



Research Paper

Socio-economic Vision of Expatriates in the works of V.S. Naipaul

Sundhee Lal Markam

¹ Research Scholar, Barkatullah University, Bhopal (M.P.)

ABSTRACT ; *The Indian sub-continent was a prosperous economy in the prehistoric epoch. World's oldest civilizations existed there. Two major sites of the oldest civilizations were well developed. There were even educational institutions which were imparting knowledge of literature, astronomy, astrology, and religion especially Buddhism in the Gupta period. Agriculture and animal husbandry were the main source of livelihood but trade relations were also acknowledged by history with Mesopotamia, Egypt, Africa, and Arabian countries. Greek and other tradesmen came to India and did all kinds of commercial contracts in the beginning. Followers of the Vedic path among Hindus were forbidden for crossing sea. It was so because spiritually enlightened persons may be influenced by other cultures and possibly leave the original path. Though Swami Vivekananda had crossed the sea addressed the world religious summit in Chicago. Gandhi as well had gone Britain for his higher studies then he went to South Africa for the case of a Gujarati businessman. Gandhiji's expatriate was educational and professional. Dr. Bhimrao Ambedkar moreover had been to America for his studies. Vivekananda, Gandhi, and Ambedkar were dynamic expatriate characters, who brought social awareness, fought against social problems. Many Indian expatriates have settled abroad and have been empowered with socially, politically, and economically. Already Indian migration was observed in many countries as businessman and laborer. There was a small number of diasporas in the early phase while it increased in number in the post-colonial period. Most of the expatriates were indentured laborers about which V. S. Naipaul has written in his works. Naipaul's grandparents were amid those laborers, who were taken to the third world. Socio-economic development was the vision behind those diasporic moves all across the world.*

KEYWORDS: *Expatriate, indentured labor, socio-economic, unemployment, entrepreneurship*

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I. INTRODUCTION

Naipaul the Nobel Laureate of Indian descendant incorporates the images of expatriates. His enterprises bring a close analysis of the socio-economic status of all the immigrants who had moved to different sites as indentured laborers during the British period and in the post-colonial period widely. A million mutinies had demolished Indian economy and the social status of citizens was declined. The agricultural economy of India was providing all the basic needs profusely but could not give good recognition. In the post-colonial period also, entirely India remained an agrarian background economy. Socio-economic development did not hike for a long duration since India was under British rule for two hundred years. Poverty and illiteracy made the country weaker. East India company's administration had broken the backbone of the Indian economy by taxes laid on entrepreneurs and the common man. The monopoly of the company destroyed the infrastructures of all those small domestic industries of Indians. An era of darkness was created for Indians by the British. People were unemployed due to company rule. Self-employment of the citizens was discarded and made them depended. The raw material for the textile industry was taken to Europe and fine clothes were produced in their textile miles. Gandhi's Charkha, later on, became relevant and inspired for entrepreneurship again. During the independence movement, Gandhi sponsored the Khadi industry extensively for self-employment. Though Indians were not skilled enough for self-employment and various service sectors. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam the former President of India had a vision for Indians to be the master in all the fields- agro-processing, pharmaceuticals, biotech, engineering, roads, railways, telecommunications, electricity and stand in world economic and political forums as well. Socio-economic advancement is measured with Gross Domestic Product growth rate in national income, higher life expectancy, literacy, and employment. In the colonial period, people moved to the third world by force or choice. They intended for their economic growth by working in various industries of colonizers.

II. EDUCATION AND ENGAGEMENT

In the colonial period, two types of employment were created. One was contractual basis work for agrarian. The other was a clerical type of job for those English educated people. They were called *Babus* means clerks, who used to deal with all the official works in British colonies. They were like bridges between masters and slaves. Unquestionably, Europeans had established their rule in many countries. Indentured labors were working in the sugarcane fields and some of them managed to send their children for schooling in alien terrestrial. Naipaul's father Seeprasad Naipaul studied and became a journalist in Trinidad. He was an Indo-Trinidadian writer. He was the inspiration to his son V. S. Naipaul later who had gained reputation as a writer. He was awarded Booker Prize in 1971 for his book *In A Free State* and Nobel Prize in Literature in 2001. Author's socio-economic standing is praiseworthy and is an example of an entrepreneur in literature. In the British agricultural colony, a small island country facilitated with missionary schools for education. V. S. Naipaul was ambitious and brilliant in studies like his father. He had won the scholarship for his bachelor degree at Oxford University. Educated Indians did not mind Hindu hostile rules that always discouraged intellectuals to go to the alien countries. They fulfilled their human desires and needs of the modern world. Indians thought of going abroad to find good jobs available there. Naipaul went Alexandria from Piraeus by the dingy little Greek steamer. He too had sailed the seas for his profession of writing as Gandhi had sailed to South Africa. Gandhi went there as a savior because British rule exploited Indian businessmen and other professionals. His journeys throughout his life may be called as religious tourism as Naipaul did to India the ancestral land. Tourism is the employment generating prospect in the present scenario. Naipaul's travel writings are part of those tours. He has written a trilogy about his ancestral land. *An Area of Darkness*, *India: A Wounded Civilization*, and *India: A Million Mutinies Now* describe the Indian sub-continent.

The slavery system was abolished in America, so African slaves were not accessible for agrarian and industrial manufacturing works. Indian population was agrarian and the British had a better chance to engage them on a contractual basis since they were ruling in India. Corruption and nepotism enforced to migrate brilliant people from India. Diaspora for job purposes is always beneficial that empowered with good earning. Job opportunities in developed countries fascinated every good verse person. The brain drain was received in industrialized and technologically advanced countries like the United States of America, Australia, Canada, France, England, and Russia. In *An Area of Darkness* Naipaul says, "Everybody wanting to get out to United Nations jobs. Doctors going abroad. Scientists going to America." (97-98) Well, learned people have abandoned idleness, disliked pastoral and agrarian works. Indeed, they hoped for a better life. They wanted to change their traditional and ancestral professions, which had made them as socially mean. Indian expatriates were willing to reform their social life through various jobs available abroad. The traditional professions were given up and taken the new one in the era of science and technology. Science and technology have brought a lot of changes in the whole world.

III. SOCIAL LIFE AND SERVICES

In the Indian context, service was based on caste that every caste was assigned for a certain duty. In traditional work division of four major categories played a crucial role. That culture was eradicated in British period little bit but ruling class never wished to do so. Of course, ancient work division was beneficial to them because they used it to crash those classes in a diplomatic way. Foreigners took advantage of distinctive cultures, class, and ethnicity. They made them work in their industries. Even, they took them to different sites of the world as labors. Indians carried their own cultures to foreign countries. Traditionally Pandits were asked by Hindu people for performing all those rituals and religious rites. There was a request for Pandit to do havan-poojan (prayer performed by Hindu priest) in Hindu houses in Trinidad. So Ajodha thought of sending Biswas to a Pandit, where he can learn all the rituals and prayers. Later he will do the same. Indian Hindu society especially priestly class continued their faith in Hinduism. They did not give up their faith but organized Trinidad Hindu Association. The protagonist Ganesh in the novel *The Mystic Masseur* longed to reach out to Hindus in order to promote the Hindu faith. He succeeded in this task and became famous as a miracle man. Thousands of people came to him for healing touch and blessings. His fame spread all over the island. He also tested his luck in politics as he had challenged the local politician Pandit Narayan Chandrasekhar. He was elected as the president of Hindu Association instead of Pandit Narayan. Ganesh became Member of Legislative Assembly by influencing people as a magic man and good politician.

Administrative services were the sign of prestige to all. After engagement of labor class and counter clerk British government recruited security personnel. And to enhance administration control in the miscellaneous topography, Imperial Civil Service (ICS) was initiated by Warren Hastings. Higher level and lower level civil service was framed alike Indian caste system. This gave the impression of a contrasting situation as Indians were considered for lower level services and higher positions were held by themselves. It appeared as a power complex among foreign rulers to their subject races everywhere. In point of fact, these types of jobs were for well-educated individuals. So, some of the brilliant persons enjoyed these designations.

And gradually it continued in the largest democracy. Indians have adopted this Imperial Civil Service when India got freedom and approved in administration. Indentured labor and services were familiarized in East India company and later in British India. They hired local people to work in their factories. Occasionally they looked out for skilled labors and sent them far away. In *An Area of Darkness* Naipaul wrote, "Service is not an Indian concept, and the providing of services has long ceased to be a concept of caste." (77) Though service is a foreign concept that appointed personnel and civil servants from native people. People were very enthusiastic to take those services. Naipaul perceived that outset while taking with administrators and recorded the reply of a civil servant saying, "It gives me prestige." (76 *An Area of Darkness*)

IV. ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Entrepreneurship of Indian diaspora is successful all across the world. Naipaul's writings reveal the self-employment of the descendants of Indian labors. In the novel, *A House for Mr. Biswas* Mrs. Tulsi was running a general store, which was opened by Pandit Tulsi of Hanuman House. Biswas was feeling about that venture as temporary, not real but later he realized, "In the meantime, he became a shopkeeper. Selling had seemed to him such an easy way of making a living he had often wondered why people bothered to do anything else." (151) Another character of the same novel Bhandat an alcoholic man too was running rum shop. Mohun Biswas was put in the care of Ajodha's alcoholic brother to assist him in the shop. But he was disliked by Bhandat who thought about him as a spy of Tara. He was treated badly, abused and beaten up by Bhandat so he left that work. His adversity continued for long till he succeeded building his own house. He did an apprentice under a professional Pandit for the profession of Pandit as the social demand had increased in Hindu society. Biswas's uncle Ajodha wished him to be a professional pandit in the Caribbean Island. The Caribbean island consisted of much Hindu population. Overall Indian expatriates were 150000 and belonged to Hindu, Muslim and other communities.

Indian diaspora has given prestigious writings professionally like Naipaul, who made India proud after Rabindranath Tagore. Seepasad had chosen journalism and writing. His move towards other profession was a well beginning for educated children of agrarian labors. It was neither against Indian culture nor labor class. It was a kind of new occupation that was very risky than labor. A new generation of Indian directed their lives towards writing works. Hindu scriptures were very longstanding pieces of literature but those inscriptions were religious not written as a career. Orientalists have stimulated for such type of careers. Indian writing in English is frequently a job-oriented task. In his writing career, Naipaul was despaired and had once taken an inauspicious step of suicide. His first editor was his wife Patricia Ann Hale. She helped him to eliminate his depression. Self-employment was caused by doing changed work. In the book, *Half A Life* Naipaul has chosen an Indian character namely Willie Chandran who is a son of Brahmin father and a Dalit mother. He went to London to study from India. He became a short story writer after completion of studies he managed to published a book. Willie's sister Sarojini underestimated him and thought that he will become a teacher after getting the famous degree. Willie Chandran replied her saying, "I don't think you know. But I've written a book. It's coming out next year." (116)

One of the characters of Naipaul's novel *In A Free State* namely Santosh went to America with his master. His master was an Indian bureaucrat. Along with him, he went to the United States of America for his assistance. He used to get very less pay that could not help him much. His poverty remained the same as in India. Then he decided to quit and find another job to ensure financial betterment. An Indian entrepreneur was then an American there. Priya had got citizenship of America and settled with the restaurant business. He was running a restaurant and Santosh got a job there. He wandered in search of a good job that can fulfill his needs. Santosh did not have a work permit to take a profession. The work culture in the USA needed skills for any job as well as fluency in the language. Unskilled were not considered or allowed for any kind of works. He faced a lot of problems such as unemployment, fear to be caught by police as illegal immigrants and lacked communication. If he might have acquired technical knowledge earlier, the possibility of getting a good job was easy. He was an ordinary cook and taken by the chance to America. He struggled a lot searching for a job. He met an African origin girl who flirted and loved him. That hubshi girl taught him English at least a skill of communication required was fulfilled. He had encountered pathetic state as well felt a mockery over those typical circumstances in an unknown nation. In the novel *In A Free State* Naipaul wrote the narration of Santosh, "I made an offering to the girl. In return, she taught me a few words of English. 'Me black and beautiful' was the first thing she taught me." (28) In abroad it was not easy to settle and get a satisfying job. Still, many people go abroad and struggle and finally succeed.

In many countries, Indians have a political advantage as the populations increased. The socio-economic development of Indians was significance in relevance to politics. They have a good reputation as political leaders. In the novel *The Mystic Masseur* Naipaul illustrates Ganesh's political ambitions:

Ganesh raised his hand. 'I am doing this only for the sake of Hindu unity in Trinidad.' Some people cried in Hindi, Long live Ganesh!' But what about the League?' the boy said. 'we are

not going to form the League. In less than three weeks the Hindu Association is going to hold its second General Meeting. Many officers will be elected and I hope to see all of you among them.' (174-175)

In the twentieth century scenario all the Indians, who have settled or working abroad are given an identity as Non-Resident-Indians. Some have become President, Prime Minister, Member of Parliament, and holding important posts in government as well as in private sectors. Mauritius, Singapore, Trinidad and Tobago, Fiji, Guyana, Malaysia, and Suriname consist majority of Indian expatriates. As political representatives, those diasporic people have been elected several times in a democratic way.

V. CONCLUSION

Indian labor class build the capacity and managed business venture. The Colonial period of the world caused a large number of displacements from the native land. Labor and new business venture were combined in Indian diaspora for their economic growth. Opportunities for education to their descendants and milieu of those colonies made Indian very painstaking to earn coinage and got a good reputation. In the competitive global market, Indians took the risk in the hope of profit. Entrepreneurship of Indian diaspora consists of all communities. Hindu, Muslim, and all other castes of Indian origins went to different colonies of the British empire in the world in the early nineteenth century. Priya's restaurant in Washington, Tulsi store, Rum shop of Bhandat, and Ganesh's political and religious activities in Trinidad reveal the socio-economic development and entrepreneurship of Indian expatriates. Naipaul's writings are the depiction of enthusiastic and laborious Indians, who struggled for bread and butter in the early colonial period but well establish entrepreneurs of the modern world. Naipaul himself had faced similar conditions in London after his completion of studies. His writing works provide a glimpse of dissimilar occupations selected by Indians in an opposing manner to their ancestral occupations and have attained approval.

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