



Migration, Education And Delinquency: Educational Vulnerability Of Afghan Refugees And Its Effect On Their Resettlement

Dr. Jamil Khan (Lecturer in Sociology, University of Malakand)

Dr. Waseem Khan (Lecturer in Sociology & Head, Department of Criminology, University of Malakand)

Dr. Sana Ullah (Lecturer in Sociology, University of Malakand)

Prof. Dr. Arab Naz (Dean, Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Malakand)
(corresponding author email; arab_naz@yahoo.com)

Paper Submitted: November 11, 2020

Paper Reviewed: December 17, 2020

Paper Accepted: January 17, 2020

Abstract

Education is the reconstruction of human experiences, which shapes personality and a reason for social adjustment in the dynamic and diverse environment. Relationally and comparatively, the immigrants or refugees require educational attainment at the most to integrate, adjust and resettle in the new society (receiving society). Failure in attainment of such a basic requirement adversely affect their adjustment and resettlement in most cases lead them towards deviance, delinquency, and criminality. The current research is an attempt to understand the situation of Afghan refugees in Pakistan especially Pakhtun settled areas pertaining to the role of education in their resettlement. The is study is undertaken through qualitative methods including convenient sampling technique (sample selection) and interview guide (data collection). Afghan refugees residing in the area were selected as research participants. The study concludes that educational opportunities to Afghans are rarely available in the area, which is among the aggravated reasons behind their mal-adjustment and hurdle in their resettlement. Alongside, evidence about turning of youth into criminal activities because of non-availability of educational facilitation is one of the blatant effects are also found. It is recommended that provision and inclusion of Afghans in the educational structure might have effective, productive, and lucrative consequences for Afghans and the general Pakhtun community for smooth and serene social structure.

Keywords: migration, education, resettlement, deviance, delinquency, crime, social adjustment, educational deprivation

Introduction

International migration has been a source of concern for the people both in the countries of origin and those at the receiving ends. It is believed that the presence of the large number of populations will pose threats to their identities and the local people will soon be outnumbered in their population. While on the other hand, those who arrive at the new conditions bring some expectations with them as well. They think that the new environment will at least accept them cordially, which in turn will assist them to combat with the traumatic situation they are faced with. On the contrary, instead of going to integrate into a new environment, the newly arrived people faced the issues of adjustment and settlement. They are caught in bi-culturalism and a challenge is made to the parental attitudes, behaviors, authorities, and perceptions (Michel, 2004). Initially they are confronted with numerous issues ranging from food and shelter to integration, but the most visibly among them is the issue of the receiving of the education. The youth among the migrants is particularly faced with difficulties in getting formal education as most of them are devoid of inheriting good literary skills and a sound academic background with them (Rossiter & Rossiter, 2009). The current research is also an attempt to address the question of correlation between education and settlement of Afghan refugees turning into deviant and delinquent personalities, which is yet to be explored in sociological and criminological contexts. The emphasis is particularly laid on the Afghan refugees in terms of vulnerabilities in education and their resettlement in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa with an indication of their indulgence in criminalities.

The Argument

Pakistan has accommodated many Afghan refugees since the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan in 1979. It has left no stone unturned in unveiling each and every effort to integrate such a mass exodus of people in its socio-economic structure. At the initial encounter after being passed through a series of enquiries, they are placed in camps. In order to settle them into a new environment they are provided with food and shelter to the maximum level. But soon it is realized that the support which is provided to them is not sufficient to live with. They aspired for an environment where they could take a fresh breath of air, where they have the opportunity to enlist with education, which is always confronted in the primary data. Instead of integrating these people on permanent basis, they were displaced to different ethnic neighborhoods. Under this scenario, they find themselves in the quagmire of punitive dispersal where they are left with no opportunities to enhance with better educational and interpersonal skills. Moreover, their settlement is also shattered where they find no settlement with fragmented education and developing low level of interpersonal skills. They are discriminated in the labor market while being not accepted

with the preexisting and development of educational skills, they come in conflict with the new environment and search for illegal means to accommodate in the new setup. Such an argument leads the researchers to find the role of education with settlement of refugees in the new structure, and if so, what are those factors that lead the refugees to search for the alternate means for settlement in face of discrimination in the educational sectors of Pakistan.

Objectives

1. To explore the level of education among Afghan refugees and involvement in crimes
2. To investigate the resettlement issues with respect to issues of education in Afghan refugees and their involvement in criminal enterprising

Methodology

This study was conducted under the framework of qualitative research design. The sampled population was conveniently selected from the target population of Afghan refugees. The selected respondents were interviewed through interview guide where they were assured that their information would be kept confidential and would not be revealed and that they might quit the interview process at any stage, if any of the questions deem offensive or irrelevant to them. The data was thematically analyzed under the framework of Braun and Clarke's (2006) six steps thematic model. The interviews were first translated, carefully edited, and then transcribed followed by finding the relevant themes with which discussions and analysis were made in the light of the literary information.

Analysis and Discussion

Resettlement of the refugees has been an issue of concern across the globe because they are faced with issues of familial support and stability, socioeconomic status, physical and mental health, language proficiency, interpersonal skills, social networks, personal resilience, educational attainment and employment opportunities (Enns, 2008). Among these, one of the biggest issues that the migrants are faced with is the receiving of education. Upon arrival into the host society, the refugees' youth face difficulties in getting formal education as most of them do not inherit literary skills and a good academic background from their countries of origin (Rossiter & Rossiter, 2009). Similarly, the issues in settlement evidently produce issues in educational attainment, which is believed to be a source of their malnourishment and mal-socialization, thus leading them to delinquencies and deviances of different form.

“... (expressing with grief), we are searching for shelter, food and clothes and you are talking about education. Survival comes first. If we survive, we might be able to think about other things”.

Educational facilities are constrained for refugees in terms of learning the local language. The issues ranging of from language to the development of a high level of proficiency in academic and content-based learning may take five to seven years (Cummins, 2000). It is

further their interrupted schooling backgrounds, lack of formal education and poor literacy skills that leave them at disadvantaged position. The studies of school dropout rates indicate that quite many refugees' youth whose language is different from the hosting communities have failed to complete high school (Watt & Roessingh, 2001).

“No, we are not given with the educational facilities. We face many hurdles in getting education like the dispersal, because we can't stay at the same place for long time and has often been removed. Further, understanding the local educational system is also an impediment in our educational attainment. We don't understand the language, like in Pakistan, Urdu and English are the medium of instructions, which we are not familiar with”.

Similarly, the migrants' youth are left with fewer options of limited linguistic proficiency, intercultural and employment skills that they bring with them from their country of origin. This situation becomes even more exacerbated when these academic challenges leave them to indulge in illegal activities. They lose the social capital and become involved in crimes, violence and gang activities (Wortley, 2003).

“... it's true that our poor performance in education and lesser educational opportunities have left our youth idle. And there's a maxim that the “da wazgar sarhy dimagh, da shaitan kor ye” (the idle man's brain is the workshop of devil). Such idleness compels us to think the other way round and indulge in unsocial and antisocial activities”.

The fact that impediments in resettlement produces hurdles in education attainment of the refugees leading them to different forms of delinquencies is endorsed in the theoretical scholarship found in criminological research. The context of Social Disorganization theory draws its emphasis on relationship between crime and ecological characteristics. Shaw and MacKay (1942) advanced the notion crimes rates are higher in localities suffering from huge influx of migrants, which are devoid of the basic civic facilities of education, health care and proper housing. Similarly, the Strain theory asserts that anger and frustration in the wake of negative and destructive relationships (often claimed as mal-resettlement of refugees) creates strain due to disjunction in the aspirations and expectations. This type of strain especially occurs among youth, when they aspire for something that is idealized, suddenly there arises the lack of financial and educational resources. Strain also occurs when the expectations exceed the achievements.

“... We are living in adversities. We had lots of expectations when arriving to Pakistan because we are Muslim like them and Pakhtuns as well. contrary to our expectations, we are discriminated and not owned by these people, which produced lots of stress and frustration in our minds. We do not like these people and often get angry when we face the discriminatory patterns. It's been long time, but we are neither adjusted nor supported here, that's why most of

our youth are inclined to and indulged in illegal practices. It's our compulsion to survive by any means".

Alongside, the conception of Social Reaction Theory explains labeling in the form of stigma creation and negative effects on self-image. It is believed that those who are labeled are denied higher education, deprived from highly paid jobs and other social benefits. Such alienation leads to the development of lower self-image. Labeling theorists are also of the view that the process of someone being labeled in public should be condemned, because in public ceremonies the person is not being labeled but also passed from a hearing trial, in which the individual is convicted for crime (Erickson, 1962). This approach affects the settlement process of refugees, which is practically found in the case of Afghan refugees in Pakhtun society. Labelling is one of the biggest issues of Afghans in Pakistan. They are labelled with numerous negativities in terms of their social, cultural, lingual, and physical characteristics. Apart from other deprivations, the educational deprivation is highly influential while constraining their adjustment and resettlement in the society. As is well known fact that education is a source of interaction, rationality and social adjustment, Afghans deprivation in it mark them at the edge (isolation), which in turn deviates their mentalities towards unhealthy practices. For instance,

"We are treated contemptuously by the locals, which is a source of our anger and hatred towards them. We do not have rights in this country especially educational rights. Higher education is like a dream for Afghani youth, which is hardly fulfilled. Although there is a provision at university level in the form of one seat as foreign student quota, which means that a single student is accommodated per year in higher education, which is extreme form of discrimination. Unless we are not educated how would we get adjustment and settlement in this country"?

Research studies indicate the negative repercussions of labeling as most hazardous in terms of educational attainment and finding an honorable job in the labor market. In this respect, research conducted on youth with the age from 13 to 22 by Jan Gunner Bernburg and Marvin Krohn have found evidence when a person is labeled, it decreases the conventional opportunities of deviant restricting him from educational attainment, and employment. The kids who are labeled in childhood are more likely to involve in crimes during adolescence, unless they do well to overcome their negative perception in school and through meaningful opportunities of employment (Bernburg & Krohn, 2003). In sum, it is concluded that those who are negatively labeled by school, parents, and official institutions are likely to be found involved in crimes and anti-social behaviors. In similar context, the Afghan refugees especially youth are confronted with labeling in the host society. They are not welcomed in the social structure particularly educational setup. Most of the Afghans have the resentment that they are considered the "outsiders", which is a source of their frustration and maladjustment. Alongside, the stigmatized and absurd behavior of the locals compel them to

avoid education or quit in the mid by those who are already enrolled. Such a pathetic approach becomes a source of their criminalities and delinquencies, as comments from the interview participants explicate:

“... One of my nephews was studying in a school. He was taunted for being an outsider migrant on daily basis. Many times, he had fought with school mates on this issue and at the end he just left the education. He wasn't let to adjust in their environment. Suffering from educational quit, he got mentally depressed and indulged in use of drugs (charas). With the passage of time, he became a professional thief and also got involved in violent crimes”.

“... We are trying our best to get resettled here because we have left our country and want to merge here, but the locals are not ready to accept us. Even at the educational institutions and among the educated people, there is lot of hatred for us. My brother was studying in a university, but the locals didn't allow him to their peer circles, which caused inferiority complex in him. He left the university and presently is working as a laborer with a mason”.

Conclusion

Right to live, right to get educated and right to expression are the basic rights throughout the globe, which are entertained and provided at the earliest. Unfortunately (in terms of literary information), immigrants or refugees or migrants are usually deprived from such basic rights. Their existence is always at stake and has rarely been given civic rights and human rights. Their mobility is restricted, and educational attainment is hindered. Alongside the literary data, the empirical information endorses the facts that Afghan refugees in Pakistan especially in Pakhtun society had arrived at this part of the world with some expectations because of their analogy with the locals. Upon their arrival, they were not treated with what they had expected. Afghanis faced numerous issues in their settlement upon their arrival, which added to their already miserable and vulnerable conditions. They were not available with health facilities, food, cloth and shelter, security, and education. Such deprivations caused mental frustration and hatred among them against the locals. The study found that unavailability of educational facilities was among the core reasons of their maladjustment and non-settlement. Education being a source of integrity and interaction was missing among the Afghans, which enhanced their vulnerabilities. Such a distance from educational attainment negatively affected their integration in the local population, which in turn diverted them from legal way of living and earning to illegal and antisocial mechanism. The distance produced through these apathies worsened when the educated segment of Pakhtun society turned against them in educational institutions. It is recommended that provision of educational facilities might be single most effective tools to turn these “outsiders” into “insiders” and beneficial segment of society to play their role in socio-economic development of the society. Unless they are included in the mainstream education, they might not develop

their personalities and the level of both the violent and non-violent (property) crimes shall tend to proliferate.

References

Bernburg, G. J., & Krohn, M. (2003). Labeling Life Chances, and Adult Crime: The Direct and Indirect Effects of Official Intervention in Adolescence on Crime in Early Childhood. *Criminology*, Vol. 41, pp. 1287-1319.

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative research in psychology*, 3(2), 77-101.

Cummins, J. (2000). *Language, Power and Pedagogy: Bilingual Children caught in the crossfire*. Toronto, On: Multilingual Matters.

Enns, R. (2008). Recent housing experiences of immigrants in Winnipeg, Edmonton, and Calgary. Paper presented at the Prairie Metropolis Centre, Edmonton Research Symposium, Edmonton, AB, Canada.

Erickson, K. (1962). Notes on the Sociology of Deviance. *Social Problems*, Vol. 9, pp. 397- 414.

Michel, J. (2004). Identity development of young women from Haitian immigrant families in the United States: A qualitative exploratory study. *Dissertation Abstracts International*. Section B: The Physical Sciences & Engineering, 64, 9B (UMI No. 4626).

Rossiter, J.M., & Rossiter, R. K. (2009). Immigrant youth and crime: Stakeholder perspectives on risk and protective factors, Working Paper No. WP02-09, PMC Working Paper Series, Prairie Metropolis Centre.

Shaw, C. R., & McKay, H. D. (1942). *Juvenile Delinquency and Urban Areas*. Chicago: University Press, Chicago. Shaw, C. R., & McKay, H. D. (1972). *Juvenile delinquency and Urban Areas*, rev. ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Watt, D., & Roessingh, H. (2001). The dynamics of ESL drop-out: Plus, a change. *The Canadian Modern Language Review*, Vol. 58, pp. 203-222.

Wortley, S. (2003). Hidden intersections: Research on race, crime and criminal justice in Canada. *Canadian Ethnic Studies Journal*, Vol. 35, pp. 99-117.