

## Abstract

Hinduism is one of the minority religions in Kenya whose membership is basically drawn from the Indian immigrant community. This article analyzes the historical roots of Kenyan Hinduism and how it contributes to Kenya's religio-cultural heritage diversity. The following questions are answered in this paper: How did Hindus migrate from India to Kenya? What factors motivated Hindu migration from India to settle in Kenya and Nairobi in particular? In what ways has Hinduism contributed to the diversity of Kenya's religion-cultural heritage? The descriptive research design was adopted and data was collected through fieldwork using a structured questionnaire and oral interviews. The target population comprised Hindus residing in Nairobi. Data analysis was done using qualitative techniques emphasizing on the Grounded theory. The article reveals that push factors (such as inter-religious conflicts, poverty and unreliable climatic conditions) in India as well as pull factors (such as reliable climatic conditions, ample land for cultivation and absence of inter-sectarian conflicts) in Kenya, are among the major motivating factors for Hindu immigration to Kenya (Pundit, 1961). Most Hindus in Kenya chose to settle in Nairobi due to the greater potential it offered for business and industrial activities. Indeed, the colonial and post-colonial legislations tended to place restrictions on Indian settlement or business operations in rural areas. The research acknowledges the important role Hindus play in projecting the multi-religious and multi-cultural nature of the Kenyan society. But, the quest for national identity has, however, remained the key challenge for Kenyan Hindus of Indian descent.