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AFGHAN NATIONALS AND THE POLITICAL AND SOCIAL STATUS OF SISTAN AND BALUCHISTAN

NACIONALES AFGANOS Y EL ESTADO POLÍTICO Y SOCIAL DE SISTÁN Y BALUCHISTÁN

	
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RESUMEN
La presente investigación determina el estado político y social de los ciudadanos afganos que viven en la provincia de Sistán y Baluchistán de Irán. Esta fue una investigación cualitativa realizada por el método de análisis de contenido y los datos obtenidos por el método de análisis deductivo. Según los resultados de este documento, se puede reconocer que las consecuencias de la migración de ciudadanos extranjeros a Irán son más negativas; trae algunos daños irreversibles a las estructuras políticas, económicas, sociales y de seguridad de las regiones fronterizas orientales y, en general, a toda la sociedad.
Palabras clave: estatus político y social, ciudadanos afganos, Sistán y Baluchistán

ABSTRACT
The present research determines the political and social status of Afghan nationals living in Sistan and Baluchistan province of Iran. This was a qualitative research conducted by content analysis method and data obtained by deductive analysis method. Based on the findings of this paper, it can be acknowledged that the consequences of foreign nationals' migration to Iran are more negative; it brings some irreversible damages to the political, economic, and social and security structures of the eastern border regions and more broadly to the whole society.
Keywords: political and social status, afghan nationals, Sistan and Baluchistan

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INTRODUCTION

In recent decades, the occurrence of insecurity and civil wars in Afghanistan have caused a significant number of Afghans to immigrate to other countries. Due to having a common border with this country, Iran has been the first and most important destination for their immigration. On the other hand, having a shared religion and language has increased the growth of Iran's acceptance of immigration, and the immigrants have traveled to Iran in the last few decades, either legally or illegally.

As stated above, the presence of Afghans in Iran has long existed for many different reasons, including linguistic and historical backgrounds, and dispersed seasonal migrations for work and economic livelihoods. But in the last three decades, in addition to the ever-expanding economic immigration, there have been three major waves of political immigration from Afghanistan to Iran. The first wave was after the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1978-85. At the same time as the arrival of immigrants, Ayatollah Khomeini, the then Iranian leader, ordered the borders to be opened for the arrival of Afghan immigrants and compelled the Basij and the Revolutionary Guards to co-operate with the Afghan immigrants. The order of the leader indicated Iran's open policy toward Afghan refugees, which led to the displacement of about three million Afghans in Iran (Sadeghi, 2016).

The second wave was after the civil war among the various groups of Mujahideen between 1989 and 1995. In this period, with the end of the Iran-Iraq war, Iran's policy towards Afghan refugees changed, and the refugees were obliged to leave Iran and return to their country. Similarly, about 3 million Afghanis who entered Iran in the first period had fallen to 804,404 people in the period before the Taliban's rise in 2016.

The third wave regards Taliban's presence from 1995 to 2001, which caused other immigrants to come to Iran, whose main reasons were the prohibition of general education, especially for girls, by the Islamic Emirate of the Taliban and the massacre of the Hazaras. Despite the continuation of insecurity in Afghanistan and the willingness of its citizens to travel to Iran, Iran's policy in this period was to expel immigrants from the country. The large plan for the return of Afghan refugees two-year contracts between the governments of Iran and Afghanistan and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) since April 2001 confirmed this issue. Reducing the level of administrative and social services to Afghans living in Iran, increasing cost of educational, health and urban facilities, preventing a large number of Afghan children without official permit of access to education, lack of work permits, etc. were other measures that Iran has taken to send Afghans back.

It was decided that with the start of the project in 2001, there should be no problem called Afghan refugees and by the due time they should have been returned to their country. After the September 11th events and the US invasion of Afghanistan and

the formation of a national government in the country, the process of returning migrants voluntarily or forcedly became sever. In 2005, following refugee return policy, the number of immigrants reached 743,856, which was less than one million (Sadeghi, 2016).

The Supreme Leader of the Islamic Revolution in Iran in 1994 emphasized the education of legal and illegal Afghan refugees free of charge, saying that "no Afghan children, even those who are illegally present in Iran, should be excluded from education, and all of them must be enrolled in Iranian schools". This command changed completely the conditions, and after this date, the restrictions on the return of immigrants were declined. Iran's President Hassan Rouhani in a meeting with Abdullah Abdullah, executive director of the Afghan National Unity Government on the sidelines of the thirteenth Cooperation Summit in Istanbul, Turkey said that the Iranian government was trying to register the illegal Afghan refugees living in Iran.

Due to its proximity to the Afghan border, Sistan and Baluchistan Province has enlisted about 300,000 authorized and unauthorized Afghan immigrants since the beginning of the revolution. As of 2016, Iran's new policy has also been taken into consideration in Sistan and Baluchistan province (Mirlotfi & JahanTigh, 2016). In 2017, four thousand Afghan students were studying in line with the humanitarian policies of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the emphasis of the Supreme Leader on providing the conditions for studying for all those in need of education in Sistan and Baluchistan schools.

LITERATURE REVIEW

HISTORY OF AFGHAN IMMIGRANTS IN SISTAN AND BALUCHISTAN PROVINCE

This vast province has a common border of 900 km on the east side with Pakistan and 300 km with Afghanistan; in the south it has a water border with Oman Sea; in the north and northwest it is neighbor with Khorasan province with a length of 190 km, in the west with the Kerman province by 580 km and with Hormozgan province by 165 km. The province consists of two districts of Sistan and Baluchistan, which are naturally different from one another.

Sistan and Baluchistan province is one of the most important migratory region especially of Afghan refugees in Iran; it has natural, human, social, political and economic characteristics.

The results show that Sistan and Baluchistan province is in the 7th position among the 16 border provinces; since one of the main components of the development is

social mobility, this section addresses urban and rural settlements in this province to determine the urban or rural areas of population.

RESETTLEMENT OF AFGHAN IMMIGRANTS AND THEIR IMPACT ON DEVELOPMENT

Afghan refugees residing in the villages of Sistan and Baluchistan province have acknowledged that they are satisfied with the living conditions in the village, and if they want to migrate, they tend to migrate from a village to another. Afghan refugees also expressed their interest in political participation in Iran, and the political participation is one of their first priorities. As discussed, one of the important and factors affecting the development of each province is the settlement situation in the city and the countryside. In this regard, we will study the development situation of the border villages of Sistan and Baluchistan province in order to determine the status of development of the villages where the legal and illegal Afghan refugees reside.

OPEN DOOR POLICY

One of the motivations of Afghans' immigration to Iran during the communist rule in Afghanistan (1978 to 1985) was the non-religious educational system in Afghanistan. Henceforth, for many immigrants, especially the Shiite Hazaras, Iran had a great opportunity to educate children in schools. In addition, in many parts of Afghanistan, especially in villages, the girls had little opportunity to study, and Iran was an opportunity for girls (Gharabaghian, 2016).

There are no accurate statistics of Afghan students during the 1980s and 1990s in Sistan and Baluchistan province. However, due to the open policy of Iran towards legal education of Afghan citizens, the legally resettled Afghans did not have financial and religious difficulties in schools.

ECONOMIC PARTICIPATION OF AFGHAN IMMIGRANTS IN IRAN

Economic Participation of Legal Immigrants

In the early 1970s, a large number of Afghan workers came to Iran following the oil price crisis and Iran's need for foreign labor, especially the non-technical worker in the construction sector, due to the launch of large projects in different parts of the country. The difference in the economic development level of Iran and Afghanistan had a huge contribution to the migration of labor force from Afghanistan to Iran.

However, employers put Afghan refugees at the top of their list and with them replace the indigenous workers because of low wages and non-payment of non-wage costs,

especially the cost of insurance. In general, these factors make it possible that in many cases the competition for unskilled workers to occupy jobs is in favor of Afghan workers. Since a very high percentage of Afghan refugees were employed in the construction sector, the greatest impact occurred in this area, and Afghans, with low wages, were replacing the domestic non-skillful labor force present in this sector. At the same time, employers who were paying lower labor costs have sought to attract Afghan refugees in the labor market, seeking to reduce their wages. This can affect investment in the construction sector. Meanwhile, due to the skill and educational qualities of Afghan refugees, the investment in the construction sector can also affect the presence of these immigrants in the labor market (Issazadeh, 2017).

The results indicate that about 60 percent of Afghan employees were employed as a simple worker. Subsequently, holders of technical jobs, such as sewing, masonry, shoemaking, carpet weaving and stone making received the highest percentage. The smallest number belonged to religious scholars, which included less than one percent of the workforce. Men were mostly employed as simple laborers, while women's main focus was on technical services. The second generation of Afghans, as compared to the first generation, was less active as a simple worker.

ECONOMIC PARTICIPATION OF AFGHAN ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS IN IRAN

The main characteristic of illegal workers is that they are less skilled than regular legal immigrants in the destination country's labor market. A part of this issue goes back to immigration law. According to the immigration law, the skilled workers, technical workers and administrators have priority in being accepted. Consequently, with the admission of skilled workers in these countries, these are unskilled workers who are forced to make illegal immigration.

Another part of it is related to labor market law. In the formal labor market, which requires educational certificates, work permits and membership in unions, it is very difficult for immigrants to hide their illegitimacy, and the immigrants have to work legally to enter such a market. Academic certifications and job licenses are specific to high-skill jobs rather than low-skilled jobs. Hence, for the workers who have an academic and job degree, the illegal immigration is unimportant, and they are legally entering the formal job market by presenting their documents. But the workers with very low skills and lacking a work permit that cannot enter the formal job market are engaged in entering the informal labor market as illegal migrants in the labor market (Chiswick, 2016).

MATERIALS AND METHODS

In the first step, the main question and variables of the study were identified. After selecting the research question and variables, a set of documents or messages from books were collected and personalized to answer these questions. These documents and messages were then categorized into categories, with a code for each of these categories. Finally, the word, phrase, theme, sentence and content were selected as the unit of analysis and final analysis was conducted.

FINDINGS

LEGAL CONSEQUENCES

1 .Weakening of the law on the entry and residence of foreign nationals approved in 1931:

One of the negative effects of unauthorized entry and residence of foreigners in Iran was the inadequate implementation of Article 19 of the Law on the entry and residence of foreign nationals. Indeed, with the entry and residence of unauthorized foreign nationals, the guarantees provided for in this article are questioned because the Iranian government does not have the ability to check the accuracy of documents, criminal record, expulsion from Iran, health problems, financial status, and moral records and the like. Therefore, it may be that there are persons with involuntary criminal, contagious patients, etc., among the displaced persons and foreign nationals who enter the country illegally, and their negative consequences for the society are indisputable. The negative consequences of unauthorized refugees' illegal residence, in particular Afghan refugees, are the spread of insecurity in the eastern regions of the country, the prevalence of various diseases and health problems among the residents of the migratory regions and the prevalence of socio-cultural problems in these areas.

2 .Non-applicability of Citizenship Law (2019):

Since civil law has conditioned the recognition of the private rights of foreigners to their national law, it is not possible to properly enforce the provisions of this law against foreign nationals without identification documents that are illegally present in Iran. For example, Article 7 of the Civil Code, which forms one of the Iranian rules of conflict resolution, considers personal status to be subject to the law of the government. Thus, the foreigners who are legally in the country will, in the framework of this article, carry out their personal actions in accordance with the law of their respective country, but the foreigners lacking entry permits and identification documents are in difficulty in the implementation of this article.

Article 961 of the Civil Law has determined three exceptions to the principle of the similarity of the private law of Iranians and foreigners: only foreign nationals with a

permit to enter and reside with legal identity papers are subject to these exceptions and not the foreign nationals with unauthorized entry and residence without identity cards. The first exception is the law in which the law explicitly limits it to the Iranian nationals or expressly divests it from the foreign national (The Civil Code includes the Civil Code with subsequent amendments and additions, the views of the Guardian Council, the list of chapters and chapters, the detailed and explanatory subtitles, etc. 2019).

SOCIO-CULTURAL CONSEQUENCES

The following can be considered as some of the most important socio-cultural consequences of the presence of Afghan citizens in the province of Sistan and Baluchistan.

Children without identity: The Iranian legislator has accepted the imposition of foreign husband nationality on the Iranian woman and, therefore, the woman loses her Iranian nationality after marrying her husband and gets her husband's nationality. In contrast, the Iranian woman cannot give her Iranian citizenship to her foreign husband and children.

Due to the lack of birth certificates, these children do not have the right to study in Iranian schools and the right to work in workshops in Iran. Of course, assuming that at the age of 18 these children will be given an Iranian identity card, their problem will not be resolved because they lose the best life period for reading and education, and the legislator has not provided any kind of support for them.

Effects on health and food: Outward and uncontrolled transit of Afghan refugees to Afghanistan and Pakistan, which are at a very low level in terms of health issues, and the lack of respect for health by their households has caused various diseases in the society. In particular, people in neighboring provinces with Iran suffer from more cultural and health poverty than other provinces in Afghanistan. The presence of a group of Afghans in Sistan and Baluchistan has led to the transmission of various diseases to the province; according to the statistics released in the TV of Islamic Republic of Iran, these reach 104 diseases, that most of them are dermatological diseases. The statistics are based on a survey of the province's health situation. For example, in the field of the impact of the presence of Afghans on food, given the fact that more than 160,000 Afghans live in Zahedan, more than 100,000 of whom are unauthorized, this increase in population is causing serious problems in the field of food preparation of the province (Dahmardeh, 2016).

Non-adaptation with the new environment: An immigrant not only does not internalize values, but, in some cases, draws a cultural wall around him which leads to the formation of a sub-culture, which is indicative of non-compliance with the new

environment. Studies show that some immigrants return to their former values after a while, and try to restore them, to the point where their degree of opposition to the ruling values (alien to him) is raised, if it is impossible to realize their own values.

Expanding illiteracy: Over two decades of war and political conflict in Afghanistan, the education sector faces a serious problem and has been led to the country's highest illiteracy rate. Therefore, according to statistical findings, 90% of Afghan immigrants are illiterate, more than 95% attributed to women. In other words, it is unlikely that Afghans are literate in Sistan and Baluchistan province. While the results from the general census of the population and housing in 2016 declared the literacy rate by 23% and illiteracy rate by 77% (Dahmardeh, 2016), it is specific to the Iranian inhabitants of the region.

SECURITY CONSEQUENCES

In any case, the security implications of the accepting countries of immigrants are another consequence of immigration, which is evident in different ways. One of the forms of security implications is political and military security in the accepting countries of immigrants, which has different modes.

In this regard, the immigration of Afghan citizens to Iran is the thing that can be accompanied by security outcomes. In the meantime, the presence of foreign nationals, including Afghan citizens, etc., and their marriage to Iranian women can have negative consequences, which in some cases threaten social and national security. Also, the presence of foreign nationals, in particular, of Afghans in Iran, can be accompanied by following security implications (Rahimi, 2018).

1 .Marginalization: A remarkable case of immigration is the problem of marginalization as a result of immigration. The marginalized people are often those who migrate to major cities to work or earn money, and in the first step encounter a problem called housing and settle down on a fringe of towns without full urban amenities. The boundaries of cities have common characteristics: they often form a young population and have a large population density. A common issue seen on the periphery of the city is the existence of criminal acts and offenses against the law.

Sistan and Baluchistan province has numerous and dispersed villages along the border with Afghanistan, and Afghan refugees were forced to go to the border villages of Sistan and Baluchistan Province due to Iran's obscure policies in dealing with Afghans and fear of being rejected from Iran. Afghans' residence in the border villages not only has not played a role in enhancing security and protecting the territorial integrity of Iran, but their activities in various areas of drug trafficking, fuel, human, etc. have had some bad effects and consequences.

The arrival of unauthorized Afghan citizens has negative feedback on various aspects of security, including public, psychological and guild security. In addition, their entry, as the border guards say, causes "the number and power" of border regiments to be engaged (Barzegar & Mirsardo, 2018).

2 .Harm to the implementation of the strategic plan of territorial preparation: In the preparation of national space of each country, the territorial organization is considered an important political goal. The organization of geography and population is the fundamental elements of territorial preparation. In the area of territorial preparation, the population and geography are linked to politics, and their interaction with each other will have a significant impact on national power and national security.

The persistent and widespread smuggling of drugs by Afghan nationals has the following negative effects on territorial preparation planning of contaminated areas:

A: Non-economical feature of other economic activities and capital flight: The profitability of illicit drug trade is very high. The difference in price of narcotic drugs from the place of production to consumption usually reaches 1500%. Therefore, despite such a market that is the most prosperous trade in the world after the arms trade, the existing capital does not tend to other productive, industrial, and even service-oriented activities (Haghpanah, 2018).

B. Insecurity of space for investment: Any investment and economic activity requires the security and assurance of investors. But the spread of drug trafficking in some parts of the country has led to insecurity in the investment climate. Mischief and insecurity and bloodshed settlements, armed extortion, raids, hostages, attacks on economic and public centers have been repeatedly taken place by the drug smugglers in areas of the country's infected provinces.

3 .Changes in population structure and composition: Some of the negative consequences of the illegal presence of Afghans is due to the different lifestyles of Afghan and Iranian families. As the age of marriage has risen among young people in Iran, the families often tend to have one or two children, and in addition, the divorce rates are high among the Iranian families. In contrast, by most Afghans we witness early marriages between boys and girls, having more children, and a negative attitude to the phenomenon of divorce. If the illegal immigration process of Afghan immigrants is not controlled, in the coming years, it will be effective in the population composition of the country.

5 .Drugs: The developing world has witnessed the emergence of a crisis that has led to millions of people being subjected to slavery addiction. Like the nuclear crisis, the population crisis and the environmental crisis, drug trafficking is one of the four major crises of the twenty-first century. Neighborhood of Iran with the largest opium

producer in the world (Afghanistan) and its market of consumption of these materials (Europe and North America) is a major factor in the security of the borders of the country in general and the security of the southeastern border in particular (Zarghani, 2016).

DISCUSSION

The results of this research show that Afghan refugees living in Sistan and Baluchistan province are more likely to live in the margins of cities and villages neighboring Afghanistan, and have a relatively satisfactory economic and social status in their villages and are reluctant to migrate to the cities.

Statistics also show that the villages closer to the border have more Afghan households, and these villages have a lower level of development than other villages. In other words, each village with more Afghan refugees has a lower level of development.

Also, since Afghan refugees, especially their first generation, are simply looking for simple and low-level jobs to meet the economic needs of their families, they are not trained and educated and have low literacy levels.

Consequently, the low level of literacy has made them unwilling to exploit the mass media and, according to statistics, Afghan citizens have the least exploitation of the media and Internet networks. This makes that the mass media do not have the desired effect on Afghan refugees so that they make changes in their lifestyles and are interested in migrating to the cities.

Based on the results of this research, it can be deduced that the relationship between the existence of Afghans along with some of the spatial imbalances between the peripheral and central regions of the country has exacerbated the phenomenon of non-development of the villages inhabited by the Afghan of the border area of Sistan and Baluchistan.

In sum, it should be acknowledged that the presence of Afghan refugees in Sistan and Baluchistan province not only does not improve the development components, but also in many cases it slows down the development trend in the province and presents many economic, political and security problems, such as the distribution of narcotics, fuel smuggling, goods smuggling, espionage activities, etc. in Iran. It seems necessary to explain the consequences of the presence of this group of society in a more precise manner and discuss its positive and negative consequences.

CONCLUSION

Immigration of foreign nationals to Iran has effects and consequences that can include some positive aspects on the one hand and negative aspects on the other hand. In this regard, the illegal presence of foreign nationals should be considered as one of the problems in the country, which not only affects the composition of the population of the accepting regions of immigration and population growth but also has irreversible consequences for the cultural and social structure of the country.

Also, the lack of economic prosperity in Iran is one of the factors causing the problem of job creation in the society. Immigrants' entry into the labor market in the short and long term has had a devastating effect on the employment rate of indigenous people, especially the border regions. In the short term, the physical capital and the time needed to make optimal use of manpower for the immigrants is limited, and in the long term, the physical capital can be transferred from one part to another, which allows immigrants to make their own human capital through raising the level of education and language skills; this can affect the employment rate of indigenous people in the accepting areas of immigrants.

In the security domain, it should also be acknowledged that the presence of foreign nationals and the negative impact of their migration on economic, cultural and social spheres can also have negative security consequences. One of the security consequences in Iran is the presence of political refugees and persons displaced in the country, which can be linked to negative security implications. Also, the connotations of cultural and social security are also the other consequences of the presence of foreign nationals in the country, including social crimes, such as drug trafficking, rape, street violence, etc., and can disrupt the security of the society.

In sum, it should be acknowledged that although the immigration of foreign nationals from the eastern borders of the country can be accompanied by positive consequences such as: cultural interaction and increased labor force and even the arrival of new capital into the country, it also has many negative consequences. Due to the economic non-growth in the country, the number of unemployed and illegal immigration of many foreigners, especially Afghan immigrants has increased.

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