Indian Diaspora

Voices of Grandparents and Grandparenting

Amarjit Singh (Ed.)

Indian Diaspora

TRANSGRESSIONS: CULTURAL STUDIES AND EDUCATION

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TRANSGRESSIONS: CULTURAL STUDIES AND EDUCATION

Cultural studies provides an analytical toolbox for both making sense of educational practice and extending the insights of educational professionals into their labors. In this context *Transgressions: Cultural Studies and Education* provides a collection of books in the domain that specify this assertion. Crafted for an audience of teachers, teacher educators, scholars and students of cultural studies and others interested in cultural studies and pedagogy, the series documents both the possibilities of and the controversies surrounding the intersection of cultural studies and education. The editors and the authors of this series do not assume that the interaction of cultural studies and education devalues other types of knowledge and analytical forms. Rather the intersection of these knowledge disciplines offers a rejuvenating, optimistic, and positive perspective on education and educational institutions. Some might describe its contribution as democratic, emancipatory, and transformative. The editors and authors maintain that cultural studies helps free educators from sterile, monolithic analyses that have for too long undermined efforts to think of educational practices by providing other words, new languages, and fresh metaphors. Operating in an interdisciplinary cosmos, Transgressions: Cultural Studies and Education is dedicated to exploring the ways cultural studies enhances the study and practice of education. With this in mind the series focuses in a non-exclusive way on popular culture as well as other dimensions of cultural studies including social theory, social justice and positionality, cultural dimensions of technological innovation, new media and media literacy, new forms of oppression emerging in an electronic hyperreality, and postcolonial global concerns. With these concerns in mind cultural studies scholars often argue that the realm of popular culture is the most powerful educational force in contemporary culture. Indeed, in the twenty-first century this pedagogical dynamic is sweeping through the entire world. Educators, they believe, must understand these emerging realities in order to gain an important voice in the pedagogical conversation.

Without an understanding of cultural pedagogy's (education that takes place outside of formal schooling) role in the shaping of individual identity – youth identity in particular – the role educators play in the lives of their students will continue to fade. Why do so many of our students feel that life is incomprehensible and devoid of meaning? What does it mean, teachers wonder, when young people are unable to describe their moods, their affective affiliation to the society around them. Meanings provided young people by mainstream institutions often do little to help them deal with their affective complexity, their difficulty negotiating the rift between meaning and affect. School knowledge and educational expectations seem as anachronistic as a ditto machine, not that learning ways of rational thought and making sense of the world are unimportant.

But school knowledge and educational expectations often have little to offer students about making sense of the way they feel, the way their affective lives are shaped. In no way do we argue that analysis of the production of youth in an

electronic mediated world demands some "touchy-feely" educational superficiality. What is needed in this context is a rigorous analysis of the interrelationship between pedagogy, popular culture, meaning making, and youth subjectivity. In an era marked by youth depression, violence, and suicide such insights become extremely important, even life saving. Pessimism about the future is the common sense of many contemporary youth with its concomitant feeling that no one can make a difference.

If affective production can be shaped to reflect these perspectives, then it can be reshaped to lay the groundwork for optimism, passionate commitment, and transformative educational and political activity. In these ways cultural studies adds a dimension to the work of education unfilled by any other sub-discipline. This is what Transgressions: Cultural Studies and Education seeks to produce—literature on these issues that makes a difference. It seeks to publish studies that help those who work with young people, those individuals involved in the disciplines that study children and youth, and young people themselves improve their lives in these bizarre times.

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Printed on acid-free paper

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

AMARJIT SINGH

1. INTRODUCTION[i]

Grandparents too are Integral Parts of the Indian Diaspora: Celebrating the Voices of the Diasporic Indian Grandparents

STARTING POINT: VOICES OF SOME GRANDPARENTS

"We have a broader view of life now. Some of our old traditions have changed."

"I enjoy a lot when I do grand parenting. I simply love the way they [grandchildren] talk, play, eat etc. I feel like I am learning lots of things at this age from my school going grandchildren."

"I barely see the grand-children… all our traditions will be washed out with them. If I don't see them, how can I teach them? Our children no longer answer to us… so why would the grand-children?"

"What will they [grandchildren] be like in the future?"

"…our health is not so good and with age it will only deteriorate. Our own children and their spouses are both working so they do not have enough time and the new generation only want freedom so they will not take our responsibility".

"How much burden of one's culture one should carry?"

"…even we get 'bitter' by our children's behavior, we still don't want to leave them, because we are stuck with '*mempta*' [attachment]. That is our tradition. And that is our weakness".

"Too much love is not good."

"In no circumstances we should lose our culture, as long as we have a breath."

"I guess I could tell them [grandchildren] about me."

This book is about contemporary Indian grandparents and their grand parenting practices. In this book we recognize and celebrate the various contributions of the Indian diasporic grandparents to promoting and sustaining good and optimal health and life styles of their own, as well as of family members, grandchildren and

communities – as they live their daily lives in different countries – the United Kingdom, the United States, Canada, South Africa, Fiji, Mauritius, Australia, Suriname and Malaysia – and in different economic, social, cultural, religious contexts and specific household and family situations.

A few words about how this book became reality may be of interest to some readers. Over the years, as educators, some of my colleagues and I have been engaged in larger pedagogical projects of teaching and learning from reflective and critical pedagogical perspectives (Doyle & Singh, 2008; Hamnett et al, 1984; Singh & Devine, 2013; Singh et al, 2001a, 2001b). Among other things, we have been interested in the question: How could something that is "local", perceived "desirable" and "sustainable" be promoted and legitimized in the age of "globalism"? The demand to produce local knowledge is also related to critical issues associated with the processes of self-representation and cultural appropriations. Thus I have thought of putting this book together mainly for teaching, reading, and pedagogical purposes. In my chapter in this book I reflect and describe the context of my personal involvement with the diasporic Indian grandparents. In order to make this book project a reality, I approached those people whom I thought might be interested in the role the contemporary Indian diasporic grandparents play in the Indian diasporic families and communities in different countries. This I did through personal contacts I made with people whom I met at various conferences, and by doing computer search. Once the contacts had been made and contributing authors been identified, I shared my interest in the diasporic Indian grandparents and in Indian diaspora with them in two ways: interpersonal face-to-face interaction, and correspondence with those who live away in different countries using e-mail messages. During face-to-face conversations I explained to the contributing authors about my approach to organizing this volume from reflective and critical pedagogical perspectives. Actually, this book is a sequel to my book I co-edited (Mehta & Singh, 2008), *Indian Disapora: Voices of the elderly in five countries*. Rotterdam: Sense Publishers. In this sense it has taken more than six year to conceptualize this book and finally get it ready for printing.

In organizing the material in this book the contributors make use of a number of pedagogical tools and on-going conversations drawn from various areas of studies such as diaspora, globalization, modernization, sociology of family, social gerontology, and cultural and post-colonial studies. However, the concept of voice as one of the critical pedagogical tools provides an anchor to various narratives that contributing authors have included in their respective chapters to this book.

One of the underlying ideas in organizing material for this book has been that it is not only that people of "communities of diasporic Indian seniors and grandparents" in different countries are experiencing rapid change, but people in many other sub-groups and cultural communities are also experiencing fast-paced transformation globally. Such global transformations taking everywhere have made

individuals and groups sensitive to the issues related to process of self-representation and cultural appropriation. Thus for the people experiencing change the issues of self-representation and cultural appropriation have become very critical in relation to practices where they engage in navigating and negotiating their daily lives in many situations, which are in constant flux (Singh & Devine, 2013). The diasporic Indian grandparents and seniors want to self-represent in areas such as sustainability of their communities, families, lifestyles choices, cultural values, and for their very survival in term of being a distinct political, social and economic entity in the context of globalization; people all over the world desire, imagine, observe, plan, and act self-consciously, albeit in varying degrees, to sustain and expand some aspects of the local place and space in their own individual and collective self-images. The active, engaged, and entangled voices and practices of grandparents recorded and presented in this book can be seen as testimony to those concerns. Singh's chapter in this book further elaborates on some of these points.

Other underlying ideas have been that listening to the voices of Indian diasporic grandparents in many countries can also shed light on the changing roles of grandparents in many other diasporic societies. The small scale nuanced studies discussed in each chapter serve to complement and deepen the meaning of other research-based content in each chapter with authentic and personally articulated experiences of grandparents.

Over the years, part of my own overt agenda has been to extend conversations about the well-being of the Indian diasporic elderly and their voices that we presented in our previous book Mehta & Singh (2008). The contributing authors to this book present voices of the Indian diasporic grandparents who "do" grandparenting in their respective countries, in ways that show that, when accorded the opportunities to voice their concerns relating to grandparenting and to share their grandparenting practices with other people, the diasporic Indian grandparents are happy, satisfied with their life achievements, and relaxed, albeit to various extents and degrees, thus contributing to their overall well-being in the later year of their lives, as well as to the well-being of others around them.

The contributors to this book try to build their analyses by focusing on the voices of Indian diasporic seniors and grandparents. Those voices, combined with the biographical observations, commentary, and multilevel analyses of the contributors, should provide readers glimpses of the quality of aging and family life being experienced by the diasporic Indian grandparents and seniors.

In this book contributing authors write from multiple perspectives in capturing the voices of the diasporic Indian grandparents in the context of everyday living. With the help of the participating Indian diasporic grandparents, the contributors to this book have produced comparative narratives that highlight the place of grandparents in families and communities located at particular places in different countries. In producing various narratives the authors have combined relevant multidisciplinary professional knowledge with common and good sense daily

experiences of their own and grandparents in their respective countries (see endnote X in Singh's chapter in this book). In this sense they have produced nuanced local knowledge with global implications.

There are many stakeholders interested in the well-being of the Indian diasporic grandparents as seniors. These include immediate family members and friends, a myriad of government and private service providing agencies, religious and cultural organizations, and various professionals trained people such as social and community workers, cultural workers, and social scientists – psychologists, sociologists, economists, anthropologists, gerontologists, physicians, political scientists, geographers, architects, city planners and developers, and educators, including teachers, students, and reformers. We hope this book will be of interest to all these stakeholders.

Like grandparenting, there are many dimensions of aging – physical aging, psychological aging and social aging. We believe the key questions with which those stakeholders should be concerned are: Are the diasporic Indian grandparents as seniors experiencing "optimal", "usual" or "pathological" (see Singh's chapter in this book) aging in the contexts of their household and family while they age in different cultural and nation-state contexts? What can stakeholders gather from the voices of Indian diasporic seniors and grandparents? How can the stakeholders prepare themselves to listen to the authentic voices of those elders and grandparents? What can the stakeholders do to create safe sites and places where the diasporic Indian seniors and grandparents feel empowered enough to help themselves to work toward realizing their full human potential as they grow old? What does growing old and doing grandparenting roles mean to the diasporic Indian seniors and grandparents? These are critical pedagogical questions (see Singh's chapter in this book). The authors in this book provide readers some answers to these questions through offering them aspects of life stories of the Indian diasporic grandparents. These life stories should provide rich contexts for the stakeholders to make their own assessment of the Indian diasporic grandparents' situations. This self-awareness of their own self-assessment of the diasporic Indian grandparents' situations, we hope, may become a guide for actions by stakeholders to support the two main goals of the diasporic Indian grandparents: how to improve the quality of their lives in later years as they grow and age in their respective countries and settings, and how to contribute to the well-being of their grandchildren and families; for aging is both an individual and social process (Quadagno, 2002).

Cultures, communities, and aging in India have several levels of complexities (Lamb, 2008). This has not been the main concern of this book. However, it is obvious that any conversation of the Indian diasporic grandparents and seniors cannot be meaningfully carried on without thinking of life – past, present and future – in India, because the contemporary Indian diasporic cultures and communities are as complex as those are in India. The authors in this book to some extent explore areas that relate closely to the lives of the diasporic Indian

grandparents, as they reminisce on aspects of their life-long achievements in later days of their life, by remembering history of their ancestors who before them lived in diaspora and passed on to them Indian cultural values. Brij Lal's chapter in this book throws light on this connection among diasporic Indian grandparents and India. Suffice here is to note that according to Cengel (2013) "as young families move to pursue modern jobs in the cities and life expectancy increases, India struggles to address a growing, heartbreaking gap in elder care (p.31). Further, "the family structure that once cared for the elderly is under threat" (p, 38), and "the demographic shift in India has caught the government and society unprepared" (p. 39).

Another underlying idea in organizing this book has been that grandparents in general in all societies and cultures play multiple roles as organic intellectuals (see Singh's chapter in this book). Thus, from the very beginning in our approach to editing this book, we have seen Indian diasporic grandparents in different countries as organic or transformative intellectuals. As such, this group of people is a reservoir of stories and insights. If people only listen to grandparents, instead of just hearing them, the listeners will realize that the stories of Indian diasporic grandparents tell us many things: under what conditions the diasporic Indian grandparents in different countries grew up, what they have made of themselves and what they have lost and are losing as the diasporic families go through transformation.Their stories tell us what we need to sustain, and how to sustain what we desire having. As educators we are claiming here that, as organic intellectuals, the diasporic Indian grandparents have had a vital role in the history of development of communities and families while living in diaspora in many countries, and in reinforcing the culture of the time. They continue to play this role even today through story telling. The Indian diasporic grandparents as organic intellectuals are vital actors in explaining to the younger generation of today and of the future about the potential of young generations in deciding what type of social self and identity they would want to develop – the social self and identity that would enable them in imagining and in bringing about changes in their respective countries that would correspond to that imagined social self. The readers will find that stories told by the Indian diasporic grandparents in many chapters in this book document this fact. Here we are also claiming that there is a fundamental difference between the notion of listening and hearing. Listening requires paying attention to the voices of those who are speaking without any stereotypes and prejudices. Listening requires a sense of empathy. It is trying to understand the deep meaning located in the voice of a person who is speaking, without imposing interpretative schema that uses discourse that may lead to "colonize the life world" of the speaking person. Listening is only fully possible when a person feels safe to communicate with others what is in her/his mind (see Singh's chapter in this book). For these and other reasons, the contributing authors to this book from the very beginning understood this in organizing their material for their respective chapters. Thus in presenting their narratives, they consciously highlight the voices of

grandparents in their respective chapters, sometimes at the expense of disrupting the smooth flow of their narratives. This is not to say that the contributors to this book totally shy away from interpreting the voices of the diasporic Indian grandparents. However, they leave interpretation of grandparents' voices, in large part, to readers (Fook, 2012; Van Manen, 1997). Thus the voice of each Indian diasporic grandparent is valued as it helps illuminate the meanings the grandparent attaches to the shared experiences with her/his family members and communities in their respective countries.

In their later years of life Indian diasporic grandparents play their roles in day to day living within a web of intersecting relations to their family members, who live near to them in varying sizes of communities and also to those family members who live away from them in diaspora. In addition to playing grand parenting roles, one of the other significant intersecting relations grandparents have with their families and communities entails focusing, on their part, on needs and desires concerning their own overall wellbeing in later stages of life. These needs and desires are associated with living and ending one's life in terms of developing some personal and cultural perspectives on death and dying, and with one's sense of happiness and evaluation of life-long accomplishments and contribution in all spheres of life-social, political, psychological, spiritual, and economic. The contributors to this book present voice of the diasporic Indian grandparents in the form of direct quotes taken during conversations with them. Most of these quotes are indented and appear in many chapters in this book. These direct quotes represent the voices of grandparents, showing their multiple concerns related to the well-being of everyone around them.

Today many Indian diasporic grandparents are younger and have higher education in a variety of professions and occupations. How these highly educated grandparents function today as intellectuals in relation to their grown up children will have profound impacts on their grandchildren and great-grandchildren in the future when their adult children set up their own households and become grandparents in the next twenty to thirty years. There are many grandparents in this group of intellectuals who have become diasporic grandparents because their children have moved away from places where they live, either alone or with their young families to find work in other places. These young grandparents have become "distant grandparents" and are engaged in grandparenting roles from a distance within their own localities and countries.

Grandparents in Global Context

The role of grandparents in today's changing family structures has been recognized globally. Against all myths[ii], grandparents all over the globe are engaged in lifelong learning, as they go through various stages of their normal life course journey[iii], which cumulates in death.

Globalization process accelerates changes in family structures, as it does in lifelong learning among grandparents. Indian diasporic grandparents are no exception to these global and biological trends. The contributions of grandparents to promoting and sustaining good and optimal[iv] health and life styles of their own, as well as of family members, grandchildren and communities – as they live their daily lives in different countries and in different economic, social, cultural, religious contexts and specific household and family situations – are celebrated on the International Day of Older Persons (see Singh's chapter in this book).

Shilpa Davé in her chapter in this book notes that "while Grandparents Day exists to honor the presence of grandparents, it is their past rather than their present existence that is being honored." In this book we celebrate both the past and present existence of the Indian diasporic grandparents in a number of ways.

We start by recognizing the fact that despite the otherwise rich literature on life and history of Indian diaspora, while the achievements of the few rich and the famous Indians living in diaspora have been given the celebratory treatment, similar status is not often given to the achievements of the diasporic Indian grandparents (Mehta & Singh, 2008). This is not to say those grandparents' contributions in the past and present in creating the resilience nature of the Indian diaspora has not been recognized at all, but it is to point out that their contributions are still remembered mostly in sporadic, insufficient and not "good enough" ways. In contrast, in our view, the achievements of the few rich and the famous Indians living in diaspora have been readily and overly advertised and marketed. While compiling *The Encyclopedia of the Indian Diaspora*, Brij Lal, Peter Reeves & Rajesh Rai (2006, p. 15) point out that "the vanquished and the victors, the subalterns and the sahibs, have equal claims on our attention…. clearly there are areas where Indian communities have been settled for long periods of time…. without having a significant effect on the countries of their residence …. [but] they, too are integral parts of the diaspora."

Therefore, in conceptualizing this book our intention has been to claim that the diasporic Indian grandparents have significant effect on the countries of their residence. The contributors in this book show that historically this has always been the case, and also is the case in the present day history of diasporic Indians. Therefore, we are claiming here that the Indian diasporic grandparents also deserve the celebratory treatment or should be accorded such celebratory status because these communities of elders as grandparents "too are integral parts of the diaspora."

The contributing authors to this book celebrate the contributions of "communities of the diasporic Indian seniors and grandparents" in various areas of family and community lives in an attempt to overcome this gap in the literature on life and history of Indian diaspora. They do so by way of listening to the authentic, local and nuanced "voices"[v] of Indian diasporic grandparents in their respective countries: the United Kingdom, the United States, Canada, South Africa, Fiji, Mauritius, Australia, Suriname and Malaysia. In this way the authors go beyond

providing comparative insights into the multiple and complex roles played by the contemporary grandparents by discovering and describing the actual grandparenting practices of the Indian diasporic grandparents in nine countries mentioned above.

By highlighting the lived voices of the diasporic Indian grandparents in this book, the contributors are engaged in revitalizing the contributions made by the diasporic Indian grandparents to keeping diverse "Indian families" as strong as possible in the current era of globalization process and social policy initiatives that are dominated by the ideology of neo-liberalism (Mehta & Singh, 2008; Stager, 2013; Sreger & Roy, 2010).

One of the consequences of globalization is that it spurs among people of all ages everywhere the desire to reflect on their material and social psychological experiences and to tell their own stories based on their everyday living experiences and sense making resources[vi] available to them. In other words, as individuals and groups they want to exert some degree of human agency to have some say in the organization of their everyday relationships with others that have been deeply affected by forces of globalizations and concomitant government economic and social policies (Quadagno, 2002).

Like other individuals passing through different stages of their lives, grandparents in general want to tell their stories to others around them and to friends and family members who are away from them. Indian diasporic grandparents as aging adults desire to do the same. Moreover, in this globalized situation, grandparents, like other people, want to tell their own "indigenized" and "local" versions of stories to other people (Giddens, 1990); they expect other people to listen to them sympathetically and respectfully.

It is important for the Indian diasporic grandparents that others listen to their "local voices" because especially in North America, Australia and in Europe, listening to the stories of seniors and grandparents is an important theme in social gerontology, sociology of family, and government and non-government policy making and implementing processes. The social policy decisions made in various spheres of public lives in these "welfare-states" are directed towards providing hundreds of social, cultural, and health services to grandparents. Government and non-government agencies generally provide these services to grandparents as elderly by designing various types of programs and projects in communities where there is a concentration of seniors and grandparents. These programs and projects provide opportunities for grandparents and seniors to get together and share their stories in their own voices. Those agencies also provide funds to members of different diasporic communities to design and establish programs and projects that suit to maintain their well-being, while at the same time enable them to integrate in the mainstream culture of North American and European societies. Singh, Ludher, Sarma and Sarma-Debnath, Bihari and Juttla in this this book describe a few of those projects in their respective countries. It is important for the diasporic Indian grandparents to realize that all government and non-government agencies that

provide various types of services to them and seniors are part of the aging enterprise. In my chapter in this book I particularly attend to this on – going discourse on designing culturally appropriate and sensitive projects and programs for and by the Indian diasporic grandparents and seniors in Greater Toronto Area (GTA).

Grand Parenting as a Separate Identity and a Separate Stage of a Family Life

It is generally the case in Canada, U.S., Europe, and in many other countries that mostly retired people of fifty five year of age and over are considered seniors, old, elder, elderly or aged and, are often victims of the ideology of ageism (Mehta & Singh, 2008; Singh, 2008, pp. 124–126; CARP, 2002, p. 2). This is also the case with the diasporic Indian elders and grandparents in Canada, U.S., and other countries (Lamb, 2008; Mehta & Singh, 2008). Many people also hold the stereotypical view that all grandparents are seniors, ignoring the fact that today there are many people who become grandparents at a much earlier age (Singh & Devine, 2013; Newman, 2012; Quadagno, 2002). Further most believe that there is no difference between roles and identities of seniors who are grandparents and those who are not grandparents.

However, at least from the perspective of sociologists who study various aspects of family relations and roles in North America, the roles of seniors and grandparents in family relationship are not the same. According to these sociologists seniors as grandparents "do" (see Singh's chapter in this book) grandparenting roles. To paraphrase Newman (2012) here, doing grandparenting entails an active learning component: that it is an accomplishment rather than a fixed attribute of each individual. Unless an individual dies prematurely, he/she may become a grandparent. Different people become grandparents at different ages. Like the transition from adolescent to adulthood, becoming grandparents is not solely determine by numbers of years an individual has lived but the trajectory of that individual's life accomplishments, family relationships, and social circumstances. From this perspective then, "Grandparenting has thus become a separate identity and a separate stage of a family life" (Newman, 2012, p. 330). Many researchers in Canada and U.S. have identified several different styles of grandparenting (Mitchel, 2009). Almost all chapters in this book identify various types of grandparenting styles and roles played by the Indian diasporic grandparents in seven different countries.

Besides identity difference between the seniors and grandparents, sociologist and social gerontologists generally believe that both older people and grandparents have rich treasures of memory, and that both are "open books of experiences"- books that too often go unread. Seniors and grandparents themselves need and want to be listened to, and to share their experiences and wisdom with others. This process of listening to their life stories based on their long-term memories is extremely rewarding for their well-being and that of the listener.

Prita Mukta is one of those well-known researchers whose interest lies in memories studies. She believes that research, community work, and projects that focus on highlighting the voices and memories of diasporic Indian seniors and grandparents would just be "wonderful". In her own words, such projects "…that involved the elderly were just wonderful. I would love to see this advocated as good practice throughout the globe …." She thinks that those projects and programs that do not highlight voices of the seniors based on their memories and raise important and difficult issues that affect their and communities' lives are not that helpful. In her words, "… *a part of me feels that our intellectual and theoretical perspectives are often a mask to cover up all those very difficult things that happen within our midst such as elder abuse in particular as well as marital violence, and abandonment of human beings [personal communication, emphasis mine]*." Psychologists of aging and social gerontology distinguish long-term and short-term memory among the aged. As aging adults grandparents are very good in long-term memory (Quadagno, 2002). The Indian diasporic grandparents have rich treasures of memory. Kisson Bihari in his chapter provides rich memories (nuanced, local, and indigenized) of diasporic grandparents in South Africa.

Families and Households as Contexts for Grandparents to do Grandparenting

In general, both at the global and national levels, there are two competing perspectives – family decline and family transformation – that frame the conversation of family as social institution, cultural symbol, and socialization place for the young in contemporary societies. Besides family, other social institutes in modern society include education, economics, politics, law, religion, heath care, and the mass media. In North America, as in many other countries, family and household are defined differently (see Singh's chapter in this book).

In North American social science literature family decline perspective is "an approach to understanding families that regards recent changes in family life as a sign that the overall importance of family as a social institution is eroding" (Newman, 2012, p. 31).

On the other hand family transformation is "an approach to understanding families that maintains that family-both as a living arrangement and as a social institution-is not disappearing but instead is becoming more diverse and complex as it adapts to changing social and economic circumstances" (Newman, 2012, p. 37).

The debates over the definition of family evoke highly charged emotions among many people. Thus for many people the key question is: What does family stand for? Many people strongly believe that rise and fall of the country is directly related to this question. Since many sociologists believe that in fact meaning of family and how people feel about it is socially constructed, the answer to the above question takes the shape of highly charged political debate. According to social

construction of family the meaning different families attach to their families "… is a matter of collective definition and human agreement" (Newman. 2012, p.5).

The contributors to this book have been able to listen to the voices of the diasporic Indian grandparents in their respective counties. A close and focused reading of the voices of the diasporic Indian grandparents reveals the nuances of their day to day family relations in which they are engaged in doing grandparenting role. Some of these grandparents voice their concerns that are associated with family in decline perspective, while others voice their concerns with issues related to family transformation perspective. The voices of the diasporic Indian grandparents presented in various chapters in this book make it clear that many of these grandparents constantly are struggling and problematizing these two dominant and competing perspectives and discourses – family decline and family transformation. Further, their voices indicate that they are searching for safe and in-between-places to "do" grandparenting. Below we discuss the notion of in-between-places and spaces as we have defined and articulated it and used it for conceptualizing the organization of this book.

Searching for in-between Places and Spaces to "do" Grandparenting

Singh in his chapter in this book discusses the notion of in-between places and spaces in more detail. Suffice here is to mention that for our purposes in this book the in-between-spaces are those openings or windows of opportunities (social, political, cultural, economic, and so on) that are to be found between the decline and transformation family perspectives. These are the locations in interaction and negotiation situations that enable grandparents to do the best possible grandparenting role from the perspective of their own well-being as grandparents, while at the same time taking their grandchildren's and families' well-being into account as they age in the context of various types of diasporic Indian households and family structures in countries in which they live in diaspora. Using perspective of George Herbert Mead on the emerging nature of the "I" of the " social self" in relation to the "Me" part of the social self, and work of (Frie 2008; Jenkins, 2008; Martin, 2008) and many other scholars who make use of George Herbert Mead's perspective on the development of social self in developing their own theories of human psychological agency, I further elaborate and describe this notion of in-between-spaces in my chapter in this book, and in a chapter in another book (Singh & Devine, 2013).

That the Indian diasporic grandparents are of varying backgrounds, and that they are engaged in a variety of grandparenting styles, will become clear to readers of this book. Further, the reader will see that, using their psychological agency, the Indian diasporic grandparents are constantly seeking and imagining in-between-spaces to do grandparenting in ways that are mutually beneficial to all the stakeholders (e.g., government agencies, for profit and nonprofit organizations,

religious institutions, extended family members, non-family friendships and kin-ship net-works, and so on) who are involved in making the families stronger in the age of globalization.

Looking for in-between-spaces for doing grandparenting makes even more sense when we realize that experiencing old age is never an isolated phenomenon. The life histories of older people and grandparents are intricately intertwined with the histories of their families, communities, nations as well as global trends. In this sense, the plight of the individual self of a grandparent is related to the social self of the others, and that of the larger society and culture. Thus, in general, understanding of the individual's pains and happiness cannot be fully appreciated without having a deep sensitively to the social self of the larger social structure. (Mills, 1959; Odin, 1996; Aboulafia, 2001). If there is any validity to these statements, it follows that the causes of the personal troubles facing some Indian disporic grandparents cannot be attributed solely to an individual grandparent as a person.

Further, the voices of the diasporic Indian grandparents presented in the case studies included in each chapter in this book make it clear that the grandparents are not quite interested in accepting the idea that their personal concerns can be ascribed exclusively to their generations' so-called backwardness or simply to the notion of "generational differences", "generational gap", or to any other such labeling schemes that use dominant binary concepts to create stereotypical images of them as "others" (Mehta and Singh, 2008; Nayer, 2004; Singh, Martin & Singh, 1991).

Modernization theory has for a long time been one such dominant theory that has used various ingenious and insidious binary schemes. Calling certain people "traditional" and others "modern", it has scuttled the imaginations and creativities of people, including grandparents, to perceive and act in ways that would have enabled them to create in-between-spaces in which grandparents could have self-images of themselves as both traditional and modern, as these two terms have been used in the modernization theory or in discourses of Western modernity (Lauzon, 2011).

On the contrary the voices of the grandparents presented in this book make it clear that grandparents see themselves as active participants in their aging process, recognizing the fact that various aspects of the global cultures and social structures around them are transforming in accelerated ways. Recognizing the agency of grandparents that enables them to deal with and experience changes that are taking place around them as they live their daily lives in relation to others, the contributors to this book provide us with rich biographical sketches of many grandparents who had conversations with the authors of various chapters in this book. These authors listened sympathetically to the voices of those grandparents and convey to the readers in nuanced ways: Who are the diasporic Indian grandparents? Where do they come from? When did they come? How do they feel as they grow older in different societies and cultures and experience the aging

process? How do they construct images of their social selves? How do their self-constructed images influence their social interactions with others, and how do those social interactions with others in turn transform their behavior patterns?

For the standpoint of perspective taken to conceptualize this book, the answer to these questions is that without an understanding and savoring of the rich and long history of the Indian diaspora, we can only partially be in a position to listen to the voices of those seniors and make sense of their experiences, their struggles and their successes in life. To fully talk about the long and complex history of the Indian diaspora is indeed a Herculean task, and the purpose and scope of this book greatly limit discussion of the very rich and interesting aspects of the history of many of the the Indian diasporas, and the diasporic Indian grandparents. However, the contributors to this book attempt to make many preliminary remarks on the specific aspects of the history of people of the Indian diaspora in highlighting the voices of the diasporic grandparents. Thus the contributors provide the context in which they locate their respective case studies.[vii] These case studies provide safe spaces for various sub-groups of Indian diasporic grandparents to voice their concerns about their everyday lives and grandparenting styles.

Further, past, present, anticipated and imagined global social trends keep creating new social, political, cultural and economic, demographic and nation-state contexts, in which diasporic Indian grandparents of all backgrounds keep charting their own individual life courses as they experience all aspects of the aging process – social, psychological, biological. This has been possible, first perhaps, due to the fact that the the diasporic Indian grandparents, being a part of a larger Indian diaspora, are not a homogeneous group of elders. Secondly, because as social and cultural structures change, new forms of social self-emerge.[viii] Thirdly, although aging is a social process, each individual faces unique experiences as she/he goes through different stages of the aging process. These aging processes mentioned above unfold in the contexts of local, regional, state, national and global political economies, and of the welfare and non-welfare oriented policies of their respective nation – states.

Familiarizing Oneself with Some Key Words Spoken about the Indian Diaspora and Perceptions of Self-Image Held by Indian Diaspora

The roles of grandparents in families are rapidly transforming under the impact of globalization on all aspects our lives (Quadagno, 2002; AARP, 2013; Global Fund for Children, 2010). We are here assuming that everyone may not be interested enough in knowing what grandparents do, especially the diasporic Indian grandparents. However, since diaspora studies now generally are an integral part of globalization discourse, it may be helpful for some to familiarize themselves with the rich and long history of Indian diaspora, since it is one of the largest diasporic groups in the context of global migration, imperialism and colonialism. To be sure, a lot of the material on migration history of people from India is already available

in other places, so no attempt is made here to cover this vast material on Indian diaspora. I have been interested in studies in Indian diaspora, because some of my colleagues and I are involved in a larger project in reflective and critical educational pedagogy. I will attend to the pedagogical purposes involved in compiling the book soon.

Therefore, in this section of the chapters we include discussions of many things that interest us pedagogically. What interests us here most is the fact that what individuals actually do (in our case the diasporic Indian grandparents) in social situations (in our case many types of diasporic Indian households and family structures) and how they do what they do are crucial factors in comprehending human behavior and its social consequence. This means that human conduct cannot be comprehended apart from the actual contexts in which it occurs. In social science literature many scholars have suggested several methods to study how people carry out their activities in various social situations. A method suggested by (Lofland, 1976) includes four steps. One of those step suggest that those whose interests lie in understanding the lived everyday life of others should try "getting close-up to people actually acting some place in the real world and developing intimate familiarity (with them and their situation)." If we decide to follow this method of knowing others, we will have to be physically present in all those countries, places, spaces, and locations where people of Indian origin now reside, and also be present in all those varied Indian diasporic household situations in which the Indian disporic grandparents engage in doing grandparenting. Obviously it is just not possible for anyone to be able to do all those things, since this type of undertaking is very time consuming and expensive. But there are some people who have been able to accrue enough resources to participate in many of those situations in which the Indian diasporic grandparents do grandparenting. For example, the contributing authors to this book have been able to enjoy such an undertaking. It is our hope that the situated information they provide about styles of grandparenting of the diasporic Indian grandparents in their respective countries is pedagogically relevant to a variety of readers, as well as enhancing our professional and common sense knowledge in making sense of socialization process in the diasporic Indian family structures across different societies, cultures and sub-cultures.

However, given the financial and time constraints all we could do is to try "getting close up to people…" who have actually acted somewhere in the course of their career in situations where the diasporic Indian grandparents do grandparenting role. These are those people who have been able to have enough social and cultural capital, particularly money and time, to spend greater part of their life span in interacting with members of Indian diaspora more intimately, deeply, frequently and systematically. In this way they are supposedly more familiar with all sphere of daily lives of Indian diaspora – social, cultural, political, historical, and economical-globally and locally. Keeping this perspective in mind about what individuals actually do, below we present selected excerpts from Brij

Lal and his associates' work, hoping that these excerpts will familiarize readers, students, and many other stakeholders interested in Indian diaspora and lived lives of Indian diasporic grandparents in the context of much broader field of diaspora studies.

Brij Lal, Peter Reeves & Rajesh Rai (2006) make a number of the following general points about the nature of Indian diaspora. I have selected these points, because they were helpful as a potent frame to organize the material presented by the contributors to this book. This list is not exhausted; more such selective points can be added to the following list. Here are the selected points:

- "… how rich, varied, contradictory and confusing the subject [Indian Diaspora] is, defiantly rejecting the easy grasp of smug theory." (p. 15)
- "it is the individual distinctiveness of the various disaporic communities, however, that stands out and underlines the enormous complexity and variation in experience" (p. 9).
- "In the Indian case, there is a common ancestral homeland from which people left for various reasons, voluntarily and involuntarily, heading to all corners of the globe…. However, fractured or frayed, ossified or fluid, there is a sense of cultural, religious and historical ties with India, in various combinations of longing and nostalgia (p. 14).
- There is, somewhere within us, a deep desire to know who we are, where we have come from, and our place in the larger schemes of things (p. 13).
- The Indian diaspora is large and growing… but we should be cautious about speaking of the Indian diaspora in the singular… there are diasporas within…. (p. 13).
- One may consider oneself to be a part of the Tamil, Sikh or Gujarati diaspora first, but not necessarily at the expense of a wider identification…. Generally, relations among diasporic Indians are harmonious; though occasional friction and misunderstandings occur… caused by… contrasting perceptions of culture, when 'hybrid' notions clash with 'essentialist' notions of what is right and proper (p. 13).
- Facts do not speak for themselves; they speak when they are spoken to (p. 14).

GLIMPSES OF VOICES OF THE INDIAN DIASPORIC
GRANDPARENTS IN THIS BOOK

Earlier we aluded to the fact that the debate over the definition of family evokes highly charged emotions among many people. People have strong beliefs about what family stands for. There are two dominant and competing perspectives – family decline perspective and family transformation perspective. The voices of the diasporic Indian grandparents presented in various chapters in this book make it clear that many of these grandparents constantly are struggling and problematizing

these two dominant and competing perspectives (see Singh's chapter in this book). This is highlighted in the voices of many grandparents in this book as follows:

"A rootless tree [in this case an Indian family] can't survive for a long time [without strong values]. So is the case of a tribe or a nation."

"Our culture is being diluted more and more…I feel that eventually our culture will go. Just think about such things as living together before marriage."

"I barely see the grand-children… all our traditions will be washed out with them. If I don't see them, how can I teach them? Our children no longer answer to us… so why would the grand-children?"

"…although we are taking care of our grandchildren at this age, there is no guarantee that they will take care us when we need them".

"From what I see, not that Indians are any better off than Westerners, but I feel like we have some values that the children should have…. For instance, in Punjabi elders are addressed a certain way. You have a certain respectful way of speaking to them. Whereas in English it's just plain 'you'. I just feel like children should know … being respectful. I find that by mere use of language it made them [respectful]".

"…yes, although we are far from our 'motherland', yet in Maritius we live according to the traditional Indian values. Values such as, love, respect, truth, peace and happiness help us to be more spiritual than having a materialistic approach to life."

"I would love my children and grandchildren to understand and adapt our rich culture, tradition and values in our daily life…but our life is now here… my grandparents and parents were born here…all my relationships are now here".

"…parents set examples for children. I am afraid to say that the education system does not cater for training in spirituality. So this task has to be fulfilled by parents. Parents should consciously impart values. These days parents are too busy at work. They do not give enough time to their children. Often they just provide material benefits to satisfy the children."

Yet voices of the many diasporic Indian grandparents presented in this book reveal that they are searching for in-between-spaces. The voices of some grandparents listed below epitomize such concern:

"I am very liberal about religion. One of my grandsons got married with a white American girl last year. I think my grandchildren can choose their life partner from any community and religion. I just expect love and respect from

them. These qualities should prevail in all the families that bind them together."

And she says,

"My second generation came abroad, settled down but their life style and thoughts changed in the new environment. The same thing will evolve eventually in the third generation. Although I am not sure whether such a change is good or bad but I am worried about new generation, whether they would be heading to the right direction."

"…to build up my third generation with our own culture and tradition I need to know their language, liking and disliking, need and demand and life style. If I get any support from our community to know and learn all those it would be very nice and helpful for me."

In the voices of other diasporic Indian grandparents,

"Indian and Canadian societies have different backgrounds… We should let our children [and grandchildren] adopt [some attitude of Canadian Society] too, and stop always mentioning to them what we did in India or how things are done in Indian Culture home."

"…the would be Indian diasporic grandparents need to have balanced approach. That is, they should look for common values that they and their Canadian born and grown up children hold. Future diasporic Indian grandparents need to educate themselves with open mind approach. As a first step, collaborate with your grown up children who have their own families, and then ask yourself, do your adult children support "Indian values" held by you? Do not assume that they do. If your adult children do not support your kind of "Indian values", they would not support your way of socialising their children – your grandchildren. In other words, they may not allow you to play the grandparenting role according to your wishes. There certainly will be resistance, if not out-right conflict between you and your adult children. For example, if your own children do not speak Punjabi (i.e., you did not teach your children Punjabi when they were growing up, or they did not learn how to speak Punjabi because they grew up in the context of Canadian society), and they think it is not that important for their children to learn Punjabi in Canada, then how can you, as grandparents, expect your grandchildren to learn Punjabi and expect to avoid some degree of conflict between you and your adult children?"

"….you cannot be successful in your grandparenting role, unless you first learn to listen to your grandchildren carefully, who are growing up in the Canadian social context. In other words, you cannot approach your grandchildren expecting them to listen to you always and pay respect to you

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unconditionally, as some grandparents who did not grow older in the Canadian context do (see the first three categories). You have to learn to earn respect from your grandchildren, first by respecting them as children."

"I have raised my children in a balanced way. I have encouraged them to learn the Punjabi culture and at the same time the American way. My daughters and sons are well versed in American culture and they have been successful… However, I now feel my daughters are caught between deciding whom to marry – with a Punjabi man or the American. I think I should have socialized them in different ways in this area. Perhaps, I should have given them clear message that they could marry anyone of their choice, and not necessarily with a good Punjabi man, or a good man from India. I should have given them more freedom in this area."

"…look at your situations. Change your mentality. Forget about what you did in India. Canada is your country. Learn from them what people do here. So many ways of doing things! Learn from each other. Forget what you did in Punjab."

"…yes because sometimes their father doesn't have a stable job….he might not even have a job… and when the mother also doesn't work… then you have to help the child… you should give a few things… what the parents give will not be enough so we as grandparents should help".

"our health is not so good and with age it will only deteriorate. Our own children and their spouses are both working so they do not have enough time and the new generation only want freedom so they will not take our responsibility".

She further voices her concerns,

"I don't know what is awaiting me in the future…I always think about this… for the time being everyone is here but sometimes we are alone…if something happens to us who will look after us".

Many grandparent lament,

"In my experience in Toronto, most of the diasporic Indian grandparents/ seniors are miserable and unhappy with their lives in Canada. Their children are too busy to 'meet two ends', they have no time for parents, therefore seniors and grandparents have to learn to be independent, but the problem is that their children keep them too busy to look after their children [seniors' grandchildren] and to do their house work etc. etc. The children must give two or three hours free time to their parents. If children have a nanny or 'live in' to do the house work and to look after their children [seniors' grandchildren], the children have to pay to that nanny about 20 thousand dollars a year, plus after six p.m. the nanny or the 'live in' do not work, plus

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they get weekends free. Grandparents who are looking after their grandchildren are getting nothing of anything as 'live in' gets, but on the top of that children get their parents' pension checks."

"all our life we have struggled for our children and grandchildren but we are not sure what to expect in the future".

"In Mauritius there are many grandparents who cry…they complain that their children don't pay attention to them…see how many are going to homes" and "whatever we earned, we gave to our children, now most of them don't have time for their parents".

Further, the diasporic Indian grandparents are not very keen to accept the idea that their personal concerns can be ascribed exclusively to their generations' so-called backwardness or simply to the notion of "generational differences", "generational gap", or to any other such labeling schemes, including the stereotypical associated with the ideology of aging (CARP , 2002; see Singh's chapter in this book). Here are typical voices of some grandparents:

"After all they [my granddaughters] are citizens of this country and this is their home but it's important for them to know the U.S. is also the home to people from India like me."

One grandmother's voices her relationship with her family and grandchildren in Canada this way,

"I like to spend time living with all my family".

"I love to learn new things and keep active"

"I find it easy to check e-mails and send them messages, when our family sends out group mails, I'm usually the first one to reply".

"I love it when they upload pictures so I can see them in all their lovely outfits."

PEDAGOGICAL AND CURRICULUM GOALS IN EDUCATION FOR TRANSFORMATION

Finally, the impetus to write this book also comes from our desire to meet the demands of our students whom we teach in the contexts of multicultural societies and classrooms. Our students come from diverse backgrounds and bring with them rich social and cultural capital.[ix] In many cases they are directly involved in care giving to their aging parents, aunts and uncles, and grandparents. We also teach courses to professional students who work in the areas of community development, social work, health care delivery systems, and who specialize in other academic disciplines, such as cultural studies, post-colonial studies, and globalization

studies. These students bring with them field based practical knowledge and experiences. Their field-based practical knowledge enables them to couch their voices in subtle nuances of everyday lived experiences. Students demand that this form of nuance based practical knowledge should be recognized in the development of curriculum[x] that is based on perspectives that are critical and reflective[xi], at all levels of training and educational institutions. In producing this book, the contributors have tried to heed their advice and voices in a variety of ways. For example, in this book all contributors in their respective chapters provide a relatively extensive list of references, endnotes, and relevant statistics taken from government census reports, and a review of research carried out both at micro and macro levels in different countries. Everyone encounters many situations in her/his everyday life and uses his/her commonsense knowledge and social-cultural capital in interacting with other people. In this way each of us is constantly involved in learning and teaching process. This process of mutual learning and teaching enables us to contexualize and problematize various situations in much more meaningful ways and to make sense of other's voice for developing a perspective on our own life as we go through different stages of our life course journey from childhood to old age. So in the appendix we present some reflective and critical questions that may be helpful to the reader to engage and question narratives presented by the contributors to this book. This should serve as a guide for those who want to study further, and who might find themselves having a desire to know a particular topic in greater depth in a comparative framework. As an editor I have encouraged all the contributors to write in a language accessible to all stakeholders and lay public, such as family members and the seniors, and grandparents who may not relish excessive specialized social science language. We hope that, albeit in a modest way, this book will prove useful to all those students and to their teachers.

NOTES

[i]   This chapter is re-worked and modified version of my four co-authored chapters: chpaters 1&7 in Mehta and Singh (2008), and chapters 1&36 Singh and Devine (2013). *Rural transformation and Newfoundland and Labrador diaspora: grandparents, grandparenting, community and school relations. Rotterdam: SENSE Publishers (in press).*

[ii] Grandparents as seniors often have to deal with ageism. Ageism is an ideology, like racism and sexism, which encourages the tendency to generalize, categorize and simplify the diverse histories, voices, experiences, struggles and successes of seniors by lumping them into a single set of representation. A recent CARP (Canadian Association of Retired People) report (2002:2) points that this tendency "manifests itself through a variety of myths about seniors." According to this report, some of these myths are: seniors [grandparents] are all alike and predictable; they all live in institutions; they are all frail, sick, dependent or senile; they are all rich; they cannot learn new things; they are useless and cease to contribute to society; they are all isolated and lonely; they are waiting to die; they become aimless in retirement and die soon after they retire; they are vulnerable and therefore more easily victimized than younger people; and that they are all devoid of sexual feelings and experiences. The most prevalent "myth" that is held by many about Punjabi seniors in Canada is associated with ageism, is that they are 'illiterate', hold 'traditional Punjabi' values, do not understand 'modern Canadian' values, and are unable to appreciate and negotiate what the

modern, industrial, liberal, democratic, western societies like Canada have to offer in the context of cultural globalization. Kalish summarizes the views of ageists as follows: "Ageists…express overt and covert dislike and discrimination regarding the elderly. That is, they avoid older persons on an individual level; they discriminate against older persons in terms of jobs, other forms of access to financial support, utilization of social institutions, and so forth. Further, the ageist individual derides the elderly through hostile humor, through accusations that the elderly are largely responsible for their own plight, and through complaints that they are consuming more than their share of some particular resource. They may also contend that older people deserve what they get, are, in effect, a drain on society, are functionally incapable of change or improvement (or, conversely, are capable of change and improvement and should be required to do so with their present resources), and do not contribute adequately to the society from which they are taking resources. Ageism involves stereotyping, prejudice, discrimination, segregation, hostility…the list can go on and on," (p. 398). Kalish, R.A. "The New Ageism and the Failure Models: A Polemic," *The Gerontologist*, Vol. 19, No. 4, 1979, pp. 398–402. See Morgan, L. & Kunkel, S. (2001) (2nd Edition). Also see Quadagno, J. (2002) (2nd Edition).

iii "The lifecourse framework is an approach to studying of aging that emphasizes the interaction of historical events, individual decisions and opportunities, and the effect of early life experiences in determining later life outcomes" (Quadagno, 2012. P. 30.)

iv "With the growing knowledge about the modifiability and variability of physical aging processes, the distinctions among usual, optimal, and pathological aging emerged … 'optimal' aging is characterized by minimal loss of physical function and a healthy, vigorous body; 'pathological' aging is aging accompanied by multiple chronic diseases and negative environment influences. 'Usual' ageing refers to the typical or average experience – somewhat in between pathological and optimal"… "Psychological aging processes include changes in personality, mental functioning, and sense of self during our adult years." (p. 5) See, Morgan, L. & Kunkel, S. (2001) (2nd Edition). *Aging: the social context*. California: Pine Forge Press. Also, see endnote ii in chapter twelve in this book.

v We realize that voice is not something that someone gives to others. It is something to be engaged and critically understood. Voice is often problematic, yet it is central to any sense of personal action and power, that is agency. While a great deal has been written on voice as critical pedagogical category, no attempt is made here to review the literature on this category. However, it suffices to mention that the exercise of listening to the voices of both the diasporic and the non-diasporic Indian grandparents , and to all the stakeholders who are interested in their well-being, enables us to realize what forms of knowledge and cultures those groups bring in the form of cultural and social capital. It is important to know what sorts of cultural and social capital get produced and reproduced when different voices are engaged in real life situations. Once the grandparents come to realize that their voices are liberating, they can build on that freedom. They can feel confident in solving real and perceived problems pertaining to their daily lives in their own specific ways. We should remind ourselves that in this process of prioritizing the voices of the grandparents all parties involved are simultaneously teachers and learners. Part of the struggle for voice, in pedagogy, is to help the grandparents to develop a language that can serve as a means to empower them to socially transform their lives. Further, we should remember that lived experiences and language are linked together. We speak out of our lived experiences, for in fact there is no other way to speak. Therefore, if we do not have freedom to speak out our experiences, we might become voiceless. If the individual is voiceless, does it mean that the individual is negated? Silenced? Our orientation is that if the Indian diasporic grandparents, with the help of other stakeholders, can use their voices to produce "local knowledge" and "local theories" in their respective countries about their own aging process in relation to the larger debate in society about aging and grand parenting , they might be able to speak to their own specific reality with confidence. They could self-consciously reflect on their own construction of old age and on their own transformation. In writing this book we are claiming that integrating case studies presented in this book into pedagogical practices give us a site to engage the voices of the Indian diasporic grandparents living in various countries and other

stakeholders. For this way of looking at the struggle for voice, in pedagogy, see Doyle, Clar & Singh, Amarjit (2006). *Reading and teaching Henry Giroux*. New York: Peter Lang Publishing, Inc., Giroux, H.A. (1989). *Schooling for democracy*. London: Routledge, Giroux, H.A. (2003). *The abandoned generation: democracy beyond the culture of fear*. New York: Plagrave Macmillian, Giroux, H. A. (1993). *Living dangerously: multiculturalism and politics of difference*. New York: Peter Lang Publishing, Inc, Giroux, H.A. (1993). *Border crossing: cultural workers and the politics of education*. New York: Routledge. Steinberg, S.R. (2012).

vi   We have noted that in many Indian diasporic families grandparents function as cultural workers and roving leaders. As such they are involved in sense – making process. Weick (1995) points out that "sense-making is about authoring as well as interpretation, creation as well as discovering" (p. 8). Sense-making is "a process in which individuals develop cognitive maps of their environment" (Ring and Rands, 1989, p. 342). And "people make sense of things by seeing a world on which they already imposed what they believe" (Weick, 1995, p. 15). Sense-making involves both individual and social activities (see Singh's chapter in this book).

vii   The usefulness of small scale, community and neighbourhood based studies is well recognized by the social science community. The contributors to this book note that most studies on diasporic Indian seniors are small scale studies. We will see in this book the review of those studies. Smith's (1999) comments on small scale research projects involving Maori communities are useful here, and so are presented in some detail. Smith writes about the concerns of Maori researchers in New Zealand and the challenges they face in articulating indigenous research agenda in the context of a highly institutionalized world of research. Her observations may throw some light on how to appreciate the place of small scale research done by local people who are deeply involved in the well-being of their communities. She points out that "…research is highly institutionalized through disciplines and fields of knowledge, through communities and interest groups of scholars, and through the academy." She reminds us that research is a political process since it "is also an integral part of political structures: governments funded research directly and indirectly through tertiary education, national science organizations, development programmes and policies." Further, like governments "corporations and industries fund their own research. Their research programmes can involve large amounts of money and resources, and their activities take place across several parts of the globe. Others like "non-government organizations and local community groups also carry out research and involve themselves in the analysis and critique of research. All of these research activities are carried out by people who in some form or another have been trained and socialized into ways of thinking, of defining and making sense of the known and unknown. It seems rather difficult to conceive an articulation of an indigenous research agenda on such a large scale." This is so, she explains, because "…to imagine self-determination, however, is also to, imagine a world in which indigenous peoples become active participants, and to prepare for the possibilities and challenges that lie ahead." (p. 124) She goes on to say that "… in addition to reasons outlined earlier … about the general regard for research by indigenous peoples, there is another reason for a reticence in naming an activity or project as research. Research is also regarded as being the domain of experts who have advanced educational qualifications and have access to highly specialized language and skills." The diasporic Indian communities are interested in producing their own culturally relevant knowledge. But it is not easy to do so in real life situation, because they have to constantly engage the so called 'research experts'. Smith explains, "…communities carrying out what they may regard as a very humble little project are reluctant to name it as research in case it provokes the scorn and outrage of 'real' researchers. Furthermore, indigenous communities as part of the self -determination agenda do engage quite deliberately in naming the world according to an indigenous world view." (p. 125). In this context one could appreciate the usefulness of the small scale studies. Theodoratus (1984–1989) also endorses the usefulness of small scale studies, and his 1984–1989 series compiles research on the presence of small ethnic communities in the United States and Canada that might otherwise not have been noticed by larger group projects.

viii For review of the earlier literature on this line of thinking, see, Zurcher, L.A. (1977). *The mutable self: a self-concept for social change*. Beverly Hills: Sage Publication. Also see, Singh, Amarjit, Wilfred Martin and Rupinder Singh (1991). "The modes of self of south-Asian elderly in Canadian society: towards reconstructing interdependency." *Multiculturalism*, Vol. XIII, No. 3, 3–9. All articles in this book document recent evidence to demonstrate the extent to which the diasporic Indian grandparents are successful in developing new modes of social self in the context of global changes that surround them.

ix Giroux is one of the leading voices within the discourse of critical pedagogy. One of the important tenets of Giroux's thought about curriculum is that teachers and professors should need to take seriously those cultural experiences and meanings "that students bring to the day-to-day process of schooling itself. If we take the experiences of our students as starting point for dialogue and analysis, we give them the opportunity to validate themselves, to use their own voices" (1981, p. 123). This suggestion does not fit well to "a predetermined and hierarchically arranged body of knowledge [that] is taken as the cultural currency to be dispensed to all children regardless of their diversity and interests" (p. 123). He further explains that the concept of hidden curriculum allows us to make "linkages between schools and the social, economic, and political landscape that make up the wider society, the hidden curriculum theorists provided a theoretical impetus for breaking out of the methodological quagmire in which schools were merely viewed as black boxes" (1983, p. 45). Giroux maintains that curriculum must not be limited to the domain of the few and the privileged, but it must center on the "particular forms of life, culture, and interaction that students bring to school" (2005, p. 104). He writes "critical pedagogy always strives to incorporate student experience as official curriculum content. While articulating such experience can both be empowering and a form of critique against relations that silence, such experience is not an unproblematic form of knowledge" (Giroux and Simon, 1989. p.231). Giroux suggests, "instead of stressing the individualistic and competitive approaches to learning, students are encouraged to work together on projects, both in terms of their production and evaluation" (2005, p. 104). Like Giroux, we realize that that curriculum should go beyond the experience of students' life. It should expand their boundaries and borders "while constantly pushing them to test what it means to resist oppression, work collectively, and exercise authority from the position of an ever-developing sense of knowledge, expertise, and commitment' (p.104). According to Giroux and Aronowitz what we need is "really useful knowledge that draws from popular education, knowledge that challenges and critically appropriates dominant ideologies, and knowledge that points to more human and democratic social relations and cultural forms" (1994, p. 153). See, Giroux, H.A. (1981), Giroux, H. A. (1983). *Ideology, culture, and process of schooling*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press; London: Farmer Press; *Theory and resistance in education*: a pedagogy for the *opposition*. London: Hienemann Educational Book, Giroux, H.A. and Simon, R.I. (1989). *Popular culture, schooling, and everyday life*. Granby, Mass.: Bergin and Garvey, Giroux, H.A. (2005) (2nd.Ed.). *Schooling and the struggle for public life: democracy's promise and education's challenge*. Boulder, Colo.: Paradigm Publishers, Giroux, H. A. and Aronowitz (1994). *Education still under siege*. Westport, Conn.: Bergin & Garvey, Doyle, C. and Singh, A. (2006), op. cit.

x The 1970s saw the rise of critical pedagogy. It rose in resistance to so-called transmission approaches to education and curriculum. Therefore, in our reading we find that in critical pedagogy a distinction is often made between the pedagogical goals and curriculum goals of teaching and learning. Curriculum goals generally entail providing students the opportunities to learn the already existing forms of knowledge produced within the framework of dominant paradigms. Pedagogical goals require more than this. They are framed to bring about progressive social change. See endnote 7. Based on our research (see Doyle, C. and Singh, A., 2006, op. cit.) in the "field", we have developed the RCIT (Reflective and Critical Internship Teaching model), a model of teacher education designed to engage students with curriculum that aims at achieving both the curriculum and pedagogical goals. In this model we envision that generally there are three forms of knowledge production that dominate our daily conversations and lived experiences. We label these forms of knowledge as common sense knowledge, professional knowledge, official knowledge, and defined them as follow: common sense knowledge is taken for granted dominant cultural norms, values,

attitudes, self-concepts, behavior patterns, and overall orientations which we have acquired through socialization in cultures and societies. It constitutes more of our personal opinions and idiosyncrasies. The professional knowledge is produced by various professionals, such as sociologists, psychologists, and so on, and their respective professional organizations. The official knowledge is produced by the state, i.e., various government apparatuses, such as the department or ministries of education, health, economic development, and so on. In building the RCIT model we find ourselves more inclined to accept the assertion that it is the on-going conversations we have with others that makes it possible for us to live together and solve our problems. Therefore, the model encourages students to self-consciously combine the three forms of knowledge described herein when they engage in communication with others. We have found that when students do that, they feel more empowered. They are more likely to make sense of their environment (personal and social predicaments in which they find themselves due to their specific locations in general social structure) more confidently. Empowerment also entails prefigurative politics and living. Kaufman (2003:277–8) writes that "prefigurative politics is based on the belief that we are creating the new world we are advocating as we go, and so we should try to build in the present, the institutions and social patterns of the society we are working toward." And "in prefigurative movements, we are reweaving the social fabric. We are creating an alternative social world, and the relations we create along the way lay the foundations for the relations we will have after we achieve our goals." See, Kaufman, C. (2003). *Ideas for actions: relevant theory for radical change*. Cambridge, Mass.: South End Press. Also see, Schon 1987, 1983.

[xi] "The primary preoccupation of critical pedagogy is with social injustice and how to transform inequitable, undemocratic, or oppressive institutions and social relations." Burbules, Nicholas C. and Rupert Berk "Critical Thinking and Critical Pedagogy: Relations, Differences, and Limits," in *Critical Theory in Educational Discourse*, Thomas S. Popkewitz and Philip Higgs, eds.Butterworth's, 1997. According to Sullivan (1987:63) "a fundamental assumption of a critical pedagogy is that it is a broad educational venture which self-consciously challenges and seeks to transform the dominant values of our culture." Likewise, Leistyna & Woodrum (1996) assert that: "Critical pedagogy is primarily concerned with the kinds of educational theories and practices that encourage both students and teachers to develop an understanding of the interconnecting relationship among ideology, power, and culture… [that] challenge us to recognize, engage, and critique (so as to transform) any existing undemocratic social practices and institutional structures that produce and sustain inequalities and oppressive social identities and relations." According to Giroux (1997: xiii) pedagogy "involves the production and transmission of knowledge, the construction of subjectivity, and the learning of values and beliefs." Kellner explains, "Critical pedagogy considers how education can provide individuals with the tools to better themselves and strengthen democracy, to create a more egalitarian and just society, and thus to deploy education in a process of progressive social change." Kellner, Douglas. "Multiple Literacies and Critical Pedagogies." *Revolutionary Pedagogies – Cultural Politics, Instituting Education, and the Discourse of Theory*. Peter Pericles Trifonas, Editor. New York: Routledge, 2000, Giroux, H.A. (1997). *Pedagogy and the politics of hope: theory, culture, and schooling: a critical reader*. Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press.

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UMA BHOWON & SUNYUKTA BHOWON RAMSARAH

2. VOICES OF INDIAN DIASPORIC GRANDPARENTS IN MAURITIUS

Roles, Issues and Concerns

ABSRTACT

This study aimed to capture the perceptions and lived experiences of third and fourth generation Indian diasporic elders regarding their role as grandparents in contemporary Mauritius. Using a qualitative approach, in-depth interviews were conducted with grandfathers and grandmothers. Thematic analysis of interviews was undertaken to identify the main issues and concerns that these elders have regarding their role as grandparents. Most saw their role as even more important now given that their children as dual earner couples may not have sufficient family time. Although most elders live separately, they play an active role in the upbringing of their grandchildren and perceive themselves as custodians of values, traditions and culture. Other issues that emerged were related to old age, economic concerns and health.

INTRODUCTION

The aim of this study was to capture the perceptions and lived experiences of third and fourth generation Indian diasporic elders regarding their role as grandparents in contemporary Mauritius, specifically, their perceptions regarding their role as grandparents in a fast changing society and their concerns over their present and future lives.

   Our motivation to undertake this study emanates from our perception that Indian diasporic elders constitute an impressive number of people over the age of 65 in North America, Asia and Europe. Consequently, gerontology has emerged as a popular field of study and research in recent years. Despite this focus on the elderly, some specific elderly populations have been largely under-represented in the gerontology literature and research. Grandparents constitute one such group. With globalization, diaspora studies have emerged as a vibrant and dynamic area of research, but research on diasporic elders, particularly grandparents, still needs to be undertaken. Some specific questions asked in this study are: who are the Indian diasporic grandparents, how relevant is their role as grandparents in contemporary Mauritius, what are their concerns regarding their role, how do they

negotiate and manage their interactions with their own grandchildren, how difficult or satisfying is their role, what concerns do they have regarding their future. Findings of this study throw light on the Indian diaspora in general and on the role of grandparents in particular.

HISTORY OF CONTEMPORARY MAURITIUS

Mauritius lies 500 miles from the east coast of Madagascar and over 1000 miles from South Africa. The island is volcanic with a total land mass of approximately 720 square miles. The country had no aboriginal inhabitants and has over the past few centuries gone through waves of colonization. The Portuguese were the earliest Europeans to discover the island in 1510, followed by the Dutch in 1598. The French, who were the first colonizers, arrived in 1721. The French occupation of Mauritius lasted a hundred years, long enough for French culture and language to have left a permanent mark on the population. A British colony since 1810, Mauritius became independent in 1968 and a Republic in 1992.

The French colonial period saw the island as a strategic point in the Indian Ocean trade route. During this period about 30 artisans were inducted from India (mainly from Pondicherry) to develop the colony. The next Indian arrivals consisted of prisoners brought in by the British Indian government during 1816 – 1820. Slavery was abolished in Mauritius in 1835. As in Guyana, Jamaica, Trinidad & Tobago and other Caribbean countries, the substantive Indian settlement of this country began only in 1834 with the induction of indentured labour from the British colony of India to Mauritius to work in the sugarcane fields of British planters (High Level Committee on the Indian Diaspora, 2000). By 1869, just 30 years later, 67 percent of the population of Mauritius was derived from the Indian subcontinent (Bowman, 1991). The socio and political life of Mauritius since independence has largely been determined by people of Indian origin who have a strong cultural identity with their immigrant past. According to Mishra (2007), "the rich and varied experiences of Indian immigrant on the island have made Mauritius a microcosm of the historical disapora" (p. 263).

Post-independence, Mauritius moved from a mono-crop economy based entirely on sugar export to a newly industrialized country with a flourishing economic processing zone, tourism and more recently an information & technology sector and offshore financial sector. Mauritius has often been cited as a success story or miracle in the African continent not only for its economic progress but its success in maintaining its linguistic, ethnic and cultural diversity.

INDIAN DIASPORA IN MAURITIUS

To say that, among all countries in the world in which Indian diaspora is established, Mauritius is unique and distinctive would not be an exaggeration

(High Level Committee on the Indian Diaspora, 2000). The small island is home to various ethnic groups (e.g., Hindus, Muslims, Tamils, Telagus, Marathi, Gujratis, Creoles, Whites, and Chinese), 15 spoken languages and four world religions are practiced here (Erikson, 1994). It is no wonder that the representation of the nation is one of a complex multicultural mosaic in which all ethnic groups are incorporated and are considered to make up the "national mosaic" [a "rainbow nation"] (Wong & Verkuyten, 2010, p. 625).

Hindus in Mauritius constitute about 52 percent of the population, followed by 17 per cent Muslims. Both trace their origins to South Asia. About 28 percent of Mauritians are Creoles of African and mixed origin, while Chinese and French constitute for 2 and 1 percent of the population. Unlike the other South Asia diasporas in Guyana, Trinidad and Fiji, also established through the indentured system, the people in diaspora in Mauritius are not confronted with a hegemonic national identity tending towards their exclusion (Eisenholr, 2006). Unlike other diasporic locations, the Indian diaspora in Mauritius does not face any challenge by indigenous population in the imagined community of the nation (Munasinghe, 2002; Kelly, 1998). State institutions in Mauritius explicitly encourage the propagation and celebration of diasporic links, expending significantly more resources and effort on supporting ethinicized ancestral cultural traditions, values and languages (Eisenholr, 2006). All major Hindu festivals like Diwali, Holi, Durga puja, Shivratri, Ganesh Chathurthi, Cavadee and Ougadee are celebrated at the national level. More recently, the government constructed cultural centres which are representative of the major ethnic groups and are state funded.

According to Eisenholr (2006), in "Little India", the performance of diasporic traditions and allegiances to India as a land of origin becomes a hegemonic basis for cultural citizenship in Mauritius with continuing commitments to ancestral traditions (p. 5).

"These traditions are portrayed as ancient and glorious and as repositories of cultural values that enable their adherents to lead spiritually and economically productive lives in solidarity with others….full membership in the Mauritian nation is performed through the cultivation of such tradition with origins elsewhere" (p. 5).

In line with studies conducted elsewhere, Hindu elderly in this study believed spirituality to be a core value of traditional Indian culture. Their attachment to religion and spirituality was manifested in many different ways, such as, observation of cultural festivals, in religious practices, participation in religious groups and most importantly in pilgrimage to motherland. All religious festivals are celebrated with a lot of fervor. As expressed by a female respondent,

"we would not be who we are if we did not celebrate these festivals".

Another stated,

"Spirituality and religion give meaning and direction to our life, without these we would not be known as hindu".

Although these respondents have lost contact with their close ones and with the motherland, they have maintained and reconstructed their religious and cultural identities through direct participation in religious/spiritual practices and movements of their homeland. Most were regular followers of some temple or kovil. Some had followed courses in spirituality and meditation offered by organizations such as the Brahma Kumari and Art of Living. A common practice for these respondents was to take a pilgrimage to India during which they would visit religious places. Another was to construct a Hanuman temple in their yards. All the Hindu respondents agreed that traditionsl Hindu values enabled them to be spiritual,

"yes, although we are far from our 'motherland', yet in Maritius we live according to the traditional Indian values. Values such as, love, respect, truth, peace and happiness help us to be more spiritual than having a materialistic approach to life".

Spirituality to them meant having a strong connection with god. As stated,

"to me, to be spiritual means to forge a strong relationship with the supreme being god. Spiritual life means to live according to values".

Further,

"the essence of Ramayana is how to create harmony with oneself, the family, the society and the nation. The Gita teaches us the philosophies of karmayoga, gyanyoga and bhaktiyoga. These values help me to think, speak and act accordingly."

For these respondents, it was extremely important that their children and grandchildren also live according to these values. As expressed,

"parents set examples for children. I am afraid to say that the education system does not cater for training in spirituality. So this task has to be fulfilled by parents. Parents should consciously impart values. These days parents are too busy at work. They do not give enough time to their children. Often they just provide material benefits to satisfy the children".

What emerges from these expressions is a strong attachment to values and traditions of motherland India which these elderly have strongly followed in their lives and a strong desire to see these values and traditions being preserved and followed by coming generations.

One such tradition is people's understanding and notion of family which is generally the most significant social institutions in the everyday life of the

diasporic Indians. Despite influence of larger macro level phenomenon such as international migration, globalization and transnationalization, families in Indian communities retain some common features of Indian family life. Parents still take responsibility for the educational, emotional and religious development of their children. Social and religions festivals are celebrated together. The elderly in this study see such gatherings and celebrations as extremely important for the social and emotional development of their children and grandchildren,

"if we (the elderly) do not make the effort to keep everyone together, our children will never know what a family is or what relationships mean".

However, the stereotypical Bollywood image of the happy extended and large family living together under one roof is almost non-existent. Our respondents expressed their mixed feelings of togetherness and loneliness as:

"well we have always lived together, we do everything together..celebrate festivals, new year, birthdays and weddings…I would not want to stay alone at this stage of my life..I am happy that I have my family around me"

Nuclear families are the norm rather than the exception As stated by a female respondent

"when I look after the children and when their parents look after them, it's not the same… the children stay with their parents now and I live here, so it's better that their parents look after them. The children are theirs so they know how they want to raise them, but had they been here it would have been good".

Another added

"Now I am alone… earlier they were here… now they have married and went away…now I am alone…I have to stay here only…when they were young I used to look after them…now all of them have grown up…they work or go to school…but every day I get to meet them as they stay nearby".

It is often claimed that the hardest hit by this change are the elderly. Both elders and their adult children use different discourses to explain, justify, understand and adjust to this change. As narrated

"earlier my children were staying with us and then they went away…but… well…they want their privacy so we let them go….but our relationship is the same."

"You know in our times we had eight to ten children but still managed to stay together but my elder son always tells me that bringing up two children nowadays is more difficult than bringing up ten children in the past as life has become more difficult now".

While elders often complain of neglect and alienation, adult-children explain their busy life in terms of demands of their work and pressures of modern life. These perceptions and sentiments were expressed by these elderly as

> "there are some children who don't look after their parents…they go to leave their parents in homes…they don't visit them there…so you see… we have looked after these children and now that we have become old we have become children for them… now they should look after us".

> "For that they should have time but that's exactly what they don't have, they come home, eat and then go to sleep so how will they interact with anyone".

Social and economic changes in Mauritius have given rise to the dual-earner family. Females constitute almost half of the working population. This has led to improved standard of living for most families but at the same time childcare has become a major concern for most parents. As stated

> "yes we should help our children because nowadays everyone works and for children who have not started school or nursery it's a big problem. We should help the mother as she also works and it's not like in the past when you had ample time…so nowadays it's a type of support…this is how I see it".

With inadequate childcare facilities available a major question for working parents is: "Who will take care of their children?: Most couples turn to their own parents in this situation. As stated by a female respondent

> "yes my children wanted me to look after their children…it's better when grandparents are here…they are elders, their presence is important for the family and they have the experience of looking after children".

In many western societies, grandparenthood has traditionally been associated with a 'peripheral role' where grandparents assist in childcare without taking full responsibility for child rearing (Cox, 2000). Such a role has been construed as being one of 'pleasure without responsibility' (Neugarten & Weinstein, 1964, p. 31). Recent research has revealed that an increasing number of grandparents have moved from this traditional notion to assuming the role of full time parents (Ochiltree, 2006). This shift in childcare is often related to parental drug and alcohol abuse, mental health problems, HIV/Aids, child abuse etc. However, in Mauritius, most grandparents expect to play the role of grandparent. As quoted by some

> "yes as grandparents you are happy to do all that you can for your grandchildren…when they were young we used to look after them. You see the parents go to work so shouldn't we be looking after the children".

Also

> "I am very happy that I am a grandparent…when our children got married, we were waiting to be grandparents and now we are waiting for our grandchildren to get married so that we can have great grandchildren".

Although the Indian diaspora has been the focus of many studies by researchers, none has looked at this specific elderly population. We hope to contribute in some way to understanding the concerns and aspirations of this diasporic population.

METHODOLOGY

This study employed a qualitative approach to data collection and analysis. Since a major interest of the study was on understanding grandparents' experiences, this approach was chosen as it allows the researcher to "access the personal experiences of the storyteller who frames, articulates and reveals life as experienced in a narrative structure we call story" (Kramp, 2004, p. 105). This approach is not concerned with representativeness or making inferences about the larger population but seeks to gain rich, comprehensive data from a small number of participants (Mason, 1996). Such research is particularly appropriate for a study of this nature as it can give depth and detail of a phenomenon that are difficult to convey with quantitative methods (Strauss & Corbin, 1990).

To delve deeper into the lived experiences of Indian diasporic grandparents, in-depth interviews were conducted with 20 seniors (5 males and 15 females). The age range of respondents was between sixty two to seventy five years.

A purposive sampling technique was used in order to select 'information-rich' participants (Patton, 2002, p. 230). Respondents were selected through acquaintance with the researchers and by reference provided by participants themselves. Taylor (2005) described the qualitative as "inductive, with the purpose of describing multiple realities, developing deep understanding, and capturing everyday life and human perspective."

These interviews generated a wealth of data that captured the emotions, experiences and perceptions of third and fourth generation people of Indian origin in Mauritius. An interview took between one to two hours to complete. Notes were taken by the researcher.

The interviews were transcribed, coded and sorted accordingly to emerging themes. The data offers rich data, in terms of respondents perspectives on life, their roles, values, social norm etc. but cannot be used to generate information that can be subjected to quantitative analysis or used as a basis for generalization.

FINDINGS

Characteristics of Respondents

Respondents were twenty Senior Indian diasporic grandparents (15 females and 5 males). All were third and fourth generation of people of Indian origin whose great grandparents had come to Mauritius as indentured labourer during the French and British occupation. In terms, of ethnicity, 9 were Hindu, 6 Catholics and 3 Muslims.

Their average age was 67 years. Except for two grandparents who had studied up to school certificate level, the rest had only some basic primary schooling. Only three female respondents were still employed at the time of the interviews. The remaining were retired and living on old age pensions. They had between one to 6 children and between 7 to 10 grandchildren. Of these, 14 grandparents were actively involved in the bringing up of their grandchildren on a daily basis. The remaining took care of their grandchildren for a few hours on weekdays till the parents returned from work. An interesting and common feature of housing in Mauritius is that most married children live in a separate house from that of their parents but in the same yard. Some would live in the same house but have separate cooking arrangements.

Origins and Family

For most respondents in this study, child rearing was intertwined with their culture, religion and their colonial past. The topic of origin and family was an important component of the discourse of most respondents. At different points in the conversation they referred to the hardship faced by their grandparents and parents, how they were cheated by colonizers, how they left their motherland in search of a better life and opportunities. As stated

"my grandparents had left their motherland because they were cheated by the whites that this place is full of riches and they would have a comfortable life".

Many narrated how their parents left their motherland with nothing but their religious scriptures that have guided them in all aspects of their life, including child rearing and how important it was for them to transmit these values and culture to their own children and grandchildren. These feeling and emotions were expressed as

"you know my grandparents had nothing when they came here but yet they succeeded in transmitting good values in their children and grandchildren".

Another respondent stated

"all that I have learnt from my parents I pass on to my children, I teach them good manners, how to walk on the right path."

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"I always teach them what I have learnt, especially since they are girls, someday they will go to their husband's place, I tell them to respect their in laws in the same way as they respect me".

When queried on the role grandparents can play in the upbringing of their grandchildren, most respondents spoke of their wisdom and experience which they acquired from their own parents and how this experience can help in shaping the character, values, culture and spiritual life of youngsters today.

"Yes…because you need knowledge…so we should share our experiences… if we keep them for ourselves it's like having discovered a gold mine and keeping it unearthed".

Religion and culture was a common theme which linked the past, present and the future of these elderly: what they acquired, what they have and what they would like to transmit to the new generation. All respondents took a lot of pride in the hard work put in by their forefathers and their achievements, especially with regard to education of their children. Although all respondents showed strong attachment to their country of origin, they had no desire to return there as they had a comfortable life. As narrated

"I would love my children and grandchildren to understand and adapt our rich culture, tradition and values in our daily life…but our life is now here… my grandparents and parents were born here…all my relationships are now here".

CHANGING PATTERNS OF CHILDHOOD

The initial question put to the respondents was on whether they (grandparents) should be involved in the upbringing of their grandchildren. Interestingly all respondents said yes but in citing reasons for their involvement most talked about changing patterns of childhood and the difference between childhood in the present and the past. The type of childhood experienced by grandparents and grandchildren portrayed a change from children being involved in work and taking care of younger siblings in the past to children whose lives are centered on school education, tuition, friends and the internet. As stated by one respondent

"whatever time my grandson gets after school and tuition, he spends on the internet. He prefers to chat on the net rather than talk to people *around* him. His parents don't mind because they also do not have enough time to communicate with children".

Another difference between past and present related to love and affection. As stated

> "nowadays there is no time because all of them go to work. They put their children in nurseries. They return late from work, hurry up to cook food and give to the children because next morning they have to go to work again, it's not like before…the way we used to look after our children".

> "There is a lot of difference…in our times, we did not leave our children and go… and even if people worked they would look after their children before going to work but now days parent's don't look after the children, they just leave the children and go".

Many respondents said that in their time they would give more love and affection to their children but nowadays these emotions are equated with materialistic goods. One elderly narrated

> "now days children don't have anything to say. Parents don't communicate well with the children. When children come back from school, they sit down and start doing their homework. They don't have the wish or desire to talk… nowadays children can only be seen with their mobiles…they are more interested with their mobiles than with their studies or anyone".

Parents express their love by giving expensive things to children.

> "honestly, I can tell you that some people are doing it well…but there are some who well, what we can see here…it's a bit unfortunate…parents go to work…the children are left on their own…you can see them on the streets with their mobiles or on the computer and that's why I say the situation is deteriorating.in our times it was not like this".

The parent-child relationship, in general, was perceived to have undergone changes from past to the present in terms of love, respect and commitment. This was expressed as

> "yes we looked after the children well… but now days people put children in nurseries but sometimes when you put children in nurseries, they don't have an attachment with their parents…they are getting attachment with the person who is looking after him…it's not like in the old times…nowadays parents and children work, but still there is no progress in the house and life is becoming tougher".

REASONS FOR CARING FOR GRANDCHILDREN

With respect to respondents views regarding their involvement in the upbringing of their grandchildren, interesting reasons were put forward. Some were compelling circumstances that forced grandparents to support their own children in the rearing

of their grandchildren. One reason was financial hardship due to unemployment on the part of their sons and the high cost of living. As stated by one respondent'

> "yes because sometimes their father doesn't have a stable job….he might not even have a job… and when the mother also doesn't work… then you have to help the child… you should give a few things… what the parents give will not be enough so we as grandparents should help".

The most common reason put forward by most grandparents was the rise of dual-earner families in Mauritius. With parents working, the onus for taking care of grandchildren was on grandparents. This was a recurrent theme for most grandparents. As one states

> "that's because if both parents work, when the child will come back from school, there won't be anyone to look after him, he will go wherever he wants and do whatever he pleases and he might learn wrong things… so in such cases, we are here, we should support him".

In addition to these compelling external reasons, respondents also gave social and emotional reasons for being involved in the caring for grandchildren. Two – third of the respondents cited experience on parenting as a major reason for why grandparents should care for their grandchildren

> "our children don't have that experience…. that's why we should help them and teach them what to do with grandchildren because we have already become grandparents, so we have experience of what not to do….[those things that parents are unable to do."

Such views reflect the views of most grandparents in this study. Tied to their experience in grand parenting was their ability to teach grandchildren good manners, proper behaviour and education. The latter was aggravated by their concerns regarding children's behavior in modern society. The fear of values and culture being eroded was a constant theme. Many grandparents saw themselves as guides and custodians of culture and values. As stated

> "grandparents should be here to help in looking after the children. And if they make mistakes, we correct them…we tell them what is good and what is bad…the children will have a guide…they will know that there is someone to teach them how to differentiate between right and wrong".

It needs to be emphasized that grandparents in this study saw themselves as support for their own children but were careful in drawing a line between helping and interfering. Some explicitly stated that they would not like to interfere in the way their children were bringing up their children. As stated

> "I do understand that times are not the same anymore. I try to guide my children and grandchildren and give my opinion only when it is needed, otherwise they may think I am interfering in their life, you see".

RELATIONSHIP WITH GRANDCHILDREN AND THEIR NEEDS

In response to a question asking grandparents to describe their relationship with their grandchildren all stated that they had a good relationship—full of attachment, love, closeness and affection—whether they stayed with them in the same house or separately. Even when they live far away their presence was kept in the form of photographs,

> "but as you might have noticed… we have kept pictures of all of them here… just take a look…you will see we have photographs of all my grandchildren…that's how their presence is felt in the house''.

Contrary to the past when grandparents as the elder most in the family had the final say in all matters, this generation of grandparents made a clear distinction between their authority and power over their grandchildren and that of the parents. As remarked by one grandfather

> "we are like friends… we don't have that kind of relationship like an authoritarian grandfather would have with his grandchildren".

Another grandmother stated

> "we have an affectionate relationship… and of course I am their grandmother not their mother… whenever there is a problem, I will talk to the mother".

In terms of the needs of grandchildren today most grandparents emphasized that children need their own parents the most but given time constraints of a dual-earner family they also recognized that grandparents need to cater for some of the monetary and emotional needs of grandchildren. Two important needs were education and advice and grandparents saw themselves as fulfilling both of these needs. As reported

> "their greatest need is education…not only academic education, but the foundation itself which they get from the family… how to live in society… so we guide and tell them what is good and what is not… it is very important because earlier there were not so many social problem as there are nowadays".

However some grandparents were quick to acknowledge that they cannot compare the world today with their own times and that there is a need for them to adapt to this changed world.

CUSTODIANS OF VALUES, CULTURE AND TRADITIONS

A constant theme emerging from all the interviews was grandparents' concern and fear regarding erosion of values and traditions that were preserved by them and passed on to their own children. These values and customs were perceived to be even more important in today's world than ever before. They made constant references to their times and how the world has undergone change. As said

> "nowadays we are living in a different world…the environment and atmosphere is different… it's not the same as before".

This concern was aggravated by their perception that

> "children are not obedient as before"….and "there is a lot of difference in the way youngsters used to dress up in our times and the clothes they wear these days…earlier it was much better…the body was covered up".

Given these perceptions it was considered even more important to transmit the right values and traditions and most respondents considered it their duty to assume the role of custodians of values and traditions and their culture in general. When queried about specific things they do in order to teach their grandchildren their values and culture, almost all made reference to religious symbols and teaching and this was common to the respondents of Hindu, Muslim and Catholic faith. As stated by one Hindu

> "every morning we teach her how to do prayers…we ring the bell while doing prayers… teach her how to say Om".

Another said

> "when we pass in front of a temple, we bow our head in reverence and we tell the children to do the same…we tell them about god…this is lord Ganesh or Ganesha, this is lord Hanuman, this is Durga".

For these diasporic Indian elders concern for values, language and tradition was central to the cultural concern. On the one hand they showed a strong adherence to tradition and customs and expected the younger generations to do the same but on the other hand they recognized that times have changed and they need to adapt to new ways of life. They were at a crossroad where on one side the values on which they built their life were being challenged while on the other side the same values were perceived to be more important than ever before. Most respondents saw themselves in the middle trying to preserve these values and also embracing the changes that society was undergoing.

CHILD REARING THEN AND NOW: REFLECTIONS ON THE PAST
AND THE PRESENT

Our sample of respondents consistently reflected upon the child rearing practices of their time and comparing it with practices nowadays. All acknowledged that times have changed but also hinted in very subtle tones that parents are not as devoted to children as before. Economic concern was a constant theme:

> "well, I don't know how to explain but we had time to look after our children. Both my wife and myself used to work, but we still managed to look after our children".

Despite the hardships that were experienced by most respondents as young parents they still perceived that the effort they put in was immense compared to parents nowadays who have all facilities to support them. As stated,

> "we got full opportunity to look after them… and children were more obedient in those times…well we can't say that it was very easy because there was very little money and no facilities…we all lived in one house and only one person worked…but still we struggled".

When probed on precisely what was going wrong with child upbringing nowadays, the unanimous answer was that parents are not devoting enough time to their children resulting in communication gaps. Some commented

> "In our times we did not use to leave our children and go…and even if people worked, they would look after their children before going to work, but nowadays parents don't look after the children, they just go".

Another said,

> "Nowadays children don't have anything to say to parents. Parents also don't communicate well with their children. When children come back from school they sit down to do their homework, they also have no desire to talk. They are more interested in communicating with others on their mobile phones and internet than with parents, this is also reducing attachment of children with their parents".

Parents were seen as responsible for reversing this situation,

"children are young, they have no experience of life, so it's the parents' responsibility to find time to communicate with children, attachment and right values need to be inculcated when children are young otherwise you lose them".

Interestingly, despite these perceptions, observations and concerns, most respondents in this study saw their own children fulfilling their parental role exactly as they (the respondents) taught them

"I think that whatever we taught him, he is teaching those to his children… whatever values we have inculcated in him he is inculcating them in his children, the children are following the path their father is showing them".

MAJOR CONCERNS FOR THEIR FUTURE

As mentioned earlier, most married adults in Mauritius live in separate houses in Mauritius but in close proximity to their own parents. Despite this physical closeness to their children, many respondents expressed concerns and worries about their future. The two main concerns were related to finance and health. As stated by a male respondent

"although we are taking care of our grandchildren at this age, there is no guarantee that they will take care us when we need them".

When probed about their apprehensions, one female respondent stated

"our health is not so good and with age it will only deteriorate. Our own children and their spouses are both working so they do not have enough time and the new generation only want freedom so they will not take our responsibility".

She further added

"I don't know what is awaiting me in the future…I always think about this… for the time being everyone is here but sometimes we are alone…if something happens to us who will look after us".

Another one lamented

"all our life we have struggled for our children and grandchildren but we are not sure what to expect in the future".

Despite this, many still had hopes that their children would support them in times of difficulty. Related to this was the issue of inheritance. Some respondents narrated stories of how some children rejected their old parents once they had inherited parents' property. These concerns were expressed as

"In Mauritius there are many grandparents who cry…they complain that their children don't pay attention to them…see how many are going to homes" and "whatever we earned, we gave to our children, now most of them don't have time for their parents".

In conclusion, what emerges from this study is a picture of Indian diaspora elderly actively engaged in caring for their grandchildren. Their role as grandparents is inextricably linked to their origin, tradition and culture. Grand parenting is a duty and an expected progression in the life cycle of these adults and they show an

eagerness to be involved in the caring of their grandchildren. The underlying motivation is to preserve and transmit the values and culture acquired by their own parents to the new generation. Most recognized and accepted the dramatic changes that childhood has undergone from their time to the present, especially with regard to the way in which technology has changed communication patterns between parents and children. Social, emotional and economic reasons were cited for being involved in caring for grandchildren. Erosion of values, traditions and culture was a constant worry for these diasporic elderly and many saw themselves playing an important role in preserving and transmitting these values. They saw themselves as filling a void left by working parents in the social, emotional and cultural development of their grandchildren. This was achieved through storytelling, pictures of gods, visits to the temple and family celebrations. The elderly in this study, although very attached to their culture and tradition were quick to recognize that the world has changed not only at the macro level but also at the micro level of the family in terms of relationships and authority and the need for them to adapt to these changes. Consequently, they drew a sharp line between helping and interfering. In the course of the discussions, many elderly navigated between the past and the future reflecting on the relationship between parents and their children. The past was often glorified by successful child rearing despite very limited means whereas the present was a concern despite more means. Standing at the zenith of their life, these elderly had economic and health concerns but also hopes for support from their children who they expected to have imbibed their own values and culture.

LIMITATIONS AND DIRECTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Although this research gives voice to Indian diaspora adult grandparents, it is not free from limitations. The qualitative bottom-up approach is high in ecological validity but the findings cannot be generalized due to the sampling frame and the qualitative methods. Consequently, external validity remains in question. However, the findings that emerge are not very different from similar studies conducted elsewhere and has generated rich data providing significant depth of insight into the complexity of the experiences of grandparents caring for grandchildren. This may be taken as partial evidence for external validity. The data generated can be used to construct quantitative measures for larger samples. Future research needs to examine the extent to which contextual factors shape the experiences of this specific population.

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KISSOON BIHARI

3. GRANDPARENTS AS ASPECTS OF THE INDIAN DIASPORA IN SOUTH AFRICA: BOON OR BURDEN?

ABSTRACT

Given the long years of experiences in a changing world, and the time for reflection on them, given that such experiential knowledge has matured into a rare wisdom, understandably grandparents should be the most valued human resource on the planet. Yet this is not so. To some they are a burden, to others they have outgrown their use, to others yet they are a convenience to care for their children.

It is the grandchildren who will most acknowledge the worth of their grandparents and their influence on them, for the relationship between grandparent and grandchild is a unique and sacred one. Consider. Most often grandparents are taking care of the children. Grandparents not only see to the physical needs of their grandchildren, but they also play an important role in bringing stability into the lives of the children. The world of children is dynamic and changing. Grandparents, who themselves have lived through tremendous change, are best equipped to impart values, skills and lessons to them.

In writing this chapter, I interviewed a number of grandparents from different backgrounds and circumstances. I abandoned the well-structured questionnaire that I had so painstakingly created, and I started to listen to their hearts: the same themes were played in different keys and scales. To their grandchildren they were caregivers; they imparted a value system to them; play and story-telling were often a means to build character and instil values in them. They all felt the impact of the erosion of values and traditions. Some felt a sense of being abandoned by their own children, and experienced the loosening or breaking down of family ties.

INTRODUCTION

The chapter has three parts: Part A describes the journey of Indian diaspora in Natal; Part B describes the activities of daily lives of Indian diasporic people from the perspective of grandparents; and Part C describes Indian diasporic grandparents' engagement with grandparenting roles in the fast changing family structure of the Indian diaspora in Natal. The paper concludes by referring to formal and informal institutions which provide the context in which aspects of the daily life of diasporic grandparents in Durban, South Africa unfold.

PART A: FROM THE PENS OF HISTORIANS

The early colonial farmers in Natal found that sugar cane would thrive there. It would ensure their own prosperity as well as the economic progress of the colony. But they required a steady flow of cheap and reliable labour. They therefore requested the government of Natal to introduce indentured Indian labourers whom they considered suitable because they had already been used in Mauritius, while the local Africans were reluctant to work for them. (Govender and Naidoo, p. 10).

After the Indian government and the colonial authorities in Natal reached an agreement, the first batch of indentured labourers arrived in Durban in 1860, all 342 of them (one was born during the voyage). In the next 51 years, the Indian population grew to 152 184. (Bhana, p. 121).

They were a truly mixed lot: they came from a mixture of social backgrounds, from different castes, and possessing skills in a variety of professions. (Singh, 2005, p 77). They spoke a variety of languages, including Tamil and Telegu, as well as the dialects of UP and Bihar.

Apart from the 'indentured Indians' were the 'passenger Indians', so called because they paid for their own passage. Most of them were businessmen who had seen the rich prospects there. They fulfilled the need for such things as spices, cooking utensils, clothing, books, and musical instruments. (Kalpana Hiralal, 'Traders Shaped the Country', *Sunday Tribune*, 04 July 2010). They first located in Durban but then moved out, settling in the major towns along the route from Durban to Johannesburg. Even today, Indian communities are still found in these towns.

These Indian traders became very successful. Apart from servicing the Indians, they traded with the local Black population in the remote areas as well as with the poorer white communities. They sold goods more cheaply than did their White counterparts, and they sold on credit as well. Because of their success they became a threat to the smaller white storekeepers.

Within a few years of the arrival of the Indians, the prosperity of the white planters and the colony grew. This contribution of the Indians was acknowledged both by the press and the Prime Minister of the Colony. (Govender, and Naidoo, 2010, p. 31).

The Indians proved themselves and prospered – by their perseverance and their skills in such things as turning a wasteland into a productive farm or a garden, by their pride in their traditions and culture, by their forward thinking in such things as the building of schools for their children.

At the end of the indenture period, the Indians could re-indenture for a further 5-year period and thereafter receive free passage to India or receive a grant of land to the same value. Only a few returned to their motherland. The rest chose to take their freedom: some of them found employment in such sectors as: railway, harbour, municipality, hotels, brick-yards, tea estates, wattle plantations, and on the coal mines in Northern Natal. (Mangaroo, 2010, pp. I– 5). A large number of them

became self-employed as domestic servants and market gardeners. The latter grew vegetables, fruits and flowers, and sold them to the white housewives at much lower prices. They had an excellent knowledge of cultivation and this combined with a practical business-sense ensured a sizeable profit. (Mangaroo, 2010, p. 23).

The whites saw this progress of the Indians as a threat to them as they were in competition with each other. The passenger Indians in particular were a source of concern: they were growing more prosperous and had become powerful rivals in business and commerce. (Desai and Vahed, 2012, p. 350).

As a result, a number of discriminatory laws were passed against the Indians. The first of these was Law 3 of 1885. By this law, they could not obtain the burgher rights of the South African Republic (Transvaal); nor own fixed property; the government had the right for 'purposes of sanitation' to assign to them certain streets, wards and locations to live in. As a result, they suffered severe restrictions on their rights to trade, reside or own and occupy property. In addition, petty indignities were heaped upon them. Such signs in front of white establishments as 'No dogs and Indians allowed' were common. (Anti-Indian legislations were to continue for many decades to come.)

It was into this scenario that Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi arrived in 1893. Using as weapons his philosophy of *satyagraha* and his knowledge of the judicial process (important was Queen Victoria's assurance of equality to all her subjects in the empire) he set out to fight the racism and the unequal laws that were imposed upon the Indians. (Govender and Naidoo,2010, pp. 55–6). He provided the necessary leadership and motivation, and started a weekly paper through which he inspired and gave direction to their struggle. He founded the Natal Indian Congress (NIC) in May 1894, its main aim being the protection of Indian rights. (Govender and Naidoo, 2010, p. 56). He gained various concessions, including the abolishing of the 'Three pound tax'; the recognition of Hindu, Moslem and Parsee marriages.

When Gandhi left South Africa in 1914, the situation did not ease for the Indians (nor for the other race groups). Discriminatory acts against the Indians were there since the earliest times, and progressively became harsher. Indians had been living in barracks created by their employers, for example, Magazine Barracks and Railway Barracks. But due to the shortage of housing, these became overcrowded and soon turned into slums. (Padayachee, 2002 et al, p. 5). Others had also settled in the Point, Bayside and the Bluff. When the whites saw the value of these areas, they, under the pretext of improving unsanitary living conditions, removed Indians from their homes, and expropriated their land. (Padayachee et al, p. 5). Indians were forced to move to areas set aside for them.

In 1948, the National Party (NP), with its ideology of apartheid, came into power. (Govender and Naidoo, p 92). Racial discrimination intensified – the NP's political slogan was: 'The Kaffir in his place and the Coolie out of the Country'.

One of the most vicious laws was the infamous Group Areas Act of 1950 which affected all race groups. (Govender and Naidoo, p. 94). Millions of people of all race groups were forcefully removed from where they had been living for

generations. Indians were compelled to relocate to designated areas: Chatsworth, Merebank and later Phoenix. As always, property owners were paid a pittance. The forced removals affected entire communities: temples and mosques, schools and businesses – all were affected. Chatsworth was opened in 1964. It consisted of sub-economic units and economic houses. It was so located as to act as a buffer between the White residential areas and the large African township of Umlazi in Durban.

In 1961, the NP government declared South Africa a republic, after winning a whites-only referendum on the issue. The currency changed to the Rand; a new flag was created; and the South African anthem was composed.

The NIC (Natal Indian Congress) played a significant role when the ANC was banned in 1960 and was dissolved when the ANC (African National Congress) was unbanned. The NIC and its leaders had served in the struggle for the liberation of South Africa unflinchingly.

One of the most powerful figures in the freedom struggle and the intelligence chief of the ANC was Mac Maharaj. He spent twelve years on Robben Island with Nelson Mandela. Though he was subjected to excruciating torture, he survived. He miniaturized on foolscap the manuscript of Mandela's autobiography, and smuggled it out when he was released in 1976. He escaped to Zambia and became a principal leader of the ANC in exile. He led Operation Vula from 1987–1991. He served as Minister of Transport from 1994–1999. (President Mandela is reputed to have quipped: "Since he transported my autobiography out of Robben Island, we will make him minister of transport!")

When Nelson Mandela became the President, he acknowledged the great sacrifice that the Indians had made in the struggle for democracy. He included six Indians in his cabinet of sixteen members. However, when Mbeki became president, most of the Indians were excluded.

In June 1976, black students of Soweto schools rose up against apartheid education, followed by youth uprisings all around the country. Indian students in sympathy joined in the struggle, and suffered terrible brutalities by the police. The education of many was badly affected.

In 1984 a system of Trichameral Parliament was established. (Govender and Naidoo, p. 95). Although the government stated that this was created so that each race group, Whites, Indians and Coloureds (the Blacks were excluded) were to have their own Parliaments and total control over their own affairs, it was seen as a ruse to perpetuate white domination and create a rift between Africans and Indians.

In 1990 the government unbanned liberation movements and released political prisoners. (Govender and Naidoo, p. 97). The first multi-racial elections were held on 27 April 1994. The ANC won 62% of the votes in the election, and Nelson Mandela, as leader of the ANC, was inaugurated President on 10 May 1994 – the first black president of the country.

Indians and Africans often lived next to each other before the segregation on racial lines. Africans sometimes lived on land or occupied houses that belonged to

Indians. But beneath the surface there was some resentment and tension. (Singh, A: 53). In January 1949, an argument between a Durban Indian businessman and an African flared into violence, and soon developed into a riot. Africans looted and burnt down Indian houses, shops and factories; raped and pillaged, tortured and murdered. Indians did not retaliate; most ran away and hid. The police stood by and watched helplessly. Later, the military had to be called in to restore peace and order.

Once again, in 1985, Africans attacked Indians living in Inanda. (Govender and Naidoo, p. 96). Indian homes were again looted or burnt and destroyed. The Phoenix Settlement, the home of Gandhi, was also destroyed.

DEMOGRAPHICS

According to the Census 2011 data from Statistics South Africa, of the total population of 51.7 million, 1.3 million (2.5%) were Indians. The Indian population remained constant between 2001 and 2010. About 71% of them lived in Kwa-Zulu Natal (KZN), about 19.5% in Gauteng and some 5% in the Cape. Between 1996 and 2011, approximately 4% of the Indians from KZN relocated in Gauteng.

The largest concentration of Indians in KZN is in Chatsworth and Phoenix; and in Gauteng it is in Lenasia and Laudium.

Almost all Indians (93%) have English as their home language. Other languages spoken are: Tamil, Hindi, Gujarati, Telugu, Urdu. Vernacular languages are offered in some government schools, together with Zulu and Afrikaans. Many Indian cultural organizations want to preserve the vernacular languages, and so many have established schools where evening classes for both adults and children are held. The Hindi Shiksha Sangh of South Africa, the South African Tamil Federation, and the Andhra Maha Sabha are most zealous in their efforts.

Almost 50% of the Indians in the country are Hindus, 22% Moslems, and 18,5% belong to the various Christian Churches. Most of these Christians belong to the Pentecostal and Charismatic Churches.

According to the 2001 Census, 53% of the Indians in Durban, Phoenix and Chatsworth are Hindus; and 12% are Moslems.

PART B: FROM THE HEARTS OF GRANDPARENTS

1. INDIANS – PEOPLE ON THE MOVE

Introduction

Through a film of tears, we saw the reluctant goodbye and the smile of the adventurer. We understood then how parting could be a sweet sorrow. My son was off to East London, almost a thousand kilometres away from home. In-service training was a requirement for the completion of his diploma. He was not able to

find a place here in KZN that would afford him this opportunity. And so – he was off.

My wife was shrouded in a silence of sadness that only a mother feels when her child leaves home – albeit she would see him in another month's time. I mused on this eternal coming and going of people – not in the Hindu sense of reincarnations! – but on the observable principle that the world and her people (either as societies or as families) are ever in a state of motion and change.

The movement of people—whether as individuals or as groups of friends, or as a tribe or an entire nation – has always been one of the characteristics of the human being throughout the ages. The flux and flow of life is reflected in the dynamism of societies. Sometimes this dynamism emanates from an inner urge, and sometimes it is caused by external factors. Our forebears came to South Africa in the hope of improving their material lot; and in the last few decades, many professionals (Indians included) have been leaving our country, seeking new grounds, impelled by a need for self-fulfilment and economic stability and progress.

As the car slowly ate up the miles of tarmac, my mind flowed back over the waters of time … a century and a half. ….

the ship severed
slowly sailed away
and Bharat drowned
in a pool of pain
streaking down cheeks

turn west! turn west!
where the sun sets
our sun will rise.

In the symphony of Indian life, the dominant and recurrent notes of their movement are interwoven with the motifs of struggles and sorrow, of promises and betrayal, and the mighty crescendos of success and ecstasy.

When our forebears were freed from the shackles of indentured labour system, they had to move out of the compounds or barracks, find employment other than in the sugar cane fields, and make their own homes. They worked hard, saved their money and purchased land and built their houses. For them then (as for many of us today) land and home were the indications of success and wealth, symbols of achieving their goals.

Those who were able to bought pieces of ground. Some purchased large tracts of land, such as Mothilall's grandfather who became one of the largest sugar cane farmers. Jay's maternal grandfather had, after much hard work, purchased about 3 acres of land in Motala Farm, near Pinetown. Mr A Motala, a large-hearted Indian man, owned a large farm there. He subdivided the land, and sold it to other Indians at an affordable price.

The houses were often large. Maya recalled: "*Naani*'s house was very big and it was always kept neat and clean. Everyone had their own room. There was also a maternity room where the mother was confined during her delivery."

The less rich moved to outlying areas such as Clairwood, Bayside, Sydenham and Riverside. But they did not always enjoy the peace and stability that they sought. The Group Areas Act of 1950 forced thousands of us to move out of areas that the whites desired for themselves.

Mrs Sewcharan, who grew up in Riverside, recounted the story of one most unfortunate man.

"The old man had bought land there [in Riverside]. He grew vegetables and became quite rich. Then we all had to move. [It was declared a white area.] We lost out very badly because you know what they paid us. [The owners of the land were paid a small amount only. There was no negotiation.] The old man felt very bad and started to lose hope. The sons bought land in Newlands. But they had to move again because of Group Areas. [That area was declared a coloured area.] This time, too, they lost a lot of money. The old man could not take it. He died. I heard the sons are living somewhere in Phoenix. They are battling it out." [They are struggling to make a living.]

The Sewcharan family were fortunate. They lived all together in a joint family. When they moved from Riverside to Chatsworth, they were all allotted houses next to each other.

After 1994, there was another movement. The Group Areas Act was no more, and people could live wherever they chose to. Indians started to move to formerly white areas. The predominant colour of the white schools began to change. Predictably, whites moved out of these areas, so that some areas which were once white areas became predominantly Indian with some black families.

Yet another movement of a different kind was the emigration of Indians and the accompanying brain drain or capital flight. Ironically, Indians came to South Africa in search of a better future; now, many want to leave for the same reason. Those who want to leave but cannot do so because of their limited means encourage their children to go abroad. A study in 2010 (*The Times* 25 April 2010), indicated that more than 70% of young blacks and more than 30 % of Indian young adults wanted to emigrate. There were a number of reasons for this. For the young, it was mainly the high rate of unemployment and the difficulty of securing a job in the face of affirmative action which ensures that blacks be given the first preference. This engendered a great degree of stress in them.

Most people soon became disenchanted by the new government. It did not keep to its promises. Corrupt and unscrupulous politicians, escalating crime, low education standards, poor health services, the Aids epidemic, and increasing unemployment were other reasons. The five popular destinations for emigrants are UK, US, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand, because English was the spoken

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language there, better career opportunities and salary packages were offered, and there was safety.

Another important factor was that Africans who had fled from the violence-torn townships built squatter camps right next to Indian homes. This transformed the quiet and peaceful Indian suburbs such as Clare Estate and Reservoir Hills with their erstwhile beautiful gardens and buildings. Ishwar recalled his shock when he first saw the changes.

> "I went to check my Big Uncle. I heard he was very sick. Doctors said he was on his last lap. 'Ell, what a thing we saw! The posies (houses) got high-high walls. And on the top, some ous put razor wires. Some ous put spikes. You can't vie inside just la' that. You must first choon in the intercom, then they open the gate. Everything 'lectric."

Alarm systems and burglar guards are common. So are the teams of night watch that patrol the areas.

2. INDIANS IN A CHANGING LANDSCAPE

BOYS SMOKING AMONG THE GRASS

among the tall grass that spiked the sky
hidden – we smoked
passing strands of smoke through circles we blew
they stayed a moment
then dissolved in a chaos of lines and forms
-- strands of memory against clouds that told tales
and suddenly stretched in meaningless wisps
-- and vanished

FROM CLAIRWOOD SOUTH TO CHATSWORTH

The world of my childhood and boyhood vanished like smoke in the sudden storm of the Group Areas Act. You will not find Clairwood South on a map; it is but an echo in my heart.

Clairwood South was a tin shanty town. The houses were all constructed of wood and corrugated iron. The men worked in factories and the women minded the homes (and the children). We lived in a house with a large frontage – until they built the dual roads over our vegetable gardens. Before that, we grew most of our vegetables. We used the water from a small pond in the backyard to water the plants. To get drinking water, we had to follow a long queue at the community tap. There must have been some sixty houses in the whole area, and only three taps. So there was bound to be trouble at some time or the other. Especially, when Ramado

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would come there with two large buckets or a 44-gallon drum and keep everyone waiting. It was also a gathering place where the women exchanged news. Unknown to them, we boys heard things we should not have, such as some girl who ran off with a boy because one family had objections to the marriage, or more sensational, some girl had become pregnant. This was, of course a rare thing, and a real piece of gossip for the women.

Next to the tap was a path that linked South Coast Road (a major road) to Collingwood Road. It was used by the African workers who used the train on their way to and from work. On some afternoon, you might have seen an African running towards the station suddenly fall, get up swearing and cursing and run on. And you might have heard the laughter of some children who had plaited the grass that grew on either side of the path!

After her morning cup of tea, *naani* would go into the garden and tend the plants. I would join her as often as I could. She would dig out the weeds and I would gather them and heap them on the edge of the garden. She would dig a hole and I would place the seeds in, and as she moved forward, she would cover each one with a deft movement of her foot. And just for good measure, I too would put my little foot over it. I loved her very much indeed. People used to say that I was her tail! On a Wednesday she and I would go to the plank factory to buy off-cuts for firewood. It was a distance away from our home, and a group of the older women would leave early. Some children would sometimes join them. After the purchase, we would need to make two or three or even four trips to haul all the wood home. The women carried the bundles on their heads, and we boys would carry them on our shoulders. After lunch, *naani* would lie down in the verandah on a grass mat. And in the afternoon, when the three o'clock train went, she would get up, have a cup of tea, and we would go into the garden. She could tell the time by looking at the position of the sun, or by listening to the trains. When we moved to Chatsworth, she was not able to go off to sleep at night – there were no trains!

At night I would sleep next to *naani*. In the dark she would tell me stories – of kings with seven wives, or princes who outwitted wicked kings; or stories that I later discovered were from the *Mahabharata* and *Ramayan*. From her I learnt to tell the alphabet. It was a proud day for her when I could repeat all the letters of the alphabet and count up to twenty. It was from my uncle that I learnt to read. It was but a short time before I could read parts of the newspaper with a lot of help. And so when I was enrolled at school and the teachers found that I was literate, they placed me in the second class.

When *naani* cooked something special, she would send some to the neighbours. And the neighbours did likewise. There was such an intimacy among us. When we went to visit our families, *naani* would inform the neighbours that we were leaving. It was not that they should keep an eye on our house – there was no danger then. If perchance a visitor came to our home in our absence, they would see to him. It was as if all the neighbours were extensions of our own family. Not that there was no trouble or fights among us. They would argue in raised voices, and

sometimes the lowly ones (whom nobody really respected) would use vile language and fight with sticks or knives. It was much fun when the women joined the fray. But all would dissolve in time. We boys also fought, but we never held a grudge for too long.

And then … we were forced to leave our homes. They gave us houses in Chatsworth. The demolishers came. They ripped the roofs; they stripped the floors; they uprooted the wooden foundation blocks. Then there was nothing. Clairwood South was no more. Not on any map. It was an echo in our hearts.

To Chatsworth then we came. There were new roads, all numbers and no name, rows upon endless rows of houses, some with roofs of red tiles and others with roofs of asbestos. Then there were the flats, the sub-economic units, for the poor. It was not too long before these houses were dubbed 'matchbox houses'. For the first time, we had running water and electric lights.

My *naani* was not as eager as most to shift to a new place. But there was a way the old people accepted change beyond their control … they did not fight it but simply flowed into it. She had reasons to be unhappy. The houses were semi-detached, the yard was small, and there could only be a very small garden. But worst of all … she was horrified to discover that the toilet and bathroom were in the main house! In Clairwood, our toilets were some distance away from the houses.

In the flat, also, it was not convenient. The only sink was in the kitchen; and the toilet/shower was in a space just enough for one to move in.

There were no shops. In the mornings, a van would come with bread and milk and some other necessities. On Friday afternoons and Saturdays, vans loaded with all sorts of stuff came to us: vegetables and items of grocery, live chicken and eggs, and an assortment of things. When the shops came up, these vans slowly disappeared from the scene. Perhaps taking the cue from these pioneers, some started little businesses from their homes, selling sweets and ice-blocks, targeting children. Others targeted a section of the adult population (much to the concern of the wives) – they started *shebeens*, that is, illicitly selling liquor. They flourished everywhere, and all sorts of people visited them, including policemen in uniforms. While some ran their businesses in their backyards, where the men would 'shoot down a *dop*' standing, or sitting precariously on wooden boxes, and then quickly leave, other places were plush in comparison. These were well furnished rooms with bar counters, chairs and tables, and music (and later TV). In time came drugs, prostitution, gang wars and organised crime.

Today there are shopping centres and garages, a provincial hospital and medical complexes and a private hospital, small commercial and business enterprises located in sizeable buildings or run from homes, and a host of services.

The altered and pacey lifestyle, the newness of things, the initial joy and excitement were off-set by new expenses: travelling to work was now far more costly, and even children had to travel to school by bus. The door-to-door vendors,

of course, had increased their prices. We silently tightened our belts and smiled dimly.

We lived among strangers, and could never re-create that closeness that we had enjoyed in the earlier years. Being uprooted from our old homes had its effects on us. Each one had lost something invaluable, something unredeemable. But we made new friends, and discovered lost relatives.

Too many things were changing, too many things passing away. But the Indian mind has always coped with this change with a strength that has become its characteristic trait. But, perhaps, over the decades, it has been decreasing.

Our forebears were successful because they were focussed and goal-oriented. Some qualities and characteristics that they all seemed to share was that they were stern, hardworking, straightforward, and austere in life and even in speech.

Mothilall remembered his grandfather:

"He was a strict disciplinarian, a no-nonsense man. He could not tolerate anyone being slack or sloppy. He carried himself with a dignity and an air of authority that immediately commanded a respect. He was a distinguished man even in his dress. Though an Indian infused with the ancient traditional values, he always dressed meticulously in western clothes. Though not mean in any sense of the word, grandfather was very economical and was careful in the use of things. He would not waste anything, and whatever could be used he used to the best. He did not throw away his cigarette boxes, but used them to make notes on. He would trim the edges of the boxes, and was left with neat little pieces of cardboard. He used these for his daily notes. Interestingly enough, though he was Hindu, he wrote in Gujarati."

Jay described his grandmother:

"She was a short, hardy old lady who always had her head covered with the hodni or sari – just like all the other women. She was very stern. The workers were afraid of her. If she found them lazing, she would swear at them. She was a hard worker. She rose very early, even before the sun; and would start work. She would work the whole day in the fields. Together with this, she supervised the workers, took care of the vegetable garden, ran the household, and attended to the business matters as well. With her family and most especially the children she was very loving and tender."

Jay's grand-mother-in-law was somewhat aristocratic old lady who supervised all the housework – and smoked a *hookah*!

These and the other grandparents as well kept to truth at all cost. There was a trust among them, and the given word was never something to be contested. Mothilall tells us that there were a number of small farmers adjoining his grandfather's farm. They cut the cane and sent it to the mill.

> "For ten, sometimes eleven months, they would have no income. They would buy things on credit from grandfather. When they received their cheques, [they were paid some 6 – 7 months after the work was done], they would hand them to grandfather who would cash them and take what was owing to him. As there were no banking facilities, he created a trust for them. The details of each one was kept in little notebooks – the amount they received, the groceries they bought, the cash they borrowed, and so on."

The story of Budhram Baba illustrates how verbal arrangements fell away in time. His father was a *mali*, a holy man, and a faith-healer who often cured people of their illnesses. He lived on a land owned by a large-hearted man who told him that he would not interfere with his house or the temple. In time, both men passed away, and Budhram Baba, having been trained by his father, continued the work. But the sons of the landowner asked him to move out of their land. After much negotiation, the land on which the temple stood was bought by devotees and the temple was saved, but the house was pulled down and the land sold. The original temple, which was a primitive structure, a shelter covered on all sides by canvas, was replaced by a properly constructed temple.

There are many such temples in the Indian communities everywhere, some large and magnificent, others small and humble, but all keeping the light of our religion burning.

Prof. Usha Shukla observes,

> "This light of religion was the very heart of the indentured Indian, and it was this that preserved their sanity…. In the few hours that they had to themselves, they spoke about their mother land India, and about their religion. From the very first, it was the Ramacharitamanasa that was the light in their dark days. Because it was composed in Awadhi, a common language, it was easily understood and read in Northern India."

Hindus have an oral tradition, and therefore many sections of the text had been inscribed and locked in their hearts. No doubt, among the earliest of the indentured labourers, there were a few who could read the *Ramayan*. Some who could not read worshipped the *Ramayan* in the same way as one does a deity. In time came more educated people and especially with the teaching of Hindi, the *Ramayana* came to be recited more often and in groups or *baitaks* (from the root of the Hindi word for 'to sit'). These eventually evolved into *Ramayana satsangh* groups which held regular services that included both the singing of the text and discourse on it.

The *Ramayan* and Sri Ram were not the only focus in their religious life. Sri Krishna and the *Gita* soon found their way into the lives of the Hindus. ISKON (International Society for Krishna Consciousness) had embarked on drawing into their fold the Hindus who followed the *Sanatan Dharma*. This was in itself an education to the masses and acted as a stopper against the attempt of Christians to convert Hindus. The worship of the Divine Mother in Her various aspects and the

Devi Mahatmyam grew in prominence. In recent years many organisations have commenced the performance of the Durga Hawan during *Navaratri*, reciting the 700 verses of the text. In the earlier years, an animal sacrifice was common. But in recent times, the trend is to omit it for various reasons: there is an increasing difficulty in procuring the animal; the closeness of our houses to each other does not provide the necessary privacy, and most of all, our religious teachings and spiritual education that come from various teachers emphasise that we rather slay the animal tendencies within us.

In those early days, the most popular form of prayer was called the *Katha and Jhunda*. It was really the *Satya Narayan Vrat Puja and Katha*, a worship of Lord Vishnu and other deities, and concluding with some five moral tales. Sometimes, the white employers were invited. It was a big plus to have them at a function, and they were given very special treatment. The entire function took some three hours or so. All the relatives and friends would attend and seat themselves under the tent in neat rows on wooden chairs. Nowadays, it is very much a small function, often performed indoors, with the closest relatives (if any) attending. It ensures privacy and so focus, and cuts down on both preparations and costs.

Drama was one of the ways in which the religion was kept alive. The indentured Indians found time to enact scenes from their religious anecdotes despite the unwillingness of their employers to see them use their time in this way. In time, these took the shape of organised theatrical groups.

Mrs Sewcharan, who spent her early years in Riverside, an old community largely of market gardeners, recollected that it was there that a group of men popularised a form of drama that came to be known as the 'Riverside dance'. Their presentation was based on stories from the *Ramayan*, and apart from the dialogues, included songs and dances (much of which they composed), as well as comic relief often based on current events. (I myself have heard that one such dancer took part in a sari queen contest – and won!)

The *Ramayan*, through the presentation of characters and their interactions with each other, holds up to us ideal relationships and shows us the consequences of violating accepted codes of conduct. As an allegory, it warns against a sensate culture and upholds the joys of a life centred in our nobler or higher self. As the world changes, so we too have to change. Many choose the outer world and its sensual joys rather than the more enduring inner life which affords us the ability to enjoy the world more but with discrimination and control.

It is therefore that Jay places great emphasis on a proper religious and spiritual outlook to life. He believes that the family must pray together.

> "In this way the example is set and there is the development of unity and closeness among them. I used to take my grandchild to the temple on certain days when there were prayer meetings, festivals and celebrations. All this is standing him in good stead today. He is in Jo'burg. He won't get the same opportunities there."

Jay believed that the things we teach the child in the early years are our gifts to them, a lifelong gift that they keep and which they will bequeath to their own children and grandchildren.

> "If the future generations guard these carefully and pass them on to their children, then I think we don't have to worry about our coming generations. They will have the tools for a successful life."

Phoolmathie acknowledged that there was a change in behaviour and values from one generation to the next. She fondly compared her own children and their friends when they were younger with children of the same age group today. She noticed a marked change. But, she said resignedly, 'We can't do much.' – it was a process and it must run its course. However, she felt that while this was so, at least certain forms of conduct must be inculcated in the children from an early age. They would form a good foundation for the future.

Her view was based on her own experiences and insight, but it had its roots in the influence of her grandmother. Neela, too, recalled her childhood.

> "My naani was strict about our behaviour. We all learnt to greet the elders with joined palms in a respectful manner. We wore long skirts and had long hair which was neatly plaited. We were told that if our hair was left open at midday or in the evening, a spirit would seize us! We had to walk carefully and carry ourselves properly – - that is, in a dignified manner."

But Neela noted that as times changed, some of the values and principles of her grandparents also underwent changes. For example, for her *naana*, marriages had to be caste appropriate, and there was absolutely no question of a marriage between a Hindi speaking and a Tamil / Telegu speaking couple. In Neela's family (and in the larger part of our society) all this has changed.

> "We have a broader view of life now. Some of our old traditions have changed."

Even marriages between couples of different religions is now no longer an issue, but not without some difficulties for their children. Whose religion will the child follow?

Mala's son married a Christian girl, and went off to live away from his parents. While initially, the differences in the religion were not an issue, it became an important one when the child was left in the care of Mala while the parents were working. The mother did not want her child exposed to Hindu ways. But this was impossible as Mala's daily routine was interwoven with her Hindu way of life. If both parties do not manage the child sensibly and objectively, grave dangers, both religious and psychological, await the child.

Mothilall noticed that more and more power and control were coming into the hands of the young. If their intentions and actions were not grounded upon a strong

value system but were dictated more by personal interest and material ends, then their parents and grandparents were prone to exploitation.

> "Today, we can see that many grandparents are there just to drive grandchildren to school and pick them up in the afternoon. And the grandmother is a nanny who takes care of their grandchildren – washing and bathing them, feeding and clothing them, seeing to their health and welfare. And no need to pay her."

But he felt that this did not imply that grandparents should passively accept their lot. No doubt they have a value (and a right, too), and therefore they should do what they know to be the best for the growing grandchildren without, of course, getting into conflict with their own children.

Changing values have also affected marital relationships and families as a whole. A half century ago, marriages were arranged, although we did hear of the occasional 'love marriage' and the rare elopement. The girl married into a family, and the couple learnt to love each other afterwards. If her mother-in-law was harsh, she bore her suffering in silence, and her husband could do little. Today, many couples go off to live on their own. Those girls who have to live with their in-laws often make their wishes and wants known before the wedding, and it is the mothers-in-law who are on the receiving end!

But marriages do fail, sometimes they end abruptly. It is not uncommon to find a couple who had been courting a long time separated a few weeks after their wedding. In the earlier years there were no divorces amongst us. But in recent years divorce has been on the increase. More often, it is the women who file for divorce. It indicates that they are no longer passive or docile in unhappy marriages. This is no doubt related to the women being well educated, more independent and secure, socially and financially. At one time, divorce was a last resort, but it would seem that today it is the first option.

Weddings today, if not more elaborate and colourful, are more organised and orderly, and more expensive. From the very start, it is all the couple's undertaking: they choose each other (the parents have little or no say in the matter – arranged marriages are a thing of the distant past!); usually they are both working and so they plan their wedding and do most of the purchasing. Sometimes, some families may go to India to purchase the wedding outfits. Weddings are held on a Saturday afternoon or a Sunday. It is no longer that all the family members are invited. The couples choose a table arrangement and the closest family members and friends are invited. It is often a point of embarrassment to parents who are not able to invite all their relatives and friends. Except for a few, people generally are becoming accustomed to this new tradition and do not mind not being invited as most of them are usually invited for the pre-nuptial ceremonies.

The trend of a 'Saturday night *jol'* (a bash the night before the wedding) still continues. But the Riverside dancers disappeared in time, and were replaced by western bands, usually a quartet – three guitars and a drum, which often included

the lead singer. This gave way to disco: beaty Bollywood music and *bhangra*. Some people prefer *Chutney and nagara* music.

When a couple are married, and if they can afford it, they will go off to live on their own. But often they live with the parents of the boy. The joint family has not disappeared altogether.

The people of my generation all lived together. That was the practice. When the need arose, the house was extended. Even among those whose lot was humble, the yards were large enough to allow a room or two to be added as the need arose. One such occasion was when a son was to be married. A small gathering of friends and family, usually on a Sunday morning, would put up the additional unit. Among them there would always be one or two who were builders or carpenters, and others with similar expertise.

There was a great joy in living together in a large family. Gangama wistfully recalled her childhood days and later years.

*"*I always lived in a big family. It was so nice."

A joint family has so many people of different natures and temperament.

"Yet… we all lived in unity. We learnt to accept the faults of each other,"

said Neela. Such a style of living engendered many wonderful personal qualities. One developed selflessness and tolerance, and learnt to be forgiving. Caring and sharing was a way of life.

Suren appreciated the merits of all family members living together: the experience, the knowledge and the values of the older ones ensured that this micro-society functioned optimally. In times of difficulty, the much needed support (both material and moral) was there. He said,

"But … my daughter does not enjoy such benefits. She has just had her second baby. If she were living with her in-laws or with us, then she would not be as hard-pressed as she is now."

Pre-natal and post-natal care would have been there. Further, he saw that she alone had to perform all the household chores, whereas in a joint family, it would have been shared.

The joint family was very much like a little kingdom. The grandfather (and in his absence the grandmother) was usually at the head. The grandmother usually handled the household expenses and inevitably ruled over the daughters-in-law. The sons handed their weekly earnings on Friday evenings to her or to father. Sometimes the married brothers would keep a part of their earnings and give a part for the running of the house. There was a unity then that is hard to imagine today. There was a deep respect for the elders; there was a love for each other in a world where the family was more important than the individual, and to make a personal sacrifice was a matter of honour.

The mother of the house would allot duties to the daughters-in-law and her own daughters as she saw fit. But each helped the other.

In a large household, there were always many playmates. One was never alone – in play or in work, or in one's moments of sorrows and difficulties. If we were too rowdy or became robust and 'dangerous', some aunt would quickly step in. And if a child was crying, any aunt would pick up the child and tend to her. It was not unusual for one mother not only to tend to but also to breast-feed the infant of another. Children were everybody's responsibility. Anyone could chastise or discipline the child of another.

This absence of playmates is a cause for concern as many parents today decide on having just one child. This means that the child is more often than not lonely and more likely to display behavioural problems. Christine's 'adopted' grandson was a single child who hardly saw his parents. She said:

> *"He is keeping the company of some boys his own age. But they don't have very good habits. What can I do? He is not my own grandchild. He has a mother, and I don't know how far I should go in controlling him."*

She did one of two things: gave in to his demands or tried to bribe him; or, she threatened to tell her daughters who also warned him that unless he behaved they would withhold the gifts that they were going to give him, or not purchase things that he requested.

On the other hand, a single child who grows up with people around him who monitor his behaviour develops according to the traditions and culture of the family. Phoolmathie's grandson, an only child, is a case in point. He was left with her in the morning when the parents went to work, and taken back home in the evening. Phoolmathie and her husband took care of him, seeing to all his needs, and ensuring that he grew up along the acceptable lines. But she was mindful of the fact that he was her daughter's child and she had to exercise particular caution in dealing with him.

The joint family was bound to disintegrate. The first powerful blows came as a result of the Group Areas Act. When people were forced to relocate to Chatsworth and later to Phoenix, it was no longer possible for all the family members to live together as the houses were small, in fact just small enough to accommodate a small family. Parents and their unmarried children lived together; the children might move out once they married. But housing has remained a problem.

But there were other factors, too. Mothilall and Suren both observed that better education, the knowledge explosion and improved communication made the younger ones more ambitious and career oriented. There was a drive for independence and an assertion of the ego. They were self-reliant and did not turn to their parents and grandparents for guidance and direction.

Mala observed that the bride came to the new home with her own goals and aspirations.

"That is why it is better that they stay on their own."

When a young woman married into a joint family, she was expected to be an obedient daughter-in-law. A woman married into the family; she did not marry an individual. But the modern woman wanted to affirm her presence and claim her right to freedom. When she lived on her own, she experienced no such pressure and she could carve out her own future and establish her own identity. She was often a working woman bringing an income into the home. There lay her self-esteem and value. In her own home, away from the rest of the family, she was the queen; she replaced her mother-in-law. But she could not fulfil her maternal duties fully and her role as a mother became secondary and diminished.

"When they are young, they can't think for themselves. We have to tell them what to do. But they won't always listen,"

said Mala. She also mentioned a tendency in the young not to accept the shared responsibility of a joint family system. In the joint family, financial resources were shared and if one lost one's job the rest of the family was there in support. The younger generations rejected the notion of communal living and sharing because of their determination to attain economic stability on their own and achieve a measure of success in the world.

It was a sensitive issue. The mother experienced much pain in 'losing' a son; and the son often experienced a conflict in his relationship between his mother and his wife: pleasing one would cause pain to the other; though in most instances it was the mother who was self-sacrificing, and allowed the son to fulfil the wishes of his wife.

A close scrutiny will show that often this breaking away from the parents had a beneficial result. The young couple brought out all their dormant abilities and were able to grow to their fullest.

Sometimes a household temporarily became a joint family. Overcrowding was there, but no one minded, of course. Rukmin's was an example. she said proudly,

"I have three children and twelve grandchildren,' 'Whenever a grandchild was expected, my daughter or daughter-in-law would come to my home to have the baby."

Usually, they would stay on at the request of Rukmin, much to the delight of her daughters and their husbands. They all loved to stay with her.

At one stage, all three sons and daughters-in-law lived with her. She describes this period as a continuous cycle of births, the excitement often giving way to a chaos of rituals that accompany the coming of a new born.

"At one time, there were three babies all together there! I had to get the help of one daughter-in-law and a neighbour to cope with them."

Even though the daughters-in-law could have chosen to go to their own mother's home to have the baby, they preferred to be with Rukmin. In this way, a closeness developed between Rukmin and her grandchildren. Of course, there was an intimate and loving relationship among them all.

Rukmin's special value as a grandmother perhaps lay in this: her knowledge and expertise in handling the infant – bathing and massaging with oil, feeding it with a special preparation (we have replaced this with Gripe Water!), and exercising, as well as a process that one may describe as 'smoking the baby': certain powders, including *lobhaan*, were thrown onto burning charcoal, and the infant was held overhead, to inhale the smoke. For the mother's bath, she would boil leaves of certain trees and shrubs. All this ensured the health and well-being of both child and mother.

Such skills as those of Rukmin's were not rare, but they would pass away without being transmitted to the next generation. It was an "unscientific practice" looked upon with great scepticism by the modern and educated lot who will be hard-pressed to explain how a *dai* (pronounced as the English word 'thy') was able to right a baby in a breach position in the womb and deliver it safely.

It was a psychological boon for the growing child to have many people around him / her. When Mala had her children, they were all loved very much by their grandparents as well as by the two doting uncles. But they also had to leave as the house was becoming overcrowded. Her children were denied the love and attention as well as the feeling of security from the many people they were used to have around them. They were denied the lessons of interdependence, and their own independence and self-esteem were no longer the concern of the many.

When Jay's daughter married, the couple decided to live on their own, even though they could have lived comfortably with their parents. It was in keeping with the current trend – if a young couple could manage, they would set up their own home.

> "My daughter chose to live near us, and so they bought a house just five minutes away from here. We all enjoy a bit of both the worlds. We see each other every day, and spend more time together in the evenings. They have supper with us on most evenings. And we also have much time to ourselves."

Although Suren could afford to travel frequently to Jo'burg to see his grandchildren, he said that they would not go as often as they would like to.

> "Young couples need time to bond. They need their privacy. They need their space."

But he admitted that in his choice there was an element of sacrifice. Absence from the grandchild resulted in loss of contact. But this physical separation was made up to some extent by regular telephone calls.

The breaking down of the Joint family had another serious implication. When children left their parents, the elderly people were left isolated. Those who are

fortunate had children who kept in touch with them and saw to their needs, both social and emotional. Of course, there were old people who did value their independence and did not mind living on their own.

But today, too many have been deserted. They no longer have the care and attention of their children whom they raised, and do not have their grandchildren to love. All too often, a sense of helplessness and depression comes over them, the feeling that they are no longer wanted. For some heartless children, the only value that their parents have is the house they own. We have heard so many tales of children who coerced their parents to transfer the house to them, and then sent them to old age homes or forced them to leave the house. Sometimes, they sell the house and the old people have nowhere to go. In one instance, the old mother was left outside an old age home at night. When the security discovered her, arrangements were made to take her in.

This refusal to fulfil the filial obligation was but one instance of their moral decline, the erosion of their own essential goodness, and their rejection of the treasury of priceless principles that they were heir to. While I grant that there is no general agreement on what constitutes the right action, I cannot but think that there is something very criminal, something sinful, in casting out our parents from their home. Our traditional values were being rapidly replaced by a lower set of values. It was the result of crass imitation and acceptance of the worst in western culture. But the degeneration first started from within, that is, in the home itself.

Prof Usha Shukla observed that parents themselves are adopting a foreign culture at the expense of traditional values. She asked,

"This being so, then what can a mother pass on to her daughter?"

We have found that some women today drank and smoked more openly, dressed improperly, and behaved in ways that placed the family unity and honour at risk. It was therefore not surprising that Indian girls at the university dressed in a way that their own parents might object to.' (Perhaps they left home well dressed, but on the campus, they peeled off the top layers of clothing!).

Once while waiting in the car park at the university, I could not help but overhear the conversation of some youngsters in the car next to me. At first it was a distraction that took me away from my game of scrabble, and I caught strands of their conversation. Though not one given to being surprised easily, I froze at their recounting of their Bacchanalian orgies.

"Our culture is being diluted more and more,"

commented Devika Madari, who taught Hindi in a government school and also at the Hindi Shikska Sangh.

"I feel that that eventually our culture will go. Just think about such things as living together before marriage."

To the young, there was nothing wrong with it; they could not understand why their parents were so shocked. Parents who did not give in to their children were

sometimes threatened: their children threatened to leave home, or, worse still, to commit suicide. I was much amused once when a boy demanded a particularly expensive sound system. His parents could not afford it. But when he walked out of the house, his father went in search of him, found him, and placated him with the promise of getting the desired object for him. Such forms of blackmail were common, and might indicate that parents were losing hold on their children.

3. WHAT GRANDPARENTS DO

A Poem for My Granddaughter

> *i saw you in your first hour*
> *you took me by surprise:*
> *your hands feeling the air*
> *your head moving, your eyes -- so deep – (did you know your depth then?)*
> *searching the details of a new world*
>
> *a new world i shall show you*
> *i shall see the world through your new eyes*
>
> *i shall show you fire in a matchstick head*
> *and other wonderful things:*
> *the tremendous possibilities enfolded in the world within you*
> *matchstick-heads waiting to be ignited*
>
> *unfold, awakening bud!*
> *arise, sleeping goddess!*
>
> *when you pass from five to ten*
> *the world will beckon with wondrous joys*
> *in my silence you must choose*
> *to become lower than the worm*
> *or higher than the gods*

The choices that we make in our lives, and the success or failures that follow, depend on the richness and extensiveness both of our teachings and our experiences. It also depends on how one thinks of oneself. We may think of a child as full of goodness, or say that he is a potentially divine being; or just see him as a psycho-social organism that can be taught to evolve to yet higher and higher states of being. We may differ in the way we couch the concept of what a child is, but we all basically agree that we can teach the child the highest ideals and create for him an environment and opportunities that will release the infinite possibilities that are hidden in him.

When his daughter resolved to go to Johannesburg, Suren did not oppose her intention but gave his approval and blessings. At that time, current thinking would

have shown a great concern for sending away a girl, alone, to a faraway place, where there were no relatives and so the care and control that are naturally exercised in the home would be absent. But Suren had no such anxieties.

> "We grew our children with great love and care, and saw to all their needs. We disciplined them into a way of life that was acceptable to us. Our children grew up in the ashram environment and imbibed the moral and spiritual culture. Our spiritual teacher also moulded them. So to let her go was not an issue."

There was a deep-rooted trust in the knowledge that the values that children are exposed to in a spiritual atmosphere would form a shield against the usual temptations that present themselves in such innocent and attractive garbs.

But such conditions and opportunities for being in the ashram and in the company of a holy man were not there for Suren's grandchild. Reasonably, most grandparents would see their roles cut out for them. Not so Suren and his wife. With great affection he said:

> "Grandchildren are there only for us to love them. Changing social conditions require us to meet new circumstances in ways different to what we have been used to,"

He would not intervene in the raising of his grandchildren, nor would he advise his daughter on her role as a traditional mother.

> "In any home, parent guide and control their children. Then as the children grow up, more and more freedom is allowed to them. As adults, they have all the freedom. But, we are always there to guide and support them if they need us or ask us."

It is with such beliefs and ideas that we grandparents (and parents, too) raise the child, care and nurture him; create ways in which to play with the child and keep him entertained; and at the same time make every moment a learning experience.

For most, the arrival of a grandchild is a life-changing experience. Our daily rituals are sometimes modified, sometimes totally transformed, and sometimes discarded to be replaced by new ones.

Neela recalled her experiences when she became a grandmother for the first time.

> "I travelled to my son's home daily for the first two weeks. I would attend to the baby and the mother. Visitors would be pouring in all the time. I would have to make tea and all. Then I would prepare the meals for everybody. I would return home in the evening and do all my own housework."

This included the preparation of meals for all. This back and forth between the two homes became quite hectic for her and often she would feel quite drained out.

"I used to be quite tired. But still I was happy to do everything.,,, the family name will continue,"

because it was a boy, the happiness was all the more. When after six weeks the mother had to return to work, the parents would bring the infant to Neela's in the morning, and take him back home in the evening when they returned from work. Neela said that because there was just one child who occupied her attention, there was a special bonding between them and the two are very attached to each other.

She trained him into a definite routine so that she could complete all her housework and still have enough time to devote to him, not only to attend to his basic needs but also to do the fun things, that is, reading and playing with him. Her second grandchild was a hyperactive child, and would not allow himself to be bound to any routine. He was thus difficult to cope with, but the love of a grandparent is the saving grace.

Before they took a nap, she would tell them a story or teach them a nursery rhyme. The second child usually would not want to sleep or rest. She would involve him in some such activities as drawing or playing with a toy that would engage his attention for a while.

When Jay became a grandfather and his daughter had to return to work:

"We agreed that the child be left with us for the day, and his parents would pick him up in the evening after work. My wife was still working, so for the next three years and two months, I became a mother!"

He was a total nanny (if there is such a thing): he would bathe, clothe, feed, and play with the baby. Before the child's nap time, Jay would read to him or tell him stories. These stories were both from western and Indian sources. The baby enjoyed both. He would also sing *bhajans* (religious songs) to the child.

At this time, Jay was pursuing his studies in priest-craft, and needed much time for his study and research. How a busy grandfather turned mother could – only Jay knows!

Mala's two grandchildren (young ladies, really) went to work in Jo'burg.

"We always keep in touch. We phone each other almost daily. The girls tell me their personal problems and ask me for advice. They may not be living nearby, but we are in touch and I am still keeping an eye on what they are doing and I know who their friends are. I want them to feel that I am there with them."

At one time, there were three grandchildren with Rukmin. One was employed, another was at a tertiary institute, and the third was at a secondary school. Their mother was also employed. Her hands were quite full seeing to the needs of each. Her role in the family was far more than that of a grandmother. It was necessary for her to add to the family income, and so she worked from home. Apart from fulfilling the household duties, there was an important task that she had to perform.

Contact time with her granddaughters was more than that of the mother. Therefore she had to play a part of the role that the mother should. Although loving and tender-hearted, Rukmin could be very firm. Fortunately, her grandchildren were obedient and hard-working.

"I give each one some chores to do every day,"

she said. This helps build in them a sense of responsibility and self-esteem. Rukmin believed that these are important for everyone so that there was a proper direction in life and they set sensible goals for themselves in terms of their careers and their future in general.

When babies and children grow up in a joint family system, they assimilate (unconsciously and passively) a culture and a value system; their character is moulded and allowed to develop along a path that is in accordance with age-old traditions. Usually the lead role is played by the grandparents.

However, some think that it is not the grandparent's responsibility to impart to the child a value system. Suren stated his view:

"The parents should bring up the child according to what they think is right. I won't interfere in the matter."

Suren did not feel that he or his wife was in any way moulding the behaviour of the child.

"We just play with the child,' he said. "Most parents want to bring up their children with their own set of values and principles, without any 'interference'."

But others differ. Neela and Phoolmathie both ask that if the grandparents themselves do not undertake this, who else would? Today, parents have little or no time. The problem is much aggravated when both the parents are working. If the child is fortunate, there is a grandmother to take care of him. If not, there is some day-care centre, or crèche. Neela said:

"Little children should be taught as the occasion arises. They will listen more carefully."

But she added that it was important to tell stories that had a moral lesson. These stories are to be found in our epics and tales.

Jay observed:

"There is a greater value in stories from our epics and tales as they are very value-centred and contribute to character development."

It forms a foundation on which the building blocks of morality and ethics are erected. These stories as well as prayers or *mantras* should be taught to the child during the early years. The child has the capacity to commit them to memory

easily. Later, the moral implications and ethical values implicit in the stories may be discussed or revealed.

Maya saw her role as a grandmother as a serious one.

"It is my duty to teach them good behaviour and habits, good speech and those qualities that will make them successful in life."

To this end she would read or tell stories from Ramayan and Mahabharat.

The stories are all illustrative and would form an excellent moral and ethical foundation and contribute to healthy thinking.

Christine's maternal grandmother was a Telegu speaking Christian. When Church services were held, she would take all the children with her to the Telegu Baptist Church. It was mostly from her that the little children learnt about religion and that too, in an informal way. She would speak about the Bible often in order to illustrate a point or teach some moral lesson. And she taught them to sing as well. She was staunch in her views and an unrelenting Christian.

If a metaphor were to be chosen to convey the relationship between grandparents and their grandchildren, Raveen would doubtless choose 'play'. Through it, the child learns that in life there are rules that must be followed; there are rewards to be reaped, penalties and punishment for non-compliance, opportunities for advancement, the joys of success….

Raveen's four grandchildren, whose ages ranged between three and six years, eagerly looked forward to come over to his home because they would get to do many things that their own parents would not allow them to do or the opportunity for doing them did not exist at their own homes.

Parents exercise control over their children: they impose restrictions, and concede degrees of freedom according to their own ideas and understanding. But with Raveen, the grandchildren enjoyed total freedom. This naturally brought to the fore some conflict between parent and grandparent. However, Raveen made his position clear to the parents (that is, with his own children!):

"As long as I am with the children, I will supervise them and be fully responsible for them. So no one need have any worry over that!"

This freedom that Raveen allowed the children did not imply that they could do whatever they wanted to, for then pandemonium would reign. His was an imaginatively thought-out learning situation in which the children expressed themselves freely in an environment that was controlled and organized. Their organs of perception were sharpened, their imagination was kindled; they developed certain skills; they experienced their environment through all their senses. In short, they experienced their world, they touched life.

He allowed them to shout and run about to their hearts' content. They played with mud, messed their clothes (not to mention their hands and faces), played with water, washed the car …. In fact, all those things that children want to do, and many parents do not allow them to. He recalled with a mischievous smile,

> "My one daughter-in-law is quite prim and proper and is extremely conscious of how her children speak and conduct themselves. But when the children are with me, she has no alternative but to silently accept what is going on."

The gay abandon into which the children flung themselves no doubt made her smile inwardly.

When the children had had enough of activity, he would take them into a room he had especially prepared for indoor play. Here, the children could draw and paint or put together puzzles. Raveen explained:

> "They must tell me what they are doing and more important, why they do what they do. In this way, I can tap into their minds, and so give their cognitive faculties a boost."

He proudly quoted the example of his three-year grandchild who could assemble a 100-piece puzzle!

A sense of unity was an important theme in Raveen's life. He would get the children together, and together they would create a story. Raveen would start a story:

> "There was once an eagle. He lived … Where did he live?' The answers would come: 'In the mountains!', 'On a large tree!"

Sometimes there would be conflicting details. He saw this as an opportunity to sharpen their faculties and develop critical and logical thinking. The children learnt that there was an order there, there was a system of turns which should not be violated. '*But*,' he said,

> "once they are all fired up, they tend to forget this, and I have to remind them that it is important to listen to others."

He often told stories that had a moral implication. Rather than telling the children what the point of the story was, he asked them to comment on the appropriateness of the actions of the characters. This would lead to a discussion.

> "Children are truthful and open," he observed. "They are thus able to articulate their own difficulties and challenges, and find their own solutions. It is a way of empowering them."

He added,

> "The greatest thing that we can do for our grandchildren (or children in general) is to give them the gift of self-confidence and self-esteem. It is a life-long gift that they will cherish."

He used to take all his grandchildren into his small meditation/prayer room. He would give each one something to do, for example, one has to ring the bell during *arati*. At other times, they would all sit down to watch a DVD. (There are many

animated movies on Indian mythology, and children love cartoons.) It also allowed Raveen a break from the excitement and exertion!

Story time was followed by sleep time. He read to them. At the end of the day, the children would become a bit subdued – naturally, after all the activities!.

> "As they are going off to sleep, I put on some instrumental music, which has a calming effect on them."

When Raveen would take the children shopping, he would give to each a small amount of money to purchase whatever they wanted. There was a great thrill for them to select items, to pay for them on their own at the till, and receive the change. They learnt the value of money and the transaction process.

Most grandparents are retired people. Some grandmothers have not worked at all, or have worked but for a short while only. It was not so much the absence of the economic necessity for them to work, but the conscious choice to raise their children. Today, it has become very necessary for both parents to work to make ends meet.

Unless one plans one's retirement, one will not know what to do with all the time that one suddenly finds. There was RS, an energetic little man, now a retired principal. I met him a few months after he took retirement. He was unshaven in the middle of the morning, was not dressed as carefully as he was wont to a few months ago, and had obviously slowed down. He admitted:

> "I don't know how the day just passes."

I knew his routine at school. He would be at school an hour earlier, be prepared for the day to the detail, meet and talk to most of the teachers as they came in; after assembly he would walk twice round the school blocks, and by ten, he would have read the paper, and have had two cups of tea -- and his school would be running like clockwork. Now, at ten in the morning, he still had not read his paper, but he had had his second cup of tea.

On the other hand, if he had a grandchild, his morning would be quite filled. Suren is an example of one whose life has changed with the coming of grandchildren. This generally serious-faced man and his somewhat quiet and reserved wife were dragged into a play with their grandchild. And they were willing participants! They would run around the room, play hide-and-seek, dance around, or just scatter toys. They were both in very good health, but this exercise of dancing to the tune of the children was very taxing, but at the same time they felt exhilarated and elated. There was a freedom, a sense of gay abandon, that was not there in the play with own children. With the grandchildren, it was living the moment, in the moment; but with their own children, they had to be cautious not to cast away discipline. Not so with the grandchild – her parents were the figures of authority.

Suren had been in a management position for a number of years. So how did it feel to be ordered to do things by someone else?

'Just wonderful!

He beamed. He recalled a certain line of philosophical thought that warns householders against attachment to family and possessions. Again he smiled and said,

"See. This is all attachment.'"

Then he adds,

"I just love it."

And again, there was Raveen, a retired teacher whose grandchildren, when they visited him, filled his day, they filled his life.

"You have to plan what to do before you retire,' he advises. 'Otherwise, you waste your life. At the end of the day, I like to think, "I have done these things, I have achieved something." If not, I am as good as dead."

He belonged to a social-religious organisation. His work included the teaching and propagation of religion and social services of various kinds.

In like spirit, many retired people volunteer their services to social bodies or religious organisations. Their experience, understanding and skills have an immense value that are of benefit to any organisation. And they are freely given. From his early years, Mothilall had been serving in a social body.

"Now that I am retired and have more time, I have undertaken to do a bit more. It is quite exhilarating and fulfilling. I meet with more people than I did while working, and there is always a healthy exchange of ideas. There are also people like me who have retired. I meet them frequently. They really appreciate it when you show a concern for their welfare."

Suren used to give a few days in the week to a religious organisation where he not only supervised the work of other paid workers but also himself became a 'fixer', attending to numerous chores. It was fulfilling to do that.

"This is what we have been taught. By doing this work, I am progressing in my spiritual life."

I myself present a two-hour weekly programme on 'Hindvani', a non-commercial, community-based radio station. It started as a project of the Hindi Shiksha Sangh to promote Hindi. Today, it is managed by over 50 volunteer workers, many of whom are in full-time employment; some are housewives, and a few retired people.

In the ordinary traditional household, the struggle for existence was somewhat eased with a division of labour: the men earned and the women looked after the home and raised the children. But sometimes, circumstances compelled a woman to fend for herself and her children. It might be that death had snatched her husband, or that he had deserted her, or that he had fallen into bad ways and cared

nought for her or his children. Such conditions brought out a more powerful response from within her. She turned against the wolves of the world, defending her children, holding onto her own.

Suren's grandmother was a poor woman who by dint of hard work and perseverance was able to raise her children. He recounted:

> "She left the shores of India because she was unable to bear the problems at her in-law's home and was forced to run away. Her great fear was that if she were caught, she would be subjected to greater abuse."

The solution – a British ship that was about to sail for Natal!

In Natal, she married and mothered a few children. At the death of her husband, she married a third time. He was a railway shunter who died in a train crash. Once again, life threw up its challenge to her for her survival. She became a vegetable hawker.

> "My granny was well known as "cart lady" because she sold vegetables from a cart in Old Fort Road [Durban]. The tree under which she located herself became a landmark."

She lived with Suren's parents -- hence his close contact with her. She was the economic pillar in the family:

> "Her earnings supported the family. My father's money went towards paying for the bond for the house."

Jay's recollection of grandparents was limited to just his grandmother, as *naana* had passed away when he was still a small boy. *Naani* worked on the farm until her last days. She maintained the farm, supervised all the work, and sold all her produce. With great admiration, Jay recalled her activities:

> "How she did all this, I cannot imagine!"

and that too with caring for her children! Gangama's story is a short and simple one.

> "He [her husband – the older generation of women never referred to their husbands directly, but only as 'he' or 'his father'] 'started to drink and never gave any money towards the house. So I had to work."

It was a harsh life. She attended to her children and their needs, took care of the house and made all the necessary payments.

Though a talented man, Kabir's father was unstable in more ways than one. He was easily influenced and conned, would leave one job for another, get on the other side of the law and go into hiding, or just walk away from home, then suddenly turn up months later, and pretend that nothing had happened. But it was his wife who received the blows. She would be evicted from one place after another. She sometimes lived in a hovel; at one time in a shelter that was once chicken run. She

sewed clothes and was barely able to keep herself and her three children alive. But almost always the people around her were kind. They would send her food at night if they saw that she had not lit the fire; or sometimes they would send a few potatoes and a tomato and onion. Later, her brothers called her to live with them. For a few years she was with family. But when they all moved to Chatsworth, she was allotted a sub-economic unit. Again she was totally on her own. She worked hard from morning till night, seeing to the welfare of her children. It would seem that they were the only reason for her existence. One day, when her son was just a boy, she had broken down and was sobbing bitterly in her kitchen which was a little shelter too small even to stand up in. He wiped her eyes and promised her that one day he would build her a big house and they would all live happily together. He saw in the dancing light of the flames the flicker of a smile. It did come to pass that he built a house and they all lived in it together. But within the year, she cast off her body that had suffered so much, had achieved so much.

CONCLUSION

In and around Durban, there are a number of Senior Citizen Groups. Most of these have been organised by interested individuals, themselves senior citizens or sometimes retired people. These groups usually meet once per week. The activities of these groups vary. Some may be religiously oriented – the Dayanand Garden Sthree Samajis is a group of women that meet weekly at the Aryan Benevolent Home (ABH) in Chatsworth. Their programme includes the performance of *havan*, followed by a talk or discussion on relevant or current topics. After this, they help in the work of the ABH, such as preparing vegetables for lunch, or general cleaning. Their assistance extends to major undertakings such as fund-raising for the ABH. Outside speakers and guests are invited to discuss such themes as health, women empowerment and the role of women in society. Often they are addressed by visiting Swamis of the Arya Samaj (India). Like other similar groups, they plan outings and picnics.

At one religious organisation, a large number of senior citizens meet, listen to an address by one of the members of the organisation, on a spiritual topic, and leave after taking lunch. Some groups focus on hobbies, such as crocheting and sewing, or yoga and keep-fit classes. At the end of the year, many of these groups go on a holiday. Cape Town is a favourite destination. They receive accommodation and transport at very affordable rates.

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S.S. LUDHER[i]

4. THE SIKH DIASPORA IN AUSTRALIA: AN EXPLORATORY REFLECTION AND IMPRESSIONS ON ASPECTS OF GRANDPARENTS AND GRANDPARENTING

ABSRTACT

This chapter discusses aspects of the adventurism of the Sikh community. Included topics relate to the origins of the Sikh religion, the contributory causes for their migration to Malaysia and Australia, and aspects of Sikh grandparenting in Australia.

Prior to World War II Sikh migration to Australia was largely an Indian phenomenon. These migrants evolved from the era of the Ghans and the Hawkers and progressed to the fields of agriculture and business. The 1960s began to see the arrival of Sikh professionals like doctors and engineers. Migration from India is more fully discussed under Part B of this Paper.

The pioneers of South East Asian migration to Australia post-WW II came from the 1950s onwards in fairly large numbers as tertiary students from Malaysia and Singapore. Some were privately funded while others came on various scholarships. The principal areas of study were in Medicine, Architecture and Accountancy or as post-graduate students. While many of them elected to remain in Australia after qualifying, especially if they had been privately-funded, most were obliged to return to their own countries after graduation/qualification to comply with the requirements of their scholarship schemes or otherwise. Nevertheless many returned alumni returned later on to settle in Australia after fulfilling their scholarship requirements or other obligations. These graduates and other skilled migrants settled in the Australian capital cities like Melbourne, Sydney, Adelaide and Perth. In the course of time they progressed to marriages and establishing their own family units here.

The longer term saw settled Sikh migrants see the need to bring in their parents on family reunion schemes and/or to play their traditional role in the nurturing of young children.

INTRODUCTORY

In his book *Sikhs and the City: Sikh History and Diasporic Practice in Singapore*, (Modern Asian Studies, Cambridge University Press, 2011) *Gerard McCann* made the following introductory remarks: "Despite the importance of the Sikhs in Colonial Malaya and the Straits Settlements, traditionally falsely understood as merely related to the maintenance of law and order, there is a marked scholarly lacuna on the 'community'. The weight of scrutiny has in fact been borne by Sikh students at universities in Kuala Lumpur and Singapore. Many had orthodox 'Tat Khalsa' agendas to assert whilst others produced balanced and highly informative theses, particularly *RS Malhi* and *Amarjit Kaur."*

Gerard McCann observed that unlike the academic works of historians especially of R.S. Malhi and Amarjit Kaur, the writings of disparate writers like *Lopo, Saran Singh and Mehervan Singh* were based on anecdotal information rather than scholarly examinations of historical developments. These latter have therefore sometimes been unfairly criticized for obvious input of personal ideas and lacked sufficiently critical guidelines and/or historical controls to qualify as academic works. What is probably being forgotten is that this latter group does not appear to have made any particular claim to researched material.

The writer acknowledges his indebtedness to reliance upon anecdotal evidence and personal observation, as well as on well-researched works of historians. While every effort has been made to produce this article in a non-judgmental and nostalgia-neutral background the writer apologies if any personal bias or special claim is inherent.

ORIGINS & IDENTITY OF THE SIKHS

The Sikhs originated in Punjab, the land of five great rivers namely the Jhelum, Chenab, Ravi, Sutlej and Beas flowing through North West India to the Arabian Sea. From time immemorial Punjab has been on the direct route of various invading armies from Central and Inner Asia that periodically poured over the Hindu Kush in search of adventure, booty and/or resettlement.

Regular encounters with these aggressive plundering invaders toughened the Punjabis to resist and ultimately absorb the invaders. In the course of time, a number of Hindu Rajputs and Jats and a small minority of like-minded Muslims, through the teachings of Guru Nanak Dev, the first of the Sikh Gurus, formed the idea of an egalitarian peace-loving religion that germinated and grew to become the Sikh religion.

Guru Nanak was born in 1469 in the village of Talwandi, district of Sheikhupura, about an hour's journey west of Lahore by car. Nanak travelled widely over Punjab, Sind and Persia and elsewhere preaching his religious beliefs. Such activities were not uncommon in that era as evidenced by the then roving Sufi travelers doing very much the same. Guru Nanak finally returned to Punjab and set

up a small community village that he named Kartarpur located beside the banks of the River Ravi near Lahore. There he taught and crystallized his Sikh precepts to his disciples. And there he breathed his last in 1539.

The word 'Sikh' evolved from the Sanskrit term shishya meaning 'disciple'. In the course of time the term "Sikh" came to be applied to Nanak's ever-increasing admirers who gravitated to him and his teachings. His followers considered him their "Guru' (meaning exalted teacher or leader).

After his death Guru Nanak's teachings were adopted and adapted by nine successor human Gurus, the last being Guru Gobind Singh (b. 1666). Guru Gobind Singh had to contend with incessant hostilities of Hindu hill rajas as the Sikh community expanded east towards Anandpur and southeast towards Delhi. Over time the Sikhs asserted themselves and wound up as Rulers of the Punjab to establish Sikh Raj (rule).

Before he left this earthly life Guru Gobind Singh determined to cease human succession to the Guruship. He declared the Sikh holy book ("*Sri Guru Granth Sahib"), as* the final seal of Sikh Guruship. The *Sri Guru Granth Sahib* contains the compilations of the teachings of the various Sikh Gurus as well as eminent non-Sikh (including Muslim) religious personalities of and prior to that time. The Sri Guru Granth Sahib occupies an integral position in all Sikh prayer halls ("*Gurdwaras").*

The annexation of Punjab by the British after the Battle of Chillianwalla on the banks of the Sutlej River in January 1849 was a defining moment for the Sikhs. The loss of Sikh sovereignty led to their decline as the major force in Punjabi political life. They had been and remain the smallest religious community in Punjab. The British had no time or inclination to consider the needs of different competing interests of the Punjab. This indifference facilitated the Muslims as the largest community to revert to their pre-Sikh dominancy as the most influential group in Punjab.

THE SIKH DIASPORA TO AUSTRALIA

Pre-Federation

Genesis of the diaspora from India. The single-most important factor for the diaspora was the British enforcement of the absolute primacy of their interests in commerce and industry as against the welfare and interests of the Indians. The pluses and negatives of this outcome was that British rule in Punjab led to major changes in several aspects, opening fresh challenges waiting to be availed of. The British needed manpower to assist in the development of their other colonies

elsewhere. Displaced Sikh soldiers and other adventurous Indians were encouraged to seek opportunities all over India as well as in other British colonies.

Their decline as a power in the Punjab and their exposure to fresh challenges elsewhere led Sikhs to seek wider employment and commercial opportunities wherever the British were active. Sikhs involved themselves in agriculture, industry and commerce all over India, and also joined British Indian forces in large numbers to serve elsewhere in India and in their other colonies. The result was to expose Sikhs to the British dominions of Canada and Australia and the colonies of Burma, Malaya, Singapore and Hong Kong, opening whole new vistas to them. Sikhs have not looked back since.

An article by Salim Lakha published in "*The Encyclopedia of the Indian Diaspora*" (*General Editor Brij V. Lal (NUS, 2006)* states that British subjects in India resettling in Australia brought the first Indians to Australia from 1800 onwards as "free immigrants" labour. The biggest single batch was of 40 Indian labourers comprised mostly of tribal Dhangars from the Chhota Nagpur area of Central India to work in New South Wales.

Pre-Federation Indian presence in Australia dates from the time of cessation of convict labour transportation of Europeans to Australia resulting in serious labour shortages in Australia. Most Indians came or were brought of their own free will and comprised mainly of Muslim Punjabis, Pathans and Sikhs. Coming from agrarian backgrounds they were capable of undertaking tasks as farm labourers on cane fields and shepherds on sheep stations in New South Wales and Queensland. Indians were also present in the gold fields of Victoria during the time of the Victorian gold rush of the 1850s-1860s. The Victoria Census of 1857 recorded 277 persons of "Indian or Hindoo" race. In that period of time the description "Hindoo" was not necessarily confined to Hindus but was generally inclusive of Indians of every persuasion.

The Ghans. The two main categories of Indian migrants that remain etched in Australian history were the 'Ghans' and hawkers. About 2000 cameleers and 20,000 camels were brought from Afghanistan and North West India to Australia between 1870 and 1930 to help explore and settle Australia's vast arid interior. Camel-breeding stations and rest house outposts (caravanserai) were set up to link coastal cities with remote inland cattle and sheep grazing stations. The introduction of motor vehicles in the 1930s spelt the end of this practice. Most cameleers chose to return to their homelands but a fairly sizeable number chose to remain behind and turned their attention to other activities.

These cameleers were mainly Muslim Pathans but were called "Ghans". But there was also a small sprinkling of Sikh cameleers as evidenced from records of the Commonwealth 'certificates of exemption from the dictation test' (CEDT) issued to cameleers leaving Australia with an intention to return. Some Ghans formed relationships with Aboriginal or European women in isolated areas.

Towards the end of the 19th century sizeable numbers of Afghans, Pathans, Punjabis (including Sikhs) and Chinese turned to Australia to seek their fortunes. Being without any special skills they transplanted to rural Australia as hawkers, hawking being based on credit, requiring little capital to begin. These young men travelled on foot until they had earned enough money to purchase horses and carts. Warehouses sold stock on credit to Indian wholesalers who in turn provided the stock to the hawkers also on credit. The latter then resold these goods to farmers and farmhands also on credit. Hence credit was vital to this trade, money being generally available only after the harvesting of the crops.

The Hawkers. Hawkers had to obtain licenses issued by the individual States. From the 1890s such licenses became generally restricted to British subjects thereby denying most Chinese from renewing their licenses. Indians being British subjects thereby acquired a monopoly on hawking until the 1930s whereafter new migrants from mainland Europe entered the trade in competition.

Sikh hawkers commonly remitted some of their profits back to their families in Punjab while investing the residue in Australia to build stores and buy land, especially in northern New South Wales. Baba Ram Singh and Uttam Singh who arrived in 1890 were among the most successful of Sikh hawkers. In 1907 they established "The People Stores" which became a flourishing business enterprise.

It is believed Baba Ram Singh brought the first Sri Guru Granth Sahib (the Sikh Holy Book) to Australia in the early 1920s. Uttam Singh saved £10,000 to develop a thriving business on Kangaroo Island (Kaur). Other early arrivals included Sardar Beer Singh Johal (1895) and Sardar Narain Singh Heyer (1898), said to have come in a ship named the "Captain Cook".

Sikh hawkers were usually well received by country folk but their successes and continued acquisition of land worried some politicians. This resulted in many restrictions being placed on hawkers. Many early pioneers were compelled to travel back and forth to India to meet their families which were not permitted to join their menfolk in Australia. Such restrictions ultimately caused many of them to return to India to retire.

POST-FEDERATION

The White Australia Policy 1901

The White Australia policy was introduced with Federation in 1901 and lasted till 1973. This policy restricted immigration of non-whites into Australia. The actual numbers of Indians in Australia prior to the White Australia Policy is estimated at between 4,700 and 7,600. With the introduction of the Policy, Asians were allowed in only if they were merchants or students and then only for short periods of time. Even Asians already settled in Australia who visited their motherlands were barred from re-entry to Australia.

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The First World War

The First World War changed this situation in respect of the Sikhs. The British had classified Sikhs as a martial race for preferential recruitment into the British armed forces. Sikhs fought alongside Australian and British troops on battlefields at Gallipoli and elsewhere in the Middle East. This interaction softened Australian attitudes towards the Sikhs.

After the war the growing threat of an expansionist and industrialized Japan made Australia feel a need to strengthen links with India to counter the Japanese threat. This saw the Indians of Australia given greater rights than allowed to other Asian groups. Indians were also given limited property rights, the right to vote and allowed pensions. Many Sikhs used their new found rights to bring their sons of working age to Australia.

This latter era saw also Sikhs make their first presence felt in Queensland and northern New South Wales where they initially worked on the sugar cane fields and agriculture before moving on to other industries such as the construction of railways.

The Second World War (1939–45)

Sugar Cane & Banana ventures in NSW and Queensland
World War II once again found Australian and Indian troops fighting side by side in many battlefields. The need for recruitment for the war effort caused a dearth of labour in Australian agricultural ventures. Indians were therefore allowed to work in many agricultural sectors previously barred to them. One such industry was the banana industry around Woolgoolga in Northern New South Wales. This saw Sikhs from India and elsewhere in Australia migrating to the banana growing areas around Woolgoolga. The Sikhs worked hard and with the money saved purchased tracts of land to start their own banana farms in Northern NSW and Queensland.

Labour shortages created by the war also saw numbers of Sikh migrants who had previously worked as itinerant hawkers, cane cutters and similar labouring jobs securing more regular employment. Many congregated around Southern Queensland and Northern New South Wales to take advantage of the pressing need for workers on the banana farms.

Coffs Harbour
Banana farming in the Coffs Harbour area of New South Wales is a niche market as bananas can only be grown on the northern slopes of hills as the southern slopes and flat areas are prone to frost damage in winter. Hence the crop cannot be easily harvested by mechanical means and is heavily labour intensive. Consequently banana farming in NSW was restricted to small family holdings ideally suited to Sikh farmers from Punjab and provided them with steady work and income.

Apart from the problems mentioned above there were also other limitations connected with banana farming including periodical cyclone damage. Therefore many Sikh farmers had to broaden their outlook. One alternative was to convert many banana plantations to blueberry plantations which have a more reliable paying export market (Sikh Council of Australia, Inc).

Woolgoolga

By the 1890s there was a jetty near the town of Woolgoolga being used by sawmills and there was also some sugar farming in the area. But the area proved unsatisfactory for sugar cane. By the turn of the century bananas began being grown but it was not until around the 1930s that they were grown with any success.

Around the turn of the 20th century a substantial number of Indian migrants, probably attracted to the area by banana farming, moved south from Queensland and settled around Woolgoolga. They were the ancestors of the modern town's substantial Sikh community and were the descendants of Punjabi migrants who originally came to Australia to work on the Queensland cane fields.

The final push for Sikhs to migrate to Australia came after the partition of India in 1947 and the traumatic upheavals preceding and following it. The natural impetus for many families' members to join relatives who had migrated earlier to Australia also saw a further exodus of Sikh migrants to Queensland and Northern New South Wales.

The unsettled conditions prevailing in post-partition Punjab also led many Sikh men to bring in their wives from Punjab to Australia to create Sikh households and start life afresh in more settled circumstances. The birth of their children in Australia entitled them to naturalization thereby creating the first true Sikh Australians. Today Sikhs represent about 25 per cent of the total population of Woolgoolga. They are a mixture of the descendants of the original settlers and later migrants who came to join relatives and to marry within the community.

The First Sikh Temple was opened in Woolgoolga in 1968 becoming the first formal Gurdwara to be opened in Australia. Woolgoolga now boasts an important Sikh community and is an interesting peaceful seaside holiday destination with the usual attractions of swimming, surfing and fishing. This is distinctively modified by its unique Indian and Sikh connections.

There are now thriving Sikh communities in northern NSW and Queensland. The hard work and prosperity of the original Sikh farmers ensured the education and advancement of their children. The younger generation qualified and graduated in such diverse fields as medicine, economics, law, and other professional fields. In common with most young educated people from rural areas large numbers of these young educated Sikhs moved on to the bigger cities of Australia.

THE WHITE AUSTRALIA POLICY TO 1965 & THE COLOMBO PLAN SCHEME

After WWII during the era of the 'White Australia Policy' many scholars from Malaya had already begun attending tertiary education courses at Australian colleges and Universities as private students or through the Commonwealth Scholars scheme (the 'Colombo Plan Program'). These students were comprised of Malaysian Chinese, Indians and Sikhs. Many acquired opportunities to settle in Australia mainly through inter-marriage with white Australians. Others were able to secure professional and skilled job vacancies opportunities owing to the high rate of attrition of Australian soldiers during the war and compounded by the Australian requirement for national service in the 1950s in South East Asia to fight the communist insurgency in Malaya.

Familiarity with Malayan society in Malaya and Singapore and the growing Asian presence in Australia came to be seen and felt by Australians and gave them pause to reflect that Asians were not after all or necessarily inferior to Whites.

Moreover the drain by WW II on its energy and manpower caused Britain to recognize that independence was inevitable for its colonies in Asia and that the time for this was nigh. Most of the colonies achieved independence within the framework of the British Commonwealth of Nations. In order to encourage the retention of their close cultural and economic ties with the Commonwealth, Britain, Australia and New Zealand jointly devised the "Colombo Plan Scheme (or Program") to play an active role in the stimulation and development of the new Commonwealth nations, the object of the Plan being to provide academically performing students of these new nations with opportunities to pursue higher education and training in Britain, Australia and/or New Zealand.

Australia was in the forefront in providing scholarships and fellowships under this plan. From about 1950 Australian Universities and other tertiary institutions expanded rapidly to attract not only Colombo Plan students but also fee-paying Commonwealth students. Many Sikh students from India, Singapore and Malaysia took advantage of these openings. Besides the Colombo Plan scheme, other Commonwealth English-educated businessmen were also inclined towards education for their children in Commonwealth countries.

Australia became the favoured destination for Asian students in the 1950s and 1960s. Malaysians had already had a long connection with Australian troops during the Second World War and later during the time of the Malayan Emergency of the 1950s. Large numbers of Australian troops based in Malaya had fought side by side with other Commonwealth troops against first the Japanese and later the communist insurgency.

Students who came on Colombo Plan scholarships were obliged to return home as per their scholarship terms. The White Australia Policy then in force also prohibited employment of non-whites despite the growing economy of Australia. This meant that after completing their education the graduates of the new

Commonwealth had to return to their home countries. But an exception was made for students who married white Australians resulting in children of the marriage.

However, many fee-paying students felt inclined to remain in Australia, especially those who came to study in the fields of Medicine, Engineering, Accountancy and Architecture. Most Malayan and Singaporean Sikh students were essentially from the educated and professional elite of their community. Their Australian education influenced their children towards an Anglo-Australian orientated lifestyle and thinking, thereby encouraging them in turn to follow in their parents' footsteps to pursue tertiary education in Australia.

Hence a tradition of sorts had been established. These educated migrants established themselves in equally educated and professional positions in Australia. Although actual statistics are unknown the writer ventures to say that it is the Sikhs from Malaya and Singapore that today comprise the cream of Sikh society in Australia.

Over time the opinions of the emerging Asian Commonwealth nations caused the Australian Government to modify its thinking on its restrictive immigrant policies. Finally in 1967 the then Prime Minister Harold Holt removed the restrictive measures and opened the door to qualified non-white migrants to settle in Australia. Then in 1973 Australia finally scrapped its discriminatory White Australia Policy altogether.

The effect and ramifications of the overtly discriminatory race politics of the Malaysian government after 1969 and its effect on non-Malay migration to Australia is discussed elsewhere in this Paper.

POST WHITE AUSTRALIA POLICY: POST 1973

In 1973 The Australian government enacted the Racial Discrimination Act, the effect of which was to dramatically increase non-white Commonwealth migration to Australia. The main sources of the new migrants were Malaysia, Singapore, India, Fiji, Kenya, Uganda and the United Kingdom. These new migrants comprised many Sikhs not only from India but also from other Commonwealth countries. Whereas early immigrants had been mainly labourers working in country areas, these new migrants moved or based themselves mainly around the major cities working in a variety of fields. Melbourne became home to the largest Sikh population in Australia.

The early 1970s saw racial violence and riots in East African countries against Indian and Pakistani residents. This led to a further exodus of Indian families to Britain, Australia and New Zealand. They comprised mostly businessmen and professionals who settled easily into Australian society. This influx was in addition to the parallel influx of businessmen, professionals and other well-qualified individuals from India, Malaysia and Singapore choosing to migrate to Australia.

Their fields of endeavour encompassed agricultural science, farming, medicine, engineering, business and so on.

The census figures for 2001 estimated the Sikh population in Australia at some 22,000 (Sikh Council of Australia Inc), constituting some 14% of all people of Indian origin migrated to Australia. This compares to their being only some 2.5% of the total population of India. (The 2001 figures showed that the majority lived in New South Wales (11,000), Victoria (6,000) and Queensland (3,000). South Australia and Western Australia were next at 1000 each. According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics, 87% of Punjabis residing in Australia are aged under 50 and over 83% of them are proficient in English.

Sikh migrants have excelled in most fields, including law, medicine, building & construction, real estate, transport, hospitality, Information Technology, and accounting & finance, education as well as sports, cultural activities and community activities. Post-2000 saw a great increase in the number of Sikh students studying in Australia, many of them also staying on after the completion of their degrees.

THE SIKH DIASPORA TO MALAYA/SINGAPORE

Preliminary

The Sikh diaspora to Australia will be incomplete without factoring in the matter of the parallel Sikh migration to Malaya and Singapore, and for many, thence to Australia. Leaving aside the first migrations of Sikhs from India direct to Australia in the 19th and early 20th century eras, it appears post-WWII Sikh migration to Australia to at least the mid-1990s was in the main a Malaysian/Singaporean phenomenon. The large scale influx of skilled labour, professionals and students directly from India to Australia is essentially a phenomenon of the 1990s onwards.

Pre-World War I

The British began their involvement in the affairs of the Malay States in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. This encouraged and led to large scale migrations of Chinese and South Indians to the region. The attraction for the Chinese was the allurement of tin and gold mining, agriculture (especially rice) and rubber plantations. British sponsored Sikh personnel as auxiliary forces (troops or police) in the region to coincide with and manage that influx.

Enforced or Assisted Sikh migration

The first arrivals of Sikhs in Malaya appears to have begun with the transportation of two political prisoners namely Nihal Singh (aka Maharaj Singh), and Kharak

Singh in or about 1850 who suffered exile for taking part in the Sikh wars against the British. Subsequently certain Sikh convicts also suffered the same fate of exile. But convict exile was never significant enough to be recorded. In fact today there are no Sikh families living in Malaysia or Singapore who can trace their ancestry to Sikh convicts: (Sandhu, 1993).

The first voluntary Sikh migrants to the Malay States were from about the 1870s onwards. These came as mercenary soldiers recruited by the British. Sikhs began migrating to Malaya in larger numbers when the British began recruiting for the police and paramilitary forces. Captain Tristram Speedy from Penang went to India to recruit discharged soldiers (Sikhs, Punjabi Muslims and Pathans) for paramilitary duties. These forces were brought in to enforce law and order in Larut in Perak among warring Chinese clans namely the Ghee Hin and the Hai San. Thereafter they were deployed in Pangkor in 1874 before being made the nucleus of the Perak Police together with Malay and Chinese recruits in 1877 under the command of Lt Paul Swinburne.

For the Sikhs it was an extension of their newly found use of British-led opportunities to diversify their aspirations wherever they could. Much of the recorded history of Sikhs in British Malaya concerns their role as police or quasi-military units in the colonial forces and with para-military and civilian police forces, railway police, as well as clerical and railway administration staff. This inflow encouraged an equal influx of other Sikhs in search of opportunities in other lines of work. This mass migration of Indians and Chinese to Malaya was largely voluntary and became a defining feature of Asian globalization consistent with international economic, demographic and technological transformations interlinked to European adventurism and imperialism in the region (Kaur, 2011).

Voluntary Self-funded Migration

While most Sikh auxiliaries returned to India after their term of service, many chose to remain in the Malay States to be absorbed into the newly established civilian police forces in the Malay States and straits colonies (Singapore, Penang and Malacca). Similarly Sikhs migrating of their own accord also invariably tended to remain in the region and to sponsor their relatives in India to join them. They sought a more desirable life and a better standard of living for themselves and their children in their adopted lands.

Many of the latter group became dairy farmers, security guards, bullock cart owners/drivers, clerical workers, retail traders and moneylenders. Their flourishing ventures and concentration in certain districts drew other Sikhs to the same occupations and activities in the same localities facilitated by networks of family and friends. Fairly large numbers of Sikhs had settled in Malaya and Singapore (read "Malaya" to include Singapore unless the context indicates otherwise) from

the early 1900s up to the Second World War, and continued thereafter until the mid 50s when stricter migration laws were introduced.

Malaysian Sikhs can take pride in their phenomenal progress as a result of their resilience, sacrifices and the early determination of earlier Sikh migrants. Within one generation the Sikh community was transformed from being one of predominantly policemen, bullock carters, watchmen, dairymen and mining labourers … into doctors, lawyers, teachers and other professionals (Malhi, 2012).

Most early Sikh migrants to Malaya originated from the urban and rural areas of the Majha, Malwa and Doaba regions of the Punjab. These migrants were represented in the approximate proportions 35% Majha, 35% Malwa and 20% Doaba respectively (Sandhu 1969, p. 124).

These migrants worked assiduously and flourished in various spheres of life including the army, police and education and also in commerce and general labour. Many of their children became professionals in various fields of endeavour including medicine, law, engineering, accountancy and teaching.

This cross-dependence of the British and Sikhs on each other led British colonial governments to play an important role in encouraging Sikh initiatives to preserve their communal identity and defend their distinctive history, religion and cultural norms, and in the setting up of Sikh cultural and religious institutions. These developments encouraged further Sikh migration to Malaya. From the British perspective this development was closely inter-linked to the need to balance the contemporary influence of the larger Chinese and South Indian migrant communities. This arrangement was also apparently acceptable to the Malay rulers of the communities to whom the benefits thereby ultimately flowed.

THE PARTITION OF PUNJAB/POST WW II

The final phase and contributory cause of Sikh migration and resettlement in the colonies in the post-war period from 1946–57 is also consistent with the stabilization of the Sikh population in Malaya.

Many Sikhs returning to India after the Second World War after war service overseas were confronted with increasing communal violence between Muslims and non-Muslims. The resultant spectre created by the partition of Punjab for the creation of Pakistan was too traumatizing. A significant number of the Sikhs lost their ancestral lands and everything they had owned or built. Many displaced and traumatized Sikhs and Sikh returnees opted to rebuild their futures elsewhere in India or in foreign lands, especially where family and community networks were available to assist settlement or resettlement.

It helped that Malaya was then experiencing a trade boom associated with the Korean War (1950–52). The favourable economic conditions thereby created attracted not only the returnees but also new migrants and even many Sikhs from Thailand to move to the Malay States. Most settled largely in the main population

centers of Singapore, Penang, Kuala Lumpur, Malacca, Seremban and the Kinta Valley of Perak.

Whereas in 1947 Sikhs and other Punjabis jointly comprised some 42,000 people in Malaya, by 1957 they were estimated at about 61,400. On the 522nd birthday anniversary of Guru Nanak in 1990, the then Prime Minister of Singapore Lee Kuan Yew stated that Sikhs could lay claim to a long and illustrious history in Southeast Asia, utilizing colonial economic and political opportunities to great effect in pre-colonial Singapore. This claim can be said to be equally true of Sikhs across the border in the Malay States and Straits Settlements.

Within a different context Tony Ballantyne (2006, 2001) suggests that the experiences of sojourners add considerable cultural capital to political, economic and social negotiations to impact the multiplicitous 'webs of Empire'. The British Empire and post-colonial world therefore provide a more nuanced picture of the continuity and change in various localities.

Migration from India slowed considerably in the early 1950s and virtually ceased after 1957. There were two main reasons for this. First, independent India introduced its own Indian passports scheme in 1950 curtailing the practice of Indians travelling abroad without Indian documentation. Second, the introduction of the *Immigration Ordinance 1953* by the British colonial administration in Malaya laid down strict new admission criteria for migration into Malaya to curtail the entry of less-skilled Indian migrants (Sudhamani). This spelt the end of unskilled Sikh immigration to Malaya (Kaur, 2005) and also the end of unrestricted travel by Indians to Malaya.

Against the backdrop of the partition of the Punjab in 1947 there was a further (re) negotiation of Sikh identity, this time centred on issues connected with a Malayan identity. A number of Sikhs who had packed up and returned to India after the Second World War came back to Malaya in 1947–8 (personal communication with K. Pritam Singh in 1972). India became a point of cultural and spiritual contact rather than a political link. One manifestation of this Malayan Sikh identity was the formation of the Ipoh Road Indian Co-operative Housing Society in 1950 by a number of Sikhs in Selangor. The Cooperative Society's aim was to establish a "secular and egalitarian" Sikh settlement that was not linked to occupational or religious objectives. The Society's other objectives included the "establishment and maintenance of social, re-creative, educational, public health or medical institutions for the benefit of the [Sikh] community" (Kaur 1973/4, 223).

The main road leading to this housing scheme was named Khalsa Road and there are in this area currently a number of Sikh families resident who are descendants of the original Society founding fathers. Presently, professional status and wealth count for higher social standing in the Malayan Sikh community, mirroring Sikh migrants' original desires and dreams of a better standard of living. The Malaysian Sikh's adherence to a diasporic community is demonstrated by the fact that the Sikhs accept their inevitable link with their past migration history and continue to participate in Punjabi and Sikh rituals and customs. Their strong sense

of co-ethnicity with their fellow Sikhs in Malaya, India and elsewhere has meant that the Malayan Sikh Diaspora today has become an integral part of the wider history of Sikh migration and is inter-connected globally with Sikh communities worldwide.

THE RACE RIOTS IN MALAYSIA 1969

The 1969 General Elections of Malaysia saw the ruling Alliance Party coalition of three race-based political parties namely the United Malays National Party (UMNO), the Malaysian Chinese Association (MCA) and the Malaysian Indian Congress (MIC) return to power but with a reduced majority. There was a marked swing of votes away from the Malay UMNO Party dominated government. The Alliance lost key states that fell into the control of non-Malay or non-UMNO parties. The Party also lost the majority control of the central government. The racial riots that followed the election (13 May 1969 incident) led to a declaration of a state of national emergency or Darurat (en.wikipedia.org/wiki/May_13_Incident).

The emergency rule profoundly changed Malaysian society from a once tolerant multicultural society based on mutual goodwill and progress based on personal endeavour and achievement to one dependent on race, religion and intolerance against the non-Malays. Malays were declared the "sons of the soil" (*bumiputras*) and hence entitled to special rights in all fields of life and activity and to be principal beneficiaries of the common purse. Employment, commercial, economic and educational opportunities in all fields and aspects of life became the prerogative of the Malays. Permits, licences and other restrictions were made requisite on a whole range of business and economic activity. Various fields of endeavour and opportunities were reserved solely to the Malays. Initially mention was made for a sunset clause for a return to democracy upon lapse of a time frame. It was not honoured and has since been consigned to history.

To all intents and purposes the ordinary Indians and Chinese have been left floundering, bereft of any hope of equal advancement and improvement of their lot whether by study, effort or merit. They are second-class citizens in the land of their birth. The wealthier older established Chinese business classes have to some extent managed to mitigate some of these handicaps through their personal wealth, superior business acumen, and connections with Malay businesses and the booming economy of China. As for the ordinary Indian and Chinese man in the street, it remains to be seen what is to become of them and the future of their children.

This "sons of the soil" government policy motivated the many affluent and/or professional Chinese and Indians to venture forth to foreign shores to seek their futures there, or they send their children overseas to study and thence settle there. Favourite destinations are Australia, New Zealand, Britain, Canada and the United States. By 2011 the ethnic composition of the Malaysian population had reduced to

Malays and other Indigenous 65%, Chinese 26%, Indians (includes Sikhs) 7.7%, and others 1.2% (US Department of State 2011*).

The better-educated Malaysian Sikh intelligentsia and businessmen through their superior work ethics, social status and personal connections manage to maintain a reasonable standard of living. The more motivated encourage their children to study hard to become professionals such as academics, doctors, lawyers, accountants and engineers, and thence to migrate; or else to study abroad and remain there. The foregoing summary best explains why so many Malaysian Sikh youngsters adopt a pro-diasporic frame of mind, their choice destinations being Britain, USA, Canada, Australia and New Zealand where many pre-settled Sikh communities already exist.

ISSUES OF APPROPRIATE CARE FOR THE CLDB (CULTURALLY
AND LINGUISTICALLY DIVERSE BACKGROUNDS) ELDERLY

Introduction

This topic is pertinent to considerations of the present Australian immigration policy based on multiculturalism as opposed to its previous White Australia policy. The term 'multiculturalism' refers to the sense that people are linked in more ways than their birthplace divides them. Consequently as the migrant population ages their core cultural needs and traits come to the fore. Their different cultural needs and expectations then need to be met comprehensively.

Australia in common with Western countries has a rapidly ageing population. Presently Australia has some 13% or 2.5 million people aged over 65 years, and it is anticipated that by 2051 this age group will represent one quarter of the total population of Australia.

The Federation of Ethnic Communities Councils of Australia (FECCA) is a peak body representing the interests of and advocating for Australians from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds (or "CLDB"). In 2001 the top five oldest birthplace groups were Italy, Greece, Germany, Netherlands and Poland who today constitute the largest groups of CLDB persons. FECCA believes the CLDB migrant population is ageing more rapidly than the rest of the population and estimates that by 2021, 30% of older Australians will be from a CLD background. The term "older" here meaning persons aged 65 years and over (also "elderly" or "seniors").

This older group of migrant origin as a whole speak English poorly and invariably feel more comfortable in relying on their language of origin for communications with service providers. It is therefore important for the government to accelerate and deepen the nation's understandings of the needs of the ageing generally and those of CLDB ageing specifically to cater to these groups in an appropriate and timely manner.

Community Demographics

The Aboriginal Communities of Australia are recognised as the traditional owners of Australia replacing the previous misconceived description of Australia having been a "terra nullius" before the advent of White settlement. See the momentous decision of the High Court of Australia in *Mabo v Queensland (No.2) [1992] (HCA 23).* White settlement of Australia began in the 1800s with the transportation of convicts from overflowing prisons in Britain. This settlement was soon followed up by the inflow of free migrants from Britain who arrived in enough numbers to give Australia its present British heritage.

Large scale migration by non-British white settlers to Australia is essentially a post-World War II phenomenon. Large numbers of refugees began arriving from Eastern Europe and the Baltic States, Poland, Germany, Greece, Italy and Holland from Displaced Persons (DP) camps in Western Europe. In the 1950s Australia also signed bilateral agreements with various Western European countries to provide assisted passage to their nationals wishing to migrate to Australia. In contrast the majority of Southern Europeans had to finance their own journeys.

The abolition of the White Australia Policy by the Whitlam Government in 1973 coincided with a change of emphasis from family reunion and labour migration to skilled and professional migration. Large scale Asian immigration dates from this period. The largest post-WW II groups of independent migrants of non-European stock comprise of the Chinese, Indians and Malaysians (Sikhs being included in both the Indian and Malaysian migrants groups).

Significant other minority communities have also been welcomed into Australia at different times. These included Jewish groups and after the fall of Saigon in 1975, large numbers of Vietnamese under humanitarian schemes. Since the 1990s significant intakes of refugees from Africa and Afghanistan have been received and are still being received.

The Issues

Local, state and federal governments recognise the unique role played by ethno-specific and multicultural organizations in providing essential and integral service solutions for CLDB ageing people. The Department of Health articulates its vision as "better health and active ageing for all Australians": (Department of Health and Aging Annual Report 2005–2006). A range of studies have been conducted into the experiences of older people from CLDB backgrounds in assessing services able to effectively meet their needs.

One of the main barriers to this group accessing health and welfare services is their English language limitations. It appears that people who learnt English as a second language in later life tend to revert to their first language in old age, losing their command of the English language (Trang Thomas. *Older migrants and their families in Australia: Family Matters, No.66 Spring/Summer 2003).* Those who are

not able to access culturally and linguistically appropriate care are at risk of isolation, withdrawal, depression and poor health outcomes.

This indicated the need for a range of options to be developed to suit individual differing needs. The situation requires flexibility across the range of aged care services including home and community care services designed to support people living independently in the community, in respite homes or in residential care. This in turn led to recognition that mainstream services provision cannot by itself meet the diversity of needs of the community. The conclusion of the enquiries was that what was required is a mosaic of culturally appropriate measures for the CLD elderly.

There are many CLDB-specific organisations willing and able to work in partnership with government at all levels in delivering quality services to these groups. A range of consultations conducted around Australia indicate that older CLD people are not homogenous but diverse, and hence need a range of flexible solutions to meet individual needs. It is also recognised that CLD elderly cannot be defined by their cultural backgrounds and have to be considered as individuals with individual needs *(Power and Powerlessness – a project investigating matters affecting residents from CLD backgrounds in Aged care facilities:* Report, September 2006).

"Mainstreaming" whereby generalist services presently receive funding to provide appropriate care to CLD people is not and may not be the best solution. What is really required are initiatives that build the capacity of service providers to be more inclusive and to develop the cultural competence of their workforce. This is evidenced by generalist providers increasingly turning to ethno-specific and multicultural agencies for advice on how to deliver culturally appropriate care as they do not have that expertise themselves (*Ethnic Communities Council of Victoria* – A Proposal for a multicultural aged care strategy, Sept. 2006).

An example of this was provided in a paper by the Victorian Association of Health and Extended Care Issues (*The provision of aged and community care for people from CLDB)* which was referred to in a study of Victorian aged-care facilities respecting Italian persons with dementia. The paper stated that: "Elderly Italian residents with dementia are calmer and need less medication in ethno-specific nursing homes where staff and other residents speak their language. The Aged Mental Health Research Centre found that while 30% of participants had been prescribed daytime tranquilisers at mainstream nursing homes, none of those living in facilities where Italian was spoken were prescribed such drugs."

FECCA's consultations with various multicultural organisations indicate that the current government model of competitive tendering to provide funds to CLDB bodies is not working. Instead such a model inclines to diminish community networks, and provides a strong disincentive for organisations to pool expertise and knowledge and work together to achieve better outcomes for older people from CLDB: *(FECCA consultation feedback).* On the other hand a model that

encourages partnership building and enabling high quality care has the potential to create positive change.

FECCA has suggested various proposals including the provision of sufficient security of funding and the provision of bilingual and bicultural workers. It has also made various recommendations that they believe will make a positive difference. However the writer leaves further discussion on these issues to a more appropriate body to consider.

SOME ASPECTS OF GRANDPARENTS AND GRANDPARENTING: VOICES OF SIKH GRANDPARENTS

Introduction

A discussion on family life will be well-served by a concomitant examination of grandparenting. Grandparents retain an integral role to play in extended Indian family units in the care and nurturing of their grandchildren. This role impacts beneficially in a number of ways on the welfare and wellbeing of the family unit as a whole. The grandparents' involvement facilitates the parents (the "middle generation") to relocate and rebuild their new lives and seek and secure gainful employment in the new country. The children have a guardian while the parents are out at work. And the grandparents feel useful and wanted. A survey will soon elicit responses that include representations such as

"well, you know in our community grandparents are expected to play an important role in many ways."

And one cannot disregard the "silent" role grandparents play in maintaining the bond between the three generations by passing on Sikh traditions and practices to the grandchildren.

At this stage I wish to insert an important caveat to make this discussion more relevant and contemporary. My discussion relates to Sikh grandparenting in Australia. We may therefore assume that both the grandparents and parents under discussion hail from or possess a similar educational and social background. This common background is an important factor in the expectation of grandparents expecting and receiving all due respect from their children.

The Nature and some Problems of the Role

Hereon for ease of expression grandparents are described as "grandparents", the middle generation as "parents" and grandchildren as "children".

The nature of the parents' role may be compared to being the "meat" between two slices of bread; one slice being the grandparents and the other the children. In the words of one parent's voice

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"we are caught between the values of our parents and our personal values, and how any clash of these values may be perceived by our children."

Another parent commented that

"our parents want their grandchildren to show respect to them, complaining that today's young people are not respectful enough."

From the foregoing 'conflict' one can surmise that despite the benefits of the grandparents' role, the grandparents' own sensitivities have their attendant problems.

The cultural mores, values and sense of familial duties probably common to most Indian religious traditions provide a sense of community life where the younger generations are expected to hold their elders in respect and be conscious for their care and wellbeing. The grandparents are expected to impart and cement the culture and religious practices to the younger generations. The parents are expected to promote the familial bonds between and across the age groups. In the words of one Sikh grandfather

"our religion teaches us the traditions of "langar, seva, and sarbat da bhala". It is our duty to pass on these values to our grandchildren, but to do so we expect the parents to play their due part by accepting our role and not openly contradicting or challenging us."

As in traditional families the role of the grandparents in Australian Sikh households is facilitated by residing with their children and grandchildren or else in close proximity to them. The grandparents expect to be treated with due respect by both younger generations. One grandparent expressed it thus

"I live with my son's family. My son and his wife have three children aged five to fifteen. I act as their carer and mentor. I therefore expect respect from my son and daughter-in-law, and their support in my role towards the children. The parents do this so the children have to conform. They do pay due respect to me."

But not all is as rosy as may appear. As grandparent, Preetam Singh puts it:

"These days it is becoming very difficult to live with extended family. My son and daughter-in-law are both professional people. They live with me but yearn for their own separate household. They want their personal freedoms and their own modern ways of living. They want to raise their children in their own way and I get the impression they resent my "interference" in their way of raising their children."

This conflict is truer where Sikhs live in big joint families within predominantly Australian communities *(Sikh Community Profile,* City of Whitlesea*)*. But this situation appears to be becoming less common. Contrary to the stereotypical image

perceived by some Westerners, very many Sikhs do place value on the independence and privacy of the individual. A retired Sikh lawyer stressed that people of his age group with similar educational backgrounds have long encouraged the younger generations to stand tall and be self-dependent to compete with the White Australian community. (Migrant Information Centre, 2010).

Family issues tend to be discussed first within the immediate family in accordance with cultural expectations and resort is had to outside help only if that did not resolve the issue. The elders of the Sikh community are well-aware that being now resident in Australia their personal writ is constrained by Australian law and societal expectations. But even where adult children live independently of their parents and raise their own families, they nevertheless continue to maintain close links with their parents and other family members and meet regularly for social visits and/or religious events.

Moreover within the context of globalization and migration there is a growing trend towards grandparents playing significant roles in the wellbeing and lives of their grandchildren. This is particularly true when the help in question involves the grandparents taking their grandchildren to school, babysitting them when both parents work, playing with them, looking after them when they are sick, buying them presents and so on. And in circumstances where the parents experience financial problems, grandparents who can afford it help to pay the grandchildren's school fees, buy them text books, and so on.

Many grandparents live longer today than their previous generations. This leads to some of them having to live with their adult children. In such instances these grandparents help to share in a number of roles with parents. These include teaching the grandchildren the Punjabi language, Sikh cultural values, and keeping them entertained, listening to their problems and generally spoiling them. Such grandparents play an important role as family historian in passing on the family history and legacy to the grandchildren.

Such Intergenerational relationship often enhances the quality of life for young and old alike. According to *Christiane Purcal, Deborah Brennan, Bettina Cass (2011)*, "grandparents raising grandchildren are increasingly on the policy and research agenda in Australia and internationally. Little is known however about the diverse circumstances and experiences of these grandparents."

Grandparents: Support & Funding

Although today all grandparents are not necessarily elderly, many need help and support. *Greg McIntosh, Janet Phillips (2003)* state that there is an

"array of services and support provided by the State to the elderly in Australia. The terms 'elderly' and 'aged' are taken here to mean people over the age 65. A number of government programs (Commonwealth, State/ Territory and local) provide support and services for the aged in Australia. In

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addition there are programs and support by the community and voluntary sectors (particularly families and carers). Such services may be provided by private for profit sector and/or not-for-profit sectors.

The aged are also entitled to access 'mainstream' support and services (for example, health care, housing support and income support). As these services are equally available to the whole population, it is not possible to precisely identify exactly what is provided to the aged and what it costs."

Funds are also made available by the Office of Multicultural Interests and Local governments to support ethnic organizations to deliver essential services to culturally and linguistically diverse communities.

State Departments of Heath also provide cultural diversity information. For instance the Australian Institute of Family Studies provides, among other family related issues, the latest research information on grandparents' roles in families and child care, grandparents' contact with grandchildren after their parents' divorce, grandparents raising grandchildren, and on cultural issues involved in enhancing the well-being of linguistically diverse families (CaLD). Also see, *Multicultural Information Directory, 2009–2010; Vicnet Directory-Indian Community, State Government of Victoria; Government of Western Australia Office of Multicultural Interests.*

I have been unable to locate satisfactory relevant literature on Sikh grandparenting in Australia nor how much of it if any is being accessed, nor am I aware of any studies in the area specifically of Sikh grandparenting in Australia. It is unlikely there is satisfactory literature in the area of Sikh grandparenting roles in Australia as against that of mainstream Australian households. Little literature if any on Sikh grandparenting appears in the public domain. By the same token it is unlikely that there is any public information on the needs and desires of Sikh grandchildren.

It may be that that this area of study has not attracted much attention as Sikhs in Australia remain very much a minority community and the issue may not have attracted attention, nor is much known about issues of Sikh intra-family and inter-family conflicts in Australia. The paucity of interest in researching Sikh issues in Australia could be explained to such factors as the perception that Sikh culture prefers to "save face" to protect the family "izzat"; to spare the family from shame in the eyes of the community. This may be compounded by the community belief in modesty and shyness which are highly appreciated in Indian culture.

Hence within these cultural constraints, family issues would generally tend to be discussed first within the immediate family before recourse is had to outside intervention. To quote Jit Singh, (a grandparent who speaks only Punjabi):

"I will be too ashamed to ask for help from social workers in the event of conflict with my children or grandchildren. Nor would I have any idea where to seek help."

There may be many reasons for the lack or perceived lack of such literature. Perhaps Sikhs in Australia still retain their privacy more closely than in Canada, UK and the United States (the writer admits he cannot personally confirm this). The lack of a common contemporary history between Sikh migrants from different countries is made worse by the present lack of meaningful interaction between such Sikh migrant groups themselves in Australia. We need to bear in mind that the Sikh community in Australia originates from such diverse countries as India, Malaysia, Singapore, Afghanistan, Fiji and East Africa, let alone Sikhs long settled in Australia. The writer is of the opinion that these diverse backgrounds of origin have influenced migrants to think, behave and act in different ways and directions. And this is the real or active cause for the lack of commonality and cohesion between the different Sikh communities in Australia.

The Role of Sikh Associations & Gurdwaras

The role of Sikh Associations & Gurdwaras in arranging venues for Sikh families from different source countries to gather and interact is of the utmost importance. Their role in providing common meeting areas for Sikhs from different source countries to meet, pray and dine regularly acts as the single most important catalyst in encouraging and maintaining a common bond between them. All Australian capital cities and many larger Australian cities are likely to have Gurdwaras run by Sikh Associations. Such associations are likely to have management committees comprised of members hailing from different countries.

Parishioners get together not only for the customary Sunday prayer sessions but also to mix, socialise and celebrate Sikh occasions like *Diwali, Vaisakhi* and *Gurpurbs*. Sikh weddings are solemnised in the Gurdwaras as are thanksgiving and funeral *bhog* prayers. Gurdwara associations or their offshoots organise and support Sikh sporting activities. Such activities include hockey, golf and badminton. Competitions are held not only between Sikh teams but also with non-Sikh teams and include interstate and international teams.

Interviews with Sikhs from different countries tend to elicit common comments such as:

> "I go to the gurdwaras to feel at peace; I often feel lonely and look forward to the opportunity to meet other Sikhs at the gurdwaras; my family members need to meet and get to know other Sikhs; I need play outlets and Sikh teams provide this medium"

and so on, and so on. Most such activities and opportunities come from meeting and socialising in gurdwaras and Sikh activities. An elderly matriarch and widow Surjit Kaur particularly appreciates gurdwara-organised outings as they

> "enable us to socialise, meet Australian people, see how they act and behave, how they interact with their children",

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and so on.

There can be absolutely no doubt that but for the Gurdwaras there would have been little if any opportunity or facility for Sikhs originating from the different countries to meet, mix and fraternise. All age groups assist in the management, cooking, washing up, and serving of langar food, and so on. Interestingly in the main or capital cities, though the parishioners may originate from different countries, the prayer routines and weddings tend to be conducted in the manner of Sikh gurdwaras in Malaysia and Singapore, the legality being sealed by a marriage celebrant, generally a Sikh. This may be explained by the fact that most gurdwaras in capital cities were originally established, maintained and run by Malaysian and Singaporean Sikhs.

Current Australian Immigration Policy

Australian immigration policy limits migrants to nuclear family units, meaning confined to parents and immediate children. Australia immigration policy also accepts extended family migrants within the context of family reunions under strict pre-conditions. Reunion is limited to aged parents. A sponsor is required to produce evidence of adequate personal funds to fund and maintain the care and welfare of the sponsored parent(s) without recourse to the public purse. Surjit Kaur (quoted earlier) confirms she was sponsored by her son after her husband passed away in India. The son and his wife work in the city and needed her to look after their young children.

> "I am a widow; these are my grandchildren, so I am more than happy to be here with them."

The inescapable fact though is that generally only wealthier migrants are in a position to sponsor in order to meet the stringent requirements.

Consequently within the Australian context the issue of grandparenting roles is more topical to where the sponsoring "child" has long standing residence and Australian citizenship coupled with a satisfactory financial standing to nominate his parents' migration. This situation differs from that where the grandparents were the original migrants, whether before or after marriage and their children accompanied them or were subsequently born in Australia, thus becoming grandparents to their childrens' children born in Australia.

The Present Position

There are both advantages and advantages in different generations living together as extended families, or within close proximity of each other. In fact the writer personally believes the idea of extended families living not under one roof but in close proximity is ideal to promoting extended family relationships. In the absence of undue pressure or conflict between the generations, clearer lines and practices of

interaction become apparent. The grandparents retain their personal individuality yet feel less isolated and forgotten. Any sense of idleness is overcome by the opportunity to spend quality time with their grandchildren, teaching and familiarising them with their mother tongue, and generally making them conscious of their culture, religion and heritage. Grandparents help parents care for their children as and when their assistance is required. Grandparents may also convey the children to and from school; have them over for weekends or when the parents need space of their own for social or other activities, and so on.

This distance proximity works to everybody's benefit and welfare and promotes the closeness of family ties without undue suffocation. In Surjit's voice

> "I do not impose but make myself available to help my children and their children when asked. I like this arrangement. I think this is a good way to keep my own independence and have good family relationship,"

Such free co-dependence frees the parents of the children to go out to work with more relaxed minds. They also have more time to themselves to go out after work hours and to all-adult social activities and other outings where the presence of children may be inconvenient.

The writer's long-held belief and confirmed with discussions with some like-minded respondents discloses great support for an "independent and separate yet united" co-relationship *(*the Indonesian national motto "*bin ika tunggal ika"*, namely "unity in diversity". Such a relationship fosters a continuing and more appreciative yet less intrusive place for grandparents in the lives of their grandchildren. Ex-Malaysian retired Doctor Partab Singh though feels that such arrangements need more open and mature minds to fully function and such arrangement may find more opposition from more parochial Indians from those regions of India where parental control is stricter and more encompassing.

Grandparenting of the above nature may be termed "healthy grandparenting" as it tends to encourage more patience, closeness, mutual respect and tolerance between the generations. As one respondent succinctly expressed it, the unfettered unity promotes better friendship and respect all round. But as in most cases ideal situations and extreme situations may unfortunately co-exist. The healthy grandparenting scenario is based on aspirations for a "best possible outcome". The flip side of the coin is the maxim of "familiarity breeds contempt" which may lurk in hidden corners. As aptly put by a disgruntled respondent

> "even healthy grandparenting can easily come unstuck where the parents separate on hostile terms"

such as divorce.

Teacher Paramjit Kaur recently split from her abusive husband. She feels that

> "these days you can never know when families are going to split."

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The fact is one cannot ever ignore the possibility of a separation in extreme cases that generates so much hostility and abusive relationship between the erstwhile spouses. It can be really hard to retain civility and keep traditional family relationships going in such situations.

It is evident that more involvement, effort, commitment, cultural work, and formal big-scale and informal small-scale community and neighbourhood based research need to be undertaken to fully understand the needs of Sikh grandparents in Australia and their roles in the nurturing and care of their grandchildren.

The Future of Sikh Extended Families

Anecdotal evidence appears to indicate that future close contact between different generations of Sikh families whether in India or the diasporic countries will orientate towards maintaining social contact only by way of occasional family gatherings and activities. I say this because current evidence indicates that in the current era Sikhs whether from India or Malaysia or Singapore are more mobile when resettling and spreading their wings to different parts of the US, Australia and New Zealand. Whether family reunions under this trend will be as equally convenient and/or satisfying when compared to different generations living under the same roof remains to be seen.

The Australian emphasis on private personal lives and personal space may influence extended Indian families presently living in close proximity. With the current emphasis on personal space and the differing expectations of the different generations one may anticipate more frustration and aggression between the different generations within extended households,unless support and understanding grows for "independent and separate yet united" relationship. Given the historical resilient nature of the Indian diaspora, this may indeed be possible!

NOTE

i   This Article is written on invitation from *Dr Amarjit Singh* of the Memorial University, St. Johns, Newfoundland, Canada with encouragement from the writer's sister *Prof Amarjit Kaur* of the UNE, Australia. These invites encouraged the writer to finally take the plunge into his long-held interest in writing. Though not being a historian or an academic, the writer has nevertheless held a long abiding interest in the affairs of the Northwestern Indian subcontinent with particular reference to Sikh and Pashtun affairs. This paper provides him an opportunity to engage in research on the subject matter as well as gives him a medium for expressing himself. The writer makes no apology for his style of writing any reader perceives as being presumptuous in claiming special knowledge of the subject. But his humble apologies are due to any writer or source of information if due attribution to him/her or it is inadvertently omitted.

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MOHIT PRASAD

5. LADKAN KHELAYAN HAI: PLAYING WITH THE GRANDCHILDREN – INDO-FIJIAN GRANDPARENT RESPONSES TO THE ASSIGNATION OF CARE-GIVERS

ABSTRACT

This chapter documents grand parenting from a small cross section of the Indo-Fijian diaspora. The Indo-Fijian diaspora refers to the community descended from indentured labourers brought from India to Fiji from 1879–1920, as well as descendants of smaller groups of later free Indian immigrants who arrived after 1900. This study based on the words of the respondents on their cultural and social role as grandparents, particularly that as caregivers for their grandchildren, is prefaced by a short literary-historical narrative on the Indo-Fijian diaspora. This narrative draws on socio-cultural studies and from Indo-Fijian literature for context. The respondents are drawn from Fiji and from the second-shift diaspora of Indo-Fijians in Canada, United States and Australia. As a cultural referent point a single respondent from the Fiji-Chinese diaspora in Canada is also included. Included among these stories of grandparents is a selection from the particular solitude of grandparents who are widows, and widowers. Their words, collectively, form the language of grandparents informed by a particular cultural mother space – India (China), and a historical leap into their diaspora in Fiji, and subsequent journeys of transmigration fraught with the narratives/counter-narratives of genealogy and generational fillips.

One Canadian winter, the 'Lady from Canada' finds herself overwhelmed by an unexamined feeling. On an impulse, she announces she wants to go 'home'. Her grandchildren are puzzled, 'What's gotten into Grandma?" They are concerned but have no time for nostalgia, because they have a different notion of home and identity. (Subramani, 1992, *Altering Imagination,* p. 92)

INTRODUCTION

This chapter documents grand parenting from a small cross section of the Indo-Fijian diaspora. The Indo-Fijian diaspora descended from indentured labourers brought from India to Fiji from 1879–1920. It also refers to descendants of smaller groups of later free Indian immigrants. This study is based on the words of the

respondents on their cultural and social role as grandparents, particularly their responses, when given an assignation as "caregivers" for their grandchildren. It is prefaced by a short literary-historical narrative on the Indo-Fijian diaspora that contextualizes the role of family and grand parenting. The respondents for this study are drawn from Fiji and from the second-shift diaspora of Indo-Fijians in Canada, United States and Australia. Indigenous Fijian or I-Taukei respondents are not included due to the Indian diaspora assignation of this paper. There is a valuable study to be taken in that direction, through a comparative paper on grand parenting among I-Taukei and the Indo-Fijians. As a cultural referent point a respondent from the Fiji-Chinese diaspora in Canada is also included. Included among these stories of grandparents is a selection from the particular solitude of widows, and widowers. Their words, collectively, form the language of grandparents informed by a particular cultural mother space – India (China), and a historical leap into their diaspora in Fiji. The initial journey and subsequent transmigrations generate narratives and counter-narratives of genealogy and generational fillips, between grandparents and grandchildren.

Such transmigrations include a second shift migration that is common among many descendents of the sugar and other plantation labor centered indentured Indians across the globe. Brij Lal (2008) alludes to this commonality in the following excerpt:

> As we leave South Africa, I have the distinct sense that for many young Indians, while South Africa will be the home of their parents and grandparents, it won't be the home for their children. …As has happened in other places with substantial Indian populations like Fiji, Guyana and Surinam, South Africa too, will empty of its Indian population and gradually vanish from the collective consciousness of its diasporic community into the margins of a distantly remembered past. (p. 17)

This fragmentation of motherlands, between India as place of origin and their new countries of labor, residency, birth and citizenship under indenture, gains a third dimension and new marginality. This third dimension is the new homeland in the often realized metropolitan magnets for migration in the former settler colonies of Canada, the United States, Australia and New Zealand. The first two countries are the more commonly aspired to destinations from among the Indo-Caribbean diaspora. For the Indo-Fijian diaspora, the spread is even among the four countries. There is a wider area of study not possible in this narrative of this spectacular movement from the independent but often politically volatile former colonies to global metropolitan centers, in this case former European settler colonies. Fiji, Suriname, Guyana, and Jamaica are among former indentured/plantation colonies where descendents of Indian indentured labor were politically marginalized after independence.

These subsequent journeys of transmigration are captured by Brij Lal's earlier statement on second shift migrations. Subramani (1992) places the dichotomy

between such fears and longings in his autobiographical piece 'Drought' based on a journey to the place of his birth on Vanua Levu, the smaller of the two main islands in the Fiji archipelago.

> People have no concept of history any more, he continues. I listen to his lucid, aqueous Hindi, enchanted. He used to be a Labour Union leader and President of the Mandali. He is worried about the future of his grandchildren. He is afraid, and sees dark days ahead. That is why he likes to escape into the past, when the town consisted of a bungalow, and tiny shops with wooden verandahs, when the laundry man drove his cart through the street, and everyone knew each other and there were so many interesting people to talk to… (p. 62)

Both, Lal and Subramani, delve into identity politics among a diaspora that attempts to make sense of a particular history and the fears and hopes that drive the imagination and the feet onto planes to leave a place and a past, mythic, idealized or real. The origins of these fears and longing go back to earlier spaces within the diasporic psyche that is now well documented in the history of the Indo-Fijians. In 1879, the first shipload of indentured Indians on board the Leonidas gazed upon the bays and hills of Levuka, the old capital of Fiji. Destiny, karma or mischief, usually a combination of these and the associated push and pull factors of imperialism, in the mid-1800s, had brought many of them to Fiji. In this instance, to be off-loaded as part of so much of the merchandise of British colonialism in Fiji, the result of a convenient labor migration/indenture agreement between Raj and Raj. Brij Lal, through the vast oeuvre of his works, documents and critically engages with both these larger histories. His early scholarship best documents the varied and often localized reasons for such movements of labor and with it place, time, fears and longing. Lal establishes the fact that the push factors that wrote a ship register of the indentured could be traced back to local conditions in India, of drought, famine, and the varied nature of politics under the British Raj. This localized nature of migration under indenture meant often whole extended families were part of the cargo of Indians transported to Fiji as labor. Brij Lal (1979) documents such familial migrations in his account of some of those who perished in the ill-fated ship, the Syria, which was wrecked off the coast of Viti Levu, the main island of Fiji:

> Another striking feature of the Syria immigrants was the very high number of families among them, mostly coming from the district of Monghyr. Typical of the many families on the ship was the extended family of Somerea, fifty year old widowed Mushar from Monghyr: she was accompanied by her son Bundhoo (twenty-eight years), and his eldest brother Gurdial (thirty years) and his wife Sonicharee (twenty-eight years), their son, Bolaki (ten years), and their three daughters, Kublasia (seven years), Jeeroa (four years) and Sookeri (fourteen months). (p. 29)

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Lal's documentation of the tragedy is significant in revealing the extended family structure within the indentured in their journey from India to Fiji. The indenture system and the ensuing period of indenture between 1879 and 1920 were given the popular vernacular variant of *Girmit*. This term was derivative from the practice of thumb printing/signing a contract or "agreement" that consigned one to indenture. Subsequent generations of Indo-Fijians have created its own mainstream and subaltern discursive systems towards the creation of an Indo-Fijian ideology and world-view.

K.L Gillion (1962,1973), Vijay Mishra (2008), Brij Lal (1983, 1992, 1998, 2000, and 2004), Ahmed Ali (1976, 1980) and Vijay Naidu (1980) from various academic disciplines see the *Girmit* period as an important point in the generation of a particular ideology and world view for an Indo-Fijian diaspora. This is usually related to theories and perspectives on the displacement and transportation from India to the different political, geographical and cultural surroundings in Fiji. Away from the everyday and lived experiences of this world view, in academia, this is often quantified and qualified as a cultural manifestation with various schools of thought on a definitive or dominant ideology of the Indo-Fijian diaspora. Vijay Mishra (2008), for instance, argues that the Girmit ideology has been shaped by thwarted millenarian expectations, by nostalgic links with the cultural traditions of the Indian centre, by perceived and real threats from the indigenous presence, and the political and social apparatuses of control and manipulation, installed and implemented by the British colonial administration in Fiji (Nelson, 1992, xi-xii). It is beyond the scope of this paper to critically engage with these arguments in any depth, given the particular delimitations and stated aims under study. One of the overlooked areas, in most of the studies cited earlier on an Indo-Fijian ideology and its manifestation of a world view, has been the role of the family and individuals in the sense of their everyday lived lives. One recurrent manifestation is found in Indo-Fijian literature on the ideal of the unity of an extended family, which is in a normative sense, driven by exemplary work ethics to success and status in the wider community. The Indo-Fijian writer Raymond Pillai (1980) makes this point in his acclaimed short story 'The Celebration':

> Your father wanted you to grow up into a strong, honest man. That's why he brought you up so firmly. And not just you only. We all felt the weight of his hand at one time or another. But we've all benefited. We are wealthy. We are respected in the whole district. And we are still a united family. So many families quarrel and break up after the father dies. (p. 92)

Other prominent Indo-Fijian writers, like Subramani, Satendra Nandan and Sudesh Mishra, acknowledge the *Girmit* period and experience as an important moment in creating an Indo-Fijian diasporic society. Their narratives and the salient role of the family are also critically engaged with by the Indo-Fijian literary and diaspora critic, Vijay Mishra, most recently in *Literature of the Indian diaspora: theorizing*

the diasporic imaginary, apart from his earlier foundational works, some of which are cited in this study. Literary narratives, unlike historical studies and theoretical perspectives, engage with and define ideas and values of the family and generational/genealogical relationships within the Indo-Fijian diaspora, in a more substantial manner. Family as an institution, and within it the roles of parenting and of grandparents within the Indo-Fijian community, is often related to the cyclic nature of life and social and familial responsibilities. This prescription of roles within the family cuts across sectarian religious Hindu-Muslim divides. Such ascription and acceptance of roles is derived from religious scriptures. It is often self-prescribed, as is the case among the respondents for this study.

Indenture as "agreement" is a false and misleading part of the colonial vocabulary. This has been well documented by the above mentioned academics and writers, who instead argued in line with Gillion's (1973) assertion that indenture system was "institutionalised slavery". Gillion goes on to point out '… the notion that there could be a fair and equal contract between a colonial government and an Indian peasant was illusory.' (p. 38) Brij Lal (1992) documents the inequities of indenture when he documents the 1890's as the:

> …darkest days of indenture experience, a time of heart-rending rates of infant mortality, of excessive discipline and repressive legislation, and of a general unwillingness on the government's part to guard the rights of the labourers. (p. 41)

Lal relates this violence to the family through high infant mortality rates; as well as concomitant factors, such as high rates of suicide, plantation violence, sexual violence, domestic violence and child abuse. Added to this are the oppressive living conditions of the 'Lines' or plantation barracks, immortalized in Indo-Fijian folk song forms such as the *Bidesia*, some of which were documented and translated in English, by J.S Kanwal (1980). This particular folk song tradition grew from the largely impoverished Bihar region in India, to mark and often lament the loss of people to migration. The folk songs and associated folk theater, *bidesia nautanki*, in the first instance were compositions and dramatic narratives, respectively on internal labor movements in India, and then the overseas movements under indenture. Brij Lal through his oeuvre of works extensively documents such movements out of Bihar and the Northern hinterlands of India in the first wave of indentured migrants to Fiji after 1879.

A historical narrative that is given a parallel, novelistic impetus by Amitav Ghosh (2008) in *Sea of Poppies* traces migrations and transmigrations out of this Indian hinterland to the promised lands of prosperity. For the Indian indentured labor this promised nirvana turned out to be isolated, albeit exotic islands and places such as Fiji, Surinam, Mauritius, Guyana, Trinidad, South Africa, Kenya, Nigeria, among others. Then there are the historical narratives that became part of the generic oral stories about indenture told by grandparent to grandchild in all these lands and islands.

> One of the most touching stories that I recall from my childhood days is the one that my grandfather told me. He told it with a certain wry humour. …I grew up in my grandparents' lap. It was a lap lavish in love and affection. (Kumar, 1979, p. 81)

Vijendra Kumar, a noted journalist and first local editor of the Fiji Times, goes on within this excerpt to tell the tale of a band of Girmityas who made a short lived dash for an India. They believed their ancestral homelands to be just over the mountains from where they were indentured. Oral generational narratives from grandparents to grandchildren are common in two collections of Indo-Fijian biographical fiction; *Bittersweet* (2005) and *Stolen Worlds* (2006), edited by Brij Lal and Kavita Nandan, respectively. It is thus within this particular framing of literary and biographical narratives of the Indo-Fijian diaspora that the responses from grandparents need to be contextualized. In their responses, there is ready agreement with the alternative theoretical paradigm found in the historian Ahmed Ali's work on *Girmit*. Ahmed is an often undervalued commentator on the Indo-Fijian diaspora through his works on *Girmit* and indenture history.

Among the respondents in this study, the relationship between history and the cyclic nature of their religious beliefs, as *dharma* particularly among *Sanatani* Hindus, is put forward as the basis of their acceptance and devotion to the role of grandparents. Such a response ties in with the earlier studies by Ali (1980), where the idea of indentured life being akin to a living hell, is *Narak* or hell as opposed to the idea of *Swarag* or the paradise they had been promised by the recruiters or *Arkatis* (p. 15). However, Ali inserts an important marker in concluding that;

> Though girmit had been *narak*, Fiji was itself not a permanent hell. Once one's *karma* had been fulfilled through the agonies of girmit, a new incarnation was possible at contract's end; the new karma enjoined utilising opportunities and succeeding in this world, material success was the new *moksha*. (p. 15)

Ali utilizes the religious theorem of hard-work/endurance/hardship (girmit) leading to new work/life (*karma*) opportunities, as the path towards salvation from material and worldly hardships or (*moksha*). Among grandparents, this theorem is given a material and worldly expression, when caring for their grandchildren (and great-grandchildren). They attain salvation by providing care as a matter of duty, as *dharma*. This is apparent in their rejection of a determination of their role as caregivers. And similar dismissals of the idea that they are functionaries as a transactional role, where the care of children in lieu of paid care giving is the reason for their relevance and value among children and grandchildren.

For the general reader of this contribution on grand parenting in the Indo-Fijian diaspora, it is important to demarcate Fiji's history into several important epochs. This falls in three parts. The Indenture Period from 1879 to1920. This period, in part, runs concurrently with the second epoch, designated as the Colonial Period

from 1874 to 1970. The third is the post-independence/postcolonial/neo-colonial period since 1970. Fiji's post-independence history after the glorified celebrations on 10th October, 1970, quickly degenerated into the quicksand of racialism and provincialism. The schisms and fissures between the two major ethnic groups, the Indigenous Fijians, or I-Taukei and the Indo-Fijians, came to the fore. All of the respondents in this study were young adults at Fiji's independence, with young or growing families.

The respondents' invocation of Fiji from the immediate post-independent era subscribed to the artifice of nationalism and citizenship that had caught their imagination. Their lived experiences highlight the possibilities of such ideals, but turn reactionary at the realities of Fiji's failures. The respondents' evocation of a paradisiacal image of their homeland, and most strongly affirm this over any other – India/China or where they are now, is contextualized in their memories and imagination, in the shadows of the military coup in May 1987. This coup was directed at the country's first labor party government, perceived to be dominantly Indo-Fijian despite an I-Taukei Prime Minister and racially mixed cabinet. It is beyond the scope of this chapter to engage into greater depth with the intricacies of causes of the 1987 coup and those that followed afterwards in 2000 and 2006. However, it remains part of the context for this study and is embedded in the responses from the grandparents, particularly in its impact on family and kinships among the Indo-Fijian diaspora. Subramani writing in 1995, almost a decade after the 1987 coup, articulates this shock to the Indo-Fijian psyche, in his introduction to *Altering Imagination*:

> On May 14, 1987 life changed permanently for us in Fiji. Overnight a familiar world became defamiliarised as a certain movie: armed soldiers on the streets of Suva, a gunshot in a chemist shop, a bomb explosion in a car: we were beginning to live the bad news of some other parts of the world. One might say in the latter half of 1987, a different kind of imagination entered the social and political life of the country. (p. 8)

In 2000, an ostensibly civilian coup was led by elements of the Anti-Terrorism Unit of the Fiji Military Forces. It ousted the government of the first Indo-Fijian Prime Minister of Fiji, Mahendra Chaudhary. The coup was eventually quelled by the larger military, after which the military took an increasingly direct role in Fiji's politics. Chaudhary's government was not returned to power. Instead, they were forced into another general election against a party led by the military appointed interim Prime Minister, Laisenia Qarase, in July 2000. The Qarase led party won the general elections in 2001 and again in 2005. During this period his government reverted to ethno-nationalist policies, which were cited by the military as the reason for executing another coup in 2006. Fiji reverted to rule under a military junta led by coup leader Frank Bainimarama. This potted recent history of Fiji is relevant to this study of grand parenting, as it provides context to the words of the respondents.

The words of the respondents for this chapter, collectively, speak of a particular cultural mother space – India (China), and a historical leap into their diaspora in Fiji. Embedded in their narratives are responses to the various embarkations and dispersals of their personage as cargo of history. As third generation descendents of migrants to Fiji, the respondents were all born between in 1930–1960. As such, they grew up, were educated, worked and raised families within the colonial period and the immediate post-independence period of 1970. Out of the nine respondents, six are now resident outside of Fiji and four of them left after 1987. Such emigrations are not just a recent phenomenon nor are they without implications on relations within the community. Donald Brenneis (1979) inasmuch points this out based on studies of conflicts and conflict resolution mechanisms among the Indo-Fijians during the early 1970s.

> Those families whose children have found good employment because of secondary or university education are also likely victims, as are those whose relatives have emigrated to Canada. (p. 48)

This process of the continual breaking up and further dispersals and removals of Diaspora and arrests of migration/dispersal is overlooked by theories on diaspora, which foreground a unitary modality as the discursive position. The creation of new geography and culture-bound Diasporic literatures indicates widening/shifts/ breaks/removals of the circles away from the original homelands of their dispersals. The *Girmit* experiences of the forbearers of Indo-Fijians have provided the basis for much intellectual debate and aggrandizement as the definitive source of angst for Indo-Fijians. This self-definition in terms of the *Girmit* gets voiced by Indo-Fijian politicians, intellectuals, and writers. It also finds currency in popular expressive and performance based articulators such as folk-singers, popular comedians and story-tellers and more recently through popular culture forms such as films and rap. Academic scholarship often overlooks the central place of family and kinship ties in determining the lived reality that underlies many of these more communal narratives on defining a diaspora. Family dispersals through migration lead to the natural attrition of the extended family unit and its communal space that was traditionally part of the Indo-Fijian family structure. This is often resisted and re-configured in the second-shift dispersals of the Indo-Fijians to countries like Canada, Australia, New Zealand and the United States. Some evidence of this is found in the assignations of the care-giving roles of grandparents in this study and the resistance of respondents who cite their roles as being part of the extended family structure and its familial cycle of roles, responsibilities and obligations. However, it remains beyond question that the series of migratory dispersals from India to Fiji and to new homelands reconfigures individual and familial determinations of the imagination and psyche of being. This thematic engagement with family is sustained throughout Subramani's 'Sautu', regarded as among the seminal short stories exploring the Indo-Fijian diaspora;

> A cloud had descended on Dhanpat's life after the simultaneous departure of Ratni and the children. Immediately after Ratni's death, Dulari was married. Then Dhaniram found work with a tailor and he shifted to town with his wife. And Somu disappeared from Sautu. With these exits a great deal of love banished from Dhanpat's life. (p. 104)

The banishment of love in its communal avatar, as a tragedy of movements and migrations out of the familial, is a universal theme in the study of the diaspora. This is also found among themes in the wider trends and areas of scholarship on grand parenting. As a disclaimer, given the largely sociological bent of the responses in this paper, it does not study self-rated health of grandparents in various comparative frameworks with attendant reasons. Such frameworks can be found in a wide variety of scholarly studies specifically on those areas and with that particular research focus: for example, Minkler and Fuller-Thompson's study of self-rated health of grandparents raising grandchildren with non-care giving grandparents. Among the Indo-Fijian diaspora, and as is common across the Indian diaspora, high divorce rates, single parent families, single mothers and other non-traditional permutations including same-sex parent families are areas of contemporary significance that requires scholarship relative to aspects of families especially when it comes to the traditional role of grandparents. Areas that scholars like Linda M. Drew, Mary H. Richard and Peter K. Smith have examined in their various individual research and scholarship are two related areas in which grandparent roles are particularly under stress: grandparents acting as custodial parents and grandparent-grandchild contact loss in cases of parental separation or divorce. Peter Uhlenberg and Bradley Hammill and their work on the frequency of contract between grandparents and grandchild is another area of relevance in a wider study of grand parenting in the Indo-Fijian diaspora. Jane Pearson, Andrea Hunter and Joan Cook provide another element to the area of grand parenting studies through their study of grandparents as caregivers in the urban environment.

The important area of gender relations and differences in the grand parenting experience is also an area of importance that is brought out in this study, and adds to the wider scholarship on the topic. This study through the respondents differentiates between grand parenting lineages and sets along patriarchal and matrilineal lines. Indo-Fijian traditional and religious dictates carry particular values for each lineage and set. For example, Indo-Fijian women at childbirth traditionally went back to their parents' household to give birth and for the associated post-natal recovery period. Given the cultural lineages of the Indo-Fijian diaspora, this is an important determinant in the responses of grandparents about their role in caring for and contributing to the nurturing of the grandchild. The delimiting exercise for this chapter finally arrived at the positioning of a discourse on what assignation was to be given to grand parenting among the Indo-Fijian and the one Fijian Chinese respondent, based on their response to being called "Caregivers". In the Indo-Fijian diaspora, the role of the grandparent in looking

after the child is qualified through the Fiji-Hindi phrase, "Ladkan Khelay Hai", which directly translates as 'Playing with the Children". A phrase that the Chinese Fijian grandmother also agreed as her choice of a culturally centered definition of looking after her grandchildren, as opposed to the term "Caregiver". Playing with the children…

CHINESE FIJIAN WIDOW GRANDMOTHER

Marion*, is a widow and grandparent to four grandchildren from her two sons. She is currently domiciled in Richmond, Vancouver, Canada with her younger son, his wife and their two children, a son (2) and a daughter (5). Her other son is resident in Fiji and has two children, a son and daughter. She is a second generation Fijian-Chinese, and was widowed at an early age from her aircraft engineer husband. She brought up her children in Fiji and educated them there and her elder son earned his qualifications from Australia. She comes from a large family and a sizeable number of her extended family, including her brothers and sisters, live in Vancouver. She grew up in Ba, a large township on the Western part of the main island of the Fiji Group, Viti Levu. Her parents operated a bakery and grocery shop. She operated a school canteen and then a thriving restaurant at the main municipal market in Fiji's second city, Lautoka. Marion migrated to Canada, following her son, in 1997. She speaks fluent Mandarin, and is conversant in English, Fijian and Fiji-Hindi. After retiring she had looked after the children of her elder son in Fiji and now her main work is a caregiver grandparent to her grandchildren in Canada.

> I think of my role as a grandmother as an extension of my role as a mother. I virtually grew up as a single parent – as a widow – with my two children. All my love and attention was on them. In Fiji, and among the Chinese generally everywhere the role of the mother and then grandmother is clearly defined. We are expected to look after our children and their children as they look after us in old age. There are other external relations and factors in this version of the extended family, especially the relationships with the daughters in law. I am also mindful of the changes in the relationship with your sons as they get older and get married and have obligations to their wives, and sometimes to their families. In the Fiji situation, among all the races there are shared complications and joys in the family. Among the Fiji-Chinese the family bond is very strong and an important part of our progress through life. We came from a large family and most of my brothers and sisters were well educated and provided for by our parents. Today, we share our roles as grandparents, and most of us find ourselves in the care –giving role, although we don't define it as such. It is more of a cultural obligation and no-one I know of sees it as the same way as a formal care-giving role is, for example for old people. I know in my case and that of most of my

brothers and sisters who are now grandparents, and even friends, from across the races in Fiji, the whole business of looking after grandchildren can be quite different from how the Europeans see it. It is not so much an obligation, cultural or moral, but something inbuilt in us, it is very natural; it would be unnatural to be a grandparent and not provide care for your grandchildren. It will be like abandoning your natural offspring. Or like abandoning your parents in old people's home, as they are called in Fiji, and if you did that you were looked down upon. Looking after my grandchildren gives meaning to my life and where I can, I try and meet some of their needs, even financial to the best of my abilities. In turn my children look after my needs, I get to travel a little bit and spend time with my brothers and sisters here in Canada. I also miss my son and his family back in Fiji as I miss my friends and the kind of life we have over there. I made a decision to be here and am proud to be a grandmother to my grandchildren so that in my little way I can contribute to their lives. I know they learn their language from me as well as little cultural things about being Chinese, even if we have come a long way from there, over a long time, through Fiji and now in Canada. Sometimes they teach me how to be a Canadian.

*Full name withheld for privacy, as per other respondents.

BABU: WIDOWER GRANDFATHER TO TWINS

Babu, seventy-six, went to Canada in 1998 after the expiry of lease on his cane fields in Ba, Fiji to join his son and daughters who had migrated there earlier in 1990. A farmer with various skills in carpentry, he continues to work and often takes jobs as a house painter, outside of Surrey, Vancouver, where he lives with his daughter. He had previously lived in Calgary with his son. Most of his work is for members of the Indo-Fijian diaspora around Vancouver. He had migrated with his wife and youngest daughter, both of whom were involved in a tragic car accident, with the mother losing her life. As he stays with his daughter most of his activities center around her twin sons (2), but he usually shares the care giving task with his sister-in-law, who is herself a widow and was married to Babu's younger brother, with a number of grandchildren from the same maternal grandparents' set as part of the larger extended family. Given the expensive nature of childcare in Canada and that most of the respondents emerged from migrant groups in the lower socio-economic band in this study, the shared care-giving arrangements provide for anywhere between 5–8 grandchildren to be looked after. Babu is an itinerant caregiver given his erratic work schedules but provide practical and moral support to his sister-in-law, in the larger shared arrangement apart from providing occasional care for his two immediate grandchildren. This is limited mainly to filling in the times when his daughter needs to go shopping or drive her husband to his security guard job, usually at night.

As a grandparent and as a male I have fewer expectations as to what I can do for the grandchildren. I mostly supervise them when their parents are not around. The twins require double the care and my being around makes it a shared burden for my daughter. After the loss of my wife I am very close to my daughter and to her children. I have lived previously with my son and know how the whole extended family operates. We have to do a lot of sharing of responsibilities in Canada in order that we can progress. This is not new to us. We did the same thing back in Fiji. It is in our culture and even the religious books say the same thing about our duties as a householder. I have looked after my children now I look after their children and also those of my larger family as a reward rather than as a punishment. I do this on my own terms. Sometimes we all adjust but most times there is no pressure. I am not dependent on anybody. I draw an income and get supplementary pensions and can get by on very little. I travel when I want to. I have friends and still have a life outside the immediate family. I don't like the words 'care-giver' there is no such thing in our culture or religion. It is our duty, our karma, while we live to do that for our children and their children. It should be seen as an expression of love and acceptance of life and how we manage things between the generations. As we grow older we have less need while the young their needs grow with them and I take pleasure in looking after them and having the means to provide for them. It is fun to watch them grow perhaps without the same level of commitment as that of being a parent. At the same time we are still doing the parenting job by making life easier for our children. We all have different styles and values in looking after children. I still do things my way. Sometimes it irritates my daughter and also my son-in-law, he is from India, and culturally some things are different from the way we do things in Fiji. We are more laid back and accepting of things as they come and adopt the same attitude towards children and grandchildren. He sometimes confuses what I say and how I say things with their general standards on what should be said to children or not. I know when I am not needed in the whole drama with parents and children and step away from things. Most of the time being around the little ones means I have something to look forward to other than work and some kava or a few whiskeys.

MAMI'S STORY AS WIDOWED MOTHER, GRANDMOTHER AND GREAT-GRANDMOTHER

Mami was widowed when her husband was killed in a work accident, in Fiji. She was left with three young daughters and a son to bring up. She depended on her own family and that of her deceased husband to bring up her children. As a measure of the nature of family bonds this included staying close to the sisters and brothers of her late husband and their children while in Fiji. She was an integral

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part of the birth ceremonies in the family and took on the role of acting as a post-natal midwife. This role extended to both sides, both her birth family and that into which she had married. Her two daughters eventually migrated to Canada in the early 1990s, and she stayed behind in Fiji with her other daughter. She lost her son who was the family leader at an early age as well. This third daughter had her own tragedy of being widowed at an early age with two daughters one of whom was unborn at the death of her father. These children eventually migrated to Canada through the family reunion program and adoption and Mami also moved to be with them in 2004. Their mother remained in Fiji. Mami lived with her younger daughter and provided care giving for her great grandchildren, from the grandchildren of all three daughters now living in Canada. She extended this to other great-grandchildren, including that of her brother-in-law Babu's daughter.

I follow a long tradition in my family of looking after children. I come from a generation of women who were taught at an early age and prepared for bearing and looking after children. I was married young, had children at an early age, and then was widowed young. In that regard my training to care for children became my strength against adversity. It provided a means for me to be useful for my children but also for the children in the larger family. I remained within the folds of the extended family from my late husband's side. They continued to accommodate me and my children in all the social and cultural activities. I was close friends with some of my sisters-in-law and brothers-in-law as well. I could go and spend time with them as if my husband was still alive due to the respect they gave me. Later in life, I raised my grandchildren as my daughters and late son led busy lives in Fiji. I lived with my son and after his passing with my remaining daughter in Fiji. Looking after her daughters became the driving purpose of my life. It was important to organize things in the house so that they had the best chance to do well in school. We had never been well-off and for most of our lives we lived simple but fulfilling lives. The migration of my two daughters after their marriage opened up other possibilities, but I was also saddened to see them go. I missed on not being there for the birth of all their children, but whenever possible I travelled to see them and help out in raising them. With the task of looking after the two grandchildren left in Fiji, I could not see them as often as I wanted to. When they were also able to come to Canada and with my other daughter now independent in Fiji, it was logical of me to come over and help out with the great-grandchildren. That is the practical side to all this. We have to join hands, have unity in the family, in order for our children to progress. We were all taught that the lives of children and their children be better than what we had. They have so much more materially, all of them are well off, live in this rich country with its cars and big houses. There is so much to admire in what they achieve. I feel that in my own little way I have contributed just a little bit towards that achievement. I

do not have any qualms about being seen as a care giver. It is not a word that I would think about or associate with what I do as a grandmother and great-grandmother. In fact until this word was used in the interview I thought it was something that all the Fijian women did in the States, you know those who come over to look after the elderly in the homes. I am a mother, a grandmother and a great-grandmother not a caregiver.

PRATIMA AND RAJ: SHARING GRAND PARENTING

Pratima and Raj came from two farming families and were married in their early twenties in 1960. They lived on and worked a family farm on the outskirts of Rakirraki, a small town in the North-Western corner of Viti Levu, Fiji's largest island. On this farm they raised a family of two girls and a boy. In 1985 they moved to San Franciso, California and the family now lives in Fremont. Not in a typical fashion among the Indo-Fijian diaspora, the Singhs and their children live within a postcode or two in Fremont. They have two grandchildren from their eldest daughter, a grandson and granddaughter both now in their early twenties, and three granddaughters from their son. They played the role of caregiver grandparents to their older grandchildren that they combined with busy work schedules worlds away from their idyllic farm life. Raj ran a cleaning contract while Pratima worked in a hospital. They raised their children to be high achievers with a premium on education. Their son is a dentist in a thriving private practice, while their eldest daughter is an entrepreneur, and their younger daughter is a physiotherapist. Pratima is now retired while Raj is semi-retired. Their time is increasingly taken up in looking after their three younger granddaughters who range in age from 3–8 by providing a drop in centre from school and pre-school activities, while their parents pursue their busy careers. They chose to give separate interviews.

PRATIMA – FROM SISTER CAREGIVER TO GRANDMOTHER

I was raised in a large family of nine siblings and as the eldest sister had looked after children while I was still a child. Growing up among both sets of grandparents and often being shuttled among them gave me my first impressions of their place in family. I was among children sent to live, work and study with my paternal grandparents who ran a restaurant and lodging house in Ba town. Our parents stayed behind to work the farm and chose to send us there because we could get good education in the Catholic schools there. Our grandparents were tough and in some ways rough because they lived in a business world and I had a step-grandmother who could be harsh on us. We had to live through all that because from an early age our father drummed into us the value of education in order to get away from the

hardship of farm life and the uncertainty of leased land. My personal recollections of life with the grandparents varied in the time spent between the two sets. There was very little time to sit back and reflect on what was our relationship with them. They understood their roles and provided the platform for us to get an education. This was common to many of us in that time going through school in the late 1940s and in the 1950s. Many of those who went through the schools in the towns like Ba came and stayed with relatives, we were lucky we were living with grandparents, who provided us a roof to stay and three square meals. During those times children were born in quick succession and I already had five siblings all growing up within ten years of each other. Away from the parental home it was important to maintain a sense of family among us and to ensure that the most promising among us had the best opportunities to progress through education. As the eldest, as it happened in most families, and being a girl, once we got to what was seen as marriageable age then education could and often did take a back-seat. It happened to me and as the first to be married off I quickly changed from a child into an adult with the added responsibilities that came with marriage. My role as the eldest and raising my own family apart from living in a large extended family with my husband all contributed to the shared sense of responsibility in looking after each other. I feel that a great part of this sharing of responsibility came down to looking after the young in a communal sense. No-one really questions this role. It is not something that one has to do but one that is each one is born to do. Some resist the role, particularly today, with ideas about independence and having their own space. We do the same and keep time aside for our personal, community and business commitments, but as in the past the bulk of our time, and increasingly since retirement is spent in looking after the grandchildren. Having three granddaughters who are close in age reminds of my own growing up time. Sometimes I can see myself and my two other sisters who were close in age to me in their faces and what they get up to.

RAJ: FAMILIES AND MEMORIES OF FIJI

Growing up in the rural community in Rakiraki as a young boy I had various experiences of grandparents. My paternal grandparents were from Maharashtra in India and were Marathi's and this gave me a stronger sense of my origins then among other people. I could see they were of tough stock and did their talking through their work. Their work ethic was something that rubbed off on me as a young boy. As a grandparent I believe in the same work ethic and that all work carries value. I inculcated this in my children and now in my grandchildren. I also grew up in a new environment in Fiji after the indenture period among the indigenous Fijians and learnt their language and ways. We spent a lot of time among them and in a sense

because of the proximity of our farm to their village lived with them. I am still pretty fluent in speaking Fijian although because here in Fremont I don't always get the opportunity to practice it, sometimes I am a bit rusty. Living there one could see clearly the shared communal responsibility for children among the villagers. There seemed to be no difference between children in the families or those born out of wedlock and especially how they were treated by the grandparents. They showed equal caring, compassion, what they call 'loloma' among them. I realized then that the relationship between grandparents and grandchildren could be universal. Although, it was not always so, as sometimes they suspected the child to be a product of miscegenation among Indians and Fijians, and often they would become the butt of jokes. Even then, this was not extended to ostracizing either mother or child, but accepting them as children with straighter hair and noses. My own experiences as a grandparent are obviously colored by these phases of my growing up. I became a grandparent in America and I feel that in some ways the experiences are a bit different because of that. Grandchildren as a rule in Fiji are more obedient and discipline can be enforced on them, as it was done with us. Here, we have to adjust to their growing up, better language skills and of course they are all very confident from an early age. As an Indo-Fijian grandparent during my first experience with the older grandchildren was they led and we followed. We were not able to devote that much time as we still had work and family responsibilities. At the same time we were very much part of their growing up. They formed a bridge for us into the wider community here. At the same time we were able to impart in them a sense of where they came from, and this from them could be challenging, as their mother was from Fiji and their dad from India, but they were all in a sense Indians. Yet, they were not, for being Indian from Fiji can be a completely different thing then being from India. With the younger granddaughters, it is becoming a hands-on experience as they are at an age when we get to see all of them. As they grow older they will spend less time with us and we can already see that with the oldest going to school. God-willing as they move on perhaps the great-grandchildren will take up their space.

PARUL: SINGLE GRANDMA

Parul is a divorced single grandparent. She lives in Canberra, Australia and has three sets of grandchildren from her son and two daughters. Her grandchildren were all born after her divorce and she maintains a family home that is the centre of the extended family activities. She has provided direct care for all three sets of grandchildren. Currently, she provides care on a regular basis for the two sons of her younger daughter and a granddaughter from her other daughter. After her divorce she retained custody of her children who were in the late stages of high school and provided for them through their tertiary studies. The children had lived

with her until their marriages. Parual had settled in Canberra with her former husband and children in 1990. Her role of a single grandparent who is divorced was not common among Indo-Fijians but seems likely to increase given the higher divorce rates, particularly in the second shift diaspora out of Fiji into Australia, New Zealand, United States and Canada. She does not share grand parenting duties with her former husband.

I find looking after the grandchildren a continuation of my role as a mother to my children. I suppose it is a normal instinct to have and it comes naturally both in your own expectations and that of your children that you will play an active role in the lives of the grandchildren. As a single mother I have learnt to respect the views and aspirations of my children. I have provided guidance and support as required. At the same time I expect the same respect for my views and independence. As a grandparent I find the role is a pleasure, often demanding as one gets older, but there is always the smile on the faces of the grandchildren that makes it worthwhile. I get to see glimpses of my children, their father or mother in them, and at the same time that of their other parent as well. I get to see some of that individuality repeated in the children of my children. In that way one also gets a feeling of reviving or taking the relationship with your child to times past through the grandchildren. As a single grandmother I shared some of the caring with their paternal grandmother, as my two daughters were married to brothers. This remains a bond as their paternal grandmother in practice is also a single grandmother as she has an ailing husband. I don't know, but maybe as a community, among Indo-Fijians we tend to point our character traits in the grandchildren and link it to their parents, or grandparents, as we did with our children earlier. Sometimes we take this search for character traits further back and cast the net wider seeking associations with other members of the extended family. Often this can be done to affirm the intelligence or advanced nature of their development relative to their age. I suppose, as a community, we start young when it comes to passing judgment on the children. I see that as a means of providing them with the ideal aspirations of good work ethics and the goal of having them one day become at least tertiary qualified professionals. Given that my children were all early in their careers as were their partners there is also a material aspect to the role. You feel obliged in the sense that you are providing further support for them to establish their careers and their family by sharing the burden of raising a child. One also gets the joys of such a burden. As the grandchildren were born, I assumed the role of care giving quite naturally, but as I said earlier within the determination of their parents. This, I feel is often neglected among our community, in the relations between grandparents and their children over the grandchildren. We cannot assume that we know best or determine how they are to be brought up. It is right and often easier to leave this to their parents. We wanted that same independence

when we had our children. It is only right to give that independence to the children over our grandchildren.

KUSMA: MIXED MARRIAGES, MIGRATIONS AND GRANDMOTHERS

Kusma became a single grandmother recently. She was married for over fifty years. She has five children, with four sets of grandchildren from her three sons and a daughter. Her daughter became a single parent with a granddaughter. Her eldest son, who lives in Sydney, Australia, has a teenage daughter. Her second son has four daughters. Her youngest son has two daughters and the sole grandson. Her role as a grandmother along with her late husband stretches back more than 25 years when her first grandchildren were born. These grandchildren of her second son had an indigenous Fijian or I-Taukei mother. This is not a common union in Fiji. She provided daily care for a procession of grandchildren that followed at the family home, even when the nuclear family lived apart. She traveled to Australia to provide care for her granddaughter at birth. She cared for the children of her youngest son, who remained at the family home for the period during which this set of grandchildren were born and entered school. She lives in the family home alone with her children and grandchildren all living in their nuclear family units.

My first grandchildren came early as my second son married young. Their four daughters all were born close to the family home as my son worked in the tourism industry. As a family unit, especially as parents we had initially been wary of our son marrying an indigenous Fijian, but ultimately we left the decision to him and accepted his choice of bride into the household. It was a relationship that grew with the four beautiful granddaughters they provided for us and the eldest was virtually brought up by me. We shared a close relationship with this eldest granddaughter and this relationship extended to her mother, who we found to be a respectful, fair-minded and very good nurturer for the children. It also provided me an opportunity to learn about the extended family and clan from her side of the family. Their close knit nature and values I discovered were the same as we had. It is testimony to the value that we placed on the relationship with our first daughter-in law, who was Indigenous Fijian, that she retained the same respect and humility for us as her in-laws, even after her divorce from my son. In later years, as my own children moved away from home, she continued to come and spend time with us and looked after us. This extended to staying in the family home and then later visits at the hospital as her father in law took sick. As my late husband retired and we expanded our transport business, we found we had the time and money to lavish on the grandchildren. The expanding business for a while also provided an opportunity for our two sons to work together with us. This led to the

continued relationship we had with the other grandchildren who followed in quick succession among our children. All of a sudden we had five grandchildren who were all very close to each other in age. The children of our youngest son were all brought up in the family home as he lived with us. The grandchildren provided a bond for us with our children. The family home was always there and we expected to be part of their lives, as we provided care for them as well as in a material sense through shared responsibilities in the family business. This family business unraveled over a period of time as the two sons took different directions and eventually opened their own business ventures. This had an impact on the relationship with the grandchildren as they moved away from the family home. The death of their grandfather brought them all together and in their mourning they expressed the love and devotion we showed to them when they were in our care. Now, as a single grandmother, I find the grandchildren have grown up, and I don't have the same responsibilities as before to provide care for them.

PAT: THE SINGLE GRANDPA

Pat is a widower and single grandparent. After a long career as a restaurateur Pat retired to the family farm and now looks after a small sharecropping holding with one of his brothers, just outside Lautoka, the second of Fiji's cities. He has two sons and a daughter. His grandchildren set come from his daughter. She was single mother with twin boys and now has a daughter from her partner with whom she is in a stable relationship. Her sons have a Rotuman father and her daughter has a Ni-Vanuatu father. Pat's first grandchildren were born shortly after the death of his wife about a decade ago. He had moved to the family farm and built his own residence on land allocated to him in 1990. He shared the property with his parents living in the family home until their passing away in 2006 and 2007, respectively. His children have all moved away with the daughter and older son living in Suva. His younger son is studying in Australia.

> I found myself a grandfather in strange circumstances. It followed shortly after the death of my wife. I knew my daughter was pregnant and she had determined that she wanted to be a single parent. The knowledge that she would have twins was worrying at first as we were all emotionally stretched at that point. I have shared a close relationship with my children and the passing away of their mother at a relatively young age was something to get used to. The coming of the grandchildren was a blessing as they provided a focus for all of us. It bonded the family and with the responsibilities of looking after the twins the three children really responded to the task for them. They stayed in Suva, due to work and study commitments, and the two boys staying with their sister provided a family support, that would normally come from the parents. I was instantly close to the two boys and while I was

not there to provide care on a continuous manner, I tried to give whatever support that I could. Due to the nature of my daughter's work that means frequent international trips, the boys were left in the family home. I was not the sole carer as either the brothers were there and in all instances their nanny stayed with them. These instances provided me an opportunity to bond with the two boys. There was never a question of seeing them as fatherless. I do not believe in those cultural values that cause a father or mother to turn away from their children because of the choices they make, especially when it comes to marriage and children. I believe in basic human values of love and compassion. In any case as a new grandfather caught up in the emotion of having grandchildren, this was never a matter for discussion or debate. Having the grandchildren and that too as twins means having double the trouble and double the fun. I admit, I have never been the care giver as some other grandparents are. I have the luxury of their company for a short period, and they have their whole support network that their mother has provided for them. The same arrangement has continued with the new granddaughter. I share a close relationship with her father who is usually here for all the children. He is a very humble person and accords me respect and at the same time, someone who blends in well. He has taken over fathering responsibilities for all my daughter's children. As a grandfather, while I do not subscribe to the traditional values, I want all my children and grandchildren to do well and they remain close and united. This comes from the love they have showed each other after losing their mother and the compassion among them in welcoming my grandchildren, her children and the nephews and niece for the two brothers.

LADKAN KHELAY HAI: PLAYING WITH THE CHILDREN: RETROSPECTIVE

Playing with the grandchildren seems a euphemistic, seemingly strange description of the complexities of grand parenting. The reaction against the term "Caregiver" or assignations of transactional values, such as grand parenting duties being part of the material values and exchange that is attached to sponsorship and accommodating parents through migration, is similarly dismissed by the respondents. The term "Caregiver" has formal and institutional discourses associated with it that is disowned in this study by the respondents as a term to prescribe their role in grand parenting. It carries the added discursive burden of being vocation to provide care for the aged – that is a popular menial migration vocation among the Fiji diaspora, particularly in the United States. The preferred discursive term among the respondents is that the grand parenting role is an expression of love that fits in with cultural, religious and historical matrixes on their relationship with grandchildren.

This study remains skeptical of the expression of love as the determinant in grand parenting among the Indo-Fijian diaspora. It is difficult to assign this as sole and definitive element in a series of complex relationships from the personal to the familial to the societal domains; series of relationships made even more complex in a complicated world of migrations with its associated ledger of losses and gains, of notions of homeland, motherland and new places to live. As a starting point it is not an impossible discursive position to document grand parenting in the Indo-Fijian diaspora with the lonely Chinese-Fijian respondent. Their point that love is at the core of the grandparent and grandchild relationship perhaps needs to be given due currency and its desired position in this study. A shared one love that is poignantly expressed in the verse below by Darren Kamali, a poet of mixed islander and European ancestry from Fiji living in New Zealand.

So much sacrificed
So far have you gone
Still the sea breeze
Tells tales of your undying love
For your people
Your culture
For each other
My great grandmother
My great grandfather
Your stories must be told
All in the name of love (p. 79)

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MAYA KHEMLANI DAVID

6. ROLES OF SINDHI GRANDPARENTS IN MALAYSIA

Malaysia is made up of Peninsular Malaysia known as West Malaysia and East Malaysia which consists of Sabah and Sarawak. Malaysia is a multi-ethnic country with a population of 23.27 million, who use at least a hundred languages. Of the total population, Bumiputeras, who are Malays and other indigenous groups, comprise 65.1%, Chinese 26.0%, and Indians 7.7%. While the Malay majority consider themselves "indigenous," non-Malays, such as the Chinese and the Indians, are described as non-Bumiputras, or more controversially, 'immigrants' since most of them arrived and settled in Malaysia during the colonial period. Within each group, a variety of languages and dialects are spoken.

   This research focuses on one of the Indian communities in Malaysia, more specifically the Sindhis. First, however some background of the larger Indian community is necessary. The majority of first-generation Indians (Tamils) migrated to Malaysia to work in the rubber estates during the British regime. The Tamils in Malaysia are located under the category of Indians and they constitute the largest Indian community in Malaysia, with 85.9 percent of the Indians in Peninsular Malaysia being Tamils, as of 1991. The other 14.1% include the Malayalees (3.2%), Telegus (2.43%), other Indians (6.77%), Sri Lankan Tamils (1.6%), and Pakistanis (0.91%) (Khoo, 1991; Population Census 1980, p. 22). The Department of Statistics Malaysia Census classifies the Indian Population as is presented in Table 1.

   The national language of the country is Bahasa Melayu (Malay), a language of the Austronesian family but Mandarin and many dialects of Chinese and Dravidian languages like Tamil Telegu, Malayalam, and Indo Aryan languages like Punjabi, Bengali Gujerati and Sindhi are also spoken.

   It is manifestly clear that Malaysian Indians are not ethnically homogenous and consist of the Tamils, Malayalees, Telegus, Punjabis, and Bengalis among others. However, in essence the Indians can be categorized into two distinct groups: North Indians and South Indians. 90% of the Malaysian Indians are South Indians. The South Indians consist of the Tamils, Malayalees, Telegus whilst the North Indian group comprises the Punjabis, Gujeratis, Sindhis and Bengalis, of whom the Punjabis form the largest number. Whilst the majority of Tamils are Hindu, the majority of the Malaysian Punjabis are Sikhs by religion.

   The heterogeneity in ethnicity is also shown in religion. Within each ethnic group there are not only a number of languages and dialects (see Table 1) but also

Table 1. Indian Malaysian population by year

Group	1957	1970	1980	1991
Indian Tamil	556,453 [75.70%]	746,558 [80.00%]	925,448 [85.10%]	1,112,907 [84.71%]
Malayalee	51,188 [3.70%]	44,199 [4.70%]	34,864 [3.20%]	44,215 [3.37%]
Telegu	27,089 [3.70%]	31,332 [3.40%]	26,113 [2.40%]	34,615 [2.64%]
Sri Lankan Tamil	24,616 [3.30%]	25,288 [2.70%]	17,421 [1.60%]	14,935 [1.14%]
Sikhs	NA	NA	32,684 [3.00%]	44,815 [3.41%]
Other Punjabi	NA	NA	5,148 [0.48%]	NA
Sinhalese	3,314 [0.40%]	3,550 [0.40%]	3,080 [0.28%]	2,121 [0.16%]
Other Indian	61,456 [8.40%]	72,138 [7.70%]	32,118 [2.95%]	44,758 [3.41%]

(Source: DOS.2000)

a variety of religions. Table 2 shows the wide range of religions practiced in Malaysia. In fact, religion tends to further differentiate ethnic groups. For instance, there are Tamils who are for the large part Hindus but there are also Tamil Christians, and Tamil Bahais. The Malayalees are also for the large part Hindus but there also are Malayalee Christians and Malayalee Muslims (see David & Nambiar, 2002; Nambir 2011). In the same way the Punjabis are for the large part Sikhs but there are also Hindus, Muslims and Christians. As for the Gujeratis there are Gujerati Jains, Gujerati Hindus, and Gujerati Muslims. There is a further division among the Christians as some are Catholics, others Methodists and the other Protestant groups (see Daniel, 1995).

This lack of homogeneity is also seen in the fact that the Sri Lankan Tamils who speak a variety of Tamil appear in the official statistics as a separate group (see Table 1) from the Tamils who came from South India for the large part as indentured labourers. This heterogeneity among Malaysian Indians is further exacerbated by the caste system. For instance, the Natukottai Chetty is a society for merchants whilst the Maruthuvar Sangam is for the Maruthuvar caste (hairdressers) (Hj. Mohd Jali, et al., 2003, p.151). Even after coming to Malaya, the social segregation mentalities between the different castes were carried over to their new countries: the Tamils (of the lower caste) were supervised by *kanganis* (overseers) and *mandurs* (foreman) who were from the upper castes (the MSN Encarta Encyclopedia website). Today most Indians deny the importance of caste in transplanted Malaysia but in-depth questioning reveals that the notion of caste is an important consideration in mind sets (interviews with Sindhi respondents).

The divergences among the Malaysian Indian community is reflected in the fact that the Ceylonese (Sri Lankan) Tamils do not identify with the Indian Tamils and like to emphasize that they are Ceylonese Tamils while the Punjabis prefer to identify themselves as Punjabis rather than Indian. This compartmentalization is

Table 2. Malaysian Indians and religion

	Numbers	**Percentage**
Islam	69,043	4.10
Christianity	130,408	7.70
Hinduism	1,412,686	84.10
Buddhism	20,144	1.20
Confucian/Taoist	1,244	1.20
Tribal/Folk	922	0.05
Others	35,632	2.10
No Religion	791	0.04
Unknown	9,262	0.55
TOTAL	1,680,132	100.00

(Source: DOS, 2000)

also reflected in official statistics where the Tamils are grouped separately as Indian Tamils and Sri Lankan Tamils and the Punjabis as Sikhs and other Punjabis, i.e., Hindus, Christians, Muslims (see Table 1).

The Indians in Malaysia had been coming to Malaya for a very long period and from very early days. However, it was during the British overlordship from the nineteenth century onwards that Indian migration made an impact on the Malaysian scene. There were two kinds of migration-assisted and non-assisted (Arasaratnam, 1979). Under the former scheme, the British brought in indentured laborers, mostly Tamils to work on the rubber plantations in Malaya. Soon they felt the need for educated people to manage the workers and inevitably their choice was the Malayalees from Kerala (see David and Nambiar, 2002, p.143). This is because the Malayalees had a highly evolved system of education and their proficiency in English made them ideal communication links between the Tamil workers and the English employers. The Malayalees were also employed in many Government departments and private firms. The British also brought in Punjabi Sikhs to work in the police and army. Some professionally-qualified Indians also migrated and first settled in the Straits Settlements and later spread into the Federated States of Selangor, Perak and Negri Sembilan (Arasaratnam, 1970, p. 33). In the early years of the 20th Century, many Sindhis (mainly from Karachi), Sikhs (mainly from Rawalpindi, Lahore, Ludhiana, Jullundur and Amritsar) and Marwaris arrived (Tyebkhan in the Penang Story website). The Sindhis came mainly to the Straits Settlements, Penang and Malacca to open textile shops or work as sales personnel for earlier established Sindhi businesses.

During the British regime the majority of the Indians (Tamils) in Malaysia had low incomes and they mainly did low-skilled (e.g., plantation workers and labourers) or unskilled blue-collar jobs. But there has been rapid upward mobility especially among the Sindhis, Punjabis and Malayalees and many of the third

Table 3. Malayan Indian population composition and historic background

Composition	Background
Tamil	Originated from Tamil Nadu
	The largest ethnic group in Malaya (90% of the Indian population in Malaya)
	Most worked in the rubber and oil palm plantations. Others worked in government offices.
Malayalee	Originated from the Malabar coast
	The working class is mostly found in the plantations and the middle class, in clerical and professional employment.
Telegu	Originated from Andhra Pradesh
	Most worked as labourers in plantations.
Punjabi Sikhs	Originated from Punjab
	Most worked as police and railway station officers, security guards. Also involved in the rearing of cows. It was said that the Sikhs' bullock cart service was an important form of transport in the tin mines.
	Starting from the 1920s, there were many Sikhs involved in business and the professional fields.

(Table adapted from Hj. Mohd Jali, et al., 2003, p. 151)

generation are found in professional sectors like law, engineering, education and medicine (see David, Naji & Kaur, 2003 on the Punjabi Sikh community; David and Nambiar, 2002 on the Malayalee community; David, 2000 on the Sindhi community).

The overall backdrop of the Indians broken down by ethnic grouping is shown in Table 3.

Indian labour migration, which began in 1786 with the establishment of Penang as the first British Crown Colony up to the recession of the 1930s, was essentially a South Indian, predominantly Tamil phenomenon. The non-labour migrants refer to the "literate" Indians brought in by the British Colonial regime from Ceylon and South India to man the administrative and technical services; and North Indians (mainly Sikhs) for the defense and security services. There was also a group of free migrants consisting of lawyers, doctors, merchants, petty traders and moneylenders who followed in the wake of the planned migrations to cater for the special needs of their countrymen. In short, Indian Malaysians are not a homogenous ethnic community. At the time of Merdeka independence in 1957, almost 70.4 percent of the Indian Malaysian labour force was in the rural plantation and mining sectors. In 2000, 15.1 percent remained in the agriculture sector whilst 62 percent were in the manufacturing and services sectors. In the period 1970 to 2000, it is evident that Indian Malaysians clearly moved from being agricultural workers (44.1%) to production, transport equipment operators and labourers (39.4%). There has been a

massive transformation from a mainly rural to an urban labour class (Appudurai and Dass, 2008).

THE SINDHIS IN MALAYSIA

The Sindhis came from Sind, which used to be a part of India, but is today part of Pakistan. The Sindhis have traditionally been a trading community. According the Bharadwaj (1988, p.149 in David, 2001), "Sindhi youth customarily travelled outside their home to seek their fortune" and Sindhi firms have been established in many parts of the world since the nineteenth century. Settling down in Malaya was mainly a consequence of the partitioning of India in 1947 which resulted in Sind becoming part of Pakistan. As merchants they naturally gravitated to urban areas like Penang, Malacca and Taiping to cater to the British force stationed there (David, 1996). Today the majority are found in Kuala Lumpur.

About seven hundred people make up the Malaysian Sindhi community. Within the community, approximately 20 to 25 percent have contracted exogamous marriages. The first members of the community initially arrived in Malaysia during the British period to trade, principally in textiles. During the Second World War, the Sindhis established themselves on a more solid footing in the country. The permanence of their stay was further consolidated by the partitioning of India, when Sindh, their original homeland, became part of Pakistan. Many Sindhi Hindus residing in Malaysia, then known as Malaya, lost their homes back in Sindh and decided to remain in Malaysia as well as in other areas where they had settled earlier. With the passage of time, children of the first generation entered, in contrast to their merchant-parents, more professional and skilled jobs.

Since settling in Malaysia, Sindhis have experienced a language shift. Many of the first-generation Sindhi women were not, and still are not fully proficient in English. Sindhi remains their primary language. In contrast, the first-generation Sindhi men, who were largely merchants, are competent in English. In addition, a variety of Malay known as Bazaar-Malay, has generally been the language of preference for cross-cultural and local encounters; Bazaar-Malay is widely used by Sindhi men with those who do not have English, and is also used by many first – generation women with those who do not speak Sindhi. This variety of Malay is usually not formally learnt but acquired through service encounters. Second-generation Malaysian Sindhis who attended English-medium schools during the colonial era are proficient in English, which has increasingly become a dominant language among Sindhis. Most second-generation Malaysian-Sindhis generally only use Sindhi to communicate with older, non-English speaking community members. They also use Malay with non-English speaking domestic help, which may include Tamil or Indonesian domestic servants. As Malay (the national language) is the medium of instruction in schools, many third-generation Malaysian Sindhis are proficient in standard Malay and use it rather than the bazaar form of Malay. They are also proficient in English, which is often spoken

by their second-generation parents. So, when second and third generation Sindhis from English-speaking homes interact, they generally make little use of the Sindhi language.

The use of different languages within the same conversation occurs frequently within the Malaysian Sindhi community. During the process of shift, use of the Sindhi language, although it is no longer the dominant language for communication among them, can be continued for vestigial purposes (David, 1996).

Despite historically strong families, Sindhi society in Malaysia is experiencing radical change with the increasing break-up of its traditional and extended family structure. The impact of greater educational opportunities provided for female children, movement away from the textile trade and towards professions like doctors, lawyers and engineers, and women increasingly working outside homes and family businesses, have all played a role in this process. A further reflection of this change is that the primary language used by the second and third generations at home is no longer Sindhi.

With less than seven hundred members, who straddle three generations, and growing incidents of exogamous marriages, use of the Sindhi language in Malaysia is becoming increasingly limited. The decreasing use of the language results not only from the community's current linguistic needs but is also due to limited attempts by Sindhis themselves to maintain the language as a marker of identity. Although some parents do try to teach Sindhi to their children, their task is an uphill one since Sindhi is not taught in either government or private international schools. Similar declines and difficulties in the use of the Sindhi language can be noticed in other Sindhi communities around the world as well.

RESEARCH LITERATURE IN MALAYSIA ON GRAND-PARENTING

Today nearly one in 20 Malaysians is over 60, and almost 1.7 million of the nation's 26.64 million population are in this category. David, et al. (2008) studied the attitude of Malaysian youth and their responsibility towards their elderly parents. A questionnaire was administered to 306 students to determine if religious affiliation, place of residence, gender, age and ethnicity made a difference in their attitude and responsibility towards supporting their elderly parents.

In another study focusing on the role and expectations of Malay, Chinese and Indian grandparents, David et al. (2008) conducted a study of subjects in the Pantai constituency in the Klang Valley in Selangor Malaysia and found that irrespective of ethnicity, Malaysian grandparents had similar expectations of and for their grandchildren.

Aziz (2007) discusses the relationship between grandparents and grandchildren in Malaysia. She emphasises the care and support transferred to the grandchildren and briefly discusses the issues and challenges faced by the grandparents in their informal care role. She concludes that one of the services provided by the elderly

parents is caring for the grandchildren, that is, basically raising their grandchildren in the absence of the parents.

In a more recent study David and Kuang (2011) interviewed a total of 10 Malay, Chinese and Indian grandparents and grandchildren to determine the role of these grandparents and the perceptions of the grandchildren vis-à-vis their grandparents. The study, through interviews with the link parents, also set out to determine if the relationship with the link subject affected the relationship with the grandchild. The results showed that to some extent, the G1 respondents performed their roles as grandparents but despite this being known, little was disclosed by the G1 respondents about their relationship with their grandchildren.

AIM OF THE STUDY

In the light of these sociological changes around and within them, the aim of this study is to determine whether or not aged participants, henceforth also termed grandparents, have been affected by the changes in the Sindhi society. How many grandparents still stay in extended families with the link parents and their grandchildren? With different language proficiencies and preferences across generations, what is the effect on communicating with grandchildren? How do these changes affect their role as grandparents?

METHODOLOGY

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with six Sindhi grandparents living in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Five of the grandparents interviewed are individuals who live on their own, and one lives in a joint family home with her children and grandchildren. The study was conducted in the urban area of Kuala Lumpur. The population of Sindhis in Kuala Lumpur includes 160 families, some of which have living grandparents. Six participants were chosen to provide the data through in-depth semi-structured interviews conducted in the participants' homes and at social functions. Since the data was related to family relationships and roles, conducting the interviews in a friendly environment is helpful to elicit useful data for qualitative studies (DiCicco-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006; Warren & Karner, 2005). The grandmothers who participated in this study were at the age range of 55 to 65 and were from the middle income range of the society. The one grandfather interviewed was frail and weak and did not say much and died shortly after the first interview.

The interviewees had direct and frequent contact with their grandchildren although only one had the grandchildren living with her and one lived in a different flat but in the same condominium with the grandchildren. Two had their grandchildren living in Kuala Lumpur (living in the same city) and one had grandchildren living in Singapore (another country but still very close to Malaysia). Field notes were taken by the researcher and were later analyzed to find

out the qualitative categories and themes related to the aims of the study. Content Analysis is used to analyze the data. Babbie (2004) defines content analysis as a method of studying recorded human communications, such as books, websites, paintings and law (Babbie, 2004).

McKeone (1995) identifies two types of data management: 'Open analysis' and 'Prescriptive analysis' (also labeled as 'Interactive' and 'Pre-defined' respectively; see CSU, n. d.). Open analysis identifies and categorizes subject matters within the text while prescriptive analysis employs a theoretical framework of analysis to study the data. This paper will employ the open analysis approach, as the prescriptive analysis approach requires an existing framework of analysis.

DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

Analyzing the interview content led to four main themes emphasized by the Malaysian Sindhi grandparents as their ideals including: leaving a legacy behind, being with family members, feeling and being useful and active, and transmitting values to the younger generation.

The grandparents play different roles to fulfill these ideals. Four main roles were found for Malaysian Sindhi grandparents in relation to their grandchildren, namely: teacher, care-taker, defender of social values and friend. In this section each theme is explained and discussed and examples from the data are included to justify the themes.

LEAVING A LEGACY BEHIND

Growing up with grandparents enables your children to embrace a legacy (Liew, 2009). To leave a legacy behind for the grandparents in our study meant that they will be remembered by the descendants or family members in ways that would be interpreted as pleasing or worthy of being mentioned by others. Generally, from the interviews conducted, it is clear that many of the grandparents want to be remembered favorably by their grandchildren. Some like to be remembered as individuals who had spent their time teaching their grandchildren religious norms and cultural values. In addition, they also want to be remembered for the knowledge, advice and care showered on their grandchildren. Below are a few extracts from the data to show how the grandparents convey this ideal.

GP1 is in her late 50s and has 2 young grandchildren in Singapore. She uses Face Time to talk to them at least 3 times a week and visits them at least four to five times a week. Their language of interaction is English.GP1 teaches her grandchildren some Sindhi cultural norms like "pare pahe" (bend and touch the feet) generally of an older person when meeting older community members. She also teaches them religious terms like "wahe guru" which

actually is Punjabi but the Sindhi community also goes to Gurdwaras (places of worship of the Punjabi Sikhs).

GP2 is another grandmother in her mid sixties. She has a three year old grandchild who does not stay with her. They communicate in English and she teaches her grandchild rhymes and courtesy magic words like "please" and "thank you".

Other grandparents interviewed also state that it is important for grandparents to especially teach their grandchildren Sindhi cultural, social and religious norms and be remembered as a source of care and wisdom.

BEING WITH FAMILY MEMBERS

It is clear that grandparents also focus on their families. This is not surprising since the family is a "social institution found in all societies that unite people into cooperative groups to oversee the bearing and raising of children" that is bonded through "blood, marriage or adoption" (Macionis, 2001, p.462). Among Asians, the knowledge that one's children care for oneself is a sign of being loved and cared for.

Grandparents, especially grandmothers are more likely to have influential relationships with their grandchildren (Gromly, 1992). Contented grandparents view their grandchildren as important individuals. Having grandchildren makes the elderly very satisfied with life as being responsible for the welfare of their grandchildren not only occupies them but also results in them occupying the role of adviser.

Not only is care, attention and being with family members an important element of empowerment for the grandparents, it appears that shared activities further promote good feelings.

FEELING AND BEING USEFUL AND ACTIVE

Gromly (1992, p. 636) notes that the elderly may either choose to integrate or isolate themselves socially. By this, she means that the elderly who choose to remain active and involved in activities with others are much more likely to feel satisfied rather than those who choose to remain solitary and passive. She also adds that in America, the elderly are frequently engaged in leisure activities which include hobbies, recreation, part-time employment, voluntary service and socializing.

The Sindhi grandparents would like to be very much responsible for the care-giving of their grandchildren and for some this is done on a daily basis. This helps them to occupy their time and feel useful. One reason why the grandparents are involved in the household is that they want their grandchildren to associate their

contribution to the household as manifesting their love for them. The grandparents hope to receive love in return.

They enjoy their family life, family ties, and relationship with their grandchildren, and they also look forward to spending time with the grandchildren. Most of all, they do not mind performing tasks for their young grandchildren like driving them around, teaching them and playing with them.

VALUES TO BE TRANSMITTED

The values that were emphasized can be broadly categorised under moral, social and educational values. The moral values emphasized by the grandparents are related to aspects of good manners and emotions such as having great respect for the elders, politeness, having good and positive attitude, being caring, honest, helpful and diplomatic or tactful. Amongst these, showing respect to the elders and others seems to be the major concern of many grandmothers. This is illustrated in the words of various grandparents:

> GM2: …they have to know the ways to respect each other, in particular, the elders.

> GM3: …they must respect their parents and not talk too much or say things that may hurt their feelings when talking to the elders.

> GM5: …good conduct means showing respect to the parents, having good manners, respecting the grandfathers and grandmothers and respecting others.

Educational values that were stressed are the need to be good in one's studies, be knowledgeable and having good religious education. For instance, several grandmothers said:

> GM1: …what is important is we have to teach them religious education. It's very important. An elderly person told me that I must teach the children "om" at a very young age so that they will have a more meaningful life.

Specific for the granddaughters are the emphasis on general values such as the need to be courteous and to be diligent in doing domestic chores. The grandparents felt that in order to become a good wife and mother, a girl should have all these virtues. They also attributed these to the need to have a good name, a good life with the in-laws and uphold the good name of one's family as one day the girls will leave the family's house and live with their in-laws. It is interesting to note the deep concern expressed by two grandmothers and one grandfather:

> GM2: For me granddaughters must be taught courtesy and good mannerism. They must get good names from others. We must teach them so that they can uphold the good name of the family.

GM4: I emphasise the teaching of culture. They must respect others. They cannot be disrespectful to their parents and must be obedient. This will ensure that they have a good life with their in-laws after they get married.

GF1: Even though in general they receive the same treatment, the caring of the granddaughters is a bit different as they will have a separate life after they get married….

Obedience is another value that was highlighted. For some Indian grandparents, these aspects seem very important, as illustrated in the voice of one of the grandmothers:

GM2: …for aunty, granddaughters must be taught how to do household chores, learn to cook, no need to do very well in their studies because after they get married, they have to keep the good name of their family, that's enough.

GRANDPARENT ROLES IN SINDHI FAMILIES IN MALAYSIA

Malaysian Sindhi grandparents identify themselves with different roles, the most prominent of which is the role of the teacher of cultural, social and religious values. They try their best to share their wisdom and influence and to share their knowledge with their grandchildren. The second role which is somehow related to the first is the defender of values. Malaysian Sindhi grandparents put much emphasis on cultural values and try to maintain and preserve the Sindhi culture and transmit it to their children and grandchildren.

The new lifestyle of the Sindhi families has led to new role "the friend". Grandparents have to keep up with the grandchildren's lifestyle and needs so they have started to use new technology and the Internet to communicate with their grandchildren. They are more involved in activities like playing computer games, going shopping or watching cartoons together, which makes them more like a friend than a grandparent. Below are two extracts of the data to share the grandparents' ideas.

GM1: Over the weekend we go to malls together.

GM3: On visits I play computer games with my grandchild and watch cartoons.

The last role recognized is the role of care-taker. This role has been affected by the change in lifestyle. Since extended families are not very common with the new generation, grandparents live separately and as a result are not able to play this role as strongly as was possible in the extended families.

CONCLUSION

The Sindhi community in Malaysia takes part in religious ceremonies and social functions and within these interactions the role of the elderly in the families is emphasised but there are no specific programmes to enhance the role of the grandparents in the community.

The shift from extended family to nuclear family has weakened the care taker role, since grandparents and grandchildren do not live together permanently. But the contact and bonds are still strong and alive, especially with the younger grandparents who make an effort to accommodate the young, even with language, so as to establish friendship with their grandchildren and participate in their activities as caring friends. Living arrangements have resulted in a change in the nature of the relationships but not hindered them. The interface and the means are different but the roles and ideals are the same and maintaining the grandparent – grandchild relationship is important to protect the social, cultural and religious values of the diasporic community.

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HOLLY SEVIER

7. DISTANCE GRANDPARENTING

Tale from Hawai'i's Diasporic Indian Community

ABSTRACT

In a global world—connected, disconnected—Hawai'i sits 2,500 miles from the nearest continent, a place unique and isolated, volcanically active, culturally plural, growing daily both through the hardening of lava and through successive waves of immigrants, each bringing their own identities, languages, traditions, values. This research brings to the air the voices of grandparents whose ancestors left India and who migrated to Hawai'i via Tanzania, Singapore, and mainland America, people who settled and raised families here on O'ahu. Where the children have grown and left for the mainland and now have families of their own, the grandparents remain, but this story is not one of isolation nor of growing old; rather it is a tale of perseverance, of connectedness, of navigating disparate styles of parenting in an increasingly multicultural, multi-generational world.

INTRODUCTION

According to recent census estimates over 12,000 grandparents in Hawai'i were primary caretakers for their grandchildren in 2010, and a further 52,495 lived with their grandchildren, but many of Hawaii's grandparents have more distant or intermittent roles in the lives of their youngest relations. Perhaps this is especially true of Hawaii's grandparents of the Indian diaspora, many of whom—as evidenced by this study—have convoluted migratory histories, high levels of education, and who have encouraged their children to seek opportunity wherever in the world it may be found. While cheap flights, phone calls, and video telephony enable grandparents physically distant from their relatives to maintain close ties even as opportunity pulls them out of the state, this research uncovers in rich detail the nature of distance grandparenting among older adults from the Indian diasporic community in Honolulu.

Non co-residential Grandparent Bonds

The nature of the grandparent-grandchild bond has shifted over the years in the West as the number of grandparents sharing accommodations with their close

relatives has declined. While prior empirical studies of grandparent-grandchild relationships tend to emphasize the deleterious effect that geographic distance has on the strength of kinship ties (Mueller, Wilhelm, & Elder, 2002; Uhlenberg and Hammill, 1998; Hodgson, 1992), physically distant grandparents may not be any less supportive or significant than those who have more frequent face-to-face contact. While Mueller et al. label "influential" (p. 370) those grandparents who are highly involved in all aspects of grandparenting and note that 61 percent are physically present in their grandchild's daily life (though noncoresidential), they also find that full-time employed grandparents are more likely to be influential, suggesting perhaps that time spent apart from grandchildren does not in itself weaken the grandparent-grandchild bond. Although Mueller et al. find that distance is consistently predictive in a lack of involvement in a grandchild's life, they also find that "neither contact nor relationship quality captures the multifaceted diversity of this relationship" (p. 380).

While empirical and theoretical studies tend to bifurcate grandparent-grandchild living arrangements into either coresidential or noncoresidential categories (see Mutchler and Baker 2009), an interesting aspect of distance grandparenting relationships in Hawaiʻi is that while grandparents may spend most of their year in a telemediated relationship with their grandchildren (that is using the phone, video chat, or written correspondence to maintain close familial ties), when Hawaiʻi-based grandparents do visit their out-of-state relations (and when their out-of-state families come to visit them) they stay in the family home together, becoming coresidents for weeks at a time. Perhaps this serves to keep their ties strong despite the months when they are not physically copresent. Certainly the role of Hawaiʻi-based grandparents may be difficult to compare to others because of the unique geographic separation between Hawaiʻi and the mainland states, but then the role of grandparents itself can be challenging to pin down on account of the "multidimensional and fluid nature of this complex family role" (Silverstein and Marenco 2001:494).

Seeking Grandparent Voices

Where other studies seek to understand the grandparent-grandchild relationship using relatively large-scale survey data (see Uhlenberg and Hamill 1998, Hodgson 1992, Roverto, Skoglund, and Robbe 1996), this research seeks to give voice to the grandparents themselves. A number of older adults with grandchildren and ancestral roots in the Indian diaspora were spoken with or interviewed in-depth for this study after introductions from a mutual acquaintance in the summer of 2012. After the first face-to-face interview at the home of a retired couple, I was invited to join their group's *kirtan*—a ritualized chanting of religious texts—accompanied by a meal and a robust group discussion over afternoon tea. One subsequent in-depth interview was with a grandparent couple where both interviewees identified themselves as being of Indian descent. A second in-depth interview was with a

grandparent couple where only one grandparent identified as being of Indian descent. Two further in-depth interviews were conducted with Indian diasporic grandparents who maintain strong and active ties to their grandchildren. Field notes were written during informal discussions. However, in-depth interviews, which lasted on average two hours, were audio recorded and transcribed verbatim. Notes were *not* taken during in-depth interviews in order to engender a more conversational atmosphere where grandparents felt comfortable speaking their minds. Although I approached each interview with a list of prepared questions, my approach after initial prompting was very much to let the grandparents steer the discussion wherever it led so that their experiences could emerge with a limited amount of interviewer interlocution.

Further biographic details of study participants have been withheld to protect the anonymity of participants in this study (given the extremely small circle they are part of). However, of the six grandparents interviewed at length for this study, over 80% held bachelor's or doctoral degrees, all were home-owners, and over 60% owned their own businesses. Of their total of nine children who were born and raised in Hawaii, and of their ten total grandchildren, all but two of the grandchildren are now living with their parents in mainland locations.

Navigating Transnationalism

Change is a constant in Hawai'i; people come and go in waves, waves that brought the first settlers, opportunities that brought the first immigrants of Indian descent. Though Hawai'i is often described in clichéd idealisms as a melting pot where disparate peoples coexist in harmony, separate groups of immigrants have always been identified by the skills and labels they are said to bear: laborers for the plantations, academics for the universities, technicians for the burgeoning biotechnology industry. Perhaps because of the complicated migration routes undertaken by many of the grandparents interviewed for this research, routes that involved transition migrations through parts of Africa and Asia, as well as the pain of permanent separation from elderly relatives in India, and strong feelings that a return to India would be undesirable, few of the study participants considered themselves 'Indian' as such, and many were bemused by the idea. One grandfather —a pensive, turbaned widower in his seventies, father to two college-educated professionals, and grandfather to three mainland grandchildren—spoke decisively about his latest project, "a psychological one" as he described it, to erase all thought of boundaries located in the ideologies of nation or race. He explained,

> "When you define somebody and put boundaries around them then they remain within those boundaries, psychologically",

Rather, he looks forward to a day when

> ". . I will never say my *Indian* granddaughter … that has a tremendous effect on that individual when you define them, narrowing, and at the same time when you project it, extrapolate it, the whole community is defined that way".

But this is not to say he doesn't consider himself as belonging to the Indian community; rather he considers himself an adept code-shifter, living both as a Sikh with traditional Indian belief systems and values inside his home, and as modern father, grandfather, business-owner outside of it. he said

> "I am able to shift myself in and out of my culture on a daily basis."

Scholarship by Nina Glick Schiller, Linda Basch, and Cristina Blanc-Szanton (1992) has labeled this code-shifting phenomenon as *transnationalism,* where migrants are found to be "… forging and sustaining multi-stranded social relations that linked their societies of origin and settlement" (p. ix). The authors find that concepts of boundary as defined by nation of race are called into question by the lived experiences of "the transnational lives of contemporary migrants" (p. x) and this grandfather's voice adds to the literature that disputes such bounded conceptualizations.

Flexibility and adaptability are advantageous in negotiating any new environment, but if code-shifting is something that immigrants choose for themselves—lending them the ability to exist comfortably within themselves while adopting on their own terms some of the norms and values of their new homeland —for their offspring it may be more complex. One grandfather told me how his wife and he had struggled as their children were young in navigating the physical boundaries that separate followers of the Sikh faith from their non-Sikh neighbors. After their eldest son was teased for having long hair as the religion dictates, they decided to cut it, a step he describes as

> "highly emotional, traumatic … all those thoughts of the religious principals taught to us by the elders of our community came to mind."

And yet rather than feel loss or guilt, cutting their son's hair against generations of tradition became a decisive step for these immigrant parents.

> "Having taken that step as time progressed we became bolder," he said. "We started reasoning on our own that God would understand that we are in a different setting now and if we make a change he would understand."

Before each of his sons left for successful careers on the mainland he sat down with them and in a final step of cutting them free from their Indian-ness told them the following:

"We have come to this country: this is home. I am not going back … if you want to progress, if you want to be accepted in this Western or American society you have to adopt their value systems. I have no problem if you do … but the opposite happened after I gave them that freedom and both children married Indians."

Now they have children of their own they are actively involved in their own Sikh communities, regularly attending Gurdwara, making sure their children attend school on Saturdays to learn the Punjabi language. He says,

"My two granddaughters sing in the temple, they read and write in Punjabi. It makes me feel tremendous, great, that they have adopted this,"

Adding with thoughtful humility,

"Has it been my effort? No. I actually gave them freedom to assimilate, to become part of society … they chose their own wives without our help, and they chose Indian."

If a diaspora is a scattering, a dispersal, a diffusion over the earth like seeds to the wind, then Hawaiʻi is fertile ground with a long tradition of welcoming and accepting a plurality of people each navigating the globe as they navigate their own identities; yet within each immigrant bristling with the newness of a place there is an internal fort containing the roots of the traditional and cultural values from the lands of diasporic origin. One retired couple in their seventies whose tales of grandparenting find voice here, and who describe themselves from their beautiful hill-top home as living a very full life, note that while in Hawaiʻi some traditions may be diluted, there is a commonality among cultures that finds new roots here. In the Punjabi language traditional elders are addressed formally, unlike in English where no such divisions are made, but in Hawaiʻi there is a tradition of referring to elders as 'Auntie' and 'Uncle' not based on lineage but rather as a matter of respect, a tradition that mirrors naming norms in northern India and in a plurality of other cultures. Asked whether it was important to them that their children marry within the community the answer came back to this issue of naming:

"From what I see, not that Indians are any better off than Westerners, but I feel like we have some values that the children should have," the grandmother said. "For instance, in Punjabi elders are addressed a certain way. You have a certain respectful way of speaking to them. Whereas in English it's just plain 'you'. I just feel like children should know … being respectful. I find that by mere use of language it made them [respectful]".

And although their son married a 'local' girl—code in Hawaiʻi for someone born and raised here, someone not Indian—their new daughter-in-law was very accommodating, folding in aspects of the Indian culture into their family's life and ways, including an Indian-style wedding, Indian food, and a willingness for an

Indian middle name chosen by her mother-in-law according to the first letter of that day's scripture verse. Other grandparents from the Sikh community in Honolulu also spoke of their grandchildren having Indian middle names, one mentioning that it wasn't essential to her, but with a proud smile as if she considered it an honor. But where Indian names were chosen for first names, as one grandfather told me, it was important that the name were easy to pronounce by others, by Americans.

> "They were very sensitive, both of them, that [their children] would not be teased when they went to school," he said. "Was I in any way saddened by that, that they had not followed the traditions?" he asked. "As I told you, I have become bold."

<div align="center">NAVIGATING DISTANCE RELATIONSHIPS</div>

Like the ebb and flow of waves that have molded the coastline of Hawai'i, it is characteristic of the social life of these islands that just as people come, so they leave; while the overall population in Hawai'i grows by just over 1 percent annually according to the US Census Bureau, almost 200,000 migrants left the state between 2005 and 2009. For the children of these parents of the Indian diaspora, children who have inherited their parents' commitment to education and to working hard and who are no strangers to travel, opportunities post-college led most of them away from the islands. One couple who spoke to me at length about their children and grandchildren on the mainland said that although they speak on the phone frequently and visit every two to three months, the relationship between them is strong, but intermittently so.

> "They would prefer us to live there, which I don't want to do on a long term basis" explains the grandmother, who is deeply involved in the Sikh community here in Honolulu. "Ideally I would like to be closer to them so that I can impart some of my background, things that I consider important. However in some ways I guess it's a little selfish in that we have a very full life and it's hard to give it up." The grandfather is more emphatic in defending his hard-earned retirement time: "I know I shouldn't say that as a grandparent, but this is *my* time now."

For other grandparents who work in Hawai'i and whose grandchildren live on the mainland, trying to navigate the little spare time they have together is a delicate business.

> "It's nice to be near them but you don't want to be with them all the time," said one grandmother. "I don't think we can *stay* with them," her husband concurred. "To stay in the same house would be a little difficult. Parents don't like other people—grandparents—having two sets of rules in the same

house; that creates havoc for the children. But on the other hand it's also a great asset because they have four people to turn to instead of two."

Rather than live full-time with their children and grandchildren, these grandparents and most of the others I spoke with instead lived independently, becoming coresident for weeks here and there as they visited their grandchildren on the mainland, or their grandchildren visited them in Hawai'i, in this way both maintaining their independent lifestyles while forging strong ties with their families.

If an active, independent lifestyle was typical of most of the grandparents whose stories find voice here, it stands in direct contradiction to the traditional image of the grandparent that, according to Claudine Attias-Donfut and Martine Segalen (2002) "still remains firmly associated with old age." (p. 281). According to this bias, Attias-Donfut and Segalen note, research into grandparenthood has often been devalued or disregarded entirely in Western traditions "because of the historical devaluation of older people and the weak stereotypes of 'grandpas' and 'grandmas' bent over in rocking chairs or with home-made jams" (ibid). For the healthy, active grandparents interviewed for this study, one of the benefits of their youthful demeanors is that while the relationship with their youngest relations may be intermittent, the increase in their expected life spans—compared to that of their own grandparents—means that their grandparenting relationships are likely to be long-term, giving them time to impart the values and customs they consider important to them.

"I wanted them to speak my language. I wanted them to learn the prayer that I do. Also get used to the food that I make,"

said one grandmother, describing, perhaps in order of priority, the core cultural tenets that form the heart of her sense of Indian-ness. But where some traditions have stuck—their granddaughter knows her Sikh prayers, enjoys making roti with her grandmother, loves wearing Indian clothes—her knowledge of the Punjabi language is more fragile.

"They know little words," said the grandmother with a touch of sadness. "And they'll probably stick but other than that I really don't know. I really don't know."

Other grandparents were equally worried about the loss of language that might occur given the physical distance between them and their grandchildren.

"They come here, we try to teach them," said one grandmother. "Then they disappear again… our daughter says you should speak to them in Hindi or Punjabi … we can speak, but you have to have an interest."

While only some of the American-born children of Indian diasporic parents interviewed here learned the language of their parents, all were keen for the language tradition to be passed down to their own children. One father of two was

emphatic as a child that he didn't want to learn Punjabi, but now that he has children it's become of interest to him. The children's grandmother explains:

> "He used to tell *my* mother, 'I'll teach you English. I don't want to learn Punjabi'. But when their child was born he says to me, 'Mom, I want you to speak Punjabi to her'. So it was very interesting, I was quite surprised."

Perhaps the further an immigrant gets from their ancestral homelands, from the land of their parents, from the place of their own births, some traditions such as language feel more vulnerable. Or perhaps in a multicultural, global world there is pride in that which makes us different. This sentiment of pride has been reflected in related qualitative studies such as in an analysis of the multicultural identities of inner-city London schoolchildren by Amrei C. Joerchel (2006), who noted that teachers spoke of international poetry day as an opportunity for the children to be "proud of their language … read poems in their own language and, thereby, show their extra talents" (section 4.1). Certainly the grandparents whose stories find voice here spoke of their grandchildren's abilities to speak the language of their ancestors with great pride and as a continuing source of connectedness despite their physical distance.

Among the grandparents I spoke with where their grandchildren's knowledge of Punjabi or Hindi was limited to just a few words, however, the words they did know were always related to food.

> "They love Indian food but I think that is their greatest attachment to the culture," said one grandmother, who considers her descendants to be "culturally different" from her and her husband. "That is *the* Indian part of them is the food," her husband added.

Another grandmother who often cares for her toddler grandson explained his knowledge of Punjabi:

> "He knows common words; roti, dahl," she explained.

One other grandmother, speaking about her non-Indian daughter-in-law saw food as the cultural glue that bound their families together.

> "She's adapted very well. She loves Indian food, she even makes it herself now," she said with pride. "So only thing is the language. And I do fear that down the road I don't think there will be much of our influence really because there's so many other things taking their time."

NAVIGATING GENERATIONAL DIFFERENCES

Just as land masses change, divide, connect, grow, in a global world where the reach of opportunity is no longer contained within national boundaries, multiculturalism is increasingly the norm for families with the luxury of being able

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to follow opportunity where it goes. Yet if our grandparents are actively welcoming of differences in culture, it is the generational differences that prove trying.

> "This is a different situation," said one grandmother who raised young relatives of her own as generations had done before her: by intuition. "We just did the best we knew, nobody told us you should do this or say this."

When she sees how her grandchildren are raised, however, she is prickled by a pervading sense of differentness which she attributes to the disparities between the generations rather than any cultural or racial divide.

> "Modern mothers are very different. They want to do everything *their* way of doing it," she says of her daughter's parenting style. "It's by the book somehow." Her husband is more emphatic. "Sometimes I tell her she is a helicopter mother, she is hovering over the children. I say, let go of the kids and they will be quite safe wherever they go."

Previous research into the nature of intergenerational relationships has honed in on the perceived sense of generational difference. "When people are raised in different time periods, their values and perceptions of the world can be quite different," note Lynda Spence and Heidi Liss Radunovich (2007:1). "This can lead to difficulties in understanding one another." Further research has identified the differential styles of parenting between the generations as a potential site of disagreement. "The questions over the right way to bring a child up represent the major source of intergenerational conflict," note Attias-Donfut and Segalen (p. 285). One set of Honolulu grandparents perceived the differences between their family life and that of their children and grandchildren as to do with values, however.

> "They're very commercially minded, they're people that know the price of everything and the value of nothing," a grandfather said of his mainland offspring, further cautioning, "acquisition of a lot of material things brings you convenience but it doesn't necessarily bring you happiness."

Perhaps this represents a certain lamenting that the opportunities that drew their children away from Hawai'i, away from a more frequent physical co-presence with their grandchildren, brought both opportunity and cost.

> "Professions which are quite lucrative can be a blessing and a curse," the retired grandfather of two noted, attributing his perspective as one of the benefits of age. "In all fairness you didn't arrive at that decision overnight … the children have to go through that for themselves."

Another grandfather saw the generational differences as a natural result of having been brought up in a 'new' culture.

"The home is somewhat the old world, the old cultural values, but they spend more time in school and with their friends than they spend in this world so they are really moving from a Western world to an Eastern world," he said. "They are just not going to accept some of the old values. They have to decide whether they are going to change or whether they are still going to be embedded in their old value systems."

But rather than bemoan the differences between the generations, this grandfather is able to switch himself to his children's perspectives, to remember his own mindset when he was young, and to give them the benefit of space to develop on their own.

"I am constantly accepting whatever they are doing … that they are leading their lives, that they are doing well," he says, adding that he feels it is he that has changed as a result of this open-mindedness, but also that this mindset has brought them closer despite living a continent away. "They respect me tremendously … There's a tremendous relationship going on."

MANAGING EXPECTATIONS

For the active, educated Hawai'i grandparents whose stories find voice here, grandparents who are adept at computer technology and fortunate enough to fly whenever it suits them, distance has only partially infringed on their abilities to forge a close relationship with their grandchildren. The idea that they should be of service as babysitters during visits, however, does not sit well with most of the grandparents interviewed for this study.

"It's a different relationship, adult children using the grandparents as a babysitter service," said one couple who have seen another grandmother become burdened with too much of a care role. "She wouldn't like to babysit all the time; she would just like to be involved. They wanted her to take care of the baby and she said you know I am really being abused … this is too much. I'm here to just have fun with the baby."

For other grandparents, busy work and social schedules and independent living contradict what their children might perceive as traditional grandparenting roles, leading to grandparents who see their youngest descendants as a pleasure or leisure activity, perhaps, rather than as a caregiving commitment.

"I don't want to go there and just be a baby sitter," said one grandfather. "That's a waste of my time."

Perhaps this has more to do with the geographic distance between them and their grandchildren, that they do not form a part of their grandchildren's regular schedules, that when their grandchildren come to visit or when they visit their grandchildren, everyone is in holiday mode.

"Right now if they are with us and something goes wrong we pass them back to mother," one grandfather noted.

Other grandparents stated they would like to take on more of a role during family visits but find that due to the closeness of bond between parent and child, and the young age of grandchildren perhaps bewildered by only vaguely familiar surroundings, there is not enough of a role for them.

"We are just tagging along. We are not really totally actively involved," said one grandmother. "As long as the parents are there [the grandchildren] are not going to pay attention to us. They love being with their parents," she said, adding wistfully of her daughter and son-in-law, "I wish they were a little less possessive."

The one grandmother interviewed who lived close to her three grandchildren and who babysat her toddler grandson frequently noted that where her grandchildren "think they can push grandma" and that there are only a few things she doesn't allow, her daughter chastises her for spoiling them.

"That's all I can do!" she says, with a broad smile lighting up her face, unaffected by what her daughter expects of her in terms of discipline. "I try but sometimes they won't listen to me."

If we think "spoiling" children is part of the more traditional role of grandparents, one couple felt that it was the parents' continual indulging of their children that was impeding them from forming a stronger bond with their grandchildren.

"The parents are a lot fun for them," said one grandmother. "Take them out constantly, take them to the beach, so when they come [to Hawai'i] they very much want to be with their parents all the time because they are giving them such a great time."

Perhaps children do not need constant entertaining, or perhaps that notion is a throwback to another age, but one grandmother found that coming up with a stream of activities for her young grandchildren was of benefit to her both physically and mentally.

"You are running around and then you have to think of ways of entertaining them, keeping them occupied, your mind has to generate things and also physically—I'm there, I make them play with mud, I make them dig something, plant something."

TECHNOLOGICAL BABYSITTING

With its layers of peoples, immigrants, generations living alongside each other in a relatively small geographic space, Hawai'i presents a distinctive social environment. Yet, its physical environment is no less unique and its year-round

good weather and range of outdoor activities make it an ideal locale for raising children free from the multiple technological distractions of contemporary life. Technology, however, follows mainland grandchildren here, and in many cases proves damaging to grandchild-grandparent relations.

> "It's almost confrontational because they're mesmerized," said one active man in his 70s of his grandchildren's relationship with mobile devices.

Anthony Giddens (1990), argues in *The Consequences of Modernity* that rapid technological advance presents as a major discontinuity between the generations (p. 6), but that the *scope* of change presents a further break between the past and the present. "As different areas of the globe are drawn into interconnection with one another," he writes, "waves of social transformation crash across virtually the whole of earth's surface" (ibid). The transformation of childhood due to emergent technologies certainly alarmed one grandmother on a recent visit to her two grandchildren on the mainland.

> "The little one [she] … keeps saying iPad iPad iPad and I thought she was talking to me … so I asked him [my son] what is an iPad? At that point he [my son] gave it to her and she took it … and sat on the sofa and there she was."

When the grandparents are back home, for this busy working mainland family it is technology that becomes the babysitter.

> "My son is so busy I think he's just happy they're taken care of and I don't think that's very clever," said one grandfather. "iPad is a babysitter when he is babysitting," added his wife.

The tale is a cautionary one because when the children are not alone, when there is no need for the electronic babysitter; their attentions are still with the machine.

> "I'm telling her, let's talk, put that away," said one grandmother. "Two or three sentences then [she's] back again … The children become so dependent on machines."

Where almost all the families put the technology away for family dinner, the television—the electronic babysitter of previous generations—is not far from view.

> "I think it's a very difficult time to be raising children just because of the technology that comes straight into your house and it becomes competitive," said one grandfather, adding despondently, "I don't know how you keep your children away from these things."

His wife was equally sad about the intrusion of the television:

> "I'm very against it but that battle I am losing. I know that," she said, attributing the loss of this particular war to the geographic distance between

them. "Because I'm not there the whole time," she explained. "May be if I were there. Maybe."

For the grown children of our Indian diasporic grandparents, children spread over mainland America as opportunity dictates, technology has become the babysitter of choice, particularly for many of these families where both parents are engaged in professional work, working the long hours that their professions demand of them. "I suppose they don't see their father that often," said one grandmother, justifying how her grandchildren's attentions are wholly with the parents when they come to Hawai'i to stay. "He's really very busy," said another grandfather of his son. "He takes calls whenever they come." If his wife is at work when calls come and he is watching the children then it is the television that picks up the slack, but that does not sit well with the grandfather. "My question to him is what is she watching, what's going on here?" he queried.

MANAGING DISTANCE

If more than 12,000 Hawai'i grandparents look after their grandchildren according to 2010 census estimates, one grandfather felt this was the norm for the country he had left as a young man.

> In "Indian culture, child is only six months old they go to Mom's place, drop the baby off and go back home, say you raise them for the next year while we go do our studies," he said. "I think that's a bit extreme," his wife intoned. "I don't think I would like to babysit all the time. I would like to enjoy them."

Asked how geographic distance impeded on grandparents' abilities to form a close relationship with grandchildren her husband was emphatic in his negative response, but not saddened by the situation.

> "They are left out, there's no question of it," he said. "But this is different times where everybody is far flung. Formerly being fifteen miles away would be a big deal; now 5,000 miles is considered normal."

Giddens (1990) was well aware of this fragmentary nature of contemporary life where opportunities can lie far from the places where people grew up. "The development of modern social institutions and their worldwide spread have created vastly greater opportunities for human beings to enjoy a secure and rewarding existence," he writes, cautioning, "But modernity also has a somber side" (p.7). Later, he explains. "Modernity increasingly tears space away from place by fostering relations between 'absent' others, locationally distant from any given situation of face-to-face interaction" (p.18). But where locational proximity was uncharacteristic of most of the grandparent-grandchild relationships in this study, it was not indicative of emotional distance; all of the grandparents interviewed were

active in both maintaining old and creating new avenues for strengthening bonds with their youngest relatives.

A preferred activity for all of the grandparents interviewed was reading to their grandchildren, and books were the preferred gift for grandchildren, especially for those grandchildren with all the electronic toys they could wish for.

"They've got more than they need," said one grandfather. "We have never bought anything," said his wife. "My choice would not be their choices anyway … if I have bought anything it's been books."

Other grandparents have found more traditional pursuits to be enjoyable, activities that link them with their grandchildren, and which their grandchildren seem to enjoy no less for all the technological distractions around them.

"I play with them. We do word puzzles. I play chess with them. Nothing physical," said one grandfather. "When I go there I will read to them … I tell them constantly read, read, read. That is what makes you educated."

Despite his busy work schedule and only seeing his grandchildren on extended visits, this grandfather nevertheless has what he considers to be a very strong bond with them.

"Distance has developed more love between the children and grandchildren because they miss me and I miss them so there is a genuine love," he said. "I tell them no sooner than I live with you misunderstandings are bound to happen."

CONCLUSION

Just as migrants navigate their way physically to new lands, so the journey continues once residence has been established, including many smaller adjustments that amalgamate over the years to form a new social self. But that journey rarely happens in isolation; included here are the voices of a small group of grandparents with roots in the Indian diaspora, grandparents who have overcome divisions and boundaries and perceived cultural differences, who have successfully raised their own children to adulthood, and who take great pains to maintain strong emotional ties to their grandchildren, even as distance threatens to thwart their efforts.

"We think family ties are very, very important so that's what we want to entertain with our grandchildren," concluded one grandfather. "It may be hard to do that but it is still desirable."

Another grandfather confirmed that the physical distance between him and his mainland grandchildren obligated him to work harder at it:

"It's hard because of the distance," he said.

But rather than idealize the relationship that grandparents have with their grandchildren, he is more pragmatic.

> "All that kind of love they imagine … that the children come in the morning … they will look at the grandparent lovingly. If you think practically and say this is my imagination and realize these things don't happen it's ok. But if you internalize and it becomes part of your conscious and you really want this to manifest as a reality then you have a problem. Then the relationship sours."

This grandfather's willingness to let go, to give his children the freedom to forge their own paths, to help them assimilate, to modify the dictates of the Sikh faith while keeping his core religious values intact, has led him to a place of both calm and great respect. "A beautiful relationship," he says.

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SHILPA DAVÉ

8. 1960S INDIAN AMERICAN IMMIGRANT GRANDPARENTS AND THE CULTURAL FAMILY NARRATIVE

ABSTRACT

Recent studies of aging Indian diasporic populations focus on grandparents who emigrate from India to be with their children or are in the U.S. seasonally. The post-1965 immigrant generation has been in the U.S. for almost fifty years and while the group is seen as a historic generation there have been relatively few accounts of their lives as seniors in the U.S. In *Indian Diaspora: Voices of the Diasporic Elders in Five Countries*, the editors point out the different aspects of aging including "physical, psychological, and social aging." How do we understand and define the present situation of the aging post-1965 Indian immigrants in the U.S. in the 21st century? This essay explores how the role of the grandparent as defined by senior immigrants provides an opportunity to record and characterize how immigrant Indian and American national and cultural identities are expressed in changing family relations such as being grandparents to a third generation of Indian and multi-racial grandchildren.

INTRODUCTION

In Jhumpa Lahiri's opening short story, "Unaccustomed Earth," an Indian immigrant father and his thirty-year old married daughter wrestle with their changing family roles from father and daughter to grandfather and mother. The immigrant father, a recent widower, immigrated to the U.S. in the 1970s with his wife and raised a son and a daughter in Massachusetts. He saw them both educated and settled in the U.S. Nearing 70, the father is now a single man who mulls over his relationship to his daughter and his grandson when he visits them in Seattle Washington:

> "The more the children grew, the less they seemed to resemble either parent – they spoke differently, dressed differently, seemed foreign in every way from the textures of their hair to the shape of their feet and hands.

> Oddly enough it was his grandson, who was only half-Bengali to begin with, who did not even have a Bengali surname,with whom he had a direct biological connection, a sense of himself reconstituted in another." (54)

In this passage, the father expresses two different sentiments. The first identifies his reflections as a parent who has completed the task of raising his children into adults and also at the same time feels disconnected from the individuals that his children have become. The second feeling, however, is one of hope and connection to his grandchild in whom he recognizes bits and pieces of his own character that emerge as he takes on the role of a grandfather. The story asks us to consider what parents and their adult children have in common besides blood ties and familial history.

In the first quotation, the use of the term "foreign" evokes the immigrant narrative but it is reversed to give us the immigrant father's point of view. The father sees his children as foreigners not only because of their physical traits and cultural references but also because they belong to a different generation and a different geographical space that has separated them from their parents. This complex picture contrasts with the second-generation point of view of many Asian American narratives that dwell on non-American or immigrant practices (language, clothes) of the parents associated with India. Importantly, the narrator is not a man who is looking at his teenage children or college-age children, but a man who is contemplating his adult child who has her own family. He can look back on his life and see the role he played as a parent and how he has moved beyond that role to express and live out his individual desires. In the story, it is a relief for him to be alone and away from the pressures and responsibilities of raising children. This is not to say he does not love his daughter, or wants to limit his relationship with her but the narrative expands the role of the father to include the thoughts and feelings of a senior who is free to have activities and a life where he does not have to live up to any expectations other than his own.

To be a grandparent is to also re-evaluate how you think about your own children and your relationship to them and perhaps confront the fact that the immigrants are now an aging population that may not be there to see the grandchildren as adults. When the narrator's father in the short story comments "[h]e had not paid this much attention when Ruma and Romi were growing up," (38) he recognizes that he did not have the time to spend with his children because he was busy working. The goal was always to get them educated and settled and in the story when he talks to his adult daughter he continues to advise her about her career. What surprises him is that he is able to see himself in his grandson in a way that he cannot with his children. The idea of being "re-constituted" is a reconstruction of his identity or a re-organization of how the father thinks about his own identity in relation to his daughter and his single life. With the grandson he does not need to be the breadwinner or the advisor but instead can interact with him in a domestic setting. There is a companionable air between the toddler and the grandfather. The toddler wants to spend time and be with the grandfather without his parent's expectations, and the grandfather is able to pass along his love of gardening without being judged or measured by other adults. Moreover, when the father leaves to return to his home and travel partner on the East coast, it is the

daughter who wishes he would stay on a more permanent basis to interact with her child and be part of an extended family.

Lahiri's title story in her most recent short story collection introduces some of the current trends and issues in Indian American communities. The stories are not about the process of immigrating or assimilating to American life but instead focus on the maturation of the immigrant community and changing familial roles with their second-generation children. In the story, the daughter, Ruma observes, "[b]eing a grandmother transformed her mother, bringing a happiness and energy Ruma had never witnessed." (27) The process of transformation that the daughter observes in her mother is a realization on her part that her immigrant parents are individuals who are more than the traditional roles of mother and father and that their lives have not stopped but also evolved and continue to evolve after the children leave the home. It is the idea of transformation and reconstitution that the role of a grandparent evokes in both the immigrant and second generation that resonates with the Indian immigrant seniors I interviewed in my study.

At a recent meeting of my mother's lunch group in Madison, Wisconsin one of the most prevalent discussions at the table was how to prepare for the visits to and from the grandchildren. When I asked one of the lunch guests about being a grandparent, she said:

> "I never imagined being a grandparent or growing old when I was immigrating. I did not really know my grandparents. I was interested in getting a better education and making a better life for my future children."

This response highlights some of the issues of the established Indian immigrant generation from the 1960s who did not think about aging or establishing a community in the U.S. when they immigrated but who are adjusting and thriving in their lives as senior citizens and grandparents in the U.S. After 40 years in the U.S. it is the role of grandparent that challenges the narratives of Indian immigrants as foreigners and their second-generation children as assimilated Americans and illuminates how family and cultural roles are not as easy to distinguish in multi-generational and aging immigrant populations. One manifestation of the complexity of cultural identity is how Indian immigrant seniors adopt American ideals of self-reliance and independence in their own lives and yet simultaneously emphasize passing on Indian values such as familial loyalty and cultural traditions for their grandchildren.

Recent studies of aging Indian diasporic populations focus on grandparents who emigrate from India to be with their children or are in the U.S. seasonally. The post-1965 immigrant generation has been in the U.S. for almost fifty years and while the group is seen as a historic generation there have been relatively few accounts of their lives as seniors in the U.S. In *Indian Diaspora: Voices of the Diasporic Elders in Five Countries*, the editors point out the different aspects of aging including "physical, psychological, and social aging." How do we understand and define the present situation of the aging post-1965 Indian

immigrants in the U.S. in the 21st century? This essay explores how the role of the grandparent as defined by senior immigrants provides an opportunity to record and characterize how immigrant Indian and American national and cultural identities are expressed in changing family relations such as being grandparents to a third generation of Indian and multi-racial grandchildren.

METHODOLOGY

For this essay, I was interested in recording the stories of immigrant Indians in the U.S. who came as graduate students (or their spouses) between 1960 and 1970. From 1960 to 1980 there was a marked increase in the Asian foreign-born population in the United States. The relaxation of immigration restrictions by the 1965 Hart-Cellar Act saw populations rise from 490,000 in 1960 to 825,000 in 1970 and to 2.5 million in 1980 (U.S. Census data). The interviews I conducted were with ten Indian grandparents (4 men, six women) all of whom had immigrated to the U.S. from India between 1960–1971, remained in the U.S. to raise their children, and are now grandparents to children ranging in age from 3– 16. All the interviewees currently reside in Madison Wisconsin, are retired, and live independently in their own residences. Their ages range from 65–80 with the median age of 70. Their children and grandchildren reside outside their home and often live in different cities and states. I asked a series of similar questions to all the participants about how they experienced and defined the role of a grandparent and was able to visit most of the subjects in their homes. I recorded the interviews in July of 2010 and also asked follow up questions in February 2011.

Madison is a college university town and also the capital of the state of Wisconsin. Madison (population 220,000) is the location of the University of Wisconsin-Madison (40,000) and serves as destination city for many international as well as domestic students. In 1960, Madison's population was 126,000. The racial demographics according to the 1960 U.S. Census show that Madison was the home to a primarily white demographic. Less than 2000 inhabitants were African American and 200 were listed as "all other."[i] The low numbers reflect the fact that many foreign students did not fill out the Census or a non-standard method of data collection across different parts of the state.[ii] Higher education was the primary reason most of the interviewees immigrated to the U.S. and all of them came to Madison because of the University of Wisconsin. All the men immigrated to the U.S. because of opportunities for educational advancement either as students or faculty members. All four men pursued a graduate degree in the U.S. and three of the four attained a graduate degree at UW-Madison with one taking a position as a faculty member. Five out of the six women interviewed were married when they immigrated and five out of six already possessed undergraduate degrees and then pursued advanced educational degrees at the UW Madison.[iii] Education was the driving force behind this group's desire to immigrate and after achieving that goal, all of the interviewees said their intent was to return to India. This differs from

senior immigrants who come to join their families under family reunification and other immigrant groups who immigrated for employment opportunities. The desire to return to India rather than settle in the U.S. is also apparent in the amount of time that the group retained their Indian citizenship, which was an indication that they wanted to return and use their new found knowledge in India. Two of the men returned to India to work in the late 1960s and then decided to come back to the U.S. As one interviewee said,

> "I was proud to be part of a new nation and I wanted to go back and help build up India. But at the end of the 1960s and in the 1970s the political situation made the U.S. a better choice to do the kind of research I was interested in."

In my group, most did not decide to become citizens of the U.S. until the 1980s or 1990s, over twenty years after they first came to the U.S.

I grew up in the city of Madison, Wisconsin in the 1970s and the first Indian community that developed was centered on the university. The screening of Hindi films (before the advent of the VCR) was an occasion for the gathering of Indians and South Asians and the films were shown on 35mm reels in college lecture halls. Community members went to talks about India and South Asia, saw and participated in Indian musical and cultural programs, and socialized with a group of 20–30 families. In addition, there were new groups of international students and friendships developed through personal relationships and organizations such as the Indian Student Association and Association of Indians in America (AIA). Because the numbers were small, people divided into groups more by age rather than by state or language affiliation. I remember everyone talking about being Indian even though in our groups we had Gujaratis, Punjabis, North Indians, and South Indians. Everyone communicated in English but as children we also developed an ear for hearing different regional languages interspersed with English. Currently, Indians refer to this, for example, as "Hinglish." In the 1960s and 1970s there were no Indian restaurants or Indian grocery stores in Madison so there were trips to Chicago for Indian supplies and there were gatherings at people's homes, university settings, and church basements for home cooked food from all regions of India, music, and festivals.

For my oral interviews, I found it was initially difficult for the interviewees to think about what role they would like to play as grandparents. Although they recognized the role of a grandparent, their own personal experiences with their grandparents did not necessarily prepare them to think about what kind of relationship they wanted to develop with their own grandchildren. One interviewee said, "I think because we still get together with the people we have known for thirty years it does not feel like time has passed. We are still seeing our friends." Thus being a grandparent is one aspect of their life but does not define their identity. The majority of the interviewees had grandchildren who were 7 or younger so most of their comments and interactions with the grandchildren

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concerned caretaking and entertainment. One grandparent did discuss her teenage grandchildren as they entered high school but it was in relationship to their education rather than their social and cultural practices. What all of them said was that they wanted to pass down knowledge of and pride in their Indian cultural heritage while at the same time recognizing that the grandchildren were American.

"It's a much different time than when we were raising our children so they do different sorts of activities than we did with our kids."

All of them felt a distance from the rigors and politics of contemporary child rearing and yet at the same time enjoyed their interactions with the grandchildren. Even though all the interviewees are American citizens (and have been for many years) it is their Indian heritage (as seen separate from an American heritage) that their children and they wish to emphasize as their cultural legacy.

Anthropologist Sarah Lamb discusses the process of aging among Indian Americans in the U.S. and the different expectations that certain generations have that are culturally identified as the "Indian" way and the "American" way. Her work primarily focuses on seniors who have immigrated to join their adult children who are more cognizant of Indian ways and American ways. She describes the idea of "trans-national living" where

"…Indian American seniors end up self-consciously taking on practices, values, and modes of aging they regard as American although often ambivalently doing so with both reluctance and eagerness" (60).

I would take this concept further by observing that immigrants who have settled in the U.S. and lived in the U.S. for 40 or 50 years have access to U.S. social services and many of them are U.S. citizens who qualify for Medicare and make the policies on health care and where to live their political fights.

To use Lamb's terms, an American mode of living means living independently in your own place whereas an Indian mode of living is moving in with your children. All the interviewees I talked to are very aware of debates on healthcare and Medicare because they are affected by it. In fact, many of my interviews joke about how when they go out to eat together they all take out their pillboxes to make sure they don't forget to take their medication. Some topics that they discuss include insurance policies, recent surgeries, and increasingly, funeral services.

None of them are interested in retiring in India because all their friends and their children are in the U.S. They are engaged with U.S. politics on the local and national level and have an established community in the U.S. that includes Indian and non-Indian networks. The ability of this group to assimilate and work within American institutions is highly developed and yet their cultural memories and traditions are equally important to them. Although my subjects are immigrants from India, the expressions and comments of the interviewees on the subject of grand parenting tend to lack ethnic specificity and instead conform to stereotypical American middle class observations about grandchildren that include generational

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differences and passing down family history.[iv] What comes out of these conversations is an examination of the changing family roles that are occurring when the immigrant generation becomes grandparents. The interviewee's relationship to being a grandparent highlights some of the contradictions of "living in the American mode" and yet also being Indian for long-term resident Indian immigrant seniors in the U.S.

The concepts and results that follow arise from three main areas of inquiry. First, how do the subjects define the role of a grandparent and second, how does that role compare to their role as a parent. Finally I address how the interviewees thought about what legacy or values they would like their grandchildren to learn from them. What I find is less of a discussion about what is Indian and what is American but rather an opportunity for the subjects to reflect on their own stories and how they ended up as grandparents. On one hand they want their grandchildren to learn about India and their cultural history but on the other their relationship to the grandchild is a secondary role that does not embody their interests and life. The conversations and discussions mirror the idea of reconstitution of the Indian seniors' lives where they are seeing the scope of their lives as they interact and think about their grandchildren. These are the stories that they want to pass on and yet most of the children are not as aware of their parent's history and their grandchildren are too young to learn.

The interviews provided an opportunity for the Indian senior immigrants to reflect on their own lives. Many were more engaged when telling me their personal stories than in thinking about their role as grandparents, perhaps because their role as a grandparent was only one facet of their lives as opposed to the other activities they were engaged in as senior adults. Because all the interviewees have known me for most of my life, I also felt as if I was a stand-in for some of the stories that they wanted to tell their own children but perhaps their own children had never asked. Most of the interviewees continue to talk to me about these issues even after this study was completed.

FAMILY ROLES AND RELATIONSHIPS

In my discussions and conversations I opened up the interviews with questions about individual family histories, which were about their memories about grandparents in their own lives, and how their parents interacted with their own children. Most of the interviewees did not have a solid recollection of their grandparents or their interactions were very sparse. Many of the grandparents died when the interviewees were young or before they were born. One interviewee remembered her grandfather's devout religious practices and another remembered playing cards with her grandparents. For two of the interviewees, the Partition between India and Pakistan in 1947 also figured prominently in family life and structure when their families moved from now Pakistan into India. In general, the paternal grandparents were more prominent in all the interviewees' lives. In the

case of one senior, she remembered going to see her maternal grandmother when her own mother was pregnant:

> "My grandmother interacted more with her sons' families. When my mother was pregnant with my siblings we would go and spend time—sometimes several months—with her. She was very strict and traditional. Like a lot of Asian women at the time she preferred the male children. The males got all the attention and the girls were there to work. I guess my relationship with her was mostly related to "fear.""

The gender expectations of the interviewees' grandparents did have some effect, especially on the women. For this interviewee she later says that she believes her role as a grandmother is

> "to set a good example as a woman for both her granddaughters. I want to encourage them to have no restrictions…and make sure that they can do whatever they want to do."

She wants to make sure that the limitations that Indian parents sometimes put on their children to go into the fields of engineering or medicine (and ones that her parents placed on her) are not the only options that her grandchildren will hear about. The absence of role models in their own experiences gives them an opportunity to create their own way of interacting with their grandchildren. Since many of them did not live in an extended family with grandparents in the home they do not expect to do this with their own grandchildren. Many of them used to visit their families for an extended time such as one month but as one interviewee said,

> "we liked to get together with the whole family because we had a lot of people to play with but we were happy to return to our place."

In East Asian and South Asian cultures the stereotypical expectation is that the senior parents will reside with the children and any other arrangement such as seniors living in a retirement home is seen as a failure on the part of the family. (Fukuyama, 1993) In this case, they do not think of American or Indian cultural traditions but one that comes from their own experiences and is contrary to the stereotypes associated with Asian culture where extended families are the norm.

In their own children's lives the role of the grandparents varied but most of the interviewees said that because of the distance between their parents in India and their children in the U.S. that it was difficult for the grandparents to have a large influence in their lives. One interviewee had her mother living with the family and that fact greatly influenced her daughter's relationship to Indian language and culture because her daughter grew up speaking an Indian regional language:

"Even before my parents came to the U.S. my daughter enjoyed going to stay with her grandparents in India. She learned Indian languages and traditions from her grandparents."

The implication is that it was the grandparents rather than the parents who had the time to spend with the kids. Two interviewees left their children with their parents for an extended time when they came to the U.S. and then sent for them later. But when I asked if they would be able to take care of their grandchildren in the same way they both said that it would be too complicated because of the activities that their grandchildren were involved in:

"the kids today have soccer practice or swimming lessons or are always on the go. I play cards or read books."

A lot of the activities the kids want to do involve more physical effort and many of the seniors I talked to are unable to keep up with that schedule. In fact, some of their children feel the same way. Some other seniors travelled back to India on an annual or bi-annual basis but as the children grew older (especially after high school) this became more difficult. This is one of the key issues of immigrant life especially for those who immigrated before the 1980s----that many had to leave their parents and their families behind and start creating a sense of Indian values and cultural heritage for their families in the U.S.

CULTURAL HERITAGE AND FAMILY LEGACY

All the interviewees said that they never thought about grandchildren as they were raising their children. They did their job as parents so the grandparent role is an unexpected luxury. In fact, many of the interviewees said they had never been asked the questions, what is the role of a grandparent, and what do I want my grandchild to know about me, until I asked them. Since most of the grandchildren of the interviewees are young---below the age of 10-- it's difficult for many of the seniors to tell their stories and give general advice about life or school especially when you see them infrequently. When I asked how they would teach their grandchildren about their Indian heritage I received various answers but there was some difficulty for all the interviewees in defining what it was that they could pass on that was Indian besides their own stories:

"I guess I could tell them about me."

The majority of interviewees I talked to have multi-racial grandchildren (only 2 are full Indian). None of the grandparents mentioned this as an issue but there was an awareness that their grandchildren would grow up with American cultural values. One man said:

> "After all they [my granddaughters] are citizens of this country and this is their home but it's important for them to know the U.S. is also the home to people from India like me."

Her heritage, he says, includes knowing that America is the home of people from other parts of the world as well as those who have been here for generations.

Most of the interviewees stressed that the Indian values they wanted to pass on were the importance of family and family ties to their success and the other was to get a good education. In this case, to most of the interviewees, being Indian meant putting family first and being American meant putting personal desires first. The contradiction was that in order to get a good education, almost all of the seniors I interviewed had to leave their family to immigrate to the U.S. and most of them came either by themselves (6 interviewees) or as a married couple (4 interviewees). One interviewee said that since his grandchildren were young, he would focus on developing a relationship with them in the hopes that it would lead to later conversations. In the meantime he was working on his collection of family letters as something he could leave for them in the future. Others wanted to make sure that although the grandkids are American that they have an important heritage and that they have "strong roots."

Many of the interviewees talked about sharing India with their grandchildren in terms of consumer goods or as a geographical space rather than as specific cultural values. For example one senior said,

> "…we watch Indian movies and the kids love to dance to the Indian movie
>
> songs,"

and another remarked that her grandchildren

> "…wear Indian clothes we buy them when we go to India."

When I asked what kinds of stories they might tell one said,

> "…we have these tales of India stories that we read them so they can learn about the history and mythology. My granddaughter is very interested in religious figures like Krishna and Buddha."

Some have visited or talked about going with their children and grandchildren on a trip to India as an important way to share their culture. Four of my interviewees went with their children and grandchildren to India and found it rewarding because they were able to show the young children where they grew up. But the trip meant more to the second-generation children than to the grandchildren who tended to have problems with the food, noise, and travel conditions. In getting parents to engage with the grandchildren, the second generation started asking more questions of their parents and their lives. One of my interviewees said that after the trip her daughter wanted to talk to her more about her life experiences. In this case,

the relationship between the immigrant mother and the daughter was evolving through the interaction of the grandparents and the grandchildren:

> "My daughter kept asking me about what it was like for me to raise her. It's important to my daughter to teach her children about being Indian so she asks me a lot of questions."

The multi-generational trip opened up an opportunity for the adult second-generation child to talk to her mother about other aspects of her life that did not address her role as a mother.

Some of the grandparents discuss how their daughters are interested in teaching their children about India through comics, Bollywood, TV shows, clothes, and cultural organizations but with two working parents the grandparents note that their own children's lives are much more difficult when it comes to raising children. Their own input and influence also seems to be dependent on how the children relate to their parents and the role they want their parents to play as grandparents.

The adult children who are daughters include the parents (especially the mothers) in their children's life and want to pass on to their own children what they now see as important in their childhood. For example, two women talked about how their daughters wanted them to teach some words in Hindi or a regional language (Gujarati, Punjabi, Tamil, Telugu, etc.) to the grandchildren. One mentioned sharing a religious tradition. But in general, the activities that the interviewees do with their grandchildren such as reading books, playing games, and travelling together do not necessarily have a specific ethnic or cultural component to them. The interviewees (3) whose grandchildren live in town have more of an opportunity to influence their grandchildren and be a part of their everyday life:

> "We are luckier than some of the other people because we get to see our grandchildren almost every day. We are a part of their lives. This is different from a lot of our friends."

They see them for multiple days every week, perform caretaking duties, and are in a position to share their food, language, and other traditions. However, for the other interviewees their role as a grandparent is just one facet of their life that occurs 3 or 4 times a year as opposed to the more demanding full time role of a parent.

GRANDPARENTS AND THE ADULT PARENTS

One of the more difficult questions to answer was how they thought about the role of a grandparent compared to the role of a parent. One interviewee put it like this:

> "When we became parents we were just starting out in life and we wanted to make sure our child was properly fed, educated, and cared for but as

> grandparents, we have money, we have time, and we are not responsible for disciplining the grandkids. This is what makes it fun. Of course [the kids] recognize that too."

The primary responsibility as the parent was to be the provider but as grandparents the boundaries are very loose and hence the relationship is based on enjoying your time together. The emphasis is on experiencing new things and learning together rather than worrying about child management. All the men and some of the women I interviewed expressed the same sentiment—as a parent they were focusing on their career and their work to provide a secure financial future with their children. The benefits of retirement one man said, is that he has more "free time" to spend with his children and his grandchildren. Most of the seniors admitted that one of the best parts about being a grandparent was

> "not being responsible for discipline and being able to hand that task off to their children."

For my interviewees, there was a gender difference but as with many of their answers there was not a primarily ethnic component to their answers. Their style and impressions of grandparenting reflects an American middle class grandparent who lives independently from the children and grandchildren. The women tended to express the difference between being a parent and grandparent more concretely because they noticed how their roles have changed from primary caregiver to part-time playmate. As mothers, one of the woman said "the children were their first concern" and as a parent she was much more "conservative" with her own children. She wanted her own children to follow Indian traditions as much as possible, which meant no dating for the daughters, strict dietary requirements, and the desire that her children marry Indians. As it turns out, none of the children married Indians and her grandchildren are multi-racial. As a grandparent, she tells her daughter to be more lenient. As a mother her role was to regulate the children's lives from what they wore to what they ate. As a grandmother she wants to be the one who

> "consoles her grandchildren when the parents get mad at them."

Also there was the desire, said another woman,

> "to pass on Indian traditions and language."

As a grandparent, many of the women talked about being free to spend time with the children but without the responsibility for discipline or the decision-making involved in day-to-day life. That job has passed on to their children. When they were mothers, there was a concerted effort to teach their children about their ancestry and heritage. As a grandmother, one of my interviewees wonders,

> "What will they [grandchildren] be like in the future?"

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because she realizes she may not be there to see them as adults. One grandmother wants her granddaughters to be strong independent women and learn from her story as a young unmarried Indian woman who immigrated to the U.S. in the 1960s to follow her dreams.

Two of the men pointed out that because they were busy working as parents they didn't spend as much free time with their own children. One man said that as a parent the children were a financial and educational "responsibility" but as a grandparent you now have

"the luxury to spend some time with them and then pass them on."

Now, he can play with the kids and read to them. The men are able to assume the role of caregivers in a manner that they could not do as the head of the household. None of the men were changing diapers but they all liked reading and interacting with the grandchildren and at the same time were relieved to get back to their own routine after the children left. One of the men said that being a grandparent is

"easier because you are not burdened with their life and their emotional and financial security."

As a grandparent you can be "a resource" and can also influence them if you see them often or have local contact.

As seniors and parents of adult children their family is still of primary concern but not part of their everyday life unless the children and the grandchildren live in town.[v] In more recent times, Judith Treas and Shampa Mazumdar have pointed out that that senior newcomers tend to

"reside in extended family households" and "be cared for by family members" (245)

but this does not necessarily lead to a successful transition to life in the U.S. and points out some of the constraints with family support. All my interviewees lived in independent residences and only three of the people (two out of the three are a married couple) I interviewed had grandchildren living close by or in the city. The rest expressed a wish that the grandchildren and the children would live close by but there was also a general recognition that they did not want to live with their children. As one interviewee said,

"I value my independence but I also know that I am getting old."

So while all the interviewees expressed that they wanted their grandchildren to value the importance of family the reality is that the children live all over the country and the people and friends that have known them their whole lives are in one town. They do not want to leave that. Thus the discussions about grand parenting were also linked with community and familial relationships.

The blood ties of the family are vital to all the interviewees but the social Indian communities that have lived and grown together in Madison are also another kind

of intimate relationship. This group is living in the American mode because they are integrated with mainstream society where their personal histories as Indian immigrants were tied to their family relationships. In other cities there is now movement towards entrepreneurial and social networks created by Indian seniors for immigrant seniors that relieve the isolation and address the needs of the senior population such as Indian food catering services, buffet lunches, and oral history and memory sharing programs. (Mehta and Singh 2008) There is not yet a critical mass in Madison to establish these but several members of the community have been contemplating how to retain their strong community ties and independence, and maintain their family ties. For this group cultural history and oral histories can be an important method of passing on cultural and ethnic values that can reach the youngest generations and showcase their importance as part of the Indian diaspora and the American immigrant experience.

CONCLUSION

In September of 2010, President Barak Obama signed a proclamation declaring National Grandparent's Day. The text links the presence of grandparents in our lives to an essential part of American identity:

> [Grandparents] "have a special place in our homes and communities, ensuring the stories and traditions of our heritage are passed down through generations. On National Grandparents Day, we honor those who have helped shape the character of our Nation, and we thank these role models for their immeasurable acts of love, care, and understanding."[vi]

The proclamation insists that our national identity and cultural heritage not only "have a special place," but also "helped shape the character" of America. With senior immigrants, their stories and their presence continue the narrative of the U.S. as a land open to immigrants where everyone can pursue the American Dream. While Grandparents Day exists to honor the presence of grandparents, it is their past rather than their present existence that is being honored. To be a grandparent means you have left a national and personal legacy and for immigrant grandparents, they are trying to share that legacy with their children and grandchildren. The reflections on their immigration journeys and the stories of their lives were of interest to me because as a second generation child I am able to appreciate what I could not until I was an adult and wanted to pass these stories on to a third generation.

Although my group of oral interviews is a small subset, I think the responses to my questions highlight some interesting issues related to grand parenting, and aging Indian immigrant populations. I hope it will lead to additional studies about older Asian American immigrant groups in the U.S. and the generational differences and patterns between immigrants in the last four decades of the 20th century and the first decade of the 21th century.

NOTES

i   In 1960 Wisconsin's population was 4 million. According to Census data, race designations were white (Hispanic and Caucasian) and non-white populations that included mixed race, Negroes, Am Indians, Japanese, Chinese, and Filipino. The "all other" category included Asian Indians, Korean, Polynesian, Indonesians and other non-white. The Wisconsin population of Negroes in 1960 was 75,000 and the All Other category was listed at 18,000. Within the "all other category" the largest racial minority was American Indians.

ii   The conditions and categories changed for the 1970 census so it's difficult to make comparisons of different racial populations. Also the 1970 U.S. Census for the first time was mailed to U.S. residents so that had an effect on some of the reporting numbers because of protests to the Vietnam War, the government draft, and government policies. University of Wisconsin records on international students are also difficult to trace by country of origin or difficult to trace in general before 1970 in available institutional reports.

iii Historically, the University of Wisconsin had a close connection to the newly independent nation of India in the 1950s and also developed one of the first academic departments focused on the study of India and then South Asia. The university was one of the first to offer language courses in the different languages of India and continues to be a center of South Asian language study in the U.S. As a leading institution in the study of India in the 1950s and the 1960s the UW also attracted foreign students from India because of its reputation and faculty exchange program. On his first state visit to the United States in 1949 (India was newly independent in 1947) Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru visited the cities of Boston, New York, Washington D.C. and Madison Wisconsin. Honored by the Governor, and the President of the University, Prime Minister Nehru delivered an address outside in November on the lakefront side of the Student Union at the University of Wisconsin. This special relationship between the University and intellectuals and academics led to an exchange of visits from faculty members from all over India in areas related to urban and agricultural planning, engineering, and medicine.

iv   For an interesting comparison on Senior Asian and Hispanic living arrangements, see Douglas T. Gurak and Mary T. Kritz's article "Elderly Asian and Hispanic Foreign-and Native-Born Living Arrangements: Accounting for Differences" in *Research on Aging*. 32(5) 567–594.

v   Szinovacz, M. 1996. Living with grandparents: Variations by cohort, race, and family Structure. *International Journal of Sociology and Social Policy* 16, (12): 89–89–123. This is an interesting study which takes data from the National Survey of Families and Households that discusses how socio-economic status determines the tendency for black grandparents to care for their children and grandchildren in the household and how the major issue for whites is for the children to care for seniors in the household.

vi   Presidential proclamation 8560—National Grandparent's Day 2010 (September 10, 2010)

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DEBJANI SARMA & KABERI SARMA-DEBNATH

9. INDIAN DIASPORIC GRANDPARENTS IN CANADA AND THE UNITED STATES

Their Urge to Transmit Indian Culture and Heritage to Their Descendants

ABSTRACT

From the dawn of human civilization every human being has had an urge to transmit his own culture and heritage to his descendants to preserve and reserve their own identity of roots to their next generation to come. In the passage of time everything decays by the laws of nature; but roots of origin of human beings are not abolished totally due to the preservation and transformation process. It is an inherent quality or habit of human beings. Grandparents play an important role to pass their hereditary culture and history of roots to grandchildren. This feature is almost the same all over the world. But now-a-days, the society is changing rapidly due to the technological development, globalization and liberalization. The impact of these societal forces on the new generation of Indians living in the United States and Canada appears to very high. In this context the role of Indian diaspora grandparents living in North America has been changing over time.

   In this paper we first present a brief history of the Indian diaspora in U.S.A. and Canada basically for pedagogical purposes. To be sure, this history is readily available to the experts, but in my experience the general public is not sufficiently aware of the history of the Indian diaspora in North America. Secondly, we present voices of eleven diasporic Indian grandparents in North America with whom we have had relatively long conversations. During these conversations we listened to them sympathetically, and came to realize that the Indian diasporic grandparents have an apprehension that the flow of globalization and liberalism would float away their own values of life if they are not careful and sincere enough to transmit and imprint their own roots of culture and heritage to their descendants properly. Finally, we describe their daily practices which shed light on their grand parenting styles, which we believe are directed towards preventing this particular apprehension they appear to have.

HISTORY OF INDIAN DIASPORA IN THE US AND CANADA

According to the Encyclopaedia of Social Sciences, "diaspora" is a Greek term, which refers to "nation or a part of nation, separated from its own states or territory

and dispersed among another nation, but preserving its own national culture." V. S. Seth describes diaspora as "scattering of people with a common origin, background and beliefs."[i] Indian diaspora refers to all people of Indian origin living outside India and who, for the most part, preserve at least some major Indian ethno – cultural characteristics and beliefs. We have seen use of the following words in various writings and discussions about the Indian diaspora: Overseas Indian, NRI (Non Resident Indian) and PIO (Person of Indian Origin).

The first Indian immigrant came to Massachusetts in 1790 as a maritime worker from Madras and this was a part of early commerce connection between India and the US. This flow was going on slowly in 18th century and by the end of 19th century (around 1898–1899), some Punjabi peasants came to look for jobs in State of Washington's lumber mills and California's vast agricultural fields. In 1901, the 1st Indian came to U.S. as a student and within a decade some Indian students came to the University of California. This trend continued and at the beginning of the 20th century, lot of Indians came to the U.S and among them, most were agricultural workers. In 1920, it was estimated that there were about five thousand Indians living in the U.S. Even though they got their citizenship, they did not have the right to buy land property. After World War II, there was a severe scarcity of doctors, engineers and entrepreneurs in the US which opened the door of opportunities for Indians to immigrate to the United States. Before 1965, it was not easy for Indians to get visas and stay in U.S. They were affected by various social, political and legal obligations in every step of their life. Thus the U.S. government made a law namely "Immigration and Naturalization Act of 1965" which provided the option to issue 20,000 visas for each country in the eastern hemisphere. This opened up the gateway for many Indians to fulfil their dreams and the Indian population in U.S was drastically increased to almost 350,000 by 1970. This flow never stopped and according to US Census, there were about 815,447 and 1.215 million Indians in 1990 and 1997, respectively. The data of U.S. census 2000 show that Indian-American is the third largest population among Asian-American population group in the U.S. The latest American Community Survey shows that there are 3.18 million Indian-Americans which represent 1% of the U.S. population.[ii] Most of the Indian-American communities live in California followed by New York, New Jersey, Texas, Illinois, Florida, Pennsylvania and Washington DC. The percentage of educational level in the Indian community is more than the average US population. 87% of the population has finished their high school whereas 62% has college degrees. In comparison, only 20% of the US population has the same level of education. Over 72% of Indian-Americans have absorbed themselves in the work force and spread their steps in various areas like medicine, engineering, law, IT (Information Technology), international management and finance, higher education (teachers in colleges and universities), mainstream media, journalism, writing, film and music, traditional business (real estate, retailing), taxi driver, factory worker, news stand workers and farmers. Although in

1960, most of the Indian immigrants in the U.S. came with professional jobs like teachers and doctors, the recent trend shows that many of them are coming in IT sectors with good knowledge of English and proficiency in one or more Indian languages. Those who were less educated and non-professional were usually employed in occupations of manual work. 43.6% of Indian-Americans were in managerial and professional specialist occupations, 33.2% were active in technical, sales, administrative support and the remaining 23.3% worked as operators, fabricators, laborers and process workers.[iii] There were 300,000 Indians or PIOs who worked in various technology firms in California's Silicon Valley and this represents almost one-third of the employees in Silicon Valley. Also, 7% of high tech firms were led by Indian CEOs. The average per capita income of Indian-Americans was US $ 60,093 where the national average was only US $ 38,885. The buying power of Indian-American was around US $ 20 billion per year in U.S.

The Indian diaspora was always directly or indirectly involved in American politics. But they were actively aware of American politics from Kennedy's administration period. For the first time two Indian-Americans were elected as state legislatures from New Jersey and Maryland in 1994. In 2000 an Indian-American was elected as a senator in Minnesota and in 2010 another Indian-American origin woman was elected as a governor in South Carolina. There were lots of many other Indian Americans who were in top positions at national level, for example: director of National Institute of Standards and Technology, Deputy Assistance Secretary of Transportation, Executive Director of Centre for Nutrition Policy under USDA, Assistance Secretary of Health, Chief Technology Officer of Peace Corps, US Chief Agricultural Negotiator, the Administrator of The United States Agency for International Development, NASA and many more. The Indian diaspora has also established some organizations in the U.S. namely the Association of Indians in America, the National Federation of Indian Americans Association, the Global Organization of people of Indian Origin, the Indian American Forum for Political Education, the National Association of Americans of Asian Indian Descent and Association for India's Development who play an important role in cultural and political views.

As far as Canada is concerned, we have to go back in 1897 when a small group of male Sikh population landed in this country. They actually ended up in British Columbia hoping to find jobs. In 1903, there were only 300 (East) Indians in Canada. Within a couple of years, 5000 Indians (mostly Sikhs) arrived in British Columbia and started working in lumber mills, railway construction sites, cattle farms, fruit orchards and forests. As they were illiterate and unskilled, their wages were very low. In 1907, there were some economic, social and political problems raised against Asian immigrants in British Columbia. A new immigration law was enacted in 1908 by the Canadian government to impose restrictions on Asian immigrants who were barred to bring their families in Canada. Although the law was not in place until 1919, in the meantime, many of the families who were there left Canada for India and the U.S. In 1947, Canadian government introduced a new

immigration law which would allow only 100 Indians to immigrate to Canada every year. After ten years, the number was increased three fold. After 1967, the Canadian government introduced a point-based immigration system based on education and skills. Such a move helped a large number of Indians to immigrate to Canada. There were 713,330 people of Indian origins in Canada (data from Canada Statistics 2001). However, Indian Embassy reported approximately 850,000 populations which represent 2.74% of total population in Canada. In 2009 this number exceeded more than one million. Among this population group, 42% are Hindus, 39% are Sikhs, and the rest are Muslims, Christians, Jains and Buddhists.[iv] Half of the Indian diaspora in Canada is from Panjabi community. They come from Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Punjab, Gujarat, Maharashtra and West Bengal. Many people of Indian origin live in Toronto followed by Vancouver, Mississauga, Calgary, Montreal, Edmonton, Abbotsford, Ottawa, Hamilton, Winnipeg, Saskatoon, Halifax, Quebec City and Kitchener. The Indo-Canadian works in various sectors like medicine, academia, management, engineering, agriculture, forestry, trade and personal business. Most of them are well-educated and professionals in Canada. Some are also involved in politics directly. Although immigrants feel the discrimination in job placement, 30% of Indians have occupied professional and managerial jobs in the government and private sectors, 22% are in sales and service occupations, followed by 19.4% in business, finance and administrative, 14.2% in processing, manufacturing and utilities, 12.7% in trades, transports and equipment operators, 9.5% in management and 8.4% in applied sciences and related occupations.[v] The average annual income of Indo-Canadian is 20% more than the national average income in Canada.

Indian diaspora in Canada are also politically active like in the U.S. In 2000 five people of Indian origins (PIO) were elected as Member of Parliament (MP) in the federal election (see endnote iv). A PIO was elected as premier in British Columbia and subsequently became federal health minister in 2004. Nine PIO were elected as MPs in 2004 out of 308. Many Indo Canadians were elected as Member of the Legislative Assembly and MP in British Columbia, Ontario, Alberta and Manitoba. They are engaged in publishing weekly newspaper; the weekly voice, Can Indian, Times of India weekly and India Journal as well as ten Panjabi newspapers in Punjabi community. Indo-Canadians also have some TV channels like Asia Television Network, Eye on Asia, Asian Connection and Music India. All those media provide updated news about India as well as the Indian community in Canada.

From different statistical reports on Indian diaspora, we see a substantial number of PIO settled in the U.S. and Canada. Many more are also coming every year. However, a number of PIO moved back to India due to various circumstances. I have noted that many PIO also follow this path after finishing their study, training, or job contract. Many PIO elderly also return to India in order to stay within their own culture, society and community though they have enough opportunity to stay with their children and grandchildren. They love their children

and grandchildren more than anything else in the world and do not mind to stay with them for few weeks, few months or even few years but not for the rest of their lives.

VOICES OF GRANDPARENTS

Method

One can see from the information presented above that for a long time a large number of Indians in diaspora has lived in in U.S. and Canada. It was only later that some grandparents joined their children. Among them lots of grandparents take care of their grandchildren whether they live with their children or in separate house in the same city; especially when both parents work outside the house, they want to keep their children with their parents. Grandparents also enjoy their grandkids' company and love to take care of them. To know their opinions and experience about grand parenting we had conversations with eleven Indian diaspora grandparents over the phone. Using the perspective of voice in critical studies and pedagogy, we will highlight some of their thoughts and experiences in their own voices below in this paper. The perspective of voice has been discussed in chapter one and in some other chapters in this book, so there in no need to discuss it here. The conversations with grandparents were not confined to any specific enquiries we had, instead they shared various things in their personal life during an open ended and long discussion format.

Voices

First interview was done with a 63 year old Gujarati woman who lives with her daughter in Ontario, Canada. She is blessed with two grandchildren: one 11 year old boy and a 6 year old girl, both were born in Canada. She is an educated person with a bachelor degree in Arts (BA) from India. After coming to Canada, she realized the communication gap with her grandchildren due to different culture and language. In order to overcome these obstacles, she started taking English language classes when her grandchildren were at school. She said,

> "I enjoy a lot when I do grand parenting. I simply love the way they talk, play, eat etc. I feel like I am learning lots of things at this age from my school going grandchildren."

She wants her grandchildren to be acquainted with Gujarati culture and language and for that reason; she spends an hour with them every day. She believes that if she is capable of communicating with her grandchildren, they would be able to learn Gujarati culture and language. Also, she would be able to help them in their studies at home. She hopes and believes that her grandchildren will follow Indian culture, religion and life style. And she will be happy to see that. Her daughter and

son-in-law have full-time jobs, so kids are always with grandmother after their school as well as in the weekend when their parents go out. She thinks that parents have an important role to make their kids understand about the role and importance of grandparents in the family life. She has profound interests about the social life in Canada, its culture and life style, kid's interest in different ages and how to handle them in this society and country if she gets a hard time with grandchildren during grand parenting. In this case she said, "Community clubs and various organizations can provide information and in those places grandparents can discuss with other grandparents as well."

From the same community, another 67 year old woman explained her experience about grand parenting in Canada in a different way. She got her BA degree in India and worked in a bank for 32 years in Mumbai. She immigrated to Canada almost 12 years ago with her son, daughter-in-law and twin grandchildren. She stays with them in the same house and used to take care of her grandkids when both parents were at work during the day. She does not have any communication problem with her grandkids and speaks English and Gujarati very fluently with others at home. She said, "My twin grandkids (one girl and one boy) are the most important and valuable parts in my life". She continued,

> "All my thoughts and wishes are revolving around them only. I taught them Gujarati language and culture. My granddaughter is involved in Indian Cultural program and is a well-known Indian classical dancer in Ontario. That makes me so proud. She was one of twenty contestants in the Miss Canada competition."

She also told me that she never had any issues dealing with her grandkids and was not hesitant to tell and explain if they were doing anything wrong. She believes that she always maintained very open and friendly relationship with her grandchildren. Due to the constant support from her own kids, she was able to depict herself as a perfect grandmother and bring together the whole family. Thus any support from community organizations or anywhere was not necessary in her case.

Some grandparents' thoughts and ideologies have been changed due to time, experience and multicultural environment. This is true for four Bengali grandparents who shared their experience about grandparenting. Out of four grandparents three were women and one was a man. All of them are very liberal and they do not have any hesitation to see their grandchildren's western life style.

We spoke to one lady who came to Canada with her husband about 42 years ago. Although she has master degree from India, she changed her profession to nursing while living in Canada. She is now 71, a widow and lives alone in Ontario. She has one daughter who lives in the same city and one son who resides in other province; both were born in Canada. She maintained and practiced Bengali culture in the family which motivated her own kids and they are very comfortable to speak in Bengali as well as in Hindi. She still regularly reads Bengali novels, listens to

music and enjoys Indian cultural programs and religious festivals with Indian community. However, her grandkids from her daughter's side can neither speak Bengali nor Hindi although they enjoy Indian cultural programs with other Indian origin kids and dress up traditionally. She shared her thoughts with me,

> "I never gave any type of opinion or advice to my grandchildren in any circumstances. I think only parents have the right and they are responsible to make decision for their kids, not the grandparents. I believe any interference on my grandchildren's life style, food habits etc. would affect their personal life."

She regularly visits her grandchildren who are in the same city and spends some quality time with them. She introduces them to various religious books like the Ramayana, the Mahabharata and narrates the stories by translating them into English. They enjoy listening to all those as a story like other kids. When she sings devotion songs like "Bhajan" (like "Hare Krishna Hare Krishna") sometimes her grandson asks her what she is singing. She tries to explain him that it's a religious song – a part of prayer. But she does not know how much her grandson has grasped from her explanation. She is not sure how much her grandchildren will learn and follow Indian culture and tradition in their life. It is unlikely that they will follow or practice Bengali culture, Indian customs and traditions. She told, "However, I will be happy if my grandkids follow the tradition and culture. Even if they ignore all those things, I will not feel bad."

The story is quite similar for another Bengali couple, a 79 year old man and 74 year old woman. They share their grand parenting experience in almost the same way. Both of them came to U.S. after being in the government service and teaching profession in India. They have a son and a daughter who have established themselves as doctors in U.S. Their son got married with an Indian origin non-Bengali girl but she speaks Bangla perfectly and their daughter got married with a white American Christian boy. From both sides they got four grandchildren. As both their son and daughter-in-law are doctors, they remain quite busy with their jobs. Thus they were helping their son had to take care of the grandchildren. The grandfather told me,

> "When my eldest grandson was 3 or 4 years old he used to sleep with me only. If I left their home for a short time, he really cried a lot. Although he is a 14 years old boy now but sometimes he comes to sleep with me at night. He has his own world and is busy with his studies, friends and various extra-curricular activities. I am not very strict about culture and religion. If they continue to show their interest in Bengali culture and follow religion, then I would be very happy. However, if they don't follow, I don't mind. I think that they have the right and should decide what they should do."

Now the kids have grown up and built their own world. Although they become very busy with their daily activities, they try utmost to visit their grandparents and

spend sometimes with them now-a-days. The couple also told me that they don't have any communication problem and speak English only with all their grandchildren as they never learnt Bengali. Their two grandchildren are now learning Hindi in a school and attend all prayers (puja) at home as well as in the temple. But they are not sure how much their grandchildren can understand all those religious matters, culture and activities despite the fact that they participate in different Indian cultural program with other Indian children. On the other hand, their two young grandchildren from daughter's side do not know any language except English because their parents, friends and neighbors speak English only. These two grandkids do not follow any Indian culture and religious actives because their parents do not follow any religion except decorating house with Christmas tree during Christmas. Kids like to claim themselves as half Bengali because they know that their mother is a Bengali and father is a white American. Overall, both grandparents doubt whether their four grandchildren will propagate the Indian culture further or not.

We interviewed another 65 year old Bengali grandmother who came to U.S. with her husband at a very young age. Although she had completed BA in India she always remained as a home maker. Her eldest daughter is a dentist who got married with a white American and the younger one is a lawyer who is married to an Indian origin man. She lives in Houston but she hardly remains at home after the death of her husband. She spends most of the time with her daughters who have four children. This not only reduces her loneliness but also gives her the opportunity to take care of her grandchildren. She completely enjoys the companion of her grandchildren. Although her daughters can speak Bengali, unfortunately they can't read and write it. Interestingly, the grandchildren can understand Bengali but only communicate in English. She was able to motivate her children to practice religions and they used to go to the temples regularly. Such a trend is being propagated among her grandchildren who love to celebrate pujas in the temple with other Indian kids. She told me,

> "My grandkids are very smart, advanced and intelligent due to technological developments and environment. I never have any issues while taking care of the grandchildren."

She tries her utmost to take care of them and she believes that she is a successful grandmother. As far as Indian culture and religion activities are concerned she said,

> "I do not want to impose anything on them but I expect them to be honest in their life."

We got totally different opinions and thoughts when we spoke to another Bengali woman living in Ontario, Canada. She came to Canada almost ten years ago to join her son. At the age of eighty, she is very conscious about her five years old granddaughter and her future. Despite being a graduate in literature, she remained as a housewife and spent most of her life with the family in Kolkata. She told me,

> "From my childhood I knew, family is an institution which teaches me to live not only with the parents and siblings, but also with grandparents, uncles, aunts, cousins. All the family members will live under the same roof and celebrate all the social, cultural and religious activities together."

She is very frustrated to see the evolution of the modern family in India and Canada. She thinks that the new generation has a different perception about the family and they occasionally meet their close relatives like uncles, aunts, cousins and sometimes grandparents who don't live with grandchildren. Her granddaughter does not speak Bengali although she attends Indian cultural programs or goes to temple. When we asked her about her grand parenting experience, she did not answer directly. She told me,

> "My second generation came abroad, settled down but their life style and thoughts changed in the new environment. The same thing will evolve eventually in the third generation. Although I am not sure whether such a change is good or bad but I am worried about new generation, whether they would be heading to the right direction."

At the end of our conversation, she expressed her thoughts about the role of grandparents in family life. She thinks if parents can give a clear and constructive pictures in their children's mind about own culture, roots, ideology, family traditions and norms, kids will depict the same picture in their mind. She believes that her grandchildren must learn all good things so that they can have a good future. In addition, they must follow their own culture and religion. She told me,

> "A rootless tree can't survive for a long time. So is the case of a tribe or a nation."

She thinks that wherever people live they should not forget their own culture, roots and customs. She is worried about the future generation who may not follow this path. She does not have enough confidence in her granddaughter as she does not have much interest about Indian culture and religion.

Like another 65 year old Punjabi woman, many Indian diaspora grandparents think that taking care of their grandchildren is not a job or duty for them; it's their right, moral obligation, tradition to nurture their grandchildren with love and affection. They teach their grandkids about socialization, practice of developmental skills and give them unprecedented time and company as kids just love to get it. When kids make mistake or do something wrong, grandparents make them understand what they should do. They try to teach their grandchildren the best way to make a bright future. That Punjabi woman came to US with her husband in 2005 and her elder daughter lives in Canada with her two children. She told me that her granddaughter speaks Hindi and her grandson can understand Hindi. They love Indian culture and enjoy all festivals in Canada with her school friends. She is a quite successful grandmother as she is able to engage them with Indian culture and

religion activities. She maintains very friendly and boundless relationship with her grandchildren. She also told that she did not face any type of problem during grand parenting and played the same role that other grandparents usually do in India. She is very flexible and open minded. So in future if her grandchildren get married with someone in different religion or culture she will not get upset about it. She said,

> "I think, I am very liberal about culture and religion. I will never ask my granddaughter to follow Indian culture and pray to Guru Nanak. She has an interest in Indian culture that I have noticed from her childhood. She performs Indian dance and loves Bollywood culture. She goes to Gurudwara with other family members and also celebrates Christmas with her friends."

When we spoke to a 70 year old Indian diaspora grandmother from Mumbai, she shared some different experience and expectations. She has been living in the US with her husband for the last 11 years. Her two sons live in different houses with their families in the same area, so she can see her sons and grandchildren very often and spend a lot of time with them. She thinks that she is a successful grandmother although she does not feel the necessity to learn or update herself about the modern generation. She maintains a fantastic relationship with her four grandchildren. She is very happy to see that her eleven year old granddaughter is very conservative and always wearing a hijab that is an indispensable part of Muslim religion. Her grandson studies in a Muslim school in their area. She is not very much worried about Indian culture and social life but she just wants her grandchildren to practice their own religion and get married with someone from the same religion. She believes that she is teaching them perfectly about various aspects of their own religion.

We met with another very liberal 88 year old Muslim woman in US who only finished high school. She currently lives with her sons and took care all her ten grandchildren when they were very young. Now they have grown up but at least they come to see their grandmother in the weekend. Those who live in other cities, they don't forget to call her once in a week. She was able to raise and guide them the way she wanted. She never had any communication gap as she was able to speak English and most of the grandchildren can speak Hindi as well.

> "I am a lucky and successful grandparent",

she continued to tell,

> "I am very liberal about religion. One of my grandsons got married with a white American girl last year. I think my grandchildren can chose their life partner from any community and religion. I just expect love and respect from them. These qualities should prevail in all the families that bind them together."

It appears that grandparents rely on their own experience in life and thus try to create an emotional and safe atmosphere for their grandchildren. They play a major

role in the family particularly in the absence of parents. They are good story tellers and very caring baby-sitters. Kids prefer to listen to their grandparents more than their parents because of the trust build up over time and they think that grandparents can understand their real problem or situation. Sometimes grandparents are like a bridge to fill up the gap between parents and their grandchildren in Indian society.

Analysis

We had myriads of experience while speaking to some Indian diaspora grandparents living in the U.S. and Canada. They have shared their grand parenting experiences as well as the expectations from their third generation. According to the 2010 Census data in the US, 4.9 million grandchildren were raised by their grandparents. 2.5 million American grandparents were responsible for the basic needs of co-resident grandchildren. 970,000 (37%) grandparents were the caregiver of their grandchildren without their parents in the same house and only 3% Asian Americans take care of their grandchildren.[vi]

In U.S. and Canada many Indian diaspora grandparents take care of their grandchildren. They love to provide good care of their grandchildren and give a sense of family pride and history of culture to them. We can remember one Guajarati grandmother, who told us,

> "I teach my granddaughter and grandson Gujarati language three hours in a week. So they will be able to understand about Gujarati family culture perfectly. I think without learning Gujarati they can't learn our culture and customs."

It seems that the ideologies of Indian diaspora who came to the U.S. and Canada for higher studies or with professional jobs and took citizenship are different from the same who came to join their children with higher or less educational background. The former is very open minded and liberal as compared to the later who is more conservative and concerned about the culture and customs for the next generation.

Among my interviewees five grandparents came to North America when they were young and they came with their life partner from India. They came to join professional job. One Bengali grandmother who lives in Canada and one Panjabi grandmother who lives is U.S. had established their career after coming from India. Their second generation and third generation were born here. So they saw the life style of their children as well as grandchildren. Somehow it seems to me that they are more liberal than other grandparents who came to join their children later on. But there is a Panjabi grandmother who came to U.S.A. eight years ago. She is very liberal about Panjabi custom and culture as well as Indian Tradition. There are two of my interviewees (both are Gujarati) who are very concerned about Gujarati

language, culture and tradition. Though one came twelve years ago and another one came five years ago.

One of my interviewees (74 year old Bengali woman) said,

> "My daughter got married with a white American man. He is a nice person. Whenever we visit them he tries to spend time with us though he is very busy with job. He visited India twice with my daughter and grandchildren."

She also said,

> "My grandchildren are not interested about religion matters. But they celebrate Christmas and rarely go to Indian cultural program."

There are lots of Indian origins who got married with someone from different community, culture and religion after coming here. In those cases, their children are exposed to the very mixed culture. This is very common among the Hindu communities. On the other hand Muslim community is very determined to follow their own religion although they don't mind getting married with anyone irrespective of their nationality or cultural background. When parents are very religious and cultural minded, they try to pass this trend to their children but children who are born in the U.S. and Canada generally love to follow the indigenous culture and social life as they are influenced by the their friends and neighbors. New generation likes to follow the western life style, loves freedom and independence. In a typical Indian family, children are always with grandparents, parents and other relatives who usually live in the same house. So they can share their feelings with all the family members. They are generally grown up with lots of restriction since a young age. Even when they are grown up and have their own family, they still seek their grandparents' and parents' advice before executing anything.

It is a common thing that grandparents are considered the supreme authority of the household, who has the right to know everything about all family members. They are also the decision makers although they usually make decision by discussing with other family members. The first generation of Indian diaspora always expects that the second generation will listen to their parents and abides by the rules of the family. Especially young generation does not take this very seriously and they are more comfortable with the western life style as expected. As a result, some problems arise in the family life and it affects the relationship between parents and children. One Muslim grandmother (83 year old) told me,

> "We never thought to do anything without asking elder person in our house. The person would be grandparents, parents, parents-in-law, uncle, aunt, elder brother or sister."

Some of the Indian diaspora are very conservative about religion and caste. So it becomes a big family issue when children get married with the person having

different religion and culture. But some parents are very liberal and they let the children decide about their own life.

The third generation in Indian diaspora is very different from the second generation. It's really hard for them to follow the typical Indian family culture, rules and regulations because they are far away from all those customs, culture and language. Also the surrounding environments and culture affect a lot. We talked to two Gujarati grandmother. Both of them were very concerned about their grandchildren. They wish that their grandchildren will get married with someone from Gujarati community only. In most cases, grandchildren consider their grandparents as an important person in their life and they are ready to listen to their advice and suggestion only when grandparents are considered as main household in that particular family. One Bengali grandmother shared her experience in this regard. She told me when her grandson was 7 year old she used to take care of him. She told me,

> "My grandson was not ready to listen to me all the time as he considers his mom to be the boss of the house not his grandmother. When he was explained very details about the importance of his grandmother in the family, he realized that and he never argued with me."

So her opinion is that when parents are able to make their children understand about their grandparent's roles, importance and status in family, they will pay more attention and follow the family rules. In general, most of my interviewees are well-educated and smart enough to learn about basic rule of grand parenting after coming to the U.S. and Canada. In Indian family household the elders would be respected, revered and considered to be fountains of knowledge and wisdom. Their opinions were sought before any family decisions were made like marriage, spending money but now-a-days it has been changed due to modern pressures. In Indian culture since childhood grandchildren learn family closeness, spirituality, respect for elders, the merit of taking care and time to help grandparents without being asked. This is called "Core Indian value".

Indian Language, Culture and Religion

Every nation and origin are influenced by their own language, culture, and customs. We have seen Indian diaspora in the U.S. and Canada coming from different parts of India. Thus they speak languages like Hindi, Bengali, Punjabi, Gujarati etc. whereas south Indian people use English to communicate with other Indian communities. According to US Census Bureau (Census 1990), there were five most common Indian languages spoken in U.S: Hindi, Gujarati, Punjabi, Bengali and Malayalam. These five languages are among the top 50 most spoken language in the U.S.

In Canada, the most spoken Indian languages are Panjabi, Tamil, Urdu, Guajarati and Bengali. The different distribution of Indian languages in Canada

represents diversity in culture, language and religion. The first generation of Indian diaspora prefers to speak their own language for communication at home and within the same community. One Bengali grandmother told me,

> "I always speak Bengali with my son and daughter. Though they can speak Bengali but they can't read or write. I can also speak English very well but within community and at home I prefer to speak Bengali."

She also told,

> "But for the second generation, it's getting harder to adopt the same trend. My grandchildren can understand Bengali but they don't speak Bengali at all because their parents speak English with them at home."

Some of them can understand and speak Hindi or other Indian languages but they can't read or write. They are able to learn because of their parents' and grandparents' initiatives as well as frequent get togethers within the Indian community during various cultural programs, Indian national festivals, and prayers in the temple, church or Gurudwara. Despite the fact that the second generation of Indian diaspora likes to speak English with their friends within the same community and others, at the same time they are somehow also involved with Indian culture and festivals. During the interview with Indian diaspora grandparents, they explained how they enjoy all those Indian cultural programs with their children and grandchildren. Although some of their children and grandchildren don't speak Hindi or any other Indian languages, they love to wear Indian traditional dresses, eat Indian food in all Indian cultural festivals. One Bengali grandmother told me that her grandson went to the temple with them during Durga puja. When he saw other children with pajama and Punjabi Kurta he asked her,

> "Dida (grandmother), where is my costume for Durga puja? I want to wear it and please get it for me right now."

Her son went to Gerrard Indian Bazar (in Toronto) and bought him one set of pajama and Punjabi Kurta. She was very happy to see him with Indian dress in the temple.

Indian music and films have big influences and power to attract people all over the world as they reflect Indian culture, life and tradition. Indian music is also popular within the non-Indian community in different countries. Even most of them don't know the language but they love to listen to the music. When the first author was in Australia she knew lot of Lebanese people who like to watch Hindi movies although they don't understand, they are just fan of Indian movies. The same is true for the third generation Indian diaspora who does not speak or understand any Indian language but they love to watch Hindi movies and music. We (both authors) personally know lots of them who speak only English but regularly go to Indian music school or institute to learn about Indian music and

dance. Generally, this type of Indian cultural practice exists in the family where both parents come from India, have interests in all those things and maintained such environment within the family. In Canada, lots of Indian children learn Hindi as a second language at school. Two of my interviewees told,

> "Our grandchildren go to a school to learn Bengali. We are very happy to see that many schools have such provisions."

So it would be congenial for their grandchildren to know about Bengali culture, literature and music as well as other Indian culture and literature. One of them told me,

> "I believe that in this way, our culture and literature will survive from generation to generation."

Due to the advancements of communication technology, there is tremendous influence of media within the Indian community. Most of Indian families in the U.S. and Canada have Indian TV channels at home. For the new generation, it is one of the most sophisticated ways to know about Indian languages, culture, music and films. Various Indian films are screened regularly in big cities where a large number of Indian communities exist. One Gujarati grandmother told,

> "When my grandchildren finish exams we all go to watch Hindi movie in theatre. There is a theatre close to the house in Scarborough where we watch Hindi movies."

Indian diaspora organizes various international and Indian cultural programs in North America every year. Celebrities come from India to join these festivals which attract lots of people. It is a great way to let the new generation know about their roots and culture.

Indian fashions have also become very popular both within the Indian diaspora and among non-Indians all over the world. Indian Jewellery is quite famous among women due to its elegant design and style. It's a part of Indian culture and tradition. Since the Indus Valley civilization (5000 years ago) India has been making the jewellery made of beads, gold and metal and at 300 BC diamond was added. These jewelleries are made for different parts of the body of woman like necklace for neck, earrings for ears, nose ring for nose, anklets for leg, Tikka for forehead, bangles and bracelets for hand and rings for finger. All those jewelleries are divided into four main categories: Meenakari and Indian Kundan jewellery, Temple Indian jewellery, Antique Indian jewellery and Indian imitation jewellery. They are available in any country and that has become a good business in the world market. During the wedding, young diasporic Indians love to wear very traditional wedding dresses along with jewelleries. There are thousands of Indian stores across the country which can supply all those things.

Indian is a big country with different traditions and cultures from north to south and east to west. Every region has its own traditional dresses for wedding and

various festivals. Indian fashion includes Indian jewellery, dress and style which vary region to region. In Indian garments "Sherwani and Jodpuri" for men and "Shallowar-kamiz and Ghagra-choli" present a colorful heritage. Indian fabrics on clothes have got a space in clothing industry all over the world. Generally all older and diasporic Indians wear their tradition dress in daily life whereas young generation likes to wear traditional dress in special occasions like Diwali, Durga Puja, regional new year like Nabobarsho (Bengali New year), Puthandu (Tamil new year), Ugadi (Telugu new year), Bestu varas(Gujarati new year), Putuvarsham (Malayalam new year). It's not very uncommon to see many non-Indian ladies with Indian dresses like "Shallower and Kameez" or non-Indian men with "Panjabi and Pajamas" in the US and Canada. Indian fashion has appeared as a special style in the international market with Indian film and international celebrities, super models, the winners in Miss World and Miss Universe competitions. Some Miss worlds and Miss Universes are well known all over the world as well as their Indian fashion and style. There are some world famous Indian designers; Abu Jani, Sundeep Khosla, Manish Malhotra, Rohit Bal and Suneet Varma. Some of them have worked as designers in Hollywood movies.

Indian movies have a big international market and they represent Indian culture, and tradition as well as Indian fashion and style. A number of Indian movies are based on their life abroad. Some famous titles include Pardes (Foreign Land), Dilwale Dulhania Le Jayenge (The Brave-hearted will take the bride), Aa Ab Laut Chalen (Come let us Return), My Name is Khan, Kabhi Khushi Kabhie Gham etc. Many movies have won international awards and become famous. Some of them are Pother pachali (Song of the little road), Aparajito (The unvanquished), Apur Sansar (The world of Apu), Tin Kanya (three daughters), Charulata (The lonely wife), Asani Sanket (Distant thunder), Nayak (The Hero). All those movies were directed by lifetime Oscar winner Satyajit Roy. Some movies like East is East, The Namesake, Slumdog Millionaire, Monsoon Wedding, Bend it like Beckham, Bride and Prejudice, Bollywood Hollywood, Namaste London, Mississippi Masaala, American Desi, The Bong Connection etc. have received international acclaim. All those movies have a big influence on older diasporic Indians as well as younger generation.

Indian food has also become very popular among non-Indian community. Many stores sell Indian frozen packet, dry food spices and various things to fulfill the demand from the community. Young generation in Indian diaspora gets such cultural touch and ideas from this type of environment.

There is enormous enthusiasm and interests among Indian diaspora to celebrate various religion festivals, national functions and Indian cultural programs. There are several organizations within the Indian American community in North America like the Federation of Kerala association, Federation of Gujarati Associations, Telugu association, Bengali Association etc. Thousands of Indians participate in Indian cultural activities, educational and charitable programs, and religious activities in temples, Gurudwaras, churches and some selected places. Indian

diaspora has different religious background and most of them believe in Hinduism, Sikhism, Islam, Christianity, Jainism and Zoroastrianism. Indian American parents like to bring their kids to attend those programs and these cultural and religious festivals and celebrations seem to be big get – together events in Indian community outside India. One Bengali grandmother told,

"I always go to Durga puja with my daughter and son with their families."

In Canada, there are more than a hundred Hindu temples and sixty Gurudwaras scattered in different providences. There are also lots of churches and mosques. In the U.S., there are 193 Hindu temples and 170 Gurudwaras. Indian diaspora utilizes those places for different type of activities in addition to religious programs. They organize yoga, music and dance classes, and charity and social work events as well. In the U.S., some temples have "Sunday school program" for children where Indian new generation can learn the language, culture, heritage of India, Indian dance and music. Temples also arrange lots of program for senior citizens. In 1965, the spiritual leader Chaitanya Mahaprabhu came to the U.S. and established the International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON). Lots of American and non-Indian from all over the world are devoted to ISKCON. There are many ISKCON temples in Canada and U.S. as well as in more than seventy five countries all over the world. Though Hindus in India pray differently and go to the temples of their choice/beliefs but here all Hindus share the same temple for prayers despite having different ideologies. Temple became a cultural center for Indian second and third generation diaspora in North America.

CONCLUSION

The Indian diaspora grandparents have an apprehension that the flow of globalization and liberalism would float away their own values of life if they are not careful and sincere enough to transmit and imprint their own root of culture and heritage to their descendants properly. We have experienced that well-educated grandparents do not have language barrier with their grandchildren and maintain a friendly and understandble relationship. On the other hand, grandparents who do not speak English and have grandchildren who were born in USA and Canada who do not speak Hindi or another Indian local language have experienced a great distance with their grandchildren although they love their grandchildren like any other grandparents. Other than language barriers, there are other issues which arise in different situation during grand parenting and these depend on kid's age, their social and family life. So it appears that grandparents need some supports like parent training, housing assistance, health care service, family support, legal support and recreation time with the same aged people to do this job perfectly without physical and mental stress. They need to get all support to fulfil the grandchildren's need like early intervention and treatment service, mental and behavior service, school readiness for young grandchildren, childcare service,

positive youth development services and academic resources. One Gujarati Grandmother told,

> "To build up my third generation with our own culture and tradition I need to know their language, liking and disliking, need and demand and life style. If I get any support from our community to know and learn all those it would be very nice and helpful for me."

Grandparenting has a positive influence on the family. Parents remain relaxed and happy to see their parents taking care of their grandchildren because they believe that grandparents are more concerned about their children's safety and wellness than anyone else. Grandparents take care of their grandchildren with emotion, love and affection and some of them think, this is the only purpose of their life. They love to do this job and are happy to think that this is the second chance in their life to raise the children again. They transmit their ideas and values of life to make a bright future generation.

NOTES

i   http://www.languageinindia.com/march2012/kavithadiasporafinal.pdf (p. 171)

ii   http://www.scribd.com/doc/86766458/Census-2010-Asian-Population (p. 14)

iii   http://moia.gov.in/pdf/Canada.pdf (p. 3)

iv   Brij V. Lal, Peter Reeves and Rajesh Rai, "The Encyclopedia of the Indian Diaspora", University of Hawaii Press, Honolulu (2006), (p. 330–331)

v   http://www.aarp.org/relationships/grandparenting/in2010/ more_grandparents_raising_grandchildren.html

vi   http://www.wmich.edu/grandparenting/docs/symp1.pdf (p. 3–5)

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VINEETH STEPHEN

10. INDIAN DIASPORIC GRANDPARENTS IN CANADA AND CHANGING ROLES FOR GRANDPARENTS ACROSS NATIONS

ABSTRACT

Grandparents have always played an important role in family life, but over the last two decades, many have increased responsibility for their grandchildren due to changes in families and society. Diasporic Indian Grandparents in Canada and across nations have traditionally placed significant importance on intergenerational family life. Nandan and Eames (1980) research suggests that it is not uncommon to find these Indian grandparents living in the homes or in close proximity of their adult children/grandchildren as the collectivist culture and families traditions of India are often tied up with unseen bond, cooperation, harmony and interdependence. Historically, the roles, feelings and approaches that grandparents have for their own children may differ from those of their grandchildren (Kornhaber, 1996). However, these days new roles for Indian Diasporic Grandparents have emerged in great part due to significant changes in their own children's lives such as marital divorce, out of province employment, illness, death and financial security. The aim of this paper is to examine the changing roles of Indian Diasporic Grandparents in Canada in accordance with Kornhaber roles through the voices of these grandparents and analysis of their discussions.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF DIASPORIC INDIANS IN CANADA

Indian immigrants have arrived and settled in Canada since 1897 and make up the second largest immigrant group in Canada, following close behind – but poised to exceed – the Chinese immigrant population (Agrawal and Lovell, 2010). Recent forecasts from Citizenship and Immigration Canada project that India will replace China in the near future as the main source of immigrants to Canada (O'Neill 2006). By 1903, the Indian population in Canada numbered about 300, but it grew rapidly to 5000 between 1904 and 1908. Prior to 1962, most of the immigrants from India were men mainly from the Punjab region, but thereafter the influx was more balanced between men and women. Besides the Sikhs from Punjab, Hindus from Gujarat, Bombay and Delhi, Christians from Kerala and Parsis from Bombay also immigrated to Canada (Bhargava et al., 2008). In 1967, with the introduction

of immigration quotas based on a points system rather than on ethnicity, the Indian immigrant population began to increase. Since 1985, there has been a general trend of increasing numbers of Indian immigrants to Canada, with more than 20,000 Indians immigrating each year after 1990 (Agrawal and Lovell, 2010). Statistics Canada Census of 2006 indicates that there are more than 962,665 people who consider themselves as being Indo-Canadians and the estimated amount for 2012 is over 1,200,000. The main concentration of the Indo-Canadian population is found in the Greater Toronto Area and the Metro Vancouver/Fraser Valley Region, however there are growing communities in Calgary, Edmonton, Hamilton and Montreal (Statistics Canada 2006 Census).

INDIAN DIASPORIC GRANDPARENTS IN CANADA

In terms of statistics or data pertaining to diasporic Indian grandparents and seniors there are no large scale surveys that are available to the public (Koehn 1990, Koehn and Stephenson 1991). Statistics Canada figures showing low-growth projections for South Asians as a visible minority by age group and sex, Canada, 1991 to 2016, showed that the total population of South Asians for both sexes between the age group of forty-five to seventy-five years and over will increase from 109,600 to 441,000 in 2016. Further, Statistics Canada projecting low growth scenario, population of South Asian males seventy-five years of age and over will increase from 47,400 in 1991 to 66,000 in 2016. It is important to note that there will be more South Asian females (27,600) than males (19,900) who will be seventy plus years of age in 2016 in Canada. On the whole, in 2016, in the age group between forty-five and seventy plus, there will be 211,900 South Asian males and 229,200 females in Canada (Singh, 2008). Indo-Canadians have very diverse religious backgrounds. Sikhs, at 33.5%, are the largest group among Indo-Canadians, while this group comprises only 2% of the population in India. In India, Hindus, at 80%, are the greater population. However, they comprise only 27% of the Indo-Canadian population. Muslims and Christians respectively are 17.5% and 16.5% of East-Indian population in Canada (Bhargava, et al., 2008).

Specific Context

The grandparents discussed in this paper are all Canadians citizens of Indian ancestry who originate from the southern Indian state of Kerala. According to the 2011 Statistics Canada Census there were approximately 17,695 Canadians who had identified their mother tongue as Malayalam. This represents 1.8% of all Indian diaspora in Canada as well as 0.05% of the entire Canadian population. The official language of the state of Kerala is Malayalam and members of this community are often referred to as Keralites or Malayalees. The religious community of the Kerala population is diverse and a mixture of different faiths, most significantly Hinduism, Islam and Christianity. According to the 2001 Census

of India figures, 56% of Kerala residents were Hindus, 24% were Muslims, 19% were Christians, and the remaining follow other religions including Sikhism, Jainism, Buddhism, Judaism.

CHANGING GRANDPARENTS' ROLES ACCORDING TO KORNHABER

Kornhaber (1996) postulates that there are specific roles grandparents play in a family. These roles are dynamic, meaning they will change and grow as the grandparents and grandchildren do so too, and many will find themselves playing many different roles throughout the years. Grandparents offer children a broader range of knowledge, emotions and experience than they did as parents. They also inhabit a special place in the family as a trusted adult, yet separate and different from the child's parents, and may provide a safe place for children to turn in times of stress when they feel they cannot approach their parents

Kornhaber Roles and Perspectives on Diasporic Indian Grandparents in Canada

This section describes Kornhaber's (1996) eleven roles that grandparents play in the lives of their grandchildren and families from the perspectives of Diasporic Indians Grandparents living in Canada:

(1) *Ancestor* – Grandparents are the link to their grandchild's ancestors. They are the head of the family unit and a connection to the family's common history. In our discussions with the grandparents it was observed that many of the grandparents would often speak in their native language (Malayalam) when communicating with their grandchildren, even, considering that many of their own adult children were unable to communicate in that language. One grandmother mentioned that

> "It feels normal to speak to our grandchildren in Malayalam, we did the same with our own children, hopefully by speaking with them in our native tongue our grandchildren would retain some of our cultural lingo and heritage".

(2) *Buddy/Playmate* – Since grandparents may not be fully responsible for the day-to-day care and discipline of their grandchildren, they are able to assume the role of a best buddy (Kornhaber, 1996). In one example, the grandfather describes how he connects with his grandchildren using social media

> "We regularly share photos and post comments on our grandchildren's Facebook page much like their friends from school".

Grandparents can also serve as playmates in the lives of their grandchildren. Sometimes parents are busy with jobs and the responsibilities of other children; however, grandparents are free from some of these obligations. In one interview, the grandparents expressed how

" playing with our grandchildren was a source of bonding".

(3) *Hero* –A Grandparent may be considered a hero to their grandchildren as they may have stepped in to rescue or help their grandchild in a time of need i.e. family crisis, financial trouble, etc. Many of the grandparents have happily become the default "day care centres" for their grandchildren to aid the family from paying expensive private day service fees. In one situation, the grandparents asked their adult daughter and granddaughter to move back in with them when their daughter was going through a martial separation. The grandmother said

"We had to be there for them.It was such a difficult time for us all."

(4) *Family Historian* – Grandparents are the living witness to the history of their time (Kornhaber, 1996). Some of grandparents I conversed with described how they would share stories of their life back in India

"We tell our grandchildren how we would take 3 days train journeys from Kerala to Delhi to meet our very close relatives, attend college or look for work".

Kornhaber and Woodward (1981) describe how Grandparents who act as family historians inform current generations about the experiences of their progenitors and the origins of their family lineage. Grandparents often remember more about family history and are able to provide continuity in family traditions. Linder (1978) delineates how grandparents serve as a link between the child and the preceding generation, bringing continuity to the family and knowledge of previous eras. Through grandparent companionship, the child learns the humanness and early experiences of their own parents. Many of the grandparents I interviewed felt their grandchildren should learn about their family history to help cultivate their personality, attitudes and self-concept.

(5) *Mentor* – Grandparents can mentor while encouraging their grandchildren's intellectual growth while giving them a sense of self-worth. As mentors grandparents take time to teach a moral principle or skill or instruct in some meaningful way. For example, many of the grandparents would read stories and sing Kerala folk songs to their grandchildren. Kornhaber and Woodword (1981) describe how mentorship can also involve assuming patriarchal and matriarchal responsibilities within the extended family unit. Many grandparents I conversed with felt at times they were at time the head of the house: making important decisions regarding family financial affairs, meal planning, school decisions, extra-curricular and religious affiliations.

(6) *Nurturer* – Another role that provides important opportunities for grandparents, similar to the role of parent with some added functions and advantages, is being nurturers of grandchildren's emotional and physical well-being. Kornhaber and Woodward (1981) describe how Grandparents' support provides an emotional and social safety net for the entire family, allowing

grandchildren to feel safe and secure. Many grandparents feel a need to assure themselves of the physical and emotional well-being of their posterity, which makes this role a vital one in many families. All of grandparents presented in this paper have indicated their role as "fill-in" caregiver when called upon

"We want to be available to take care of our grandchildren whenever our families need us to do so".

It was clear that grandparents had on-occasion assumed a nurturing role in the lives of their grandchildren. Researchers have demonstrated grandparent presence to be positively correlated with increased emotional security in a grandchild. Hagestad (1985) had termed it the benefit of "being there." Kennedy's (1992) research mentioned this concept in a study exploring the nature of shared activities between grandparents and grandchildren and revealed sociability and companionship activity to be directly related to a feeling of well-being in the grandchild.

(7) *Role model* – Kornhaber and Woodward (1981) describe how Grandparents can serve as a role model for families and society simply by living honourable and respectable lives. Grandparents can teach their grandchildren how they should behave in society, care for themselves, and how they should aspire to be as future parents and grandparents themselves. Most grandchildren are observant and will strive to emulate specific qualities they find admirable in the adults with whom they associate--especially their parents and grandparents, and grandparents have described situations where their grandchildren wanted to emulate them. One grandfather recalls how his grandson wanted to be a physician just like grandpa and wants to attend the same college in India, in spite of being settled in Canada.

(8) *Spiritual Guide* – Grandparents' role as a spiritual guide to their grandchildren can help teach them to value and achieve spiritual rewards such as love, tolerance, compassion, etc. Researchers have found that religious values play an important role in motivating grandparents and grandchildren to develop and maintain intergenerational bonds (Kornhaber & Woodward, 1981; McCready, 1978; McCready & Greeley, 1975, McCready & McCready, 1973). All the grandparents revealed their desire to help raise the kids according to their religious and cultural practices. One grandmother says

"We always go to church with our grandchildren and share religious stories from the past".

(9) *Teacher* – Grandparents have a fantastic opportunity to impart their knowledge, special skills, and experience to their grandchildren as their teacher. One grandfather, an ex-college soccer player, describes

"My granddaughter is only 2 ½ years old but already knows how to dribble around cones".

Hakoyama & Malonbeach (2012) describe how the grandparents' role of teacher appears to be the pragmatic arm of shaping grandchildren. Their research depicts

grandparents as teachers, passing knowledge and information, survival and practical skills to their grandchildren. In my discussions with these Grandparents, one Grandfather describes how he used to teach his granddaughter different handwriting techniques.

> "I would draw sample letters and teach my granddaughter the correct form on how to hold the pencil, then my granddaughter would practice and draw these characters next to mine"

(10) *Student* – Grandparents may also have valuable lessons to learn from their own grandchildren.

> "My grandchildren have taught me how to use a laptop and taught me how to use email and Facebook too"

says one Grandmother. They can also be students of grandparenting by joining grandparenting groups, reading grandparenting books and magazines, and taking classes.

(11) *Wizard* – Grandparents role as a wizard provides their grandchildren with a playful, imaginative alternative to their task-oriented daily life. One grandfather explains how he used to teach magic tricks to his grandchildren

> "I love to do magic tricks with a deck of playing card with my grandchildren… then they would also ask 'How did you do that?'

> After teaching my grandchildren magic tricks they are always excited to practice them back on me."

INTERVIEW SUMMARIES WITH DIASPORIC INDIAN GRANDPARENTS IN CANADA

Grandparents' Voices on Grandparenting

The following section includes eight summaries of my interviews and discussions with diasporic Indian grandparents living in various parts of Canada and their voices on grandparenting in relation to roles identified by Kornhaber. This is followed by a discussion section which identifies several common themes and characteristics revealed among the grandparents.

The First Example

This grandmother, who resides in Canada for about 6–8 months of the year and returns to India, predominately during the winter seasons, speaks of her joy of being a grandmother. This grandmother has 4 kids of her own and most of them are now settled in different parts of Canada, two in Alberta and one in Quebec and one

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who resides in Kuwait. Her children are all working professionals and rely heavily on Grandmother for assistance at home. This was especially true 25–30 years ago when her grandchildren were young infants and her own children required the caregiving abilities and know – how of their experienced parents. At that time, the grandfather and grandmother were retired so they had time to devote the families. The grandparents are extremely close to their kids as well as grandkids and viewed there caregiving not only as duty but as a blessing and privilege. In the grandmother's home hangs a beautifully decorated portrait which reads

"Happiness is Having Grandchildren to Love".

She speaks of her own grandmother in a similar way

"Ammachi was always in our home and felt very normal for her to be with us".

The amount of time the grandparents would spend in their grandchildren's home would be dependent on their needs and availability, therefore it was quite flexible. The grandparents would bounce between their different grandchildren's family homes and stay for as long as they were required. A single stretch could be as short as 2–3 weeks for up to 6months – to 1–2 years. The grandparents had served as caregivers by doing household chores i.e. cooking, cleaning, school pick-ups/drops off, assisting with homework and other common parenting duties.

The Second Example

In this case both grandparents, fully retired, quite healthy and living in their own home, still play an integral role in the lives of their grandchildren. Of their own 3 married children, only one of them has kids. Therefore they are the proud grandparents of 2 grandchildren, a granddaughter who is now eighteen years of age and another granddaughter who is eleven. It was apparent that both grandparents were very active with the grandchildren and will often communicate several times a week with them. In fact, the grandparents will stay with them when required to do so, since both parents are working professionals and travel a lot for work, as such they rely on the grandparents to look after kids especially when the grandchildren were younger. They also make it a point to spend their winter and summer holidays with them as often as they can.

"Although, they live far from us we try our best to see them".

Overall, they are a very close knit family and the grandparents speak very proudly of their granddaughters' achievements

"last week we received news that our granddaughter got accepted into a prestigious private school, she worked very hard for that and we are so very proud of her".

The Third Example

In this case, both grandparents were healthy, active and also living in their own home. Grandfather still works full time as a paediatrician and prefers to work until he is no longer physically able to do so.

"Working everyday keeps me going" he mentions.

In this example, these grandparents have 2 children of their own and 3 grandchildren. The grandfather and grandmother travel a lot and try to spend as much time as they can visit their grandchildren. "Big Daddy & Big Mommy" is what their three grandchildren call them as the grandparents feel more like their extra parents, they prefer not to be called by their actual title (e.g. Grandfather, Grandmother, Grandpa, Grandma, etc.) "since they don't feel like traditional 'old grandparents'." Recently, their grandson got accepted into a private medical school. The tuitions fees and costs with this school are quite high, placing a heavy financial burden on the family so the grandparents have happily contributed and pay the bulk of their grandson's school expenses. Their parents are very thankful that the grandparents can assist them financially.

The Fourth Example

In this case, the grandparents are both retired, healthy and love spending time with their grandchildren. They have two adult children and a total of 3 grandchildren. Four years ago, their adult daughter separated from her husband and was awarded custody of their only daughter. At that time their granddaughter was only 15 months old.

"It was a difficult time in their lives, and we asked our daughter and granddaughter to move back into our home for some time."

Their daughter had lived with them for the next 2 years.

"We were glad to support them during this difficult time…..we lived together as a normal family" said the grandfather.

After 2 years, their daughter's company had transferred her to Rochester, New York so they left the grandparents and moved into a home of their own. The grandparents continue to provide on-going support and frequently visit them.

"We missed them a great deal and we try to visit them often as we can" said the grandmother.

The Fifth Example

In this example, the grandparents are technically Non-Resident Canadians since they currently live in the Middle-East. The grandfather is just one year from retirement and the Grandmother has been a homemaker. Both are healthy and they have two adult children and 1 grandchild with another grandchild expected to arrive in a few months. Their eldest daughter lives in Montreal with her Quebecois-Canadian husband and 18month old baby boy. When their grandson was born the Grandmother had moved in with her daughter and son-in-law to help them out.

"I was glad I had the chance to be there with them, this was my daughter's first child and I wanted to be there for her to support her." said the grandmother.

The grandmother had lived with them for about 3 months before she returned to the Middle East to re-join her husband. The Grandparents regularly communicate with them through the internet using services such as Skype and Yahoo.

"We are many miles away from them and wish we could be closer to them but for now Skype will have to do".

Once the grandfather retires they will return permanently to Canada.

"We can't wait to be back in Canada" said the grandmother.

The grandparents continue to provide on-going support

"We are watching our grandson grow-up online and we so glad that the currently technology allows us to see them regularly".

The Sixth Example

This Grandmother (just shy of her 90 birthday) is the mother of 8 adult children and 21 grandchildren. Her husband passed away more than 25 years ago. She lives in Toronto and resides in one of her son's home. Since she has such a large family, she occasionally bounces between several of adult children's homes, many of whom live in the Greater Toronto Area.

"I like to spend time living with all my family".

The grandmother is an exceptionally healthy, sharp and motivated individual.

"I love to learn new things and keep active"

the grandmother proudly mentions. For her 89 Birthday, her 21 grandchildren chipped in and bought her an iPad tablet computer. She was quick to learn how to operate it and now regularly communicates with all her grandchildren online.

> "I find it easy to check e-mails and send them messages, when our family sends out group mails, I'm usually the first one to reply".

Since many of her grandchildren are now slowly spreading out in various parts of Canada and U.S she finds connecting by internet the easiest way to keep in touch with all of them

> "I love it when they upload pictures so I can see them in all their lovely outfits."

The Seventh & Eighth Example

This situation is unique since it deals with two sets of grandparents, paternal and maternal, within the same family. The paternal grandparents now fully retired, have relocated to Oakville, Ontario from Montreal, Quebec to live within a short walking distance of their grandchildren.

> "We knew since our son and daughter-in-law work full-time they would need us to look after the grandchildren from time to time, so we felt it necessary to live close to them".

The maternal grandparents both fully retired, also relocated to Burlington, Ontario from London, to be within a short 10 minute drive of their grandchildren's home.

> "We feel so lucky to live close to our grandchildren, our parents never had the chance to live this close to their grandchildren and meet often, we feel this is a blessing".

As both sets of grandparents live close to their grandchildren as well as to each other, they spend a good amount of time together and are often invited to each other's homes and attend the same religious institution.

> "We live so close to each other, we even share the same Doctor and often run into each other at the clinic".

Both sets of grandparents eagerly look forward to their chance to spend time with their grandchildren and their schedules are adjusted based on the needs of their grandchildren. This situation alludes itself to the notion of "it takes a village to raise a child" since there are literally several intergenerational family members from different sides involved in the raising of their grandchildren.

DISCUSSION

Identity

From my interactions with these Grandparents I felt they all had a strong impact on their grandchildren's sense of identity. The grandparents believed that they were often considered by their grandchildren as "authentically Indian", whereas the grandchildren's parents may have assimilated more in to the western lifestyle, including speaking exclusively in English. In fact, many of the grandchildren's parents were incapable of conversing with their children in their grandparents' mother tongue, Malayalam. Taylor et al (1992) indicates that if an individual does not have intergenerational family relationships, he or she may lack a cultural and historical sense of self. A lack of bonds, especially at the intergenerational level, may yield a less-developed sense of identity. Olsen's (2001) study assumes relationships with those of previous generations can help us gain a better grasp of who we are and where we came from, and that the particular human chain we belong to is central to our individual identity. In addition, Olsen's research with adolescents and young adults shows that transmitting knowledge about cultural and familial roots may be the most important way grandparents can influence an adolescent's search for identity.

Values, Beliefs and Cultural Influences

From my interactions and interviews with these Grandparents it was evident that they clearly played an important role in the transmission of values, ideals, and beliefs to grandchildren. Olsen et al (2001) describe how certain traits are more commonly transmitted inter-generationally than are others and may include religious affiliation, education, and occupational achievement. In addition, their research shows that grandmothers play an especially important role in their grandchildren's value development. Work ethics, however, seem to be equally influenced by both grandmothers and grandfathers. Schwartz et al, (2006) research suggests that acculturation arose in almost each of the grandparents interviewed. Acculturation explains the process of cultural and psychological change that results following meeting between cultures. In my interviews with the grandparents, it was evident that their grandchildren had often adopted many of the Indian beliefs and behaviours of their grandparents and parents. The acculturation in this situation suggested that "Indian-orientedness" is particularly relevant as an important influence in the meanings of role assignments that in turn affects the quality of relationship. This finding suggests that Asian-Indian immigrant grandchildren have made sense of their cultural environment and decided how they are going to preserve their cultural tradition as well as thrive in the dominant culture. This was consistent with Farver, Narang, and Bhadha's (2002) report which suggests that many Asian-Indian immigrants do not simply discard Indian values but somewhat

acculturate in a bicultural fashion that provides a model for their children. One grandfather expressed

> "We hope to instil in our grandchildren, as we have with our children, our traditional Indian values customs, and traditions…although we live in Canada now we want to preserve our culture as much as we can".

It was observed through my discussion and interactions that the preservation of culture and values was vitally important to most of the grandparents I spoke with.

Altruism

Kornhaber (1996) research describes the most defining characteristic of effective grandparents was their altruistic orientation towards life. Altruism – derived from the Latin "alter" (other) and the French "autrui" (other person's) – is defined as unselfish devotion to the needs of others. It is the opposite of egoism or self-centeredness. Kornhaber (1996) further suggests that altruistic individuals place a priority on service to others and express this value in their behaviour. Altruistic people are "value centred." They find inner strength and direction from a strong set of values that can often put them at odds with the society around them. Altruistic individuals are often religious, self-transcendent and display character traits associated with spirituality (Cloninger, Svaric, Pryzbeck, 1993). One grandmother discussed the importance of letting her grandchildren know the significance of community engagement and volunteering.

> "When people are sick or ill, we should do whatever we can to help out…I always try to prepare meals and deliver it to our loved ones in need if they had been treated at a hospital".

Wilson (1978) suggests that altruism as a personality characteristic may explain the biological underpinnings of grandparents' nurturing, protective and supportive roles. Since it is based on ensuring the well-being and happiness of family members, an altruistic approach to grandparenting guarantees that family members – and thus the genetic legacy of the grandparent – will in fact survive. Altruistic grandparents create and support well-functioning families. These grandparents have continuity in their existence. Their legacies are transmitted by connected, rooted family members (Wilson, 1978).

Health and Vitality

All of the grandparents have relatively good health and feel that that being healthy and fit was essential regarding their roles within the family. They were concerned that if they got sick or were no longer healthy they could not be the grandparents they would want to be

> "Six months ago I had a hip surgery, the recovery was long, we weren't able to see our grandchildren as often as we wanted to" says one Grandmother.

This was consistent with the study of Silverstein and Chen (1999) who suggested that physical vigour enables grandparents to be regarded as more actively and energetically engaged in potential social and leisure activities with grandchildren. Kornhaber (1993, p. 3) suggests that "vitality is defined as being a support or source of life", and

> "… In addition to physical vitality, there is emotional, spiritual and intellectual vitality. Vitality is positively related to mental health. Vital grandparents bring joy, excitement and wonder into the grandchildren's lives."

Many of the grandparents I had spoken with had described the notion of being "Revitalized",

> "…our grandchildren gave us a new sense of purpose and renewed energy" said one grandmother.

Kivnick (1983, p. 1056) has alluded to this "revitalizing" phenomenon, "Being grandparents allows/helps many grandparents to counteract some measure of the decrease in morale which frequently results from the various losses that are part of growing older."

Balancing Boundaries

With respect to balancing boundaries between their adult children and grandchildren, it really wasn't seen as an issue or given much thought or attention, since from their Indian culture and perspective the elders are normally well integrated into the family and their wealth of experience serves as an invaluable guide. As one grandparent explains,

> "We don't think of our involvement as interfering since that's the way it's always been with our families from as long as I can remember…. Our adult kids feel more concerned about us having to take on too much responsibility. We're always on stand-by when they need us"

For all grandparents it is quite normal to be very involved in the daily lives of their kids and grandkids. In one grandparent's voice

> "My son and daughter-in-law will be the ones to discipline the children….then the grandchildren will then come and cry in our laps".

However, in terms of disciplining, some grandparents had no issue with being the disciplinarians where others preferred that role to be left to their grandchildren's parents.

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"Once in a while, if the situation arises, we will scold our grandchildren if
they are misbehaving but we usually try to leave those duties to the parents".

Family Commitment

Each of the grandparents I spoke with was highly motivated and very committed to
the grandchildren and families. Even while some of the grandparents continued to
work, their support and commitment was just as strong. They all indicated that the
time and availability in providing support and care to their grandchildren can be
adjusted based on the needs of their grandchildren. For example, during the
summer period, the grandchildren would often remain under the care of the
grandparents so that parents would not have to find another caregiver for them.
They all cherished those times dearly.

"We would take them grocery shopping with us and spend time with them in
the playgrounds playing soccer with them" says one grandfather.

The grandparents I interviewed resoundingly cherish the moments they spend
alone with their grandchildren. Kornhaber (1993, p. 2) describes these moments
"as the vital connection between you and your grandchild blossoms fully when the
child has your undivided attention in an unhurried and relaxed atmosphere. This is
when the child "absorbs" you — heart and soul!" It was clear that the grandparents
were all very committed to their adult children's families and try to be available
when their family needs them.

Distance, Communication and Family Relationships

Most of the grandparents felt they were satisfied with the contact they had with
their grandchildren. The contact between these grandparents and their
grandchildren is not entirely a matter of choice but depends on such things as
physical proximity, the ongoing relationship that they have with the parents of the
grandchildren and other demands on their time from jobs or community life
(Ochiltree, 2006). Many grandparents currently now live separately from their
adult grandchildren since their grandchildren have moved out of their parents'
home and reside elsewhere due to work, school or being settled in their new
married life. In some instances, it was the grandparents who left the house where
the grandchildren were residing (i.e. moved to India during the winter months). In
these situations, the grandparents would try to make contact as often as they could.
Many of these grandparents were technologically savvy and were quite
comfortable with basic computing and internet and would often engage in web
chats (Skype), emails with photo attachments, SMS text messages from their
mobile phones. One grandmother was ever so delighted when her grandchildren
bought her a new laptop and created an email account for her so she could
communicate with them while she was away.

"I even learned to post photos and make comments on Facebook to stay connected with my grandchildren, especially when we were away visiting India" as described by one grandfather.

Many of the grandparents indicated that they treat their grandchildren in a more relaxed and permissive manner than they ever treated their own children. As a result, their grandchildren often feel more comfortable discussing sensitive issues with a grandparent than with their own parents.

"Our granddaughter would ask us to read a bed time story to them if they were scolded by the parents that night" says one grandmother.

Personal Satisfaction

It was also routinely observed through my interactions with these grandparents that they all considered grandparenting to be extremely personally satisfying as it provided them a sense of purpose and a feeling of being valued.

"We absolutely love being grandparents and we are happy to live close to them" indicated by the Grandparents in Oakville.

Even during a time of the year when they were apart, they depicted their relationships with their grandchildren as very close and remain connected as often as they could

"I'm so glad we learned how to use Skype and email so we can regularly keep in touch with our grandchildren when we are away from them. Even when we go back to India we can connect with them with our laptops".

Grandparents as Bonus Parents

The term "bonus" is often described as something welcome and often unexpected that accompanies and enhances something that is itself good. For example, in certain professions, notably sales and other business-type jobs, a bonus is something extra, usually monetary reward, that is received on top of regular compensation, normally tied to exemplary performance of an employee or perhaps a better than expected year for the company. The notion of grandparents as a "bonus" embodies the extra benefit or complimentary advantage grandparenting has on their immediate families. For example, the extra support, love and nurturing grandparents provide may be considered an added bonus on top of what grandchildren normally receive from their own parents. Who does the "bonus" component of the grandparents' role benefit: the adult children, the grandchildren, the extended family, the Indian diasporic community, Canadian society? It is important to note that a bonus is perceived as something of "extra welcome" and should enhance an existing "good". From our examples, it is evident in certain

instances that grandparents' role as bonus parents can occur by simply enriching the lives of their family and grandchildren without much active presence or day-to-day involvement. For example, celebrating holidays, birthdays and vacations together or babysitting when required. In other instances, such as single-parent households, the grandparent's role as bonus parents may be much more involved and require extensive input of their time, financial resources and experience. Our examples and discussions with grandparents indicate a mutually-benefiting situation to all members of the family. Firstly, to the grandparents as they remain connected with their families and share in the joy of being a part of their grandchildren's upbringing; secondly to the adult children as they benefit from having the additional assistance, support and commitment of the grandparents; thirdly, the grandchildren benefit from the extra support, wisdom, experience and love of senior family members. Will parents view the role of grandparents in their families as a perceived bonus? Perhaps, the type or level of bonus will depend on the strength, character and closeness of the relationships between the intergenerational family members. This is a possible area of future study and further discussions with families, especially intergenerational families, could provide more scope on the topic.

CONCLUSION

In summary, we can see how the roles of grandparents have transitioned over the years. In a traditional sense, especially in a North American/western setting, grandparents may have had the role of being "at arm's length" with the grandchildren and would not interfere with how their kids were raising them. In eastern societies, grandparents may have a great role in raising grandchildren. However, now due to the many changes in family structure and society we can see a greater role grandparent's play in both eastern and western societies. From my own experience, my grandparents, also originally from India, played a significant and vital role in my childhood and upbringing. As a child, both my parents had fulltime jobs therefore my grandmother and grandfather had assisted in raising my sister and me. Upon reflection, I consider my grandparents' role as "bonus parents" and strongly believe that I would not have been the same person without their committed presence, ongoing nurturing and unconditional caring love.

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KARAN JUTLLA

11. CULTURAL NORMS ABOUT THE ROLES OF OLDER PEOPLE IN SIKH FAMILIES

A Qualitative Study with the Sikh Community in Wolverhampton in the UK

INTRODUCTION

This chapter is organised into two parts. Part I discusses the migration history of Sikhs in the UK. It reviews current literature that provides a useful insight into the development and characteristics of Sikh communities in the UK, and profiles the Sikh community in the UK. It also reviews literature that provides an insight into the characteristics of Sikh families living in the UK. Such information remains descriptive as the aim of Part I is to provide a backcloth for the findings of my doctoral study with Sikhs living in Wolverhampton presented in part II of this chapter. The aim of my doctoral study was to understand how migration experiences and personal histories impact on caring for a family member with dementia for Sikhs living in Wolverhampton in the UK. Whilst the focus of my research was not on grand-parent and grand-children relationships per se, my research provides rich and insightful information about the roles of older people in Sikh families which contribute to our understanding of such phenomenon. It also draws out those areas that are worthy of further exploration.

PART I

The Migration History of Sikhs in The UK

Globally, the Sikh population is estimated to comprise 20 million people (Singh and Tatla 2006). Approximately one million of the total Sikh population live outside India and the Punjab (Singh and Tatla 2006). The majority of Sikhs have settled in the UK, followed by Canada, the United States and Australia, making Sikhs the premier migrants of South Asia. Whilst the 2011 census data was gathered in March, it is not yet available to the public domain. I therefore draw upon the results from the 2001 census as the only current available comprehensive source of data. The 2001 census estimated a total number of 336,179 Sikhs living in the UK (Singh and Tatla 2006: 32). The majority of Sikh migrants in the UK have come directly from the Punjab, the Sikh state of India (James 1974; Ballard and Ballard 1979; Singh and Tatla 2006), and were later followed by East African

Sikhs who began to arrive in the UK in large numbers by the mid 1960s, also known as twice migrants (Bhachu 1985; Singh and Tatla 2006). Although there are small numbers of Sikhs in the UK from other parts of the world, notably Singapore (Hershman 1981), research on such Sikhs is extremely limited. Based on different migration routes and experiences, the migration history of direct migrants (Sikhs from India) and twice migrants (Sikhs from East Africa) to the UK will be discussed separately.

Current research on Sikh migration draws our attention to caste as an important indicator of migration routes and settlement locations. For example, the majority of Sikhs in Huddersfield are of the landowning caste *Jats* (James 1974), while the *Ramgarhias* (carpenters by caste) was the largest Sikh community to move to East Africa (Bhachu 1985). According to Ballard and Ballard (1979) and Kalra (1980), castes within the Sikh population in rural Punjab fit into a hierarchy comprising four broad categories:

- *Brahmins and Khatris.* These are the high rank priestly class who traditionally acted as warriors to the Gurus. They comprise approximately ten per cent of the rural population of the Punjab.
- *Jats.* These are the 'landowners' and 'farmers' and comprise approximately 50 per cent of the rural population of the Punjab.
- *Craftsmen and service caste.* These comprise approximately 15 per cent of the rural population, of whom the *Ramgarhias* (carpenters) are the largest group.
- *The 'untouchables.'* These are members of the 'ritually unclean caste' (Ballard and Ballard 1979: 27) who comprise approximately 25 per cent.

Whilst these categories are broad and generalised, they indicate that the Sikh community is not a homogeneous group.

Sikhs from India

A number of early studies on Sikh communities in the UK identified that the majority of Sikhs migrated from the Jullundur Doab region within the Punjab; the Sikh state of India (James 1974; Ballard and Ballard 1979; Singh and Tatla 2006). The bulk of early Sikh migrants came from families of medium wealth in rural areas of the Punjab (Ballard and Ballard 1979). Because caste also indicates wealth, in the earliest part of the 20th century, there was no evidence of Sikhs present in the UK from the higher castes of *Brahmins* and *Katras* and from the lower *untouchables* castes (Ballard and Ballard 1979). For example, James (1974) found that the majority of the Sikh community in Huddersfield in the UK were *Jats* who migrated from Jullundur, Hoshiarpur and Karpurthala, all of which are located in the Doab region. Based on their own fieldwork among the Sikhs in Leeds, Ballard and Ballard (1979) suggest that there is a chronological sequence of four phases in the development of Sikh settlements in the UK which reflects the findings of other early small scale research projects on Sikh migration (James

1974; Kalra 1980). Singh and Tatla (2006) have provided an in-depth review of the Sikh population in the UK using a range of sources, including the 2001 census, and they too note these four phases of settlement.

Phase One: The Pioneers of Sikh Migration

The first wave of Sikh migration to the UK was in the 1860s and 1890s whereby, according to Singh and Tatla (2006), their positions within the Indian Army allowed them to act as security auxiliaries for British firms and thus accompany fellow officers on tour. It was through such experiences that Sikhs developed an attraction for foreign lands and began the outward migration process (Singh and Tatla 2006). It was not until the early 1920s however that permanent Sikh settlement began in the UK (Ballard and Ballard 1979). These were Sikhs of the very small *Bhatra* caste (hawkers and peddlers) who were known for their ability to be able to 'haggle' (Ballard and Ballard 1979; James 1974; Singh and Tatla 2006). They began making a living by *"hawking suitcases of clothing from door to door, mostly in rural areas"* (Ballard and Ballard, 1979: 28). As the *Bhatras* maintained close relationships with their people back home, the word about the economic opportunities available in the UK began to circulate in the Punjab. Many Sikhs came to the UK to join the pioneer settlers to whom they were either related, or knew through contacts. James (1974:10) reports:

> "Many arrived at London Airport with a list of 'contacts' – relations, fellow-villagers, friends, school fellows, and more remote connections – with whom they would stay while seeking work. They often started in Southall, where the biggest Sikh settlement was forming."

By the end of the 1930s, small colonies of Punjabi peddlers, among which the *Bhatras* had already become a minority, could be found in almost every British city (Ballard and Ballard 1979). By 1940 for example, there were 37 Sikhs registered as peddlers with Glasgow Council (Singh and Tatla 2006: 48). Soon, as a result of employment, British based Sikhs were able to sponsor the passage of kinsmen to the UK (Singh and Tatla 2006). The small Sikh colonies of pedlars, by the end of World War Two, were therefore essentially men who had financed themselves to the UK, and thus provided a bridgehead for the mass migration of Sikhs during the post-war economic boom.

Phase Two: Post World War Two Economic Boom

At the end of World War Two there was a huge demand for unskilled labour in British industry and migration to the UK increased rapidly (Sheik and Gatrad 2000; Poros 2001; Coyle 2005; Hatton 2005). The rapid economic growth of the 1950s led to increased employment opportunities for both indigenous and migrant workers, especially those willing to take on low-wage menial jobs (Warnes 2006).

The UK's post-war labour needs were initially met by European migrants. However, Sikh residents in the UK began communicating with kith and kin in the Punjab emphasising the opportunities for work and the potential to earn *'easy money'* (Singh and Tatla 2006: 50). Although migrants ideally sought high wages they were prepared to do "tedious and unpleasant jobs for very long hours*"* (Ballard and Ballard 1979: 29). Large numbers of Sikh men from the Punjab therefore set out for the UK drawn by the employment opportunities. Although Sikh women also migrated to the UK for better employment opportunities, mainly to work in textiles (Hall 2002), they were significantly outnumbered by men (Papastergiadis 2000). Consequently, there arose a high proportion of all-male households whereby migrants lived in communal residences as a way of saving money (James, 1974; Ballard and Ballard, 1979).

With a constant stream of new arrivals looking for shelter, an obvious area for investment was housing. Investment in housing appealed to the Sikhs, for many of them were land owners in the Punjab and the idea of being an owner of property itself brought prestige. Sikhs bought houses that were cheap, being "invariably decaying Victorian and Edwardian terrace houses which could be found in the inner areas of British cities" (Ballard and Ballard, 1979: 32). Cases of overcrowding were regularly brought to the attention of local authorities, particularly in the West Midlands and West London (Singh and Tatla 2006). By 1962, 46,000 migrants had arrived from India and immigration had become a major political issue (Singh and Tatla 2006). The 1960s was a period of consolidation and reduced migration owing to the introduction of the Commonwealth Immigrants Act 1962 which restricted Sikh migration to family reunions, and to East African British passport holders (Singh and Tatla 2006; Bhachu 1985). Industrial areas such as the West Midlands (in particular Birmingham, Walsall, and Wolverhampton) experienced mass immigration, many of whom were Sikhs (Phillipson et al. 2001; Singh and Tatla 2006).

Phase Three: Family Reunions

Changes in British immigration legislation prompted a range of migratory strategies among those already settled in the UK who wished to bring their relatives over. As a result, there were considerable differences in the speed with which different Asian groups re-united their families; the Sikhs (and Hindu Gujaratis) have done so most rapidly (Ballard and Ballard 1979). The fear that immigration control was likely to become even more prohibitive led to most Sikhs residing in the UK rushing their families through the immigration controls and into the UK (Singh and Tatla 2006). Also, social relationships and obligations made it increasingly attractive for men to consider bringing their wives and children to the UK, as well as the longing to be re-united with their families (Ballard and Ballard 1979). In many cases, wives became an extra helping hand and support in their new found businesses (Remennick 1999).

The sponsorship of families after the 1960s therefore saw a rapid rise in the number of Asian women in the UK (James 1974). Families, once re-united, lived in the cheapest houses which could satisfy their basic requirements, close to inner city areas in which all-male households had previously been established (Singh and Tatla 2006). The presence of a wife and children meant that patterns of expenditure changed; migrants began to spend more on furnishing and equipping their houses (Phillipson et al. 2001), thus improving their standards of living.

Sikh business enterprises began to proliferate and expand towards the end of the 1960s (James 1974). Due to the availability of migrants for work, many market stall traders and shop owners were able to expand their businesses to warehouses and manufacturing. Alongside the expansion of businesses, came the expansion of the ethnic market in areas where there was a high Sikh (or Asian) population. Consequently, "cinemas, grocers, cloth shops, sweet shops, goldsmiths and travel agents were all beginning to grow to serve Asian clientele" (Ballard and Ballard, 1979: 38).

Phase Four: The Emergence of the Second Generation

The fourth phase of Sikh settlement since the 1970s has been the emergence of a second generation; the British born, or at least the British educated, children of migrant parents. Whilst the emergence of the second generation is an important area for understanding intergenerational relationships within families, it has been little explored in the literature. Rather, research in this area has been concerned with the economic consequences for families as opposed to social relations. The emergence of the second generation, for example, meant that more families moved away from the cheap terraced housing of inner-city towns (Ballard and Ballard 1979). In the late 1970s, many families contained children, both married and unmarried, who were working and thus could sustain a higher standard of living due to several incomes within the household. The increased numbers of women in employment meant that wives, daughters and daughters-in-law too could contribute financially (Bhachu 1988).

The continuous rise in the number of Sikh women in employment has implications for the relationships between older Sikhs and their grandchildren. Also, the growing shift towards nuclear households, whereby many of the younger generation are setting up home alone (Bhachu 1985; Blakemore and Boneham 1994; Ahmad and Atkin 1997), has implications for intergenerational relationships within families. Due to education, many of the second generation have become *'aspiring middle class'* and tend to move with (or even without) their elderly parents to predominantly white suburban residential estates (Blakemore and Boneham 1994: 80). Those Asian elders who lived with their "aspiring middle class*"* sons and their families often reported being left alone and away from Asian friends and the temple, which is an important place of congregation for Sikh women (Bhachu 1985; Blakemore and Boneham 1994: 80). These women were

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also discouraged from meeting out of doors in the UK, not only due to prevailing social norms but also to the adverse climate. Many of the Asian older women spoke of "feelings of incarceration, loneliness and abandonment" (Blakemore and Boneham 1994: 80). Older Asian men relate to the household in a different manner as they characteristically spend more time outside of the home (Mand 2006). Such findings suggest possible implications for those older Sikhs who may be caring for their grandchildren whilst their children undertake paid employment outside of the home. Currently this area remains unexplored for Sikhs living in the UK.

Cultural conflict between older Asians and their offspring has too been reported. Such conflict has largely been the result of the second generation having to establish a balance between both British culture and that of their migrant parents (Watson 1977; Gardner and Shukur 1994). Changes in geographical locations, family sizes, as well as cultural conflict issues have important implications for intergenerational relationships amongst family members.

These four phases of settlement show clearly how Sikhs, mainly from rural Punjab, came to become established and settled communities in the UK, functioning well in their host societies as families with working members and British educated children. The arrival of East African Sikhs too contributed to this community development.

East African Sikhs began to arrive in the UK in large numbers by the mid 1960s. Having previously migrated to East Africa, they are known as 'twice migrants' (Bhachu 1985; Singh and Tatla 2006). East African Sikhs have a different migration history to those Sikh migrants from India. Their migration history and background has not only had significant impact upon their experiences on arrival in the UK, but has also affected settlement patterns. Bhachu's doctoral research (1985) provides a detailed discussion of the history of how East African Sikhs settled in the UK and is thus a key study when reviewing settlement patterns and the characteristics of East African Sikhs.

Sikhs from East Africa

The period after the Second World War saw a marked rise in Indian incomes in East Africa due to the abandonment of East Africa's original racial salary structure whilst, at the same time, a younger and more highly educated generation of Indians were entering the professions. By the early 1960s:

> '…the extensive urbanization of communities, members of which had emigrated directly from Indian villages, gave rise in East Africa to a new generation of East African-born people who were exposed to a system of education modelled on the Western pattern and to higher standards of living, and who were also developing a greater consciousness of their place in the countries in which they were residing' (Bhachu, 1985: 24).

In the 1960s, East Africa also saw a dramatic increase of female employees in the labour market. The occupational profile of Sikh women in East Africa in the 1960s (mainly clerks, secretaries, teachers and nurses) was similar to Sikh women in London in the 1980s (Bhachu 1988). According to Bhachu (1985), the Sikh community in East Africa in the post-war period became highly skilled, educated, fairly prosperous and a tight-knit community able to maintain and build networks through caste endogamy, whereby marriages were arranged within caste.

Alongside African nationalism and independence, the thriving businesses of the Sikh community in East Africa raised political concerns (Patel 2007) which in turn led to the Africanisation of public policies. This combined the proclaimed objective of meeting nationalist aspirations of African businessmen with a hidden agenda to expel Asians from Africa (Patel 2007). The Africanisation of policies thus led to the expulsion and migration of many South Asians, including the Sikhs. With little scope to find alternative employment in East Africa and with private firms reluctant to take them, many Sikhs, already holding British passports, moved to the UK in the late 1960s. There were approximately 180,000 Asians residing in Africa at the time of Kenya's independence in 1964. By 1968, approximately 80,000 Asians had left the country to seek shelter in the UK (Patel 2007). The Ugandan Sikhs by contrast arrived in the UK as refugees in 1972 when Idi Amin expelled them from Uganda. Even though the Ugandan Asian expulsion is one that stands out in history, Patel (2007:8) argues that the situation for Asians in Kenya was *'just as dire, if not worse.'*

There are currently no precise figures for East African Sikh settlers in the UK (Singh and Tatla 2006). Although a large number of East African Sikhs settled in the suburbs of London, they also began to spread out to other large cities like Birmingham, Wolverhampton, Leeds, Coventry and Cardiff (Bhachu 1985: 31). Bhachu (1985) found in her study that, unlike Sikh migrants from India, East African Sikhs did not cluster in inner city areas but dispersed into the suburbs on arrival. Even in Southall in London, they tended to live in nuclear families in the surrounding areas as opposed to in the main centre. Family members however, were usually within the same borough and maintained contact. *Jats* on the other hand, are known to live in extended families and, where they reside as a nuclear family, it is usually within the same street (Bhachu, 1985). The settlement patterns of East African settlers in the UK were a reflection of their settlement in East Africa. Families who moved to middle class suburban areas on arrival in the UK had migrated from the more prosperous parts of East Africa. East African Sikhs too did not encounter the complex problems of family reunions as the majority arrived as family units. East African Sikhs also had distinct advantages over Sikhs from India, with their more marketable skills and close-knit families (Singh and Tatla 2006).

During the 1960s and 1970s, Sikhs from India and East Africa were joined by other migrants of the Sikh diaspora including those from Malaysia, Singapore, Hong Kong, Fiji and the West Indies (Singh and Tatla 2006: 54). Like the East

African Sikhs, such migrants often were twice or even 'thrice' migrants from varied caste backgrounds and possessed significant marketable skills (Singh and Tatla 2006: 54). Many Sikhs who had served under the British in Singapore had also begun migrating to the UK in the 1950s (Hershman 1981). These Sikhs consisted mainly of the *Jats* as well as several men from the *Tanner* caste (untouchables).

The Development of Sikh Communities in the UK

As Sikhs settled in the UK they established distinct communities. Special community-based brokers developed contacts with the personnel departments of local factories and (or) established workers, thus being able to provide jobs to new arrivals very quickly (Ballard and Ballard 1979; Singh and Tatla 2006). Many brokers/patrons consequently built up powerful positions for themselves, establishing interlocking networks involving housing, shop keeping, politics and the provision of jobs (Ballard and Ballard 1979; Singh and Tatla 2006). As the UK in the early days was a "hard and hostile environment in which to live" for Asians, migrant communities provided mutual support to one another (Ballard and Ballard 1979: 30).

As mentioned, an important development in the Sikh community was the arrival of women (Werbner 1990) which influenced a move towards less crowded housing conditions (Ballard and Ballard 1979). The all-male household virtually disappeared. Immigrant women from South Asia continued their duties of the provision of money, food and care for the older members of the family and children, and visiting and keeping key relations (Alicea 2000: Mand 2004). Traditional norms, values and rituals within such migrant communities were also strengthened through the arrival of women (Werbner 1990: Mand 2002).

The presence of children soon meant that marriages were considered and arranged. Finding a suitable partner is, again, a responsibility associated with women (Blakemore and Boneham 1994: Mand 2002). The traditional gendered roles and division of labour characteristic of Sikh families in rural Punjab in the 1950s still remain powerful in Sikh families in the UK today (Mand 2006; Singh and Tatla 2006). Traditional norms about gendered roles in Sikh families are important to understand when considering informal caring responsibilities, particularly in relation to grand-parenting. As Mand (2006) notes, changing ideas about care and provision in South Asian families remains unexplored. According to Mand (2006) whilst there is evidence of traditional gendered roles in Sikh families, migration influences the ways in which family life is experienced and how family members relate to each other. Important to experiences of migration therefore, are the extent to which migrants develop and maintain resources held in their social networks both back home and in their host societies – a concept known as social capital (Mand 2006). Whilst the term social capital lends itself to multiple definitions, interpretations and uses, it is generally accepted that social capital

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refers to the expectative benefits derived from networks between individuals and groups (Portes 1998).

Because of the clear link between social capital and health and wellbeing (Sixsmith and Boneham 2003), exploring the innovative ways that migrants adopt for maintaining networks is an important research area (Mand 2006). East African Sikhs arrived with the advantages of being conversant in English as well as having a good understanding of British culture being "generally better educated than their Punjabi brethren, urban, and previously either self-employed or in non-manual jobs" (Singh and Tatla 2006: 54). Not surprisingly, those with more human and social capital could raise families, start businesses, and express political demands across borders more easily (Levitt 2001). Such advantages of East African Sikhs may well give rise to different experiences of grand-parenting, in comparison with their Punjabi brethren. Good knowledge of both English language and culture may limit the language and cultural barriers currently experienced by many older Sikh people in the UK (Singh and Tatla 2006).

Despite having different migration routes, the development of Sikh temples in the UK served as important resources of social capital. The 1960s also saw the re-creation of many Sikh institutions of Punjabi society. By 1958 the first regular Sikh temple in Yorkshire had been established where, by the mid-1960s, regular Sunday attendance at the temple was a rule (Ballard and Ballard 1979). Sikh temples not only serve to provide religious teachings for the Sikh community, but also allow for the fundamental values of Sikh society to be maintained (Bhachu 1985). As the numbers of Sikhs in the UK increased, temples continued to provide the above, though often separately to different castes. Different castes within the Sikh population soon became established communities (Singh and Tatla 2006).

The Sikhs, post migration, have continued to protect the interests of their castes by developing communities based on these key social groupings. This is evident from the number of religious organisations (mainly temples) that serve the different castes within the Sikh community (Singh and Tatla 2006). Hershman (1981: 24–25) reports that in rural Punjab, many Punjabis from the *Tanner* caste (a service caste: cobblers) have rejected the Sikh faith because *"they identify it with the tyranny of their farmer Jat masters'* and are thus becoming followers of *'the Radha Soami movement that there is no caste."* As Nesbitt (1994: 118) argues that regardless of the fact many lower caste *untouchables* (including the *Tanner* caste) have revived and reconstructed themselves as a community in the UK, they are still subjected to *'particularly vicious social oppression'* by members of the higher castes due to their "impure duties of sweeping up debris in the streets" and the *"removal of dead cattle"* in India. In India some temples prevent members of the lower caste entering as they are considered as ritually unclean people due to their duties (Nesbitt 1994). Such findings illustrate the diversity within the Sikh community in the UK.

The Characteristics of the Sikh Population in the UK

Before the 2001 census, estimates of the Sikh population in the UK were based on assumptions about the size of the ethnic group of respondents classifying themselves as 'Indian' (Singh and Tatla 2006). Singh and Tatla (2006) report that it was commonly assumed that up to half of those who have migrated from India were Sikhs. The 2001 census not only identified one's religion but also recorded one's country of birth. The 2011 census now asks for the month and year of arrival to the UK and intended length of stay (Office for National Statistics 2009).

From a total of 336,179 Sikhs living in the UK, the census reported that over half of this population in 2001 was British born (56.19 per cent), with roughly one third being born in India (34.91 per cent) and approximately six per cent in Africa (5.99 per cent). The remaining Sikhs were born in other parts of Asia (2.02 per cent), Europe (0.23 per cent), North America (0.16 per cent), or other parts of the world not mentioned (0.49 per cent). However, Singh and Tatla (2006: 60) suggest that the total figure of 336,179 Sikhs given in the 2001 census is a substantial under-representation and argue that the exact figure is around 500,000 for the following reasons:

> Sikhs belonging to the 'Dalit' category have become increasingly reluctant to classify themselves as Sikhs due to the rivalry between *Jat* and *non-Jat* Sikhs as a result of the Khalistani movement of the 1980s and 1990s. Strong divisions of caste have meant that lower caste Sikhs may have selected 'Hindu' or 'other' on the 2001 census form.

> The presence of illegal Sikh migrants who, although excluded from formal citizenship rights, participate fully in the community's economic and religious life.

> Sikh population in transit. Regular visits to their country of origin and other destinations may have occurred at the time the census was taken.

Regardless of this, the 2001 census is the only comprehensive source by which the demographic profile of the Sikh community in the UK can be determined. The 2001 census reported that the regions containing the highest Sikh populations were London and the West Midlands in the UK.

Almost a third of all Sikhs in the UK live in the West Midlands (Singh and Tatla 2006) particularly Birmingham and Wolverhampton (Phillipson et al. 2001). At 22.1 per cent of the total population, Wolverhampton has the second largest black and minority ethnic (BME) community within the West Midlands (Birmingham has the largest), of which Asians compromise 14.3 per cent (Wolverhampton City Council 2003). It also has the third largest Sikh population in the region.

The Sikh Community in Wolverhampton

In the mid-1990s, Phillipson and his colleagues (2001) revisited the work of Sheldon (1948) who had examined the changing character of family and community life in Wolverhampton in the late 1940s. Phillipson et al. (2001: 42–43) describe Wolverhampton as, "a substantial metropolitan borough with a distinctive identity and location within the West Midlands conurbation." Wolverhampton experienced a rapid growth of manufacturing industry in the immediate post-World War Two years, and by the 1960s it had become home to the highest immigrant population in the West Midlands as migrants were attracted to the employment opportunities on offer.

The majority of immigrants in the 1960s lived in central wards and adjacent districts to the west which developed into areas of multi-occupancy (Phillipson et al. 2001). With the substantial increase in the population of Wolverhampton (from around 94,000 in 1901 to 162,672 by the 1951 census), the local authority began demolishing the over-crowded residences and replacing them with large estates. Despite such changes, at the turn of the twentieth century, Wolverhampton was ranked as the 27th most deprived local authority out of 366 English districts (Phillipson et al. 2001: 47). Although Wolverhampton had improved its position by 2004 to 35th (Wolverhampton City Council 2004), it is still in the top ten per cent of most deprived local authorities. The city went into decline from the late 1960s as a consequence of growing competition from manufacturers overseas and a concomitant rise in unemployment (Phillipson et al. 2001). Despite such challenges, Wolverhampton has continued to strive and meet the needs of its local populations:

> "It's a far cry from the 1950s when Dudley Road attracted new communities from the Commonwealth, including the Asian sub-continent and West Indies. Since then the area has been transformed by an abundance of Asian restaurants, food and fashion shops and jewellers, as well as a range of other businesses as diverse as financial services and beauty salons. Now more than 90 businesses bring a distinctive feel to Dudley Road with their brightly coloured window displays, fine *silks,* fresh and unusual food and stunningly beautiful jewellery" (ABCD Newsletter 2006).

The population in Wolverhampton, as elsewhere, has been steadily ageing (Phillipson et al. 2001). The number of people aged 75 to 84 doubled between 1951 and 1991 (from 4,290 to 8,122), and those over the age of 85 had quadrupled (from 557 to 2,183). These trends have continued, so Wolverhampton now has a total population of 236,582 people of whom 14,132 are aged 75 to 84 years and 5,719 are aged over 85 years according to the 2001 census.

According to the 2001 census Wolverhampton had a total population of 236,582 of which Sikhs numbered 17,944 – the second largest religious group after Christians (157,300). Of the 17,944 Sikhs in Wolverhampton, there are equal

numbers of men and women, with 39.6 per cent of the population aged between 25–49 years, 9 per cent of the Sikh population are aged 50–59 years, 8.3 per cent are aged 60–74 years, and 2.4 per cent are aged 75 years and over (Wolverhampton City Council 2003).

The 2001 census reported that over three quarters of the Sikh population in Wolverhampton own their own property, and work in either manufacturing or wholesale and retail trades. Whilst there are no figures from the census that indicate the number of generations living within a household, the 2001 census reported that 35 per cent of Sikh households contain two or more dependent children, 21.5 per cent contain 1 dependent child, with the remaining having no *dependent* children.

As reported by Phillipson et al. (2001), Wolverhampton experienced a mass migration of Asians from the Indian sub-continent in the 1960s. The 2001 census reports that, out of the 17,944 Sikhs in Wolverhampton, 10,161 (56.6 per cent) were born in the UK, 7,322 (40.8 per cent) were born in Asia (of whom 7,176 [or 98 per cent] were born in India), 354 (2.0 per cent) were born in Africa (of whom 296 [or 84 per cent] were born in East Africa) and the remaining 107 were born in other Western European countries or America.

It is evident from the literature that experiences of intergenerational relationships within Sikh family living in the UK is an area that has remained unexplored. I have reviewed current literature on Sikhs in the UK and briefly profiled the Sikh community in Wolverhampton to provide a context in which the findings of my doctoral study can be situated. As the most recent research on Sikhs living in Wolverhampton in the UK, my doctoral study not only supports current literature on Sikh migration patterns, but also adds depth and new dimensions in this research area. More importantly, it provides us with an insight of cultural norms about gendered roles and positions in Sikh families, including those of older Sikhs', which inform our understanding of older Sikhs' lived and possible experiences of grandparenting.

PART II

The aim of part II of this chapter is to develop an understanding about the role of grandparenting in Sikh families living in the UK. To do this, I have returned to my doctoral research with Sikhs caring for a family member with dementia living in Wolverhampton. According to the National Dementia Strategy (Department of Health 2009:15):

> "The term 'dementia' is used to describe a syndrome which may be caused by a number of illnesses in which there is a progressive decline in multiple areas of function, including decline in memory, reasoning, communication skills and the ability to carry out daily activities. Alongside this decline, individuals may develop behavioural and psychological symptoms such as

depression, psychosis, aggression and wandering, which complicate care and which can occur at any stage of the illness."

A carer can be defined as somebody who provides "unpaid care by looking after an ill, frail or disabled family member, friend or partner" (Whitman 2010: 17). There is a strong body of evidence suggesting that caring for a person with dementia can be one of the most demanding and difficult roles.

Whilst the relationships between grandparents and their grandchildren were not a focus of my research, the role of elders in the family was a strong theme in the narratives of the participants. I have therefore returned to the findings of my research and the empirical data to develop an understanding of the role of elders within Sikh families and their relationships with their grandchildren. How these roles are affected when a grandparent of the household develops a dementia are also important to consider. Cultural norms about roles and positions within Sikh families were a strong theme in my research. Exploring this concept within my research will not only develop our understanding of such phenomenon, but also highlight those areas that are worthy of further research. Before discussing this, I provide readers with a brief description of my doctoral research including; its rationale, use of methodology and methods, and the participants.

A Qualitative Study of the Sikh community in Wolverhampton

There is a considerable evidence base revealing that ethnic minority groups in the UK are disadvantaged as service users. Recent research has highlighted the difficulties that Asian carers have in accessing services when caring for a relative with dementia (Seabrooke & Milne 2004; Jutlla & Moreland 2007; Moriarty et al. 2011). Such disadvantages are associated with the cultural and language barriers faced by carers in receipt of services. Evidence also suggests that Asians are generally reluctant to ask for, or accept, support from services. The lack of awareness and understanding of dementia amongst Asian communities has too been reported. Because there is no equivalent word for dementia in South Asian languages and a high degree of stigma attached to mental health, carers of people with dementia from Asian communities tend to remain hidden from services (Jutlla and Moreland 2007). When they do present themselves to services, it is often when they are in crisis situations (Moriarty et al. 2011). Issues of cultural competency within services have too been noted by such people (Seabrook and Milne 2004; Jutlla and Moreland 2007).

Whilst the evidence of barriers in service provision for Asian carers is relatively well rehearsed, there was a need for further research as to *why* these barriers exist. Currently, research on the experiences of Asians caring for a person with dementia is an area where methodological and theoretical concepts are not well developed – partly because the focus of such research has been on their experiences of services. Taking a biographical approach to fieldwork, my doctoral study explored how

migration experiences and personal histories influence experiences of care amongst Sikh carers in Wolverhampton caring for an older person with dementia. Using a constructivist grounded theory, two in depth narrative interviews were carried out with 12 carers of a family member with dementia. The first interview focused on their experiences of caring and the second focused on their personal histories including their experiences of migration. Interviews lasted 1–3 hours each and analysis applied the guidelines of constructivist grounded theory (Charmaz 2006) to ensure that participants were given voice in the research. Constructivist grounded theory also acknowledged my own epistemological stance in my research as a Sikh woman living in Wolverhampton, for "a constructivist approach places priority on the phenomena of study and sees both data and analysis as created from shared experiences and relationships with participants" (Charmaz 2006: 13).

Of the 12 participants, nine were women and three were men. Participants ranged between spousal carers (5 in total) and intergenerational carers (7 in total), and had various migration histories, including those who were British born or British educated to migrant parents. Whilst some may argue that such a diverse sample make it difficult to draw generalisations, the aim of my research was to develop an in-depth understanding of parents' individual and shared experiences.

Cultural Norms About the Role of Older People in Sikh Families: "Respecting Your Elders"

There are cultural norms associated with being a Sikh that impact on the various roles and positions that individuals have within the family. Discourses within Sikh culture therefore, not only shape the way that participants have experienced life events, but also how they have articulated them. The older generations have a significant role within the family. In my research, the older Sikhs are those who are providing spousal care (aged 60 years and older), whilst the younger Sikhs are those who are providing intergenerational care (aged 35–60 years). Whilst there were instances where this was directly referred to in the narratives of some of the participants, the importance of the roles of Sikh elders were articulated through discussions about family circumstances. As an illness mainly associated with old age (Whitman 2010), having a family member with a dementia resulted in an increased emphasis on such roles. 11 of the 12 participants were residing with their family member who had dementia. The older Sikhs were all co-resident couples whose children were living separately as nuclear families. The younger Sikhs were living in intergenerational households. Of these 7 intergenerational carers, 4 were living in households which contained three generations, 1 lived in a household which contained four generations, 1 lived with her mother only, and the other cared for his father who was not resident with him but lived with his mother who also took part in this research.

Narratives about roles within the family were closely linked with participants' gender and whether they were a member of the older or younger generation. In

other words, the older participants shared similarities due to being part of the same generation, as did the younger participants. That said, the women also have shared common experiences regardless of which generation they belong to, as do the men. Based on such findings, I discuss the role of older people and their relationships with their grand-children in the family firstly from the perspective of the older Sikhs that took part in my research, followed by the perspectives of the younger Sikhs.

The Older Sikhs

The older Sikhs who took part in my research were very ambivalent about life in the UK. As individuals, raised in communities in rural Punjab, discourses about old age and long term care differ to those within the British context. This was made evident through their discussions about the challenges and difficulties of living as co-resident couples in old age. Caring for their spouse who has a dementia whilst living separately from their children was a concept that the older Sikhs struggled to understand and accept. These participants clearly did not envisage living independently from their children and grand-children in old age. Amar Kaur, a 77 year old woman who cares for her husband, said:

> "I tell you, to live on your own… God, no-one should live on their own… that's what I say. Sometimes you lose your mind just thinking so much… what can you do? We are a family of fifteen people and we are sitting here alone. The eldest (son) has got three children… the middle son's got two children, and the youngest son lives in Bradford, his wife is a lawyer they have opened an office there… they have two (children). We are a family of fifteen and we sit here alone… how is that possible? If we were living in Punjab or East Africa… this would not be the case."

Other participants of Amar Kaur's generation shared similar feelings about living as co-resident couples. Indeed the demanding nature of caring for a person with dementia made participants, especially the older women, more dependent on their children for support. Their perceived isolation and lack of informal support from the family resulted in idealised narratives about the community and kinship support available in their country of origin. As a result of such experiences, older Sikh migrants were ambivalent about life in the UK and its associated British culture. Harbans Kaur, (a woman in her 70s caring for her husband) for instance, compared the role of women in India as a way of emphasising the difficulties of women's double roles in the UK:

> "The ladies [in the village in the Punjab] would make the flour in the morning, make roti (chapattis), and take it to the fields… make it, cook it and then take it. Roti used to be 2 times a day… the men used to go to work in the morning… they would take roti in the morning and then again in the

evening… that was what it was like, you were doing the housework all day… there used to be a lot of work to do at home… but now there is a lot less work to do in India… now, women don't do any work… they don't even have to wash clothes any more… we used to be always washing clothes, it never finished, honestly… you had to wash them, iron them… now you don't have to do that… there's less work for men now as well… men don't have to work as much because they've started using machines… before, the bulls would plough the ground… they would have to get water out of the wells themselves…there used to be a lot of work for men to do as well… it has cut down a lot… for women as well… yet there is still work to do here… people who have jobs, work their jobs and then they have to do the housework as well… there is actually more work to do here [in the UK] compared to India…it is less over there… the women don't work over there… but here, they do the job of both men and women… work a job and do the housework… over there they don't have to do either" (Harbans Kaur).

Consequently, the older Sikhs felt that they were less connected with their grandchildren due to their children having to maintain such responsibilities as emphasised by Boota Singh, an 83 year old man who cares for his wife:

"The children are busy with their own lives… even if they do come over, they sit for ten minutes before they make an excuse to leave. The grandchildren are busy with school… always doing something after school. They don't have time to come here. In my time… grandparents were the heads of the house… but it's all changed now… Here, I am an Indian father to British children."

Boota Singh and Dal Singh (aged 70 years and cares for his wife) both envisaged being the *"heads of their house"* in old age. However, because migration equipped them with the skills that help manage caring for their wives (for example, having domestic skills which they had to learn when they first migrated to the UK), has meant that they are less dependent on their children for support than the women whose husbands have developed dementia.

The differences between the experiences of the older men and women, although in part influenced by gender, are due in part to different reasons for migration resulting in different experiences post migration. Boota Singh and Dal Singh both care for their wives. As part of the older generation, they migrated to Wolverhampton prior to their wives, which meant that they initially had to establish connections and networks within the community as highlighted in Part I of this chapter. They also had to learn domestic skills such as cooking and cleaning in order to live independently. After sending for their wives, the men continued to be responsible for duties such as grocery shopping and dealing with financial issues, whilst their wives saw to domestic duties within the home. Knowing Wolverhampton well and being able to commute and get around, either via private

or public transport meant that the men were better equipped to conduct such tasks. This is one of the main reasons why the older women in my research often reported being left alone at home post migration, resulting in felt and actual isolation. The domestic skills that the older men acquired as a result of their migration experiences help to manage caring for their wives who can no longer conduct such tasks.

Harbans Kaur, Swaran Kaur and Amar Kaur care for their husbands and reported difficulties with having to take over responsibilities that their husband used to have. The extent to which they coped with such additional responsibilities was also dependent on the extent to which they received informal support mainly provided by their children. Isolation post migration, as well as language barriers, meant that the older women in my research were particularly dependent on their children for support for helping them to conduct the tasks that their husband can no longer do. Because the older women have remained in the home for most of their lives in the UK, they struggled with tasks such as grocery shopping and dealing with financial issues. They also turned to their children for support with arranging and transporting them to medical appointments.

Despite the perceived increase in isolation as a result of a shift towards nuclear families, many of the families in my research still had localised extended family settlement patterns. Nonetheless, the older Sikhs talked about the fragmentation of families and support mechanisms to emphasise the difficulties of living separately from their children. Older Sikhs gave examples of events to illustrate these difficulties. Amar Kaur, for instance, reported an incident whereby her husband had an accident and fell unconscious. She: "had to leave him and go and get the Indian neighbours" who called for an ambulance. She went on to say:

'I didn't even know that I could have called the ambulance… I didn't think you could do that… I have the number on the wall now next to the phone.'

This illustrates the difficulties of lack of knowledge and awareness of the major services, resulting in an increased dependency on their children who:

"weren't supposed to go anywhere… I thought they would always stay with us and look after us… but times have changed and this is England" (Amar Kaur).

In addition to the perceived increase in isolation, the older Sikhs suggested a lack of understanding and appreciation for what the care-giving role in relation to dementia consists of, exacerbated by the difficulties that arise in both the immediate and extended family. Swaran Kaur, though extremely appreciative of the time that her children give her, noted that: *"still, it is hard on your own… it is hard to do everything on your own… people come and go and they don't realise… that's how the children are now."*

For the older Sikhs, being a grandparent brought with it prestige and honour and signified that they were "head of the house" (Boota Singh). However, the physical

separation caused the older Sikhs to feel that even though "we are the elders of the family… what difference does it make?" (Amar Kaur). Swaran Kaur, aged 80 years, stated:

> "I barely see the grandchildren… all our traditions will be washed out with them. If I don't see them, how can I teach them? Our children no longer answer to us… so why would the grandchildren?"

Similar to Swaran Kaur, Amar Kaur believed that the lack of communication and time with her grandchildren is not solely due to the difficulties of living with a person who has dementia, but also due to her children's lack of concern for these relationships to be maintained:

> 'The grandchildren are grown up… they are not small children… they go to school. I would love them to spend time here with us but why would they if their parents don't encourage it? There's no respect for elders anymore. And because of him (her husband who has dementia)… you have to understand that he's not easy to be around' (Amar Kaur).

Whilst many of the older Sikhs felt a loss of respect for elders in the family, the importance of their role within the family and the need to 'respect your elders' was regularly referred to in narratives of the younger Sikhs.

The Younger Sikhs

The need to respect your elders is a value clearly manifested in the younger Sikhs that took part in my research. This was made evident by providing examples of events in their lives where they have been restricted due to having to conform to their parents' expectations. Many of the younger women gave examples where they were restricted in education. For instance Darshan Kaur, a British born woman aged 46 years who cares for her mother, said:

> *"I didn't really want myself to go to college… I actually went off to 'X' to do… some new courses that were coming out at that time…but I just thought…it's something that, the opportunity just arose and I just went for it. It was only supposed to be 6 months, after 3 months mom was sort of like… you're uncle's saying this and he's saying that… and I remember the conversations with mom you know… I would say… if you want me to stop it, I'm half way through it now, you know.. I will come back and get a job but if you want me to stop it…you tell me stop and come, and I'll come…and eventually she did so … it was that 4 months I did, and then I just said… you know, I have to go back home."*

Her mother's ambivalence towards adhering to norms and values about gender and education caused Darshan Kaur to give up her course and return home. Although her mother rejected the pressures of adhering to traditional norms by giving her

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daughter freedom to live away from home, pressures from older family members resulted in Darshan Kaur discontinuing her education and returning home. Other women gave similar examples to illustrate the pertinence of cultural norms about respecting your elders. Simarjeet Kaur, a woman from rural Punjab aged 49 years who cares for her mother, was offered the opportunity to do a PhD at Amritsar University in the Punjab but declined the offer because she agreed to her arranged marriage with a man from Wolverhampton. She said:

> "I applied to do a PhD at Amritsar University and I got a place….[…]… my sister never studied but I did.. it was my dad's wish and it was for my benefit…my parents were getting happiness from it.. I always would say to myself, I want to come first, I want to come first like.. that's how I finished my BA… out of the class, out of the entire village.. I came third.. at university. .in the district of Jullundur I came first.. […]..I went so far ..my dad and my brother would take me to the exams, sit there all day.. after the exam they would bring me back.. my sisters, brothers, parents did so much for me that's it's my duty now to give them some happiness. I was raised to listen to the elders of my family. So I didn't accept the PhD and I got married. After that a lot of hurdles fell at my feet…[…]… my world turned upside down."

Despite such consequences, Simarjeet Kaur went on to say:

> "I tell my children the same thing and that's what they've done…yes it's hard for them to be at home because of their garndma's behaviour… but it's their grandma. You should always respect your elders."

The need to respect your elders regardless of the consequences was a strong theme embedded in the narratives of the younger Sikhs. Agreeing to their arranged marriages was participants' evidence of maintaining such cultural norms. It was a concept in their lives that left no space to be inquisitive about. As Mr Silvers, a British born 46 year old man who cares for his father, stated

> *"…it was a norm* wasn't it? I didn't know any different … I wasn't expecting to go out with a young girl at the time, I thought, this is how it's gonna be so… it's either this way, or no way so… that's how it was."

Similarly Drashan Kaur said

> "If your mom says you go right, you go right…if she says go left, you go left…and that's how it had been."

As mentioned, according to the older Sikhs in this study, their lack of communication and meaningful relationships with their grand-children are due, in part, to their children's lack of concern for this. Contrary to this, even though some of the younger Sikhs have faced quite difficult consequences of conforming to such norms, they are still ensuring that such values are passed on to their own children,

with some exceptions. Ram Piari, aged 44 years who cares for her father-in-law for example, said:

"I mean there's a lot of things that I've been brought up to believe is the correct way of doing things which I will not put onto my kids and that angers people sometimes… but I just feel that as their mom… they will be better people… they know the difference between doing right and doing wrong… and they know respect and they know they will get reprimanded or told off if they do something … that's disrespectful or wrong to anyone. But on the other hand I do tell them… I mean it's like when my mother-in-law screams at the girls [daughters]… the middle daughter… she is very fiery. She'll just come out and say… [whispers a screaming, frustrated voice]. And I'll say look… she's an old woman… right… you can see how your grandfather (person with dementia) is… she's stressed out. However, that is not the way she should be speaking to you. So I actually say to them… you screaming back is not going to make the situation any better. So if she screams at you, you can say whatever you want … just say in a calm voice. But obviously… she is your grandmother at the end of the day so you do respect her….and people say well you've told them off and then you've taken it off them by saying… she shouldn't be saying that…and I get that but the bottom line is… she's your grandmother and that's that. You don't raise your voice to an elder."

Living in multi-generational households indeed makes a difference to grandparent and grandchildren relationships as there is no physical separation. The presence of grandchildren, the majority of whom were of school and working age, meant that they were able to contribute to the care needed for their grandparent who has dementia. However, for some, this was expected from their children whilst others were appreciative of the additional support they offered. Kareena, a woman born in rural Punjab, aged 50 years who cares for her father, for instance was very appreciative that her son lived with her and that her married daughter visits daily. Her children assist in caring: "by simply being around to help out with things like feeding, giving him a drink and occasionally sitting in" if Kareena has to pop out. They also help with domestic chores around the house. Like Kareena, Simarjeet Kaur too only has the informal support of her children to help with the care of her mother. Her children help when they can, particularly in conducting domestic chores and cooking. Simarjeet Kaur is very dependent on their emotional support as she suffers from depression.

   Mr Silvers lives within two miles of his parents' house. He receives informal support from his elder brother in the care for their father. He also has additional support from his wife as well as his brother's wife. Although his father lives with his mother (Harbans Kaur) who provides full-time care, Mr Silvers considers that they work as a team in order to ensure the best possible care. Incidentally, he also stated that he ensures that such tasks do not interrupt his children's busy lifestyles:

"Between me and my brother, we sort of erm… comfort… help each other really… and help our mom through it as well… looking out for each other. I actually think it's brought us closer as a family… on the positive side… I mean my brother will ring up and say well… let me know when the next appointment is and I'll go… don't trouble yourself cuz you went to the last three or four… let me go to the next one… he tries to take an interest you know… wants to help out… doesn't just leave me to it. My wife helps out too… helps with their shopping and stuff. We try not to put any pressure on the children. They're busy with school and other things."

For Mr Silvers' children, helping to care for their grand-parents is more difficult because they live in a separate household.

Because dementia effects the entire family, it was clear that tasks are negotiated between family members depending upon their roles and positions in the family. Sarah Kaur is a 53 year old woman born in rural Punjab who cares for her father-in-law. Her husband as the eldest son deals with the managerial tasks of accessing services whilst Sarah Kaur is responsible for her father-in-law's general wellbeing:

'making sure that he is clean, that the carers have done their job properly… even though I'm always cleaning up after them (formal carers) and that he has everything he needs' (Sarah Kaur).

She emphasised that her particularly large family work together to ensure his general wellbeing, as well as the general running of the household. Sarah Kaur's son is also married and living with them and the presence of a daughter-in-law means that Sarah has help with domestic chores and cooking. Her son has two small children. Sarah Kaur is thus a grand-mother herself and talked about the different roles that family members have in providing care for her father-in-law which is largely influenced by the fact that they all live together:

"I tell you it would be hard if it was just myself or just me and my husband. It's not so bad with everybody… I mean we do get the odd weeks when there's a lot of washing to do, and it's really dirty and stuff but you just have to do it. Because of his[father-in-law] toileting problems, sometimes the bed gets messy two or three times a day you know, or during the night… because everybody's here it does help a lot…we all do it between ourselves… because when I'm at work obviously in the evenings .my daughters and my daughter-in-law they organise the food and stuff. If I'm at home, I'll do it… but I'm also looking after my grand-children in the day because my son and daughter-in-law work full time jobs… so that works out. it's hard if I think… I mean I know other families that are big and one person usually has to do everything but we all help. It's mainly just making sure that he eats and that he's clean, the bed sheets are clean… the bathroom and stuff because obviously it gets worse than what our bathrooms are at the moment, especially after the carers have been… I mean, his food, everybody will do it,

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> but I make sure that I try and you know, keep everything clean. Sometimes it does get to you but I think because we're all together it does make a lot of difference. He's the elder of the family so we work around him… no-body questions it… we just do it… and we all live with him at the end of the day… not just me."

It is evident that family support is an extremely important resource when caring for a family member who has dementia. Care is negotiated between family members based on their positions, their expertise, availability and what the person with dementia requires. Grandparents as the elders of the family clearly have an influential role. Obligation to kin and a duty to care has meant that those caring for a parent (in-law) consider their responsibilities largely as an extension of their relational role to the cared-for person. According to these participants, this is also the case for the grandchildren. Similar to other participants, Rani (a 44 year old woman from East Africa who cares for her father-in-law) emphasised the importance of ensuring that her children continue their relationship with their grandfather:

> "My two daughters are busy working and my son is studying. They are so busy that sometimes I feel sorry for them you know. My father-in-law has always lived with us and yeah I'm the one who takes care of him but they do their part to. Just because he's not very well and can't recognise them anymore doesn't mean that they should treat him any different. He is still the elder of this house at the end of the day… we shouldn't forget that isn't it? The way that I was brought up… I've brought my children up no differently. I hope that when they have children, they will treat me like I have taught them to treat their own grandparents."

Clearly, the loss of personhood as a result of having dementia impacts on relationships – one of which is that of a grandparent and grandchild. Such relationships and how they are maintained when a grandparent develops a dementia, is an area in need of further research. Evidence of strong cultural norms about the roles of older people in Sikh families supports the need to explore further grand-parent roles in such families.

CONCLUSION

The aim of this chapter has been to develop an understanding of the role of grandparents in Sikh families from my doctoral research with the Sikh community in Wolverhampton. Part I of this chapter reviewed the migration history of Sikhs in the UK and illustrated the Sikh community to be one of diversity associated with different migration routes and differences associated with caste. In particular, this body of research highlighted the distinct advantages that East African Sikhs may have over Sikhs from the Punjab. Further research is required in order to evaluate

the impact that such differences have on grandparenting roles. Current literature regarding the development and characteristics of Sikh communities living in the UK highlighted changes in geographical locations, family sizes, and cultural conflict – all which clearly have implications for grandparent and grandchildren relationships. The rise in younger women in full time employment too suggested implications for grandparent roles. It was also clear from this literature that traditional norms about gendered roles and positions in Sikh families remain strong in the UK however, as noted by Mand (2006), changing ideas about care and provision in South Asian families remain unexplored. Also missing from the literature are in-depth understandings of the roles of grandparents and their experiences of grandparenting within such families.

Part II of this chapter discussed the findings of my doctoral research which provided insights into the changing nature of Sikh families and the importance of cultural norms associated with roles and positions in the family – in particular, the role of elders in the family. The importance of such roles was articulated differently between the older and younger Sikhs not just, in part, due to generational differences but also because of the physical separation. All of the older Sikhs that took part in my research lived separately from their children as co-resident couples. The physical separation from their grandchildren has meant that experiences of grandparenting for the older Sikhs have been limited. According to the older Sikhs, this is also due to the perceived lack of respect for elders by the younger generation.

Having respect for elders was indeed a strong theme made evident by the younger Sikhs through their examples of being restricted in education and conforming to their arranged marriages. They also emphasised the significance of respecting the elders in the family by ensuring that such values are also practised by their children. Indeed living together as an extended family has meant that their children have more involvement with their grandparents. However, what is unclear is how such relationships are affected by a grandparent developing a dementia. The huge emphasis on the role of older people within the family as a clearly influential role highlights the importance of exploring this concept further. Clearly, the rise in nuclear families has implications for not just patterns of care but also how the older generation perceive their roles within the family. Such changes have caused older migrants to idealise their lives in their country of origin where kinship and community support were robust. As a result of this, the older Sikhs were ambivalent about life in the UK as were the younger Sikhs about having to conform to cultural norms that have caused restrictions for them in education and life changing events like marriage. It is evident that maintaining such cultural norms within a British context is difficult but nevertheless, extremely important. It is hoped that the information presented in this chapter highlights the need for a robust research project that explores such concepts further. A better understanding about the roles of grandparents and their experiences of grandparenting will not only add to existing scholarship but also add value to a body of research that

currently remains scant and piecemeal – that is, experiences of living with dementia for Sikh elders and its impact upon their roles within the family.

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AMARJIT SINGH

12. UNDERSTANDING CONTEXTS IN WHICH THE DIASPORIC PUNJABI GRANDPARENTS "DO" GRANDPARENTING IN CANADA

ABSTRACT

This chapter attempts to describe the context in which the Punjabi Indian diasporic elders, as grandparents, "do" grandparenting role in Punjabi family households in Greater Toronto Area (GTA) in Canada. Our review of literature on Indian diaspora reveals that "…in historic and ethnographic accounts of Indians living in diaspora, the elderly seem to receive much less attention than the new generation and its progress, prosperity and success" (Mehta and Singh, 2008). This is also the case for the Indian diasporic grandparents.

Thus in this exploratory chapter we attempt to close this gap in two ways: first, by expanding the discussion of the context in which the Indian diasporic elderly in general live with their families, and secondly, by describing how they go about doing grandparening in those contexts in different ways in the Punjabi community in the Greater Toronto area.

Further, the chapter's focus is on understanding voices of the diasporic Indian Punjabi seniors, as grandparents. We have observed that listening to their voices sympathetically leads to deeper understanding of their situations in various areas of their everyday living as diasporic grandparents. For example, after listening to them it becomes clear that many diasporic Punjabi elderly as grandparents have two objectives: how to make the later days of their own aging process in Canada and the United States more "optimal" and "normal" as opposed to "pathological", and how to contribute to the well-being of their grandchildren in the changing context of the Punjabi Indian diasporic families; specifically they desire to help their grandchildren to do well socially and academically in schools in North America.

In this sense, many Punjabi diasporic elders as grandparents are active participants in their communities and families and have many suggestions to achieve these goals. They certainly are not a homogeneous group of grandparents, and so it is needless to say that their participations in families and suggestions to improve their relationship with grandchildren greatly vary (Singh, 2008; Mehta and Singh, 2008; Lamb, 2008).

Later in this chapter we present the voices of some diasporic Indian grandparents. Most of these grandparents live in GTA, but some of them also live in the United States and other parts of Canada, and are part of various types of households that we will soon describe below.

We learned that those diasporic Indian grandparents with whom we do community work enjoy social relations and programs that emphasize the traditional Indian cultural value of "family intimacy" in contrast to those programs that emphasize "professional-client" bureaucratic relations. Thus in this chapter we present on-going conversations about the meaning of family intimacy in the traditional Indian family, and conversations about the impact the traditional Indian value of intimacy might have on the types of activities in which the diasporic Indian grandparents would like to participate. We then describe some of the programs designed by those who work with seniors and grandparents that give priority to the traditional Indian value of intimacy.

We suggest that for some diasporic Indian seniors/ grandparents, participation in programs that emphasize the "professional-client" relationship increase their sense of integration into the mainstream North American society, feelings of happiness and satisfaction with daily living in diaspora. On the other hand, for many other Indian diasporic seniors/grandparents those programs that offer good enough doses of both the "professional-client" and Indian "family intimacy" relationship, that is, those programs that provide them with "in-between-spaces" to live their lives the way they want to live, bring a greater sense of integration into North American society, and associated feelings of happiness and satisfaction.

INTRODUCTION

Recently there has been heightening interest shown in understanding the presence of various diasporic communities in different parts of the globe, including the Indian diasporic communities. It is estimated that between 25 to 30 million people of Indian origin (people from the Indian sub-continent) live in Diaspora. Lal et al. write "… how rich, varied, contradictory and confusing the subject [Indian Diaspora] is, defiantly rejecting the easy grasp of smug theory (2006, p. 15). They further state "it is the individual distinctiveness of the various [Indian] diasporic communities, however, that stands out and underlines the enormous complexity and variation in experience" (2006, p. 9).

Using insights gained, mainly by mainstream research community in North America, in the area of development of social capital, sociology of family, reflective and critical pedagogy, and in social gerontology, this chapter attempts to describe the context in which the Punjabi Indian diasporic elders, as grandparents, "do"[i] grandparenting role in Punjabi family households in Greater Toronto Area (GTA) in Canada. Doing grandparenting entails an active learning component: that is, it is an accomplishment rather than a fixed attribute of each individual grandparent. Unless an individual dies prematurely, usually he/she becomes a

grandparent. Different people become a grandparent at different ages. Like the transition from adolescent to adulthood, becoming a grandparent is not solely determined by the number of years an individual has lived but by the trajectory of that individual's life accomplishments, family relationships, and social circumstances. From this perspective, "grandparenting has thus become a separate identity and a separate stage of family life" (Newman, 2012, p. 330). Researchers in Canada and U.S. have identified several different styles of grandparenting (Mitchell, 2009; Quadagno, 2012; Stephen's and other chapters in this book).

Our review of literature on Indian diaspora reveals that "…in historic and ethnographic accounts of Indians living in diaspora, the elderly seem to receive much less attention than the new generation and its progress, prosperity and success" (Mehta and Singh, 2008). This is also the case for the Indian diasporic grandparents. As compared to what we know about the elderly and grandparents in North America, we know very little about the diasporic Indian elderly and grandparents in North America. Thus in this exploratory chapter we attempt to close this gap in two ways: first, by expanding the discussion of the context in which the Indian diasporic elderly in general live with their families, and secondly, by describing how they go about doing grandparening role in those contexts in different ways in the Punjabi community in the Greater Toronto area. Further, the paper's focus is on understanding voices of the diasporic Indian Punjabi seniors, as grandparents. We have observed that listening to their voices sympathetically leads to deeper understanding of their situations in various areas of their everyday living as diasporic grandparents. For example, it becomes clear that many diasporic Punjabi elderly as grandparents have two objectives: how to make the later days of their own aging[ii] process in Canada and the United States more "optimal" and "normal" as opposed to "pathological", and how to contribute to the well-being of their grandchildren in the changing context of the Punjabi Indian diasporic families; specifically they desire to help their grandchildren to do well socially and academically in schools in North America. In this sense, many Punjabi diasporic elders as grandparents are active participants in their communities and families and have many suggestions to achieve these goals. They certainly are not a homogeneous group of grandparents, and so it is needless to say that their participations in families and suggestions to improve their relationship with grandchildren greatly vary (Singh, 2008; Mehta and Singh, 2008; Lamb, 2008). Later in this chapter we present the voices of some diasporic Indian grandparents. Most of these grandparents live in Toronto area, but some of them also live in the United States and other parts of Canada, and are part of various types of households and families that we will soon describe below. We also describe the type of activities they would like to participate in, and describe a few of the programs designed by those who work with senior and grandparents to enhance their well-being.

Context of Personal Involvement

For more than four decades I have been interested in the work of those diasporic Indians in Canada and the United States who have been engaged as "cultural workers" and "organic intellectuals" in various local Indian communities in solving problems that interested members of those communities.[iii] For the last thirteen years or so I have been in touch with the PHCS[iv] (Punjabi Health Community Services) "cultural workers" in GTA, mostly through having conversations with them on telephone, but on some occasions by visiting their work places, walking with them through neighborhoods where they engage with community members carrying on their daily life chores, attending their meetings, seminars, group discussions, celebrations, conferences, and so on.

Basically, in interaction with these types of workers my function has been in providing support to them in their engagement in critical and transformational pedagogy. I have tried to do so by listening to their articulations of various community development programs and plans of actions to achieve those goals, providing them with relevant information such as reviews of academic and professional literature in specific areas that they asked for, proofreading documents they produced, envisioning with them new ways of using language, acting and building positive and cosmopolitan self-concepts and self-efficacy, discussing with them new trends in cooperative, critical, reflective and collaborative pedagogical practices that promoted the central place of diversity and critical negotiation perspectives in any social action directed towards bringing meaningful social changes at individual, institutional and community levels.

Needless to say, through these conversations I have learned a great deal from them about the agency (Frie2008; Jenkins, 2008; Martin, 2008)[v] of diasporic Indian people of all ages and socio-economic backgrounds in North America, and their desire to find in-between-places where they can mix "traditional Indian" cultural values with "dominant" North America values.. Although I am the sole author of this chapter, I use the word "we" in this chapter deliberately to point out that the material presented in this chapter is based on the collective and shared insights gained by all those cultural workers and organic intellectuals who worked for the PHCS under the energetic, innovative, and committed leadership of its CEO (Chief Executive Officer), Baldev Mutta. He conceptualized a perspective on community development known as Building Social Capital in Punjabi Community.[vi] Using this perspective the PHCS has published a series of documents as "working hypothesis" (Deegan & Hills, 1987)[vii] for public use and for promotions of various practical and meaningful programs for the Punjabi community in the G TA.

This does not mean that I or other workers in this network of people who are interested in issues related to the diasporic Indian grandparents, including Mr, Mutta, are free from their own perspectival take on presenting the material to the public. This is so because working with your own community and wanting to change it in a certain direction or witnessing that it is being changed by others in

opposite directions than your own, is filled with many tensions (Smith, 2002; Hamnett, Singh, et al, 1984).

Speaking for myself, I have long been interested in the resourcefulness, visions, energy, life chances, well-being and psychological agency of the individual diasporic Indian elder/grandparent not only in North America but also of those who live in other countries in diaspora (Mehta and Singh, 2008). This does not mean that I am not interested in the collective resiliency of the Indian diaspora, about which much has been written.

Further, my sense making of social and cultural phenomenon is generally influence by a general perspective that emphasizes that the individual and society cannot exist in isolation from each other. There is a deep interdependency between the two. The life history of a society can't be fully and meaningful understood without understanding the life history of individuals who live in that society. One's social self develops only in interaction with her/his immediate significant others living together in a group, for example, in one's family, which is itself connected to various larger communities of varied and diverse small interest groups or larger communities (Aboulafia, 2001; Blumer, 1969; Doyle & Singh, 2006; Edles, 2002; Kauffman, 2003; Odin, 1996; Vohs, & Finkel, 2006; Mills, 1959; Schon, 1987; Zurcher, 1997). And change can occur at various levels: individual, cultural, social, institutional, technical, and due to unexpected changes in environment, like natural disasters (Bolman and Deal, 1994; Carlson, 2008; Depree, 1989; Giroux, 1988, 1993; Ring and Rand, 1989; Singh, 2000; Weick, 1995).[viii] Moreover, I see aging from the perspective of social gerontology, which is an interdisciplinary discipline, and thus believe that aging is both an individual and social process (Morgan & Kunkel,2001; Quadagno 2002, 2012). Particularly, my interest lies in the life course perspective in social gerontology. For social gerontologists "the life course approach recognizes that developmental changes based on biological processes mold human behavior from birth until death, but that human development is also influenced by an array of psychological, social, historical, and economic factors (Quadagno, 2012, p. 28)."

In the last five years or so I have particularly become interested in the life chances of individual Indian diasporic grandparents in North America and in countries around the world. I am not quite sure why, but perhaps after living in North America for almost fifty years, I now fall in the category of diasporic Punjabi Indian senior. I am also a diasporic Indian who married in North America, had children, sent them to schools in the United States and Canada, and became a grandfather in the social and cultural context of North American society. My son and daughter both were born in the province of Newfoundland and Labrador in Canada. My two granddaughters were born in Hawaii. Perhaps, that is another reason that I am interested in the well-being of various categories of households in which the diasporic Indian grandparents reside in North America.

The diasporic Indian grandparents, like me, are those people of different age groups who have settled in North America as citizens or permanent residents and

who have aged or are aging in the later years of their lives, in the context of North American society. The diasporic Indian grandparents in this book are also those individuals who were born and have aged and have become grandparents in those countries in which their ancestors came as Indian indentured laborerers.

Thus the diasporic Indian grandparents are group of people with different shades, experiences and specific disaporic histories, and thus are somewhat different in their overall outlook from those Indian grandparents who do not live permanently in North America but who come for short durations to visit their children, relatives and friends living in Canada and the United States. The diasporic Indian grandparents are integrated, albeit to various degrees and ways, in the mainstream of the two countries.

Below I discuss the specific locations of the Indian diasporic grandparents in the larger North American social and cultural structure, and also within the social relations of the Indian disporic families and households in North America. Further, I raise some critical questions, and hope that engagements with those questions may shed light on some ways that the well-being of Indian disporic grandparents can be enhanced in North America, and in other countries where they have been living in diaspora.

Research in social gerontology in North America, Europe and in other countries points out that one way to enhance the well-being of the elderly is to listen respectfully to their life stories in the later years of life (Singh, 2008). For most people grandparents are "young old" or "old". Seen as such by others around them, grandparents enjoy telling their stories to others in their own voices. In the context of family, grandparents want to tell their stories to their grandchildren. They feel happy and content if their children and grandchildren listen to their voices respectfully. Thus listening to grandparents contributes to their overall well-being.[ix] We have observed that this is also the case with the diasporic Indian grandparents who reside in Punjabi diasporic families in GTA and elsewhere in the Punjabi diasporic communities and families in Canada and the United States.

There are strong and viable Punjabi diasporic communities in Canada and the United States, having long and rich histories. This author and many others have reviewed aspects of these histories somewhere else in detail (Mehta and Singh, 2008, Nayar, 2006). The history of the Sikh Punjabi diaspora in Canada, the United States, and other countries is readily available, so there is no need to discuss it here in detail.

For our purpose here, it is good enough to point out that in the mainstream American and Canadian societies, since 1980, there has been a dramatic increase in the number of children living with grandparents and being looked after by their grandparents. This has been the case in other societies, too, and thus has become a global phenomenon (AARP, 2013; Global Funds for Children, 2010). Thus, the role of grandparents in today's changing family structures has been recognized globally and celebrated on the International Day of Older Persons. In today's time-poor societies, parents in many countries are hard pressed providing even simple

interaction (e.g., book reading, etc.) to their children. However, in comparison to what we know about this trend in Canada and the United States we know very little about grandparents and gradparenting in diasporic Punjabi/Indian families.

The Context of Diasporic Indian Grandparents' Roles

As alluded to earlier, in North American family contexts "grandparenting has become a separate identity and a separate stage in family life (Newman, 2012, p. 330)." If this is also the case for the Indian diasporic garndparents, we can raise several critical and reflective questions that may throw some light on how the Punjabi/Indian diasporic grandparents "do" grandparenting in different contexts, for example: What specific roles are diasporic Punjabi grandparents expected to play in Punjabi households? What roles are Punjabi grandparents in diaspora actually playing currently in Punjabi households in Toronto? What roles could the diasporic Punjabi grandparents realistically play in taking care of their Canadian born grandchildren in changing family structures of diasporic Indian families in Toronto? What are the consequences for grandparents, grandchildren, and for the household of the adult children when such shifting roles occur? For example, would it be possible for future "young" Indian disporic grandparents to raise their grandchildren the way they raised their own children? Under what conditions would grandparents be able to establish linkages with schools-community – family networks? What are the consequences of various sorts of living arrangements in which the diasporic grandparents find themselves? To what extent do such living arrangements facilitate or hinder healthy grand parenting roles, while at the same time enhancing the over-all well-being of grandparents?

In order to answer these questions, based on our perceptions, and common sense knowledge[x] we construct several categories of diasporic Indian families and households[xi] in GTA in which the diasporic Indian grandparents do grandparenting. We have created these categories by using certain elements of the concept of ideal types[xii] as often discussed in sociological literature. Before we describe those various categories, it would be helpful to first make a general assessment of the context in which Punjabi grandparents have come to and have permanently settled in Canada.

A General Context for Grandparents Permanently Settling in Canada

As is well known to those who are familiar with the history of the Indian diaspora in Canada, most Punjabi grandparents are part of the Sikh disapora in Canada. The Sikh Punjabi diaspora has a long and rich history in Canada. The expansion of the Punjabi diaspora in Canada is related to the complex and shifting Canadian Immigration policy, and to distinct waves of emigration of South Asians triggered by the changing Canadian Immigration policy. This author and others have discussed in detail this history of the Punjabi diaspora in Vancouver and Toronto,

and the place of the Punjabi elderly in it elsewhere (Mehta and Singh, 2008, Nayar, 2004).

On the whole research shows that the Sikh Punjabi diasporic community, including grandparents, is an active group of people who are often successful in negotiating and navigating their places in the new Canadian environment. Their Punjabi families are also dynamic and pragmatic in their approaches to finding their place in the mainstream of Canadian society. The Sikh Punjabi diaspora is often seen by others as relatively well organized and integrated into the Canadian social and cultural mosaic; it is a powerful force in shaping the future of diverse and multicultural Canadian society in the 21st century (Singh, 2008). Punjabi was the fourth most spoken language in Canada, according to the census by Statistics Canada in 2006.

It is in this larger context that many adult children in the Sikh community have permanently settled in Canada, and have "sponsored" their parents to come and live with them in Canada. These parents were generally fifty years "old" or older. In this sense, they had become "senior citizens" in India, basically in the Punjab, before they came to Canada. That means that they have gone through part of the aging process in Indian cultural contexts. Since cultural factors play an important role in the aging process, the prevalence of grandparenting values and the meaning and experience of raising one's grandchild held by many of those sponsored Sikh Punjabi grandparents are often influenced by traditional Indian and Punjabi culture values (Nayer, 2004). Over time many of these seniors become citizen of Canada, and as such enjoy all the privileges and rights accorded to Canadian senior citizens. This is also true for the Indian diasporic grandparents in the United States (Lamb, 2008). In this paper and elsewhere in our work, we have variously named them the diasporic Indian seniors, the Indian diasporic seniors or elders, or the Indian seniors in diaspora.

There are many reasons and bases of motivation as to why the adult children living in U.S. and Canada sponsor their parents to come to and eventually get permanently settled in Canada and U.S. When asked, the adult children say that they love their parents and feel it is their duty to take care of their parents as they get older. The adult children also say they desire to unite their families, and re-establish the values of extended families as they exist in India, while being in diaspora. The adult children explain that another motivation to sponsor their parents is that the parents can help them to raise their families in Canada; they say it is imperative in Canada that both husband and wife must work for long hours to make a living and maintain socially acceptable standard of living. They are thus simply too busy making a living and find very little time to look after children. Having their parents living with them and expecting them to take care of their grandchildren and the household chores, while they are working long hours outside the house, serves the needs of all parties in the household. This is the true value of traditional Indian extended family system, according to adult children, as they rationalize their motivation (Lamb, 2008; Nayer, 2004; Singh, 2008). On the other

hand, some of those adult children who sponsored their parents to come to Canada, themselves have aged and have become grandparents. Later in this paper we organize these various grandparents and their experiences in the diasporic Indian households into different categories, and raise more questions. Some material I have presented in this particular section is taken from my chapters in Mehta and Singh (2008), where it has been discussed in more detail.

The Types of Households in the Punjabi Community in Toronto

Grandparents are not a homogeneous category. There are regional and local level differences, and there is great diversity in their background and experiences. Through our engagement in the Punjabi community in GTA, as a beginning process, we have identified categories of households in which grandparents are involved with their grandchildren in various context and roles. We have developed these categories by listening to Punjabi grandparents in informal interaction settings and conversations. We have also listened to the stories of the Punjabi grandparents in the United States in informal social gatherings and, therefore, believe that these categories are also relevant in the context of the United States as well. These categories are:

1. *Households in Which Non English Speaking Sponsored Grandparents Reside*:
   Grandparents sponsored by their adult children who are citizens or permanent residents of Canada. These grandparents speak Punjabi, Hindi, Urdu but not English and, generally have a rural background; they were already "old" before migrating to Canada.
2. *Households in Which "Broken English" Speaking Sponsored Grandparents Reside:*
   Grandparents sponsored by their adult children who are either citizens or permanent residents of Canada. These grandparents speak Punjabi, Hindi, Urdu and speak and understand "broken English"; they do not have college education; they were already "old" before migrating to Canada.
3. *Households in Which English Speaking Sponsored Grandparents Reside:*
   Grandparents sponsored by their adult children who are either citizen or permanent resident of Canada. They are college graduates and held professional positions in India. They speak, write and understand English, as well as, Punjabi and Hindi. Many of them also speak and understand Urdu. They have urban backgrounds and experiences and were already "old" before they migrated to Canada.
4. *Households in Which Well Versed in English Grandparents Married in their own Indian Cultural Groups Reside:*
   Grandparents, who as young adults migrated to Canada in the sixties and or seventies, went to schools in Canada, became Canadian citizens or permanent residents, and are professionals or professional skilled workers. They speak

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English, Punjabi, Hindi as well as Urdu fluently. They are "growing older" in Canada. They and their children are married in their own Indian cultural groups; their grandchildren are also raised within the context of so called "traditional Indian family".

5. *Households in Which Well Versed in English Grandparents with Mixed Marriages but with Emphasis on Traditional Indian Family Socializing Tradition Reside*: Grandparents, who as young adults, migrated to Canada in the late sixties and seventies and became Canadian citizens or permanent residents. They are either professionals with college degrees or professional skilled workers, and one of their spouses is not of Indian cultural group. Their children grew up in the context of "mixed marriages households", but their grandchildren are not necessarily growing up in the context of "mixed marriages households". However, in these "mixed households", the "traditional Indian family values" predominate.

6. *Households in Which Well Versed in English Grandparents with Mixed Marriages but with no or Token Emphasis on Traditional Indian Family Socializing Tradition Reside*:
Grandparents, who as young adults migrated to Canada in the late sixties or seventies and became Canadian citizens or permanent residents. They are either professionals with college degrees or professional skilled workers, and one of their spouses is not of Indian cultural group. Their children grew up in the context of "mixed marriages households", and their grandchildren are also growing up in the context of "mixed marriages households". However, in these "mixed households", the "traditional Indian family values" do not predominate.

7. *Households in Which Well Versed in English Future Grandparents Reside:*
Young adults, who migrated to Canada in the eighties and became Canadian citizens or permanent residents; they went to schools in Canada and are professional and skilled workers. They speak English, Punjabi, Hindi as well as Urdu fluently. They are "growing older" in Canada, but do not yet have grandchildren. Some of them married within their own cultural groups, while others have mixed marriages. They are expecting to have grandchildren very soon. Their children are mostly married in their own Indian cultural groups, but some have established "mixed marriage family households".

8. *Households in Which Well Versed or not Well Versed in English Grandparents Who Visit Grandchildren Regularly for six or more months Reside:*
Grandparents who regularly visit their adult children and grandchildren who have settled in Canada as citizens or permanent residents. These grandparents visit their families for six months to two years at a time and after their visit they return to India.

Of course the above categories of the Punjabi grandparents in diaspora are not exhaustive or complete. These categories will need to be further refined and modified with more research using various methodologies prevalent in social

sciences, which may result in rejecting, modifying or creating entirely new categories. For example, we do not fully know the exact demographics of these categories. We also do not exactly know the circumstances in which the Punjabi grandparents provide care to their grandchildren. Further, we do not know answers to these questions: What type of care do they exactly provide? For how long is the care provided? Where, and by which grandparent, is the care actually provided? The review of the mainstream grandparenting literature, some of which has been reviewed in other chapters in this book and some elsewhere (Singh, 2008, Lamb, 2008) suggests that we need such detailed information to fully understand grandparenting trends in the diasporic Punjabi community in Canada, and the United States. Below we describe these categories of Indian diasporic households by providing a bit more nuanced textual context and the ways diasporic grandparents do grandparenting in those households.

The conceptualization of these categories is not an easy task, because the Punjabi diaspora in Canada has a rich and complex history. There are distinct differences, for example, between the Punjabi diaspora in GTA and Vancouver (Mehta & Singh, 2008; Nayar, 2004). Similarly, Punjabi families and households of the Punjabis in diaspora are highly differentiated (different in terms of status, prestige, socio-economic status and educational levels). Therefore, the Punjabi diasporic families appear to have different aspirations, expectations, goals, and purposes for being in diaspora in Canada; they also appear to prefer different levels of child-rearing practices and socialization outcomes.

In this context, in creating these categories, we have relied, on "mini" case histories or personal accounts of the diasporic Indian grandparents, and would – be grandparents. Understanding the behaviors of the diasporic Indian grandparents in any of these categories is no different than any other behavior; specific grandparenting behavior is human behavior, understandable within a general context of socialization and role playing, sanctioned by a culture in which one has lived and grown up, experiencing one's different stages in one's life course. Obviously, the role of grandparenting in the case of the Indian diasporic grandparents is sanctioned by traditional and contemporary "Indian values". It is beyond the scope of this chapter to entangle with the greatly complex and contested discourses of Indian diaspora and the cultural values of the diasporic Indians. Lal et al (2006), Prasad (2012, 2000) and other scholars (Mishra, 2002) have dealt with these two and many other related topics to these discourses in great deal. However, we do talk about "Indian Values" in our discussion of the diasporic Indian grandparents, doing grandparenting in Indian diasporic families and households, mainly through the voices of the grandparents.

DOING GRANDPARENTING IN INDIAN DIASPORIC HOUSEHOLDS

Category Number 1, 2 and 3): Case of Sponsored Punjabi Grandparents

We gather from our work in the Punjabi community that grandparents who were sponsored by their adult children in categories one, two and three live and function in households having specific family dynamics. The family dynamics typically constitute daily interactions of grandparents with their married adult children and their grandchildren. In this situation grandparents are also in-laws in the households, so they either interact with their sons-in-law or daughters-in-law in household settings. It is clear that in this situation each person holds distinct positions, roles, statuses and role expectations. For example, it is generally held that in a "traditional" Punjabi culture the responsibility of taking care of one's ageing parents lies with their adult children – sons or daughters. Within this traditional cultural expectation about the Punjabi family, grandparents expect to be respected, cared for and listen to as elders, having decision making authority regarding the household affairs. They also see themselves and are seen by others as the bearer and the protector of family's honor in the larger community. Thus, grandparents perceive their role basically in terms of persons who are supposed to be present inside the household, to be seen by others being present inside the household, as well as, outside in the community representing the household as its elders. Besides these perceived cultural role expectations held by grandparents, they fully understand that they are supposed to provide care for their grandchildren, love and pamper them (Nayer, 2004; Singh, 2008).

However, from the perspectives of many diasporic grandparents doing grandparenting within these cultural expectations is not so easy. For example, one grandparent "a" says,

"How much burden of one's culture one should carry?"

Grandfather "b" says,

"even we get 'bitter' by our children's behavior, we still don't want to leave them, because we are stuck with 'mempta' [attachment]. That is our tradition. And that is our weakness".

Grandfather "c" says,

"Too much love is not good."

Grandfather "d" says,

"In no circumstances we should lose our culture, as long as we have a breath."

To be sure, on the other hand, many grandparents are conscious of the fact they have to give something back to their adult children for having them in the

household and looking after them in their old age. Generally, grandparents are willing to help their adult children financially, emotionally, physically and culturally, provided they find themselves to be in relatively secure situation in all these areas. For example, grandfather "A" says,

"I want to live with my children and grandchildren."

Grandfather "B" says,

"I have two sons. They want money. I live with one, and I give him the money. The other son also wants money. But how can I give both of them the money."

Grandfather "C" says,

"I want to give money but they always end up saying some nasty things to me, then I get pissed off, somehow things don't work out."

Grandfather "D" says,

"….respect of grandparents depends upon how they have raised their own children. If [our own] children respect us and tell grandchildren to respect grandparents, then it will work."

Besides, if they are healthy, most grandparents are willing to play the role of babysitters and to do reasonable household chores; they actually relish this sort of family engagement. It keeps them busy and mentally healthy. But for many diasporic grandparents babysitting is not that much easier. They feel they have to make lots of adjustment, especially in the situation where they have to baby sit grandchildren who are attending schools. For example, grandfather "E" says,

"Grandchildren say to us, enjoy yourself, don't worry about us. We are 13–14 years old. Let us learn in our own ways. We are not like a small child anymore. We will do our things; don't tell us what to do."

In the beginning, as noted above, the sponsored diasporic grandparents in all those three categories find the babysitting and doing family chores (cooking, cleaning, washing, shopping, and so on) exciting and reasonable. However, as time goes on, these roles enacted in the context of Canadian social and cultural environment, seem to transform the dynamics of traditional Punjabi (Indian) family due to various factors. For example, conflicts arise between the spouses due to the constant presence of in-laws – father-in-law or mother-in law, and between grandparents and grandchildren due to communication difficulty. As long as children are not going to school and both parents speak Punjabi in household, the communication between the grandparents and children seems to be less problematic, because grandparents communicate with grandchildren in Punjabi. However, as children grow up, socialize with other children outside the home, interact with parents of their peers who speak English, go to the grocery stores and

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to shopping malls where their parents speak English with persons on the counters, and when grandchildren start watching TV shows in English, then communication between grandchildren and grandparents who do not speak or speak very little English seem to become relatively more problematic, as compared to communication between those grandparents who speak both English and Punjabi (see category number three). For example, one grandparent who did not speak English said,

> "English is problem…this makes face-to-face interaction with grandchildren difficult."

Grandparents living with their daughters or sons find themselves in situations where they need to navigate different ways, the ways they can adjust to life styles of their married sons and daughters, and tastes and expectations of their daughters-in-law, or sons-in-law respectively. Grandfather "F" explains his experiences and provides advice to others,

> "One Hindu boy married a Hindu girl from India. The boy's parents were also living with him. She divorced him, because she did not like the expectations of her in-laws about how should she behave as their daughter-in-law. Her husband took side of his own parents. He then married another woman, this time a Muslim girl."

Further, he says,

> "She [this Muslim girl] looks after her father-in-law."

Then he says,

> "Grandchildren want to live with me. I have a granddaughter and one grandson. I treat my daughter-in-law as my own daughter." His advice to other grandparents in such situations is that

> "Make your daughter-in-law your own daughter," [meaning that treat your daughter-in-law as you treat your own daughter].

But there are situations in which daughters-in – law do not want to be treated by their in-laws merely as their daughters or daughters-in-law, and then expected by them to behave according to what they [the in-laws] perceive is the traditional behavior of daughters-in-law. The daughters-in-law want in-laws to see them as wives, persons who are married to their sons. They want in-laws to realize that as wives, they have their own expectations how their husband should behave, how the in-laws should behave in the presence of husband and wives as couples. The daughters-in-law want their husbands more committed to their needs and expectations as wives, rather than to their parents' needs and expectations. This does not mean that daughters-in-law do not want their husbands to be concerned

with their parents' overall well-being. These contesting expectations then often become a source of conflict in the households.

To be sure, grandparents find themselves in many other situations. Grandfather "G" describes a situation in which he finds grandparents dealing with a very specific situation. In his words,

"I know grandparents who were living with their son, who recently got married. The newly wed wife got suspicious that her husband was having an affair with someone else. Meanwhile she got pregnant. The grandparents responded to her situation by saying to her that they would look after the child. The daughter-in-law said no. The grandparents asked why. She said your son has bad character, and so I have divorced your son, and moreover, I do not want my child to be raised by parents [meaning you as grandparents] who raised their son in this way."

Grandfather "H" who was listening to grandfather "G" said,

"Our generation does not understand this sort of behavior on the part of such daughters-in-law. The wife [woman] becomes a man [husband] and the man [husband] becomes a wife [woman]. The man has to live under her. If that is not possible, then things don't work out. Look at the situation. Change your mentality. Forget about what you did in India. Canada is now your country. Learn from them [Canadian] what people do here. Compromise is the best thing. Don't complain about others. If you can't adjust, go back to India."

Grandfather "H" here was making reference to the reversal of gender roles taking place in many diasporic Punjabi/Indian families in GTA, and explaining how in certain situation a wife acts like a husband (man) and the husband becomes a wife (woman), so to speak.

The family as a primary social institution for the early care of and socialization of young children is an extremely complex institution in all cultures. There exist various types of family structures in today's societies that have legitimate status. Most of them often find themselves facing many conflicts and finding solutions to those conflicts. The Punjabi/Indian diaporic families are no exception; they are going through transformations of their own in diaspora. I have described the transformation taking place in the Punjabi diasporic families in Canada, in relation to the position of the diasporic Punjabi seniors [grandparents] in changing Punjabi households somewhere else (Mehta & singh, 2008).

However, for our discussion here as it relates to the role of the diasporic Punjabi grandparents in providing care for their grandchildren, it is worth pointing out that the transformed dynamics in some diasporic Punjabi family households in GTA has led to some degree of grandparents'/elders' abuse (Mutta, Singh, et al, 2004). In one grandfather's words,

"South Asians bring their parents, then abuse starts."

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Elder abuse is a global problem. The diasporic Indian seniors/grandparents are no exception to this trend. Recognition of this fact has created a challenge for us as community and cultural workers with interest in developing the social and cultural capital of the Punjabi diasporic community in GTA. We have been particularly interested in linking the diasporic Indian grandparents with schools and the larger community in a healthy way. This is important if they are to help their grandchildren in school related cultural capital. School related cultural capital activities would include the diasporic Indian grandparents doing grandparenting in ways that would enable their grandchildren in establishing healthy social relations with school staff, teachers and other students in schools. Doing effective grandparenting would also entail grandparents helping their grandchildren in developing positive self-concepts of school ability, and social identity. Having positive overall self-concept, and the specific self-concept of ability lead students to high overall achievement and also to high achievement in specific subjects they are studying. (Singh, 1986. 1984) If the diasporic grandparents are to be successful in doing all these things, we believe that their relationship with family member in the Punjabi diasporic families should be healthy. Healthy relationships are abuse free. Elders are abused psychologically, socially, economically, and physically (Mutta, Singh et al, 2004). So, we ask: What needs to be done in the Punjabi households to spare the diasporic Punjabi grandparents from abuse? What needs to be done outside Punjabi households for those diasporic Punjabi grandparents (seniors) who are being abused? What needs to be done in the larger Canadian social structure in terms of social policies and institutional practices to create conditions for the Punjabi families (minority households) to deal with transformation they are undergoing in "socially healthy" ways (better intergenerational communication, lessening of all forms of abuse in the family, lowering of stress, improved opportunities to attain education and jobs, improved networks with mainstream communities, improved relationships with places of worships and places that foster spirituality, and so on).

Category Number Four: Well Versed in English Grandparents Married in their own Indian Cultural Groups and Category Number Seven Well Versed in English Future Grandparents:

People in these two category, as described above, came to Canada as young adults in the 60s, 70, and 80s, went to universities in Canada, got married to individuals with Indian cultural background, via arranged marriages or with individuals already living in Canada, and settled down permanently in Canada. They raised their children within their own perceptions of cultural norms of Indian family households. Their children became well educated and well settled as professionals in Canada, and have their own children. Thus, those young adults who came to Canada in the late sixties now have become grandparents (for somewhat similar situation in the United States, see chapter eight in this book). We have listened to

these grandparents in various settings while doing community work in their neighborhoods. Here is one experience of such grandparents with their grown up children. A grandfather and a grandmother, as a couple, went to their daughter's family household, with the intention of staying with her and her husband with the expectation of raising their granddaughter the way they have raised their own children. Here is what these grandparents had to say in their own words,

> "…As we became older, we expected our daughter to get married and have children. We wanted to be grandparents and wished to raise our grandchildren as we raised our daughter. When our daughter got married, had a child, we were very excited. We wanted to spend more time with our daughter and her family. In fact, we desire to live in her household as much as possible."

Given the fact that their daughter settled down in some other city, the grandparents decided to move closer into their daughter after their retirement. They took this step and managed to move in their daughter's house. There, they were able to do things as they desired in raising their grandchild. But within a couple of years, they realized that their daughter and her husband did not like the arrangement they had forged for themselves with their daughter and son-in-law. The daughter and the son-in-law communicated their displeasure with such arrangement to them in many subtle ways. We heard these grandparents describing many interactional episodes in which they realized that they were no more welcomed to stay in their daughter's house for any long period of time, and the daughter and the son-in-law did not appreciate their intervention in the way they wanted to raise their child. One set of episodes was too much for them to bear. Again, based on my best memory I heard them saying something like this,

> "… Although we were introduced to their friends, our daughter and our son-in-law did not want us to be present at their social gatherings, either at their home or at their friends' house. They would take our grandchild so we did not have her company at those times either. This behaviour on the part of our daughter and her husband really hurt our feelings. We not only felt lonely, but also rejected and disrespected. Finally, we decided to move back to our own residence and adjusted our expectations, and redefined our style of grandparenting and role as grandparents."

It is not that unusual for us to hear from most diasporic Indian grandparents in this category saying that they also had similar experiences as did the above grandparents (for somewhat similar situation in the United States, see chapter seven in this book).

The question we and some grandparents ask: What can future diasporic Indian grandparents learn from such stories and experiences of those who have already become grandparents? In our work we often raise such questions after hearing such stories. At one occasion, during the course of our work, this question was posed to

one diasporic Indian young father who would soon be a grandfather. Here is his response as I remember it,

"….the would be Indian diasporic grandparents need to have balanced approach. That is, they should look for common values that they and their Canadian born and grown up children hold. Future diasporic Indian grandparents need to educate themselves with open mind approach. As a first step, collaborate with your grown up children who have their own families, and then ask yourself, do your adult children support same 'Indian values' that you hold? Do not assume that they do. If your adult children do not support your kind of 'Indian values', they would not support your way of socialising their children – your grandchildren. In other words, they may not allow you to play the grandparenting role according to your wishes. There certainly will be resistance, if not out-right conflict between you and your adult children. For example, if your own children do not speak Punjabi (i.e., you did not teach your children Punjabi when they were growing up, or they did not learn how to speak Punjabi because they grew up in the context of Canadian society), and they think it is not that important for their children to learn Punjabi in Canada, then how can you, as grandparents, expect your grandchildren to learn Punjabi and expect to avoid some degree of conflict between you and your adult children?"

In another diasporic young grandfather's voice

"….you cannot be successful in your grandparenting role, unless you first learn to listen to your grandchildren carefully, who are growing up in the Canadian social context. In other words, you cannot approach your grandchildren expecting them to listen to you always and pay respect to you unconditionally, as some grandparents who did not grow older in the Canadian context do (see the first three categories). You have to learn to earn respect from your grandchildren, first by respecting them as children."

Another diasporic Indian young grandfather said,

Indian and Canadian societies have different backgrounds… We should let our children [and grandchildren] adopt [some attitude of Canadian Society] too, and stop always mentioning to them what we did in India or how things are done in Indian Culture and home.

Mother and father often play different roles in socializing their children. In many families daughters and sons are expected to behave differently. In the words of a would be future Indian disporic grandmother,

I have raised my children in a balanced way. I have encouraged them to learn the Punjabi culture and at the same time the American way. My daughters and sons are well versed in American culture and they have been

successful… However, I now feel my daughters are caught between deciding whom to marry – with a Punjabi man or the American. I think I should have socialized them in different ways in this area. Perhaps, I should have given them clear message that they could marry anyone of their choice, and not necessarily with a good Punjabi man, or a good man from India. I should have given them more freedom in this area.

This same diasopric Indian mother who wanted to become a grandmother did not feel hesitant to constantly remind her two daughters and two sons, who have already completed their higher education from prestigious universities in U.S. to get married soon, because she want to be grandmother. Her wish became reality when her two daughters got married and had children of their own. She recalled the way she raised her four children, who in her and others' opinion, have become socially and professionally successful because of how she raised them in her family. Below in her own words she offers insights as advice to young Indian diasporic couples who one day will become grandparents. In her words, these ten insights are,

1. Get involved with your children's lives in the very beginning of their growing up and remain involved.
2. Volunteer your time generously.
3. Make your family a loving, caring place by sharing leadership, planning, decision making and management functions of the family.
4. Don't be timid or shy to voice your desires and needs to be recognized by the family members.
5. Be willing to communicate and disclose your feelings and opinions openly and squarely with your family members and others in the community.
6. Don't be timid to share your success stories with others by providing useful information willingly and freely to others.
7. Don't be timid, or shy celebrating each and every little achievement of your family and children.
8. Learn positive ways of talking and acting about your family and community.
9. Find positive inspirations in your own history and culture and mix it with new cultures and histories of others.
10. Get involved in Your Community and Neighbourhood and Build Networks." (Singh, 2004).

The question is, would this diasporic Indian mother as grandmother, and other future diasporic Indian grandparents be able to get involved in the grandparenting role the way she was involved with her own children? We might get some useful clues to understand what may be in store for would be future young grandparents, by looking at the experiences of diasporic Indian grandparents to whom we have briefly aluded in this section.

Category Numbers Five and Six: Well Versed in English Grandparents with Mixed Marriages

In households in which one spouse is not of Punjabi/Indian diasporic background, there are two types: (a) households in which Punjabi (Indian) culture is emphasized in the socializing of children in relatively more intense and systematic ways. That is to say, children in these households are expected to learn Indian customs and mannerism, interact with Punjabi families more regularly, participate in Punjabi religious and social functions in more regular ways, visit relatives and friends in India, wear Punjabi (Indian) dresses, eat Punjabi (Indian) food and to try to learn to speak Punjabi, and households (b) in which the family dynamics and everyday living is quite different from type (a). That is, parents "mildly" expect their children to do things "Punjabi" or "Indian". The parents themselves do things "Punjabi" or "Indian" as outlined in (a), occasionally. The emphasis is on enjoying local cultural values, and participating in daily activities with local population, albeit, within the frameworks of several critical perspectives. That is to say that both parents and children are aware of the fact that all aspects of local cultures need not be mimicked and imitated blindly. This kind of perspective is used in the socialization of children by providing them with languages of difference, respect, tolerance, marginality, border crossing, and social justice (languages and perspectives that throw light on class, gender, race, ethnic, linguistic, national, cultural and group and individual identity differences). That is, languages that provide children tools to understand, negotiate and navigate their ways through social relations that are differentially organized (stratification systems), locally, regionally, nationally and globally.

Further, some more subtle differences may be pointed out between (a) and (b) mixed marriage households of the diasporic Indian families. We have noticed that children socialized in households (a), where relatively stronger emphasis on "things Indians" has been the norm, appear to move towards "local" societal norms as they grow older. On the contrary, just the opposite appears to be the desire of the children who were socialized in households (b), where relatively less emphasis was placed on "things Indian". In these families children want to learn more about "things Indians" as they grow older. The family dynamics of both households (a) and (b) may further change in the future, depending upon whom the grown up children marry. Would the children grown up in households (a) marry Indian diasporic person grown up in the cultural context of the Indian diasporic family, or with someone having mixed marriages family cultural background, like their parents, or with some "local" person? And how would children grown up in households (b) behave? Would they marry "local persons", or "Indian persons", or persons from some other mixed family cultural contexts? Finally, how would these children raise their own children? Would they socialize them within child raising practices congruent with their parents, or with practices that are at odds with their parents? The outcomes of all these possible variations in socialization patterns may

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influence the dispositions of the grandchildren. The question then is: Are the diasporic Indian grandparents ready and prepared to play grand parenting role in the context of these possible realities in future? What are their needs? Where should they go to learn skills required for grandparenting roles in the future? Who would provide such services? These and other questions need to be answered and tackled in the development of the social and cultural capital of the Punjabi community in GTA and elsewhere. Under the leadership of Baldev Mutta, and his team of community and cultural workers, the PCHS has been committed for the last two decades to finding answer to these questions faced by Indian disporic families and seniors, some of whom are also grandparents. In many respect the PCHS has been successful in finding answers to these questions and in developing programs to meet the needs of different types of grandparents doing grandparenting in various diasporic Indian households identified herein.

Category Number Eight: Grandparents Who Regularly Visit Their Grandchildren in Canada

A description by a grandfather of his household is typical of many diasporic Indian households in GTA and other parts of Canada. In conversation with us, this grandfather, we will call him Surjit, tells us that he wants his grandchildren to know about his village in India. He feels that grandchildren should know their roots in India. He wants his grandchildren to visit his village in India. He visits his grandchildren regularly in Canada every two years. When he comes to Canada he stays with his son and daughter-in-law for six months to one year. During his stay with the family in Canada, in his daily interaction, he often emphasizes the point that the children should visit his village and that the family should teach them how important it is for children to know about their country, India, and their village.

He says he feels sad at the response of the grandchildren. The grandchildren tell me,

> "Grandpa, India is your country. The village is yours. Our country is Canada, and our village is Toronto. We will love to visit your country and your village as long as you realize that the country and the village are not ours; they are yours."

He says that this response of his grandchildren leads him to constantly criticize his son and daughter-in-law for not socializing his grandchildren properly. He says, he realizes the view point of his grandchildren, but finds it hard at his age to reconcile with their way of looking things. This conflict reduces his chances of interacting with his grandchildren in a more helpful way. When we asked him how willing he was to change his thinking on this point in order to see his grandchildren's viewpoint, he replied,

"I am trying hard. I want to be of help to my grandchildren. I think, I can help them in many ways. I can tell them family stories without making specific demands. I can also learn about their lives in Canada and be supportive to their life styles in Canada, because I do realize that they are going to live and work in Canada, raise their children in Canada."

In our work with Punjabi grandparents we find that Surjit is not alone in having such emotional feelings in his interactions with his grandchildren. Many grandmothers feel the same way. Grandparents who frequently visit their grandchildren and return to India, or grandparents who live in Canada but subscribe to the outlook of Surjit, often are told by service providers and some other grandparents not to impose their values on their grandchildren living in Canada. But it is hard for some grandparents to swallow such advice, while they try to change the outlook they have in this regard. Another grandfather's voice captures expression of this emotion in quite an assertive way. He says,

"That's my motherland [India]. I can't swallow that advice [advice of service providers]. I still love my motherland, where I was born" (Mehta and Singh, 2008, p. 40).

The point is that grandparents fully realize that their grandchildren are going to be Canadian, but at the same time find it difficult to see their grandchildren show no or little interest in India, Indian values and the villages of their grandparents. The diasporic grandparents often want to pass on their legacy to their grandchildren. In the voice of one grandparent,

"I want to tell my grandchildren about obedience to elders in India. Atmosphere of schools, house and Canadian society come to my way as obstacles. These are problems. We try this, but other institutions come in way. Don't point out your finger to them [grandchildren]. Here the schools teach them to call 911, if parents treat you roughly. Here the schools want children to be free, learn their duties, rights as Canadian citizens. If you give other Indian duties, that does not work. First, you have to make ground work, and then lovingly try to influence them. But in Canadian situation grandparent's impact is lesser and lesser."

In another grandfather's words,

"….about going out, about dating? We need to educate our children. We need to tell them what is good, what is bad. We can't follow them all over. Once they are not in our care we don't know where they are going. We need to educate them about the consequence of their actions for the family. Education is a must. In the end it is their choice. Whatever is taught and the kind of advice you give to your children, should be in writing and should be signed by you and your children. Then that should be shown to children when results are negative [i.e. when something bad happens to them]."

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Voices of Grandparents: What they Want, Say, and Do to Live the Ways they Want to Live[xiii]

We have already pointed out in the beginning of this paper that many Punjabi and other diasporic elders as grandparents are active participants in their communities and families and have many suggestions to achieve their goals (Singh, 2008; Mehta and Singh, 2008; Lamb, 2008). In many cases they clearly know what they want. They also know how and what to say to those who have control over resources (cultural and social capital) in their communities (e.g. various government and non-governmental services providers, political, religious and other leaders in their communities, and so on). We have also pointed out that after listening to them we have learned that they have two main basic goals: how to make the later days of their own aging process in Canada and the United States more "optimal" and "normal" as opposed to "pathological", and how to contribute to the well-being of their grandchildren in the changing context of the Indian diasporic families.

   In this section we present their voices and describe the type of activities some diasporic Indian grandparents in GTA would like to participate in, and describe a few programs they helped design in collaboration with community workers and people in their communities. In doing culture work with the diasporic Indian seniors/grandparents in GTA we learned that

> "… these sorts of programs cannot be successful without the full co-operation and collaboration of the seniors, because the content of the programs has to be worked out through a steady flow of conversations with the diasporic South Asian [Punjabi] seniors [grandparents]. For this to happen a culture of rethinking and acting in terms of possibilities and imagining future communities has to be built among the diasporic Indian [Punjabi] seniors [grandparents] and those who work with them through constant communication in the public spheres. This can only successfully be done by bringing the seniors [grandparents] together, listening to their voices, creating conditions where their diverse voices can emerge. *Once they have the voice, they may be able to act the way they want, and in doing so may create life styles that make them feel good in relations to others* (emphasis in italics is mine)" (Mehta and Singh, 2008, 160).

About the Programs, Traditional Indian Family Value of Intimacy, North American Family Values, Professional-Client-Bureaucratic Relations, and Conditions for Creating In-Between – Places

About the programs. Before we describe these programs and later reflect on their fate in a separate section of the chapter, we want to point out that in our work with the diasporic Punjabi seniors/ grandparents mainly in GTA, but also in other provinces of Canada, and Hawaii we learned that the diasporic Indian seniors/

grandparents generally like those programs which emphasize the value of emotional, caring, friendship-like intimate relationships (i.e. primary group relationship).

We learned that it is not easy to get the seniors/grandparents together without establishing some level of primary group relationship with them as is the case in the affective sphere of interpersonal communication. The diasporic Indian seniors/ grandparents say that they do not like to be treated solely as clients by the service providers *(*Mehta and Singh, 2008; Mutta, 1997, 1992, Endnote, iv*)*.

From the perspective of the diasporic Indian seniors/grandparents there are two assumptions they find problematic that underlie the professional-client relationship, because values behind these two assumptions often take priority in the formal meetings organized by the service providers. These two assumptions are: (a) procedures that are characteristics of any bureaucratic institution, and (b) the underlying assumptions that are associated with dominant social and cultural values of North American society.

What does this feeling on the part of the diasporic Indian senior/grandparents mean in practice? We learned while working with them in GTA that by this they mean, that they "….do not generally like those mainstream programs that require their clients to participate in well organized activities, where the seniors are directed to do pre-designed specific activities. For example, sit down quietly and watch a video or a TV program on what to eat, or what it entails to become a good Canadian" (Mehta and Singh, 2008, p. 162).

We also observed that many seniors/grandparents feel that many service providers do not understand the Indian concept of intimacy as a value on which Indian family's reciprocal relations are built. Thus the programs designers do not quite know how to listen empathetically to the life stories of an older person/ grandparents with different cultural experience. Therefore, the programs they design for the diasporic seniors/grandparents lack focus on intimacy. This feeling is summed up in the voice of a Punjabi diasporic senior/grandparent,

> "I find this society does respect the immigrants but they try to keep them and their social organizations at arm's length."

This feeling is echoed by another Punjabi senior/grandparent in this way,

> "Memories are very closely connected to cultural background, and so listening to them require deep understanding of that cultural background. Generally service providers and agencies do not have such deep understanding of Indian and Punjabi cultures in Toronto" (Mehta and Singh, 2008, p. 32, p. 162).

Many diasporic Indian seniors/grandparents and community workers perceive that most programs that government agencies offer to the diasporic seniors and grandparents provide *either/or choices* to them, and not "in-between-choices".

The diasporic Punjabi/Indian seniors and grandparents have been very active and remain active in designing programs based on their own perspectives within the given constraints in which they live their daily lives. The programs that we describe below were created by the diasporic Punjabi/Indian seniors and grandparents, in collaboration with community workers who worked with them on a daily basis in their communities and neighborhoods.

Thus, one of the main organizing principles of these programs was the notion of intimacy in Indian culture, and one of the main goals was to create in-between-spaces where the Indian diasporic seniors/grandparents could enjoy conversations with each other with some degree of intimacy, love, and closeness, while at the same time learn how to live their lives independently of their children in Canada and America as citizens or permanent residents. Thus, for the community workers who work with the diasporic Indian seniors/grandparents, in-between-places are those places and sites which provide healthy doses of feelings associated with Indian sense of family intimacy, while at the same time providing possibilities for developing and sustaining extra-family sites and extra-kin social relationship to the diasporic Indian seniors/grandparents, who are experiencing aging and doing grandparenting in North American social and cultural contexts. This perspective on project and program development does not advocate an "either this way or that way" approach in organizing the activities by putting North American cultural values and Indian cultural values on opposite poles. For example, *there* are those programs that emphasize traditional Indian values of intimate reciprocal intergenerational exchange (IRIE) vs. those program designed by Canadian services provided with no or very little emphasis on Indian family values. That is, programs that are entirely based on perceived traditional Indian values vs. programs that are entirely designed based on professional-client relationship.

Conditions for Creating In-Between-Places

Below we attempt to explain what we mean by "in-between-spaces", and either/or nature of programs offered to Indian diasporic seniors/grandparents in GTA. We do this by way of reviewing Sarah Lamb's work on Indian diasporic seniors/ grandparents in the United States, and by pointing out that it is relatively easier to create such "in-between-places", once we realize that the so called core values of "traditional" Indian family and the "mainstream North American" family are not so different, and that the difference between them have often been stereotypically presented and accepted by many uncritically. We show that this is the case by reviewing selected research done on American and Canadian families, which point out to much more similarities than differences between the core Indian and North American family values, that is, if we see this research from the perspective of good sense (Greaves, 2008).[xiv]

So, at this point we provide a glimpse/preview of what the diasporic Indian seniors and grandparents do, once the "in-between-spaces" have been created for

them to voice their personal troubles and public concerns through intimate conversations with each other.[xv]

It is clear to us from our work with the diasporic Indian seniors/ grandparents that they grapple with a myriad of problems and contesting dominant discourses (Bhaktin, 1981)[xvi] in their everyday lives in GTA: they are concerned with their interaction with grandchildren, with the issues related to dating, with their own well-being and loneliness, with the possibility of moving to old age home, about big gap between the material conditions in which their generation grew up and in which the new generations are growing up, and the immense educational and technological gap that they perceive exists between them, their children and grandchildren, and with the possibility of solving their problems that exist between them and their adult children and grandchildren by appealing to religious values. It becomes clear that they are grappling with these issues when we listen to their voices. For example, in the voice of one grandfather,

> "I don't have pension. But my children feed me. I bring my money from India. My children say, daddy, we will give you money. But I don't want to take money from them. That's how I feel."

Still another grandfather says,

> "We don't want to ask money from our children. We are ashamed of asking money from them. But on the other hand if you want money, the children say why do you want money? You are getting the meals, your being fed and taken care of."

In another grandfather's voice,

> "If you get sick and stay home, your children wouldn't be able to take care of you. Nursing home is worthwhile; old age home. Nursing home is better than home. Deposit money in the nursing home. Small group of people can get together and deposit money together – help each other. Hell with children, loneliness is big thing so far. We need to take care of each other."

Another grandfather says,

> "…look at your situations. Change your mentality. Forget about what you did in India. Canada is your country. Learn from them what people do here. So many ways of doing things! Learn from each other. Forget what you did in Punjab."

Some diasporic Indian seniors and grandparents with whom we work often say that religious values can solve many intergenerational problems, while other in the group contest this prevalent perspective. In the voice of one grandfather,

> "…what habit. You always bring religion first, but you really don't have any real religion. Children are very critical of religion. They observe every

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minute thing. For example, we [grandparents] keep too much secrets from them. Grandchildren know it. They notice what is happening on TV, internet, Facebook. Grandchildren think we really don't have any good habits to give. Children observe that we are hypocrites. If you force your religious values on them they reject them. When they reject, they really mean it. These children know too much. We are nowhere near them, e.g., about internet, Facebook, TV, etc. They make the point, they are accurate. Education system in Canada teaches them about these things, our school [in India] did not teach us those things. TV show fifteen minute clip. Children see that, the things change. First generation is different. Second generation has to get them settled in Canada, so the people in generation need to be aggressive. They don't need past. Third generation is different….Old things are left behind. Struggle is for the survival. These days things are new, we need to learn from the younger generation. Time is changing; in the 1960's technology was different. Now children know of it. In Punjab we did not have technology available to us. Only rich people had it. But now grandchildren know all about this. We need to learn from grandchildren more. Mutual learning is necessary."

Traditional Indian Family Value of Intimacy

We now turn to the discussion of Sarah Lamb work. Lamb (2008) has been studying seniors from India as immigrant group to the United States in the San Francisco and Boston cosmopolitan areas, concentrating on the mixed-ethnic (Gujarati, Punjabi, Bengali, etc.) families associated with an Indo-American community center in the San Francisco South Bay. Professor Sarah Lamb writes on the experiences of Asian Indians in the United States. The richness of the anthropological approach is illustrated in her narration of the journeys of these Indians who hail from North India. According to her,

> "transnational living does not involve just picking up of people or cultural systems and importing them to another nation, however. After spending some time in the U.S., Indian American seniors end up self-consciously taking on, with reluctance and eagerness, practices, values and modes of aging they regard as 'American'" (Lamb, 2008, p.61).

She adds light to how diasporic identities are lived and produced. Her respondents were all immigrants who had left India to join their adult children in the United States. She says

> "what I soon learned to be common images held by older Indians living in the United States: Namely, that even if maybe there is less material prosperity in India (i.e., people cannot always afford as many cups of tea as they might want), then at least families in India are closer, and old people are better served. America is the land of material prosperity; India is the land of intimacy, and time. It points to some of the ways that Indian Americans and their families self-consciously grapple with the problem of how to refashion

aging, family relationships, and national-cultural identity, out of the perceived competing images and values of India and the United States" (p. 56).

She further explains that,

"Indian Americans speak of aging in an "Indian" society as essentially a family matter, in which aging parents live with and are cared for by adult children. Such a system of intergenerational intimacy makes up the heart of the "joint family," which many represent as a quintessentially *Indian* way of life, morality, tradition and aging. According to visions of the proper joint family, parent-child ties entail life-long bonds of reciprocal indebtedness. Children—conventionally most often sons and daughters-in-law—live with and care for their aging parents out of a profound sense of moral, even spiritual, duty to attempt to repay the inerasable "debts" (*rn*) they owe their parents for all the effort, expense and affection their parents expended to produce and raise them (p. 58)."

And

"In their discussions about why they have come to the United States, older Indian Americans as well as their adult children almost always invoke visions of an Indian multigenerational family. When they explain the workings of reciprocal intergenerational relations, it is interesting to note that it is almost precisely the same things that parents once gave to their children that children are later obligated to return to their parents: material support, services of caring, sentiments, and the performing of key life cycle rituals (p. 58)."

And among the four important parts of parent-child relationships and aging in India is

"The expectation of participating in the first three dimensions of reciprocal exchange--of material support, services, and the sentiments of family intimacy—are what are crucial."

In our work with the diasporic Indian seniors/grandparents in Canada we observed that concern with the sentiments of family intimacy was also most important for them. Lamb explains that

"The problem is not a matter simply of who provides the material support, or who performs the labor of household services, but of a lack of closeness, a loneliness, a being caught in a house all day surrounded by cold fog, without even a phone call from a son. An important part of Indian perceptions of junior-to-senior intergenerational "service" (called *seva* in many North Indian languages) is love and honor. This is what many Indian seniors feel to be the most seriously lacking here--the failure of the return gift of the sentiments of love and respect that make up close intergenerational relations" (p. 66).

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Sarah Lamb suggests that,

> ".... the prevailing sentiment among older Indian Americans is that, although they may have come to the United States primarily to *be with* their children, they will inevitably be disappointed if they expect family intimacy to be the primary source of meaning and support in late life.

> Those who end up feeling the most settled and fulfilled in the North American context are thus those who purposefully branch out beyond the family, partaking of the more independent and peer-oriented way of life that they find to be culturally and politically salient in the United States. U.S. communities could, then, work much further to develop extra-family sites of sociality and productivity accessible to older South Asian Americans, such as the Indo-American Community Senior Center where [for example, one senior named Matilal Majmundar] spent many of his days, Hindu and Sikh temples, and social and cultural programs for the South Asian community organized within ethnic senior centers" (p.74).

North American Family Values and Socially Constructed Nature of family

If those diasporic Indian seniors/grandparents, who purposefully branch out beyond the family feel more settled and fulfilled in the American context as Lamb is suggesting above, we think that for those Indian diasporic seniors/grandparents who are yet not branched out beyond the family but are attempting to do so, it will be easier for them to keep in mind that

> "… our views about which family norms are acceptable, normal, desirable, and praise-worthy also determine our views about which forms are abnormal, problematic, and in need of repair or condemnation" (Newman, 2012, p. 5).

Also it is helpful to remind oneself that

> "…perhaps no word evokes as much emotion or carries as much political weight as *family*. It permeates our lives and defines who we are as a culture. We're all born into family of one sort or another and will spend at least part of our lives inside of some type of family" (Newman, 2012, p. 4).

Further, family is a very elusive term and so it is not so easy to define it.

> "We may want to think that family is a natural feature of human life, but in fact its meaning – not to mention how people feel about it and what they expect from one another within it-is **socially constructed.** This means what we believe to be 'real' is always a matter of what we collectively define and agree upon as real" (Newman, 2007, cited in Newman, 2012, p. 4).

This does not mean that we can have complete freedom to define our own families. This is because we don't live our lives alone. Therefore, at some point others have to ratify or recognize our own individual sense of family. In the U.S. and Canada,

like in most countries today, family is defined by arrays of organizations and agencies, and local, state, and federal government programs. Should the family be defined based on formally recognized blood or legal relationship or reflect emotional connections to one another? This is one of the key debates in North America today.

Today in US

"despite the official definition and political attempts to limit family definitions, in everyday use we are likely to use the word *family* to describe a group of individuals who have achieved a significant degree of emotional closeness and sharing, even if they're not related" (Newman, 2012, pp. 12–13).

These groups of individuals who are not officially recognized, people other than legal or biological relatives, are known as fictive kin by family researchers (Gross, 2004).

Fictive kin, "….play a family like role in providing for the emotional and other needs of others. For instance, instead of marrying or relying on children or siblings, as they approach retirement age, many single older women these days are forming lasting bonds with longtime friends that include, among other things, dividing chores, pooling financial resources, and purchasing insurance policies or homes together"(Newman.2012, p. 13).

Further, there are those who strongly believe that the American family is in stress due to many social forces. On the contrary, there are those who believe that American family is strong and just going through transformation. These two set of conversations about family are also prevalent among Canadians and diasporic Indians in North America.

There is a tendency among some diasporic Indians in North America to believe that North American family values do not measure up to the high set of Indian family moral values. But the fact is that family in North America as an institution, cultural symbol, and place for socialization and support is very strong. Majority of young children, adult members of family and relatives, and elderly are looked after and taken care of by family (Newman, 2012; Mitchell, 2009; Shanas, 1979).

As discussed earlier, Newman (2012, p. 342) states the

"…relationship between elderly parents and adult children today can be quite close, characterized by frequent visits, telephone calls, and letters. A national survey found that over half of adult children live within 1 hour drive of their parents. Close to 70% have weekly contact with their mothers, and 20% have daily contact (cited in Lye, 1996, cited in Newman, 2012). About two thirds of adult children adjust their work schedules to care for parents, such as arriving late to or leaving early from work and taking time off during the workday (Public Policy Institute, 2002, cited in Newman, 2012)."

Further, Newman reviews a few more studies which show that

"…the extent to which adult children care for their elderly parents varies along ethno-racial lines (American Association of Retired Persons, 2001; Raley, 1995, cited in Newman, 2012). For instance, by long tradition in the African American community, adults are expected to care for their parents and grandparents. This tradition arose to address the harsh economic realities of the life: limited access to medical care, public support, and good jobs, the sorts of things that would guarantee a secure old age" (pp. 342–343).

And

"Latino/afamilies are typically close-knit. Around 80% of Mexican American elderly, for instance, have frequent contact with their adult children because they either live with them or live within a few minutes of their home. Compared with Anglo Americans, on average, Mexican American show significantly higher levels of devotions to their families, more collectivist attitudes, and a greater tendency to help their elderly parents [Freeberg & Stein, 1996].They feel significantly more obligated to avoid conflict and provide assistance" (Newman, 2012, p. 343).

Besides,

"Those children who spend more than 80 hours a week providing care to their elderly parents are significantly more likely than those who provide less care to turn down promotions, switch to part-time work, take leaves of absence, leave work early (or arrive late), and quit work entirely [Gross, 2006a]" (Newman, 2012, p. 343).

In our experience it is generally the case that many diasporic Indians believe that adult children in North America do not want their elderly parents to live with them, and do not promise to offer any guarantee to their parents that they will look after them in their old age, and that the adult American and Canadian children prefer "intimacy from distance", believing that the "intimacy from distance" is not quite the same as "Indian family intimacy". It is true that in America

"… in the 19th and early 20th centuries, elderly parents usually did not live with their adult children and weren't guaranteed their support in old age" (Newman, 2012, p. 342).

But the research shows that

"in times of need, U.S. families have always been willing to expand their households to include other kin. In the past, when elderly parents and especially widowed mothers were unable to maintain themselves in a separate households, they would often live with their adult children. These arrangements were typical for a limited time though, and usually the children

moved into parents' home to care for them rather than vice versa" (Newman. 2012, 342).

From Loss of Intimacy to Independent Living: In-Between-Spaces and Some Successful Programs

In this section we describe the process for developing and instituting several programs in the GTA for the Punjabi diasporic Indian seniors. The four programs we describe here are: (1) 'Bhooli Bisri Yade' (translated from Punjabi into English as "Forgotten or Dispersed Memories"), (2) the 'The South Asian Buffet", (3) the Gardening Program, and (4) Hindi English Senior/Grandparents Club. One of the main assumptions behind these programs was that the elderly/grandparents feel good when given the opportunity to share their memories with their peers, family members , service providers, and others in their neighborhoods, if these situations as places and spaces are safe, inviting, and provided them in-between-spaces that enabled them to live their lives the way they desired to live. (Singh, 2008, Chapter 7, pp. 133–136)

1. Bhooli Bisri Yade (Forgotten and Dispersed Memories)[xvii]

This program was conceived in 1989 by a team of community workers under the leadership of Rupinder Singh. I have been a member of this team since then. This program also came to be known as South Asians' Unforgettable Memories program. This event was held twice a year for and by South Asian Seniors/ grandparents from all over Toronto to meet and share their memories. The seniors came from all walks of life, having a wide range of educational and professional backgrounds. Some of them were village leaders before immigrating to Canada, some lived through World War Two, some described themselves as freedom fighters, and some held professional positions in the Indian army and in other offices of the Indian government in urban centers. Most of them were men, but there were also some women who participated in this program.

The seniors/grandparents were very active in organizing this event. The objective was to bring the South Asian seniors/grandparents in the Greater Toronto Area together, and to let them meet and expose themselves to the cultural and traditional ways of their peers in Canada. The seniors/grandparents knew that many of their peers had many talents in areas such as music, poetry, literature, history, journalism, yoga, dance, arts, crafts, games, food, and so on. The goal was to provide the seniors/grandparents with a relaxed social setting where their peers could share those talents with others. They also knew that many of them loved to share their memories of different stages of their lives: childhood, adolescence, adulthood and "old" age. The seniors/grandparents were able to find a regular place to meet at one of the Toronto neighborhood centers with the help of Rupinder Singh, who worked there as Community Activation Coordinator. This program

became extremely popular and still remains very popular in certain circles. Since 1996, this program has become part of the Punjabi Community Heath Centre, which is run under the leadership of Baldev Singh Mutta, a veteran community leader in Toronto. It is run exclusively by South Asian diasporic seniors/ grandparents, mostly Punjabis, on a volunteer basis.

Many other small scale programs involving seniors/grandparents in their own neighborhoods have sprung out of this original program. These were: *Bat Cheet* (Chit Chat). This event was held on the last Friday of every month. Seniors/ grandparents chose a different topic each month and held discussion groups. Many themes were touched on during discussions, and all discussions were videotaped by the seniors/grandparents themselves. They were helped by some members of the South Asian Seniors' Video Club, another offshoot program of the original Unforgettable Memories program. In the video Club, seniors/grandparents learned to use video equipment. The seniors/grandparents loved to learn these skills, because they could use the camera and other equipment to capture other activities taking place in their neighborhoods, families, and so on. The *Bat Cheet* group wanted to expand the scope of its operation by conducting outreach. This consisted of *Bat Cheet* seniors/grandparents trying to recruit at least two members of other South Asian Seniors' clubs in Toronto to join them.

The South Asians Seniors' War Memories was another project that stemmed from the original program. Many South Asian seniors/grandparents and their friends, mostly Punjabis, have lived through World War II and through the struggles and conflicts that marked India's Independence Movement. These seniors/grandparents had many experiences to share. This program provided them the safe place and opportunities to express their feeling about these events freely.

The South Asian Writers' Group program was another off shoot of the original program. Several seniors/grandparents had experience as journalists and writers, and they wanted to get together in a group. Their goal was to share their memories, write them down and share them with others through local publications and the internet.

We end this section with typical voices of South Asian diasporic seniors/ grandparents men who participated in this program in the Greater Toronto Area. These voices were recorded by Rupinder Singh in Punjabi and in Hindi a few years ago, and translated to English by me. A senior/grandparent of seventy years of age says "many people don't know about government programs. There are some thoughts, emotions, feelings that one desires to share with others. We go there ('Bhooli Bisri Yade' program) to mingle with others, share snacks, express our feelings and share them with others. That simply feels good." A senior/grandparent of sixty five years of age states "we have come from away from a village. We feel great differences here. There is a great difference in the social environment here in Canada and India. In India we went to other people's house anytime we wished and talked with others. Here there is only this place – 'Bhooli Bisri Yade' program – the club. We eat our breakfast in the morning, dress ourselves up and look

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forward to come over here. Time passes here very nicely. I mean to come here in this club, chit chat with others and let time go by with good feelings." Another senior/grandparent of age sixty-nine has this to say "in my view this kind of club should be everywhere. People then come there and indulge themselves in give and take of their thinking. We reach a stage of our lives where we need someone. For that, there should be a club like this where people can sit down together, chit chat, celebrate being happy and share good feelings. This makes everyone feel good and happy." A senior/grandparent of seventy years of age offers this reflective voice "when we all get to gather in this club to deal with someone's problems, there is no need to complicate the situation further. Instead, we should try to get the person out of his troubles. We should provide help to the person, and let him feel good and fetch some degree of happiness." And finally, a senior/grandparent of seventy four years of age says "at home people are frustrated, are in bad mood. Nobody is to take care of me. Nobody talks to anyone. Everyone keeps busy with her/his work. A person is a social animal. It's very hard for a person to live alone. One desires to talk with each other and share feelings with others. That's why it is very important to have this club – a place where people go and share their feelings in a give and take fashion and feel good. I always feel good."

2. South Asian Seniors' Buffet Lunch Program

The South Asian Seniors' Buffet program created opportunities for the seniors to share ideas about their diets, health, food habits, illness, sickness, disease, home remedies, encounters with doctors and other health providers in Canada and India, and ideas about health maintaining behaviors in Canadian and Indian cultural backgrounds.

This program existed for six years. It was housed in a neighborhood center. The first buffet was carried out by two South Asian seniors/grandparents. Because of its success, the neighborhood center gave the project CN$100 "float money". After that the project evolved into a monthly event. It was held on the last Friday of every month, from 12:00 to 2:00 p.m. From two seniors/grandparents who were male, the core group evolved into a group of 8 South Asian seniors/grandfathers and grandmothers. All participants were volunteers.

Outreach for each month's Buffet was conducted by mail-out of the Buffet brochure. Initially, the brochure was sent to the entire neighborhood mailing list. Over time, participants revised the mailing list, based on feedback from attendees and their own ideas around who best to target. Childcare was also provided for the attendees by volunteers.

Every month, a menu was planned. Much communication was done via a telephone network. Participants decided who would participate and in what ways. For example, who would cook what dishes, go shopping for the groceries, and do other work. Usually one participant would meet with the core group consisting of

seniors' staff and would buy groceries the day before the buffet. Meals were prepared collectively at the neighborhood center's kitchen facilities by a few members of the core group in a rotating fashion.

There was payment involved. Those who cooked were paid approximately CN $10 per hour for working from 9 am to 12 pm. Work done from 12 to 3 pm was considered volunteer time, plus any other time, e.g. shopping for groceries.

Food was cooked for approximately 40–60 people. The basic menu included one meat dish, a seasonal vegetable dish, lentils, chutney (sauce), mango juice, papadum (fried wafers), raita (yogurt), whole wheat roti (bread), pickles, rice and a dessert or sweet. It was sold on an "All-you-can-eat" basis, for CN$5. Later the price was increased.

Other ongoing activities of participants were to periodically clean the storage room, keep track of spices and supplies, revise and update the mailing list. At every Buffet, attendees were asked for their feedback and their suggestions for the next buffet's menu. Participants also attended ongoing educational forums. For example, they attended a recent forum held by a South Asian nutritionist on cooking specifically South Asian food in a healthy manner, and on the medicinal value of ingredients such as haldi, garlic, ginger, cinnamon and mathi.

The point is that there are many agencies and people who are interested in designing programs to help the diasporic Indian seniors/grandparents and their families.

A program may have many objectives and in order to achieve various objectives, different approaches can be combined, e.g., educational and therapeutic approaches. The educational component may consist of providing basic information on various topics related to aging, society, and the aged. For example, the main objectives of a program may be to: (1) provide information about aging in order that the family members of an older person can better understand him/her as well as gain insight into their own aging process, (2) provide mutual support and understanding through various intervention techniques, and (3) facilitate problem solving around issues in the relationship with an elderly member in the family. The two programs described here were mostly designed by the diasporic South Indian seniors/grandparents, mostly by Punjabi seniors. They contributed towards these educational and therapeutic goals to the satisfaction level of all involved.

For example, the seniors/grandparents involved in the Buffet Lunch program had this to say: "The South Asian Buffet Lunch is a fulfillment of a long cherished dream of ours, the seniors, who meet weekly at this neighborhood center. We are privileged to entertain our guests with a delightful cuisine that we prepare ourselves. We feel greatly honored by the presence of our guests who enjoy the delicious dishes and encourage us to expand our menu. We hope our Kitchen will act as a lighthouse in the community and an inspiration for the other seniors to join hands in similar cooperative projects."

3. PCHS Gardening Project: Achieving Health Goals in Culturally Sensitive Ways[xviii]

At the PCHS **"**the 2009 garden season marks the launch of the first independent community garden project supported by the Eco Source – MIAG Community Gardens Program. In September 2008, staff, seniors and community members at Punjabi Community Health Services (PCHS) began planning this exciting endeavor. Over the fall and winter months, the Sahara Men's and Women's groups actively participated in many events" (Eco Source Community Gardens, Newsletter, Issue, 2, 2009, p. 2); the Eco Source – MIAG Community Gardens Program. www.southasianfocus.ca/news/community-garden-opens-at-punjabi). Carolyn Bailey**,** Urban Agriculture Program Manager**,** Email: **c**bailey@ecosource.ca, can provide more information about this project. The Gardening Project was a great success under the leadership of Rupinder Singh, Activity Coordinator, who has more than twenty years of work experience with the Punjabi elderly and grandparents in GTA. "The satisfaction and community feeling of gardening together brings to mind many special memories", said Rupinder Singh, seniors worker at PCHS. According to Rupinder "food gardening is a great way to link our cultural history with exercise, therapy, healthy eating, community building and environmental awareness." And "community food gardens play an important role in encouraging healthy eating habits and positive social engagement." "Planting, nurturing and harvesting together helps people to literally put down roots in the community," said Carolyn Bailey, Community Gardens program coordinator at Eco Source." Further, she said, "working with the Sahara Seniors on the garden project has been an inspiring and educational experience for everyone involved" (South Asian Focus, Voices of the Asian community, Canada, July 02, 2009, 1).

The Gardening Project at the Punjabi Community Health Services (PCHS) is a very innovative and timely project. It is created by the seniors' own boundless energy and commitment for their well-being as well as by the help of the community workers and a number of professional and interested stakeholders.

The goals of the projects are : (1) to create physical activity regimes that contribute to improving and maintaining the health behavior and health status of the seniors, (2) to achieve the above health goals in a culturally sensitive way, and in a way that brings the diasporic (immigrant) seniors and mainstream Canadian communities together, with the purpose of promoting social integration and removing cultural misunderstandings, (3) to contribute to seniors' social and psychological well-being through increasing social interaction with the purposes of reducing social isolation, loneliness, elder abuse, alcoholism, family violence, and depression, and (4) to improve seniors' communications skill in English through creating opportunities for them to interact with mainstream gardening professionals and business personnel.

Research and common sense show that active living results in improvement of individual health in the long term. The gardening activities provide the seniors opportunity to move various parts of their bodies-to bend, twist, walk, sit down, and so on. Research shows that such physical activities enable individuals to build their stamina, strengthen their muscles, reduce their blood pressure, reduce obesity, reduce incidence of diabetes , heart diseases, and so on. Thus the gardening project appears to full-fill goals of Healthy Living policy in Canada in a natural environment (as compared to doing the same activities, for example, in a spa), and that being in such an environment enhances participants' social and psychological well-being as mentioned above. (See [http://www.zoomermag.com/health/turning-garden…into-a-workout/19685]

The Gardening program is also culturally sensitive, because most of the seniors in this project come from rural, small village, small plot, agricultural communities in India, where their life styles have allowed them to work in natural open landscapes, where they were involved in agricultural practices earning part of their daily livings.

The Gardening project appears to be very instrumental and effective in lessening cultural misunderstanding. This happens when the seniors communicate, listen to and explain to mainstream community garden experts and agri-business personnel how agriculture is done in their villages in India, and learn from the Canadians how it is done in Canada. This process of mutual interaction seems to be very effective in promoting social integration and removing cultural misunderstandings. On the whole, research and commonsense dictates that this sort of mutual cultural interaction creates a healthy and positive environment for the seniors to socially interact with each other and with others.

The Gardening Project improves seniors' communications skill in English. It does so because it provides opportunities for them to interact with mainstream gardening professionals and business personnel who usually speak only English. These encounters enable the mainly Punjabi speaking seniors to try to speak in English. Individuals learn a second language in social and cultural contexts that encourage and expect them to learn the second language, and in a context that provides appropriate opportunities and resources as does the Punjabi Community Health Services Gardening Project.

4. Self-Help Clubs

The diasporic Indian seniors/grandparents are an active group of people, whether or not they feel miserable or happy at times in their daily lives. They have created hundreds of self-help clubs and programs to meet their perceived needs in GTA area. Thus many of them are active leaders, cultural workers, participants in those programs. One can go on the Internet and find the list of these clubs by searching "Seniors clubs – the city of Brampton" (http://www.brampton.ca/en/residents/recreational-Activities/Pages/Seniors-clubs.aspx).

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Below we present a history of the formation of another chain of clubs for the diasporic Indian seniors/grandparents by Prabha Chandra Kohli, who is now in her seventies. She starts with her own definition of the situation of the diasporic Indian seniors/grandparents in Toronto. Hers is a story of self-help, resilience, and agency of a cultural worker dedicated to create in-between-spaces in a place officially characterized as GTA to live her life the way she wants by developing her own shade of cosmopolitan social self (see endnote xiii in this chapter) as discussed in this chapter. It is also a story of her agency that is at work to optimize (see endnote v in this chapter) her own well-being in her later years of life, as well as, to optimize well-being of other Indian diasporic seniors/grandmothers. The text below is written by her.

Establishing Hindi English Senior Clubs by Chandra Kohli

I am a retired teacher from Peel Board of education in Ontario. I taught about 15 years in Peel Board of education and about 15 years in Carlton Board of Education. I ran 3 Hindi schools under Carlton Board of Education and one private Hindi school in Ottawa. I was a coordinator and also taught at one location. I am qualified to teach and to test Girl Guides and Boy Scouts to earn their patch of Religion in Life Program [Hindu religion]. I perform all kind of Hindu Puuja .I was running 4 Senior Clubs for a few years and now I gave those Senior Clubs to other people because of my bad health. I am still running one Bhajan Group. I am still teaching Math, English, Hindi, Sanskrit, Hindu Religion etc. etc., from home. I am still doing some voluntary work. Also, I send comments to News Papers every day which are always printed. I have produced many T V programs. I write many articles which I e-mail to many people. I wrote a few articles to some newspapers those are all published. Some of the comments which I got from people about my e-mail articles are: "hats off", "this information must go to all", "very scholarly writing," "you are a scholar," "you are an established scholar", etc. etc.

In my experience, most of the disporic Indian grandparents/seniors are miserable and unhappy with their lives in Canada. Their Children are too busy to 'meet two ends' , they have no time for parents, therefore seniors and grandparents have to learn to be independent, but the problem is that their children keep them too busy to look after their children [seniors' grandchildren] and to do their house work etc. etc. The children must give two or three hours free time to their parents. If children have a nanny or 'live in' to do the house work and to look after their children [seniors' grandchildren], the children have to pay to that nanny about 20 thousand dollars a year, plus after six p.m. the nanny or the 'live in' do not work, plus they get weekends free. Grandparents who are looking after their grandchildren are getting nothing of anything as 'live in' gets, but on the top of that children get their parents' pension checks.

Seniors/ grand parents must get some time off to go to senior groups to meet people of their own kind ; to make friends ; to share ideas ; to get help from

professionals etc. etc. They need to be cheered up because they are too lonely in this country. They need friends who speak their language. They need to be fed nutritional food which they need in this cold country but that does not mean meat and eggs eating. Vegetarian food is much better than a non – vegetarian food but they need to know right kind of food to eat according to their tastes and needs. They need to learn English to communicate with doctors and dentists, to shop successfully, to make friends of local people etc. etc., and to travel with confidance, to come out of the house to move around , to visit community centers to keep them fit and to be entertained also, etc. To meet these ends, the diasporic Indian seniors/grandparents needed to establish Hindi English Clubs.

Hindi English Clubs: A History

One day I went to Hanuman Temple in Toronto first time .There the temple organizer asked me if I can give ride to this lady. I said 'yes'. During the ride 'this lady' told me "please, open a Hindi Senior club, there are so many English clubs, Panjabi clubs and many other languages clubs but no Hindi club. She said, "I am not against any club but I cannot express my ideas in other languages as I can in Hindi, therefore I do not enjoy other clubs. I tried many, many senior clubs but the problem is the same". I did not think about her request at that time. After about a year I went to the same temple and again I gave ride to 'this lady'. She made the same request again, but still I did not think about this lady's request. Again after about six months, at the same temple I met her. She, during the ride made the same request and she showed me the building where many clubs were held. At this time I thought the way she is so keen to have a Hindi Club, there might be many people with the same need, and so I started thinking about a Hindi Club. I went to that building to find out the possibilities to start a Hindi Club. Their response was very good. Then I started phoning Indian people to find out how many people would be interested. About 10 people said they are very much interested to come out of the house and to meet more people to make some friends. I went to the office of the building to tell them that there were about 10 people who are interested to come to a Hindi Club. They gave us a room by charging two dollars per head per month in 2008. I phoned the same 10 people and told them that every Wednesday, from 2 pm to 4 pm we were going to meet. All 10 people who wanted to come out of the house to meet new people to make more friends, told me,

"O No. Our grandchildren come for lunch and we cannot come at this time."

I asked them which time you people could come? No answer from them. Then I asked would 10 to 12 noon suit you?

"No, 12:00 noon, our grandchildren come home for lunch and leave for school at 1 p m."

Would 4 to 6 pm suit you, I asked.

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"No, 6 p m our children come home. I have to be home to serve them dinner."

You can imagine my situation!

I started phoning new people and told them that every Wednesday 2 pm to 4 pm we are going to meet as seniors and grandparents, please come. Every one said,

"…we will think about this and let you know."

I phoned the lady who was asking me to start a "Hindi Club" and told her that no one was interested to come to senior club. Then in 2008 we two started the club with just two of us, but I kept on phoning people. Next week there were 5, 6 people; next to next week about 10 people, and eventually there were about 30 people. After a few months, one Wednesday we went to visit the Senior Club and found out that doors were closed for all the senior clubs in that building. Up to today no one knows why, but some people say

"the Management did not pay the rent of the place."

Then we approached a community center and got a place. Since then we are there. Then we open another senior group; then another; then another and another; all at different locations and all five days of the week from 2 pm to 4 pm, every day. In November 2012 I fell very sick. I thought I was over worked. Now it is February 2013 and I am not fully recovered yet, so I gave all these senior groups to other people to run. The aim of these senior clubs was to help grandparents / seniors to come out of the house; to make new friends; to discuss their problems and to help each other to solve these problems in their own ways, and the clubs were there to get professionals help if needed; to kill their loneliness and those diseases caused by loneliness and to reduce Government's medical expenses, so that every one's taxes would not increase because of medical expenses.

These clubs offered many programs to Indian disporic seniors and grandparents. Some of the objectives of these programs was for the diasporic Indian seniors and grandparents to*: come and chat to each other about 20 minutes, do light exercises about 20 minutes, attend talk about some health related topics / safety topics / frauds topics etc. etc. by professionals for about 20 minutes, followed by questions and answers for about 20 minutes, do singing and dancing as the lung and body exercise for about for 20 minutes, eat healthy snacks, enjoy free time for the remaining time of the time, and finally to undertake some trips to different places and picnics for full day instead of the above mentioned programs.

It should be noted that those who were running these senior clubs were and are all volunteers and these clubs were run without any grants from municipal, provincial or federal govt. or from any individual. Our senior group is Self Sufficient group. We collect two quarters from each person every time from whoever comes to the group, and give one quarter as a rent for the room under the

name of "Targeted Funds". With other quarter we provide tea and snacks to everyone.

Programs offered by the Ontario Government to Indian Diasporic Seniors/ grandparents

Ontario Government or Federal Government offers many programs for seniors/ grandparents, but they are not good enough for the diasporic Indian seniors/ grandparents. Therefore, from my perspective, based on my experience with working and listening to them over several years of living in Toronto, I believe that the following services should be available for the diasporic Indian seniors in Greater Toronto Area. In every community center there must be one free of charge room for the diasporic Indian seniors/grandparents, where they can meet every day, to talk about their problems and advice each other. There should be provision of free transportation for them with nutritious snacks. There must be some kind of law for those seniors/grandparents who look after their grandchildren and do almost all the house work for which they do not get any free time to look for their own well-being, self – development and self-satisfaction. This means they must be given at least three hours a day free time by their children so that they can go to a community center and enjoy themself in Indian ways in Indian senior groups. (Kohli's text ends here)

Reflecting on the Fate of Programs and Agency of the Diasporic Indian Seniors and Grandparents

These programs had a life of their own. They are part of the aging enterprise.[xix] Such programs initially are developed as culturally sensitive, competent and inclusive programs. Ironically they end at the very point when they are perceived by the diasporic Indian seniors / grandparents, community members, community workers, and government agencies which have partially funded them as very successful programs. Those who had participated in those programs, and had time, ideas, imagination, creativity, and energy are encouraged by some to disengage from these types of programs and community work. This is done by varieties of people who are somehow able to create material conditions in which it becomes difficult, if not impossible to operate: whatever funding is available becomes un-available, positions of community workers are lost or downgraded, institutional support is reduced or withdrawn, communication in the organization loses transparency and becomes distorted. Initial emphasis on developing social and cultural capital for a particular community vanishes or loses its propriety due to changes in the environment in which such programs exist. Community organizations that house such programs become institutionalized. This means they go through transformation and begin to operate like mainstream organization, which provide services to the diasporic Indian seniors/grandparents as client. They remain culturally sensitive organizations only in name. This institutionalization process gives opportunity to some Indian disaporic community workers, and to

some diasporic Indian seniors/grandparents, who choose to "branch out" beyond the culturally sensitive designed programs, allowing them to feel more settled and fulfilled in the North American context. On the other hand, those who choose not to "branch out" this way, or are unable to do so, start using their agency once again to start new culturally sensitive programs that are directed towards opening in-between-spaces, as discussed above, for seniors/grandparents who want to enjoy living both the Indian way and the North American way. These types of community workers also relish living their daily lives in those in-between-places. They have learned skillfully and purposefully as diasporic Indians to navigate the complex terrain of North American society, thus have been able to develop cosmopolitan social self which allows them to feel settled and fulfilled both as Indians ,with some Indian values, and North Americans. In this way they have by passed the either/or option of living in diaspora as mentioned earlier in this chapter. Moreover, North Americans come in many shades, so one does not have to be "true North Americans" to feel settled and fulfilled.

The success or failure of any social program is socially constructed. What this means is that social definition of reality is an emerging process; it emerges from knowledge which is socially generated. Social generating of knowledge involves the ordering and interpretation of facts that are gathered by proclaimed experts who possess status and authority. This does not mean exclusion of ordinary citizens, such as South Asian seniors/grandparents, working together and producing social knowledge in the public spheres in Canadian context. Eventually, some aspects of socially produced knowledge become widely shared both by the experts and by common folk as citizens and are institutionalized as part of the "collective stock of knowledge." Definitions of realities are based upon this widely shared knowledge. Essentially then, socially constructed programs are based on our attitude toward the seniors and grandparenting role, as well as on our political, economic, and social structure. The four programs described herein, in a sense, were socially constructed by all parties involved and perhaps that's why they were perceived successful, until the day that they were no more in existence. One 82 year old grandparent voiced his concern in this way,

> "I found out that programs that are provided to the diasporic Punjabi seniors/ grandparents do not include their needs. These programs are generally structured for the need of local mainstream, mostly White seniors. The programs which are provided to the ethnic seniors /grandparents do not give due considerations to the experience of and skills of the Punjabi disporic seniors/ grandparents. As a result these seniors/grandparents do not feel involved in the programs. These programs do not give these seniors/ grandparents the sense of fulfilment, achievement, and belongingness in Canadian society. I feel that the programs for the ethnic seniors/grandparents, including the diasporic Indian seniors/grandparents should be designed in ways that would make them feel good about their life fulfillment and

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belongingness in Canadian society is valued. The programs which are provided to them do not help them to make use of those skills they possess. Therefore, it is difficult for the Punjabi disporic seniors to integrate their life experience and get fully integrated into Canadian society, and thus be able to contribute to the well-being of their communities. I strongly feel that programs for the ethnic community, such as the Punjabi diasporic senior/ grandparents should be developed by seniors themselves by giving them the opportunity to make modifications to the programs offered to them by the mainstream service providers in the province of Ontario in Canada."

Another 64 year old Punjabi diasporic senior/grandfather voices his observations this way,

"Many of the programs that are developed for the diasporic Punjabi seniors/ grandparents end up being health clubs. There seniors start taking all sorts of pills. They are over medicated. Many community organizations need funding. In order to obtain funding they generally establish clubs for the diasporic Punjabi senior/grandparent. Once they get it [funds], the shape of their organization greatly changes."

What needs to be done?

After reviewing the literature in the area of grandparents' role in taking care of their grandchildren in the mainstream Canadian and American households, our knowledge about the place of the diasporic Punjabi grandparents, in the diasporic Indian households, is indeed very meagre. At this point, relative to what is known about the mainstream grandparents, we know very little about the role of the diasporic grandparents in taking care of their grandchildren; very little is also known about their needs and desires and the type of help they would need to take care of their grandchildren. Therefore, more involvement, effort, commitment, cultural work, and research need to be undertaken to fully understand the diasporic Indian grandparents and their role in different types of household not only in North America but also in other countries, because grandparenting has become global in scope. However, in this paper we have attempted to provide a conversation based on our work – a conversation that highlights their voices, that we believe enables us to ask all sorts of questions, albeit not fully articulated, about the place and functioning of the diasporic Punjabi grandparents in the diasporic Punjabi households and the conversation about the context in which they interact with their own adult children and grandchildren in North America, while doing grandparenting as best as they can.

NOTES

i   A huge amount of research on grandparents and doing grandparenting exists in North America, and
     also in Europe. One can go on the Internet and find various sites that provide very useful
     information on the elderly and grandparents. For example, see sites of these organization: AARP

(American Assication of Retired People), Global Funds for Childern, and the Australian Bureau of Statistics. Almost all chapters in this book illuminate many ways Indian diasporic grandparents "do" grandparenting.

ii   What does growing older mean if it is not simply the passage of time, having another birthday? In gerontology " increasingly, scholars argue that chronological age is a relatively meaningless variable … Age is only a way of marking human events and experiences; those events and experiences are what matters, not time itself … Time's passing is of concern only because it is connected, however loosely, with other changes: physical, psychological, and social." (p. 4) In gerontology " in the past, researchers searched for the "normal changes that accompanied aging; a most important part of this research was to distinguish normal age changes from pathological or disease processes that become more prevalent with age but were not caused by aging. With the growing knowledge about the modifiability and variability of physical aging processes, the distinctions among usual, 'optimal, and pathological aging emerged … 'optimal' aging is characterized by minimal loss of physical function and a healthy, vigorous body; 'pathological' aging is aging accompanied by multiple chronic diseases and negative environment influences. 'Usual' ageing refers to the typical or average experience – somewhat in between pathological and optimal"… "Psychological aging processes include changes in personality, mental functioning, and sense of self during our adult years." (p. 5) Gerontologists make many generalizations in this area: "First, personality does not undergo profound changes in later life… For example … the grumpy old man was very likely a grumpy young man. Although the developmental challenges and opportunities we encounter do vary through our lives, the strategy we use to adapt to change, to refine and reinforce our sense of self, to work towards realizing our full human potential are practiced throughout our adult lives." (p. 6) "Social aging is a multidimensional and dynamic force. It includes the transitions into and out of roles, expectations about behavior, societal allocation of resources and opportunities, negotiations about the meaning and implications of chronological age, and the experience of individuals traveling the life course and negotiating life stages." (p. 7) See, Morgan, L. & Kunkel, S. (2001) (2nd Edition). *Aging: the social context*. California: Pine Forge Press.

iii   Somewhere else I (Singh 2001) have written about the work of Aronowitz and Giroux (1985), who analyse the social function of educators as intellectuals and cultural workers by using four categories: (1) transformative intellectuals, (2) critical intellectuals, (3) accommodating intellectuals, and (4) hegemonic intellectuals. These, they claim, are ideal-typical categories. According to them, transformative intellectuals take seriously the relationship between power and knowledge. They believe that society consists of the dominant group and the dominated groups. The dominant group uses knowledge as power for dominating purposes. This domination creates an atmosphere of despair for citizens who lack the knowledge and civic courage to challenge the values and beliefs of the dominating group. The function of transformative intellectuals is to create conditions in society where new values and beliefs can be produced. This in turn will provide opportunities for students in schools and citizens in the larger society to become agents of civic courage who will not give up hope of changing the school and society. By making despair unconvincing, they will engage in activities which will make society more open, equal and just, and produce a democratic society which celebrates human dignity, equality and justice in society.

The next group is the accommodating intellectuals who firmly hold values and beliefs of the dominant society and openly act to support it and its ruling groups. In other words, they uncritically mediate ideas and practices that serve to reproduce the status quo. Some of these intellectuals disdain politics by proclaiming professionalism as a value system. In other words, they like to uphold the concept of scientific objectivity, which they believe is politically neutral.

While the critical and accommodating intellectuals self-consciously function as free-floating in their relationship to the rest of society, the last categories of intellectuals, the hegemonic intellectuals, are tied up in the preservation of the institutional structures in which they are located. They go beyond upholding the concept of scientific objectivity and prefer to function as moral crusaders. Their desire is to provide moral and intellectual leadership to various factions of

dominant groups and classes, making these factions aware of their common economic, political and ethical functions.

Aronowitz and Giroux (1985) explain that "Gramsci attempts to locate the political and social function of intellectuals through his analysis of the role of conservative and radical organic intellectuals" (p. 35). Whereas the conservative organic intellectuals prefer to be agents of the status quo, the radical organic intellectuals choose to provide the moral and intellectual leadership to a specific class, in their case the working class. But they could also perform similar functions for any other dominated group. These categories of intellectuals are not supposed to be too rigid. Wright (1978) points out that many intellectuals, including educators, occupy contradictory class locations. The experience of various types of intellectuals must be analysed in terms of the objective antagonisms they face on site.

iv   http://www.pchs4u.com

Punjabi Community Health Services (PCHS) was created to deliver culturally appropriate services to the South Asian community. Its dedicated staff provide services in a professional and caring manner. PCHS's framework consists of delivering Integrated Holistic Services in a family centred atmosphere. PCHS recognizes the special importance "culture" plays in finding solutions to the complex health and social problems. Therefore, PCHS's interventions are moulded to reflect the cultural nuances of the South Asian community. Also see endnote vi.

v   Many scholars and others have discussed the question of human agency, so for our purpose here it is not necessary to review a vast amount of writing that exists in this area. Roger Frie's (2008) book reviews the work of several scholars on the subject of human agency. Jenkins (2008, p. 196) states that "as people mobilize their agency, they master their difficulties, bring about 'adaptive transformation,' and even have an impact on the sociocultural context that ultimately sustain them.". The contributors to Roger Frie's (2008) book "maintain that agency is not reducible to biophysical properties, or to depersonalized social and cultural forces. And in the wake of a widely held conception that equates agency with Western and gender-biased notions of individuality and autonomy, they argue that agency is not an isolated act of detached self-reflection and choice (p. 2)." Frie states that "the objective, rather, is to reconfigure agency as an emergent and developmental process that is fundamentally intersubjective and contextualized (p. 2)." Moreover, unlike natural, noninteractive, natural kind, humankind are self-interpreting and self-reactive agents. According to Martin, "…our participation in educational and other life contexts that provide us with more varied, complex, and multiperspectival tools of thought and action, we are immersed in an ever-widening horizon of sociocultural experience….This is a historical, cultural, and contemporary world populated by ideas, debates, problems, issues, and challenges that command attention, and that encourage and enable the cultivation of increasingly complex forms of understanding, acting, and being (Martin, 2008, p. 105).

vi   Under the leadership of Mutta, in having conversations with the Punjabi community the team of cultural workers use Participatory Action Research methodology. The team wants to use conversation as a tool to build communities rather than "just" gather the data. Thus the participants are not just "objects". They are the "subjects" who continue to be involved in many different ways in this project. The participants' voices are important to our conceptualization of doing cultural work with people in the Punjabi community. The PCHS's perspective emphasizes culturally appropriate services in the development of social and cultural capital. Mutta asks the following questions: should we have culturally appropriate service delivery or culturally sensitive service delivery? Will consumers come to the professionals or will professionals reach out to consumers? Are existing services, client centered or agency centered? What should be the nature of the partnership between community and the team of cultural workers (PCHS) in term of the sustainability of relationship? Mutta explains that within culturally appropriate work, clients have a world view and professionals need to adjust their philosophy, way of work and service delivery to suit their clients' needs. Within culturally sensitive work, clients adjust their worldview and help seeking behaviours to suit the service delivery arrangements and intervention modalities of the professionals. In culturally appropriate work, the staff of the agecy, providing services do not

expect the clients to come to the agency. Staff is authorized and empowered to reach out to clients in a creative manner. People needing services have been reached and engaged by people who work for PCHS in conversations at home, coffee shops, doctors' offices and grocery shops, including many other places in the realm of the public spheres (e.g. marriage ceremonies, religious festivals, and so on). The staff is accessible via cell phones. On the other hand, agency centered approach has some key features such as fixed time of opening and closing offices and interventions are determined by agency. In client centered approach, client is in charge of the outcomes and interventions are adjusted to suit the needs of the client. The convenience of the client is what drives the intervention. This approach is called integrated holistic model of social and cultural community development model.

vii   The idea of "working hypothesis" is associated with the work of George Herbert Mead. His idea was then subsequently developed by many other people. Deegan explains that Mead's perspective was that "conflict in society occurred when people were unable to take each other's 'roles'. The remedy to social problem became more open communication. 'Scientific information' collected in an 'objective' manner provided a mechanism to understand the issues involved in any given problem. All the participants in the dilemma could listen to and understand the different perspectives and situations. Since people were rational beings and desired a peaceful and sociable existence, social reform girded with liberal values was the logical way to please social change" (Deegan, 1986, 107). But Dentler points out that the problem today is that ".… we see over selves engaged in win-lose struggles against one another for infrequent opportunities for scare material resources and social advancement" (2002, p. 62). Instead Dentler suggests that we should act in way that contributes to "….the promotion of collective, communal definitions among the social actors with whom we work. Such definitions of the situation promote readiness to act in ways that effectively respond to the myriad specific action problems confronting them. Depending on the level of social interaction where we work, our efforts in this regards should be dedicated to promoting social bonds both within and among groups" (p. 62). Further, "….it is critical (and therefore ready to act to solve problems) when they can interpret their situation as 'communal' within their own cultural traditions" (p. 62).

viii   Family and household are social institutions. Individuals as cultural workers can bring about changes in families and households. Giroux, in different ways, explains that cultural politics is concerned with the production and representation of meanings and with the analysis of practices that are involved in their production. Because power is unequally distributed in different spheres of society, power relations are often contested. People as cultural workers and in various leadership roles contest asymmetrical power relations through engaging in various textual, verbal, and visual practices which result in a form of cultural production. Pedagogy understood this way is deeply involved in the construction and organization of knowledge, desires, values, and social practices. Giroux points out that to some extent all men and women are intellectuals and cultural workers, but not all of them function in society as cultural workers. We have noted that in many Indian diasporic families grandparents function as cultural workers and roving leaders As such they are involved in sense – making process. Weick (1995) points out that "sense-making is about authoring as well as interpretation, creation as well as discovering" (p. 8). Sense-making is "a process in which individuals develop cognitive maps of their environment" (Ring and Rands, 1989, p. 342). And "people make sense of things by seeing a world on which they already imposed what they believe" (Weick, 1995, p. 15). Sense-making involves both individual and social activities. Bolman and Deal (1994), who found that leadership can be exercised from anywhere and that it is not synonymous with positions people hold in an organization. Depree's (1989) idea of roving leadership is also helpful here. He describes how this concept can provide a key element in the day-to-day expression of the participatory process. The concept of roving leadership points out that "no one person is the 'expert' at everything" (p. 46).

ix   However, Klopf and Cambra (1993) contend that true listening accounts for only 45 percent of the total amount of time people spend communicating with each other each day, as most communication is done poorly: "We ignore, or worse, misunderstand and often forget about 75

percent of what we hear. Rarely do we listen for the deepest feelings that people frequently include in their messages. We are poor listeners probably because we do not know how to listen. We may hear well, but not too many of us have acquired the necessary skills to listen well… Hearing and listening are dissimilar processes ….," (p. 99).

x   Common sense knowledge is taken for granted dominant cultural norms, values, attitudes, self - concepts, behavior patterns, and overall orientations which we have acquired through socialization in cultures and societies. It constitutes more of our personal opinions and idiosyncrasies. Also see, <http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Antonio_Gramsci&action=edit&section=8>   See, Intellectuals and Education.

    "Common sense, as described by Merriam-Webster, is defined as beliefs or propositions that most people consider prudent and of sound judgment, without reliance on esoteric knowledge or study or research, but based upon what they see as knowledge held by people "in common". Thus "common sense" (in this view) equates to the knowledge and experience which most people already have, or which the person using the term believes that they do or should have. According to the Cambridge Dictionary, the phrase is good sense and sound judgment in practical matters ("the basic level of practical knowledge and judgment that we all need to help us live in a reasonable and safe way"). Also see, (Gramisci, 1971) ideas of common sense, good sense, and function of intellectual. As educators Gramsci's ideas are important for us because his ideas about the education system correspond "with the notion of critical pedagogy and popular education as theorized and practiced in later decades by Paulo Freire in Brazil, and have much in common with the thought of Frantz Fanon and with ideas of Henry Giroux.

xi   Defintion of family and household may not be synonomous. According to updated on April 16, 2012, Stat Canada definition, "household is generally defined as being composed of a person or group of persons who co-reside in, or occupy, a dwelling. As in the case of dwellings, both collective and private households are identified. Household refers to a person or group of persons who occupy the same dwelling and do not have a usual place of residence elsewhere in Canada or abroad. The dwelling may be either a collective dwelling or a private dwelling. The household may consist of a family group such as a census family, of two or more families sharing a dwelling, of a group of unrelated persons or of a person living alone. Household members who are temporarily absent on reference day are considered part of their usual household.The household universe is divided into two sub-universes on the basis of whether or not the household is occupying a collective dwelling or a private dwelling. The former is identified as a collective household while the latter is a private household."

    In the United States, "the Census Bureau's official definition distinguishes between households and families. Households are all persons or groups of persons who occupy a dwelling such as a house, apartment, single room, or other space intended to be living quarters. Households can consist of one person who lives alone or several people living together. A family, on the other hand, is a group of two or more peope (one of whom is the householder – the person in whose name the unit is owned or rented) related by birth, marriage, or adoption and residing together (U.S. Bureau of Census, 2006b). This official definition also defines what social scientists call the nuclear family – the small unit consisting of a married couple with or without children or at least one parent and his or her childern (Newman, 2012, pp. 5–6)."

xii   "Ideal types in sociology are most closely associated with the name of Max Weber, …" "Perhaps the best way of thinking about ideal types is as 'idea types'; that is, something which the sociologist works out in his or her head with reference to the real world, but selecting those elements that are most rational or which fit together in the most rational way…" "Implicit in Weber's work is the notion that constructing an ideal type is a way of learning about the real world. This is situated within a rationalist view of the human sciences: namely, that we all share a rational faculty, and the fact that we can think and act rationally gives order to the world. Thus, by constructing a rational ideal type, we learn something of how the world works…" "The method is a difficult one…" "The best account will be found in Max Weber and Contemporary Social Theory (1983)." See, Sociologycs.com.

xiii We have found that when grandparents do that, they feel more empowered. They are more likely to make sense of their environment (personal and social predicaments in which they find themselves due to their specific locations in general social structure) more confidently. Empowerment also entails prefigurative politics and living. Kaufman (2003:277–8) writes that "prefigurative politics is based on the belief that we are creating the new world we are advocating as we go, and so we should try to build in the present, the institutions and social patterns of the society we are working toward." And "in prefigurative movements, we are reweaving the social fabric. We are creating an alternative social world, and the relations we create along the way lay the foundations for the relations we will have after we achieve our goals." See, Kaufman, C. (2003). *Ideas for actions: relevant theory for radical change*. Cambridge, Mass.: South End Press. Also see, Schon 1987, 1983.

xiv Greaves writes "Gramsci contrasts 'common sense' with what he calls 'good sense.' He [Gramsci] conceives of good sense as a latent critical faculty in all humans, but it is one that suffers from underdevelopment and becomes choked in a bewildering superstructural babble created by the class opponent. The most important feature of good sense is the critical relationship it bears to practical activity." (Greaves, 2008; p. 12). In Gramsci's words good sense depends upon "overcoming bestial and elemental passions through a conception of necessity which gives a conscious direction to one's activity. This is the healthy nucleus that exists in 'common sense,' the part of it which can be called 'good sense' and which deserves to be made more unitary and coherent." (Gramsci 1971, p. 328, cited in Greaves, p. 12). Also see endnote 10.

xv We have observed that the diasporic Indian grandparents are searching for "in-between-spaces" to "do" grandparenting. In our discussion we have also alluded to the fact that grandparenting has become a separate identity. For us searching for in-between-spaces are also linked to envisioning diverse family life styles that are available to the diasporic grandparents in the Indian diasporic families and households that are sustainable and enjoyable, enabling in enhancing grandparents own well-being and also the well-being of their families. There are many other learning models of encountering different and diverse life styles available that could be sustainable. Those learning models suggest, by implication, that new visions of traditional and cosmopolitan values and beliefs can be incorporated into reformulating social policy and programs for the diasporic grandchildren and grandparents. There seem to be spaces that are in-between the consumer society and sustainable life styles that could be realized through new ways of re-learning.

xvi Bakhtin (1981) suggests two forms of discourse: (1) a dominant, institutionally sanctioned discourse, that is, authoritative discourses, and (2) an internally persuasive discourse, that is, personal meanings that individuals make of their experience. These two discourses are dialogically related. Inside and outside the family grandparents and seniors continuously face contradictions of multiple dominant discourses on the meaning of family and and the society in which they live in diaspora. In this situation, they are actively involved in meaning making. This they must do by grappling with and working out compromises with existing contradictory discourses. Grandparents organize their thinking about doing grandparenting by using the normative categories. Authoritative discourses not only set the conditions for good grandparening practices but also determine the normative categories. An individual may choose to accept authoritative discourses unproblematically. This has been characterized as reciting by heart. On the other hand a retelling in one's own words constitutes an internally persuasive discourse which represents an attempt to problematize the dominant discourse. The propensity to question what everyone believes (taken-for-granted realities) is good grandparenting and the ability to meaningfully and critically respond to the ways people are trying to solve problems that are there in their immediate surroundings are essential for the development of grandparents' self-concept. Successful grandparents question taken-for-granted realities from multiple viewpoints by means of self-reflection and dialogue with others. In this way they are able to enhance their ability to plan their actions and transform their doing grandparening in multiple contexts. However, problematizing may make one feel uncomfortable, since it entails learning to live with tension at least for a limited time and valuing uncertainty. Going through the voices of grandparents/seniors presented in this chapter, and

focusing on their engagement with project and programs, it is obvious that they are involved in problematizing their everyday experiences. One can observe that they struggle, individually and collectively, with dominant discourses in many areas to enhance their own well-being and well-being of their adult children and grandchildren – areas such as living optimally in later years of their lives, having free time from family chores, passing their legacy and heritage to their grandchildren, being respected, loved and listened to by their adult children and grandchildren.

xvii Bhooli Bisri Yade (Forgotten and Dispersed Memories) and South Asian Seniors' Buffet Lunch Program are reproduced here. They are taken from chapter seven, "From Voices to Engagement" Mehta and Singh (2008), Ibid.

xviii This sections is slightly modified version of my article which I wrote for the Sahara Seniors Garden: Go Gree The Natural Way: Brampton,ON: Punjabi Community Health Services, June, 2011, pp. 5–6.

xix All those agencies are part of the aging enterprise, defined as "the complex network of programs, organizations, bureaucracies, interest groups, trade associations, providers, industries, and professionals that serve the aged in one capacity or another." See, Morgan, L. & Kunkel, S. (2001) (2nd Edition). Op. cit., p. 488.

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BRIJ V. LAL

13. THE HAGUE IMMIGRATION LECTURE, 2008

Marking the 135th Anniversary of the Arrival of Indian People in Suriname

I am immensely honoured to be invited to speak on this occasion marking the135th anniversary of the arrival of Indian people in Suriname. I am pleased for many reasons. This is my first visit to this part of the world [the Netherlands]. In books we read at school many years ago, we saw beautiful pictures of your country, its canals and windmills, the magical tulip gardens and the neatly manicured flat green fields stretching into the distance as far as the eye could see, its great seaports and magnificent churches, its ancient centres of learning. To now physically see them with my own eyes is a childhood dream fulfilled. So, thank you for the invitation.

Like you – or many of you – I, too, am a descendant of an indentured labourer. My grandfather, from Bahraich district in eastern Uttar Pradesh, went to Fiji as a girmitiya in 1908. Girmit comes from the Agreement, and those who went under the Agreement became known as girmitiyas, just as your forebears who went to Surinam under the Contract system became known as Kontrakis. My grandfather was one of 60,000 who crossed the *kala pani* to that remote Pacific archipelago, almost twice the number who went to your country in the Caribbean. Our forebears were a part of the massive migration of Indian indentured labour which began with Mauritius in 1834 and continued until the early years of the 20th century. By then, over a million had crossed the oceans to the 'King Sugar' colonies scattered around the globe. So I share with you a common historical experience of migration and displacement.

Like most of you, I, too, am a part of the diaspora of the 'Twice Banished,' in your case from India to Suriname and then to the Netherlands, and in my case from India to Fiji to Australia. For a variety of reasons – personal choice, racial discrimination, political marginalisation, economic hardship, a deep desire for personal betterment – over 120,000 of my people have left Fiji for other lands since the military coups of 1987, and more will leave as the opportunity arises. We, too, have crossed our own *kala pani*. So your story of migration and remigration, of starting from scratch in foreign lands is familiar to me, with all its pains and joys of adapting to new situations.

I have been to Suriname, so places like Nikeri and Paramaribo are not just idle, exotic names on a map, but places with faces and memories. I have eaten *dhallbhari roti* and duck curry at Roopram's Roti shop in the capital city. And who

can forget the *masquita* and *macchari* of Nikeri! I was overwhelmed by the warm hospitality of the Surnami Indian community. I knew something about the Surinami Indians before I went to Surinam. In 1995, Ram Soekhoe, working for one of the television stations here, went to Fiji to make a documentary on the situation of the Indian community there. He interviewed many people, including me, but was especially keen on meeting some local community leaders. We took him to a small town called Nausori to meet with Mr Bal Dev. Ram laughed out loud when he heard the name. Why we wondered, puzzled. He said in Suriname, the name referred to someone of few means, without a fixed abode, harmless, who lives on free feed by telling people: '*Hamaar naam Baldeb, hum khaaye pi ke chal deb*.'!

Like so many of you in post-war Suriname I, too, grew up in the countryside in rural Fiji. I too was brought up on the *Ramchatramanas*, the story of Sarvan Kumar, *Allha Khand*, the *Birhas* and the *Bidesias* and the *Baithak Gana*, the *Lehnga ke naach* (what you call *Ahirwa ke naach*). A few days ago, I listened to the songs of Ramdew Chaitoe and Andre Mohan. The evocative words about love and loss and impermanence, the melancholic mood of the music, the rustic musical instruments, took me back to my childhood, bringing back memories long forgotten. I remembered how, amidst all the poverty and destitution and hopelessness in the aftermath of indenture, songs and music, elementary stuff, nothing fancy or sophisticated (just *dandtaal, dholak, majira* and harmonium) kept our culture alive, our collective soul intact. Apparently, it was the same in your part of the world. And I am so delighted that fragments from that fractured past still survive in the Netherlands.

And the names too: Ramdev, Mohan, Nanhoe, Chaitoe, Soekhlal. These, too, were familiar to me. They were common enough in rural Fiji in the post-war years. They could easily have been the names of uncles and older cousins. Names are strange things, aren't they? Why do we give certain names and not others? As I thought about this, I realised the important role naming plays in the way in which we negotiate issues of culture and identity and find our place in the world. Let me share with you the Fiji experience. Indentured labourers from rural India were named after events, calamities, days, after flowers and birds. So: Mangal, Bhola, Dukhia, Genda, Budhai, Sanicharee, Bipti, Sukkhu, Garib, and so on. If you knew the Indian cultural code, you could roughly tell a person's station in life by his or her name. When the time came for the *girmitiyas* to name their children, they began naming them after gods and goddesses and with words having religious connotations, to erase distinctions based on caste and class: Ram Charan, Shiu Wati, Mahadeo, Latchman, Dharam Raji, Ram Jattan, Suruj Bali, Janki Devi. Who could tell whether Ram Charan was a chamar or a kurmi or something else? Our parents went further, naming their children Mahendra, Satendra, Vijay, Rajesh, Satish, Maya, Padma, and so on, with absolutely no cultural or religious connotation whatsoever, at least not any that I can recognise. Inventive names

erased hierarchies based on caste and ritual purity. Such were the silent, subtle processes of cultural change and transformation in Fiji.

The isolated, self-contained world of my childhood has now almost vanished beyond recall. My children think that I am hallucinating when I tell them that I was born on my father's farm, delivered by an illiterate Indo-Fijian mid-wife, and grew up without piped water, paved roads, electricity and regular news papers. Radio came late to the village, in the late 1950s. There was no television then, of course, no internet, no mobile phones. I sometimes wonder how we managed to survive through those difficult times. Not only survive but actually triumph (although I have to admit to being a Luddite when it comes to even the most basic of modern technologies!). From that kind of background to this has been a remarkable journey of exploration and unexpected discoveries. In this regard, too, I share much in common with you.

For more than a century, people of Indian indentured diaspora lived in complete isolation and ignorance of each other. Given the vast distance that separated us – you were in the Atlantic Ocean while we were in the Pacific – this is not surprising. There was simply no way of knowing. We lacked education, and the colonial education that we did receive focused our intellectual attention squarely on the cultural and technological accomplishments of our colonial masters. For the most part, we were preoccupied with eking out an existence, often without a helping hand and frequently in circumstances on the outer edges of desperation. Those who wrote about us were outsiders, who had little inkling of the deeper impulses of our lives, what made us tick. Some, though well meaning, were actually apologists for the colonial government and the plantocracy, which saw our forebears simply as units of labour to be exploited for profit. For them to accord us a measure of humanity would have undermined their project of economic exploitation; it would have been morally indefensible for one group of human beings in good conscience to oppress another. Our colonial masters saw us as potentially troublesome subjects to be controlled and managed. But we must also accept a part of the blame, for we saw our own history with a certain degree of embarrassment and shame. We saw our past as covered in silent darkness and loathed being reminded of our humble origins, especially by those who wanted us to know our place in the larger scheme of things so that we didn't grow too big for our boots. The past, for us, was truly past; that was then; we had moved on.

But things have been changing in the last two decades or so as the grandchildren and great-grandchildren of indentured labourers have themselves undertaken the task of understanding and interpreting their past, to comprehend the truth of their historical experience in all its maddening complexity and variety. I have devoted a very large part of my professional life as a historian, now spanning some thirty years, trying to rescue our history from the enormous condescension of posterity. In my first book, *Girmitiyas: The Origins of the Fiji Indians* (first published in 1983), I tried to understand the background of the indentured who went to Fiji (and to other places across the globe), who they were, where they came from, their

social and caste status, their economic circumstances, the reason they might have left their homes for strange, unknown places. Much, cruelly, was assumed about the girmitiyas, but very little actually known.

To find out, I did two things. I went through each and every one of the 45,000 Emigration Passes of all those who embarked for Fiji from the port of Calcutta. It had to be done, the whole thing; there was no way around it, no short cuts. I suppose in some inexplicable sense, it was my way of paying homage to those who had undertaken the journey. I coded and transcribed the data (on the district of origin and registration, caste, sex, next-of-kin, age, date of recruitment and embarkation, and so on: a horrendously tedious task that I would not wish even upon my worst enemy) and analysed it using the computer (in those prehistoric days of the late 1970s!). And I spent more than six months travelling through and living in the impoverished villages of eastern UP districts of Basti, Faizabad, Gorakhpur, Gonda, Bahraich, and many others from where the girmitiyas had come. I wanted to understand the place of migration in popular culture of the region. I travelled in rickety, overcrowded buses carrying sheep and goat besides people, slept in foul smelling, bug-infested beds, ate greasy food from sooty *dhabas,* drank tea from mud cups, and did other strange, blush-inducing things (out of necessity, of course!) which are now best left unrecalled.

All I will say is that it is not an experience I would recommend to the finicky or the faint-hearted.

I proved conclusively, statistically, that the indentured labourers were not all low caste riff raff, but represented a fair cross-section of rural Indian society, including higher, middling and lower castes, and coming from sections of society which, in the late 19th century, were under great stress because of recurring natural calamities (droughts and famines) and the crippling effects of British revenue policy which caused crippling indebtedness, fragmented land holdings and scattered families. I showed, too, that while many were deceived into emigrating – fraudulence is present in most forms of labour recruitment, even in our own age – many came from an already uprooted mass of humanity on the move – to the Calcutta jute mills, Assam tea gardens, the Bihar coal mines, Bombay textile mills – in search of employment. I argued that migration to the colonies was an extension of the process of displacement already underway on the subcontinent. I suggested that indentured migration was a complex, multilayered narrative, susceptible to multiple readings, but the whips-and-chains version full of violence and brutality is usually given prominence in popular renditions of indenture. That, alas, is the way things will remain. Some matters of popular belief will always remain impervious to reason or reasoned research.

In my later work, I looked at the experience of the indentured labourers on the plantations in Fiji. There can be no argument that indenture was a harsh, brutalising experience, which broke many and left others by the wayside. Pain and suffering and violence were an integral part of the indenture experience. All this is clear from the historical record, but it is by no means the full story. The plantation

was not everywhere the 'total institution' it was alleged to be. In some places, indenture was a life sentence, in others it was a limited detention of five or at most ten years. For some men and women, it was an enslaving experience, for others it was liberation from the vicious cycle of poverty and destitution at home, from which there was no possibility of emancipation in this life, or the next or the one after the next: actually, never. We must accord some measure of humanity and agency to our forebears. They were simple people from simple backgrounds, but they were not simpletons.

What we are celebrating on this occasion is the triumph of the human spirit over life's great adversities. For, from the debris of indenture emerged a community of people, at once resilient and resourceful, determined to build a better future for themselves and their children. From the remembered fragments of their motherland, they established new communities, built *pathshalas* and *mandirs* and *mazjids* and social and cultural institutions. A new lingua franca emerged – Fiji Baat, Sarnami Hindi – and a new composite culture combining the new and the old, pragmatic and utilitarian in approach and world view, more egalitarian and less respectful of oppressive and moribund traditions and rituals which sanctioned hierarchy and difference. It is this wonderful story of change and adaption, resourcefulness and creativity, which we are celebrating today. When you come to think of it, we of the Indian indentured diaspora – whether in Suriname, Guyana, Mauritius or Fiji – have a lesson to teach the world, especially Mother India. We have demonstrated how, in certain circumstances and under certain conditions, apparently divinely ordained social and cultural institutions and practices deemed immutable can, in fact, change. The way the caste system has broken down in the Indian indentured diaspora is a good example. Religious tolerance is another. *Hum pragti aur parivartan ke jeete jaagte namune hain.*

I don't know about Suriname, but one institution of migration and indenture which acquired a particular significance in the life of the indentured labourers in Fiji was *jahajibhai*, the brotherhood of the crossing. It was close to real kinship, just as real as the brotherhood of blood, a pillar upon which many a community was built. I suspect a new kind of *jahajbhai* relationship is being forged now. It is the *jahajibhai* of the cyberspace. The internet has shrunk our world, brought us closer. We email each other, visit each other's websites. Hardly a week goes by when I don't receive a request for help with this project or that, often from complete strangers, mostly descendants of indentured labourers in various parts of the world. Just a few weeks back, I received an email from Nalini Mohabir, a Canadian of Indo-Guyanese descent doing a doctorate in Geography at Leeds University, who wants to visit Fiji for research, and sought my advice about where to go, who to see and talk to. She is one among hundreds of children of the Indian diaspora who are now expressing an interest in knowing their past.

There are many reasons for this. It is a natural human phenomenon to want to know who you are and where you have come from. It is not peculiar to the people of Indian origin. 'Roots' and 'Identity' are big subjects in universities around the

world. The desire to know is also sharpened by the levelling forces of globalisation, making us want to hang on to something that is uniquely ours, that gives a particular sense of identity and belonging. I detect an awakening sense of the past among our people, and a desire, too, to pay homage to the sacrifices and struggles of our forebears. In time, the 'Girmit Divas' and the '5th of June' may become important secular celebrations of great symbolic significance.

There is a gathering sense of pride in our collective achievements in so many diverse fields. When a haunting novel about a struggling man of unfulfilled literary ambition, humbled and humiliated in his own extended family – I am, of course, referring to *House for Mr Biswas* – helps VS Naipaul win the Nobel Prize for literature; we all feel a vicarious sense of pride in his great personal achievement. When Vijay Singh, the son of an airport worker in Fiji, scales the greatest heights of world golf, we applaud. It gives us immense pleasure to know that a great-grandson of an indentured labourer in Fiji, Anand Satyanand, is the Governor General of New Zealand, or that Jai Ram Reddy, again from Fiji, sits as a Permanent Judge of the International Criminal Court for Rwanda. The list goes on and on. We appreciate the accomplishments of the children of the indentured diaspora more than most because we know how very difficult and unpredictable the journey has been.

Travel and technology have complicated grounded, ethnographic notions of citizenship which too has played its part in fostering a new, overarching sense of identity for us. There was time, not too long ago, when questions of identity and citizenship were a one-way traffic. You were either this or that, but never both. Dual attachment was considered to be disloyalty. But that zero-sum game, that ideology of complete assimilation into the social and cultural fabric of the host society now mercifully lies buried in the graveyards of discarded history. Now, we celebrate pluralism and diversity. That is why, Fatima Meer, the distinguished South African intellectual and activist, can claim herself to be a proud South African as well as a child of India. That is why Lord Dholakia is a proud British peer as well as proud son of Gujarat. I am a proud Indo-Fijian as well as a proud Australian. This openness and flexibility enables us, without apology, to cherish and celebrate the various multicultural strands of our particular identity and heritage.

India itself has played a large part in the last decade or so to foster a greater consciousness of an Indian diaspora. This resulted from a massive increase in the size of the Indian diaspora in recent decades. It is now some twenty million strong, and increasing daily. India's effort to harness the diaspora's immense intellectual and financial resources to promote the subcontinent's economic modernisation program – much in the same manner as China had done earlier with its own large diaspora – has played an important role. The annual *Pravasi Bhartiye Divas* symbolises this effort. So far the main focus has been economic, specifically, how the diaspora can help India. I hope that with time, this relationship will become less

one-sided and more mutually beneficial. We know what India wants: it wants our goodwill, support and, very important, naturally, our dollars.

There is a puzzle here. India reminds us incessantly to be loyal to our countries of birth (and this started with Jawaharlal Nehru's speech at Bandung in 1954 and was repeated by Minister Vyala Ravi this evening), but it would also like us to commit 'fiscal treason' (if that's not too strong a word) to our countries of birth by asking us to invest our resources in the ancestral homeland of our forebears. India's position is understandable. It is on its way to becoming a superpower of the 21st century. We, from the Old Diaspora, need to ask what is it that we want from India, what the terms of relationship should be from the perspective of our needs and aspirations. We should have a MAD relationship with India, asking for 'Mutually Acceptable Development', and not being content with having a one-sided, self-seeking one.

I should now like to correct myself. I have so far spoken of the Indian diaspora in the singular, but it is, of course, the result of many causes and countless crossings over many centuries. We can distinguish at least three distinct phases. First, in the era before the emergence of European dominance, was the 'Age of Merchants,' when enterprising Indian traders travelled over land and sea to central Asia and east Africa. The memory of their journeys and explorations now survives in grand monuments and ancient artefacts of history. The second phase was the 'Age of Colonial Capital' of the 19th and 20th centuries of which we, the descendants of the indentured diaspora, are the products. And the third phase, 'The Age of Globalisation,' is essentially a product of the post-World War II era. Given our diverse origins and circumstance of migration, it is understandable that our attachment to, and feeling for, India will vary considerably. The 'Dollar Diaspora' and the 'Desperate Diaspora' will see things differently.

An obvious point, you might say, but it is not always appreciated. Sometimes we are all classified under the category NRI. Now, the standard interpretation of NRI is, as you all know, *Non-Resident Indian*. That is fine, but there are other meanings as well. For instance, *Newly-Rich Indians*, in whom India is interested for their wealth and expertise. Then there are the *Never-Returning Indians*, who turn their backs on the place of their birth and wash off their hands completely. We all know a few *Non-Reliable Indians*! And then there are NRIs like myself: *Not Really Indian*! The point I want to make is that we are not all peas in the same pod. We converge and diverge as members of an amorphous Indian diaspora, depending on need and circumstance. We share many things in common – food, faith, fashion – but we are also acutely of the different historical and cultural influences which have shaped our unique identities and our perceptions of things around us. Thus I am not an 'Indian Overseas' nor an 'Overseas Indian,' but a Fijian, of Indian descent. I am an Indo-Fijian whose soul is nourished by three distinct cultural and civilizational influences: Indian, Western and Pacific (Fijian). Without any one of these, I will be the poorer.

Earlier, I spoke of the diaspora of the Twice Banished. This developing diaspora needs more study. It is a complex phenomenon. It presents challenges as well as opportunities. Questions of homeland and territoriality, of belonging and attachment, become more complex and contested. Our civilizational home is India, but we were born in Suriname or Fiji. And we now live in the Netherlands and Australia. As new identities get formed and transformed, how do we balance within our inner lives influences which have made us what we are? Let me put this more directly. As you make new homes in the Netherlands, what aspects of Sarnami culture do you still carry with you in your daily lives and which you will transmit to the next generation? What are the Sarnami ties that bind? Or will Surinam gradually recede from the intellectual and cultural horizons of the new generations growing up here and remembered, if remembered at all, as a temporary stopover for a people destined to wander the globe? I don't have any answers, but I think the question is worth asking.

I salute the achievements of the Sarnami community both here and in Suriname. We are all *jahajibhais* in this journey begun by our forebears over a century ago who, I have no doubt, will be looking on our achievements with immense pride. Indenture in the remote corners of the globe was the destination of our grandparents and great-grandparents. Through their hard work and sacrifice, they ensured that it wasn't going to become our destiny. We pay respectful homage to this beautiful legacy they bequeathed us. *Gaurav se kaho ke aap kontracki ke santaan ho*.

APPENDIX

My colleague Professor Mike Devine and I (2013) edited a book, *Rural Transformation and Newfoundland and Labrador Diaspora: Grandparents, Grandparenting, Community Family and School Relations.* Rotterdam: SENSE Publishers, 2013). We identified the themes listed below that emerged from the voices of grandparent in Newfoundland and Labrador, and many similar themes emerged from the voices of the diasporic Indian grandparents that are presented in the chapters included in this book. These themes provide insights into the roles of grandparents and how they relate to grandchildren in the context of family and community in their respective countries. It is our hope that the reader will be enabled to focus on each or several of these themes in more depth and reflect on the meanings they may have for the grandparents in this book. As well, these reflections may shed some light on relations between the diasporic Indian grandparents and other members of the diasporic Indian families as they together navigate the changes that are taking place in the Indian diasporic families and households within the local/global context of their lives.

Further, these themes may be used for discussion and comparative purposes and as a pedagogical tool to stimulate learning, in conjunction with the following Reflection Questions that were prepared by Professor Mike Devine., who teaches in the School of Social Work

THEMES

1. Helping to care for the grandchildren
2. Spoiling the grandchildren
3. Sacrifices/challenges of grandparents
4. Grandparents with grandchildren living away
5. Joy of being grandparents
6. Talking with grandparents
7. How grandparents view their role with their grandchildren
8. Activities with grandchildren
9. Grandparents' memories of grandchildren
10. Negative opinions about being a grandparent
11. Grandparents dealing with broken families
12. Helping others/helping out around the community
13. Pride in the community
14. Chores – helping out at home
15. Grandparents talking about the past/family/hardships
16. Difference between then and change in community rapport/relationship
17. Change in community structure

18. Change in the role of grandparents
19. Changes in the importance of religion/church
20. Changes in the 21st century
21. Changes in relationship with peers
22. Moving away for work
23. Work and the fishery
24. Work
25. Grandparents and video games
26. Using technology to communicate with family
27. Negative impacts of technology
28. Religion
29. Outmigration
30. Values
31. Traditions
32. Education
33. Strong work ethics, high morals and financial sense
34. Time spent with family
35. Lost traditions
36. Heritage
37. Grandparents talking about their grandparents
38. Grandparents' past times as adults
39. Grandparents' past times as children

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

Chapter Two (Uma Bhowon and Sunyukta Bhowon Ramsarah)

1. In the past, grandparents have assumed traditional roles of providing support and care to their grandchildren. However, some of that dynamic is changing as their adult children experience child care issues for various reasons. The result is that grandparents assume full time (grand) parenting roles. What are the potential implications of this change for both grandparents and their grandchildren?
2. The interviewees in this chapter talked about the oppression they and/or their grandparents experienced through colonization. They also talked about the importance and the value of what was passed down to them from their own grandparents in terms of values and culture and the importance of transmitting their own values and culture to their children and grandchildren. Analyse the importance of the transmission of culture within the context of their experiences of colonization (or that of their parents/grandparents).
3. For Indian culture as well as many other cultures, the types of involvement and the frequency of involvements has changed. What aspects of Indian culture are unique in this regard? Provide examples to support your response.

4. Analyse the responses of grandparents in terms of teaching about values and culture as it relates to the 'meaning' that is attached to this role for grandparents

Chapter Three (Kissoon Bihari)

1. Part of Indian history and culture includes, at least in part, a focus on economics and striving for a 'better life'. Analyse this statement in relation to the history and context of this chapter.
2. This chapter refers to the notion that "old people accepted change…they did not fight it but simply flowed with it". Discuss this statement in terms of the resiliency of the elderly (in this chapter).
3. The author talks about the fact that there have been many changes for the Indian people but that….'the Indian mind copes' with change. Analyse and discuss this statement as it relates to the many changes referred to in this chapter.
4. The author talks about the move from the joint to the nuclear family. What are the implications of such a change as it relates to the values of Indian culture?

Chapter Four (S.S. Ludher)

1. In what ways do you see the British domination in the 1800s influencing the ultimate sense of diaspora for the Punjab?
2. Analyze the concept of Shikh Hawkers "making a life" in Australia while still supporting family at "home" as a related aspect and concept of diaspora.
3. Describe and analyze at least two examples of the commodification of Indians in Australia.
4. The author refers to grandparents as the "meat between two slices of bread" as agents of bridging and transmitting cultural values and experiences on to the younger generations. How can government agencies support grandparents and the adult children and grandchildren to ensure important cultural values are supported in the 'transmission of culture'? Alternately, should this transmission of culture be a state responsibility?

Chapter Five (Mohit Prasad)

1. The author in this chapter goes into some detail regarding the historical context of Indo-Fijian people. Why do you think this historical context is important?
2. Given the religious connotations regarding a 'duty to care', how would you characterize the role of grandparents as carers to their grandchildren?
3. This chapter as well as a previous chapter refer to the changing roles of grandparents with the 'modern' phenomena of divorce and separation as well as alcohol and drug abuse. How do you think this change impacts the grandchildren in particular as they experience their own parents with many social problems and being cared for by grandparents who have varying degrees of different values and culture?

4. Mami refers to her caregiving role to children, grandchildren and great grandchildren as being a 'natural' role. Analyse this view in relation to women today (generally speaking) who see themselves as being able to choose a great variety of roles in life, particularly in roles in careers.
5. Analyze the statement: "Indo-Fajians placed extremely high value on education due, in large part, to their experiences of oppression".
6. The concluding part of this chapter discusses the concept of "playing with grandchildren" and "caregiver" of grandchildren. Discuss your understanding and interpretation of each concept and provide a rationale for which term you would prefer.

Chapter Six (Maya David)

1. The move of Indian Malaysians from primarily rural agriculture to urban manufacturing and service industries was a significant change. Relate this phenomena to the global market in terms of its similarities and/or differences.
2. The author refers to the fact that most first generation Sindhis speak Sindhi. However, second generation use Sindhi primarily with their elders but speak primarily English otherwise. Analyse the implications of this shift as future generations develop language. What are the implications of this cultural shift on the Sindhis in Malaysia?
3. One of the main themes for grandparents was to feel useful by taking care of their grandchildren. While this is a valued role, what does this imply about the lives of grandparents in this study?
4. Leaving a legacy was another major theme for grandparents. In essence, one may say that "leaving a legacy" is really about instilling cultural values into children and grandchildren. How important is this legacy for a society, particularly a group within many different groups in society?

Chapter Seven (Holly Sevier)

1. People may often identify themselves as where they "come from", the place they call home. For some interviewees in this chapter, the multiple moves to different countries appears to have had an impact on their sense of place and, in the literature, may be identified as transnational. Analyze the difference views of one who identifies as "coming from" versus one who identifies as "being".
2. Diasporic persons may live in a country which has an official multicultural policy but practices may 'encourage' assimilation as one story in this chapter relates. In what ways can governments and government bureaucries provide more 'freedom' for immigrants to make the choice of keeping their own cultural values or not?
3. For some grandparents, they may feel a strong sense of obligation to their adult children and grandchildren and not feel free to think or say "This is my time now!" How does one reconcile this sense of obligation and wanting to have her/his own time?

4. In this chapter, the notion of cultural food is given high priority in one case. Consumption of culturally relevant food can be a metaphor to consuming and having your culture being part of you. Discuss and analyze this concept.

Chapter Eight (Shilpa Davé)

1. In the first case example of the single grandfather, it is as though his daughter is there in body but not in character, culture, and traditions. How might this "loss" impact the grandfather in relationship with his daughter and in relation to his own "loss"?
2. One example provided was one of a grandmother who wanted to pass on to her grandchildren the message that '…you can do whatever you want to do…'. Relate this grandmother in terms of her own 'place' in her life generally as well as in relation to her social location and where she 'came from'.
3. In a number of case examples, the emphasis for the grandparents is not at all focused on the concept of the 'transmission of culture' but more on relationships. How do you see this notion in relation to the concept of assimilation for the interviewees?
4. For many grandparents their focus is on relationships with their grandchildren. How does this notion of the concept of "individual ruggedism" (American notion of each taking care of her/himself) relate to relationship building and culture?

Chapter Nine (Debjani Sarma and Kaberi Sarma-Debnath)

1. The first two grandparents in this chapter take their roles of grandparenting very seriously. Both are focused in 'culture transmission'. The second grandparent has been very successful in her goals. How do you attribute this successful cultural transmission while also immersed in Canadian culture?
2. The third grandparent in the chapter (from Bengali) takes a different approach to her grandchildren, one of non-interference. She is accepting that her grandchildren have become more immersed in Canadian culture. How would you perceive this change in attitude and approach compared to the first two grandparents?
3. In another case, a woman married an American and the language and culture are not practiced. What are the implications for cultural transmission when one of the parents are from the 'new' country? What is the impact on the grandparents and their relationships with the grandchildren?
4. One grandmother expressed concern about the changing of the grandchildren and taking on the new culture. She wondered about their direction (or lack of it) in their lives. Consider the perspective of the grandmother in terms of her values and beliefs; thinking about the concept of the 'rootless tree' symbol expressed. Describe how you think you would feel about your grandchildren who you may believe will become 'lost' in their lives.

Chapter Ten (Chapter Vineeth Stephen)

1. Considering the many different roles that granparents play, according to Kornhaber (1996), select what you consider to be the three most important roles and provide your reasons why you chose them.
2. What has been your own experience of your grandparents and what roles, upon reflection, do/did you see them play in your life.
3. Grandparents, particularly grandmothers, in the examples provided, often play a critically important role in the lives of their adult children, in-laws and grandchildren, often living with them for months or years. However, there is little, if any talk of conflicts between them. What are the implications of the impacts on the parents in relation to their own relationship as well as the relationship with the grandmother/father?
4. Grandparents often provide care for altruistic reasons. What might be some concerns with this approach or way of thinking and being?

Chapter Eleven (Karan Jutlla)

1. Some elders talked about lack of contact with their children and, from their point of view, lack of respect. Embedded within these narratives is the notion of a 'cultural divide'. How do you see this concept applying in this chapter?
2. The concept of 'development' has many connotations, including having the 'luxuries' in life to make things more simple and easier. However, despite the modernization and many 'things' most people have, there is less time. How has this modernization affected RELATIONSHIPS between people – positives and negatives?
3. The notion of living as a nuclear family in old age is one with which the diasporic aged had great difficulty in conceptualizing and one woman described it as an unbelievable situation, one that she would never conceived of as happening. What might be some of the challenges for a professional working with such a family, who, in all likelihood, sees the nuclear family as the 'norm' and may have great trouble in conceptualizing living in a multigernerational home?

Chapter Twelve (Amarjit Singh)

1. Singh identifies eight categories of disasporic grandparents earlier in this chapter. Select one category and discuss the implications (and factors) that may influence the role of the diasporic grandparent(s).
2. Discuss the concept of "reciprocity" as it relates to the relationship between grandparents, their adult children, and grandchildren.
3. Singh provides selected case example of grandparenting roles as it relates to the "changing culture and values" dilemma. Some interviewees made suggestions such as "listening to adult children to understand their (Canadian) values. Assuming the changed (Canadian) values are adopted by adult children and

grandchildren, what might be some of the challenges for the disaporic Indian grandparent?

4. In the last example of Surjit, what do you think might be some ways to "transmit cultural values and stories" in a way that the voice of the grandparent gets heard? Why is it important to both transmit culture and to be heard?

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