

# Cultural Conflicts in the Family Relations of Indian Immigrants in Lahiri's *The Namesake*

**Ridhima Bhalla, Kum Kum Ray, and Siddhartha Singh**

## **Abstract**

Growing global interconnectivity not only ensues fluid cultural exchanges but also causes conflicts among diverse ethnic communities. Exploring the challenges faced by Indian immigrants in family relationships abroad, this study also delves into their resolution strategies. Data for the study was collected through a self-prepared and structured questionnaire using Google Forms, which was then sent to Indian immigrants via email, WhatsApp, and Facebook Messenger. The questions were based on the thematic concerns of Jhumpa Lahiri's *The Namesake*. Statistical analysis was conducted using the summarised responses from Google Forms. The results show that employment (48.5%) is the predominant motive for migration, eclipsing marriage (27.3%) and the pursuit of education (10.6%). Also 48.5% feel alienated in their host country, especially on special occasions, and 33.3% long to return to their home country. When dealing with problems in marriage, 74.4% rely on open communication, while 32.6% choose a patient approach to heal relationship wounds. The analysis of the cultural and social differences in the lives of the respondents compared to the characters in the novel provides a guide for future Indian immigrants.

**Keywords:** migration, culture, conflicts, relationships, Jhumpa Lahiri, *The Namesake*

## **Introduction**

Culture is the synthesis of a society's social behaviours, institutions, and norms, as well as family beliefs, customs, and traditions. Occasionally, culture is associated with a particular region or group. Raeff et al. describe culture as human behaviour and development in particular places, times and spaces which constitute the concept of culture in a postmodern society.<sup>1</sup> Matthew Arnold claims that "the men of culture are the true apostles of equality. The great men of culture are those who have a passion for dissemination, for enforcement, and for transmission from one end of society to the other."<sup>2</sup> Thus, culture acts like an underground river that influences our family, friendships, and lives. Cultural conflicts arise when two or more cultures in the same society clash in values and beliefs. These conflicts shape our beliefs, perceptions, and judgements about all kinds of relationships. This shows that culture and its conflicts are dynamic and linked to the symbolic component of existence.

Caught between two worlds, migrants always create a double identity through loss, and often suffering, and have access to two separate systems and two fundamentally opposed worldviews. Many academic articles argue that the Indian immigrant living in a truly dystopian society feels

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<sup>1</sup> Catherine Raeff, Allison DiBianca Fasoli, Vasudevi Reddy and Michael F. Mascolo, "The Concept of Culture: Introduction to Spotlight Series on Conceptualizing Culture," *Applied Developmental Science*, vol. 24, no. 4 (2020), pp. 295–298.

<sup>2</sup> Matthew Arnold, *Culture and Anarchy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), p. 53.

alienated in the host country and longs to return home. It is noteworthy that migrants and diasporic communities experience the fluidity of the contemporary world to the extreme and struggle with the “schizophrenic characteristic”<sup>3</sup> of the postmodern world in their lives. A subtle observation of such a complex postmodern phenomenon among the lives of Indian immigrants has been made by Jhumpa Lahiri in her debut novel, *The Namesake* (2003). The novel deals with the complex situation of being caught between two opposing cultures with pronounced religious and social differences. It also highlights the potentially contradictory dimensions of the differences between the cultural groups.

The novel also portrays the inner struggles and resistance of Indian immigrants due to the juxtaposition of their native culture with the culture of the host country. The causes of insecurity for second-generation people born in America as children of immigrants lies in their family and home environment in the United States, where Indian culture and customs persist, albeit in a weakened form. The study therefore suggests that this kind of life scenario leads to friction in family relationships, and that time is the best way for an Indian immigrant to heal. The protagonists of the novel, Ashoke and Ashima, were part of the wave of immigrant professionals who came to the US in the late 1960s. However, the story of their son Gogol<sup>4</sup> is dominated by the impact of his name on his relationships with family, friends, and lovers. His name reflects the compelling themes of cultural identity, diaspora, and multiculturalism.<sup>5</sup>

## Methodology

To obtain information from Indian immigrants, a structured questionnaire was created in Google Forms by the researchers, which was then distributed to the sample via email, WhatsApp, and Facebook Messenger (see Appendix 1). Data were collected from 66 Indian immigrants (to understand how they resolve conflicts in their relationships) using the structured questionnaire. Respondents were asked a total of 24 questions across five sections. The first section contained questions RQ1 to RQ3 (RQ stands for Research Question), which were personal information, such as the name of the respondent’s home country, the host country, and the year the respondent moved to their country of migration. Questions RQ4 to RQ8 were included in section two, which referred to the socio-economic background of immigrants or their work status. Section three, questions RQ9 to RQ12, dealt with the cultural and social preferences of the respondents. The respondents’ individual marital or family preferences formed the basis of section four, which contained RQ13 to RQ18. The concluding section five was directed to married immigrants only. Unmarried immigrants could skip the last section and click on the “Submit” button. This section contained questions RQ19 to RQ24.

## Results and Discussion

The results are analysed and presented in the form of descriptive statistics for each survey question. Since the study focused on family relations of Indian immigrants, therefore the first and foremost

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<sup>3</sup> Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2000), p. 133.

<sup>4</sup> It is paradoxical that he exchanges his unwanted nickname “Gogol” for “Nikhil,” alluding to Ashoke’s favourite Russian writer Nikolai Gogol. Ashoke, while reading Gogol’s story *The Overcoat*, almost died as a young man in a train accident in India. He nicknames his firstborn “Gogol,” as a torn page from the book was his rescuer during that terrible time.

<sup>5</sup> Ruediger Heinze, “A Diasporic Overcoat?: Naming and Affection in Jhumpa Lahiri’s *The Namesake*,” *Journal of Postcolonial Writing*, vol. 43, no. 2 (2007), pp.191–202.

question refers to the native/home country. The respondents' native country is India and Table 1 presents their native/home country's state. Out of 66 respondents, 61 mentioned their state name along with the country. 5 respondents wrote India as an answer to RQ1.

**Section 1 (Respondents' home/host country details) RQ1 to RQ3**

***RQ1: Your Native/Home country along with state name***

Table 1 shows the native/ home country of the 66 respondents (See Appendix 2). Figure 1 presents 61 respondents' native/home country along with state name in percentage, where 25% of respondents belong to Haryana, India, while 10% of the respondents belong to Punjab and Bangalore states in India. The responses of 5 respondents, who mentioned India as an answer to RQ1, are not presented.

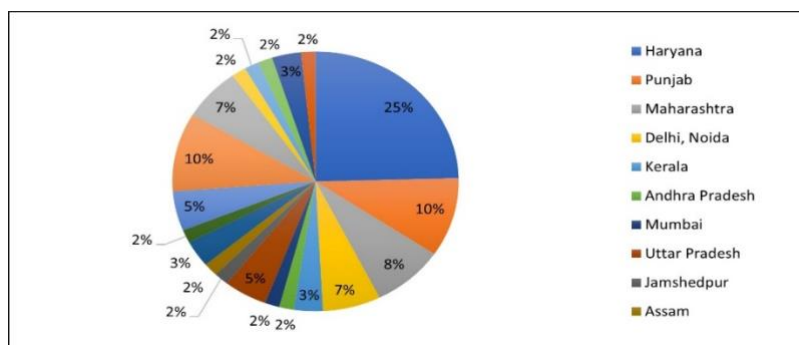


Figure 1. Respondents' native/home country along with State name (61 responses).

***RQ2: The Present/ Host Country of your migration***

Table 2 (See Appendix 2) lists the current or host countries of the 66 respondents. 39 of the 66 respondents are from the United States, 7 from the United Kingdom, and 2 each from Ukraine, Italy, and Austria. The shared Google form received only one response each from Saudi Arabia, Dubai, and Muscat. Figure 2 shows a bar chart of the 66 respondents with a migration background.

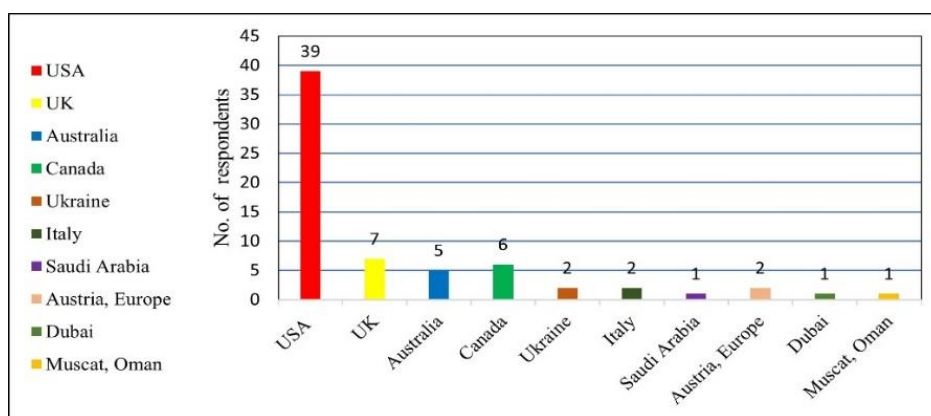


Figure 2. Respondents' present/host country of migration (66 responses).

***RQ3: In which year did you shift to your present/host country?***

For the total respondents, Figure 3 shows the class intervals of the year in which they migrated to the host country. The year in which the respondents arrived in the host country is distributed among the ten class intervals. As RQ3 is an open-ended question, the responses collected are dispersed as

indicated in Figure 3 (See Appendix 2). Between 2011 and 2020, 37 of the respondents migrated to their current country. Figure 3 shows a bar chart with the collected responses.

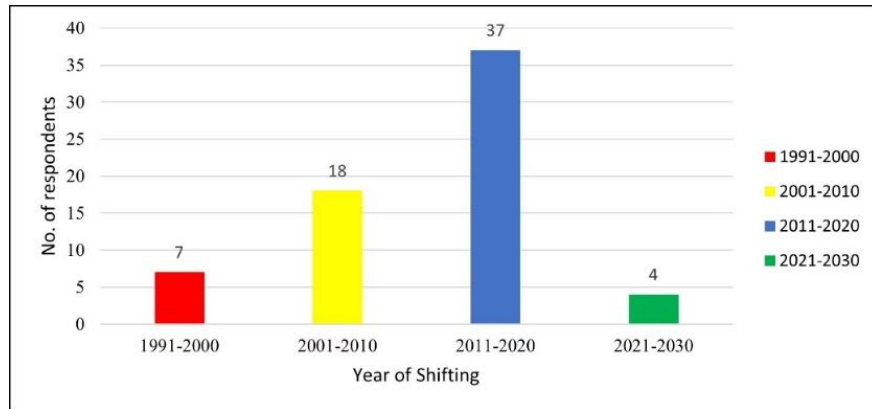


Figure 3. Respondents’ year of shifting to their present/host country (66 responses).

## Section 2 (Respondents’ socio economic / work status) RQ4 to RQ8

### **RQ4: What is the main reason for your migration?**

The next five questions are part of Section 2, which focuses on the socio-economic or occupational status of the respondents. Employment is the most important reason for migration for 48.5% of respondents, as countries of immigration offer numerous job opportunities to everyone. This is appropriate in today’s globalised and technologically enriched world. 27.3% of the respondents relocated because of marriage, as in Lahiri’s *The Namesake*, where the female protagonist Ashima also migrates because of her marriage to Ashoke. 12.1% of the respondents migrated because they wanted to settle permanently in a new country. This question was open-ended, so one respondent mentioned business as a reason for migration. Education and training also play a role in respondents’ answers. None of the respondents indicated forced or involuntary migration as an answer (Figure 4).

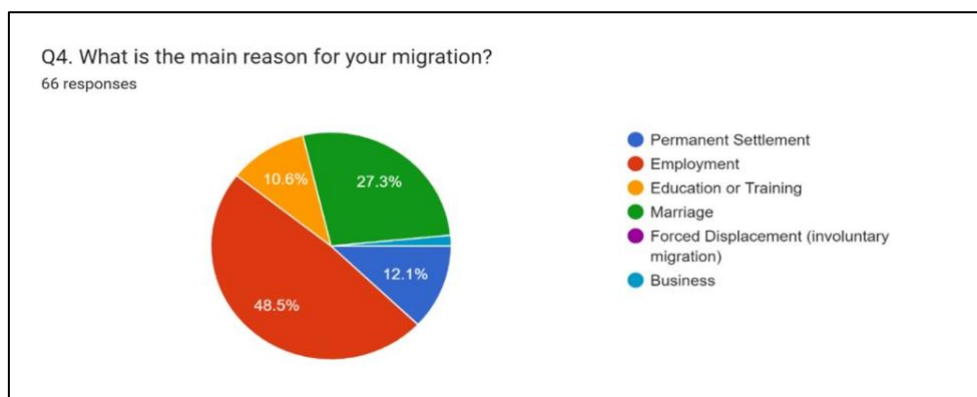


Figure 4. Respondents’ reasons for migration.

### **RQ5. What kind of work do you do?**

This question plays an important role while describing the work status of any immigrant. Most of the immigrants are white collar professionals like doctor, teacher, lawyer, professor, business executive, software engineer, and so on. According to the survey, 61.5% of the respondents are white collar

professionals, which proved that in today’s globalised world white-collar professionals are in demand. The male protagonist Ashoke in the novel has even been “hired as an assistant professor of electrical engineering at the university. For teaching five classes, he earns sixteen thousand dollars a year... The job is everything Ashoke has ever dreamed of. He always hoped to teach at a university and not work for a company.”<sup>6</sup> 21.5% of the respondents are currently unemployed due to the uncertainty of the job market. Reasons for unemployment include retirement, homemaker, or student. Some other responses in this category were researcher, payroll assistant, and business. Only 6.2% of the respondents fall into the category of unskilled work (Figure 5).

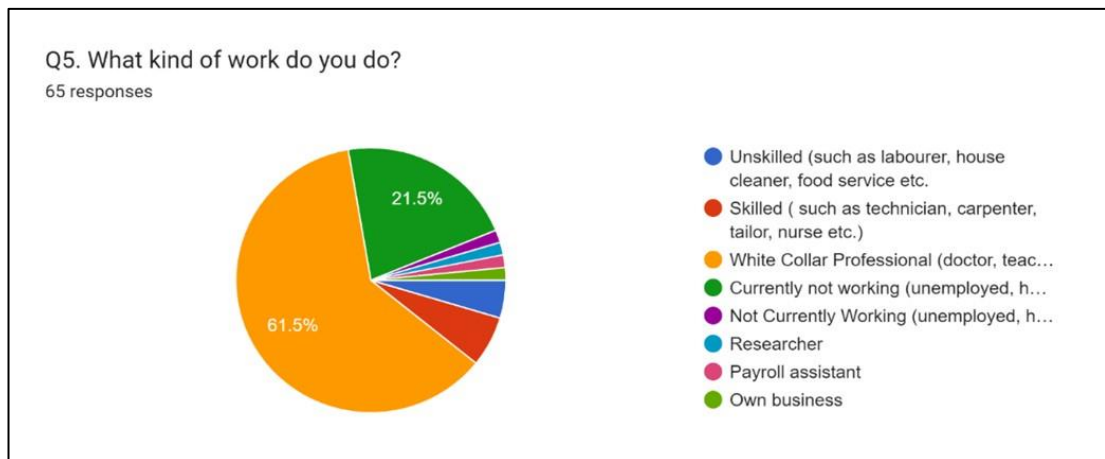


Figure 5. Respondents’ work status.

**RQ6. Which country do you prefer the most?**

The result of this question is a surprising one for the researchers. Out of 66 respondents, 64.6% respondents prefer their present/ host country while 30.8% respondents prefer their native/ home country, as Ashima prefers her homeland on various occasions. At the time of Gogol’s Annaprasan, she wishes her own brother Rana would feed him, that her own parents would bless him with their hands on his head. The remaining 4.6% respondents chose both countries rather than one one (Figure 6). The reasons for choosing the host country over the home country are addressed in this study next.

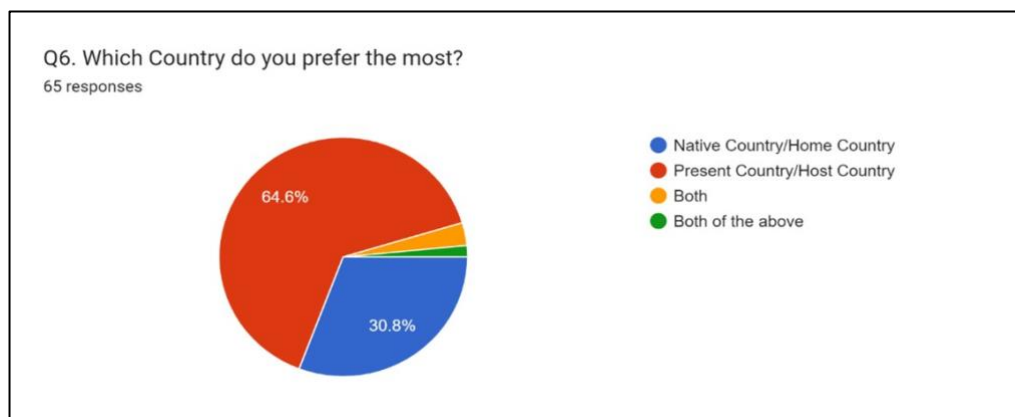


Figure 6. Respondents’ country of preference.

<sup>6</sup> Jhumpa Lahiri, *The Namesake* (New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2003), pp. 48-49.

**RQ7. What kind of differences do you find between your present/host country and native/home country?**

78.1% of respondents perceive a better lifestyle, 76.6% choose better facilities, and 51.6% cite better education as the main difference between their current country and their home country. This has been proven by many scholars in the past, that Western countries offer better lifestyles, facilities, and education to their residents. 70.3% of the respondents chose their host country as a “land of opportunities” for its residents (Figure 7). As this was an open question, a few respondents provided differences between the two countries, such as better law and order, less corruption, more streamlined processes, better civic sense, people being polite and respectful to each other, and better government and policies. These may be why most respondents in RQ6 prefer the host country to the home country.

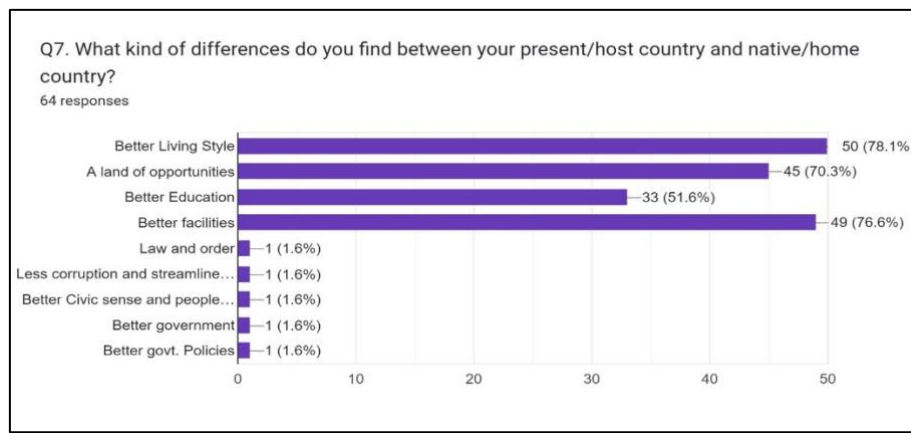


Figure 7. Respondents' difference in host/home country.

**RQ8. Do you long to come back to your homeland?**

The answer to this question also surprised the researchers. After giving more importance to the host country in questions RQ6 and RQ7, 33.3% of the respondents chose “yes” and 31.8% chose “maybe” as their answer to this question. 16.7% of respondents answered “no” and 18.2% answered “can't say” (Figure 8). It can be concluded from this that an immigrant always longs to return to his or her home country, despite a variety of opportunities and facilitation. However, we are in a transitional period where place and time intersect, and form complicated figures of difference and identity, past and present, inside and outside, inclusion and exclusion.<sup>7</sup> Likewise, *The Namesake* offers a glimpse of the upcoming experiences of its characters in an unfamiliar territory; “[Ashima] thinks it's strange that her child will be born in a place most people enter either to suffer or to die,”<sup>8</sup> when she gives birth to her son in an American hospital. She fears raising her infant abroad, imagining that her child will suffer the same fate, and feels that she does not really belong in American society.

<sup>7</sup> Homi K. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (New York and London, Routledge, 1994), p. 1.

<sup>8</sup> Lahiri, *The Namesake*, p. 4.

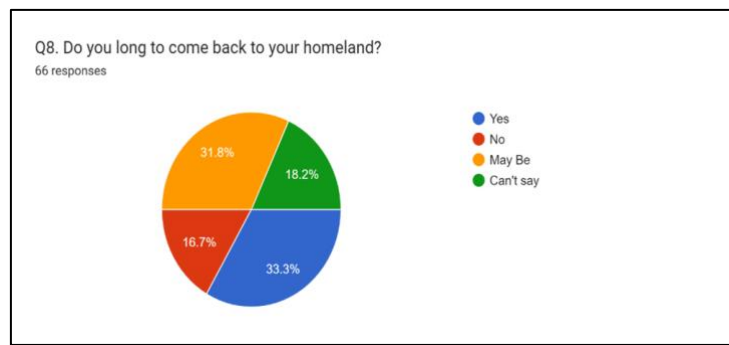


Figure 8. Respondents' desire to come back to their homeland.

### Section 3 (Respondents' cultural and social preferences) RQ9 to RQ12

#### RQ9. How often do you visit your native/home country?

45.5% of respondents visit their native country once in three years. The reason could be work priorities, financial obligations, or unavailability to go home due to uncertainty in the world. One of the respondents mentioned, "We haven't visited in the past 2 years due to covid, but probably once a year would be preferred." 36.4% of respondents also preferred once a year option to visit their native country. 12.1% of the respondents agreed to once in five years option to the question (Figure 9).

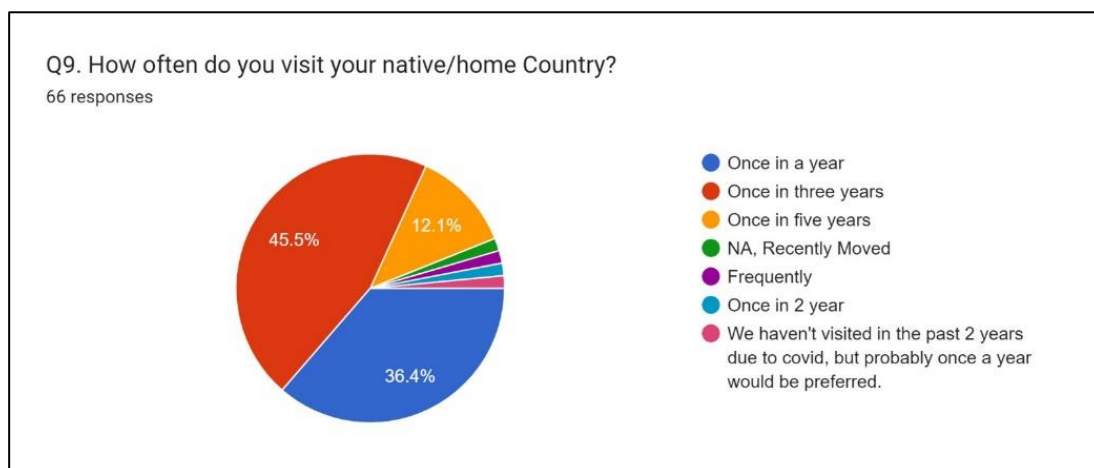


Figure 9. Respondents' visit preference to native/home country.

#### RQ10. Do you feel alienated in your host country on the special occasions such as festivals, birthdays, marriage ceremony etc.?

Special occasions play an important role in a person's life, and meeting one's family members on such occasions is like a stress killer. However, in today's fast-paced world, it seems impossible to be with family all the time, which creates a sense of alienation among immigrants, as evidenced by the fact that 48.5% of the respondents answered 'yes' to RQ10. In the novel, Ashima also feels alone when her child is born in America. As Lahiri writes:

But nothing feels normal to Ashima. For the past eighteen months, ever since she's arrived in Cambridge, nothing has felt normal at all. It's not so much the pain, which she knows, somehow, she will survive. It's the consequence: motherhood in a foreign land... That it was happening so far from home, unmonitored and unobserved by those she loved, had made it

more miraculous still. But she is terrified to raise a child in a country where she is related to no one, where she knows so little, where life seems so tentative and spare.<sup>9</sup>

Thus, the novel gives many other important clues to the difference between Indian and American culture. In one incident, Ashoke and Ashima are planning a trip to their host country after Ashoke qualifies for a three-week sabbatical at Christmas in December. Hence, Ashima regrets not going to Calcutta during Durga Puj. However, 36.4% of the respondents do not feel so alienated (Figure 10). The remaining respondents are 13.6% stating ‘maybe’ and 1.5% stating ‘sometimes’ (Figure 10).

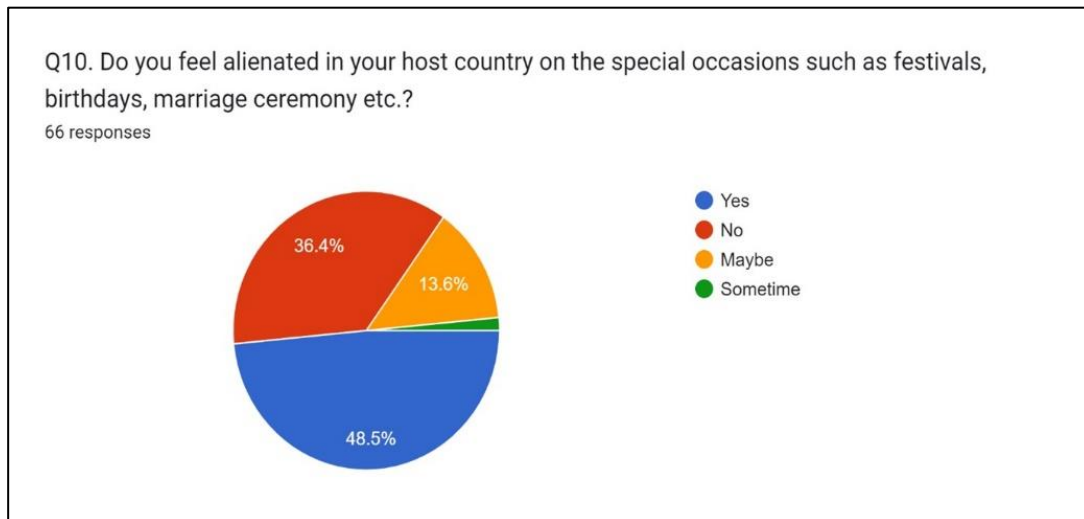


Figure 10. Respondents' feeling of alienation in the host country.

***RQ11. What type of problems did you face as an immigrant in your host country?***

Immigrants face some problems in their host country and RQ11 focuses on such kind of problems. This question gets only 61 responses, and 5 respondents gave no answer for RQ11. 42.6% of respondents face cross-cultural (traditional problems / religious issues/ mixed identity/language), 29.5% of respondents face social issues like region, religion, caste, race, community, behavioural issues, colour, gender etc. Ethnic (common ancestry/physical attributes/food habits) and psychological issues (mental issues/alienation/stressful atmosphere/ fear of being adjusted) get same weightage i.e., 26.2% (Figure11). A respondent wrote very interesting response adding an emoji, “None for now but miss India. As a saying you can take out an Indian out of India but can never take out India out of an Indian 😊.” Another respondent wrote “We both are working, and this don’t have strong connections to believe at least at home we have our family members.” According to Frantz Fanon, culture finds its place in today’s world by following realistic paths laden with productive, unified, and harmonious ways that “glow with passionate emotion and feelings.”<sup>10</sup> Few respondents mention they miss their family, mother, and motherland instead some of the respondents don’t face any such kind of problems. This question is related to “visa, immigration paperwork issues, which is trickery and time consuming and discontinued employment due to visa issues” (Figure 11).

<sup>9</sup> Lahiri, *The Namesake*, pp. 5-6.

<sup>10</sup> Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, trans. Constance Farrington (New York: Grove Press, 1968), p. 217.



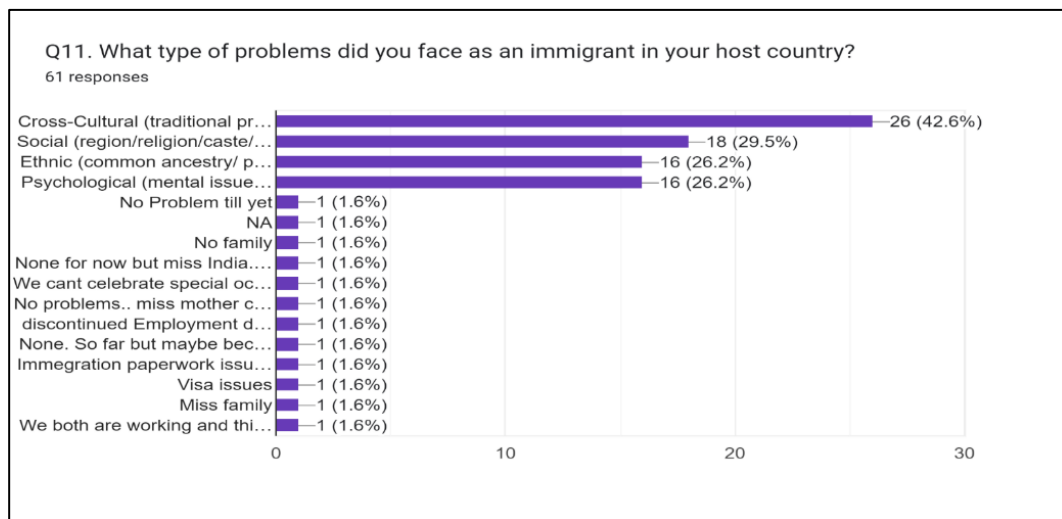


Figure 11. Respondents' problems as an immigrant in the host country.

**RQ12. How do you manage to overcome the problems as mentioned in Q11?**

63 responses were received to this question. 65.1% of respondents solve their problems by accepting them in their host country and finding their own ways to solve them, depending on the situation. They try to understand the culture of the host country and the benefits they receive in their host country. One respondent answered that: "This was our choice, and we are happy." So, they have chosen the host country and are happy to spend their future in that country. Everyone has their own preferences and is happy accordingly. 46% of the respondents solve their problems with patience and 19% of the respondents by tolerating them, while 28.6% of the respondents solve their problems by talking about them with their relatives. The researchers also believe that talking about the problems is a good way to overcome the problems as it lightens the heart and soul of a person. Sometimes meeting people and making new contacts also helps to overcome the teething problems in the new country, as one of the respondents mentioned (Figure 12). Ashima also gradually adopts the American way of life in *The Namesake*, which leads to the development of her self-confidence and autonomy as she adapts to society's expectations of a typical American woman. She acquires cultural and geographical adaptability as she grapples with different aspects of her life over several decades. Thus, after her husband's death, Ashima adopts a transnational identity and eventually "adapts to the American melting pot and eventually fits into a transcultural society."<sup>11</sup> She has dual residency and divides her time between her ancestral home, India, and her immediate family in the United States of America.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>11</sup>Afshin Assadnassab, *Displacement, an Unknown Freedom: Cultural Identity in Jhumpa Lahiri's The Namesake* (Masters Dissertation, Dalarna University, 2012), p. 10.

<sup>12</sup> Lahiri, *The Namesake*, pp. 275-276.

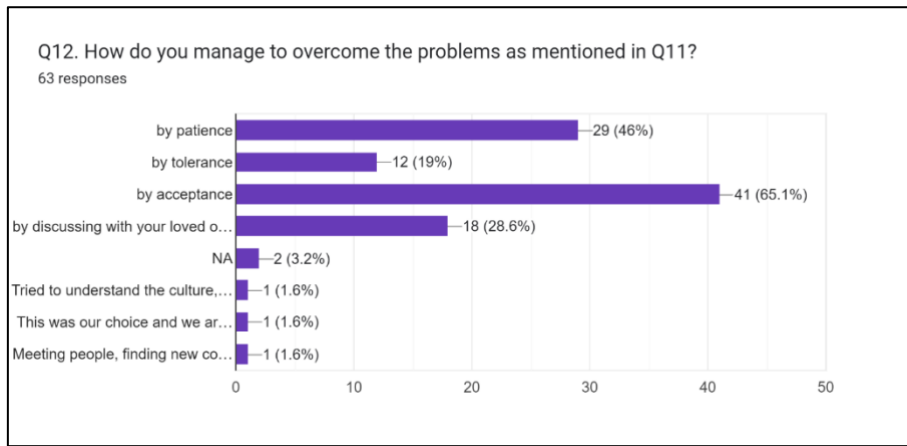


Figure 12. Respondents' ways to overcome problems in the host country.

#### Section 4 (Respondents' marriage/family preference) RQ13 to RQ18

##### ***RQ13. Are you married?***

84.8% of respondents were married and 15.2% of respondents were unmarried (Figure 13).

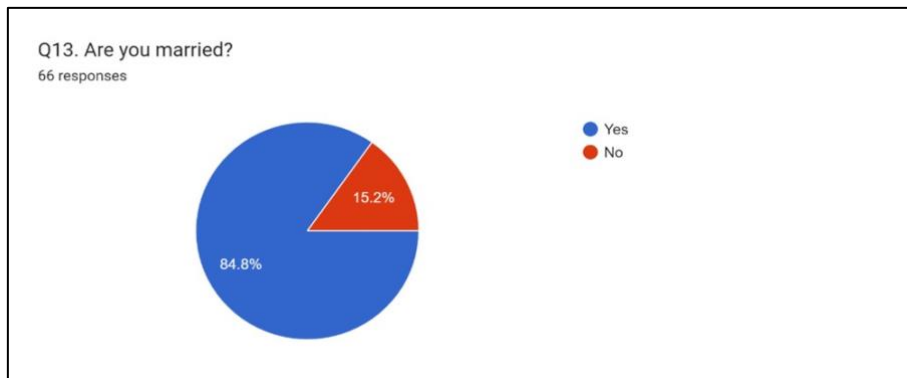


Figure 13. Respondents' marriage status.

##### ***RQ14. Does your spouse come from the same religion (Ethnic group) as yourself if you're married?***

In today's world religion hardly matters in terms of marriage but still some people consider religion as an important factor to be married. Out of 65 respondents, 87.7% of respondents' spouse come from the same ethnic group as it shows the importance of religion in terms of preference in the marriage. It is believed that when two persons from the same religion married to each other, they understand their ritual and culture in a better way. It is easy for them to assimilate in their own culture after marriage and adopt the cultural norms without any conflict. On the other hand, only 9.2% of respondents had spouses from different ethnic groups (Figure 14).

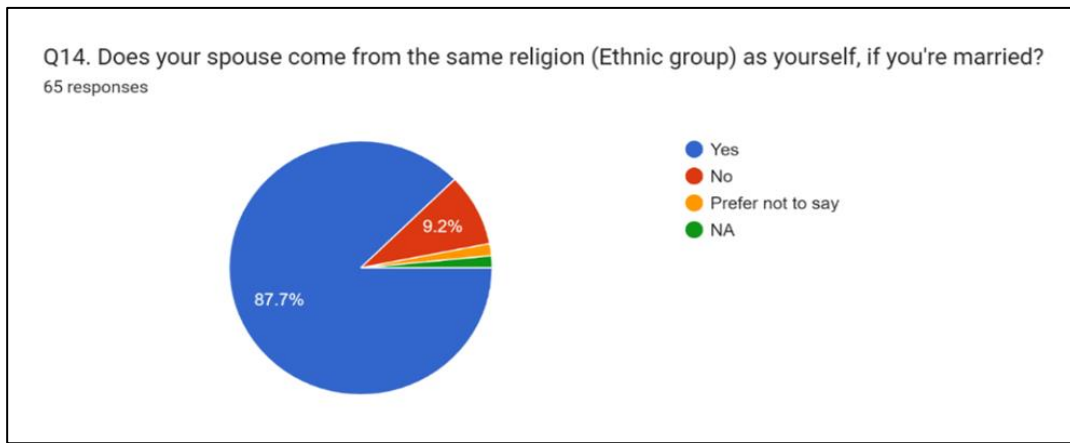


Figure 14. Religion status of married respondents.

***RQ15. Do you have any current relationship if you are unmarried?***

Only 43 respondents gave answer to this question as this was only for unmarried people. 62.8% of respondents stated they were not in a current relationship and 14% of respondents accepted their relationship status (Figure 15).

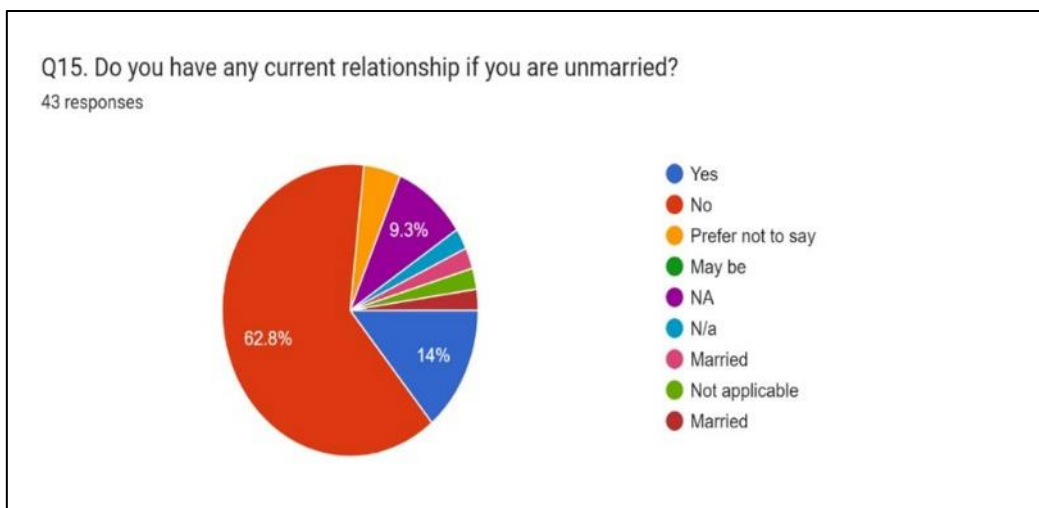


Figure 15. Unmarried respondents' relationship status.

***RQ16. If you are in a relationship, do you face any kind of problem in it?***

The main idea behind this question was to know the problems in the relationships of respondents. 52 respondents answered this question, and 63.5% of respondents do not have problems in their relationship. 26.9% of respondents have problems in their relationship (Figure 16).

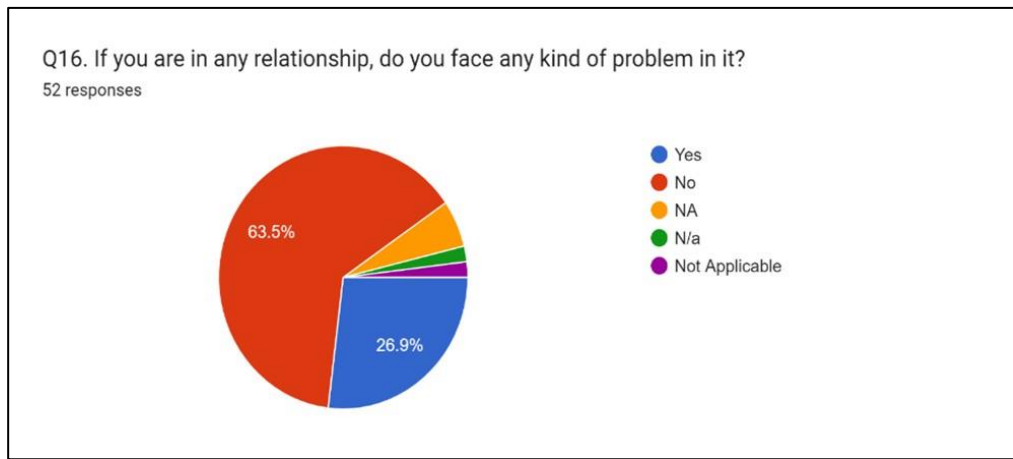


Figure 16. Respondents’ status of problem in a relationship.

**RQ17. If yes, what kind of conflicts do you face in your relationship?**

Out of 35 respondents, 40% of respondents face differences of opinion and lack of time as the main problems in their relationship. 37.1% respondents think that difference in their interests is the reason for conflict. 20% of respondents mention ego clashes and 5.7% of the respondents said sexual issues were conflicts in the relationship. The remaining respondents do not have any conflicts (Figure 17).

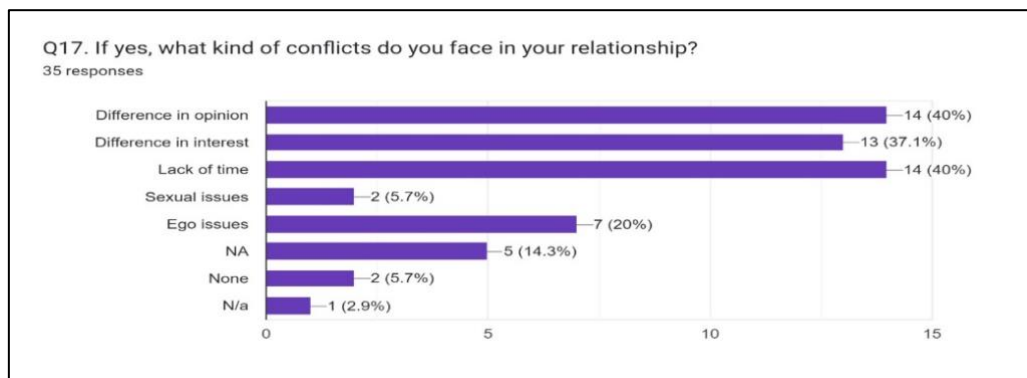


Figure 17. Respondents’ views about conflicts in relationship.

**RQ18. How do you resolve these conflicts in your relationship?**

Out of the 43 respondents, 74.4% of the respondents resolve their conflicts by talking to each other, while 46.5% of the respondents resolve their conflicts by sharing their concerns with each other, and 32.6% of the respondents take time to heal their wounds or conflicts in the relationship (Figure 18). Françoise Kral analyses how the ramifications of the new world geography affect the lives of two generations of immigrants and their interstitial selves.<sup>13</sup> Kral proposes *The Namesake* as a novel about the Indian diaspora that portrays immigration as empowering on the one hand and disturbing “the silence of the polyglot” (a term coined by Julia Kristeva) on the other. According to him, Lahiri seems to suggest in the novel that the surface does not change significantly and that it is the core that bears witness to the transformation of the self.<sup>14</sup> The other respondents don't address any conflict in the

<sup>13</sup> Françoise Kral, “Shaky Ground and New Territorialities in *Brick Lane* by Monica Ali and *The Namesake* by Jhumpa Lahiri,” *Journal of Postcolonial Writing*, vol. 43, no.1 (2007), pp. 65–76.

<sup>14</sup> Kral, “Shaky Ground and New Territorialities,” p. 71.

relationship. Likewise, towards the end of the novel, Gogol returns to his roots and a new beginning seems to be in the offing. He goes to his room and begins to read Nikolai Gogol’s short stories, which his great-grandfather had given to his father (after he had finished the twelfth grade) and which his father gave to Gogol for his birthday when he was still young (on his fourteenth birthday). Nikolai’s book was thus a whole piece of family tradition for Gogol. As Lahiri writes:

As the hours of the evening pass, he will grow distracted, anxious to return to his room, to be alone, to read the book he had once forsaken, has abandoned until now. Until moments ago, it was destined to disappear from his life altogether, but he has salvaged it by chance, as his father was pulled from a crushed train forty years ago. He leans back against the headboard, adjusting a pillow behind his back...For now, he starts to read.<sup>15</sup>

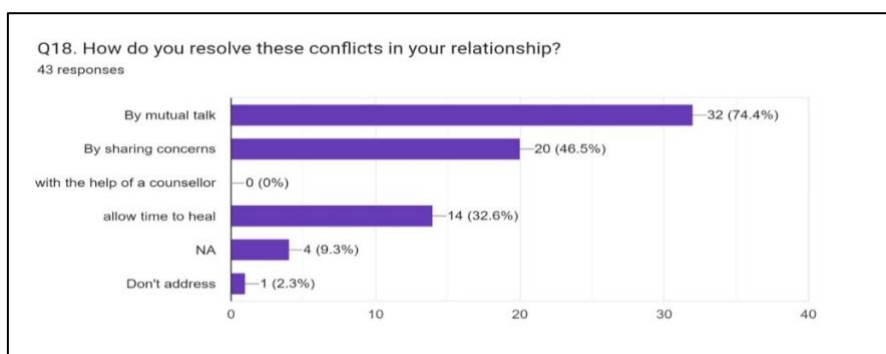


Figure 18. Respondents’ views about resolving conflicts in relationship.

**Section 5 (Only for married respondents) RQ19 to RQ24**

***RQ19. What sort of marital relationships do you share with your spouse?***

Out of 59 respondents, 86.4% of respondents share friendly relationships with their spouse and 16.9% of respondents share neutral/ apathetic relationships with their partner. As in the story, Gogol and Moushumi seem to have fully integrated as second-generation immigrants and no longer consider themselves strangers. Only 1.7% of respondents share a hostile relationship in their married life. One respondent shares friendly, neutral, and hostile relationship with their spouse (Figure 19).

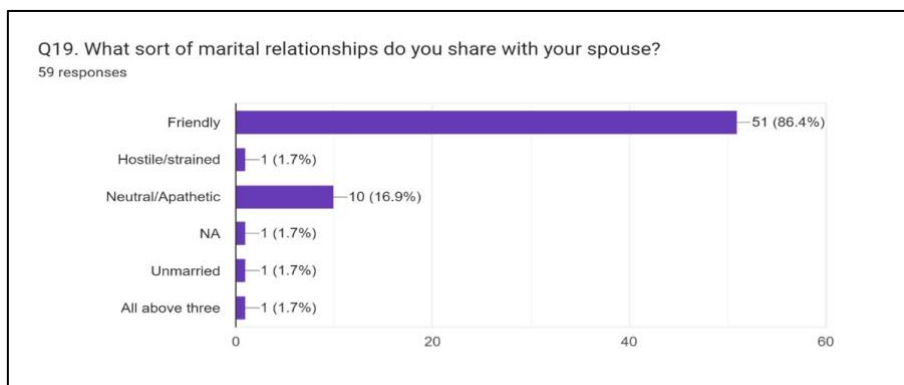


Figure 19. Respondents’ marital relationship with spouse.

Source: Own research.

<sup>15</sup> Lahiri, *The Namesake*, pp. 290-291.

**RQ20. Do you face any conflict in your marital relationship?**

Marriage is a solemn vow between two partners who choose each other. People who are happily married solve their conflicts with mutual understanding and care for each other. Out of 57 responses, 49.1% of respondents prove this notion by mentioning no conflict in their relationship. On the other hand, 19.3% of respondents share conflicts in their marital relationship and sometimes 28.1% of respondents share conflicts in their marriage (Figure 20).

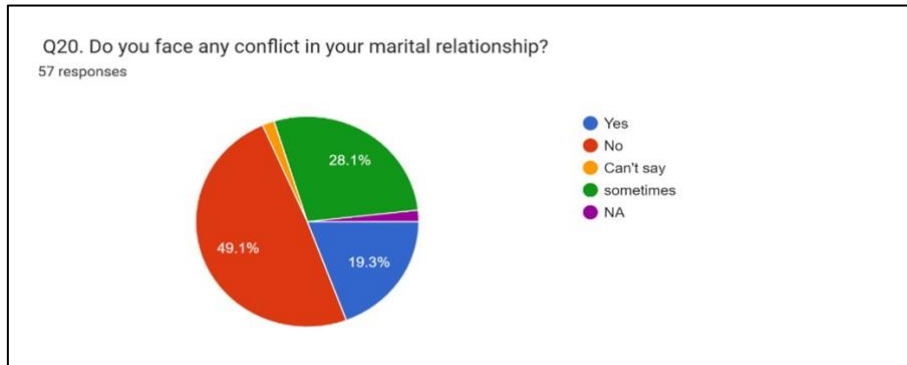


Figure 20. Respondents’ marital relationship with spouse.

**RQ21. What kind of conflicts do you face in your marital relationship?**

This question focuses on the main purpose of this study, where 59.6% of married respondents face difference in their opinion as the main reason behind their marital conflict. Out of 47 married respondents, 46.8% of them opined about the difference in interest, whereas 36.2 % of respondents blame lack of time as the reason behind marital conflict. 21.3% of respondents mention ego issues and hardly very less respondents gave importance to sexual issues. A respondent mention “We both are different, and we respect and love mutually” as a solution to resolve these conflicts in the marital relationship where mutual understanding plays an important role behind any successful relationship. Another respondent opined that “Small arguments are always there in each family life which helps it to grow further” (Figure 21). It can be stated that small conflicts are good for any marital relationship, sometimes, as they help it to grow it in a positive way.

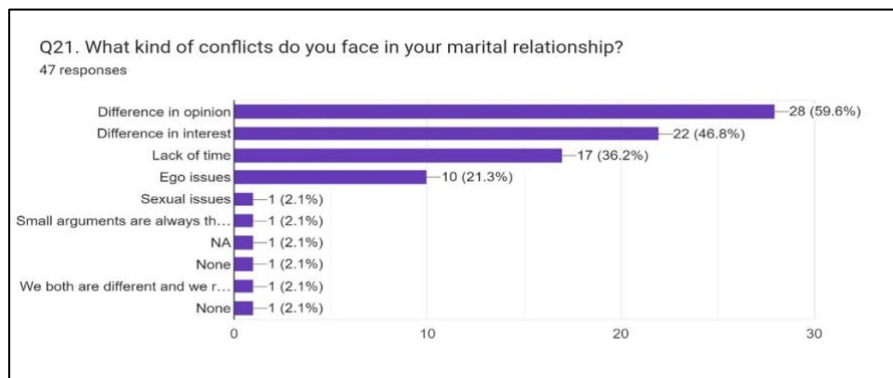


Figure 21. Respondents’ opinions about conflicts in marital relationship.

**RQ22. How do you overcome your marital conflicts?**

Out of 52 respondents, 78.8% of respondents resolve marital conflicts by mutual talk and another 55.8% of respondents overcome marital conflicts by sharing concerns to each other. 34.6% of respondents allow time to heal the conflicts in marital relationship and 3.8% of respondents take help from a counsellor to resolve their marital conflicts (Figure 22).

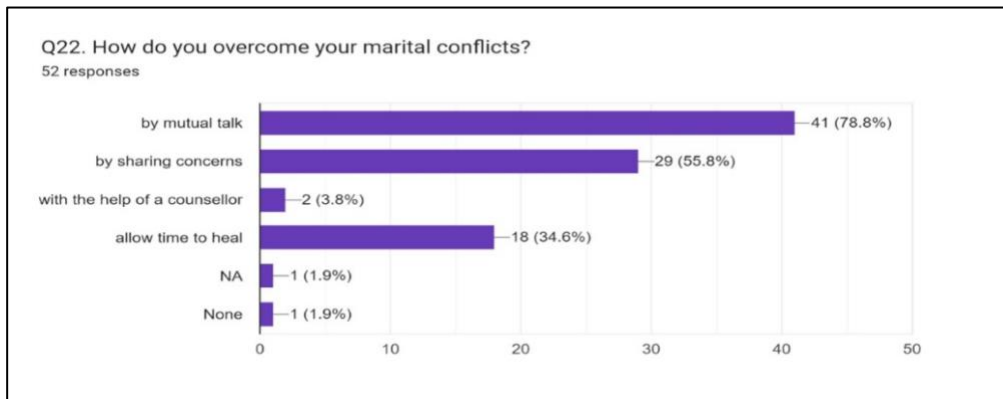


Figure 22. Respondents' views about overcoming marital conflicts.

**RQ23. Do you have any children?**

Out of 56 respondents, 76.8% of respondents have children, whereas the remaining 23.8% of respondents have no children (Figure 23).

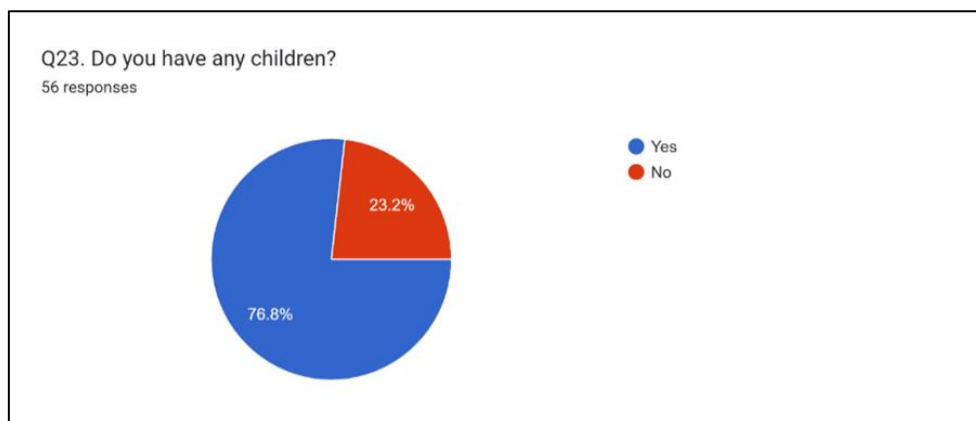


Figure 23. The status of married respondents' Children.

**RQ24. What sort of relationship do you share with your children?**

Out of 51 responses, 88.2% respondents share a friendly relationship with their children. Hostile/strained and neutral/apathetic are found among 2% of the respondents. For few respondents this question was not applicable (Figure 24).

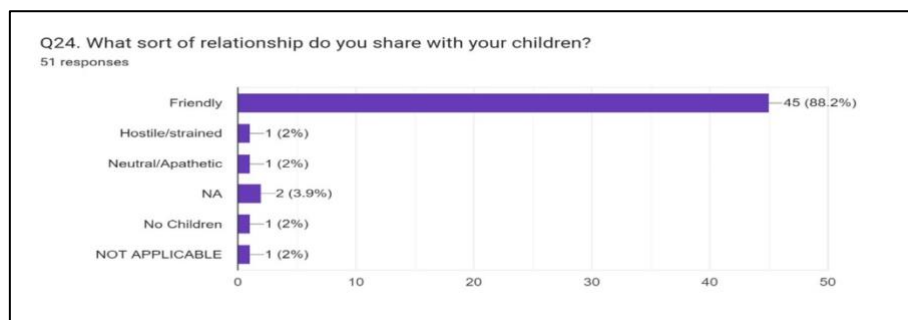


Figure 24. Respondents' relationship status with their Children.

## Conclusion

According to the findings of the current study and reading *The Namesake*, mutual understanding in a family relationship is the fuel that gives confidence and strength to overcome any kind of strife in a relationship. It helps to express an unbreakable bond between partners. It is widely known that a family bond is not like a clay pot that can be broken with a single blow. This bond provides wonderful memories that you can share with your family. Similarly, in fiction, the characters of Ashoke and Ashima reflect the chronological process of identifying and accepting their different global identities, while in the case of Gogol and Sonia, this metamorphosis remains blurred. As a result, the study suggests that such a lifestyle leads to discord in family relationships and highlights that time is the most effective technique for Indian immigrants to alleviate their emotional distress.

The sample size for this survey is small (i.e., only 66 respondents) because it was a major challenge to obtain the personal data of Indian immigrants virtually. Since the survey was conducted online, this study assumes that the respondents are familiar with using technological devices (such as mobile phones, laptops, computers, tablets, etc.) to answer the questionnaire. However, the paper can serve as a starting point for further research in this area and a careful analysis of the conflicts in Indian immigrant family relationships based on the characters in the novel. The questionnaire does not oblige respondents to answer all 24 questions.

## Appendix 1: Survey Questionnaire

### Section 1 (Personal Information) RQ1 to RQ3

RQ1. Your Native/Home Country along with State Name:

RQ2. The Present/Host Country of your migration:

RQ3. In which year did you shift to your present/host country?

### Section 2 (Socio Economic/ Work Status) RQ4 to RQ8

RQ4. What is the main reason for your migration? (Mark only one oval)

- Permanent Settlement/Employment
- Education or Training Marriage
- Forced Displacement (involuntary migration)
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

RQ5. What kind of work do you do? (Mark only one oval)

- Unskilled (such as labourer, house cleaner, food service etc.)
- Skilled (such as technician, carpenter, tailor, nurse etc.)



- White Collar Professional (doctor, teacher, lawyer, professor, business executive, software engineers)
- Currently not working (unemployed, homemaker, retired, student etc.)
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

RQ6. Which Country do you prefer the most? (Mark only one oval)

- Native Country/Home Country
- Present Country/Host Country
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

RQ7. What kind of differences do you find between your present/host country and native/home country? (Tick all that apply)

- Better Living Style
- A land of opportunities
- Better Education
- Better facilities
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

RQ8. Do you long to come back to your homeland? (Mark only one oval)

- Yes
- No
- May be
- Can't say
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

### **Section 3 (Cultural and Social Preferences) RQ9 to RQ12**

RQ9. How often do you visit your native/home Country? (Mark only one oval)

- Once in a year
- Once in three years
- Once in five years
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

RQ10. Do you feel alienated in your host country on the special occasions such as festivals, birthdays, marriage ceremony etc.? (Mark only one oval)

- Yes
- No
- May be
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

RQ11. What type of problems did you face as an immigrant in your host country? (Tick all that apply)

- Cross-Cultural (traditional problems/ religious issues/ mixed identity/Language)
- Social (region/religion/caste/race/ community/behavioral issues/ color/ gender)
- Ethnic (common ancestry/ physical attributes/ food habits)
- Psychological (mental issues/ alienation/ stressful atmosphere/ fear of being adjusted)
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

RQ12. How do you manage to overcome the problems as mentioned in Q11? (Tick all that apply)

- by patience
- by tolerance
- by acceptance

- by discussing with your loved ones
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**Section 4 (Individual Marriage/Family Preference) RQ13 to RQ18**

RQ13. Are you married?

- Yes
- No

RQ14. Does your spouse come from the same religion (Ethnic group) as yourself if you're married?

(Mark only one oval)

- Yes
- No
- Prefer not to say
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

RQ15. Do you have any current relationship if you are unmarried? (Mark only one oval)

- Yes
- No
- Prefer not to say
- May be
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

RQ16. If you are in any relationship, do you face any kind of problem in it? (Mark only one oval)

- Yes
- No
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

RQ17. If yes, what kind of conflicts do you face in your relationship? (Tick all that apply)

- Difference in opinion
- Difference in interest
- Lack of time
- Sexual issues
- Ego issues
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

RQ18. How do you resolve these conflicts in your relationship? (Tick all that apply)

- By mutual talk
- By sharing concerns
- with the help of a counsellor
- allow time to heal
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**Concluding section 5 (RQ19 to RQ24) is only for married people.**

**(if you are not married you can skip this section and click on the submit button)**

RQ19. What sort of marital relationships do you share with your spouse? (Tick all that apply)

- Friendly
- Hostile/strained
- Neutral/Apathetic
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

RQ20. Do you face any conflict in your marital relationship? (Mark only one oval)

- Yes
- No
- Can't say
- sometimes
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

RQ21. What kind of conflicts do you face in your marital relationship? (Tick all that apply)

- Difference in opinion
- Difference in interest
- Lack of time
- Ego issues
- Sexual issues
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

RQ22. How do you overcome your marital conflicts? (Tick all that apply)

- By mutual talk
- By sharing concerns
- with the help of a counsellor
- allow time to heal
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

RQ23. Do you have any children? (Mark only one oval)

- Yes
- No
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

RQ24. What sort of do you share with your children? (Tick all that apply)

- Friendly
- Hostile/strained
- Neutral/Apathetic
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

### Appendix 2

#### (No. of Respondents & Frequency Tally in Table Form RQ1 to RQ3)

<b>RQ1 Table1: Respondents' native/home country along with state name (in no.)</b>		
<b>State\Country</b>	<b>No. of respondents</b>	<b>Frequency Tally</b>
Haryana	15	
Punjab	6	
Maharashtra	5	
Delhi, Noida	4	
Kerala	2	
Andhra Pradesh	1	
Mumbai	1	
Uttar Pradesh	3	
Jamshedpur	1	
Assam	1	
Ahmedabad	2	
Tamil Nādu	1	
Bihar	3	

Bangalore, Karnataka	6	
Andhra Pradesh	4	
Himachal Pradesh	1	
West Bengal	1	
Raipur, Chhattisgarh	1	
Odisha	2	
Rajasthan	1	
Total	61	

**RQ2 Table 2: Respondents' present/host country of migration**  
(in no.)

	Country	No. of respondents
	USA	39
	UK	7
	Australia	5
	Canada	6
	Ukraine	2
	Italy	2
	Saudi Arabia	1
	Austria, Europe	2
	Dubai	1
	Muscat, Oman	1
	<b>Total</b>	<b>66</b>

**RQ3 Table3: Respondents' year of shifting to their present/host country**

Year	No. of respondents	Frequency Tally
1991-2000	7	
2001-2010	18	
2011-2020	37	
2021-2030	4	
Total	66	