



A COMPARATIVE STUDY AMONG MALAYSIAN INDIANS AND SINGAPORE INDIANS

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ABSTRACT

Most families of the Indian Diaspora migrated to the region from today's Tamil Nadu and southern parts of the Indian subcontinent generations back as labourers of a colonial economy. Many of Malaysia's Indian workers were displaced after plantations, where they were traditionally engaged as labourers, were acquired for national development in the 1980s. But the discontent of Malaysian Indians is directed primarily at the majority Malays rather than the ethnic Chinese, who comprise 23% of Malaysia's population and are also a minority in the country. Both Malaysia and Singapore have local Indians who comprise only 7 and 9.1% of the total population respectively, and are seen as a minority in both. In both countries the term 'Indian' loosely refers to the people from the subcontinent, including those of present day Pakistan, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka. The majority of the local Indian population are ethnic Tamil and second one is Telugu

KEYWORDS :

The research paper deals with comparative status and role of Indian origins between Malaysia and Singapore. Singapore is often compared with other countries, and most often with Malaysia, because Singapore was earlier a part of Malaysia. Ethnic Indians are largest minority in Malaysia and Singapore. The Indian situation in Malaysia and Singapore must be seen in the context of an original colonial unity-after the Napoleonic Wars, Britain ceded many of its colonial 'possessions' in insular Southeast Asia to the Netherlands in exchange for Dutch concessions in South Asia and South Africa. But Britain maintained a presence in the Straits of Malacca (Singapore, Penang, and Malacca) as 'trading posts' of the East India Company, and expanded from there into all of Malaya, and parts of Borneo. Indians were brought to the area as indentured laborers to do agricultural work of various sorts, but eventually predominantly on rubber estates (Harold F. Schiffman)

The colonial legacy was well-cultivated in the post-colonial nation-states of Malaysia and Singapore and made a deep impact on national politics and the daily life of its peoples. Racial stereotype are present in both states and are of great relevance for the communities, even when they often form perfect examples for 'invented traditions' (Invented Tradition: Many of the traditions which "appear or claim to be old are

often quite recent in origin and sometimes invented"). The Indian race in both states: while regarded as a uniform group, what lies behind the term is a great heterogeneity of ethnic, religious, linguistic and cultural aspects. (Holger Warnk, '2010, The Review 39).

Indians are third largest ethnic group in Malaysia and Singapore. These minority communities play a vital role to their nation's development, from per-independence period to post-independent. After the independence of the both nations the Indian status are quite change at both nations. In 1970 the Malaysian government introduces New Economic Policy (NEP), 1990 New Development Policy (NDP) and 2000 Vision 2020 policy. These policies are influenced directly and indirectly in Indian community. Singapore becomes numerically dominated by immigrant ethnic groups soon after the British annexed the island in the 19th Century. The Singapore development policies are equal preference to all races. Many Indians have also distinguished themselves in Civil Services, labour unions, journalism, law and medical professionals. As the minority they do enjoy all privileges equally with other race but they have lagged behind their Chinese counterparts in Business, Commerce, trade and politics (Unit 3. Indians in South-East Asia, p.30).

Comparison with Malaysian Indians and Singapore Indians:

	Malaysia	Singapore
2	Indian origin people of Malaysia are fewer in number when compared to Singapore Indian origin	Indian origin of Singapore is more population in number when compared to Malaysia.
4	When compared to Singapore Indian origin people are settled in lower position, middle and higher cadres.	When compared the Malaysia Indian origin people are in better position.
5		
6	Indian origin of Malaysian people are economically low when compared to Indian origin in Singapore.	Indian origin people of Singapore are economically rich in status at Singapore when compared to Malaysia.
7	In Malaysian Indian origin of people are more in number in lower professions.	Indian origin of Singapore very few are in lower professions.
8	10% of Malaysian Indian children settled in U.S.A as software engineers.	IT jobs in Singapore made Indian origin of Singapore increase in number when compared to Malaysian Indian origin.
9	Malaysian Indian origin women are in better position when compared to the past.	When we compared the status of women at both nations (Malaysia and Singapore) the position is better than 50 years before. Somewhat Singapore Indian origin women are high in status.
10	¼ th of the Indian origin women are employed in Malaysia.	Half of the Indian origin women are employed in Singapore.
11	The political participation of Indian origin role is more when compared to the past two decades	The Indian origin of Singapore at present when compared to Malaysian Indians plays a major role in politics and are in key positions.

12	Seasonal business people from India to Malaysia are low in number when compared to Singapore.	Seasonal business people from India to Singapore are high in number when compared to Malaysia.
13	When compared the Women status in both nations (Malaysia and Singapore) Ambiga is also a high-profile woman leader (Malaysia), previously received a string of domestic and international honours and titles, including the International Woman of Courage Award from US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton in 2009. She is an Indian origin, a non-Muslim and highlights how her ethnicity set her apart in the doorstep protest (Padmaja.M, 2012, Pp.139-140).	In Singapore Indranee Rajah (former MP) and Halimah Yacob (Parliament speaker) are most prominent political leader in Singapore politics, the two woman leaders belongs to Indian origin.
14	Hindraf movement in Malaysia has politically completely changed the political history of Malaysia it is the land mark in Malaysian politics.	This type of movement could not be seen in the Singapore Indian origins
15	For all celebrations marking important ethnic and religious holidays, many Malaysian families host friends and neighbours to visit and eat on holiday occasion. The visit of people from other ethnic groups and religious on these occasion represents Malaysian etiquette	In Singapore Chinese, Indians and Malays and others enjoy lunch in offices and also at residences and in festival celebration gatherings.
16	Tudung (headscarves) and purdha is followed as religious custom by Malaysian Muslims (include Indian Muslims).	In Singapore, Tudung (headscarves) in public schools has been removed since 2002
17	Majority of Indian origin practiced the Hinduism (86.18%), and a significant percent of Indians practiced Islamism (4.13%), Christianity (5.99), Buddhism (1.70) and others (2.10%) (Population Distribution and Demography Characteristics 2010).	Besides Hinduism (58.9%), Islam (21.7%), Buddhism (0.7%) is followed now and then the western influence Christianity (12.3%) is also followed by Singapore Indian origins (Census of Population 201, Republic of Singapore, 2010).
18	Thaipusam is generally celebrates by Hindus. Chinese and Malayan Muslim also participated in such occasions. Hariraya Pusam celebrated by Muslims particularly and followed by others.	Singapore Indians celebrate the Thaipusam festival, and other religious festivals (Chinese New year and Hariray Pusam).
19	Inter religious families legal ligation in Malaysia parliament passed the bill regarding Islamic family law	The matrimonial law of Singapore categorizes marriages contracted in Singapore into two categories: civil marriages and Muslim marriages. The Registry of Marriage (ROM) administers civil marriages in accordance with the Women's Charter, while the Registry of Muslim Marriages (ROMM) administers Muslim marriages in accordance to the Administration of Muslim Law Act (AMLA). All marriages performed in Singapore must be registered with the relevant registry in order to be legally valid (Matrimonial law of Singapore, http://en.wikipedia.org).
20	Constitutional rights are favorable towards Malayan Muslims	While the Singapore constitutions provide equal rights to all ethnic groups.
21	Malaysia has a widespread system of health care. It implements a universal healthcare system, system, which co-exists with the private healthcare system. According to the American Public International Lining rates Malaysia's healthcare system as the third best out of 24 countries in its 2014 Global Retirement Index-being out Spain, Italy, Ireland and New Zealand among other countries. As the medical expertise of Malaysian healthcare practitioners in "equal to better than what it is most western counties' (Ladies & Gentlemen, 2014).	Singaporeans were very much concerned about their health and access to good medical care. Being healthy has the top priority in life and at was consistently ranked first across all demographic groups. Hospitals are super specialized Indians famous Nirbhya rape victim has joined at Mount Elizabeth Hospital in Singapore, for its well developed technology.
24	The Malaysia Indian fertility (2.0%) rate is huge after the Malays (2.8%) and Chinese (1.8%) are the lowest fertility rate in Malaysia.	Whereas in Singapore Indians has the lowest fertility (1.09%) rate than Malays (1.64%) and higher than Chinese (1.08) fertility rate. When compared to the Malaysian Indians, the Singapore Indians consist lowest fertility rate.
25	Women cannot move freely in late nights in Malaysia	Women can move freely even after late night on the road without any fear in Singapore.
26	Indian origins of Malaysia are how increasingly their literacy rate but it is low when compared to Indian origin of Singapore.	Indian origin of Singapore is high in literacy when compared with the Malaysian Indian origin.
27	New Economic Policy (NEP) at Malaysia is favorable towards Malays and both Chinese and Indians opposes this policies.	Such policies are absent in Singapore.
28	The Telugu world Mahasabhalu was held in 2012 December at Tirupati in India. In that connection Malaysian Indian origin actively participated and played a major role in Padhyapatam, kholatam, Chakka bajanas, Kuchipudi, Bharathanatyam etc.	Similarly, Singapore Indian origin also actively participated in all plays at Telugu Mahasabhalu in 2012 held at Tirupati (Andhra Pradesh) in India.

29	The Telugu Association of Malaysia, is formed in 1955, it is larger and active organization, presently the association has 26 branches throughout Malaysia. The association consists of a great network throughout the world. In 1981 these associations held the 2 nd world Telugu Conference in Malaysia, it is a great remarkable event of TAM history.	The Singapore Telugu Samajam in Singapore, formed in 1975, and it is very small, when compared to Telugu Association of Malaysia, and the Singapore association actively conducting the welfare programs and cultural programmes, the organization consist a good network through the world Telugu People. The fifth world Telugu Federation (WTF) Conference was held in Singapore in December 2002, STS hosted this event.
30	The Indian origin population status in Malaysia is continually declined from 10.25 percent in 1980's to 6.6 percent in 2012.	While in Singapore an Indian origin population status has been continually increased from 6.4 percent in 1980's to 9.2 percent in 2012.
31	The crime rate of Malaysian Indian origins is very higher than that of Malays and Chinese community. The recent statistic says 71 percent of gangster in Malaysia are of Indian origin, in 2013 police identified 49 illegal gangs nationwide	When compared to Malaysian Indians, the crime rate of Singapore Indian origin is less in Singapore. According to the BBC News Asia statement Singapore has one lowest crime rate in the world
32	The suicide rate is also higher in Malaysia Indian origins 21.1 percent for suicides for 100,000 Indians compared to 8.6 percent for Chinese and 2.6 percent for Malays.	The suicide rate for Singapore Indian origin is low compared to that of Malaysian Indian origin
33	MIC formed in 1946, it is an old political organization. This organization represents the Malaysian Indian community. It provides the educational scholarships, Business loans. MIC has close association with different Indian based organizations and also gives financial assistance at different development programs some of them: National Land Finance Cooperative Society (NLFCS), the National Union of Plantation Workers (NUPW), and Institute for Educational Development (MIED), Institute Teknologi Negeri (ITN) and TAFE College.	SINDA established 1991, it is not a political organization, it is purely Self-help groups and one of the five self-help group in Singapore. The association focused on Singapore Indian origin development. The association has been major concentrated on the educational development of Singapore Indians. The association is closely associated with Action Committee on Indian Education (ACIE). The Indian political leaders play a significant role in driving SINDA.
34	The caste system followers percentage is higher in Malaysian Indian origins when compared to the Singapore Indian origins. That means caste system could not be existing from Indian community in both countries.	Similarly Singapore Indians also practiced the caste system but these percentages are very few when compared to the Malaysian Indian origins.
35	The Malaysian Indian origin participation in the civil services declined from about 40 percent in 1957 to about 2 percent in 2007	While in Singapore, Indians have also traditionally entered the Singapore Civil Service. Several individuals have risen to prominence in various government ministries and statutory boards. 9.4 % of the heads of Singapore's 64 statutory boards are Indian. When compared the Indian status in Singapore Indians with Malaysian Indians, the Singapore Indians have better status at civil service jobs in Singapore
36	The Tamil schools status in Malaysia is shrinking from 662 in 1969 to 523 in 2007.	Before world war II, in Singapore, there were 4 Mission Tamil schools, 14 private schools with an enrollment of about 1000 pupils. After 1955 greater recognition was given to all vernacular schools by government; from 1959 equal treatment was according to all streams of education. Later Tamil parents preferred to send their children to English schools and this move brought about the close of all the Tamil medium schools in Singapore. According to Mother tong policy (1966) total of 90 schools provide Tamil lesson within the curriculum time. Instantly 8 Indian base International private schools are in Singapore.
37	The total number of Hindu temples 2339 in Malaysia	While in Singapore the total number of Hindu temples are 35, this number is very few when compared to the Malaysian Hindu temples number.
38	In Malaysia, it is difficult to acquire Malaysian citizenship and PIOs/ NRIs with continuous residence for 10-15 years and having a Malaysian spouse are considered selectively for Malaysian citizenship.	In Singapore the dual citizenship, removal of residence qualification and simplified procedure for acquisition or re-acquisition of Indian citizen. Immigration and consular matters-simplification and streamlining of property acquisition regulations, avoidance of harassment by immigration officials, customs officials, FRRO, etc. Also some PIOs who are permanent residents of Singapore, but hold their country citizenship rise the issues of dual citizenship.
39	The Malaysian Indian origin getting support from Pravasi Bharathiya Divasi and Global Organisation of People of Indian Origin (GOPIO). These organisations play a significant role in protection and promotion of Malaysian Indian rights in Malaysia and these organizations can help by lobbying the government of India and the international community.	The GOPIO Singapore also plays a significant role at Singapore Indian Origins. The organization, enhancing cooperation and communication among Indian living different countries.

40	In Malaysia number of Indian based political parties are formed, like Malaysian Indian Congress, people's Progressive Party, Human Right Party Malaysian, Malaysian Makkal Sakthi Party, Malaysian Indian Muslim congress and Punjabi Party Malaysia etc.,	While in Singapore there is no separate Indian based political party, therefore majority of Indians support People's Action Party.
41	In Malaysia majority of Indians are located in western part of Malaysia. Little India (an old name Brickfields) is one of highest percentage of Urban location of ethnic Indians and Business, through centrally located and very near to huge ultra-modern and busy KL Central railway station in capital city of Kuala Lumpur.	Similarly, in Singapore the ethnic Indians located area is Known as 'Little India', is Singaporean neighbourhood east of the Singapore River-across from Chinatown, located west of the river and north of Kampong Glam. Both areas are part of the urban planning area of Rajor. Ethnically Tamils commercial or cottage industry usages are concentrated in Little India, although Tamil-dominant commercial zones are also found in HDB (Housing & Development Board) estates.

CONCLUSION

The Malaysian Indian origin is getting support from Pravasi Bharathiya Divasi, and Global Organisation of People of Indian Origin (GOPIO). Indian and Singapore share long-standing cultural, commercial and strategic relations, with Singapore being a part of the "Greater India" cultural and commercial region. Singapore is India's largest trade and investment partner in ASEAN. Tourism is largest booming economic sector in the present global era. India, Malaysia and Singapore are together in a triad system.

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