

MIGRATION AND IDENTITY CRISIS: A HOLISTIC PERSPECTIVE OF MIGRANTS

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ABSTRACT

Migration contributed to richness in diversity of cultures, ethnicities, and races the world over. Migration has severe repercussions on individuals and households who experience many problems including loss of cultural norms, cultural identity, and social support systems, acculturation and changes in identity. We used quantitative research in the positivistic tradition and employed cross-sectional research methods. The study was conducted in different areas of Islamabad and Rawalpindi. The sample size of 95 households was determined by Taro Yamane formula. The households were enumerated by means of snowball sampling technique and data was collected through a well-structured questionnaire. We found that migration is a great source of identity crisis for the migrants moving within the cities. Due to fear of identity crisis, migrants and their children do not represent themselves and hide their identity while avoiding interaction with the people and mates. Similarly, they are afraid of being discriminated against and intimidated about being treated differently by the people at their destination. By the same token, migrants become victims of identity crisis that has critical psychological consequences. It is, thus, concluded that migrants feel underrepresented and suffer from identity crisis due to discrimination at destination.

Keywords: AJK, Culture, Discrimination, Ethnicities, Identity Crisis, Migration.

INTRODUCTION

Migration contributed to richness in diversity of cultures, ethnicities, and races the world over (Manning & Trimmer, 2020). Migration has severe repercussions on individuals and households who experience many problems including loss of cultural norms, cultural identity, and social support systems, acculturation and changes in identity (Czaika & De Haas, 2014). Research shows that migration is a phenomenon of moving from one place to the other for the sake of either permanent settlement or seeking likelihood at the destination (Bove & Elia, 2017; Castles, 2017; Vertovec, 2023). Most of the migrants move due to many push factors. These push factors are socioeconomic status, better education, health facilities, specialization of

occupations and living standard. These are some of the common facts that are researched well in developed countries. Similarly, much research has also been conducted in these factors in developing countries (Banks, 2023; Mavroudi & Nagel, 2016). Moreover, cultural, ethnic and racial factors have also received due attention in developed nations. Consequently, policies have been devised to counter such issues of identity, race and ethnicity to create cohesion and equity by promoting diversity (Abdullah & Ullah, 2022; Vertovec, 2019). Nonetheless, research on identity crisis, equity and diversity is still ignored in many developing countries including Pakistan (Hussain, 2017; Vertovec, 2023). Though the researchers are actively participating in the

migration studies, but identity crisis is not seriously searched and debated by the researchers and scholars in Pakistan. As there is heavy toll of migration from rural to urban areas or from other provinces to the cities but the diversity and inclusion is always questioned.

This paper aimed to examine the migration and identity crisis among the migrants of Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) moving to the cities of Pakistan. It also sheds light on the repercussions of endangering identity of people of Kashmir in the cities of Pakistan. It is noteworthy here that people of AJK are living in different cities of Pakistan in large number. As they are also well established in their professions and earning an appropriate livelihood. Similarly, their children are well adjusted to the culture (Abdullah & Ullah, 2022; Muhammad, 2016). While people newly migrating to the nearby cities of Pakistan face discrimination based on identity (Akhtar et al., 2021; Snedden, 2015). Similar happens to the people of AJK. They usually move to the cities of Pakistan for the sake of better facilities and earning opportunities. It is noted that due to lack of overwhelming representation in these cities, migrants face various issues of their representation, identity, and discriminations in manifolds. For example, Ahmed (2017) found that people face issues in hunting livelihood due to less representations in the state institutions including business and industry. Waseem (2022) explored a very interesting aspect of representation. They argued that people hide their identity in sorting out their job-related tasks. While Abdullah et al. (2021) and Raza et al. (2023) also attracted the attention of the stakeholders towards the education of children. This study was conducted by using quantitative research in the positivistic tradition. A cross-sectional research method was used to analyze the data. The study was conducted in different areas of Islamabad and Rawalpindi (See Table 3). There was a diversity of population expanded in both cities. A sample size was of 95 households was determined by Taro Yamane formula. The households were enumerated by means of snowball sampling technique and data was collected through a well-structured questionnaire. Collected data was processed and analyzed by means of Statistical Packages for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Chi-Square test was applied

They also stated that parents train their children to hide their identity to keep themselves away from identity crisis and discrimination against minorities. It is also asserted by Mughal (2020) that migrants hide their identity to avoid the inconvenience of being treated differently. However, (Bangura & Sciences, 2023; Lazëri, 2023) found that many migrants do not hide their identity and feel proud cohesion with origin. As reiterated earlier that migration has been focus of the researchers in Pakistan but this phenomenon received less attention in AJK despite part of the international (Lazëri, 2023) migration at large scale. Similarly, this area of identity crisis has also received less attention from research so far. Lack of literature coupled with our experiences enabled us to conduct this study on the migrants of AJK living in Rawalpindi and Islamabad. This study is informed by the argument of Bangura & Sciences (2023). He stated that acculturation is a phenomenon in which groups of different cultures and individuals come into firsthand contact resulting in the changes in cultural patterns in one or another group. Bhugra (2012) described that although migrants face identity crisis, however acculturation materializes the outcomes of migration in case of sense of failure, loss and poor self-esteem, and identity crisis. It may carry some other factors such as divergence in expectations and achievements which may result in psychological problems and, hence, marginalization. Nonetheless, the process of acculturation may lead to adaptation, rejection, and cohesion.

Research Methodology

while results were tabulated and interpreted with graphical presentation.

Results

Demographic Information

Demographic information of the respondents is tabulated and interpreted as follows.

Table 1
Demographic Information of the Respondents.

Age in Years	Frequency	Percent
20-25	23	24.2
26-31	22	23.15
32-37	25	26.31
38-43	15	15.8
44 and above	10	10.5
Total	95	100.0
Occupation		
Operator	18	18.94
Driver	16	16.84
Labor	19	20
Engineer	10	10.5
Salesman	8	8.42
Marketing	8	8.42
Supervisor	9	9.5
Business	7	7.4
Total	95	100.0
Education		
Less than Matric	13	13.68
Matric	24	25.3
Intermediate	31	32.63
Bachelor	20	21
Masters	7	7.4
Total	95	100.0

The above table shows the demographic information of respondents, i.e. age, occupation, and education. Age of the respondents is distributed as: 24.2 percent were found in age group 20-25 years, 23.15 percent in 26-32 years, 26.31 percent in 32-37 years, 15.8 percent in 38-43 years, 10.5 percent in 44 years and above. Diversity of occupation is distributed as, 18.94 percent operators, 16.84 percent drivers, 20

percent labor, 10.5 percent engineers, 8.42 percent each salesman and marketing managers while 9.5 percent supervisors and 7.4 percent were businessmen. The education of the respondents is found as: 13.68 percent were having education less than Matric, 25.3 percent Matric, 32.63 percent Intermediate, 21 percent Bachelor, and 7.4 percent Masters.

Table 2
District-wise Distribution of Respondents.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Muzaffarabad	12	11.4	11.4
Neelum	10	9.5	9.5
Hattian	4	3.8	3.8
Bagh	49	46.55	46.55
Haveli	3	2.85	2.85
Rawalakot	14	13.3	13.3
Mirpur	1	0.95	0.95
Sidhnoti	2	1.9	1.9
Total	95	100.0	100.0

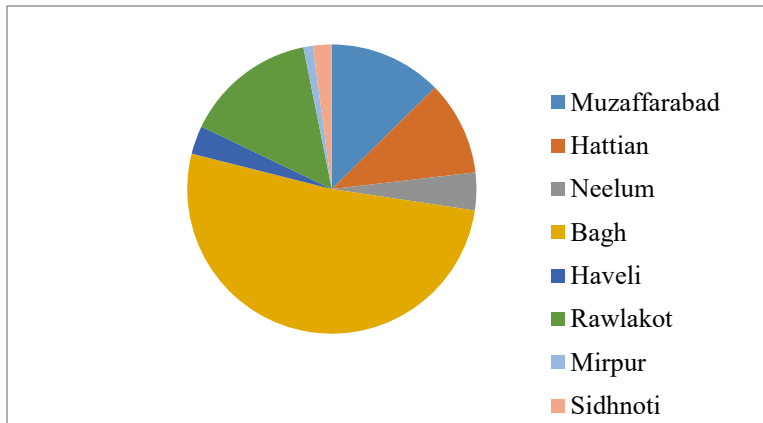


Figure 1: District-wise Distribution of Respondents.

The above table depicted that 11.4 percent household belong to *Muzaffarabad*, 9.5 percent households from district *Neelum*, 3.8 percent belonged to district *Hattian*, 46.55 percent household from district *Bagh*, 2.85 percent from district *Haveli*, 13.3 percent belong to district *Poonch*, 1.9 percent from district *Sidhnoti* and 0.95 percent from district *Mirpur*. The division wise distribution is found as 24.7 percent respondents belonged to *Muzaffarabad*, 64.6 percent from *Poonch* division and 0.95 percent belonged to *Mirpur* division.

Table 3

Distribution of Respondents at Destination.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Barakaho	50	47.5	47.5
Sadiqabad	11	10.45	10.45
Commercial Market	7	6.65	6.65
Tarnol	2	1.9	1.9
Foji Foundation	1	0.95	0.95
Khana Pul	5	4.75	4.75
Chaklala	5	4.75	4.75
Sadar	8	7.6	7.6
Lat Kurti	1	0.95	0.95
Dhok Hasso	3	2.85	2.85
Khayaban Sar Sayad	2	21.9	21.9
Total	95	100.0	100.0

Table 2 shows that 47.5 percent respondents were living in Barakaho, 10.45 percent in Sadiqabad, 6.65 percent in commercial market, 1.9 percent households in Tarnol, 0.95 percent in Foji

Foundation, 4.75 percent in Khana Pull and Chaklala, 7.6 percent in Sadar, 0.95 percent in Lal Kurti, 2.85 percent in Dhik Hasoo and 1.9 percent were from Khayaban-E-Sar Sayad.

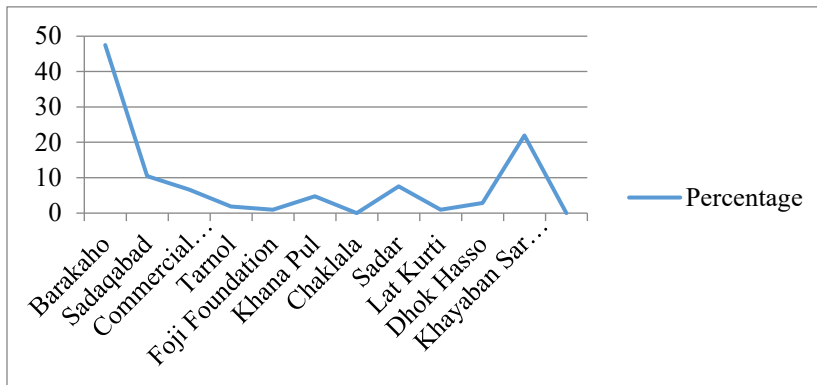
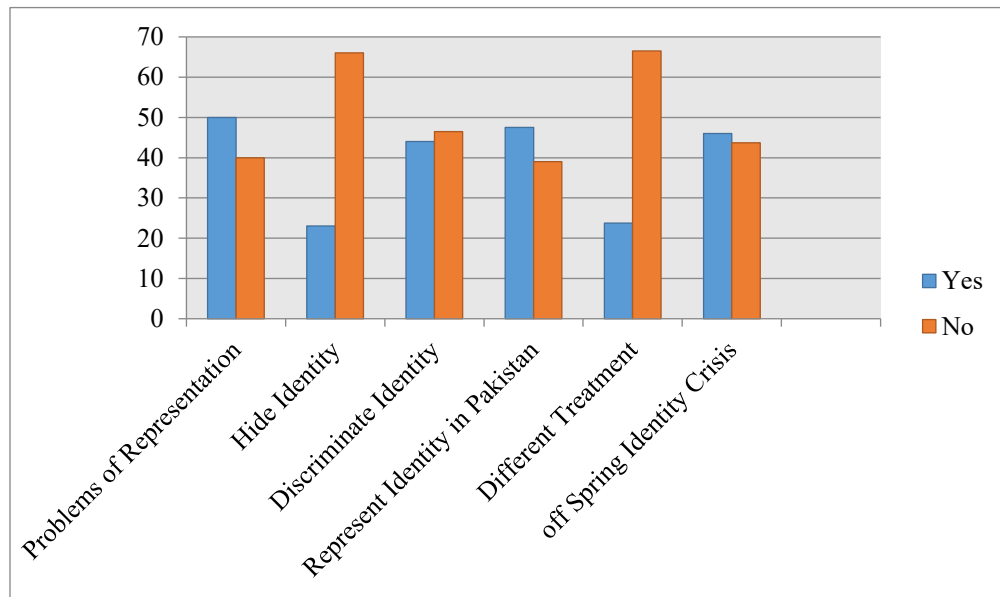


Figure 1: Distribution of Respondents at Destination.

Table 4
 Distribution of Responses of Variables.

Identity Crisis	<i>Lack of Representation</i>				Total
	Definitely	Probably	Not Probably	Not Definitely	
No	8 (7.6%)	3 (2.85%)	10 (9.5%)	21 (19.9%)	42 (39.9%)
To some extent	11 (10.45%)	16 (15.2%)	8 (7.6%)	2 (1.9%)	37 (35.15%)
Always	8 (7.6%)	3 (2.85%)	0	0	11 (10.45%)
Do not Know	2 (1.9%)	2 (1.9%)	0	1 (0.95%)	5 (4.75%)
Total	29 (27.55%)	24 (22.8%)	18 (17.1%)	24 (22.8%)	95 (100%)
Hide Identity					
	No	To some extent	Always	Don't Know	Total
No	37 (35.15%)	5 (4.75%)	0	0	42 (39.9%)
To some extent	23 (21.85%)	12 (11.4%)	2 (1.9%)	0	37 (35.15%)
Always	7 (6.65%)	3 (2.85%)	1 (0.95%)	0	11 (10.45%)
Do not Know	2 (1.9%)	1 (0.95%)	1 (0.95%)	1 (0.95%)	5 (4.75%)
Total	69 (65.5%)	21 (19.95%)	4 (3.8%)	1 (0.95%)	95 (100%)
Discriminate Identity					
	No	Yes	To some extent	Total	
No	27 (25.65%)	4 (3.8%)	11 (10.45%)	42 (39.9%)	
To some extent	14 (13.3%)	10 (9.5%)	13 (12.35%)	37 (35.15%)	
Always	4 (3.8%)	3 (2.85%)	3 (2.85%)	11 (10.45%)	
Do not Know	4 (3.8%)	0	1 (0.95%)	5 (4.75%)	
Total	49 (46.55%)	17 (16.15%)	28 (26.6%)	95 (100%)	
Represent Identity in Pakistan					
	Pakistan	Kashmiri	Total		
No	23 (21.85%)	17 (16.15%)	42 (39.9%)		
To some extent	17 (16.15%)	21 (19.95%)	37 (35.15%)		
Always	10 (9.5%)	2 (1.9%)	11 (10.45%)		
Do not Know	2 (1.9%)	3 (2.85%)	5 (4.75%)		
Total	50 (47.5%)	41 (38.95%)	95 (100%)		
<i>Treated Differently</i>					
	No	Yes	Total		
No	36 (34.2%)	6 (5.7%)	42 (39.9%)		
To some extent	25 (23.75%)	12 (11.4%)	37 (35.15%)		
Always	6 (5.7%)	6 (5.7%)	11 (10.45%)		
Do not Know	3 (2.85%)	1 (0.95%)	5 (4.75%)		

Total	70 (66.5%)		25 (23.75%)		95 (100%)
Offspring's Victim of Identity Crisis					
	No	Yes	To some extent	To great extent	Total
No	27 (25.65%)	4 (3.8%)	10 (9.5%)	1 (0.95%)	42 (39.9%)
To some extent	12 (11.4%)	15 (14.255)	10 (9.5%)	0	37 (35.15%)
Always	4 (3.8%)	4 (3.8%)	2 (1.9%)	1 (0.95%)	11 (10.45%)
Do not Know	3 (2.85%)	0	1 (0.95%)	1 (0.95%)	5 (4.75%)
Total	46 (43.7%)	23 (21.85%)	23 (21.85%)	3 (2.85%)	95 (100%)



The overhead table revealed that among the 95 household, 29 percent households had problems of representation in the beginning when they migrate from their native place, 22.8 percent faced problems of representation timely, however it is settled with the passage of time. A considerable ratio of the respondents: 39.9 percent did not face such issues of presentation in the new cultural setting. The issue of representation is primarily a concern for their jobs and business. They might think their children may feel underrepresented in schools and other places. Ethnic strife is characterized in our society. A greater proportion of people 65.5 percent said that they do not hide their ethnic identity and feel proud in introducing myself among others, 19.95 percent told that they hide themselves to some extent whereas 3.8 percent always hide their identity and feel alienated and shy in introducing themselves. Identity discrimination is also a significant fact that is being practiced with minority groups and

individuals. 46.55 percent were never discriminated against those who enjoyed privileges and prestige while given proper representation. However, 16.15 percent clarified that they were discriminated against in jobs and business. Similarly, they were discouraged and taunted for their identity. At the same time, 26.6 percent respondents faced discriminatory attitude by the people in different spheres of life. Among the 95 households, 47.5 percent said that they represent themselves as Pakistani everywhere and do not introduce themselves by their ethnicity because of fear of being discriminated. While 38.95 percent respondents represented their ethnicity as Kashmiri proudly claiming strong ties with other ethnicities of Pakistan. The respondents were asked about the treatment they receive as migrants in the new setting, 66.5 percent revealed that they have never been treated differently by the inhabitants. They were often given due privileges. On the other hand, 23.75 percent respondents said that they were treated

differently by the people. While asking about the problems faced by their offspring at schools and public places, 43.7 percent respondents held that their children neither faced such crisis in schools nor they complained about public places.

Contrary to it, 21.85 percent respondents believed that their children have been victim of identity crisis in school and public places that impacted their lives, and they are unable to seek careers and spot on their future.

Hypothesis Testing

There is an association between identity crisis and lack of representation, hiding identity,

discrimination, representing identity, treating differently and victim of identity crisis.

Table 4

Chi-square Distribution of Variables.

Identity Crisis	Pearson Chi-Square	df	P-Value
Less Representation	41.503	9	0.000
Hide Identity	30.178	9	0.000
Discriminate Identity	17.113	9	0.000
Represent Identity	17.014	9	0.001
Treated Differently	24.273	9	0.003
Victim of Identity Crisis	21.596	9	0.002

Table 4 represents the findings of hypothesis. P-value indicated that there is a strong association between identity crisis and lack of representation. This finding is supported by the studies conducted by Atif et al. (2016) and Bakhshaei & Henderson (2016). They argued that migrants feel underrepresented at the destination for many reasons. These factors may be the economic conditions, civic facilities, and education. Similarly, there is a strong association between identity crisis and hiding identity (Rafiq & Mohy-ud-Din, 2018). This is also because of the low representation and fears of being discriminated. As Bove & Elia (2017) found that migrants try to pelt their identity for the sake of adjustment in the society. Many other scholars have had similar findings. Likewise, identity is discriminated against at destination. Migrants, being part of a minority, experience ethnic crisis and hence discrimination. Kanwal et al. (2015) revealed that migrants feel intimidated and hesitant at their destination. There is an association between identity crisis and representing identity. This means that people do not introduce them as migrants of ethnic group rather than feel shy and avoid interactions. Guven & Islam (2015) and Siddiqui (2017) also found that to avoid the ethnic discrimination migrants refrain to encounter with dominant ethnicity. As they might be afraid of being treated differently. Akhtar et al. (2021) also stated that migrants try to avoid the encounters. Besides, they might have concerns that they may become victims

of the identity crisis. Although all the people do not become victims, many are prey to it. Abdullah et al. (2021) unveiled that identity crisis of migrants has serious concerns on their lives. As they are hunting for better economic opportunities and a better future.

Discussions

The migrants face issues of less representation and identity crisis at the destination. It is a significant fact that migration to the destination has serious concerns on the socioeconomic lives of the people (Dhobi, 2023; Lindley, 2014). Thus, migrants feel less represented identity at the destination. Bhugra (2012) also stated that migrants feel that their ethnicity is less important and less represented, however he viewed that it takes time to be acculturated to become part of the society and culture. Our findings revealed that migrants hide their identity from others owing to the fear of being discriminated against and intimidated in society. We also found that migrants may feel alienated because they fear being discriminated against by the people at the origin. Similarly, they are hiding their identity to avoid embarrassment. As the locals may discourage them and taunt them. Nonetheless, Bhugra (2012) admitted that migrants are discriminated in manifolds, but states are responsible for the inclusion and diversity issues. He also said that the state agencies are always protecting migrant rights while providing them all the civic facilities. He further said that discrimination cannot be avoided

due to several reasons. As migrants are always victims of discrimination. Our findings also revealed that migrants are treated differently at the destination. It is pertinent to mention here that migrants although have issue of ethnic crisis, but they are not intentionally victimized in the society. The higher standard of morals and good intentions of any ethnicity represent their background. Bhugra (2012) also supported the argument that identity crises entailing differences are always there, but the settlement sways all the spots with the passage of time. The aspirations and expectations are achieved, and migrants become part of that culture.

Conclusions

Although, migration is a great source of learning about new cultures, customs, traditions while exploring new horizons of knowledge. However, it has some serious concerns for the lives of humankind. On one hand, it contributes to the development of society while on the other hand, it entails severe repercussions. We reached the conclusion that migration is a great source of identity crisis for the migrants moving within the cities. Due to fear of identity crisis, migrants and their children do not represent themselves and hide their identity while avoiding interaction with the people and mates. Similarly, they are afraid of being discriminated against and intimidated about being treated differently by the people at their destination. By the same token, migrants become victims of identity crisis that has critical psychological consequences. It is, thus, concluded that migrants feel underrepresented and suffer from identity crisis due to discrimination at destination.

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