

Afghan Migration and its Impacts on Community of Afghanistan

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ABSTRACT

The history of migration is by far one of the very harshest and difficult topics in this new era of modernization. This article is going to define a particular part of the migration history and its aspects, which will be focusing mainly on a far-distant and barely remembered land called Afghanistan. Here we take you to the times of despair and hopelessness of a nation which has had war over war, conflict over conflict and which has seen empires come and go for over 3 centuries. This article talks about the poor condition of those people who had no other option but to leave their lands, harvests and sometimes even families because they were harmed by the war. What happens when one flees their country? Why would someone be this desperate? How does one deal with this inconvenience? What are the impacts of this immigration on a country? Do they ever return? The role of the neighboring countries has always been a very important issue in this topic like these. They have since been receiving our desperate and turmoil people who were in need of a shelter and asking for help for their survival's sake. It will be unprofessional to just talk about their help and not their benefits from this vast immigration. They have also availed from our immigration. Pakistan and Iran have had very faithful and scared people working for them for a very less expensive wages which in other case would never have been the same.

Keywords- Migration, Afghan refugees and repatriation.

I. INTRODUCTION

Generally, Since the beginning of time humans have migrated for two factors: WAR AND PEACE. The peace migration is the type of migration, people migrate in search of jobs, highly income sources and living the lives they think is best for them and their kin. But in situation of war and conflicts, the crucial situation of war forces them to leave their homes and move to somewhere safer where they could survive and live their lives peacefully (Pouya, 2022).

There have always been researches and surveys on immigration to find out the main reasons of human migration in recent years. After multiple researches, the result was carried out that socio-economic cause is the main reason that people migrate because that carries more impacts than any other factor (Dogramaci & Mersmann, 2019).

When it comes to Afghans, they were often forced to migrate for the survival of their lives and families. There have been many waves when huge amount of population is moved and migrated. In 1979, about one

third of Afghan population was made to take refuge in other countries and that marks the beginning of Afghan immigration for a peaceful and essential reason to leave their lands (Noor, 2006).

Migration from Afghanistan also came with huge impacts on both home and host countries for immigrants. Each wave of Afghan migration had direct and indirect impacts on the country, like; Social, Political, Economic impacts and even mental & health impacts (Alemi, 2016).

Objectives of the Research

1. To analyze migratory impacts
2. To Let us know what lies outside of the borders
3. To know which country has been helpful to the needy Afghan migrants

II. NATURE OF MIGRATION FROM AFGHANISTAN

Ever since the Afghans are compelled to migrate, they often migrated cross-border migration and a small amount of them moved to far destined countries. Afghan immigrants mostly travelled and settled in two destinations; Iran and Pakistan.

1. Iran:

Iran has always attracted economic migration from Afghanistan and provided the migrants their life conditions and settled them permanently since the 1850s. The migration of Afghans did not really stop there at the time, for the reason that people were more comfortable and were having a good wage for their labors. The migration to Iran was continuously rising and non-stopping. one of the reasons behind the migration was starvation and famine in north-western parts of Afghanistan in 1972. It was estimated that in 1978 about 400,000 Afghan workers in Iran were busy working in factories, construction services and food industries (Moughari, 2007). In 1991 Iran was home to 3 million Afghan refugees who were forced to leave their homes after the soviet intervention. After soviet withdrawal, about 1.4 million refugees returned home and the rest stayed there.

2. Pakistan:

Pakistan is a south bordering country that has the longest 2600KM border with Afghanistan than any other neighboring country. These two borders were used for migration and it is still being considered an option for Afghans to flee their homes. They both share ethnic identities in fact they don't recognize the border between them, they see themselves one nation. But as in large-scale migration, 3,049,268 Afghans migrated in 1979 with the family size of 5-6 when Afghanistan was invaded by the USSR. Some of them returned after the invasion but many of them still live where they were migrated (borthakur, 2017).

3. Turkey:

Turkey is the third country that host the most Afghans, after Iran and Pakistan. In recent years Turkey

marks, the best option for the immigrants because of its geographical location and sharing border with Europe (Dashti,2022).

With the process of withdrawal of US troops from Afghanistan in 2014, Afghans mostly migrated to Turkey and Europe due to lack of jobs and increasing unemployment in Afghanistan. Before the takeover of Taliban, turkey was home to 182,000 registered migrants and 120,000 unregistered immigrants who were living there for many years (Hamsici, 2021).

According to a report by DW (2021) Recap Taya Erdogan urges that we don't want to be a storage of Afghan migrants who illegally intent to cross borders to Europe.

4. Europe:

Between 1980 and 1990, thousands of professional people, had to migrate to Europe. The skills and education taken from Afghanistan to western countries caused the problem of lack of experienced and educated individuals in the rebuilding process in 2001. For many years, Europe stays a targeted continent for Afghan immigrants because of good living conditions, immigratory acceptance, and high job opportunities. In 2020, about 709,549 immigrants and refugees were settled there in the Europe and were receiving assistance from the governments (Dashti, 2022)

III. DURING THE SECOND ERA OF TALIBAN AND THE FALL OF KABUL

When the US announced complete withdrawal from Afghanistan in 2022, the republic government of Afghanistan collapsed within three weeks and Taliban once again gained the power of Kabul and dissolved the constitution. With the collapse of Afghan government, hundreds of thousands of migrants took the path to migrate and move somewhere safer (Andishmand, 2021).

According to a report by International Organization for Migration (IOM), about 5 million Afghans are living displaced with 80% of women and children. About 550,000 Afghans have had to leave their homes since July 2021 (IOM, 2021).

After the Taliban were able to enter, US and their western allies were able to evacuate about 130,000 Afghans from Kabul airport of Afghanistan within two weeks. They were including, 80,000 civilians, 5,500 Americans, 73,500 Afghans and other foreigners within 13 days (BBC, 2021).

Canada announced that they will accept 20,000 Afghans who are threatened and forced to leave Afghanistan (Dashti, 2022).

IV. THE MAIN IMPACTS OF AFGHAN MIGRATION

There are some physical and some non-physical impacts of migration on home countries and migrated

countries. Migrants are facing some health issues with some mental disorders and instability. According to a survey in Istanbul about the Afghan migrants by Alemi, 2009 “about 88% of migrants are reportedly distress symptoms and feeling sad in their migration and facing so many difficulties in their migration”. In addition, there are some social and cultural impacts of migration on a community. It can introduce new traditions, beliefs and values, enriching the cultural fabric of the receiving community. In each Afghan migration, Afghans are widely exchanging their cultural interests and sharing cultures together. It holds some negativity, too. Every wave of migration, Afghans are facing family separations, violation of humans’ right, violation of women’s rights and there are two types of migratory impacts which are shown as below (Borthakur, 2017).

1. Impacts of Migration on individuals:

❖ Negative impacts of migration on individuals:

1. Health issues.
2. Mental disorders
3. Family separations
4. Discrimination and Racism

❖ Positive impacts of migration on individuals:

1. Sharing ethics
2. Learning new cultures
3. Facing new people
4. Living more peaceful and stable than Home

2. Impacts of migration on a nation and country:

❖ Negative impacts of migration on nations and countries:

1. Population loss
2. Escape of bright minds, especially Youth
3. Crisis in home country after chaos
4. Long term instability

❖ Positive impacts of migration on nation and country:

1. Remittance to home country
2. Modernization.
3. More knowledge of a better livelihood
4. Higher respect from the migrant to their home country

V. COMPONENTS OF AFGHAN MIGRATION

Afghan immigration involves three major components.

1. Political revolutions: Each revolution in Afghanistan forced millions to leave their homes and migrate with their political allies. In USSR invasion when Iran and Pakistan were directly involved and acted against USSR, there were millions of Afghans migrated to Iran and Pakistan. After the fall of USSR invasion many returned (Wood, 1989).

In American invasion, they brought along various types of organizations and NGOs. They trained Afghans to work with them and work as cooperatives. They trained Afghan personnel who were joining them in operations against Taliban and were taking parts in any

movement by the Americans. When the US army was leaving and were ready to withdraw, they had to take their partners with them because there was a hundred percent of possible threat to them and their families. This phenomenon caused the Americans to take their partners with them to America and settle them as refugees. (Safri, 2011)

2. Receiving Helping hand for migration: Each time when Afghans needed to migrate, they received a quick and easy helping hand. In 1979, when the Soviet invasion occurred, Afghans received helping hand from Pakistan and Iran. They both opened their borders for Afghan people and welcomed them in open arms for the scale of three million of individuals (Safri, 2011).

3. Easy resettlement and receiving job opportunities: according to a survey by Stempel and Alemi, 2021 “about 44.3% of Afghan immigrants live in California, 14.1% in Virginia from 2006-2015. They have proper residence and good income sources. They personally earn between 13,391\$ to 32,346\$ a year”.

VI. THE TRANSFORMATION OF THE AFGHAN MIGRANTS

Sometimes Iran and Pakistan are giving their unique relationship of Islamic politics to Afghanistan and Afghan immigrants. They refer the Islamic elements that Islam had no borders and is a nonterritorially-defined Muslim nation and ummah. But sometimes they forget that same elements and see Afghans as a threat for their countries and blame Afghans for perpetrating and conducting crimes like terrorism, drugs, polio and conflicts in their country (Safri, 2011).

However, they have directly benefitted from the Afghan immigrants for a cheap and less expensive salary, heavy and intense labor for a miner income and service. In Pakistan 1986, there was a new party created under the title of “muhajir qawmi movement” which was founded by Altaf Husain. They won the Karachi elections in 1987, and coalited with PPP (Pakistan people’s party) to govern Sindh province. In 1990 they formed alliance with the Muslim league, too. That was when the Afghan immigrants were gaining power and strength (Safri, 2011).

Currently, there are immigrants from Afghanistan that see their host country as their own homeland because they have lived there for a very long time and accept that there is no going back from where they came from. There are now Afghans living abroad, who have adapted with their host countries so much that they are not even thinking of going back because they have settled with happiness and prosperity (Dashti, 2022).

VII. REPATRIATION AND RETURNING TO THEIR HOME COUNTRIES

Repatriation means, convincing immigrants or refugees to return to their homes and resettle in their home-countries. There are two ways for repatriation:

1. Forcefully repatriation and deportation: This way often occurs when the migrants are moved illegally via human smugglers. In this way human trafficking seems to be an important issue. According to a report by human rights commission of Pakistan (HRCP) in 2009” due to the tense and concerning relationship between Afghanistan and Pakistan, Pakistan pushed the Afghan immigrants and refugees and put them in very harsh conditions so they will leave their camps and villages (HRCP, 2009).

2. Voluntary repatriation: This is the kind of repatriation where immigrants are somehow motivated and persuaded to return to their homes. This is the only legal process which is implemented currently (Schmeidl, 2008).

Within twelve years from 2002, about 5.7 million Afghan immigrants and refugees were returned to their homes with assistance of UNHCR through the voluntary repatriation programme (Hiegemann, 2014). But it has never been easy to voluntarily repatriate immigrants. UNHCR and many other agencies always try to persuade and find the solution for repatriation.

Finding solutions for such migrants who spent such a large amount of time staying in abroad is not easy, especial Afghans who have faced terrible situation to resettle (Schmeidl, 2008). From Afghanistan, the immigrants often endure and go from extreme circumstances of conflicts and turmoil, and when they migrate, they face legal mechanisms that safeguard their rights (Harpviken, 2014). In 1988, Pakistan and Afghanistan signed an agreement named the Geneva accords for the repatriation of Afghans and withdrawal of USSR troops. Though, the USSR troops withdrew, there were still impacts of thousands of planted landmines, natural disasters, weak irrigation and infrastructure that absorbed large number of repatriates (wood, 2010).

The process and beginning of repatriation need two factors to be concerned about:

1. Mobilizing the problems of immigrants: repatriation was a rare-resettlement for those who were victims of war and were not ready to return to their home countries (Long and Crisp, 2009). the reason they were escaping from was not temporary, it was permanent. Since last three decades, Afghans have migrated because of the conflict in ideologies which the fuel different types of regimes (communism and Islamic laws) in 1970s. Mobilizing the problem would help them understand and find a proper solution for repatriation.

2. Finding solution for the problems: Afghans always fled their lands because of the armed conflicts and continuation of civil wars. In some case, the Immigrants and refugees return when the conflicts are finished and the situation is stabilized. According to the UNHCR manual on voluntary repatriation in 1996 “the refugees’ repatriation must occur on their own will and pace”. Any reason behind the immigration if that is conflict, famine, natural disasters, economic crises of any other reason... that needs to be solved before repatriating voluntary (UNHCR, manual on voluntary repatriation, 1996).

VIII. USSR PLANTED LANDMINES

Since the soviet invasion, there are more landmines and unexploded ordnance (UXO) than any other country in the world. in 2015 about 1500 square kilometers of land was contaminated and mine field. There is a large number of lives in risk for ex: woman and children are always the primer victim. Due to a report, about 20% of civilian casualties were because of landmines (MACCA, 2015).

IX. NATURAL DISASTER

Each year, almost 200,000 people in Afghanistan are affected by floods, earthquakes, drought and high temperature (Jabeen and Pulla, 2017).

In 2014, about 13,300 Afghans from Bamiyan, Takhar, and Baghlan were forced to leave their home due to the heavy rains, landslides and floodings (IDMC, 2015).

X. CONCLUSION

For many years, huge scale of Afghans leaves Afghanistan and migrate to other countries for many reasons. Pakistan and Iran are hosting the largest communities of Afghan. The continued war and armed conflicts caused huge amount of displacement and forced millions of Afghans to immigrate. Their immigration was carrying impacts and challenges with it Afghans have often migrated because of war but there have always been some mini reasons, too. In this research paper we concluded some rare and usual impacts of migration and offered some ways for repatriation. Human migration was never easy neither the way to stop the human migration. In last two decades Afghans are forcefully migrated and repatriated many times by the name of peaceful repatriation Programme. Every organization and country did their best in blaming and naming Afghans the terrorist without proper research. Afghans face many difficulties while in migration and need quite hard evidence for clearance to prove he is no danger for the host country. That is not easy and joyful to migrate in such hard conditions for Afghans. It is just done while in need. Different eras forced Afghans in different ways. There were political revolutions and climate issues that were forcing Afghans to move somewhere they could survive and breathe some safe air.

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