Impact of Globalization on Indian Families: A Positive Study on Dollar Bahu by Sudha Murthy

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Abstract:
Dollar is a dream of many Indians. To strengthen the family, most of highly educated people are migrating to America and earning a lot. Keeping this in the mind, Sudha Murthy, a software engineer, a philanthropist and an eminent writer, writes in her novel “Dollar Bahu” how Indian families are fascinated to go for America and earn money. The study of the story with the title: “Impact of globalization on Indian families with respect to Sudha Murthy’s ‘Dollar Bahu’, projects the positive impact of the migration by well educated people from India to USA. The story of Gouramma and her family is a symbol of Indian Lower Middle class family. Their son Chandru is a symbol for the financial aspirant of the educated youth in India.

Key words: Migration, People, Financial strength, Indian Lower Middle class Family.

There is a saying in Telugu “Udyogiki dura bhoimi ledhu” which literally means there is no far land for an employee. If one were an agriculturalist one can work from their home-village. If one is a business man one can operate their business from their home-town but for an employee, there is no far land or home land to work. An employee has to be on his toes to migrate to any land in order to climb the rung of success in his career ladder. This paper discuss the “Impact of globalization on Indian families with respect to Sudha Murthy’s ‘Dollar Bahu’. This article will try to throw light on the positive side of the migration especially to United States of America. If we observe Indian history, no Indian even dreamt of migrating even after Vascodigama invented sea-route to India. Indians started to think of going to foreign countries, only when Europeans entered India and started ruling the country. During British rule in India, many Indians desired to go to Europe for higher studies so that they can partake as an employee in British government in India. Since then the rate of migration to foreign land has been increasing. Until two decades back an Indian employee used to migrate to any state within the country. Ever since India opened doors for Liberalization, Privatization and Globalization, there are no boundaries between the countries for an employee.

Brain-drain is not new to India. But from late 90’s because of software boom, user-friendly technology and for the better standard of living the most popular destination for an Indian employee is U.S.A : the land of amazing wealth and opportunities. According to a survey, Indians are the second largest immigrants to America after Mexicans accounting for 4.7 percent of the 41.3 million foreign born populations.
Today every one toes the line on what is called the great American Dream of success. Its invincible currency ‘Dollar’ has got all the majestic power in the world; Dollar has a great impact on Indian economy, Indian stock market, and price of gold in India and it has its impact even on ordinary Indian families. Many Indian families are considering ‘migrating to America and earning dollars’ is a short-cut to upgrade their status in India. In fact it is not inflated to say many Indian-families are considering Dollar as incarnation of ‘Goddess Lakshmi’, with a magic wand.

Though the novel is restricted to the southern part of Karnataka—the story about the migrants only from Karnataka to U.S.A it holds true for any part of the country in fact to any immigrant all over the world.

India is respected for its talent besides its tradition by the rest of the world. Today the entire world is talking about the potential in Indian youth rather than its poverty. Even, America, the big brother of the world recognized the endowment in the Indian youth and opened the doors for them. The total number of Indian students studying in the US shot up to 28% to 1,34,292 students, comprising the second largest foreign student body in America after China, according to a new report published on Thursday by US Immigration and Customs Enforcement of the Department of Homeland Security.

Like any other ambitious youth of this generation ‘Chandru’ in ‘Dollar Bahu’ who hails from a middle class family dreams to earn dollars in America. He strives hard for that and settles as software professional in U.S.A. It has improved not only his standard of living but also the standard of entire family. Thus pay our respect to USA for improving economic standard of the country.
'Gowramma' mother of 'Chandru' has built a second stair to her house with the dollars sent by Chandru from America, a life-time un-accomplished task for Chandru’s father ‘Shammana’ an ordinary ,sincere, talented schoolteacher. ‘Shankaranna’, a retired peon in a government school is able to settle his sons and married off his daughters with the dollars sent by her daughter Chitra Joseph who settled in U.S.A. No wonder when ‘Gowarmma’ blesses Chitra

‘May you live a hundred years with children and grandchildren in America’ (pg 109).

It is only globalization which made it possible to build a shopping complex in Bangalore for a lower middle class couple Malati and Gopinath. No wonder if Malati calls it

‘a land of nectar and honey’(pg-114)

Globalization erased social stigmas. In many working places across the world, instead of flair of the employees, their caste, creed, color, language, region is being given importance. For instance in India in the process of recruiting or proffering promotions to the employees, most of the higher officials consider employees of their respective religion or caste or creed or language. This is one of the main reasons why most of the talented Indians are migrating to U.S.A, where aptitude is respected. Indo-Americans, Nobel laureates Har Gobind Khorana, Amartya Sen are the best examples of Indian Brain-drain. One has to discern than that Pepsi C.E.O Indra Nooyi, Microsoft C.E.O ‘Satya Nadella’, Google C.E.O ‘Sundar Pitchai’, Nokia C.E.O ‘Rajiv Suri’, have earned name and fame in U.S.A but not on the land of five thousand old civilized, where great rulers like Ashoka, Akbar ,Sivaji ,Harshvardhan ruled, where legends like Goutham Buddha, Charka, Aryabhatta, Mahatma Gandhi born.

As ‘Radha Krishna’ a scientist reveals in a conversation to Chandru that he went to America not to earn bucks but he is vexed with his ex-manager who used to give promotions only to the employees of his caste irrespective of the flair of the employees.

“I worked very hard and wrote some good research papers, which were later selected for an international conference……my boss, always brought up one hurdle or other to prevent my going officially because I didn’t belong to his community and didn’t speak his language.”(pg-99)

In the words of Chandru ‘America always attracts the best professionals.’(pg-99).

Statics say that majority of the students who go to U.S.A on student visa are settling in U.S.A as they are attracted not only attracted to the and standards of living conditions in U.S.A but to also its Professionalism.

Globalization earned respect for women. Many parents in India think that a girl child is as a silent burden on their hearts. This statement is very true in case of lower middle class, poor and even in orthodox families. So instead of thinking how to raise the girl child as independent and confident women, parents think how to get her married as early as possible. In the case of Chitra though she is a bright student her parents married off her at the age of eighteen to her cousin who is ten years
older to her because he is ready to marry her without dowry.

“I got married when I was eighteen, to my second cousin Manappa who was ten years Older than me. But my parents were happy that he had married me without any dowry.”(Pg-106)

In the case of Vatsala though her father is a rich merchant is very orthodox. So he married off her as soon as she completes tenth standard. Had they been in India they would have settled as ordinary homemakers in spite of their talent and ambitious nature. It is again globalization which is transforming many father-hidden, diffident young girls in to strong and confident women.

Women, once was confined to only four walls of the house. Her position is only at hearth. Today she is a C.E.O, Doctor, Teacher, Scientist what not everything. Sadly, even in these twenty first century women as a mother-in-law didn’t broaden her thoughts and is unable to accept daughter-in-law with open heart. May be it is not an exaggeration to say, today many of the young women wants to marry N.R.I’s only to escape from the domination or torture from mothers-in-law. It is true in many Indian families if there is a quarrel between wife and husband mothers-in-law adds fuel to that and supports their sons so that there would be no damage to their domination in the families. Hence there is no wonder when ‘Asha-patil’, a victim of circumstances says,

“There are many women like me in India, tortured by their mothers-in-law.
But they don’t have any option.
Sometimes, they commit suicide,
sometimes they run away and some get into depression. For me, God helped in the form of America…” (pg no-124)

Many Indians are reluctant to come back to their mother country because not only they are attracted to the professional work atmosphere but also to the respect towards one’s privacy. If women are divorced or single in India everyone feels that they have all the rights to pose any personal questions to her. That’s why ‘Gouramma’ feels sad when Shanta says,

“I am happy in this country. This society does not look down upon single Women, unmarried, divorced or widowed. They don’t gossip behind your back.” (pg no-133)

Conclusion: The story Dollar Bahu exhibits the financial motto of Indian to strengthen themselves through their skills. Many of migrated families like Chandru became financially powerful. It gave an inspiration to other families in the city to go abroad and earn money. Thus dollar incarnated as a divine gift to financially stricken Indian. It became a dream to parents see their children to study Engineering or medicine and go abroad for their employment. Everything has its own advantages and disadvantages. The intention of migrant is to earn money and make his family financially strong. In this point of view, whatever the efforts that he puts for making his dream real, is a positive aspect. Every migrant has to remember that whatever may be the land they earn their lively hood one should not forget their duty towards their mother, mother land and mother-tongue.
References:

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