

**Contemplation Of Acculturation: Cross-Cultural Identities In Padma  
Viswanathan Novels**

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**ABSTRACT**

The article meditates on the process of acculturation and its relevance in Contemporary Indo-Canadian Diasporic Literature in the novels of Padma Viswanathan's "The Toss of a Lemon" and "The Ever After of Ashwin Rao". The examination of the two different genres of novels highlights the common instances that reflect the four phases of acculturation such as Assimilation, Integration, Separation and Marginalization based on the events and cultural practices that have been witnessed in the major characters. This article makes an attempt to discuss the works of the diaspora writer with respect to the intricacies of acculturation in terms of ethnicity, culture and society. The protagonists of the two novels reflect cross-cultural identities and their hybridized developmental passages through which their attitudes, beliefs, intentions, feelings had been acculturated. Furthermore, this article also points out the deeper aspects of the psychological transition stages in adapting to the host culture and society.

**Keywords:** acculturation, Indo-Canadian Diasporic Literature ethnicity, culture, society, diaspora, Padma Viswanathan

**Introduction: Acculturation**

"Tradition is not only bending down, or process of benign transmission. It is also a conflict between past genius and present aspiration in which the price is literary survival or canonical inclusion."

-Harold Bloom.

Culture, a root that holds a human being to a tradition that distinguishes an individual of a society, state or nation that is different from another society, state, or nation. Culture encompasses of traits concerning language, religion, cuisine, clothing, social habits, legends, myths, music, dance, arts and customs belonging to the particular community especially marked by their geographical ethnicity. It depends upon an individual to pertain to the cultural practices or to deny the structure that is been followed in pattern from generations to generation. One can also follow the culture of other groups which is often lead due to the migration from the native land. Thus, the adoption to a host society, at times becomes as a choice or by force. This complex transition from one culture to the other is called as Acculturation.

Linton (1945) defined culture as "the structure of learned behaviour, the components of which are communicated and communicated by members of a particular society" and described the accessible (concrete and tangible) and hidden (knowledge, attitudes and values) aspects of culture. Similarly, Kluckhohn (1951) claimed that "Culture consists of patterned ways of thinking, feeling and reacting, acquired and transmitted mainly through signs,

constituting the distinctive achievements of human groups, including their embodiments in artefacts; and the essential centre of culture consists of traditional (i.e., traditionally derived and selected) ideas and their associated ideals in general”.

The term **acculturation** appears first in the writings of Holmes (1886), Boas (1896) and McGee (1898) to refer to the implied process of change leading to cultural fusion, or the transfer and modification of customs due to interaction between 'lower grade' and 'higher grade' cultures. Originally, acculturation was introduced as a concept at a group level. Acculturation is considered, “to be a broader construct, however encompassing a wide range of behaviours, attitudes and values that change with contact between cultures”. (Phinney 2001 p.495). The transition lifestyle in the host society has the effect to influence their psychological and behavioural pattern which is marked by John Berry's four phases are Assimilation, Integration, Separation and Marginalization.

### **Approaches of Acculturation**

The approach to culture involves the understanding of culture, its characteristics and learning of culture. An individual's behaviour is changed to maintain information and interactions within the new culture, shifting from one culture to another. This process is referred to as acculturation. Acculturation is, therefore, a process that takes place when two or more cultures of different cultural backgrounds communicate consistently and actively.

Acculturation generally occurs to immigrants, refugees, and asylum seekers, who are assumed to be permanently settled in their new homeland although these three groups may be quite different from one another. An immigrant one who voluntarily leaves the country to settle permanently in another country, an emigrant who is forced to leave this country for political reasons, a refugee is a person who has fled from some danger or political persecution and an expatriate someone who has left native country to a new country with conscious resistance to total inclusion in the new host society. In this context, it is highly rewarding to record the observation of Edward W. Said, who opines that the condition of an exile is one that “has torn millions of people from the nourishment of tradition, family and geography”. (p.174).

Ramraj in his article “Diaspora and Multiculturalism” discusses the differences among immigrant, exile and expatriate writing. According to him, “exile and expatriate writing are more immersed in the situation at home and the circumstance that prolongs the individual's exile or expatriation” more than with “the émigré's or émigré's community's relationship with the dominant society” (1996:pp.214-229).

Moreover, not all immigrants are willingly accepted into the society of the host country. To quote Salman Rushdie,

A full migrant suffers traditionally a triple disruption. He loses his place. He enters into an alien language and he finds himself surrounded by beings whose behaviours and codes are unlike and sometimes even offensive to his own. And this is what makes a migrant such a pathetic figure because roots, languages and social norms are three of the definition of what is to be a human being (p.91).

The acculturating process is different in the second-generation immigrants compared to the first-generation immigrants. The parents of second-generation immigrants undergo a stressful process of adaptation to the host country as they are unable to shun away the culture and values earned in the native land whereas the second generation Diaspora, being influenced by their acculturated parents and the culture of host land and become a part of cross-cultural.

### **Phases of Acculturation**

The phases of acculturation cannot be witnessed as a stage by stage process. It is interlinked which is not independent but interdependent. Any individual of a Diaspora community can move from one phase to another and it cannot be said where one ends and where one begins. These phases cannot be separated as a water-tight compartment. They fuse themselves into bringing about acculturation.

Assimilation phase is to renounce the homeland's culture and accepting and adapting to the host country's culture. The integration phase is accepting both the cultures by strongly adhering to the homeland's culture. Separation phase is retaining the homeland's culture and rejects host country's culture. Marginalization phase is shunning both the cultures. Each aspect has a different approach on the emotional, psychological and social development of an individual immigrant. It is commonly agreed by Dovidio and Berry that, "This model (four-dimensional strategy of acculturation) allows for multiculturalism, which asserts that different cultures can coexist in a society" (Phinney et al., 2001, p. 495).

### **Contemplation of Acculturation in the Novels: Analysis and Discussion**

This paper aims to summarize the acculturation perspective in the Diaspora writing of Padma Viswanathan. The work explores the distressing experience of home-away-from-home situations based on socio-cultural phase which led to the victimization of the diasporic community, who endured a life of hostility and resentment. The crisis of the immigrant people, who assumed to have settled well in their new home-land, underwent the storms of acculturation whether to fit in or stand out from the cultural hybridity. The tumult between the immigrants of one culture and a country with another culture occurs; when there is disintegration in adapting to that respective culture where they live in.

The novel **The Ever After of Ashwin Rao** revolves around the aftermath of the calamity that had happened due to the air crash in 1985, which changed the lives of many people apparently, Indians in Canada. One among the bereaved families, the protagonist Ashwin Rao, Indian psychiatrist had experienced the loss of his sister and her children to air mishap. After the trial in 2003, he comes back to Canada in 2004 to study the psychological effects undergone by the families who had lost their loved ones. His research is to find who the real victim is? Being a Canadian dweller for some time, he explores the trauma woven around the life of Venkat, who had lost both his wife and son in the air crash. This has made an effect on both psychological and social stratum; this is when he shifts from integration to separation by generating hatred and bitterness.

The novel **The Toss of the Lemon** portrays the life of Sivakami, the protagonist she observes the customs and traditions of the Brahmins, performs a revolutionary act, and moves back to her husband's house to raise her children. Her servant Muchami, who is guided by a very different set of caste laws, has become Sivakami's public face. This singular relationship, scrupulously formal yet indispensable for both, hold three generations together through a turbulent half-century of social and political change.

The instances in both the novels prove acculturation whether they assimilate or integrate to their cultural boundaries. Thus, this article will throw light upon the aspects of acculturation by highlighting the occurrences in these novels based on the four dimensions of Assimilation, Integration, Separation and Marginalization. The universal issues such as Diaspora, globalization, multiculturalism, cultural hybridity, identity crisis are explored with an insight of acculturation in the respective novels. Hence, there are several instances in both the novels to prove acculturation whether they assimilate or integrate to their cultural boundaries.

This article throws light upon the theory 'acculturation' in psychological viewpoint in order to describe the trauma of the immigrants who has been devoured by the catastrophe (air crash). The acculturation perspective in diaspora narrative is novel and it has been applied in the story **The Toss of Lemon** where the incidents that this paper has carried, basically centers within the community (Brahmin) itself. The transition from one dimension to another that the character confronts in life has also been commented with a new stance. The focal point of this article is to view the dogmas of caste and its practices in the acculturation outlook.

### **Cross-Cultural Identities in Homeland**

In her debut novel, Padma Viswanathan attempts to encapsulate the understanding and cultural and social quandaries. The phases of 'integration' and 'assimilation' of alien culture carried baggage of Indian cultural values to the new land to preserve their traditional lifestyle.

The novel **The Toss of a Lemon** depicts the life of Brahmins in 1902, where the protagonist of the novel Sivakami gets married at the age of 10 to the distinguished astrologer of the town. The star-crossed fate of her husband;

Hanumarathnam doomed the life of Sivakami. After the death of her husband, she did follow the traditional way of proclaiming her widowhood by tonsuring her head, donning widow's garb i.e. white sari, and also made sure that she's not seen or touched by anyone even her children till dawn to dusk. The phase of "separation" that the Brahmin community resided as their cultural practice has been carried out by Sivakami will be focused in this study as an instance of acculturation.

There are situations to describe in the novel **The Toss of a Lemon** pertaining to acculturation. As the time passes, the characters lose shades of their belief like Sivakami's need to give proper secular education for Vairum marks the first shift from separation to integration; she defies tradition for the sake of her son to pursue schooling alike other people. Sivakami confronts her religion when she decides to leave her brother's house; she is widowed and her choice to reinstate herself in the marital home even after her husband's demise brings out the dimension of 'Integration'. The same book also pictures the character of Vairum, the fatherless child who grows up witnessing the life his mother had adhered to.

Education and urbanization have been perceived to become the most relevant provider of acculturation. The consequence of acculturation includes the alteration of the cultural characteristics of the acculturating communities in a way that the community does not stay the same as the initial group at the time of the first contact. The acculturating group on long-term connection with external culture has culminated in changes both at the level of the group and at the individual level. The multidimensional acculturation cycle relates to shifts in the identity, behaviours, beliefs and behavioural norms of individuals through interaction with various cultures over time (Berry, 1980a; Berry, Trimble, & Olmedo, 1986).

On the other hand, Vairum too gave up the practice of horoscope at the time of his wedding; his failure to have children and the conflicting environment he is brought up in kind of projected the phase 'Marginalization' in him especially when he shuns the society which inflicts caste oppression on women having witnessed it first-hand. The bicultural nature of 'Integration' is seen with his choice of marrying Vani, despite his mother's denial. Vairum, the secularist believes that "Horoscopes are nothing. Less than nothing. Ashes of something long dead" being a modern thinker he supposes "science and religion have triumphed over astrology and superstition" (Viswanathan, 213)

During early 1900's, the Brahminical practice of not contaminating the teacups while drinking was a significant cultural practice of the community people. "They would hold a silver tumbler above their mouths, to avoid pollution from any saliva that has ever touched the cup" but Vairum tries to be cosmopolitan here "forces himself to put his mouth to the edge and slurp" (Viswanathan, 193). This is one of the examples of Vairum's shift from 'Integration' to 'Assimilation'.

The alteration connecting social or cultural group in acculturation integrates into becoming modern due to the urbanization and homogenization, the reaffirmation of the distinctive ideals of the culture of origin is becoming traditional, and the development of new lifestyle and distinct cultural patterns (Berry, 1980b).

Another instance from the novel is when life of Thangam was at stake. Her trouble in giving birth made her sick that she was on the verge of dying. The doctor's visit during those days was considered as a loss of dignity, especially for Sivakami since her obstetrical act at home was well handled during Thangam's early delivery as well as for her grandchildren, "no one in her family has ever been seen by a doctor. She knows there are women doctors for women patients, but it's too late to get one" (Viswanathan, 424). Due to critical situation, the male doctor had to perform caesarean in order to save at least one life from dying. This example from the novel alters the phase of 'Separation' to 'Integration' where Sivakami incorporates the bicultural identity. The implications of the four-dimensional model of acculturation are applied to the characters in the novel.

Finally, at the fag end of the novel, the long term dispute between mother and son has declined when Vairum calls out 'Amma' something that Sivakami hasn't heard for so long. She steps outside through the main hall regardless of her widowhood "as because she doesn't want to lose her son the way she lost her husband: without a word" (Viswanathan, 611). This incident indicates the rejection of homeland or community-based culture and becomes assimilated with the new culture.

The thought processes affect psychological processes across tradition and society. The thoughts and actions of the person influence cultural norms and practices as they evolve; and these cultural norms and practices affect individuals' attitudes and actions (Lehman, Chiu & Schaller, 2004). The culture that people live in plays a significant role in developing their attitudes, and adapting to a culture is a feature of the adaptability of the person.

Modern formulations, however, place great emphasis on its level manifestation. Graves (1967) comes up with the word 'Psychological Acculturation' to refer to the changes that a person experiences as a result of engaging in the acculturation phase that the community or ethnic group of the individual is going through. Therefore, 'psychological acculturation' refers to the changes that individuals undergo during their group's acculturation. The process requires several social conditions and changes that are undergone by individuals when presented with cultural changes or changes in their cultural environment (Berry, Pootinga, Segall & Dasen, 1992). Changes at the person locus are due to the effect of actions by individuals coming from outside the society and the internal psychological characteristics and conventional conduct resulting in changed behaviour; such as the formation of new behavioural norms (behavioural shifts) and disorganization or even disintegration of behaviour (acculturative stress).

### **Cross-Cultural Identities in Hostland**

The experiences gathered by the protagonist Ashwin Rao through his narrative technique is expressed in the novel **The Ever After of Ashwin Rao**, a cross-cultural story within a story. The narration entwines the tale of the families who lost their loved ones in the 1985 Air India flight bombing that led to an identity crisis among the Indian immigrants who settled in Canada and their struggle to survive between politics of the native land and the host land. The novel examines the vast areas of discrimination, marginalization and globalization through the representation of reverberations of this tragedy in the lives of its survivors.

The Toronto Star observes, "... a complex and moving novel that does what contemporary media accounts of the tragedy did not: it brings home individual stories of loss and makes clear the extent of the devastation... richly textured and powerful... fertile emotional territory... sympathetic and believable characters..."

The acculturation approaches are relevant to people in a multicultural society, assuming the right how they choose to assimilate, are primarily focused on the individual's response to (a) is it significant to establish interactions with a host society? If neutral, the approach to be pursued is 'integration' includes the upholding of one's cultural background and 'assimilation' concerning the culture of origin, and if negative, 'separation' involving the removal of associations with other communities and 'marginalization' involving the reduction of encounters with both the culture of origin. (b) Is it of significant value to retain one's identity and characteristics? If positive, integration and separation are potential approaches and when negative, assimilation and marginalization are feasible.

Given the theoretical and conceptual bearings, reciprocal cooperation is needed to achieve integration and acquiescence. Understanding the function of the dominant culture in shaping the way where acculturation occurs, an eight-fold structure emerged (Berry, 1974). Integration and marginalization approaches were suggested to be negatively associated with separation and assimilation strategies (Berry, et al., 1989). Thereby, whenever the acculturating group attempted to assimilate; it was referred to as 'melting pot,' but when ordered by the privileged group; it was referred to as 'pressure cooker.'

In her second novel **The Ever After of Ashwin Rao**, Viswanathan tries to capture the experiences and cultural dilemmas of the migrants from India in the host land Canada especially after the fatal bombing of an Air India flight. The review of Winnipeg Free Press,

"Viswanathan's second novel digs deeply and effectively into the psychology of bereavement, as well as providing outsiders with a fascinating insight into Hinduism, Indo-Canadian culture and the history of Hindu-Sikh conflict... [A] very satisfying experience indeed".

As a sensitive Indo-Canadian writer well acquainted with Indian heritage, Viswanathan unfolds a fractured double perspective. Venkat reflects the first-generation immigrant through his admiration of Indian history, Brahmin culture, a follower of rituals like Gayatri Mantra's early morning chanting, the Sun Invocation, and celebration of

Indian festivals, to make him feel at home in a foreign country. The 'Get-together' with other Indian families in Canada at the time of birthday, weddings, puja and other rituals, Venkat and Seth's families show their desire to preserve their home culture in a host land. Thus, "adherence to a diasporic community is demonstrated by an acceptance of the inescapable link with their past migration history" (Cohen1997: p. ix). It also reveals that migrant Indians carry with them, their beliefs, traditions, customs, behaviours and values along with their "possessions and belongings to new places," as remarked by John McLeod (2000:p.211).

Another character Sethuraman, who is well acquainted and integrated with both the cultures succumbs to depression and gets traumatized when he got to see the corpses from the flight crash the repercussions of the terrible sight evaded his hold of being normal even though he has never lost one in the mishap.

Despite maintaining the culture of their homeland, they also consciously or subconsciously acculturated to the new culture as an impulse of survival to adhere to the culture of the host. The celebrations of western festivals like Christmas, Thanksgiving, and Halloween, display their preferential adjustment rather than alienation. The immigrants of the first generation often return to the native land with the influence of western culture and also share their enthusiasm to the natives. For instance, Ashwin Rao celebrates Halloween party with his cousin's children at Delhi.

Their favourite thing was to ask about Canada, and when they learned about Halloween, they begged for a dress-up party. They chattered all week about costumes; I was to provide sweets. I was thrilled about hosting a children's party, to a degree that (the IRDS secretaries informed me) compromised my dignity and my public image as a curmudgeon. I planned to dress up as a bad-tempered female vegetable-seller... (Viswanathan, 20).

Immigrants attempt to fill this vacuum and slowly step towards reconstruction assimilation and adjustment to the host culture in the process of filling this cultural gap. Even among the Indian families, they call out with pet names such as Sethuraman as Seth, Mohan as Moe which was initially framed for Westerners convenience. The dichotomy between the pet name and the good name is the dichotomy of the inner and outer self. Kimberly Benston emphasizes the distinct problem of naming and renaming and the active interplay of naming with identity and ethnicity. Benston concludes that naming and renaming constitutes "a staging of self in relation to a specific context of revolutionary affirmation" (qtd.In Radhakrishnan 69).

**The Ever After of Ashwin Rao** portrays the characters as the victims of displacement, dual identities and cultural disorientation, acculturation struggles and conflicts. Ashwin Rao, the protagonist, moved from 'Integration' to 'Separation' process. He was assimilated to Canadian lifestyle in the early days of his stay in Canada and was also in a relationship with Canadian Rosslyn. After the bombing, Ashwin Rao completely rejected the host country and continued to live in India. It took him eighteen years to return to Canada, and that too for the sake of his research of the traumatic experiences of the families of bomb blast victims.

Venkat is also a character that has moved from 'Integration' to 'Separation'. After losing his wife Sita and his son Sundar, he suffered a psychological trauma that led him to hate other communities, such as Canadians, Sikhs and Muslims. He renounces the identity of being a Canadian and determines to be an Indian. At the final judgment, when the convicts have not been found guilty, he no longer wants to be identified as a Canadian. His final utterance in the novel is "I am going home. Canada is dead to me." (Viswanathan, 347).

Both the characters have reached the 'Separation' phase due to the political scenario of Canada. The novel reveals that Indian politics and religious differences have been expressed in Canada. The conflict between various ethnic or religious groups is a threatening scenario that continues to be seen in host countries as a result of the increasing population density of different ethnic diaspora communities.

In the novel, the character Sethuraman depicts the bi-cultural dilemma. The corpses and the crying faces of the bomb blast incident have changed his life and his belief system. His feeling is often considered to be the 'caught-between' that immigrants have in common. The misfortunes he experienced in the life of his daughter led him to be furious about his emigration to Canada and the Canadian way of life. The psychological trauma of the bomb blast and the loss of Sundar and Sita made him seek spiritual guidance.

Despite his cultural dilemmas, he accepted both identities; his social standing as a Physics professor in Canada, but he also approached the religious aspects of his own culture to ease his turbulent mind. He worships Shivasakthi with the 'rudraksha mala' rolling in his hands, but does not follow that he is a vegetarian who is the cultural phenomenon of his community. He slowly loses his identity and follows a multicultural vulnerability. Seth hopelessly struggles with his hyphenated identity. "The kind of thing he would laugh at, particularly now that he, too, was Canadian. But in the early years, that was him."(p.316). He realizes that he cannot escape from his Indian identity and thus from his hyphenated identity.

The first generation of immigrants trying to hold on to their past culture and history seems like a desperate effort to hold on to a rapidly slipping heritage. Their efforts are bordering on a kind of desperation to stay afloat in an alien environment where their only support is to build a strong foundation culture and values on which their future can be sustained. Immigrants of the second generation get used to the life and culture of the West rather than to their parents adhere to. Cultural practices of immigrants are always in conflict with the host country's customs. Often differences with cultural standards seemed to generate animosity. A multicultural land's inflexible rules challenge their Indian tradition. The characters reflect the intermediate relationship because two cultures have crossed each other over and over again. Kamila Shamsie mentions that the notion of culture comprises of, "complex structures of beliefs and practices and their nuances, unspoken assumptions and practices and their nuances, unspoken assumptions and deepest sensibilities..." (Shamsie, p.97).

The immigrants of the second generation are trying to break the umbilical cord linguistically and physically with their homeland but they are expressing their Indianness at the psychological level. In this way, Padma Viswanathan aptly stresses the dichotomy of growing up in two cultures. Family devotion is proclaimed as an attribute characteristically Indian. The characteristics of second-generation immigrants are expressed in Brindha and Ranjani, daughters of Seth. They are highly influenced by western culture. Brindha, a survivor of a broken marriage, experiments her relationship with other men, but her Indian cultural values make her feel guilty about her actions and her bi-cultural identity. She neither fully opts for homeland society, nor does it fully assimilated to Canadian culture.

Nevertheless, not all immigrants of the second generation respond the same way. Ranjani completely neglects the homeland community as she is assimilated to the host country. Despite the objections of her parents, she chooses living-in-relationship and the distant attitude toward the family by spending New Year with her boyfriend are the instances that show that she has shunned the native identity. As said by Subhendhu Mund,

"For various reasons, the present diaspora tends to alienate the immigrants from their roots in spite of themselves, compelling them to live between two worlds: the imaginary and the real, the past and the present, and the virtual and the material" (2005:p.108).

The character of Lakshmi is embodied by acculturation. In Canadian society, she is well-adjusted and does not suffer from an identity crisis. Her sense of belonging strengthens her identity-building efforts, although she does not cast off Indian ideals as unlike Sita, Ranjani, and Brindha. In Lakshmi's case, however, displacement and marginality cause a comparatively less sense of alienation and nostalgia. She tends to assimilate the bits of Canadian society slowly and to adapt to her daughters' modernity. She knows Venkat needs Seth and her help when Sita and Sundar die. Lakshmi lives her very own life and accepts the man god Shivashakthi blindly.

The aspect of a person's psychological acculturation and subsequent adjustment depends on the particular features of group-level happenings and also on the intervention or adjustment of person parameters. The integration of a person regarding psychological acculturation is a process that occurs across time, and stimuli that influence the process reflect the wide essence of the acculturation process. Viswanathan has thus presented this character as a diaspora, which seems to be the main source of the positive transformative potential of immigration.

The novelist's creation of Sita is a complete surprise with her change in climax. Sita was portrayed as the embodiment of Indian culture, but she breaks the illusion of identity with the discovery of her new life. In the transformation of the character of Sita, the drastic change from the process of 'Separation' to 'Marginalization' is highly visible. Her son's death has changed her belief and morality. The nostalgia becomes her source of pain and

establishes its superficial identification by renaming herself as “Karma.” Sita secluded herself physically and mentally from the identity of her origin, which was possible only by being on the host land. Diasporic tension is not only spatial, but it is also temporal. Homi Bhabha has also underlined,

The pain involved in the act of remembering: remembering is never a quiet act of introspection. It is painful remembering, a putting together of the dismembered past to make sense of the trauma of the present (qt in Gandhi 1998: p.9).

Each character's experience is different from the other. The identity crisis, the feeling of "in-betweenness" and belonging "nowhere" are the experiences of these diaspora immigrants.

Migrants straddle two cultures... fall between two stools and they suffer "a triple disruption" comprising the loss of roots, the linguistic and also the social dislocation. (Salman Rushdie, p.394)

In the group of professional migration, as seen in the characters like Dr Ashwin Rao, the aching consciousness for ‘the return to home’ is certainly lacking. They live as different ethnic groups in an organized structure. Unlike Naipaul's Biswas, who longs for ‘identity’ and ‘a sense of belonging,’ the loved ones of the bomb victims do not mourn either for ‘identity’ or for a ‘longing to return to their homeland.’ Their problems and agonies are different in psychological and emotional terms. The fact that these people who migrated as professionals are also Indians and their origins are in India cannot be ignored. Their families live in India and it is the financial necessity for which they move to other countries, leaving their minds and hearts in the motherland. Venkat communicates this to Ashwin, "Don't think that, because I stayed in Canada, I have forgotten our motherland. I returned to Canada to better support our struggle." (Viswanathan, 221). They want justice, equal rights and recognition from the host country. Because their identity has been denied, they are hardly able to accept it. In this way, the emotional conflict is expressed in this novel by Padma Viswanathan as a representative of the targeted ethnic group.

### **Solutions to Cope up Acculturation**

The solutions and the remedies to cope with acculturation are based on what the authors and researchers have deliberated in their findings of how to overcome the acculturation stress and psychological adaptation among migrants.

Conceptual frameworks that are discussed above for migrating individual involve components such as stress, adaptation, acculturation, and psychological tolerance. According to the context of Berry's (1997) acculturation approaches, for example, an adult experiencing cultural transformation is likely to encounter major changes in language behaviour perception, temperament; identification, attitudes, cognitive well-being; he or she is often constantly faced with pressure which copes with the flux of change (Berry, 1997; Redfield et al., 1).

Berry's concept is especially beneficial in demonstrating the host society's attitude in influencing the pressure interactions of the acculturating person and the acculturation approach that the individual is likely to embrace in response. The model also goes further by defining and characterizing the acculturative pressure syndrome—a specific source of stress that requires and elicits adaptive behaviours from migrants. On the other side, the Yakushko (2010) model is useful in recognizing and identifying a number of coping strategies which immigrants often use to adapt to cultural shifts. The writer does so by specifically explaining these forms of coping.

The concept of cultural adjustment by Berry (1997) constitutes the most innovative and successful acculturation research. Berry's (1997) pioneering concept of acculturation was based on early research on tension and dealing with Lazarus and Folkman's (1984). In one point, the four acculturation techniques followed by acculturating groups or individuals, assimilation, separation marginalization, and integration reflect the coping attempts they create to maintain their interaction with the host / dominant cultural community (Berry, 1997, 2006).

In terms of ‘group-level’ and ‘individual-level’ effects, the theory further defines acculturation. Specific group-level factors and individual-level factors may function on the system as well as the result of the adjustment of migrants before and during acculturation. At the group level, the following process manifests coping behaviours. Acculturation community experiencing cultural change will first evaluate the adjustment-related stressors and then



develop coping strategies to overcome these stressors. The coping strategies chosen will influence the source of stress and will show some results. This will help in the group's long-term performance, hopefully in a positive adjustment.

Taking into account the proliferation of large scale immigration and migration of people through local, national and continental borders as migration progresses, the need to examine how migrants participate in cross-cultural change, how they react and find a way to deal with the pressures and difficulties associated with these cycles of acculturation, as well as how their tolerance and adjustment strategies affect. The solutions to these problems have far-reaching developments for researchers, community organizations, and countries involved in the wellbeing of migrants around the world for education, studies, and policymaking. It is anticipated that this analysis and interpretation will contribute to further research, debates and conversations on the stress-focused approach to acculturation study and will act as a framework for further work to consider coping, its connection and result of the cultural integration of migrants.

### **Conclusion**

The Diaspora author Padma Viswanathan has described practical perspectives and finally brought out the difficult journey of immigrant families in Canada in the novel **The Ever After of Ashwin Rao** and **The Toss of Lemon** depicted the traditional Indian rural culture and practices.

Acculturation has been a compelling topic for many researchers who have refined strategies to describe how acculturation determines the lives of immigrants settling in different countries, adapting cultures unlike their own, rearing children to sustain the values obtained from their country of origin and last but not the least analyzing if they want to settle down in the host country or return to their own country. Varieties of variables contribute to acculturation. Many groups joined the process of acculturation without seeking it (e.g., refugees, indigenous peoples), many chose to enter the process of acculturation (e.g., immigrants), some because they moved to new places (e.g., immigrants and refugees), where some groups brought new cultures (e.g., indigenous peoples and national minorities).

There are certain definitions and interpretations within the human development and subsequent acculturation, which are given to emotional activity, deliberate social movements, and relationships with friends or peers, relatives or neighbours and colleagues. The first step in the process of growth is to recognize and evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the 'self.' This is the starting point of self-differentiation, which is important to seek a normal way of life for men. And then does it become 'individualism' that we switch from one society to another. Also, human development demands that risks be taken and that protective sources be identified within the person, community and society. The difficult path of development forecasts the potential dissatisfaction and resentment due to self insufficiency.

Consequently, attitudes towards one's own and host cultures can lead to a compromise to discuss the strengths and weaknesses and incorporate all cultures into one discourse. This paper aims to change the images and at acquiring commitment and confidence to adapt the images in the host society with cultural ideas. The goal of this paper is to suggest that acculturation differences exist in their various ecological environments between individuals in the host country and their own countries. This focuses on the acculturation and the transformation between traditional culture and a new society in general and/or the positive synthesis of the beneficial qualities of the two traditional and contemporary cultures through reverence for oneself, improvement of oneself, affection and trust in other people.

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