

The Lives of Afghan Migrants in Western Countries: Challenges, Opportunities, and Consequences

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Abstract

This study examines the lives of Afghan migrants in Western countries and seeks to answer the question of what challenges and opportunities they face, as well as the consequences of these experiences for them. The research method used in this study is grounded theory. The sampling strategy was purposive, through which interviews were conducted with fifteen Afghan migrants residing in Western countries.

The findings indicate that Afghan migrants in Western societies face a range of challenges. These include socio-cultural challenges such as feelings of displacement, unfamiliarity with the language, cultural differences, and nostalgia for the homeland; economic challenges such as tax obligations, forced labor, and the financial costs of migration; and political-security challenges such as the presence of anti-immigrant groups, unsafe migration routes, and the creation of insecurity within European contexts. At the same time, these migrants also have access to certain opportunities. These include socio-cultural opportunities such as social integration, prospects for advancement, and the value placed on ethnic diversity in Western societies; economic opportunities such as access to welfare benefits and favorable working conditions; and political-security opportunities such as equal human rights and the possibility of acquiring citizenship.

The consequences of this situation for Afghan migrants include the maintenance of transnational ties, weakening of intra-ethnic interactions, and financial support of family members. The results of the study suggest that although Afghan migrants express satisfaction with life in Western countries, their experiences are marked by various problems, limitations, and identity attachments. Their sense of identity cannot be understood in a singular or linear way. Instead, their collective and individual identities are shaped by both their lives in Afghanistan and in the Western countries where they now reside, resulting in a hybrid identity influenced by multiple societies to which they belong or feel connected.

Keywords: *International Migration, Afghanistan, Western Countries, Identity, Grounded Theory, Challenges and Opportunities*

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