

Exploring Berry's Four-Fold Model Of Acculturation In Tamarind Mem By Anita Rau Badami



Catherine Anthony^{1*}, Dr. Bharat Bharvad

^{1*}Research Scholar, Parul University, Gujarat, India.

²Assistant Professor, Parul University, Gujarat, India.

Abstract

This study examines Berry's Four-Fold Model of Acculturation in Tamarind Mem by Anita Rau Badami, exploring how characters navigate cultural transitions, identity conflicts, gender roles, language barriers, and emotional displacement. The novel portrays migration and acculturation through assimilation, integration, separation, and marginalization, reflecting the struggles of adapting to a new culture while preserving heritage. By combining literary analysis and migration studies, the research highlights the impact of intercultural communication, generational conflicts, and cultural displacement on identity formation. It also explores language as both a bridge and a barrier to integration. This study contributes to discussions on migration, cultural adaptation, and emotional resilience, offering insights into both literary and real-world acculturation experiences.

Keywords: Acculturation, Identity Conflict, Migration, Cultural Adaptation, Language Barrier, Intercultural Communication

1. Introduction

Acculturation, a key concept in migration and cultural studies, explores how individuals adapt to a new cultural environment while maintaining their original cultural identity. John W. Berry's Four-Fold Model of Acculturation categorizes this adaptation process into assimilation, separation, integration, and marginalization, each reflecting different ways individuals negotiate their cultural identity in a foreign setting. In Anita Rau Badami's Tamarind Mem, this model provides a valuable framework for analysing the experiences of characters as they navigate the tensions between Indian traditions and Western influences.

Studies on intercultural effectiveness (Avcılar & Gök, 2022) suggest that cultural adaptation is highly individualistic, influenced by personal, social, and contextual factors. Some characters in Tamarind Mem attempt to fully assimilate, shedding their cultural roots in pursuit of acceptance, while others preserve their traditions and resist integration into the dominant culture. The novel illustrates how personal resilience, family dynamics, and societal pressures shape the acculturation process, impacting characters' emotional well-being and identity formation.

Research on migration and intergenerational relationships (Ayika et al., 2018) emphasizes the

emotional and relational transformations that occur within migrant families. Tamarind Mem reflects these dynamics through the conflicts between generations, particularly in how older and younger characters experience cultural transitions differently. While older generations often cling to their heritage, younger ones must redefine their identity in a hybrid cultural space, leading to tension, misunderstanding, and emotional displacement.

Additionally, the concept of critical temporalities in migration (Baas & Yeoh, 2018) highlights how time influences acculturation experiences. The novel explores how characters balance their past traditions with future aspirations, demonstrating how migration is not just a physical transition, but a long-term psychological and emotional journey. Over time, nostalgia, adaptation, and self-discovery shape their evolving sense of belonging and identity. Through the lens of Berry's Acculturation Model, Tamarind Mem offers a complex portrayal of migration, revealing how cultural transitions impact identity, family relationships, and emotional resilience. The novel provides a compelling narrative on adaptation and belonging, reinforcing the challenges and transformations that define the migrant experience.

		Value and Maintain Native Culture	
		YES	NO
Value and Maintain Host Culture	YES	Integration	Assimilation
	NO	Separation	Marginalization

Figure 1: Berry's Acculturation Model

Source:

<https://open.maricopa.edu/culturepsychology/chapter/berrys-model-of-acculturation/>

By exploring Berry's Four-Fold Model of Acculturation in *Tamarind Mem*, this study examines how characters embody different acculturation strategies, revealing the psychological and social dimensions of cultural transition. Through assimilation, integration, separation, and marginalization, the novel illustrates the complex emotional experiences of migration, highlighting the tensions between heritage and adaptation.

This analysis contributes to broader discussions on migration, identity, and cultural negotiation, offering insights into how individuals navigate cultural displacement in both literary and real-world contexts. By examining the internal and external conflicts faced by migrants, the study underscores the emotional resilience, societal pressures, and intergenerational struggles that shape acculturation experiences. Through this lens, *Tamarind Mem* serves as a rich narrative that reflects the broader realities of migration, reinforcing the significance of cultural adaptation in an evolving global landscape.

1.1 Anita Rau Badami's Exploration of Cultural Identity

Anita Rau Badami's *Tamarind Mem* delves deeply into cultural identity, migration, and intergenerational conflicts, shedding light on the challenges of adapting to new cultural landscapes. The novel vividly reflects Berry's Four-Fold Model of Acculturation, illustrating how characters grapple with assimilation, integration, separation, and marginalization while navigating the tensions between tradition and modernity. Through its rich narrative, *Tamarind Mem* presents an intimate exploration of identity struggles, particularly for women who must balance familial expectations and individual aspirations within shifting cultural environments.

Research on migrant identity (Belfi et al., 2021) highlights how first- and second-generation

migrants face distinct social and professional struggles, mirroring the protagonist's internal conflict between her Indian heritage and the pressures of cultural adaptation. The novel captures these struggles by portraying generational divides, where older characters remain deeply rooted in tradition, while younger ones seek independence and cultural reinvention. This contrast emphasizes the emotional weight of migration, as individuals navigate belonging in both old and new cultural settings.

The concept of 'permanent temporariness' (Birger, 2024) aligns with the novel's themes of displacement and uncertainty, depicting migration as a continuous search for stability and self-definition. Characters in *Tamarind Mem* experience a sense of limbo, unable to fully assimilate into the new culture or completely detach from their homeland. This feeling of in-betweenness resonates with contemporary migration experiences, where cultural hybridity often leads to questions of identity and self-worth.

Furthermore, Birger & Nadan (2022) emphasize the role of social and political forces in shaping migrant identities, a theme that is central to *Tamarind Mem*. The novel illustrates how cultural and generational tensions create personal struggles, forcing individuals to constantly negotiate their identities. The external pressures of societal expectations and the internal desire for autonomy create a complex emotional landscape, where characters must redefine who they are in the face of cultural transitions.

Through its nuanced portrayal of acculturation, identity negotiation, and emotional resilience, *Tamarind Mem* provides a compelling literary perspective on migration. The novel not only explores the psychological and emotional complexities of cultural adaptation but also highlights the broader socio-political factors that shape migrant experiences. By weaving together themes of heritage, displacement, and self-discovery, Badami's novel remains a critical text in

understanding the ongoing struggles of migration and identity formation.

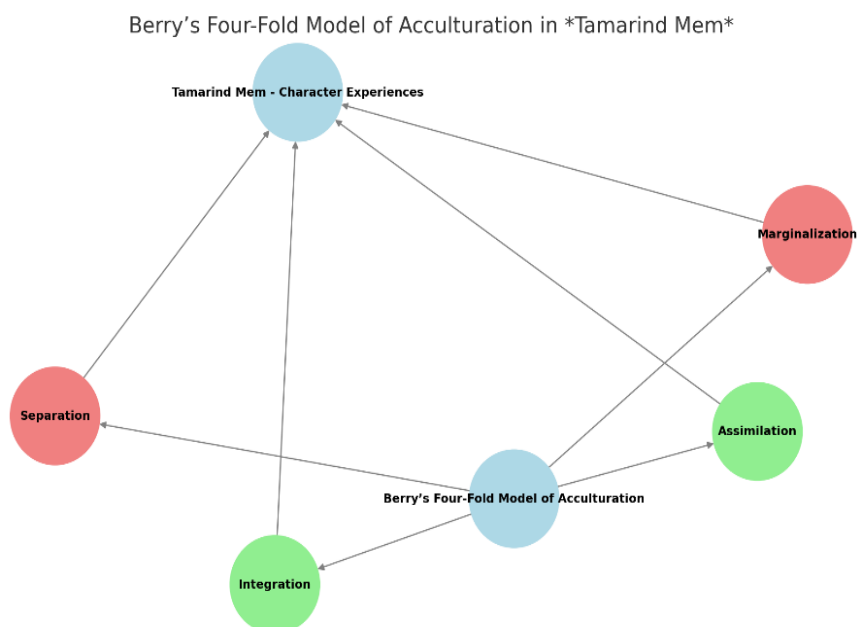
1.2 Berry's Four-Fold Model: Understanding Acculturation Types

Berry's Four-Fold Model of Acculturation categorizes how individuals adapt to a new culture while either maintaining or discarding their original identity. The four strategies assimilation, separation, integration, and marginalization provide a framework for understanding the diverse cultural experiences of migrants and the emotional and psychological challenges they encounter.

In *Tamarind Mem*, these acculturation strategies are vividly reflected in the struggles of characters as they navigate between their Indian heritage and the influences of Western culture. Some characters fully embrace assimilation, relinquishing their roots in

favour of belonging to a new society, while others hold on to their traditions, resisting integration and choosing separation. Meanwhile, those who adopt integration attempt to balance both cultures, maintaining their identity while adapting to new social norms. In contrast, characters experiencing marginalization find themselves disconnected from both cultures, leading to feelings of isolation and identity conflict.

By applying Berry's model, *Tamarind Mem* offers a rich exploration of acculturation, revealing the personal, social, and generational challenges that define the migrant experience. Through its characters, the novel highlights the emotional complexities of cultural transitions, illustrating how identity, belonging, and adaptation shape the lives of those who must negotiate between two worlds.



Source: Own processing using Birger et al., 2022, Boccagni and Righard 2020

Research on refugee and migrant populations (Birger et al., 2022) highlights how policies and structural barriers often lead to marginalization, where individuals feel excluded from both their heritage and host cultures. This form of cultural displacement results in a loss of identity and belonging, reinforcing the emotional struggles of migration. In *Tamarind Mem*, characters experience similar feelings of alienation, as they find themselves caught between two worlds, unable to fully integrate into their new environment or remain entirely connected to their cultural roots.

Similarly, Boccagni and Righard (2020) discuss the challenges of social work with displaced populations, emphasizing the importance of integration a strategy in which individuals maintain their cultural identity while adapting to a new society. This mirrors the

experiences of certain characters in *Tamarind Mem*, who struggle to balance their Indian heritage while embracing elements of Western culture. The novel illustrates how successful integration requires both social acceptance and personal resilience, yet achieving this balance is often difficult due to societal expectations and cultural traditions.

Furthermore, Cebolla Boado and González Ferrer (2021) examine how separation, often caused by physical and emotional distance, impacts the well-being of migrant families. This theme resonates strongly in *Tamarind Mem*, where generational tensions emerge as younger characters attempt to assimilate into a new cultural landscape, while older generations cling to traditional values. The novel portrays how separation within families both geographical and ideological creates emotional

conflicts, leaving individuals torn between the past and the present.

By applying Berry's Four-Fold Model of Acculturation to Tamarind Mem, we gain deeper insights into the novel's exploration of cultural identity, highlighting the emotional and psychological effects of migration and adaptation. Through its characters, the novel captures the complexity of acculturation, revealing how assimilation, integration, separation, and marginalization shape the migrant experience, making it both an internal and external battle for identity and belonging.

1.3 Aim

2. Review of literature

Sr. No	Author(s)	Year	Aim	Objectives	Findings
1	Avçılar, A., & Gök, E.	2022	To examine the intercultural effectiveness of international and domestic university students in Turkey.	To analyse differences in intercultural effectiveness between domestic and international students.	Findings suggest significant differences in intercultural effectiveness, with international students demonstrating higher adaptability.
2	Ayika, D., Dune, T., Mapedzahama, V., & others	2018	To explore post-migration family dynamics and intergenerational relationships.	To analyse the impact of migration on family structures and relationships.	Findings reveal shifts in power dynamics and intergenerational conflicts due to migration.
3	Baas, M., & Yeoh, B. S. A.	2018	To introduce the concept of critical temporalities in migration studies.	To highlight the role of time in shaping migration experiences.	Migration experiences are temporally situated and impact integration outcomes.
4	Belfi, B., Allen, J., Jacobs, B., Levels, M., & van Oosterhout, K.	2021	To analyse early career trajectories of first- and second-generation migrant graduates.	To compare employment outcomes of migrant graduates with native graduates.	Second-generation migrants show improved labor market outcomes compared to first-generation migrants.
5	Birger, L.	2024	To develop a framework for social work with forced migrants using the concept of 'permanent temporariness'.	To understand the implications of prolonged displacement on migrant support strategies.	The study proposes 'permanent temporariness' as a lens to improve social work interventions.
6	Birger, L., & Nadan, Y.	2022	To explore how social workers and refugee service users construct relationships in hostile political climates.	To assess the impact of political hostility on social worker-refugee interactions.	Findings indicate that political climates shape the power dynamics in these relationships.
7	Birger, L., Kedem, O., & Nadan, Y.	2022	To examine Israel's policies toward Eritrean refugees and their impact on parenting.	To analyse the phenomenon of 'unparenting' caused by restrictive policies.	Findings highlight how policies disempower refugee parents, leading to loss of parental authority.

This study aims to explore Berry's Four-Fold Model of Acculturation in Tamarind Mem by Anita Rau Badami, analysing how characters navigate cultural identity, gender roles, language barriers, and emotional displacement in the process of acculturation.

1.4 Objectives

1. To analyse Berry's Four-Fold Model of Acculturation in Tamarind Mem
2. To explore the impact of gender on acculturation
3. To examine the role of language as a bridge or barrier in the acculturation process
4. To understand the emotional and psychological effects of cultural displacement

8	Boccagni, P., & Righard, E.	2020	To explore social work with refugee and displaced populations in Europe.	To examine dilemmas and discontinuities in social work practices.	Challenges include balancing humanitarian goals with restrictive policies.
9	Cebolla Boado, H., & González Ferrer, A.	2021	To analyse the impact of physical separation from parents on migrant children's mental well-being.	To assess how separation affects psychological outcomes.	Separation negatively impacts children's mental health and emotional stability.
10	Cingolani, P., Belloni, M., Grimaldi, G., & Roman, E.	2022	To examine social and spatial (im) mobilities in protracted displacement.	To understand the conditions that lead to prolonged displacement.	Findings suggest that structural barriers maintain displacement rather than individual choices.
11	De Genova, N.	2022	To analyse how the COVID-19 pandemic reshaped migration and mobility.	To explore the 're-bordering' of mobility during crises.	Pandemic policies restricted mobility and reinforced border controls.
12	Ferris, E., & Kerwin, D.	2023	To explore durable displacement and long-term solutions for migrants.	To evaluate promising programs and strategies for migrant support.	Long-term solutions require integrated policies, including local community support.
13	Gabrielli, G., & Impicciatore, R.	2021	To investigate barriers to educational success among children of immigrants.	To explore labor market outcomes and well-being of immigrant children.	Educational support significantly impacts employment opportunities and well-being.
14	Gabrielli, G., Longobardi, S., & Strozza, S.	2021	To examine academic resilience among native and immigrant-origin students.	To compare resilience in different European education systems.	Immigrant-origin students show varying resilience based on national education policies.
15	Mantovani, D., Gasperoni, G., & Santangelo, F.	2021	To analyse the impact of home-school distance on native and immigrant students.	To assess differences in educational access and performance.	Longer home-school distances negatively affect immigrant student performance.
16	Muñoz-Comet, J., & Arcarons, A. F.	2021	To investigate occupational attainment and job security of immigrant children in Spain.	To assess employment stability and career growth among immigrants.	Immigrant children face challenges in job security, but educational attainment improves outcomes.
17	Talmi-Cohn, R., & Kassa, L.	2022	To explore the role of asylum seekers working as mediators in Israel.	To understand the impact of legal liminality on their roles.	Legal restrictions limit their ability to advocate for other asylum seekers effectively.
18	Tardif-Grenier, K., Gervais, C., & Côté, I.	2023	To examine immigrant children's perceptions of interactions with parents pre- and post-migration.	To analyse changes in family relationships due to migration.	Migration alters parent-child dynamics, often creating emotional distance.

19	Yang, H., & Cheung, C.	2020	To study intercultural communication practices in the hotel industry.	To assess how cultural competence affects hospitality service.	Employees with higher intercultural competence provide better customer service.
20	Zava, F., Sette, S., Vecchio, G. M., Laghi, F., Baumgartner, E., & Coplan, R. J.	2024	To investigate the relationship between social competence, immigrant background, and preschool adjustment.	To understand how social skills affect school integration among immigrant children.	Social competence is a strong predictor of successful preschool adjustment.

2.1 Research gap

While extensive research has been conducted on migration, intercultural effectiveness, and social integration, a notable gap remains in exploring the role of emerging technologies, particularly AI, in supporting migrants through their acculturation journey. Most existing studies primarily focus on education, employment opportunities, and social work policies, analysing how migrants adapt to new environments through traditional support systems. These studies provide valuable insights into migrant experiences, yet they often overlook the potential of AI-driven solutions in enhancing resilience, facilitating smoother integration, and providing personalized support for migrants navigating cultural transitions.

Moreover, while previous research highlights the impact of migration on family dynamics, generational relationships, and social identity, there is insufficient exploration of how digital tools and AI-based interventions can address these challenges. Migrants often experience emotional strain due to displacement, language barriers, and identity conflicts, making it crucial to explore how AI can assist in preserving emotional bonds, bridging linguistic gaps, and easing cultural transitions. AI-powered language translation tools, virtual mentorship programs, and adaptive learning platforms have the potential to redefine acculturation by offering real-time assistance and culturally tailored resources.

Furthermore, AI-driven technologies can enhance intercultural communication, support policy-making, and expand educational opportunities for migrants. However, its role in these areas remains largely underexplored within migration studies. AI can streamline bureaucratic processes, personalize learning pathways, and offer predictive insights into migrant well-being, yet researchers have yet to fully examine how these technologies can be effectively integrated into social policies and community-based interventions.

Future research should bridge the gap between technology and migration studies, focusing on how AI can be leveraged to promote social inclusion, emotional well-being, and cultural adaptability in an AI-driven world. By integrating technological

advancements with acculturation frameworks, researchers can develop innovative solutions that enhance migrant experiences, ultimately fostering a more inclusive and supportive environment for those undergoing cultural transitions.

3. Research methodology

This study employs a qualitative approach through literary analysis to examine acculturation in Tamarind Mem, focusing on how characters navigate cultural identity, gender roles, language barriers, and emotional displacement. By using thematic analysis, the study identifies key patterns in how the novel portrays cultural adaptation and identity struggles, offering insights into the psychological and social dimensions of migration.

A systematic review of relevant literature provides additional context for understanding migration and cultural adaptation, incorporating perspectives from migration studies, intercultural communication, and social psychology. This interdisciplinary approach ensures a comprehensive understanding of how acculturation is represented in literature and how it aligns with real-world experiences of migrants.

Furthermore, a comparative analysis is used to connect the novel's portrayal of acculturation strategies assimilation, integration, separation, and marginalization to actual migrant experiences. By comparing fictional representations with empirical studies, this approach deepens the understanding of identity formation, belonging, and cultural negotiation in both literary and real-life settings.

Through this qualitative framework, the study provides a rich and nuanced exploration of acculturation, demonstrating how literature serves as a valuable lens for analysing the emotional and psychological complexities of migration.

4. Integration: The Struggle for Belonging in a New World

Integration, one of the four acculturation strategies in Berry's Model, represents an individual's ability to maintain their cultural identity while actively engaging with the host society. Unlike assimilation, where individuals fully adopt the dominant culture, integration allows for a dual sense of belonging, where migrants retain their heritage while adapting

to new cultural norms. In *Tamarind Mem*, characters experience the complexities of integration, navigating the tensions between Indian traditions and Western influences. The novel highlights how cultural belonging is not a straightforward process, but rather an ongoing struggle shaped by personal experiences and external societal pressures. Research on migration and displacement (Cingolani et al., 2022) suggests that mobility constraints often force migrants into prolonged uncertainty, making integration difficult and emotionally taxing. Many migrants face legal, social, and economic barriers, preventing them from fully engaging with their new communities while maintaining a connection to their heritage. Similarly, De Genova (2022) examines how pandemic-era policies reinforced borders and restricted movement, exacerbating challenges for migrants by limiting access to resources and opportunities for social inclusion. This mirrors the struggles in *Tamarind Mem*, where characters must negotiate their place within two cultures, often feeling torn between tradition and adaptation.

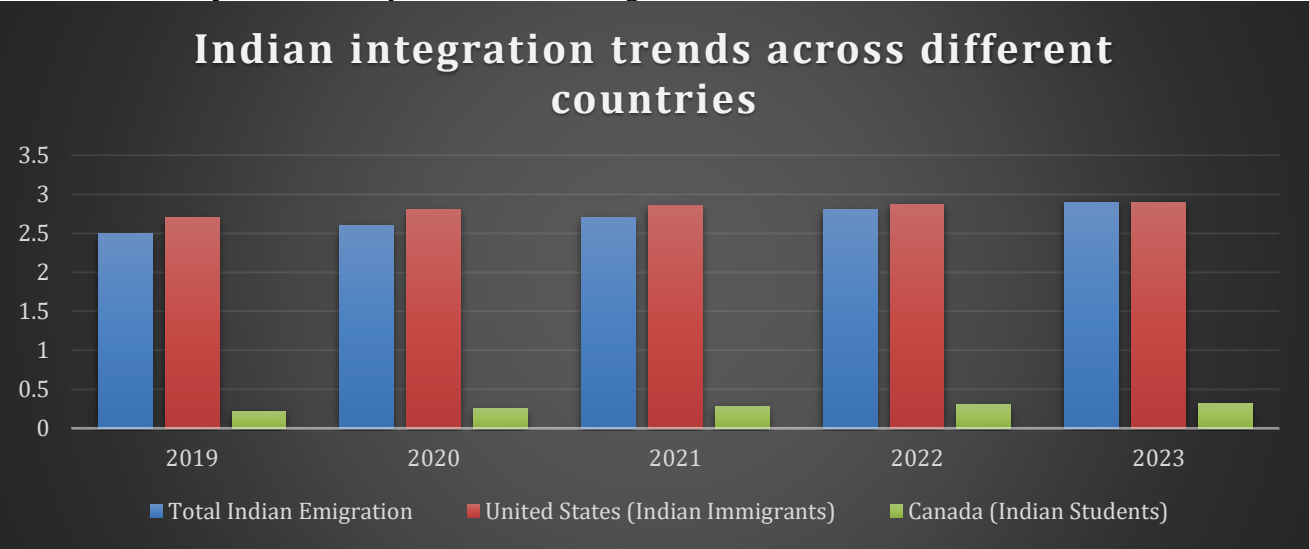
Furthermore, Ferris and Kerwin (2023) emphasize the need for structured support systems to facilitate successful integration, addressing both emotional and practical challenges. These systems include language support, employment opportunities, and mental health resources, which help migrants navigate the complexities of cultural adaptation. In *Tamarind Mem*, characters lack such structured support, making their acculturation journey more challenging. Their struggle for balance mirrors real-world migration experiences, showcasing how integration is a continuous negotiation between heritage and adaptation, rather than a fixed or linear process. By illustrating these challenges of integration, *Tamarind Mem* provides a compelling literary exploration of the emotional, social, and psychological dimensions of acculturation. The novel reinforces the idea that cultural identity is fluid, shaped by personal resilience, societal acceptance, and the ever-changing realities of migration.

Table 1: Past five years of Indian integration trends across different countries

Year	Total Indian Emigration	United States (Indian Immigrants)	Canada (Indian Students)	Australia (Indian Visa Holders)	Germany (Indian Students)
2019	2.5M	2.7M	0.22M	0.20M	0.025M
2020	2.6M	2.8M	0.25M	0.22M	0.028M
2021	2.7M	2.85M	0.28M	0.24M	0.033M
2022	2.8M	2.87M	0.30M	0.27M	0.040M
2023	2.9M	2.9M	0.319M	0.30M	0.049M

Source: Ministry of Indian Affairs, The Indian Express

Graph 1: Past five years of Indian integration trends across different countries



Indian emigration has steadily increased from 2.5 million in 2019 to 2.9 million in 2023, reflecting a growing global presence. The United States remains a top destination, with 2.9 million Indian immigrants by 2023. Canada has seen a sharp rise in Indian

students, growing from 0.22 million to 0.319 million in five years. Australia also witnessed an increase in Indian visa holders, reaching 0.30 million in 2023. Similarly, Germany’s Indian student population nearly doubled, highlighting its appeal for higher

education. Overall, the trend shows increasing Indian integration worldwide, especially through education and employment opportunities.

5. The Role of Gender in Acculturation

Gender plays a crucial role in shaping acculturation experiences, influencing access to education, employment opportunities, and social integration. Women, in particular, often face unique cultural and structural challenges that shape their ability to adapt to new cultural environments. In *Tamarind Mem*, Anita Rau Badami explores how gendered expectations impact the acculturation process, particularly through the experiences of women navigating between traditional Indian values and Western influences. The novel highlights how cultural identity and gender roles intersect, making adaptation to a new society a complex and often restrictive process for women.

Studies on immigrant integration (Gabielli & Impicciatore, 2021) indicate that gender disparities significantly affect educational and labor market outcomes, often limiting opportunities for women compared to men. Female migrants frequently face barriers such as cultural restrictions, family expectations, and societal bias, making it more difficult for them to access education and employment. Similarly, Gabielli, Longobardi, and Strozza (2021) emphasize academic resilience among immigrant students, noting that female students may encounter unique cultural pressures that affect their ability to integrate and succeed in new environments. These pressures often stem from traditional gender norms, which dictate women's roles within family structures and society, influencing how they engage with education, work, and personal aspirations.

Moreover, research by Mantovani et al. (2021) highlights that physical and social barriers, such as home-school distance and parental restrictions, disproportionately affect girls in immigrant families, further complicating their acculturation process. This reinforces how gender-based limitations impact mobility, access to education, and independence, restricting women's ability to fully engage in the host society.

In *Tamarind Mem*, these gendered struggles are evident as female characters experience tensions between personal aspirations and societal expectations. The pressure to conform to traditional Indian values, particularly regarding marriage, family responsibilities, and obedience to patriarchal norms, contrasts with the desire for independence, education, and self-actualization. The novel illustrates how women's acculturation experiences are shaped by cultural restrictions, forcing them to negotiate between personal identity and societal obligations.

Through Berry's Four-Fold Model, the novel examines how female characters adopt different acculturation strategies based on their gendered experiences:

✖ **Assimilation:** Some women attempt to embrace Western ideals, rejecting traditional values in pursuit of personal autonomy. However, this often results in emotional and social conflict.

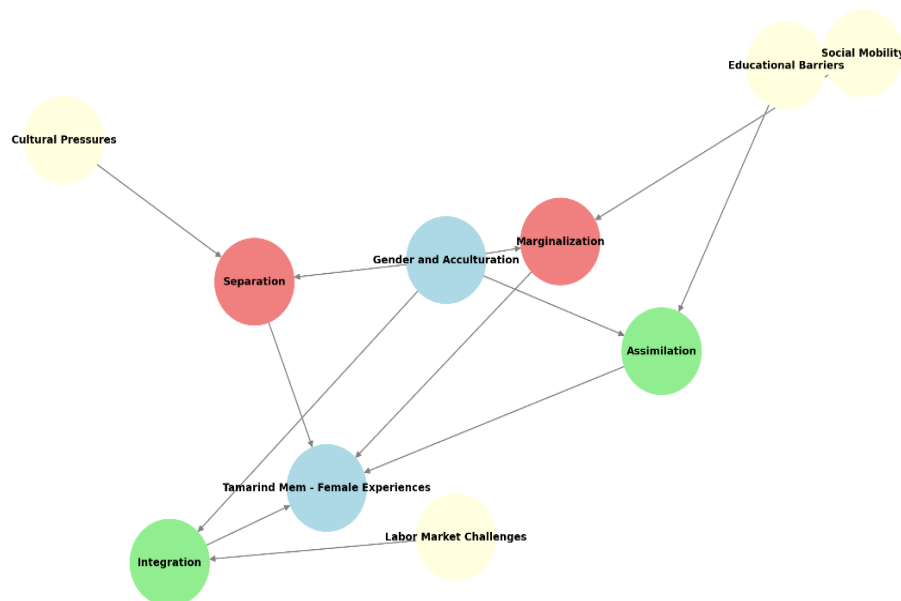
✖ **Integration:** Others seek a balance between tradition and modernity, maintaining their cultural roots while adapting to new societal roles. This requires strong resilience in navigating gendered expectations across two cultures.

✖ **Separation:** Some female characters cling to their heritage, avoiding engagement with the host society due to cultural and familial pressures.

✖ **Marginalization:** Those who fail to fit into either culture experience isolation or emotional turmoil, struggling to find a sense of belonging.

By analysing these gendered dimensions of acculturation, *Tamarind Mem* provides a nuanced exploration of the challenges immigrant women face. The novel reinforces that cultural transition is not solely shaped by ethnicity or nationality but is also deeply influenced by gender norms. Through its portrayal of female struggles with identity, autonomy, and cultural expectations, *Tamarind Mem* offers a critical lens on the intersection of gender and acculturation, highlighting the emotional and psychological complexities faced by immigrant women in adapting to new cultural landscapes.

Gender and Acculturation in *Tamarind Mem*

**Figure 2: Gender and acculturation in Tamarind mem**

Source: Own Processing using Gabrielli & Impicciatore, 2021, Longobardi, and Strozza 2021

6. Language as a Bridge or Barrier in the Acculturation Process

Language plays a pivotal role in the acculturation process, influencing an individual's ability to integrate, communicate, and establish a sense of belonging in a new cultural environment. It serves as both a bridge and a barrier, shaping social mobility, interpersonal relationships, and cultural identity. In *Tamarind Mem*, characters navigate multiple languages, reflecting their shifting identities and struggles with cultural adaptation. The novel illustrates how language can facilitate integration or create cultural divides, reinforcing the emotional and psychological complexities of migration.

Proficiency in the dominant language of a new country is often essential for employment opportunities, education, and social inclusion. Migrants who can effectively communicate in the host language are more likely to achieve economic stability, job security, and upward mobility. Language skills enhance integration, allowing individuals to participate in community life and build meaningful social connections. However, language barriers can lead to marginalization and exclusion, restricting access to education, employment, healthcare, and essential services. In *Tamarind Mem*, characters struggle with these linguistic challenges, reflecting the real-world difficulties of migrants who face social and economic disadvantages due to limited language proficiency.

Additionally, linguistic challenges impact interpersonal relationships, particularly within immigrant families. Generational language gaps often strain parent-child communication, as younger generations may adopt the dominant language while

older family members struggle to keep up. This disconnect can create emotional distance within families, leading to tensions over cultural identity and belonging. In *Tamarind Mem*, this tension is evident as characters navigate conflicting linguistic and cultural expectations, revealing how language is deeply tied to one's sense of self and heritage.

Language also influences acculturation strategies, as described in Berry's Four-Fold Model:

✦ **Assimilation:** Some individuals fully embrace the dominant language, distancing themselves from their native tongue to blend into the new culture. This may lead to greater social inclusion but can also cause identity loss and detachment from cultural roots.

✦ **Integration:** Others strive to balance bilingualism, maintaining their native language while learning the dominant one. This approach fosters cultural preservation while still enabling social participation.

✦ **Separation:** Some migrants resist adopting the new language, choosing to exclusively use their native tongue. While this reinforces cultural identity, it can also limit opportunities for social and economic advancement.

✦ **Marginalization:** Those who struggle with both their native and the host language may experience isolation, feeling disconnected from both cultures. In *Tamarind Mem*, the interplay between language, identity, and cultural adaptation highlights the psychological and emotional struggles of migration. The novel illustrates how linguistic choices shape acculturation journeys, reinforcing how language is not just a tool for communication, but a marker of belonging, heritage, and cultural negotiation.

Through its exploration of language as both a unifying and divisive force, *Tamarind Mem* provides

a powerful literary reflection on the complex realities of migration and adaptation.

Table 2: Language and Acculturation Impact Talmi-Cohn & Kassa, 2022, Tardif-Grenier et al., 2023

Aspect	Finding
Employment Opportunities	Host language proficiency increases the probability of employment by approximately 15% for men and 22% for women.
Job Satisfaction	Lack of host country language proficiency may lead immigrants to accept lower-level jobs, resulting in decreased job satisfaction.
Family Dynamics	Language barriers between immigrant parents and children can lead to damaged relationships and increased family conflict.
Parental Authority	Immigrant parents with limited language skills often face challenges in maintaining authority and effectively monitoring their children's activities.

7. Cultural Displacement and Emotional Turmoil in *Tamarind Mem*

In *Tamarind Mem*, Anita Rau Badami explores the deep emotional struggles that arise from cultural displacement, particularly through the experiences of women navigating shifting identities. The novel highlights how migration and cultural transitions create a sense of alienation, nostalgia, and conflict between generations, mirroring the psychological impact of acculturation. Characters in the novel grapple with feelings of rootlessness as they attempt to navigate their cultural heritage alongside new influences, leading to emotional distress and identity conflicts. Research on intercultural communication competency (Yang & Cheung, 2020) emphasizes how the ability to adapt to new cultural environments determines emotional well-being. In *Tamarind Mem*, characters experience miscommunication and cultural misunderstandings, reflecting the difficulties of navigating different social norms. These struggles manifest in conflicts between generations, as older characters adhere to traditional values, while younger ones strive for modern independence. The gap in communication between generations deepens feelings of estrangement and isolation, reinforcing the emotional burden of cultural adaptation.

Additionally, Zava et al. (2024) explore the role of social competence in immigrant adjustment, suggesting that emotional resilience plays a key role in overcoming cultural displacement. The novel illustrates these themes as characters struggle with feelings of uprootedness and disconnection. The inability to fully integrate into a new cultural setting, coupled with the challenges of preserving one's heritage, leads to psychological tension and a fragmented sense of self. The emotional strain of migration is portrayed through internal and external conflicts, where characters must choose between assimilation into a new culture or holding on to their roots, often at the cost of belonging and personal identity. Through Berry's Four-Fold Model, *Tamarind Mem* showcases how different acculturation strategies assimilation, integration, separation, and marginalization shape the

characters' psychological journeys. Assimilation is reflected in characters who attempt to embrace the dominant culture while abandoning their own traditions, leading to identity confusion. Integration is evident in those who maintain their cultural heritage while adopting elements of the new environment, though this comes with its own challenges of balancing two identities. Separation is seen in individuals who cling to their original culture and reject integration, creating social isolation. Finally, marginalization occurs when characters struggle to belong to either culture, experiencing profound emotional distress and displacement.

By illustrating these acculturation strategies, the novel reinforces the emotional complexities of cultural displacement, revealing how migration shapes identity formation and emotional well-being. Through its characters, *Tamarind Mem* presents a poignant reflection on the psychological costs of migration, highlighting the intricate interplay between heritage, adaptation, and belonging.

Conclusion

This study explored Berry's Four-Fold Model of Acculturation in Anita Rau Badami's *Tamarind Mem*, examining how characters navigate cultural transitions between Indian traditions and Western influences. The novel vividly portrays the psychological and emotional struggles of migration, illustrating the complexities of assimilation, integration, separation, and marginalization in an ever-changing social landscape. Through its characters, *Tamarind Mem* reflects the challenges of preserving cultural heritage while adapting to new societal expectations, showcasing the tensions between tradition and modernity.

The analysis demonstrated how cultural displacement, gender roles, language barriers, and emotional turmoil influence the acculturation process. The novel highlights how first- and second-generation migrants experience these challenges differently, with younger characters grappling with identity negotiation, while older ones struggle to maintain their cultural roots in a foreign land. The study also revealed that social competence,

intercultural communication, and policy frameworks play crucial roles in shaping migrant experiences. *Tamarind Mem* underscores the emotional costs of migration, emphasizing that belonging is an ongoing struggle shaped by individual resilience and societal structures.

Moreover, the increasing integration of Indian migrants worldwide further reflects the novel's central themes of adaptation and identity formation. As globalization fosters greater cultural exchanges, the novel remains relevant in illustrating how migration is both an opportunity and a challenge, requiring individuals to constantly redefine their sense of self.

Overall, *Tamarind Mem* provides a compelling literary lens to understand acculturation in a globalized world, reinforcing the need for inclusive policies and support systems to aid migrant adaptation. Future research could explore the impact of emerging technologies, particularly AI, in easing cultural transitions and fostering intercultural connections for migrants. By bridging literary analysis with contemporary migration studies, this research contributes to broader discussions on identity, belonging, and adaptation in a world shaped by constant cultural shifts.

Book Reviews

Anita Rau Badami's *Tamarind Mem* offers a compelling exploration of cultural identity, migration, and intergenerational conflicts through the lens of Berry's Four-Fold Model of Acculturation: assimilation, integration, separation, and marginalization. To deepen the understanding of these themes, the following three books provide valuable insights into migration narratives and the complexities of cultural adaptation.

1. South Asian Literature, Culture, and Society: A Critical Ruminaton

This anthology provides a comprehensive examination of the cultural transformations experienced by South Asian communities through literature, shedding light on migration, acculturation, and identity struggles. Through a collection of diverse essays, the book explores how individuals and communities negotiate their cultural identities amidst the challenges of globalization, displacement, and changing societal norms. Much like *Tamarind Mem*, the anthology highlights the tensions between tradition and modernity, illustrating how characters navigate inherited customs while adapting to new cultural realities.

A central theme in the book is Berry's Acculturation Model, which categorizes how migrants assimilate, integrate, separate, or become marginalized within their host cultures. The essays analyse how literary characters embody these acculturation strategies, showcasing the psychological and emotional

complexities of cultural adaptation. Some characters embrace assimilation, fully adopting their new cultural environment at the cost of their heritage, while others maintain strong ties to their roots, resisting integration. The book also delves into the hybrid identities formed through integration, where individuals balance both cultures, as well as the isolation and alienation experienced by those who face marginalization in unfamiliar settings.

Additionally, the anthology discusses gender dynamics in South Asian migration narratives, emphasizing how women's acculturation experiences differ from men's. Many essays explore the intersection of gender and culture, examining how women in diasporic literature face unique challenges due to patriarchal traditions, societal expectations, and the pressure to conform to new cultural norms. This theme is central to *Tamarind Mem*, where female characters experience conflicting roles within family structures, struggling between personal aspirations and cultural obligations.

By offering both literary and sociological perspectives, this book serves as an essential resource for analysing acculturation in South Asian literature. It bridges theoretical frameworks with literary analysis, making it a valuable text for understanding cultural identity, migration, and adaptation. The anthology deepens discussions on how South Asian diasporic communities preserve, modify, and redefine their identities, reinforcing the ongoing negotiation between heritage and change in an evolving world.

2. Migration and Cultural Encounters in South Asian American Literature – Iwona Filipczak

Filipczak's work provides a comprehensive historical and literary analysis of South Asian migration to the U.S., tracing how authors depict shifting cultural identities and diasporic struggles. By examining the complexity of migration experiences, the book explores how first- and second-generation migrants negotiate their heritage and new cultural influences. Much like the protagonist in *Tamarind Mem*, Filipczak's study highlights the psychological tensions migrants face, as they navigate the conflicting pull of tradition and the pressures of assimilation in their adopted societies.

A central theme of the book is assimilation and cultural hybridity, where individuals and communities attempt to adapt to new cultural norms while preserving aspects of their original identity. Filipczak analyzes how different generations experience acculturation: first-generation migrants often struggle with nostalgia, displacement, and cultural preservation, while second-generation individuals grapple with identity confusion, societal expectations, and belonging. This mirrors *Tamarind Mem*, where the protagonist feels torn between her

Indian heritage and the Western environment she inhabits, reflecting the broader challenges of dual cultural identities.

Beyond cultural adaptation, the book also explores racial prejudice and the psychological toll of migration, adding depth to the study of emotional and social adaptation in literature. Filipczak examines how South Asian migrants face discrimination, cultural alienation, and emotional distress, shaping their sense of self and community. The intersections of race, ethnicity, and migration create unique struggles for identity and acceptance, reinforcing how marginalization and exclusion impact psychological well-being.

Furthermore, the discussion of transnational identity is particularly relevant to *Tamarind Mem*, as characters constantly negotiate their sense of belonging across cultural boundaries. The book explores how migrants develop fluid identities, shaped by their experiences in multiple cultural spheres. This concept of cultural liminality, where individuals exist between two or more worlds, is a recurring theme in both Filipczak's analysis and *Tamarind Mem*, illustrating the ongoing negotiation of identity in diaspora communities.

Through its historical and literary approach, Filipczak's work provides a rich exploration of South Asian migration, offering valuable insights into assimilation, identity formation, and the emotional dimensions of displacement. By connecting literary representations with real-world migrant experiences, the book serves as an important resource for understanding cultural hybridity, adaptation, and the challenges of belonging in a globalized world.

3. Coolie Woman: The Odyssey of Indenture – Gaiutra Bahadur

Bahadur's *Coolie Woman* is a historical memoir that recounts her great-grandmother's journey from India to British Guiana as an indentured labourer. The book highlights the forced separation from homeland, a form of cultural marginalization that resonates strongly with the themes in *Tamarind Mem*. In both works, characters experience the psychological consequences of migration, as they are torn between their cultural heritage and the pressures of adapting to a foreign land. The emotional toll of displacement, particularly for women, is a central theme, revealing how social and political forces shape migrant identities. Bahadur's narrative portrays cultural displacement and resilience, illustrating how migrants struggle to preserve their heritage while adapting to new cultural norms.

This historical perspective in *Coolie Woman* enriches the understanding of acculturation as an ongoing, intergenerational process, much like *Tamarind Mem*, where the novel explores the long-term effects of

migration on identity and belonging. In both works, migration is not just a physical movement but a profound emotional and cultural journey, where identity formation is fluid and often conflicted.

These three books collectively provide a multi-dimensional perspective on acculturation, migration, and identity struggles. *South Asian Literature, Culture, and Society* offers a theoretical and literary framework, providing insights into how South Asian communities negotiate their cultural identities. *Migration and Cultural Encounters* provides a diasporic perspective, focusing on how cultural adaptation is experienced differently by various generations. Meanwhile, *Coolie Woman* presents a historical lens on cultural adaptation, exploring the psychological consequences of forced migration.

Together, these works deepen the analysis of *Tamarind Mem*, demonstrating how literature captures the emotional, psychological, and social dimensions of acculturation. By examining gender, cultural displacement, and intergenerational conflict, these books offer valuable insights into the complexities of migration and identity. They reinforce that acculturation is not simply an individual process but a dynamic, ongoing negotiation shaped by family, heritage, and broader social forces.

References

1. Avcılar, A., & Gök, E. (2022). Intercultural effectiveness of international and domestic university students: A case of Turkey. *Journal of Intercultural Studies*, 12(2), 531-549. <https://doi.org/10.32674/jis.v12i2.2972>
2. Ayika, D., Dune, T., Mapedzahama, V., & others. (2018). A qualitative exploration of post-migration family dynamics and intergenerational relationships. *SAGE Open*, 8(4), 2158244018811752. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2158244018811752>
3. Baas, M., & Yeoh, B. S. A. (2018). Introduction: Migration studies and critical temporalities. *International Migration*, 67(2), 1-10. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0011392118792924>
4. Belfi, B., Allen, J., Jacobs, B., Levels, M., & van Oosterhout, K. (2021). Early career trajectories of first- and second-generation migrant graduates of professional university. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 47(10), 2415-2435. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1369183X.2021.1935666>
5. Birger, L. (2024). 'Permanent temporariness' as a critical lens: A framework for social work with forced migrants. *The British Journal of Social Work*, 54(2), 780-796. <https://doi.org/10.1093/bjsw/bcad260>
6. Birger, L., & Nadan, Y. (2022). Social workers and refugee service users (re)constructing their relationships in a hostile political climate.

- Qualitative Social Work*, 22(2), 1-16. <https://doi.org/10.1177/14680173211009739>
7. Birger, L., Kedem, O., & Nadan, Y. (2022). 'Here, parents become nothing': 'Unparenting' in Israel's policies toward Eritrean refugees. *Children & Society*, 36(3), 1-12. <https://doi.org/10.1111/cfs.12907>
 8. Boccagni, P., & Righard, E. (2020). Social work with refugee and displaced populations in Europe: (Dis)continuities, dilemmas, developments. *Journal of Social Work*, 20(3), 375-383. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13691457.2020.1767941>
 9. Cebolla Boado, H., & González Ferrer, A. (2021). The impact of physical separation from parents on the mental wellbeing of the children of migrants. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 47(10), 2436-2454. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1369183X.2021.1935670>
 10. Cingolani, P., Belloni, M., Grimaldi, G., & Roman, E. (2022). "Exit Italy"? Social and spatial (im)mobilities as conditions of protracted displacement. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 48(22), 4402-4418. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1369183X.2022.2090159>
 11. De Genova, N. (2022). Viral borders: Migration, deceleration, and the re-bordering of mobility during the COVID-19 pandemic. *Communication, Culture and Critique*, 15(2), 139-156. <https://doi.org/10.1093/ccc/tcac009>
 12. Ferris, E., & Kerwin, D. (2023). Durable displacement and the protracted search for solutions: Promising programs and strategies. *Journal of Refugee & Migration Studies*, 11(1). <https://doi.org/10.1177/23315024231160454>
 13. Gabrielli, G., & Impicciatore, R. (2021). Breaking down the barriers: Educational paths, labour market outcomes and wellbeing of children of immigrants. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 47(10), 2305-2323. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1369183X.2021.1935655>
 14. Gabrielli, G., Longobardi, S., & Strozza, S. (2021). The academic resilience of native and immigrant-origin students in selected European countries. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 47(10), 2347-2368. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1369183X.2021.1935657>
 15. Mantovani, D., Gasperoni, G., & Santangelo, F. (2021). Home-school distance among native and immigrant-origin lower secondary students in urban Northern Italy. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 47(10), 2369-2395. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1369183X.2021.1935659>
 16. Muñoz-Comet, J., & Arcarons, A. F. (2021). The occupational attainment and job security of immigrant children in Spain. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 47(10), 2396-2414. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1369183X.2021.1935662>
 17. Talmi-Cohn, R., & Kassa, L. (2022). Asylum seekers working as mediators in Israel: The impact of legal liminality. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 88, 1-10. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijintrel.2022.10.008>
 18. Tardif-Grenier, K., Gervais, C., & Côté, I. (2023). Exploring recent immigrant children's perceptions of interactions with parents before and after immigration to Canada. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 87, 977-992. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14733285.2023.2168179>
 19. Yang, H., & Cheung, C. (2020). Intercultural communication competency practices in the hotel industry. *Journal of China Tourism Research*, 18(1), 1-23. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19388160.2020.1807432>
 20. Zava, F., Sette, S., Vecchio, G. M., Laghi, F., Baumgartner, E., & Coplan, R. J. (2024). Exploring links between social competence, immigrant background, and children's preschool adjustment. *Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology*, 80, 343-363. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10409289.2024.2389367>