



Cross-Cultural Adaptation and Maladaptation in Kiran Desai's *The Inheritance of Loss*: An Application of Kim's Cross-Cultural Adaptation Theory

Ms Lata Taral

Assistant Professor, Department of English, Dr D Y Patil Arts, Commerce and Science College, Pimpri, Pune, India.
Email – letaral@gmail.com

*Abstract: In today's technology driven world, cross-disciplinary integration is augmented. But what would propel cross-cultural adaptation? Technology or human mind? As cross-cultural adaptation is a complex psychological process, it will not materialize at the click of a mouse but human mind plays a decisive role in it. Culture is lifeblood. When people move from one place to other place, they carry their way of life i.e. culture with them. Sojourners are those immigrants who spend different lengths of time in new culture and return to their motherland e.g. businessmen, foreign workers, students, etc. After crossing culture, immigrants suffer from an edifice of culture shock and stress and are psychologically defeated and physically devastated because of push of new culture and pull of old one. For carrying out daily activities in new culture intercultural transformation i.e. cross-cultural adaptation is imperative. Cohen's opinion in this regard 'the purpose of life is to maintain life; adaptation is life(Kim:2001:35) substantiates it. The present paper investigates two Indians' experience of crossing culture. It analyses Jemubhai Patel's journey from an outsider to insider in new culture i.e. his cross-cultural adaptation and Biju's painful journey to imperiled life of misery in new culture i.e. his cross-cultural maladaptation in Kiran Desai's Booker Prize winning novel *The Inheritance of Loss*. The study is carried out by applying Young Yun Kim's Theory of Cross-Cultural Adaptation. The study accentuates the necessity of cultural sensitization for immigrants for curbing the termination of their lives in new culture.*

Key Words: cross-cultural adaptation, sojourners, Jemubhai, Biju.

1. INTRODUCTION:

As fire triangle of heat, fuel and oxygen is the basis of fire, the pedestal of life is culture. According to George Yule culture is 'socially acquired knowledge' (2021:312). Berry et al (2002: 02) define culture as 'the shared way of life of a group of people'. A person is not born with any culture but undergoes a progressive change by relating to social environment and becomes fit to live in it. In the words of San Zi Jing 'Basic human nature is similar at birth. Different habits (customs) make us seem remote (different)'. People adapt to the surrounding or cultural forces by learning its language and pragmatics, way of life, behavioral aspects, approaches, attitudes, actions, etc. People adapt to the human system by acquiring cultural identity i.e. enculturation takes place. 'How we understand the world and the assumptions we make about it are the product of 'received wisdom' of what we have learned from elders, social groups or media'(Robbins: 2014) as quoted by Stephen B Ryan.

Early in life cultural schemata is formed through repeated interactions within cultural groups and through this outside world is perceived. Watchword of technology driven contemporary world is globalization resulting into cross-cultural displacement. Students, foreign workers, diplomats, immigrants, etc. cross cultures for different lengths of time. As an individual crosses culture, his / her original cultural and ethnic identity is challenged and s / he becomes more aware of the previously taken for granted mental and behavioral habits to which s / he is accustomed. Boulding as quoted by Kim (2001: 13) notes that the human nervous system is structured in such a way that "the patterns that govern behavior and perception come into consciousness only when there is a deviation from the familiar". After entering a new culture, the process of enculturation starts all over again. But it is not as simple as just adding the elements of new culture to the original one. Learning new culture is subject to unlearning old one. Cultural transformation of an individual is a matter of interplay of acculturation and deculturation. And this acculturative and deculturative change leads to assimilation i.e. cross-cultural adaptation. Cross-cultural adaptation is not a computer operation taking place just at the click of a mouse. But it's a complex and psychological process. It is a matter of 'perceptual reality' for Social Science Research Council.



‘Temporary migrants are collectively referred to as sojourners or expatriates’ (Berry et al: 2002:408). Sojourners are those people who spend some years in new culture and return to their motherland e.g. businessmen, foreign workers, students, etc. According to Bocher (2003) as quoted by M Shajedul Arifeen ‘The meetings occur between two societies when individuals travel from their place of origin to another country for a specific purpose and a limited time, such people are called sojourners in the literature’. Sojourners are subject to cross-cultural adaptation, but unfortunately all do not succeed in it. In *The Inheritance of Loss* Jemubhai Patel and Biju are sojourners and cross culture for learning and earning purpose respectively. For both of them the process of cross-cultural adaptation is the darkness in the tunnel. Eventually, Jemubhai could see the light at the end of the tunnel and succeeded in cross-cultural adaptation but Biju’s journey of cross-cultural adaptation remained a tunnel vision which defeated, devastated and reduced him to wretchedness.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW:

Kim’s Theory of Cross-Cultural Adaptation:

Kim defines cross-cultural adaptation as ‘*the dynamic process by which individuals, upon relocating to new, unfamiliar, or changed cultural environments establish (or reestablish) and maintain relatively stable, reciprocal, and functional relationships with those environments*’(2001:31). His theory of cross-cultural adaptation is comprehensive and integrative as it incorporates various disciplines and approaches. It focuses on those strangers who cross societal boundaries, subcultural boundaries and face adaptive pressures from their new subcultural milieus and those who return home after sojourns in foreign cultures or subcultures. The present theory attempts to attain a balance between understanding through description and prediction through explanation which is a goal of social sciences.

Advantages of Kim’s Theory over Old theories:

Kim’s theory has the following advantages over the old theories of cross-cultural adaptation:

- i) It gives due consideration to the cultural and institutional patterns of the host environment and the ethnic community within it and the backgrounds and psychological characteristics of individuals.
- ii) It aims at integration of the investigation of long term and short term adaptation.
- iii) It views cross-cultural adaptation in the context of new learning and psychological growth.
- iv) It emphasizes sorting and consolidation of the divergent factors influencing cross-cultural adaptation.
- v) It recognizes and incorporates both assimilationist and pluralist views for understanding change in the process of cross-cultural adaptation.

Assumptions of the Present Theory:

The present theory is based on three open system assumptions. They are-

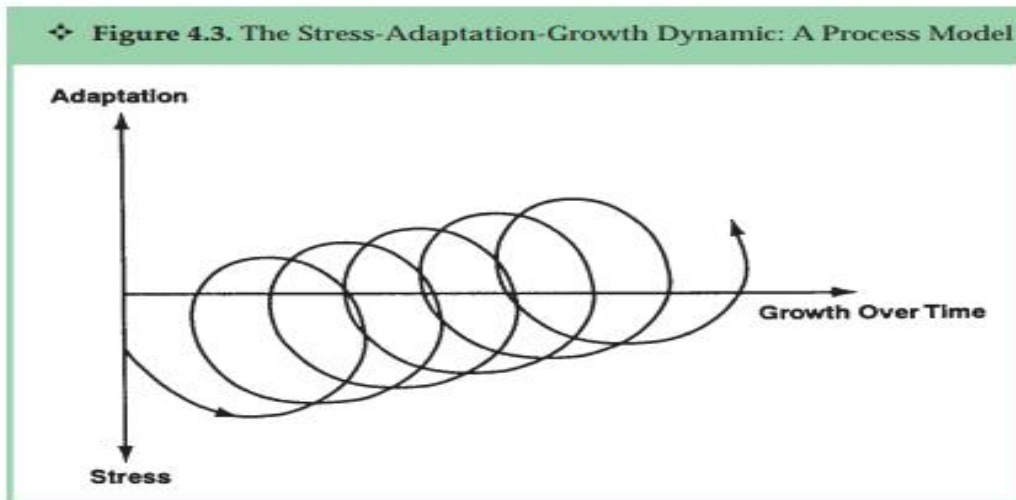
- i) Human beings have an innate self-organizing drive and a capacity to adapt to environmental challenges.
- ii) Adaptation of an individual to a given cultural environment occurs in and through communication. The soul of this assumption is person-environment interaction.
- iii) Adaptation is a complex and dynamic process that brings about a qualitative transformation of the individual. It focuses on multidimensional and complex nature of the process of cross-cultural adaptation as intrapersonal and environmental conditions play pivotal role in it.

Kim’s Process Model of Cross-Cultural Adaptation: The Stress – Adaptation – Growth Dynamic:-

When strangers cross culture, their daily activities and way of life is controlled by dominant new culture. It has coercive conformity pressure on them to acculturate into the existing cultural order. The gap between the demands of the new culture and strangers’ internal capacity to meet those demands results in mental, emotional and physical disturbance. They are mentally torn between the push of the new culture and the pull of the old one i.e. the existing conditions inside the strangers and the demands of the external environment are at war. This crisis results into their personality disintegration and emotional lows of uncertainty, confusion and anxiety i.e. stress. According to Kim ‘stress is a direct function of the lack of fitness between the stranger’s subjective experiences and the prevailing modes of experience among the natives’ (2001:55). This stress activates defensive responses in strangers which are conditioned by their predisposition and they indulge in protective psychological maneuvering for the pull of the original culture. Ill equipped strangers are literally devastated by this stress though its severity varies from stranger to stranger. This stress of being misfit in new cultural environment propels the understanding of new culture and incorporates aspects of new culture in them. And gradually strangers become fit to the external realities through change in their internal structure. This is how strangers manage this stress and move forward i.e. grow. It is called Stress – Adaptation – Growth Dynamic of cross-cultural adaptation. “Together, they constituted a three – pronged

‘stress – adaptation – growth dynamic’ of psychic movement in the forward and upward direction of increased chances of success in meeting the demands of the host environment. None of the three occurs without the others, and each occurs because of the others’ (Kim: 2001:56).

Diagram of Kim’s Process Model:



The above diagram illustrates strangers’ adaptive journey which involves ‘drawing back’ and ‘leap forward’. Because of stress of misfit, strangers are drawn back but it also activates their adaptive energy propelling growth. ‘The adaptive journey follows a pattern that juxtaposes novelty and confirmation, attachment and detachment, progression and regression, integration and disintegration, construction and destruction’ (Kim: 2001: 57). As long as challenges of new culture are there, the same process is continued. With strangers’ intercultural transformation, which is reflected in their increased functional fitness, psychological health and intercultural identity, the fluctuations in stress – adaptation – growth dynamics subside. This process model echoes Dubos’s view that ‘the problems of human adaptation could be presented as dialectic between permanence and change’ (Kim: 2001:57)

Kim’s Structure Model of Cross-Cultural Adaptation:

The structure model of cross-cultural adaptation with its six dimensions explains different rates or speeds at which adaptation takes place amongst different strangers. These six dimensions are as follows:

i) **Personal Communication:-**

Its construct is ‘host communication competence’ with indicators such as cognitive, affective and operational components. With host communication competence strangers can identify the similarities and differences between original culture and the host culture and can act accordingly i.e. can encode and decode messages as per host communication system.

- a) **Cognitive Component-** It entails knowledge of the host language including pragmatic aspect, paralinguistic patterns and non-verbal codes which enable psychological and social empowerment. It includes in-depth understanding of the host culture and cognitive complexity which refers to ‘the structure of information processing’ (Kim: 2001: 106). The strangers with higher cognitive complexity can better distinguish between their original and native culture. Compatibility between strangers’ subjective meaning system and that of the natives is made clear by cognitive component.
- b) **Affective Component-** It refers to emotional and motivational capacity of strangers i.e. their willingness to participate and functionally fit in host environment, their ability to appreciate and empathize with the emotional and aesthetic sensibilities of the natives, their attitude towards the host environment and toward themselves and identity flexibility. The strangers’ positive attitude and respect for local culture, their intense motivation to adapt and willingness to accept the identity of the host culture will enhance their efforts to learn and participate in the host environment. With strangers’ fulfillment of aesthetic needs in the host environment their aesthetic and emotional coorientation with local people develop and they can better empathize with native cultural products and will be more connected to host environment and will be part of the collective unconscious of the natives.



c) **Operational Component-** It refers to an expression of strangers' cognitive and affective experiences through specific behaviors. It entails an application of technical skills like language skills, academic skills, job skills, etc. in day – to – day life. Another aspect of operational component is synchrony which refers to harmony in communication with local people. It also includes strangers' resourcefulness i.e. ability to reconcile cultural differences and come up with creative action plans in carrying out daily activities and accomplishing personal and social goals.

ii) **Host Social Communication:-**

Social communication activities take place at macro and micro level. 'Host interpersonal communication' i.e. face to face communication in immediate social environment and 'host mass communication' i.e. in large social environment such as print and electronic media are the constructs of this dimension. The development and maintenance of relationship with natives by strangers play crucial role in cross-cultural adaptation and host interpersonal communication is its essence. Heckathorn et al as quoted by Kim (2001:75) reinforce 'Interpersonal networks exert social control by determining the language strangers must use and by conveying implicit or explicit messages of cultural values and social approval or disapproval'. Host mass communication is vital for host cultural understanding in the initial stage of sojourner's cross-cultural adaptation though there is no guarantee of instant feedback.

iii) **Ethnic Social Communication:-**

The role of strangers' ethnic social communication activities cannot be sidelined in the process of cross-cultural adaptation. Its two constructs 'ethnic interpersonal communication' and 'ethnic mass communication' emphasize strangers' communication activities with coethnics / conationals. It propels cross-cultural adaptation provided coethnics / conationals are well adapted. The strangers' stress of crossing culture can be subsided if coethnics / conationals help them to develop host communication competence and host social communication activities.

iv) **Environment:-**

The cultural and sociopolitical context is provided by the environment. Host receptivity, host conformity pressure and ethnic group strength are the constructs of this dimension. Host receptivity refers to the opportunities and social support native born people provide to strangers for developing close interpersonal relationships with them. Whether local people accept strangers into the social communication networks matters a lot. Host conformity pressure refers to the level of intolerance, prejudice and discrimination aimed at strangers by local people. According to Kim (2001:79) 'conformity pressure is the extent to which the environment challenges strangers to adopt the normative patterns of the host culture and communication system'. Ethnic group strength is determined by overall social standing of the ethnic group in comparison with other groups in society; its institutional completeness i.e. to what extent it is organized and integrated into a collective economic, political, social and cultural system and identity politics. Ethnic group strength serves to interfere with or mediate strangers' relationship with the host environment.

v) **Predisposition:-**

Whether strangers blend well or stand out oddly in the new culture is controlled by their predisposition. The constructs of this dimension are- preparedness for change, ethnic proximity and adaptive personality. Preparedness for change refers to strangers' learning of new culture prior to their displacement. Whether entry to new culture is planned and voluntary or unplanned and imposed on strangers influences their cross-cultural adaptation. Whether ethnic backgrounds of two different cultural environments bear similarity or are distinct affects strangers' cross-cultural adaptation. Kim (2001:84) states 'A stranger whose cultural values and norms are highly compatible with those of the natives is likely to find the host environment less stressful'. Such compatibility boosts up strangers' host communication competence. Adaptive personality refers to strangers' openness, strength and positivity. The strangers' personality traits like flexible, open minded and tolerant to ambiguity open the doors of new learning for intercultural transformation. Personality strength entails resilience, risk taking, persistence, elasticity and resourcefulness. These inner resources will help strangers to absorb culture shock and change with less serious damage. Positive personalities with robust optimism can better face challenges of new environment triggering intercultural transformation. Harrison et al (1996) as quoted by Kim strengthens that "positivity thus encourages acceptance of others despite differences and is

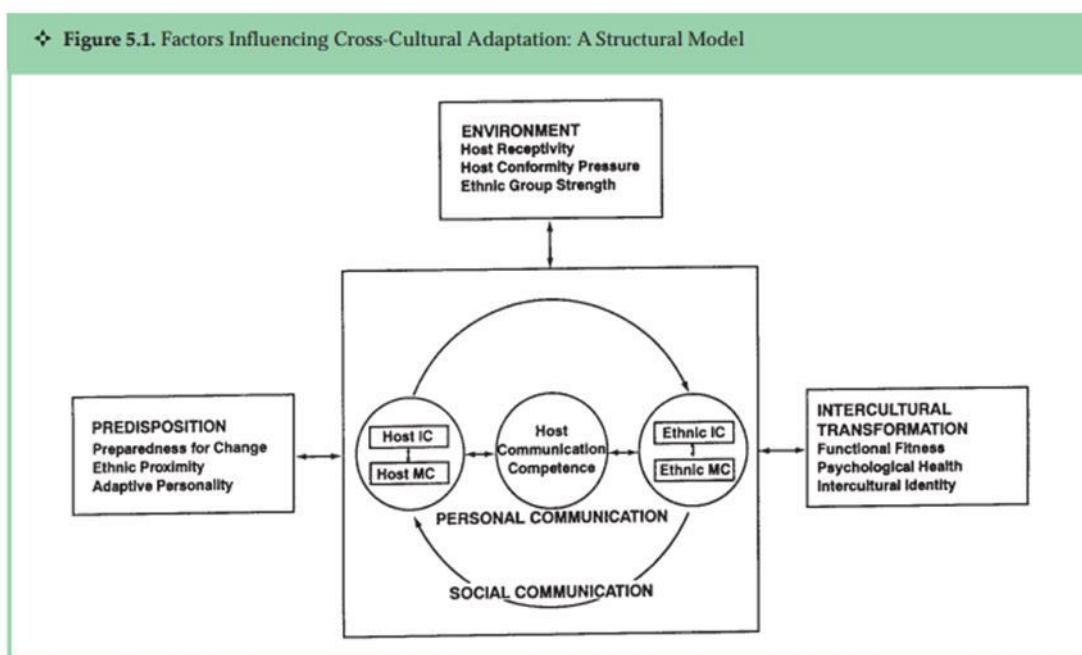


manifested in self-esteem, self-trust, and general self-efficacy”.

vi) **Intercultural Transformation:-**

The constructs of this dimension are functional fitness, psychological health and intercultural identity. Functional fitness refers to strangers’ ability to carry out day-do-day activities comfortably in host environment. Kim (2001:186) says ‘an increase in functional fitness is reflected in turn, in increased congruence of subjective meaning systems between strangers and their hosts’ Functional fitness boosts up psychological health. From functional fitness, psychological health and strangers’ interactions with a new cultural environment emerge intercultural identity. In a nutshell, intercultural transformation is influenced by the first five dimensions. All the above dimensions link twenty eight theorems of Kim’s theory.

Diagram of Kim’s Structure Model:



§ Note: IC = interpersonal communication; MC = mass communication.

Multivariate Themes of *The Inheritance of Loss*:

The Inheritance of Loss is Booker Prize winning and the most celebrated novel by Kiran Desai published in 2006. It deconstructs the myth of westernization and deals with immigrant experience, contradictory terrain of East and West, ethno-racial and historical relationships amongst people from different cultures and backgrounds, cross-cultural stress and conflict, globalization, love, insurgency, etc. It portrays the miserable plight of immigrants when they cross culture and especially illegal immigrants. The title of the novel and the lines extracted from its epigraph, which is a poem ‘Boast of Quietness’ aptly substantiate its multivariate themes. The lines extracted from epigraph are:-

‘My humanity is in feeling we are all voices of the same poverty,
 My name is someone and anyone,
 I walk slowly, like one who comes from so far away he does not expect to arrive’.

The above lines encapsulate the idea of loss. The epitome of this loss is Biju, an illegal immigrant, who is psychologically defeated and physically destroyed by demands of new cultural environment and pull of the original culture. Another immigrant Jemubhai Patel, a retired judge, also suffers from horrific culture shock after crossing culture though eventually he attains psychological metamorphosis into an image of perfect English gentleman. All the characters in the novel suffer from loss directly or indirectly.



3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

This paper examines two Indians' distress of displacement, of crossing cultures, their miserable plight of being outsider in new culture and its resultant. Jemubhai's journey from an outsider to an insider in new culture i.e. his cross-cultural adaptation and Biju's painful journey to a doomed life of wretchedness in new culture i.e. his cross-cultural maladaptation in *The Inheritance of Loss* is investigated in the light of Kim's theory of Cross-Cultural Adaptation. The study is carried out by employing qualitative research designs.

4 ANALYSES:

Jemubhai Patel's Cross-Cultural Adaptation:

Jemubhai Popatlal Patel, a retired judge, after attending Bishop's College on a scholarship in India moved to Cambridge for equipping himself for ICS at the age of twenty. As his entry to new culture was planned, he was very much excited to embrace English way of life i.e. English culture. At the time of his departure to England, he experienced piercing fear not for his future but for the foolish faith he lived with in his native place 'Piphit'. But at the very beginning of his voyage to England he encountered cross-cultural challenges. As food is culturally coded in the novel, his cabin mate's twitched nose at lump of pickle wrapped in a bundle of puris, onions, green chillies and salt in a twist of newspaper carried by him signifies the beginning of his self-abjection because of cultural differences.

Claire Kramsch (1998:81) states that cross-cultural 'refers to the meeting of two cultures or two languages across the political boundaries of nation-states.----- a culture shock may take place upon crossing national boundaries'. The predicament of crossing culture in Jemubhai's case started building edifice from his entry into England itself. He was shocked to see that people could be poor and live unaesthetic lives (Desai: 2006:138) there too. He experienced a virulent hostility and not receptivity from the natives while searching for room. His knocks were answered 'Just let', 'All full' or even a curtain lifted and quickly dropped, a stillness as if all the inhabitants had in that instant, died'(Desai: 2006:38). He faced rejection by twenty two homes and eventually Mrs Rice on Thornton Road rented out a room to him as she needed money so badly and was not sure of getting any lodger at all. Jemubhai became the victim of what is said by Stuart Hall that the westerners had power to make us see as 'others' and exercise superiority.

According to Furnham and Bocher (1982) as quoted by Redmond cultural differences are one of the primary factors contributing to culture shock. Lack of ethnic proximity between his original and host culture aggravated Jemubhai's mental anxiety. Discrimination exercised by landlady who used to keep the tray of food for him at the staircase was so humiliating. When he asked for proper supper, she said, 'We don't eat much of a supper ourselves, James (Desai: 2006:39). She called him James instead of Jemubhai. Because of the food culture of new environment, he passed sleepless nights with that half - empty stomach.

Kim quotes Robinson(2001:149-150)'In England, negative attitudes have been generated among the public based on that nation's imperial past, as manifested by the mainstream population's discriminatory views of Asians and other third world migrants'. Jemubhai's life was taken over by host conformity pressure. He was not tolerated by the natives. While travelling by bus elderly women always moved over when he sat beside them and girls held their noses and giggled, 'Phew, he stinks of curry!' (Desai: 2006:39). No native spoke to him for the entire days. His heart and mind became a blunt aching thing and words were suspended in his throat. He leaped when touched on the arm as if from an unbearable intimacy, dreaded and agonized over even a 'How - do - you -do - lovely day' ----he dissolved into tears of self-pity at the casual affection (Desai: 2006:40). Because of cold host receptivity, development of his relationship with natives was threatened and lack of fitness in the new environment brought down his edifice of self-esteem. His skin colour, accent became a problem. His self-abjection reached climax because of poor host communication competence, poor language skills and operational skills. When he stood for ICS and attended viva voce, his English still had the rhythm and the form of Gujarati. After declaration of the results, when he found his name at the bottom of the list, 'looking neither right nor left-----he ran home with his arms folded and-----soaked his pillow with his weeping. Tears sheeted his cheeks, eddied about his nose, cascaded into his neck, and he found he was quite unable to control his tormented ragged nerves. He lay there crying for three days and three nights (Desai: 2006:38).

'The origins of individual mental functioning are social----- Human behavior can be qualified as "culturally mediated" (Berry et al: 2002:47). Jemubhai started incorporating elements of new culture in his internal structure. He tried to overcome mental anxiety, frustration and stress of culture shock through psychological maneuvering and with innovative action plans which are propelled by his understanding of new environment. During his transition from one culture to another, he had carried the skill of study with him. That skill could engage him for twelve hours at a stretch.



According to Nayar (2018:203) 'Culture is about power, where power works through insidious forms- what is called ideology – to inspire people to adopt the interests and beliefs of the dominant classes'. As Jemubhai revered English culture, he started assimilating in the new environment. His skin color was disguised with powder puff. He started washing obsessively to get rid of an accusation of 'smelling'. 'To the end of his life, he would never be seen without socks, and shoes and would prefer shadow to light, faded days to sunny for he was suspicious that sunlight might reveal him in his hideousness all too clearly' (Desai:2006:40).

Jemubhai's stress of culture shock subsided when he started incorporating the elements of new culture into him which underscores his growth. He started becoming English. And his becoming English is facilitated by his only friend in England Mr Bose who was well adapted. Similarity between the two with respect to inadequate clothes, forlornly empty rooms, poor native trunks boosted up his learning of new environment. It was Mr Bose who suggested him to buy Caruso and Gigli for his new gramophone. It was Mr Bose who corrected his pronunciation and both read the same books also. Mr Bose intensified his learning and incorporation of aspects of new culture e.g. his watching the changing of the guard at Buckingham Palace.

According to Thomas et al (2010:48) "Only he who is thoroughly familiar with his own and the foreign system of orientation can be successful in intercultural cooperation". Jemubhai's intercultural transformation is made possible by number of factors. First of all his move to England was well planned and motivated. His school Principal Mr McCooe had suggested his father, 'he should take local pleader's examination and find employment in the courts of subordinate magistrate! Bright boy-----he might end up in the high court!' (Desai: 2006:58). His father himself was indulged in procuring false witnesses to appear in court and was very passionate about his son becoming judge. Secondly, while at Bishop Cotton School, he was very much impressed by the portrait of Queen Victoria and wondered that 'a woman so plain could also have been so powerful' (Desai: 2006:58). His respect for her and English culture grew a lot. He believed in the supremacy of white culture. While going to Cambridge he threw food packed by his mother overboard and was furious that how his mother could think that he couldn't eat with knife and fork in the dining salon on the ship. At the time of his departure to Cambridge, he neither cried nor threw coconut into ocean. All in all, he possessed strong willingness to adopt English culture. His predisposition also triggered his cross-cultural adaptation. His friendship with landlady's dog and eating Shepherd's pie with Mr Bose exemplify his open-mindedness to new culture. During his return journey, he sipped beef tea which strengthens his journey from Jemubhai Papatlal Patel to James Peter Peterson and his psychological and socio-cultural fitness in new culture i.e. successful cross-cultural adaptation.

Biju's Cross-Cultural Maladaptation:

The most poignant story of another sojourner portrayed in the novel is nineteen years old Biju. His move to America was unplanned and imposed by his father as his father wanted his son to be a wealthy person. He went to America with the skill of a mechanic on tourist visa and worked as waiter and overstayed there as an illegal immigrant. He did all sorts of odd jobs in restaurants and always tried to escape police i.e. became an escapee. According to Gudykunst and Hammer (1988) as quoted by Redmond cultural similarity produces more accuracy in a sojourner's ability to predict and explain host behavior, it facilitates interpersonal relationships and reduces sojourner's anxiety. But Biju's illegal status and vast cultural differences between America and India started piling up his cultural stress. He was completely paralyzed because of the tremendous stress of minority status. In New York restaurants, underground world which is unsafe and crowded was for illegal workers from third world countries. This is how the balance was maintained by keeping the first world on top and third world twenty two steps below. A owner's wife in Italian Restaurant preferred workers from poorer parts of Europe as 'they might have something in common with them like religion and skin colour' (Desai:2006:48). Natives' prejudice and attitude towards Asian immigrants discouraged Biju's participation in new environment. Host mass communication also reflected a lot of 'Racism' as said by Harrish-Harry, the owner of Gandhi Café. Biju's friend Saeed applied for the immigration lottery each year, but Indians were not allowed- 'Bulgarians, Irish, Malagasys- on and on the list went, but no-no Indians' (Desai:2006:81). Addresses, phone numbers of shadow class (third world) always changed as they were condemned to movement.

As an illegal worker, Biju worked on slave wages in appalling and life-threatening conditions. He was always humiliated, embarrassed and rejected by natives. He was not welcomed anywhere with positive attitude by them. Owner's wife of Italian restaurant could not bear the smell of his hair oil. When he tried to smile at female American citizens- 'Hi,Hi', they did not even look at him. In fact, Biju's lack of knowledge of local communication system, which is a prerequisite of his job, threatened his interaction and participation in the host environment. Because of his failure to conform to the norms of new culture, a lot of host conformity pressure was built up. He was the victim of natives' disapproval, intolerance, discrimination and prejudice. When Biju's employer gave soap, toothpaste, toothbrush,



deodorant, etc. his self-respect was killed. When he was forced to serve beef to customers which was against his religious values, his mind was entrapped in the issue of holy cow, unholy cow as his friend Saeed had convinced him, 'the cow was not an Indian cow; therefore it was not holy' (Desai:2006:76). According to Babiker et al as quoted by Furnham(2005:20) 'The quality and quantity of culture shock has been shown to be related to the amount of *difference* between the visitor's (sojourner's, manager's) culture and the culture of the country they are visiting or working in'. Because of the vast differences between American and Indian cultures, Biju possessed an awe of white culture and his culture shock was at peak. In fact, he was separated from new culture because of enormous cultural differences, acculturative stress, his predisposition and his lack of resourcefulness.

Usually, coethnics and conationals are sojourner's treasure trove for social activities. Biju also tried to connect to his conational by calling Nandu who was his father's friend and lived with twenty two taxi drivers in Queen's, but Nandu did not answer his call and tried to hide when Biju arrived at his doorsteps. Even after two hours, when Nandu found Biju waiting there, he demoralized Biju by saying, 'No jobs here anymore. If I were a youngman I would go back to India, more opportunities there now' (Desai: 2006:98). And after that he never met Biju again.

When Biju met Saeed, who had come from Zanzibar and told him that Zanzibar is full of Indians and his grandmother is Indian, he found a breathing space and relief from the suffocation of culture shock. Eating samosas, chapatis, jalebis, pilau rice together was very soothing for Biju at the backdrop of tormentation in host environment. And when 'Saeed, Saeed could sing like Amitabh Bachhan and Hema Malini, Biju almost fainted' (Desai: 2006:53). But when Saeed found employment at a Banana Republic and moved, Biju again sunk in emptiness.

Because of lack of emotional and motivational drive to participate in the new environment, Biju is not exposed to the dynamics of host culture. Therefore, there is no question of trial and error in his case. Markus and Kitayama as quoted by Berry et al (2002:101) state 'Generally Western concept of self is of an individual who is separated, autonomous and atomized seeking separateness and independence from others. In contrast in Eastern cultures relatedness, connectedness and interdependence are sought, rooted in a concept of the self not as a discrete entity, but as inherently linked to others'. Biju was more engaged in ethnic communication activities. Because of disorientation and disconnection in new culture, he was pulled by Indian culture. He practiced protective psychological maneuvering for holding on to original cultural practices. He wanted to live within a narrow purity and that's why he joined Gandhi Café owned by Harrish-Harry. It was 'an all Hindu establishment' where he could hear Gandhi's favorite tunes. Along with other illegal workers he worked for fifteen to seventeen hours donkey days with minimum wages and lived in horrific conditions. One day in Gandhi Café he skidded over rotten spinach, got injured and asked his employer for doctor's aid. His employer threatened him with the following word:

'Doctor!! Do you know what is medical expense in this country?!' 'YOU should have to pay ME for not cleaning, living like a pig'. '----know how easily I can replace you? Know how lucky you are!!! – I'll snap my fingers and in one second hundreds of people will appear. Get out of my face!' (Desai: 2006:188). It reflects lack of in-group solidarity. Biju's frustration, fear, uncertainty resulted into his aggression and complete alienation in new culture.

Gerd Bauman quoted by Louise Cummings (2013:95) observes in his book 'Contesting Cultures' '[n]o idea is as fundamental to an anthropological understanding of social life as the concept of culture'. And Biju was not equipped with this; rather he was ill equipped for the new culture. He did not have technical skills like language skills, job skills, academic skills, etc. Lack of host receptivity, extreme host conformity pressure, drastic cultural differences, lack of host communication competence, his unplanned and imposed entry into new culture and the most important his adverse predisposition, close mindedness and lack of willingness to participate in new cultural environment made him outsider permanently and homesickness victimized him making him invalid. Even homeless chicken in a park scratching in a homey manner in the dirt created a pang for village life in him. Sometimes he used to be so restless to stay in his skin. Even sometimes he felt a flash of anger at his father for sending him alone to this country. 'Looking at a dead insect in the sack of basmati that had come all the way from Dehra Dun, he almost wept in sorrow and marvel at its journey, which was tenderness for his journey' (Desai:2006:191). His life was just remained to displace air. 'Life was not about life for him anymore, and death – what would even that mean to him? It would have nothing to do with death' (Desai: 2006:268). His integration in new culture failed and resulted in maladaptation. He chose to be a poor Indian in his motherland and not hated Indian in America. His return journey was like a bus in the sky- 'New York – London – Frankfurt – Abu Dhabi – Dubai – Bahrain – Karachi – Delhi – Calcutta' (Desai:2006:269).

Biju returned home without even knowing the name of American president. After landing in his motherland, on the way, he was robbed of all his possessions including clothes.

'Darkness fell and he sat right in the middle of the path – without his baggage, without his savings, worst of all, without his pride. Back from America with far less than he'd ever had' (Desai:2006:317).

**5 CONCLUSION:**

As contemporary reality is cross-disciplinary, interdisciplinary amalgamation, cross-cultural adaptation is climacteric in which multidimensional factors interact simultaneously. According to Kim(2001:160) 'like a rider and a horse, a stranger and the receiving environment are engaged in a joint venture' in cross-cultural adaptation. In general, entering a new culture is potentially enigmatic experience. Therefore, for successful intercultural transformation like Jemubhai Patel in *The Inheritance of Loss* cultural sensitization is of paramount importance in today's context, otherwise entering new culture will result into termination of life itself like Biju in the same novel.

REFERENCES: WORKS CITED:

1. Yule, George. *The Study of Language*. Cambridge University Press. Seventh Edition. 2021.
2. Berry, W Jhon, Poortinga, H Ype, Segall, H Marshall, Dasen, R Pierre. *Cross-Cultural Psychology*. Cambridge University Press. Second Ed.2002.
3. Ryan, Stephen B. *Hidden Biases of Cultural Schema*. The Asian Conference on Cultural Studies. 2016.
4. Kim, Young Yun. *Becoming Intercultural: An Integrative Theory of Communication and Cross-Cultural Adaptation*. Sage Publications, Inc. 2001.
5. Arifeen, M Shajedul. *Academic Sojourners, Acculturation and Interpersonal Communication: Path Analysis*. Global Journal of Human Social Science, Linguistics and Education, Volume 13, issue 12, 2013.
6. Kramsch, Claire. *Language and Culture*. Oxford University Press. 1998.
7. Desai, Kiran. *The Inheritance of Loss*. Penguin Books. 2006.
8. Redmond, V Mark. *Cultural Distance as a Mediating Factor between Stress and Intercultural Communication Competence*. International Journal of Intercultural Relations, Volume 24, Issue 1, January 2000.
9. Nayar, K Pramod. *Contemporary Literary and Cultural Theory*. Pearson. 2018.
10. Thomas, Alexander, Kinast, Eva – Ulrike, Machl, Sylvia Schroll. Ed. *Handbook of Intercultural Communication and Cooperation*. Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht. Second Edition. 2010.
11. Tilburg, Miranda Van and Vingerhoets, Ad. Ed. *Psychological Aspects of Geographical Moves*. Amsterdam University Press. 2005.
12. Cummings, Louise. Ed. *The Routledge Pragmatics Encyclopedia*. Routledge. 2013.