

Study of Socio-Economic and Political Effects Caused by the Immigration of Afghans to the City of Semnan

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Abstract: Afghan Immigrants have been living in the city of Semnan for several years and the study of different dimensions of the effect, their presence has in Iran and particularly in the city of Semnan, is very important. The present research is trying to answer some questions related to social, economical and political effects of immigration of Afghans to city of Semnan. main device in the present research is questionnaire and in terms of data gathering it is considered as measurement-based. This research is considered as descriptive and analytical and the target it follows is of “Practical” genre. The dependant variable in this research is the degree of economical, social and political impacts that Afghan immigrants have on the city of Semnan. Its sample statistical society includes all supporters (bread winners) of families and neighbors of Afghan residents living in Semnan. This sample statistical society is estimated to be consisted of 400 persons, according to the Cocran formula. The results show that variables such as living in the suburbs, inappropriate urban physical situation, inappropriate sanitary condition in schools, the problem of unemployment and increase in accommodation rents, are among the problems with high priority in comparison to other variables under study.

Key words: Migration • Afghan Immigrants • Iran • Semnan

INTRODUCTION

An immigrant is one who moves from his/her homeland to somewhere else [2]. Migration is a form of geographical or local movement, taking place between two geographical units [3]. This movement has to end in changing one's normal place of residence from the place of origin or his/her location before migration to a new location or place of residence [4]. While migration is a complex and multidimensional phenomenon, the main presupposition about migration management is that migration is not a controllable phenomenon and it's a process to be managed [5].

Bruce Cohen defines “migration” as a phenomenon that takes place due to reasons including: insufficient edible material in a particular region, ideological or political prosecution and annoyance, war, national and ethnical enmity and hatred [6]. In Moein lexicon, migration

is defined like this: permanent and semi-permanent change in residence without any limitations about the distance of the movement and the optional or obligatory essence of migration, also without any kind of discrimination between domestic and foreign migration [7].

Below are summarized, influential factors in deciding to migrate and its procedure, as quoted from Lee by Lahsa'izadeh [8]:

- Factors related to the source domain;
- Factors related to the target domain;
- Preventing factors;
- Personal factors

Generally, two factors cause migration, one of which being the repulsive factors existing in the source location like: poverty, natural disasters, war, unemployment, lack of food, etc. while the other is believed to be

theattracting factors in the target location like: more sanitary facilities, better education, higher income, affiliations with relatives or family members, better accommodation, etc. [9].

Immigration has happened because of several reasons, like the purification of governmental and higher education centers from objectors, revolutionary reforms for changing social infrastructures, commencement of civil war, obligatory conscription, bombardment and massacre of most of the militants, violation of human rights, annihilation of economical centers, interference of other countries and negative resistance and the victory of the Islamic revolution in Iran.

Seasonal migrations, business migrations and other kinds of migrations somehow exist in every country. Scientists consider encouraging agents for immigration from the countries of origin and attracting agents in target countries, as the causes of migration in general. There are many repulsive and repellent agents for citizens in Afghanistan. War as the primary agent and poverty and unemployment as the consequences of war have existed during the last thirty years. After the exit of the Russian red army millions of Afghans were obliged to leave their homeland because of ethnical and tribal wars and lack of domestic security. During the last 31 years, the Islamic Republic of Iran opened its eastern borders to Afghan immigrants and accepted more than 3 million Afghan immigrants inside its borders due to humanitarian reasons. By the year 2002 and the end of Taliban's age and while a relative peace and tranquility returned to the country more than half of the population of Afghan immigrants have left Iran for their country but unemployment and insecure situation in Afghanistan, has not yet created the necessary motivation for Afghan immigrants to return to their country.

Among other reasons causing an Afghan citizen to be driven away and get attracted toward other countries, we can name intense bureaucratic corruption, discriminations, etc. At the moment millions of Afghan immigrants are spread all across the world; they have either ran away from war or came after a welfare situation or rather better job opportunities. Finally the chaotic situation in Afghanistan caused Afghans to immigrate to other countries that in fact had some attractions in comparison to the country of origin. Immigration of Afghans to Iran follows the attraction and repelling theory. Pakistan and Iran, as two countries having close cultural and historical relationships (same mourning customs or wedding ceremonies, Norooz, etc.) with Afghanistan have done expanded supports like accepting immigrants, during the time of resistance and jihad against

former Soviet Union; furthermore both countries are and have been host to the highest number of Afghan immigrants. Increases in immigration and homecoming of immigrants are counted on as two sides of the migration sheet in Afghanistan. The most significant causes of Afghans' immigration to Iran are as follows [10]:

- Lengthy borders with Iran.
- Religious association between the people of these two countries.
- Cultural and lingual proximity between these two countries and vicinity of Iran to the immigrants' homeland for rapid homecoming in case favorable conditions take place.
- Chaotic economical situation in Afghanistan.
- Intense unemployment among people and the youth
- Insecurity and battles and bloodsheds in Afghanistan

Afghanistan has become one of the immigrant-sending countries in the world, due to different reasons, such as war and a large number of Afghans have immigrated to Iran because of closeness, vicinity and cultural and religious beliefs, they have in common. Because of the considerable number of Afghan immigrants in Iran, our country is considered as an immigrant-receiving country. Afghan immigrants make less than four percent of Iran's total population; however they are approximately six percent of the working human resources of Iran. The study of different dimensions of the effect, their presence has in Iran and particularly in the city of Semnan, could be very important. According to the statistics, the number of Afghan immigrants in the province of Semnan is 40,877 and they mostly live in the cities of Shahrud, Damghan, Garmsar and Semnan [1]. For many years Afghan immigrants have been present in economical, social and political activities of the region and this presence has certainly had its effects on the city of Semnan.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The main objective of this research is to study the economical, social and political effects, caused by the immigration of Afghans to the city of Semnan. Minor objectives of this research are as follows:

- Priority-based Classification of the economical, social and political effects of Afghans' immigration to the city of Semnan.

- Providing suggestions in order to compile influential policies for ameliorating the optimum immigration management in the city of Semnan.

Research Question: The present research is trying to answer some questions related to social, economical and political effects of immigration of Afghans to the city of Semnan; including the question, what effects does the presence of Afghan immigrants have on Semnan's economic status? What effects does the presence of Afghan immigrants have on Semnan's social status? And also do Afghan immigrants have any impact on the political situation and parameters related to it?

Data Collection Method: The main device used in the present research is questionnaire. In order to understand the participants' opinions better and also for the purpose of realizing the pre-determined objectives, questions have been designed in an open and close form in this research. Filling the questionnaires has been done via verbal interviews. Clear-sighted university professors' opinions and points of views in the domain of research (migration, population and sociology) have been used for the determination of narrative, contextual and external appearance of the questionnaire and the researchers and experts of the Ministry of Interior, governor-general's office and governor's office, etc. have also been consulted. For determining the validity coefficient of the research, 30 versions of the questionnaires have been completed outside the sample statistical society. The questionnaires have been analyzed via SPSS method after completion and their permanency degree has been determined afterwards.

Sampling and Information Analysis Method: According to statistics issued by the Ministry of Interior, the total number of sample statistical society is 9,750 persons and the volume of research sample is determined by the formula below:

$$n = \frac{Nt^2pq}{Nd^2 + t^2pq} \quad (1)$$

According to the above mentioned formula if we want to estimate the sample volume from the population with a population gap of 0.5 (meaning, half of the population has an attribute and the other half, lacks it) $p=0.5$, $q=0.5$ and sampling mistake acceptance ($d=0.05$) we will have:

$$\frac{9750 \times 2 \times 2 \times 0.5 \times 0.5}{9750 \times 0.05 \times 0.05 + 2 \times 2 \times 0.5 \times 0.5} = 384 \quad (2)$$

According to Cocran formula the sample volume has been estimated to be 384 persons, however in order to achieve a higher certainty level 400 questionnaires were provided and delivered to those who were in charge (examiners); 396 questionnaires were received and analyzed afterwards. For analyzing the variance coefficient information (C.V) statistical tests like: correlation coefficients and unidirectional variance analysis were used. In analyzing the multilateral regression, different methods are used in order to enter variables in the regressive equations. In this research multilateral regressive analysis, stepwise method has been used. In this method weaker variables are omitted from the equation and placed in a table called "Excluded Variables" and the rest of the variables enter the regressive equation in order of degree of influence and determine most of the variances in the dependent variable.

In this research, in order to analyze the relationships between the variables under study, especially analyzing the relationship between the dependent variable (economical, social and political effects of Afghan immigrants' presence in the city of Semnan) and independent variables, Spearman's correlation coefficient has been used and the relationship between them is mentioned in the conclusion section. Regressive equation:

$$Y = 0.491 + 0.367(A2) + 0.299(A3) - 0.801(A4) - 0.25(A7) + 0.819(AM1) + 0.93(AM3) - 0.7(AM6) \quad (3)$$

Consequences of Afghan Immigrants's Presence in Iran: Consequences of Afghan Immigrants' Presence in Iran can be summarized in the instances, mentioned below [11]:

- The degree of immigrants' activity is higher than native folks; perhaps a very small number of Afghans are jobless in Iran, while most of the native human resources are unemployed.
- The business market will be engaged in a competition to employ native individuals and immigrants.
- The population will increase in the target country.
- Different kinds of modern crimes and misdemeanors will grow and get intensified (addiction, murder, robbery, etc.); suburban life becomes an abstruse problem in most of the big cities.
- New social phenomena produced by the impact of the two cultures (native and imported ones) will be created and this will influence the way of thinking, behavior, moral characteristics, etc.

- Adjustments in payment systems with the presence of a large number of immigrant workers cause some income alterations.
- Negative influence on investment due to lack of investment by immigrants.
- Establishment of special official organizations for probing the immigrants' problems.

Introducing the Area under Study: The city of Semnan is the most important area in the province of Semnan and is located in a geographical position of 53 degrees and 23 minutes and geographical width of 35 degrees and 34 minutes. This area is surrounded by the city of Damghan from east and northeast, Sari and parts of Savadkouh from north, Garmsar and Damavand from West and Na'in and Ardestan from south. The city of Semnan with an area of 22,191 square kilometers and population of 191,618 people is located on the southern skirts of Alborz mountain ranges. This city is generally among dry and arid areas -considering its geographical and ecological situation- to the degree that it practically encounters lack of water for industrial and agricultural, etc. usages and in terms of water resources lacks permanent rivers, except for river Hableroud which flows in Garmsar plain. Herbaceous integument of the area ranges from the type pertaining to the desert to mountainous steppe. Agricultural products such as wheat, barley, tobacco, fresh fruit and vegetables, cotton and fig are produced in the province. In terms of industry, most of its industry is related to textile and leather. Nonmetallic mineral industries are also among the best and most important industries of the area and cellulose related industries are considered as new industries of the area. Among the mines of the province, we can point out Gypsum mines, salt rock, limestone and Dolomite and iron ore, among which, Gypsum mines and iron mines are considered to be of highest qualities in the province. Handicrafts of the city Semnan include short-napped coarse carpet weaving, felting, traditional curtains, towels and mufflers and unbleached figured calico infrastructure

fabrics. In addition, we can name coarse blanket, wrapper for bed clothes, sackcloth and Choufa [12].

The Reasons for Afghan Immigrants to Semnan: Province of Semnan with 40877 Afghan immigrants is considered one of the provinces with the highest number of Afghan immigrants among other provinces of the country. One of the important reasons for the province of Semnan being an immigrant accepting province is the geographical position of the province, being located in the center of Iran and next to big provinces such as Tehran as the political and economical capital, Qom, Isfahan, Yazd, Razavid Khorasan, Mazandaran and Golestan and having an appropriate inter-regional system of transportation. Furthermore, being located in the East-West and North-South international transportation corridor is also counted on as a relative advantage in immigrant acceptance. Considering the meager distance between this province and the Eastern borders of Iran especially Afghanistan and also easy access to railways and roadways, the task of traversing to the borders of Iran becomes much easier and faster and this gives the Afghan immigrants the necessary motivation to enter the province of Semnan. Therefore, because of the availability of appropriate business and security backgrounds, Semnan is considered as one of the attracting poles for Afghan immigrants.

Among the cities of the province Semnan, the city of Semnan as the center of the province has accommodated approximately 9,750 Afghan immigrants with residence cards in it and most of these immigrants work in Gypsum mines, industrial towns and complexes, brick making furnaces, cow keeping places, hencoops and constructional fields as workers.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

For defining a priority order for economical, social and political problems caused by the presence of Afghan immigrants, variance coefficient indicator (C.V) has been used and this has been shown in Tables 1 to 5.

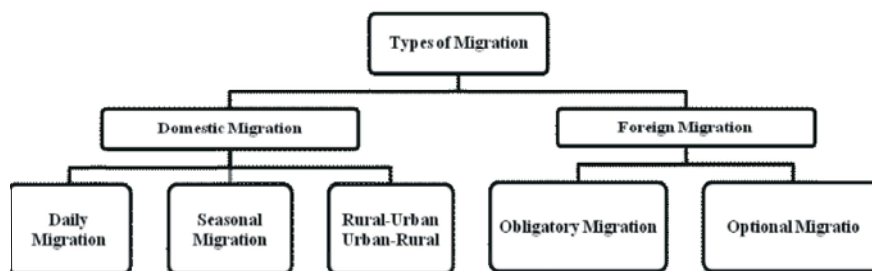


Fig. 1: Types of Migration



Fig. 2: The position of the city Semnan, in Iran and the province of Semnan

Table 1: Ranking of economical problems using the variance coefficient indicator (C.V)

Index	Average	Scale Deviation	Variance Coefficient (C.V)	Ranking
Unemployment	4.14	1.14	0.275	1
Increase in house rents	3.68	1.03	0.280	2
Decrease in workers' wage	3.96	1.11	0.281	3
Working situation	3.89	1.11	0.285	4
Increase in non-professional working human resources	3.96	1.19	0.300	5
Increase in food and clothing prices	3.57	1.16	0.325	6
City's quality of sanitation	3.56	1.20	0.337	7
Families' quality of sanitation	3.34	1.24	0.371	8
Augmentation of transportation fees	3.15	1.18	0.374	9
Increase in transport charges for passengers	3.14	1.19	0.379	10
Lack of rental houses	3.29	1.36	0.413	11
The problem of accessing basic goods	2.97	1.26	0.424	12
Shortage of appropriate agricultural lands	2.76	1.20	0.434	13
Increase in the price of agricultural lands	2.796	1.22	0.437	14
Increase in the number of floors in apartments	2.82	1.31	0.464	15
Increase in the price of residential lands	2.98	1.41	0.473	16
Turning houses into apartments	2.77	1.35	0.487	17
Turning agricultural lands into residential lands	2.48	1.28	0.516	18

Table 2: Ranking of social problems using the variance coefficient indicator (C.V)

Index	Average	Scale Deviation	Variance Coefficient (C.V)	Ranking
Traffic of narcotic drugs	4.22	1.11	0.263	1
Disturbance in the welfare and tranquility of families	3.75	1.16	0.309	2
Bad security status	3.67	1.17	0.319	3
Traffic and crowdedness	3.61	1.20	0.332	4
Local quarrels, fights and battles	3.45	1.19	0.345	5
Expansion of families without supporters (bread winners)	3.25	1.17	0.360	6
Religious conflicts	3.44	2.00	0.363	7
Kidnaping and murder	3.54	1.29	0.364	8
Sexual violence (against the female members of families)	3.73	1.37	0.367	9
The number of addicts	3.75	1.38	0.368	10
Robbery and theft	3.67	1.43	0.369	11
Water and air pollution	3.01	1.25	0.415	12
Beggary	3.34	1.44	0.431	13
Escape of girls and boys from home	2.69	1.19	0.442	14
Usage of alcoholic drinks	3.08	1.48	0.480	15
Separation and divorce	2.65	1.28	0.483	16
Suicide	2.52	1.23	0.488	17

Table 3: Ranking of political problems using the variance coefficient indicator (C.V)

Index	Average	Scale Deviation	Variance Coefficient (C.V)	Ranking
Augmentation of immigrants' population	3.81	1.12	0.294	1
Augmentation of addicts in the society	3.98	1.18	0.296	2
Increase in the number of those referring to judicial and disciplinary authorities	3.54	1.10	0.310	3
Insecurity	3.81	1.20	0.315	4
Selling narcotic drugs	3.93	1.31	0.333	5
Ethnical and religious quarrels	3.37	1.23	0.365	6
Setting forth accusations against Iran by international communities	3.40	1.25	0.367	7
Outbreak of contradictions between Iran and the neighbor countries	3.37	1.38	0.409	8

Table 4: Correlation of variables using the correlation coefficient

Dependent Variable	Independent Variable	r	P: Percent of Meaningfulness
The economical, social and political effects of Afghan immigrants' presence in the city of Semnan	Sex	0.298	0.000
The economical, social and political effects of Afghan immigrants' presence in the city of Semnan	Age	-0.066	0.227
The economical, social and political effects of Afghan immigrants' presence in the city of Semnan	Education	-0.112	0.043
The economical, social and political effects of Afghan immigrants' presence in the city of Semnan	Marital status	-0.1496	0.009
The economical, social and political effects of Afghan immigrants' presence in the city of Semnan	Number of family members	0.440	0.000
The economical, social and political effects of Afghan immigrants' presence in the city of Semnan	Working/professional status	-0.117	0.038
The economical, social and political effects of Afghan immigrants' presence in the city of Semnan	Previous record of neighborhood	-0.264	0.000
The economical, social and political effects of Afghan immigrants' presence in the city of Semnan	Membership in associations [number]	-0.258	0.004
The economical, social and political effects of Afghan immigrants' presence in the city of Semnan	Status of the residence	0.077	0.159
The economical, social and political effects of Afghan immigrants' presence in the city of Semnan	Amount of alteration in Afghans	0.424	0.000
The economical, social and political effects of Afghan immigrants' presence in the city of Semnan	Connection with Afghans	-0.089	0.101
The economical, social and political effects of Afghan immigrants' presence in the city of Semnan	Degree of knowledge and awareness	0.371	0.000
The economical, social and political effects of Afghan immigrants' presence in the city of Semnan	Cultural associations	-0.038	0.490

Table 5: Statistics to determine the contribution of independent variables in the presence of Afghan refugees in Semnan city

Variables	B	Beta	Sig	R	R2	F	t
(Constant)	-0.923		0.000				
Increase in transport charges for passengers	0.917	1.176	0.000	0.929a	0.862	12.416	1022934.872
Awareness of the situation of immigrants	0.391	0.603	0.000	0.987b	0.974	358.532	682452.629
Membership in economical and social associations	0.342	0.348	0.000	0.998c	0.996	1522.889	412401.408
Increase in house rents	-0.405	-0.179	0.000	1.000d	0.999	4574.719	-240106.628
Vituperation and street fights	0.080	-0.099	0.000	1.000e	1.000	150734.195	-1904683.432
Impoliteness among people	-0.011	-0.018	0.000	1.000f	1.000	1.099	-26316.165
Increase in the number of those referring to judicial and disciplinary authorities	0.001	0.001	0.000	1.000g	1.000	8.251	3624.972

CONCLUSION

- Most of individuals' communication is in public gatherings with the amplitude of 139 persons (35.1%) and in working environments with the amplitude of 126 persons (31.8%).
- Priority-based listing of economical problems caused by the presence of Afghan immigrants showed that variables of unemployment, increase in house rents with, diminution in workers' wages and working conditions, have the one to four priorities in comparison to other variables under study.
- Priority-based listing of social problems caused by the presence of Afghan immigrants using variance coefficient indicator express that variables of narcotic drug traffic, disturbance in welfare and tranquility of families, bad security status, traffic and crowdedness with, local quarrels, fights and battles, are of higher priorities by the order they were mentioned, in comparison to other variables under study.
- Priority-based listing of political problems' variables under study in this research using variance coefficient (C.V) showed that variables of increase of immigrants' population, increase in the number of addicts in the society, Increase in the number of those referring to judicial and disciplinary authorities and insecurity, have the one to four priorities in comparison to other variables.
- The results of correlation coefficient test shows that, Zero hypothesis is refused and research hypothesis is accepted about variables and variables of age, the status of residence, cultural associations, have no meaningful relationship with the dependent variable.
- The result of multilateral regression shows that $R^2=1.00$ that shows a 100% determination of dependent variable's variances by the 7 variables mentioned Table 5.

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