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“Hybrid Youth” Mass migration-Changing Value System: A Case Study of Quetta Based Hazara Youth

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ABSTRACT

The Quetta based Hazaras are being faced with major issues of sectarian violence, racial discrimination, political and social exclusion and genocidal target killing for the past two decades (2000 -2020) for only one reason i.e. Hazara and Shia Identity. As a result the lives of Hazaras are no longer convenient and flat to live peacefully and enjoy progress and prosperity while contributing their part to the collective efforts at province and national levels. The issue in recent years got intensified due to repeated incidences of target killing, suicide bombblast and economic disparity. Consequently, Hazaras started seeking migration at the cost of their lives for safety, security, social justice and peaceful coexistence. For this, they had to pay not only in term of finances but, compromising values system such as inclination towards civic life, education and maturity as per civilized worldwide standards. Migration and relocation, in its totality, impacted their life both in positive and negative ways. Positively, they left Quetta for better standards of life in which they are almost successful. Nevertheless, they paid a lot to bear the cost of their relocation by leaving behind their offspring including children and growing youth, who somewhat derailed from old values systems of Hazaras such as mutual respects, bounding with relatives, collective identity efforts and beyond all loosing interests and inclination towards of education at secondary and tertiary levels. While compromising so they got confronted with a generation which is called Gen Z, for worldwide, but sociologically speaking “hybrid youth” for Hazaras. This research paper does strive to analyze the situation and highlight some bitter facts with regard to new generation’s future. For this purpose lots of relevant data and information were explored to prepare a comprehensive research paper, thus this paper, by its very nature, is qualitative and as review paper. For being part of the same community observation as primary source of data collection was also implied. Based upon both primary and secondary data and mustered information the below research paper was written aiming to highlight certain behavior and deeds of Hazara youth, which is posing threats towards old value system being practiced by elder segment of the nation. During the process of producing this research paper, the need of a detailed research was highly analyzed to be conducted in future by researchers and academicians

Keywords: Migration, Hybrid Children/ Youth, Gender Role, Value System, Impact Study

INTRODUCTION

Genocide, targeted violence, social and political exclusion combined with economic marginalization is few characteristic that are coupled with Hazara Tribes of Quetta for the last two decades. The life, liberty and freedom of social mobility are restricted in and around the city – impounded to, two localities where they do reside in majority i.e. Alamdar Road in Eastern and Hazara town in the Western parts of the provincial capital, Quetta.

Consequently, migration has been opted as a survival strategy by a large number of individuals and families. Few migrated with families whilst many others did it alone mostly -

the male head of families. Australia, USA, UK, Canada and various countries of Europe attracted these individuals and families because the situation of peace and social justice are relatively up to standard in those countries. Availability of a respectable means of earning livelihood is another factor that motivated many to choose migration. Usually, this migration has been opted not as a choice, but compulsion due to security threats by sectarian outlets such as Lashkar e Janghvi, Sepah-e-Sahaba and similar other militant groups (Jafree et al. 2023). Despite the fact, this migration resulted safety, economic viability, but at the cost of compromising immediate parental supervision of left behinds particularly the growing youth. The trend of migration has since long been having implication in matters such socialization and other sociability as nation and, beyond all, the risk of compromising social values such as education, mature personality development and youth with no or least purpose of life to attain. Their actions, by and large, do not match the old value system characterized with maturity and civilized citizens of a nation and country as their predecessors. The impact of migration on value system is not merely additive (traditional values plus Western values) but transformative in its very nature. Youth grown up in such household experience what sociologists call “Transnational children” or hybrid youth – a condition in which their daily reality is shaped by two or more national contexts simultaneously (Bryceson & Vurela, 2002). This paper investigates on how the migration of male head of households affects the overall grown up of youth in particular and over-sighting the old practicing value system of Quetta based Hazaras in general.

Indeed, value system refers to a set of religious, familial, cultural and ethical principles, which expectedly supervise and guide decision making mechanism of family affairs and youth grown up (Schwartz, 2012). An effort has been made in this paper to explore the issues that are associated with absence of male head of families while considering aspects such as social exclusion political economy, remittances, transnational parenting through review of relevant studies and observation. It is significant to state that the main focus were those who are highly vulnerable Hazara as a ethnic minority, which had the least chances to be studied from the perspective of youth grown up without immediate supervision of their male head of family – fathers and other immediate relatives.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Hazara though live in Quetta in large number, whose population is roughly estimated to be between 8, 00,000 to 900,000 – a good percentage in total populace of provincial capital, which according to Census of 2023, is approximately 2.27 million (Aslam et al. 2023), it lies among the category of 6.3% in demographic terms where 44% speaks Punjabi, 15% Urdu, 14% Pashto, 3.6% either Balochi or Brahvi, 15% Sindhi and Saraiki respectively (Majeed, 2010) among the total population of the country which is more than 25 crore human souls. For being mostly Shia and ethnically Hazara community that is characterized with Turkic-mongoloid features, in a Sunny run state, where they are confronted with racial and sectarian discriminations (Ebrahimi et al. 2017). According to Human Rights Watch (2020) over 2,000 Hazaras have been killed in targeted attacks in Balochistan between the year 2000 and 2020. This ever increasing issue of hate-rate, discrimination by various state and non state actors combined with economic discrepancies forced Hazaras to seek migration and relocation both within country and abroad. The Islamic human value of “ Sabr” and strong emphasis on education and social harmony lead them towards migration, however, at the cost of leaving behind their offspring prone to a situation which is none Hazara youth friendly and is called breeding a “hybrid youth”- a generation passing through transnational values which is neither

compatible to value system being followed and practiced by Quetta based Hazaras nor of culture being practiced by people living abroad. According to a study conducted by “Arenas - 2005 and Boss-2006” the prolonged separation between children, particularly growing youth and parents, in most cases, the father lead to a damaging situation leading to compromise the old, tested and proven value system of their forefather with something new, which is not evident altogether, which is termed by sociologist as “emotional remoteness or ambiguous loss”. This is what happening among such families of Hazaras residing in Quetta. In economic term the money being send as remittances is adequate enough to build a sustained life, but this, in no case, replace physical presence of father to look after the activities pertaining to child and youth grown up. According to “Bertice Berry 2005 an American Sociologist” the dilemma between choosing two cultural value systems is not risky due to facing financial burdens of one family member into two different places, but compromising, the value of authority of physical presence

In a tribal or semi tribal society, patriarchal authority is central and final as far as daily routine is concerned, let it be matters such as wedding, funeral ceremonies, education and recreational activities including children and youth grown up, the physical presence of father is a key component to make it happen. (Omidian 2009) a researchers group, however, concluded that physical presence of father reshaped the primary social institution’s authority to decide and enforce decision being taken by families, which in turn brought the very concept of empowering female to head the family affairs including the children and youth bring up. The elder son’s of migrated families, in some cases, experienced to be replacing the role of father, which seems to have failed and mother’s role as guardian got minimized as a result of none social sanctioning by the community in general. This is an alarming issue that requires institutionalized responses by individuals and organizations of Hazara community of Quetta, Pakistan.

According to another study conducted by Zulfiqar et al, (2023) economic remittances are not neutral; they carry cultural script such as how to spend the sent money i.e. remittance. In case of Hazaras it got usually comprised as it did not get invested for education and most importantly for income generation of families and community at large. The bleak side of this situation is that most of the remittances are being utilized on leisure activities such as picnic, wearing fashionable dresses, shoes and other belongings, eating luxurious foods outside – hoteling with friends and fellows

METHODOLOGY

This desk based research is, in its totality, an effort of review of previous research papers already published, thus this research paper is qualitative in nature. Besides personal observation, a lot of relevant research papers were reviewed to get better insight into the matter. Based upon, key informant interviews; review of secondary data and information shared by key individuals belonging to concerned community combined with deep observations this report was prepared. Keeping in view all the limitation of desk research and biasness of authors of various articles published in a variety of journals, all necessary precautions have been taken to make it empirical and unbiased. The following thematic concepts have been studied.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

The findings of this research paper is widely bifurcated into various aspect of the impact of migration on left behind family members, particularly the growing children and youth of

Hazaras residing Quetta Balochistan and other cities of Pakistan. Due to absence of any baseline study the following thematic aspects were considered to be studied as indicators.

Theme: 1. Weakened religious guidance vs strengthened identity resistance

Typically, a Hazara being Shia Muslim is fond of offering prayers on daily basis, fasting during the month of Ramadan and performing other rituals not only at home and Mosques (Imambargah) but also going to Iran, Iraq, for pilgrimage of the shrines of Hazarat Imam Raza (the sixth), Hazarat Ali (the 1st), and Hazrat Imam Hussain (the 3rd Imam) respectively. The well off segment of Hazara families does perform Hajj and Umra by visiting Mecca and Madina on regular basis. However, after migration of male head of family the ratio of performing all religious rituals have drastically decreased rather replaced by paying more time to listen to clergies delivering speeches and conducting religious talks on social media. In families where the mother is less authoritative and over burdened with daily family chores, the ratio of receiving religious contents from abroad by male family head – father, have gotten momentum towards of digitization of religious authority- meaning that Quetta based Hazara youth are confronted with the issue of multiple and sometime conflicting interpretation of Shia Islam (Mehmood, 2015). According to “Tajfel & Turner - 1979” this phenomenon, for the most parts, is aligned with social identity theory, it take place when external threads gets increased among and for the group identification (Islam, 2014). The same theory implies to youth of Hazaras of Quetta.

Theme 2: Least inclination towards secondary and higher education

Hazara youth, relatively, used to be inclined towards getting education for being urbanized community, where it was believed that education is a peaceful strategy for survival, growth and participation in all sphere of life including earning a respectable job i.e. means of livelihood. A drastic changed has been vividly noticed that migration of fathers combined with indifferent response of Government to take pragmatic actions to curb it, Hazaras were left alone to seek opportunities to ensure safety and sustain live as Hazara and Shia by their own strategies including coping mechanisms. And since Hazara community by its very nature is peaceful sensitized, well educated and adequately civilized people, they did not jumped into responding discrimination through harsh reactions, rather opted for soft options such as peaceful agitations in Quetta, Islamabad and at international forums to take up the issue and lobby around for restoration of peace and coexistence in Pakistan and across continents. As a result of unpromising future in terms of peace, social justice and having respectable means of livelihood the Hazara youth became indifferent from education, businesses and trading in and around province. This matter of loosing interests in education lead to psychosomatic disorder symptoms such as anxiety, sleeplessness and depression followed by getting indulged into drug addiction (Tanveer, M., (2017). Opening of “ Qelula” outlets serving youngster both male and female with “HUQA” to smoke tobacco that are artificially colored with different flavors in various community based restaurants in Hazara town along- with easy access to purchase and abuse alcohols, heroin, crystal and other life threatening intoxicants have further added fuel to already deteriorating dependence on drug abuse among Hazara youth. Apart from drug addiction one study undertaken by a group of students of an national level University found an alarming ratio of use of certain medicines meant for treatment of Post Trauma Stress Disorders PTSD and depression among terrorist affected families of Hazara community particularly youth and mothers (Zarak, et al. 2020). It is a bitter fact that four detoxification centers for treatment of drug addicts mostly Hazaras are functioning only among Hazara localities.

The remittances being sent after hardships and irreparable struggling by migrant individual family heads do not get properly invest to earn and increase incomes, rather utilized lavishly by youth of those families. This trend is getting momentum and a popular chore among Hazara youth irrespective of genders, which is alarming. Apart from boys gender who spent most of their time without pursuing any futuristic act or career paths, girl's too drifting and spending lots of remittances either on fashion and outing. Hazara neighborhoods both in Marriabad and Hazara Town are the only places in Quetta where female hotels and refreshment outlets are being set and run by people who in return adequate income on daily basis by their female costumers. The cost of getting married seems beyond everybody's approach and financial domain causing late marriages or never married individuals. As a result, the middle class got somewhere vanished as only two groups left there in society – the “have ones” who receives weighty remittances from abroad and the”have not ones” who are faced with difficulties and challenging situation to bear the cost of daily expenditures with regard to survival, child education and meeting the needs of utility bills in an ever increasing situation of inflation nationwide. Property mafia is large in numbers, who have artificially raised the cost of property beyond the reach of almost everybody due a trend being prevailing in Quetta i.e. lives in pockets. Alamdar Road and its adjacent localities are mostly resides by Hazaras, Pashttonabad by Pashtoons and Sariab Road areas by Brahvis and Baloch whilst most of downtown areas of the city is being inhabited by other ethnic communities such as Punjabis, Sindhis, Urdu speaking and even religious minorities like Christains, Hindus, Behais etc.. For instance, a small mud house with 2 or 3 bedrooms in Alamdar Road areas costs in billions and beyond the reach of middle class citizens.

Sociologically speaking, all such happenings along with already immature behavior exemplify by wanderers youth activism is the outcome of systematic discrimination, social and economic exclusion combined by security issues accompanied by corruptions and systematic biasness in public sector organizations have been promoting children and youth who have already lost interests in pursuing future by all ethnic communities of provincial capital. Among Hazaras, this is vividly evident that youth do perform day dreaming about migrating abroad, particularly Australia where most of his friends and family members is already residing. There are two types of youngster i.e. the ones whose family members are already abroad and they are waiting for visas, and also those, whom have no chance to migrate, but dreaming to do so even at the cost of their careers, family prestige and lives

Theme 3: Reconfiguration of Gender Roles, family authorities and structure

Traditionally, the role of a Hazara female revolved, for the most parts, around childbearing and household chores, however, absence of immigrant fathers, have increased their role many folds, which in turns changed gender roles within family, its ever changing affairs in and outside of family, such as decision making pertaining to emotional, familial, clans related matters and finances have already overburdened females (Batool & Jaffar, 2025). Consequently, boys left behind or waited for their relocations do make most of the decisions with regard to utilization of remittances. Due to immaturity combined with physical restricted mobility, mostly they do not invest it in matters of income generations. Among youth female gender despite of high ratio of education most of the remittances are spent on trends related to beautification such as wearing branded dresses, shoes, hand carry bags and getting make up instead of getting higher education and specializing in various fields of life. Number of female driving cars / vehicles is, relatively, higher among Hazara female gender as compare to other communities. This trend though is women friendly as far as women rights are

concerned, it is considered to be replacing the old “value system” being adhered to by older segment of Hazara community.

As far as emotional labor of mothers in such families are concerned, the mother do tell her children / youth in order to maintain the image of the importance of father such as your father used to decide like this, even when she decides alone. This sort of dual rule being played by mothers burnout and decrease responsiveness to child/ youth emotional needs and deeds (Khan & Khan, 2019).

Theme 4: Psychological ambivalence and Hybrid identity

Stuart H McPhail Hall , a British sociologist once used the term “ hybrid Identity” – somebody who is neither him or her, as far as, his or her ethnic identity is concerned, rather the person is someone who is divided into many pieces such as at home a Hazara child/ youth, who do speak Hazaragi or a dialect of Dari Persian, then the same person is intentionally or unintentionally is expected to speak, read and write Urdu and other local languages for social harmony, he or she is also expected to learn and speak English as International communication medium, the same person is intentionally commissioned to have access to all technological gadgets such as laptops, desktops computers, audios/videos and movies and various social media outlets. Consequently, an ambivalence do occurs nationally, irrespective of ethnic belongingness among youth of all communities. So do face Hazara community/ nation living currently in Quetta. As a result, it is observant that despite of all efforts being made by various organizations, i.e. political parties, students organizations, welfare based groups and organizations, inputs from controversial clergies, their groups and organizations who hold regular sessions of focusing women under the umbrella of “Roza Khani” have not impacted to overcome this problem and its associated issues like having no monitoring mechanism, providing alternatives help and support to children and youth to feel being helped and restored in the case of absence of male family members who is alive and doing hardship to sustain and continue a respectable life for him, his children, family members and community/ nation at large

CONCLUSION

Migration had always been an optional strategy for sustenance of life over the planet; it had been adopted not only by an explicit nation, but also by all ethnicities and leaderships in surge of and to find some space for future interventions, indeed, for a respectable, peaceful and lustful live and livelihood. Hazaras living in Quetta did the same, but at some heavy costs that may be having both positive and negative consequences and impact over them as nation.

Positively, though having access to peaceful and harmonious social co-existence, where all gets equal and equitable treatments, where merits prevails and where anybody can enjoy social justice and opportunities to explore life in its fullest forms without having compromised his or her ethnic and individual identity. Hazaras migrated abroad do also enjoy to live a life, where in return of their paid taxes, they have comparatively a good living standards combined with internationally accepted life style, liberty and freedom to think and express themselves openly in matters that matters and are concerned to their life, liberty and freedom of movement, thoughts and expressions. However, the costs being paid are somewhat heavy as it is challenging the value system and promote a generation, which is called hybrid youth.

Contrary, to their values systems as byproducts of their forefathers, which seemingly shows threatened to have been compromised. A person born and trained in a peculiar culture characterized by irreparable value systems including their ideal and real culture prone at risk to be dilated is, no doubt a matter of serious concerns. The prevailing socio-economic and

political situation of Hazaras both in Quetta and abroad needs a lot of organized interventions to be taken to minimize the already engulfed gaps between male head of families abroad and their children, particularly the growing youth to be minimized.

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