



## Journal of Political Stability Archive

Online ISSN

3006-5879

Print ISSN

3006-5860

<https://journalpsa.com/index.php/JPSA/about>

Persecuted Communities and Displacement: A Comparative Study of Afghan, Jews, Palestinian, and Rohingyan (1924-2024)

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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.63468/jpsa.2.4.43>

## **Abstract**

The paper explores the problem of religious persecution and discrimination as one of the leading factors of mass migration and forced relocation of various religious groups and societies like Palestinian, Jews, Rohingya and Afghans across the world since 19th century to the 21st century. The analysis that includes the systematic examination of the past and the current examples of such sacred Diaspora shows the intersections of politics and religion, as well as forced migration. Comparatively, the paper will analyze the socio-political and economic dilemma the groups are facing in the countries they are living in, how they are struggling to establish their nationalities and other rights, the security issue, what the nongovernmental organizations are doing to give their rights, and what are the long-term implications in the mental and psychological well-being of the scattered people. The paper shall seek to argue how these communities have experienced displacement as a result of the role played by religious identity resulting in the formation of Diasporic communities that have been languishing in turmoil, marginalization and struggle to gain cultural and political recognition. The method applies the qualitative analysis of the historical archives and records, the testimonies of refugees, and the existing studies to provide the insight on the causes and effects of the religiously-based migration. The theoretical formulation will be grounded on the Push and Pull theory of migration and forced migration theory because the application of both theories will provide a comprehensive view of the forced displacement activities. The relevance of this study is, to the future the information collected will enable the policy makers to understand the status of migrated communities and the predicament of both migrated and the receiving country and hence, will have the ability not only to meet the needs of the forcefully migrated communities but also the long-term effects of the cultures and socio-economic wellbeing of the migrating community. The hope of this research is to provide a contribution to the literature gap by providing an insight to the comparative study of the pattern of migration overtime, the psychological and socio-economic impact of forced migration and the invaluable contribution made to the refugee crisis and a human-based issue to the modern world.

**Keywords:** : Forced migration, Religious persecution, Diaspora, Identity crisis, human rights violation.

## **INTRODUCTION**

Many causes, such as economic prosperity, political and social conflicts, natural disasters were the predeterminations of the process of migration which has shaped the history of humanity since times immemorial. But the migration that is the result of violence and the discriminating situations is the one that is known as the forced migration. It is done when an individual is forced to leave his country due to external political forces, social conflicts, and instability, armed war, violation of human rights, and persecution based on discrimination (Kolbe, A. R., & Henne, D. 2017). Consequently, this kind of migration has been prevailing in the modern era as colossal migrations of people have been witnessed since the 20th century to the present on the premise of religious and ethnic persecution. The forced migration normally leads to the scattering of entire communities that are not of the parent nation to multiple generations and hence the formation of Diasporas. These Diasporas are not just displaced individuals anywhere, they are working communities that are in the doldrums attempting to survive and in the

process fermenting their identities, culture and connectivity to their mother country most likely in anticipation that they will come back to their country one day. The process of forced migration, though, is also followed by a set of social, political, economical, psychological and cultural problems, adjusting to a totally new surrounding, preserving their own identity, beliefs and values contribute to the advancement of the problems among the dispersed communities. Thus, the forced migration as the consequence of the religiously-based persecution is one of the most devastating forms of traumas that is experienced not only by the migrated communities but are passed through their generations. This thesis will explore the forces of forced migration since the 20th century into the latest date that has been experienced by four religious groups, namely, Palestinians, Jews, Rohingya Muslims and Afghans. I selected these groups because they are historically related to forced migration and are demonstrating religious dissimilarity and the issues that these communities have been experiencing long before today, till the moment they are in the current situation in which they have settled. The paper will identify the permeations of religion and politics and forced migration and provide an insight on the socio-economic, political and psychological impacts that were felt by such specific groups of people because of religious persecution and migration. The different reasons that could lead to religious persecution are discriminative national laws, social practices, radicalizing violent ethnic cleansing, genocides, and it can be also founded on the historical grievance towards a particular religious minorities or ethnic minorities in order to persecute it. These aspects in turn not only yield to persecution and abuse of human rights but also experience traumatic mass migration by those who are the common subject of persecution. One of the oldest and the oldest known migration is that of Jews due to their religious persecution across the four communities and more so in Europe in the 20th century. The Nazi Holocaust that caused expulsion of the Jews in the rest of the world where it was estimated that 6 million Jews were tortured by the Nazis, simply because the government hated and discriminated against the minority. The survivors of the holocaust who had survived had no option other than leaving the land to go into other states like United State, Soviet Union and other European and Arabian states in the name of personal survival abandoning their loved ones and their properties. The disperse Jews people were systematically discriminated by the Soviet Union leaders under Stalin regime but their movement were closely suppressed which limited their freedom and opportunities and led to their oppression of the life of religion and culture. This once again led to a colossal movement of the Jews in Soviet Union to Palestine and USA. Besides, during the 20th Century, the Jews in the Arab countries were subjected to Anti-Semitism of systematic discrimination and oppression of Jews that led to a steady stream of Jews in the Arab countries to Israel. Hence, this example of the 20th century of Jews migration suggests the interconnection between religion and political factors, which led to forced migration. Palestinian Diaspora is recognized as one of the greatest migrations of the 20th century and the Jews one which occurred following the persecution of their populations on the ground of their religiosity in their home country. It brought about violent discrimination since the Jews, who migrated out of Europe into Palestine and the formation of the state of Israel in 1948 were displaced, their property, and ownership of their land have to take refuge in their neighbours (Palestine Diaspora Movement. 2024). This led to the displacement of 750,000 Palestinian in the year 1948, a phenomenon that is known as the

Nakba (Arabic: Catastrophe). An example of how religious persecutions can result into their long term sufferings is the current Palestinians since 1948-till date who have been living in their neighboring states, legal and social marginalization and yet retaining their identities (Palestine Studies, 2024). The final massive migration is the Rohingya migration that took place in the 21 st century in Myanmar, a tiny minority of Muslims that resided in Myanmar so long but since 1982, were not considered citizens of Myanmar, hence, they were stateless. This group had now been facing organized violence in Myanmar which could not permit them to endure, dominate their liberty and rights. In 2017 a military crackdown with the order of government of the location where Rohingya Muslims live resulted in the massive migration of about 700,000 Rohingya Muslims to flee the land of the Buddhists instantaneously and seek shelter in the neighboring countries especially in Bangladesh where millions of Rohingya Muslims are seeking refuge to date in camps that makes it difficult to survive of the Rohingya Muslims people owing to the inadequate supply of food, shelter, medical provisions and basic supplies. The location since 1979 is Afghanistan where forced mass migrations become the hot spot as the political and social instability of the nation is becoming increasingly enormous with the Taliban rule in power in 1990s and the extreme discrimination policies and sharia laws of the Shia minorities and the Hazara minorities. These minorities were then persecuted in the area to a great extent and decided to emigrate to the neighboring nations that were Pakistan and Iran in order to survive. The recent migration wave in Afghanistan happened in 2021 when the Taliban regime appeared again and the US troops were withdrawn in Afghanistan, thousands of Afghans emigrated to other countries of the world to escape the Taliban regime and save their lives. To date millions of Afghans who have been dispersed due to religious persecution are still surviving in Pakistan, Iran and USA camp. The most forcibly migrated communities are left all over the globe, and though, the international attention, they cannot go back to their countries. They were able to spend days of their lives knowing that one day they would head back to their home country and get to reside in the land that they call home in a decent and normal way.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

Religion plays a significant role in elucidating the phenomenon of migration as a motive of action when the migration has occurred as well as in maintaining the identity when undertaking the action. Not migration; that is in fact merely a reconstruction of deeper identity, quite often, on the stamp of the religious tradition. To illustrate, religious identity can be proved to help in steering the immigrant through his or her socialization within the society besides aiding religious loyalty amid the pressure of displacement. The theme plays a central role in explaining forced displacement because religion is typically the foundation of the support that can be extended to the displaced person. (Nordin and Otterbeck, 2023). At that, Migration and Religion, Magdalena Nordin and Jonas Otterbeck, 2023 is devoted to the reflection of the relationship between migration and the relevant religion since it focused on the experience of post-war immigrating to Western Europe. Among the IMISCEE (International migration, integration and cohesion) line of research, this work introduces the religious issues, transformations or more to say the functions that the migration bestows on people and communities. In perfect accord with the article on (Susanna Trotta and Elena

Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, *Religion as a Catalyst for Forced Migration* 2022), it will provide some of the basic facts on how religion generates reasons to migrate as well as prerequisites to migrations. The largest part of the book is about how the religious practices can be accommodated to the country where those activities are hosted; the immigrants are introduced to not only different countries but also to secular countries. The authors move on to highlight the concept of religious integration that serves to explain how religion may be deployed by immigrants in the process of preserving the culture and reorganizing the social norms. It is an intersectional approach as the book focuses on the impact of gender, race, and age in religious experiences of immigrants. This is significant and vital within the context of understanding a great deal of the thesis issues. Religious identity can be hardly considered as independent variable in forced migration. It shows among others that women experience different things about religiosity in the host nations on the level of cultural requirements or social compulsion, but the ethnic identity is normally closely associated with the religious expression. They constitute complicated social processes on immigrants (Jonas Otterbeck, 2023). Issues of methodology and research are addressed. Nordin and Otterbeck are concerned with the methodological problematic situations in religion and migration, especially in the process of differentiating voluntary patterns of migration and forced patterns of migration: A criticism of such accounts is that they are often too simplistic and fail to pick up on the motivation behind their migration. It stresses the fact that the relegation-induced migration is highly a response to social-political outcast or menaces in home countries. As an example, religious persecution may compel some groups of people to migrate not only to improve their economic well-being in the cause of survival and, therefore, these ideas can be related to the themes of forced migration. Although it contributed immensely to the roles of immigration studies, *Migration and Religion* perceives religion through the prism of its duality in accommodating both migration push and migration pull factors. The book gives a wonderful avenue of researching the forced migration due to religious persecution through capturing the changes in the religious identity and the modification of the religious identity in the migration context. The migration is mostly reliant on religious groupings, whereby by 2010, the demographics of Christians and Muslims comprise about 75 percent of all the global migrants, and this was to a great extent, owing to forced migration and anti-semitism (*Defining International Migration*, 2010). This has followed the patterns of forced migration where minority religions are thrown out leading to the formation of Diasporas that are cross-generational (Pew Research Center, 2010). This is a report by the Pew research center titled *Faith on the Move* which provides detailed research on religious affiliations of international immigrants. It analyzes the migration patterns of the large religious groups such as Christians, Muslims, Hindus, Buddhists, Jews, and other religions and non religious groups. The report brings out the impacts of religion both as a factor and by-product of migration in a lot of analysis. This is important to the understanding of the intersection of the two variables of the religious identity with forced migration and displacement that is consistent with the theme of religion as a driver of forced migration. Asia-Pacific turns out to be the key source of migrants in terms of origin as it provides a third of the world migrants. Countries such as Mexico, India and Russia are the greatest contributors of Christian and Hindu immigrants as opposed to the North Africa and Middle East which are the major contributors of Muslim immigrants (Pew Research Center, 2010). The report has

also shown that has been forced in these areas because of persecution on religious grounds. The report also shows that religious persecution of these regions has brought a declaration of forced migration as has been depicted by the Palestinian refugees displacement which is representative of the bigger theme of forced migration that has arisen because of religious conflicts. The other important contribution that Faith on the Move makes is the attraction to the destinations of the refugees. The countries that are highly religious such as the United States and Canada are the preferred destinations by different religions. In particular, it is the immigrants of Christian faith (out of the total number of immigrants, more than 3 are located in the United States) that would be most appealing to that country, and nearly three quarters of all immigrants who came to the United States are of foreign birth, with the majority of the rest of the immigrant population belonging to Hindu and Buddhist groups and religiously unaffiliated. However, the Muslim migrants are more of a locality to places such as the Gulf Cooperation Council countries where the Muslims constitute a huge proportion of the migrating workers (Spotlight on the Gulf Cooperation Council Countries). The data gathered about the destinations proves that the level of religious attachment does not only affect the reason of migration, but also the selection of the host country where the migrants prefer to seek refuge in the countries that are providing them with protection and assuring them with religious tolerance. The Pews Research center gathered and tabulated censuses of migrated population based on global religion and migration database (GRMD, 2010). The acquired data helps to figure out the trends of the migrated population particularly under persecution of religion, and the gap and challenge faced when collecting the data through unreliable records of some places.

### 2.1.1 Old Vs New immigration styles.

Forced migration as a disaster has been a typical phenomenon in the course of history because of wars, genocides and disasters that are of natural occurrence. On a global basis, it has more than 100 million forced displacement individuals (some of them are refugees due to the long-standing conflict, others are internally displaced (IDPS) due to the environmental factors and some forced to seek asylum due to the political and social instability). This has been of exceptional proportions according to Migration Data Portal that has influenced the lives of the people due to this forced migration. (Migration Data Portal, 2023) This trend has been formed over time particularly in the western European regions following the Second World War. This trend has been categorised into five major trends that point to its change nature. The former was early 40-1950s-1973 after which contract workers were factored in until 1973, then there was the multifaceted shift of the migration then moved to the latter, which was more inclined into the security aspect (9/11) after 2001. These categories implies the variation of the trend of forced migration that was more political oriented migration to the era of 1940s-present of security and economy driven migration. As authors notes that these tendencies have affected the future of Europe as a place of emigration through political instability and as a place of immigrants through economic opportunities and a safe wellbeing that shows the significance of the region. (Nordin & Otterbeck, 2023) However, contemporary tendencies and trends of forced migration is the result of ethnic pandemonium, deprivation of resources (both natural and human), poor standards of life, systematical abuse of human rights, terrorism and ecological catastrophes. These transnational and interdependent organized issues have posed a threat to the national interest and national security of the states that have compelled policy makers to seek more

stringent and brutal policies of immigration and asylum seeking. Any individual, who is denied such immigration privileges due to the tough policies feels insecure at the region where he is staying (Wood, W. B. 1994). The Pew Research Center report indicates that by the year 2010, approximately 214 million people who constitute up to the 3-percent of the world population have been residing in host countries or as a stateless person where 27 percent of the population is Christian and 49 percent are Muslim and the remaining population members other religions. This fact renders religion one of the drivers of forced migration in the historical and the modern world due to different events such as mass killings in the name of religion, enticement of economic gains, and war. Despite the fact that most of the factors have not been unaltered but the regional demography has evolved over the years as in the case of Europe during the world wars and Asia and the Pacific in the current times. (Pew Research Center, 2010). The percentage of international migrations is 1 percent of the world that is comprised by the Jewish who represent 0.2 percent of the world population. The trend of migrations of the Jewish population has been over the past three decades since 1990 to 2020(2.3 million-3 million) changing overcrowdedly. In the present day statistics it is found that 3 million of the Jews live in MENA (mainly in ISRAEL), 21 percent in Europe, 16 percent in North America and very few in Latin America (mainly the Caribbean and the Asian Pacific). As the historical literature suggests, the migration of the Jewish community may be traced to the end of 19th century when the community was expelled out of the Russian empire through the pogrom policy that was pursued by the Tsar Alexander during the Stalin era in the middle of the twentieth century. However, this would take a different turn when Stalin came to power and this was misused to the extreme when the community did not get their religious practices, experienced genocides and restricted movements allegedly because of the accelerated brain drain of USSR. However, time passed by and USSR fell apart (1991), accompanied by the support of the American Jewish fled USSR and sailed to USA that became the third most popular immigration destination of the Jewish. (Pew Research Center, 2024) Organized forced migration includes 5 types that are transfer (initiated by state during such events as natural disasters) and exchanges (moving across the border through state forced migration), reparation (people returning to their home) and Exodus (Mass migration that is usually done forcefully by the state). With regards to the Palestinian communities, the Palestinian migration in 1946 could be termed as Nakba falls under the category of Exodus which is forced movement of people out of the Palestinian territory and this process was politically as well as religiously oriented as the Palestinian population faced genocide like that of Sabra and Shatila massacres (1948). The migration pattern has shifted to exodus to exchange whereby it has been seen that the Jews in the world have been migrating to Israel to settle there abandoning the indigenous Palestinians to leave their lands and find refuge in their neighbouring nations. In addition, 85 percent of the Gaza population have been forcibly displaced in their respective countries as their safe heavens were also bombed as was the case with the Rafah region where most of the women, children, and other noncombatants were. (Lynn, 2024). It is not merely the fact that the religious persecution is done against the Jewish and the Palestinian people but also against the Rohingya. Community is a Muslim ethnic group located on Rakhine, state of Myanmar, officially denied a right of recognition by The Burmese (Now Myanmar) government and laws since 1982. This has had an impact on their basic human rights like shelter, food, education

and security making them the biggest stateless people in the world in the Kutupalong and Nayapara regions of Coxbazar, Bangladesh when the state expelled 742000 people as a consequence of its attacks on its police in their name and the government declared them to be terrorists and crack down leaving 2.6 million Rohingya civilians an IDP. These are figures which have been used as an indication of forced migration pattern including exodus since the onset. (Albert, Maizland, CRF, 2020) The long invasion of other states like British, Soviet Union and in the latter case USA is a grave yard of a conflict and war in Afghanistan. These invasions were accompanied by migration. One can trace the migration of the Afghan people to the time of invasion of USSR in 1990s when people had voluntarily moved out of the country in search of safe heavens against a communist regime and they had moved to the countries where they had economic avenues of leading a better life. Along with the changing fortunes of the government, in 1996, the Afghan community had to succumb to the Taliban rule that was worse than before. As a result of this fact, people escaped to other countries. However, the biggest storm that they had to experience was followed by the Post 9/11 attack, during the course of WoT that displaced the people within their own borders, making them into IDPs and refugees and some stateless and remain in the same stature. The latest events would be the Taliban regime takeover in 2021, or, to put it, the Taliban 2.0 era, an approximate of 2.6 million Afghani refugees in the foreign countries and 3.5 million became the inner displaced people (USCIRF, 2022). Other locations that have reported the forced religious migration include the Central African Republic (2013) because of the lack of resources and discrimination that constitutes minority displacement in the Muslims. (USCIRF, 2022). Similarly, the Pakistani Christians due to the extremists and the Syrian people due to the long term civil war in their country are the contributors of the forced and involuntary displacement. (Goździak& Main, 2023)

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

To examine the religious persecution and displacement of communities like Jewish, Palestinian, Rohingya and Afghans this paper will be qualitative in nature and to gain insight and examine the social, political, cultural, economic, and psychological struggles of the communities a systemic analysis of secondary data shall be performed. To ensure validity and authenticity of the data, triangulation will be embraced, where data will be collected using various sources, historical documents that were verified and peer reviewed materials. The study is more focused on the validity, consistency and suitability of the data to the purpose of research and also critically evaluating the sources of secondary data in ensuring that the ethical aspect of research is upheld. The study embraces the qualitative research application strategy to assess the lives of the communities who are being persecuted by religion and especially on the comparative study of their historic and modern migration pattern and the formation of diaspora. To investigate complex research phenomenon like forced migration, religious persecution, identity crisis, psychological trauma and socio-economic challenges, qualitative method approach evidences to most appropriate method, as it enables to analyze in detail past and contemporary data of events related to forced migration, legal frameworks of such issues and the internal and external factors that are seen to have fueled the religious conflict within the states and also have the influence forced migration of communities like the Jews during

the mid-19th century between Germany to Europe then Europe to the state of Israel (Morris, 2001). The qualitative approach gives a rich description of personal and political accounts and the policy pursued that allows analyzing the cultural, ideological, and psychological effects of displacement of religiously persecuted communities and defining diaspora communities in an in-depth way. (Creswell, 2014; Flick, 2018).

### **Research Design**

The research design is a case study research, in which the researcher will discuss the experiences and the documented records of the identified four communities within the case study i.e., Jews, Palestinian, Rohingya and the Afghans. The adoption of this strategy made it possible to find out the common experiences and the various migration patterns taken by these chosen communities in the various geopolitical and geographical setups. Through secondary source of data the research has made a critical comparative analysis of the challenges these communities experienced between leaving their country to living in a host country. The case study research design offers an analytical structure to historical data, legal framework and policies of a state that creates mass migration and has influenced diasporas communities. In the comparison of the historical and the contemporary case study, the research paper assesses the changing aspects of the religious persecution as well as forced migration that is forced. (Yin, 2018; Stake, 2006). The choice of particular four communities: Jews, Palestinian, Rohingya and Afghans is established because of their interrelatedness with past and current periods of forced migrations of the world. It has been observed that the four communities were becoming a target of religiously inspired persecutions, genocides, mass killings, bodily and sexual abuses, socio-economic and political marginalization in their homeland states since the early 20th century to the present times. These communities also are a discourse of international human rights (Yin, 2018; Stake, 2006). In this way, the case study of these states turns out to be topical and offers an effective method on the general subject of the religious persecution and forcible displacement.

#### 3.2. Sampling

The sample used in this study is based on the secondary sources which include historical record, statistics, policies and gathered data of the displaced communities. This paper specifically is about four communities, which are Jews in Europe, America and Middle East, Palestinian in Middle East and Europe, Rohingya in Myanmar, Bangladesh, Indonesia, Malaysia and India, and Afghan refugees in Pakistan and Iran who have undergone forced migration due to religious persecution since the mid 20th century to the beginning of the 21st century.

### **Analysis of the Research**

This part of the research goes into the depths of an in-depth examination of the various and common political, socio-economic, identity and cultural issues and the psychological trauma experienced by the respective four engaged populations which are Jews, Palestine, Rohingya and the Afghans during the time of migration and the consequences of forced migration and how the challenges affected their lives during their stay in the host nation. In addition, this section involves an examination of the role played by NGOs and other international bodies that determine to what extent they are effective in offering aid to such dispersed communities

and what the factors behind the meager activity of the organizations serving such communities are.

### **Political and Economic Problems of Religiously Persecuted Communities since 1940s to 2024.**

In their homelands between 1940s and modern period these four communities have suffered acute religiously based persecution an event that has significantly affected their lives over centuries such persecution has had the most pronounced effect on the lives of the Jews in the early 20th century with their persecution in Europe in the mid 20th century (Bukovec, P. 2014), at the height of the Nazi regime in Germany during 1940s, after the World War II, as the Jews moved to seek refuge in Palestine, North America and The creation of the state of Israel and the migration of Jews who lived all over the world to the land of the Jews caused the systematic persecution of the Muslim and Christian Palestinians by the Jewish government, the military campaigns of Israel, caused the displacement of millions of Palestinians in the late 1940s known as Nakba to their neighbors where they are still living in the camps and refugee centers making it the worst refugee crisis in modern times. The community in Southeast Asia that has been the most vulnerable to religious persecution is the Rohingya Muslims of Myanmar who were targeted by the 2017 military as a result of the military initiating mass persecution of the Muslim community which culminated to the forced migration of the Rohingya to the other neighboring states primarily Bangladesh, Malaysia, Indonesia, Thailand and India. The second largest migrated community of south central Asia is the Afghans, 23 million of Afghans are in dire need of humanitarian aid and approximately 6.4 million have been scattered throughout the world demanding refuge in another country since the 1980s up to date (UNHCR, 2020). These forced migrations are associated with numerous political and economic issues, which define the lives, the experience and identity of the Diaspora communities. This analysis is particularly designed to dwell on the political and socio-economic issues and aspect of struggles of the four communities in their host country as well stating the effect of such issues to the dispersed communities.

### **Identity Crisis and Security Concerns as one of the consequences of the migration of forces**

The main problems that facing the displaced communities due to the religiously motivated persecution and forced migration are the identity crises and security issues. Identity crisis can be described as the confusion caused to the communities by being forcedly migrated since they do not see themselves as a part of their social and cultural environment that they used to since they are now in different states and are also fractured in their own identities in a foreign society. The identity crises usually result in the loss of all the ties that the communities have had with their past, tradition and culture that causes them a lot of difficulties in surviving in the host country. Conversely, security concern is witnessed where the communities are exposed to vulnerable situations in the host states as they experience all types of violence, discrimination and marginalization in the host states, and the crises were being aggravated by the fact that there were no legal protection and a framework to extend to the refugee. The problems associated with the forcefully migrated communities are multiplied when these two elements of the aftermaths of forced migration come into collision (Zetter). R, 2007)

### **Minimal Directive of International and Non-Governmental Organizations in mediating Forced Migrating Communities**

The International and Non-governmental organizations have been important in the acts of

facilitating and also in responding to the forced migrant populations through the way they offer them humanitarian services that include basic food, shelter, medical treatment, advocacy to human rights and through legal protection to them. The role of these organizations however appears to be restrained by the political and economic constraints including the funding and outside political interference as well as the forces of these institutions do not have the power to enforce. Non-governmental Organizations like Amnesty International (AI), Medecins Sans frontiers (MSF) and human rights watch (HRW) trying desperately to offer aid to the affected communities but they usually fail to guarantee lasting stability, safety and secure settlement of the migrated communities. (Betts & Collier, 2017).

### **Psychological Trauma and trials to which the communities that are religiously persecuted have been exposed**

Being the forced migrants, asylum seeker and the refugee as a whole is losing in the land of a complete new environment to adapt to and leave all their property, identity, culture, traditions and their loved ones and find a safe haven in a land where the natives feel that the refugee is a burden and they do not want the refugee to inhabit their land as long as possible. Therefore, forced migration may cause chronic psychological trauma on the communities that are displaced and causes such problems as post-traumatic stress disorder, anxiety, low self-worthiness, guilt of the survivor and identity crisis. Such mental problems are usually a consequence of discrimination, marginalization, lack of mental health care support and socioeconomic problems that the migrated population, both in their home country and the host country, experience. The reports given by the International organizations, non-governmental organizations and the experiences given by the individuals has been clear that many of the forced migrants have experienced extreme direct violence in their host state and that force them to leave all his or her value behind and become a refuge on the land of someone. This first-hand violence is genocide, mass killing, ethnic cleansing, persecution and discrimination on the basis of religion.

### **Key Findings of the Study**

After the close examination of the forced migration of Jewish, Palestinian, Rohingya and Afghans, the following key findings have been emerged. The statelessness that follows the refusal of citizenship and access to legal rights by their countries of origin is one of the major critical issues that the religiously persecuted forced migrants experience, and they become susceptible to exploitation in their host countries since they lack the means of acquiring the right to access basic healthcare, shelter, education, food and shelter (UNRWA, 2020). Forced displacement due to conflict and violence generates enormous suffering to the migrant that resulted in disturbance of their family structure and financial stability because of which they became extremely dependent on humanitarian support by the international community (Arhoni Ada, 2003; UNHCR, 2020). The displaced population is usually politically marginalized in their countries of destination, those who have been persecuted in their home countries on religious grounds are not granted the right to vote or any form of involvement with governments, (Gibney 2014), hence the lack of legal empowerment, recognition and citizenship became an obstacle to lawfully represent themselves and fit in the new environment (Castells D. Haas N. Miller 2020). The diaspora groups politically persecuted tend

to be economically crippled that includes unemployment, informal employment, labor, very low-wage work, and lack of legal protection, (UNHCR 2021). The studies have shown that the economic mobility is harder due to the inability to be economically stable to achieve stable job cycle of poverty, (Duffman and Frattini 2014). The host countries, such as Lebanon, Jordan, Pakistan, Iran, Egypt, and Syria, among others, and the host country, Bangladesh, strictly regulate the legal entry of refugees and asylum seekers in their country so that they can not get permission and access to social welfare schemes and to work in a legal avenue, therefore, the deprivation of economic right and state-backed discrimination and marginalization compelled the community to live in precarious conditions, (Betts and Collier 2017). Moreover, these communities cannot help any financial institution to take care of their financial status, since they do not have social identities. As an example, they cannot open bank accounts, credits, or own a place in their host country (Banki 2013). Installing one of the direct means of economically paralyzing the marginalized community by confiscating the property and depriving them of their financial security. The losses of these assets deny these communities an opportunity to recover their lives and make their coming back worthless since they have nothing to leave in their land (Human rights Watch, 2020). The loss of culture, religion, and national affiliations also contribute to the development of identity crisis in the communities that were forcefully displaced, as they were torn between keeping their culture, religion, tradition and heritage alive, on the one hand, and becoming assimilated into a new society, which is entirely different, on the other (Zetter, 2007). The Jew community, facing anti-Semitic policies in Europe, horrific persecution during the Holocaust moved to the Western society to get a better life only to suffer identity crisis as they were torn between saving their culture, religion Following the Nakba of 1949, the Palestinians lost their own homeland and were subject to a systematic marginalization in the countries where they resided as refugees and they had become stateless a condition that led to their growing resistance to be a nation with its own identity, (Khalidi, 2020). Following the amendment of the citizenship law of Myanmar in 1982 that denies the Rohingya citizenship, despite generations of living on the territory, they became stateless because their state refused to acknowledge them as its citizens, and despite not being their land, they remained homeless, (Human Rights Watch, 2020). With a longstanding conflict since 1989 up to this day and facing systematic violence and discrimination in their state, the Afghan refugees migrated into Pakistan and Iran to enjoy a better life, but restricted status by the countries that received them as well as the imposed restriction has given the refugees identity crisis, Meanwhile, the internally displaced persons in Afghanistan that are a minority have been experiencing identity crisis under the successive government, (UNHCR, 2022). The identity vacuum that the generation born after the migration experience creates is that they are unable to identify with either their motherland or the new land where they are born causing them to become a social alien and also causes psychological distress, (Yick, 2007). The security threat is the reason why many forced migrations take place and consists of ethnic cleansing, state-sponsored persecution, and religiously motivated persecution. This was also the case in the Jewish migration during the Holocaust in Germany, where there were direct state and societal threats on them, during the early pogroms and systematic violence in the Soviet Union (Bauer, 2001). The Palestinian till date have to struggle with displacement due to the military actions of Israel since Nakba. The

legal limitations of the Palestinians, living in the Gaza and West Bank, the occupation policies, as well as limitations placed on the refugees by the host countries, are the conditions that render the security of the refugees in both the nation and the host state unstable (Khalidi, 2020). Following the military crackdown of Myanmar, nearly 700,000 Rohingya were displaced to leave the land and migrated to Bangladesh, Indonesia, Malaysia, and other neighboring countries as a result of the violence, massacre, and sexual abuse carried out by the military upon the commission of the order of government. In addition to this, the security of the refugees in the camps is threatened due to human trafficking, gang violence, and the absence of legal protection offered by the host country, and their life in the camps is in danger (Human Rights Watch, 2018). The minority people in Afghanistan, Shia and Hazara people, have been subject to systematic violence by the Taliban, and as such, they are forced to abandon the land and escape to the other state. However, the circumstances under which the Afghan refugees are residing in the host countries, including Pakistan and Iran, are also exposed to the risk because of the tentative legal status (UNHCR, 2022). In 2024, the United Nations High Commissioner to Refugees offered approximately 2 billion of aid to the forced migrants. Nevertheless, the efficiency of United Nations overall in delivering the humanitarian services to the tormented communities over the centuries is constrained by the lack of funding and the political influence (Figures at the Glance and UNHCR). As a result of the political influence, the UNRWA which is the body that deals with the Palestinian refugees is limited in its operations due to the vetoes that the U.S. has had in the United Nations Security Council on the resolutions pertaining to the Palestinian cause (Al Jazeera, Takkenberg, 1998). The United Nations, who has been working in Afghanistan on behalf of the cause of facilitating the internally displaced individuals, has been compromised by the restrictions created by the Taliban government, which has led to restrictions in the distribution and movement of humanitarian aid and humanitarian workers (UNHCR 2023). Human Rights Watch has been on the frontline to record crime against forced migrants as well as reveal the systematic discriminations, genocide, bodily violence and state-sponsored persecutions in the region. Conversely, Amnesty international has been lobbying to change the policy and actively protesting against forced deportation of people and communities by their respective governments in their own state and stringent asylum policies (Amnesty International, 2024). Although both the organizations have been operating successfully with the aim of enabling the post-migrant communities, they do not have direct implementation powers which restrict their capacity to effect changes to the suffering community. Their influence had also been compromised by the state restrictions (Ganguly, 2021). The international committee of Red cross had been involved in assisting the affected communities with health care but lacked effectiveness in their operation due to the limitations imposed by Nazis on them (Favez, 1999). The same case the ICRC has been experiencing in Palestine through the limitations imposed by the Israeli forces (Forsythe, 2005). It has also impacted the effectiveness of ICRC due to the threats posed by the Taliban in the course of rendering help to the IDPs in Afghanistan (UNHCR, 2023). The Holocaust and ethnic cleansing of Jews by the Nazis left those who survived subjected to extreme torture and inhuman treatment, thus leading to people developing PTSD, anxiety, depression, and survivor guilt psychological issues (Kor,2019). A significant number of these youngsters have experienced generational trauma since the results

of the survey indicate that the youths have high cortisol levels and mental problems despite not being the object of the suffering themselves (Yehuda et al, 2016) The report reveals that nearly 70% of the Jewish victims of religious persecution experience psychological problems (US Holocaust memorial museum, 2021) The Palestinians and most so those living in Gaza and West Bank are experiencing severe mental health problems including PTSD, anxiety, depression, and fear, (Palestinian Center for Human Rights). The children in that place are severely traumatised and end up with emotional and cognitive problems, (Save the Children). In the case of the refugees who live in Lebanon, Jordan, Egypt, and Syria, is depressed, and the youth commits suicide due to their economic exclusion and hopelessness (Doctors without Borders, 2023). Over 80% of the Rohingya refugees experience Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, Depression, Anxiety, and Selflessness in Bangladesh because of the systematic violence that occurred in their country, and loss of identity (UNHCR 2020). Those that were subjected to the 2017 military crackdown continue to experience terrible traumas and nightmare problems, (BBC 2021). The women of the refugee camps who were the victims of the sexual abuse display high percentage of the Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, Anxiety, and fear of socializing, (Save the Children, 2023). The Afghans who had observed the prolonged struggle in the state and were the victim of ethnic marginalization sponsored by the state have serious psychological problems, the Afghan children in the host country, particularly in Pakistan and Iran, fear socialization and cannot communicate, (NPR 2022). The Taliban authorities have been persecuting and discriminating against the returned refugees in Afghanistan.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

To curb the problem of statelessness, the states are encouraged to collaborate with one another in order to help them offer legal documents to such displaced populations to enable them give them a semblance of relief in the face of their plight (UNHCR, 2020). Such communities need to have economic policies set by the host country in order to be given economic opportunities to survive and sustain their family members without engaging in any illegal and informal employment (Human Rights Watch. 2019). It should be sustainable long term relief programs in form of offering economic opportunities, education and skill training to the refugee communities instead of short term temporary assistance. The local businesses that have been formed by these communities should also be supported (Peteet, 2018). According to the absentee property law or forcefully, state must compensate the land they have taken possession of to ensure the person is financially empowered to generate alternative opportunities to him in the host state (Human Rights Watch, 2018). International bodies such as the United Nations High Commissioner of Refugees are supposed to lobby the aim of giving legal status and citizenship to the stateless groups, refugees, and asylum seekers such as Rohingya so that they can enjoy their basic rights (Human Rights Watch, 2020). Other governments and NGOs should also embark on programs whereby the dispersed communities are able to perform and uphold their cultural and religious practices, as well as integrating to the host society (Biale, 2011). To end the gap that exists between the ancestral background and the second generation of the refugees who are born in the host state, it may be helpful to educate them on migrant history and identity (Yick, 2007). The migrant communities can be involved in the policy making process and this will assist in maintaining the cultural identities whilst integrating the

compelled migrants into the new society (Zetter, 2007). And to avoid the long-term statelessness of Palestinians and Rohingya, diplomatic initiatives ought to be enhanced to grant them the legal nationality rights in host and home countries, (Khalidi 2020). The United Nations ought to put more effort in making legal binding international engagements in an attempt to secure the rights and to safeguard the security of the forced migrant groups. They ought to also work harder to make the access of asylum available to the migrants (UNHCR, 2022). Host countries and other international agencies by preventing crimes, trafficking, and forced recruitment in the refugee camps can work together in ensuring that the security of camps surrounded by refugees is boosted (Human Rights Watch, 2018). The international bodies must put in place early warning systems such that forced migration caused by violence and ethnic cleansing within the state are averted, (Bauer, 200). The governments that have undergone or made systematic violence against any minority ought to be held accountable by the legal institutions or international courts to ensure that future measures to prevent forced migration and displacement can be established (Ganguly, 2021). To ensure that the process of returning refugees becomes feasible with no fear of persecution, one should consider creating safe return programs and safe repatriation policies, (Khalidi 2020). The UN decision-making process ought to undergo reform, particularly when it comes to issues that are connected to humanitarian crisis (Ganguly, 2021). United Nations agencies must also make sure that long-term funds on refuge support rather than relying on a temporary aid program (Figures at Glance, UNHCR). In addition to this, there is need to increase the diplomatic involvement so that the host nation may be obliged to uphold international standards of protection of refugees. Human Rights Watch, Amnesty International and the United Nations ought to engage in more relationship and collaboration with the view of pushing more effective humanitarian laws. The international organizations should also carry out more public awareness programs to mount pressure on the government of host and originated countries to adopt more humanitarian policies (Takkenberg, 1998) (Human Rights Watch, 2024). And to help the refugees and asylum seekers settled in the host nations following the religious persecution, legal support systems ought to be constructed. It should be changed to negotiation with the host country that will help to relax the mobility of humanitarian aid workers and adjust it to ICRC staff in particular (Forsythe, 2005). The situation whereby ICRC workers are offering humanitarian aid ought to improve the security processes, particularly in the warring areas, in such a way that the danger of life to the workers can be addressed. The ICRC ought to increase its advocacy task to pressurize the international protection of the internally displaced persons and the communities that are residing in the host country under international law (Favez, 1999). There are several recommendations that can be embraced to address the psychological traumas that the refugees and forced migrants have been experiencing as a result of the religious persecution that had been perpetuated in their state. In the case of the Jewish community who have endured the holocaust and have endured the discrimination by the Soviet state, mental health therapy of the survivors and their children can be used to assist the survivors to cope with the intergenerational trauma. To help the global healing process of the Holocaust survivors worldwide, creation of Survivor Support Group among the Jews can be efficient. In addition, it needs to be documented and educated about the Holocaust trauma in order to ensure that the historical denial can be avoided and empower the narratives of the

survivors (Yehuda et al, 2016; Kor, 2019). Concerning the Palestinian refugees, The benefits of mental health care should be enabled, particularly to the children who have experienced the protracted conflict in their area and throughout the migration process, also in the country to which they have emigrated, These children have endured mental trauma, tension, anxiety, and against losing their lives and therefore, the extended medical care provision will assist them to develop cognitive and emotional stability. The advocacy of Palestinians rights should be intensified by the international communities to minimize the stress associated with statelessness and the conflict between Israel and Palestine where the individuals are the most affected (Save the Children, 2023). They ought to create economic support programs in the refugee camps in Lebanon, Jordan, Egypt and Syria to help the Palestinian refugees economically, in a bid to minimize the depression that the refugee have due to unemployment and financial instability (Palestine centre for Human Rights, 2022). To address the psychological trauma among the Rohingya that live in the refugee camps in Bangladesh, special mental health care facilities and trauma counseling must be established on the ethnic cleansing survivors particularly to the women and children who are living in the refugee camp. The circumstances in the refugee camps ought to be enhanced ensuring that the camps are habitable to the human beings. The government of Bangladesh ought to also deal with the problems of overcrowding within the camps by settling the refugees elsewhere. The stress associated with financial instability in the Rohingya can be mitigated by availing economic opportunities in the host country. The international communities should also strive to have Rohingya recognized and also grant their citizenship right to them to ensure the strain associated with the statelessness is addressed (BBC, 2021; UNHCR, 2020). With the Afghans living in Iran and Pakistan as well as those suffering in the region of Afghanistan under the successive government, organized psychological programs must be launched, especially on the children, in such a way that, the social inclusion and emotional stability of the children can be managed. They should set advocacy policies to protect Afghanistan refugees against forced migration and the marginalization protection (NPR, 2022). To lessen the long-term psychological suffering, anxiety, and post-traumatic stress disorder among the Afghan refugees, training programs and educational development programs ought to be introduced among the displaced Afghan communities to enable them to be empowered (Amnesty International, 2022).

## CONCLUSION

Religiously motivated persecution and forced migration have historically and continue to shape the past and present realities of many communities across the global society. This study has explored the Jewish, Palestinian, Rohingya and Afghan forced migrants comparatively and has analyzed the political, socio-economic, psychological and identity based issues that the migrants encounter in their motherland and the time they are transitioning and living in their host country. The extensive influence of systematic violence, discrimination, state-sponsored marginalization, and state policy on the refugees and asylum has been discussed in this study through a qualitative research method and in applying the push-and-pull theory and the theory of forced migration. This study gets to find that the religious persecution is one of the greatest causes of forced migration resulting in an enormous marginalization, statelessness, and

violation of human rights. The displaced communities in the world do not just endure the economic suffering, but they are also experiencing a harsh identity crisis since they are regarded as stateless people or social aliens, and they are also experiencing a lot of security vulnerabilities in both the home state and in the host state. Moreover, the paper sheds more light on the minimal role played by the international bodies and the non-government organizations whilst meeting the needs of these refugees and asylum seekers, and the impediments that these bodies encounter in the course of their responsibilities. The gap will also be revealed through the research; through the research, the gap has been unveiled through the laws of asylum, refuge policies and long term resettlement plans of states. The result assists in highlighting the changes that must be made to the international policies and the necessity of establishment of new ones that would be more concerned with the rights and safety of the internally displaced people and forced migrants that were the subject of religious persecutions. The long-term integration, rehabilitation, and conflict resolution both at the home state and in the host state must be prioritized rather than relying on the transient asylum measures. The contribution of the state policies, regional relations, and international governance is important to curb the forced migration problem and to ensure that these populations who have been experiencing violence, discrimination and marginalization quite a long time ago now ought to receive justice, security and the acknowledgment they are entitled to. To overcome these issues, there is need to have a concerted effort by the policy makers, academicians, and the humanitarian agencies. Moreover, the international community needs to develop more inclusive and equitable international systems in which forced migration cannot be a requirement but an option.

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