

Resettled Minority Refugees' Dilemma: Assimilate or Integrate?

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Abstract The increasing number of refugees across the world has entailed reinforced attention to this disadvantaged group, particularly on their lives after displacement. Although assimilation theories focus on how migrants navigate within a new society, the acculturation process itself has remained somewhat distinct and challenging for refugees among the broader migrant group due to their inherent specificities. This study aimed to explore if and how the generational aspect and social capital in the form of ethnic social connection help refugees to navigate racial inequalities and hegemony during the resettlement process. The situation may be more complex and multi-faceted for minority refugees and can shape their perspectives and aspirations regarding acculturation – to be integrated or assimilated - differently. This ethnographic study with a second-generation Muslim refugee couple found a dichotomy among the second generation of Muslim refugees: educated ones with higher social capital tend to integrate, while less-educated ones with low or no social capital tend to be marginalized. These findings' conformity to the segmented assimilation theory may be due to the characteristics of target participants. More researches are recommended to have a comprehensive understanding of the emerging issues with refugees, with a special focus on minority refugees, in a host country.

Keywords Acculturation, Assimilation, Integration, Social Inclusion, Social Exclusion, Refugees

1. Introduction

The cross-country migration of humans is almost as old as their emergence thousands of years ago in Africa. In recent years, the number of immigrants has significantly intensified due to various political, social, and economic processes, which have, in many places, resulted in conflicts

and forced people to move from their place of origin. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) data shows a record number of forced displacements of people by the end of 2017, about 68.5 million, with 25.8 million of them being refugees [1]. In the face of the huge number of displacements, the UNHCR recommends three solutions for the refugees: local integration in the country to which the refugee has fled, return to their country of origin, or resettlement in a third country [2]. Of the astounding number of forcibly displaced populations, a trifling 102,800 were resettled in different countries with assistance from the UN agencies [1].

Historically, the United States of America (USA) has been one of the most preferred destinations for migrants [3]. There has, however, been changes in patterns with regard to migration to the USA over the years: pre-First World War and pre-1965 period is characterized by inflows of white-European migrants, while post-1965 witnessed non-white migrants from South America and South Asia and South-East Asia [4]. Specifically, during the last two decades, the USA saw the migration of refugees from conflict-affected African and Asian countries [3]. In this changed context, scholars have started revisiting various concepts related to migration, particularly how the immigrants 'adjust' in the new society [5-11]. It is worthy of scholarly exploration to understand if refugees, who form a distinct group compared to other types of immigrants and asylum seekers, have added another layer of complexities in the traditional migration dynamics in the USA.

In this background, this paper aims to look at the assimilation and integration of refugees – vital components of acculturation - through a critical lens. The minority refugees face additional challenges in the dominant culture. Therefore, the paper opts to bring out some of the pertinent challenges and how minority refugees manage to overcome those challenges. Thus, the paper depicts a focused real-life scenario for academics, social workers, and policymakers.

This paper conceptualizes acculturation, assimilation, and integration process in the context of the contemporary world as well as from the perspective of a Muslim refugee family resettled in the USA. Although the legal regime is quite pertinent for refugees, this paper, however, excludes any analysis of policies, which can be a research topic by itself. Instead, the paper highlights the policy and regulatory issues from the perspectives of a Muslim refugee family. It also aims to demonstrate how acculturation is influenced by refugees' aspiration and acceptance for assimilation and integration. The literature review indicates that a comprehensive study would be useful to deepen the understanding of these dynamics. Additionally, literature particularly on Muslim refugees and on a family-setting are limited. To address these gaps in the literature, this paper aims to explore the following research questions:

1. How do refugees' view acculturation, assimilation, and integration? Does this perspective have a generational dimension?
2. Which factors of social exclusion and social inclusion do they consider as significant for acculturation, assimilation, and integration?
3. With the surge in Muslim refugees in recent years, does religion add more complexities to xenophobia and other forms of discrimination toward resettled refugees?

It may be noted that 'migrants', 'refugees' and 'asylum seekers' are sometimes used interchangeably; whereas, these are distinctly defined by the UNHCR, particularly for varied official and operational reasons. Asylum-seekers are people seeking international protection from conflict and persecution, while refugees are people fleeing conflict or persecution in their natural habitat [1]. Refugees qualify to avail certain legal protections guaranteed by the UNHCR, including economic and social rights. Every refugee is initially an asylum seeker, although not every asylum seeker is considered as a refugee. In contrast, migrants are people who leave their home country pursuing a residency in another place to avail a better work or education facilities, or to be reunited with their families [1-2]. Thus, freedom in choice for leaving own natural habitat is the main distinguishing factor between refugees and migrants. Consequently, the terms and processes of acculturation, assimilation, and integration may have different meanings for these forcibly displaced people compared to 'traditional' migrants. Their degree of freedom in choosing the country of destination also plays a role in this process.

2. Methods

The study applied a narrative inquiry method within a broader ethnographic framework [12] to understand refugees' perspectives on acculturation, assimilation, and

integration. The research was conducted with a second-generation Muslim refugee family to further underscore the impact of religion on this perspective. The data collection methods included face-to-face interviews, participant observation, literature review, and publicly available statistical data. This ethnographic research was conducted in a city in Upstate New York to cognize refugees' lived experiences after resettling in a developed country. Additionally, interviews were conducted with a person affiliated with a local mosque, an official of the American Civic Association, and two social workers engaged with a local community school to acquire an ecological understanding and for the triangulation and trustworthiness of the research.

A 'snowball' technique was applied to select the participants. This technique is useful to identify a hard-to-reach and/or 'hidden' population [13-14]. English was the chosen language for one-hour long interviews. Depending on the interviewees, distinct, but inter-related, semi-structured, and open-ended questionnaires were used. Participation was voluntary and the purpose of the research was explained to all participants prior to obtaining their consent to participate. Oral consents were taken from all interviewees instead of a written one to maintain their confidentiality and to respect the sensitive nature of the participants who belong to a vulnerable group. Fieldnote taking and transcribing were done by the researcher.

Positionality and reflexivity. The researcher is a Bangladeshi Muslim female doctoral student. Being a development practitioner for more than a decade, her work used to focus on marginalized groups, particularly women and children, as well as the policymaking process. She has brief experience working with refugees living in Bangladesh. During that time, the researcher has come to realize, among other issues, how refugees are viewed as the 'unwanted population competing for limited resources available to the locals' and how this perspective also affects the refugees' existence in host communities. Her present positionality – gender, ethnicity, culture, community-level involvement, affiliation with a US university, and residence in the USA as an international student – makes the researcher a partial 'insider' as well as an 'outsider'.

3. The Research

3.1. Literature Review

Refugees, like any people, have certain basic needs of daily life. Then again, humans are social creatures. So, beyond meeting the immediate needs, as Maslow's [15] 'Hierarchy of Needs' proposes, refugees also have a need to be part of a community. Social exclusion, as well as social inclusion, may pose challenges for refugees in

acquiring a sense of belongingness in the new environment where they have to resettle. Social exclusion and inclusion are complex, multidimensional processes that can manifest as a complete or partial marginalization of individuals, households or groups [16]. Race, ethnicity, class, xenophobia, religion, and other factors (e.g., education level, language skills, an opportunity of participation, and access to resources) can be the reasons for social exclusion [17]. Social inclusion is the opposite process of social exclusion and comprises of necessary resources, services, and opportunities for individuals to participate in a society [18]. These factors can overlap and simultaneously act as the causes and consequences of social exclusion and social inclusion. For example, most of the information relating to services for refugees (e.g., settlement procedure) and required forms are available on websites. It is anticipated that refugees have the ability to access and use information from Internet when in reality, many refugees have a language barrier and/or lack the required level of education. This inhibits their social inclusion and causes social exclusion [18-19].

One of the purposes of this paper has been to explore how acculturation, assimilation, and integration processes are influenced, with time, by the factors of social inclusion and social exclusion and, thus, become significant for any migrant, including refugees, in a foreign land. The situation, understandably, is challenging for refugees who have to cope with pre- and post-displacement trauma at the same time. Factors of social exclusion and social inclusion can escalate daily stressors and add complexities to their post-displacement trauma [20-22]. Can these factors also influence refugees' aspiration and acceptance for acculturation, assimilation, and integration in a new society? This ethnographic study of a refugee couple was conducted to further elaborate this notion.

It is useful to conceptualize acculturation, assimilation, and integration before delving into the current research. Berry's [23] canonical research justifies four types of acculturation: (1) integration, whereby individuals intend to maintain own cultural norms and values alongside interacting with the other culture; (2) assimilation, in which individuals adopt the norms and values of the new country while rejecting that of their own; (3) segregation, whereby individuals retain own cultural norms and values and reject those of their new country; and (4) marginalization, in which individuals reject the norms and values of their own as well as those of the new country of residence. The following discussion further explains acculturation, assimilation, and integration as well as their relevance to the refugee situation.

Acculturation is a process that involves "accessing, understanding, or adopting specific aspects or characteristics of a new culture" [24, pp. 135]. This multi-faceted and complex construct can be measured across several different dimensions, including language, values, norms, cultural identity, and social contact with

native people [24]. The acculturation into a new country may be a different experience for the refugees whose life, unlike other migrants, is impacted by inconceivable hardships and trauma from the time fleeing and then living in refugee camps.

Assimilation is the process by which members in a subordinate group adopts aspects of a dominant group (<https://sociologydictionary.org/sociology/>). During the nineteenth and the early twentieth centuries, with the migration of large number of Europeans to the USA, the term assimilation referred to an attempt made by ethnic minorities to adopt the customs and traditions of the dominant community, specifically the 'white' Americans, so that they become 'similar to' the majority culture and not the 'underclass' Blacks [5,9,25-27]. Assimilation can be viewed, according to Alba [9], as not something is done "to" persons, but rather something accomplished "by" them. By assessing the public discourses in France, public policies in Germany, and scholarly researches in the US, Brubaker demonstrates 'the return of assimilation', but with a shift from "*the automatic valorization of cultural differences to a renewed concern with civic integration*" that considers cultural commonalities from "*the bad old days of arrogant assimilationism*" [8, pp. 542]. The diverse flow of migrants in the USA over different periods has directly influenced the essence of Assimilation Theory [6-11], which demands a separate study of its own. Scholars advocating either neoclassical assimilation or segmented assimilation (for example, 5-6,8) have identified some intriguing dynamics in relation to assimilation:

- Although it can be a deliberate, self-conscious activity, assimilation is often unintentional and usually invisible that shapes an individual's actions and choices within a particular socio-economic environment.
- Cultural practice, language spoken at home, inter-racial marriage, a racial mixture in a neighborhood, and the degree of concentration in a specific socioeconomic stratum can indicate the degree of assimilation.
- Assimilation gradually moves beyond cultural to socio-economic matters (e.g., the divergence between educated, high-skilled immigrants and uneducated, low-skill immigrants).
- Generally, assimilation happens at multi-generational levels and has a greater impact on the descending generations.
- Population-level assimilation can take place without individual-level assimilation.

Integration refers to an end product of a dynamic, multi-faceted two-way process with three interrelated dimensions: legal, economic and socio-cultural [2]. Several indicators can show the level of refugee integration in a new environment, such as the degree of freedom in

movements, access to resources and local services (including health and education facilities), ownership of property, and participation in the local economy [28]. Policy documents and legislation of a host country may support the integration of asylum seekers and refugees, but this neither guarantees their social inclusion nor full protection from social exclusion [16-18].

3.2. The Real World: Perspective of a Resettled Muslim Refugee Family in the USA

The US city, where this study was conducted, is characterized by a majority of the population being 'born in the USA' (more than 85 percent) and white (more than 77 percent) [29]. Refugees have been resettling here for more than three decades. Since 2009, about 4,000-5,000 refugees were resettled here. Due to the influx of refugees in the mid-1990s, a refugee resettlement program was initiated here but was discarded in 2018. This change follows the overall metamorphoses in the country's political atmosphere, particularly in relation to immigrants, including refugees. All the personal information of refugees is treated as confidential because they belong to the vulnerable population category. The only information available was that most of the refugees, who came over the last five-six years in this City, are from the Middle Eastern Region, and, presumably, most of them are Muslim. The administrative institution (i.e., American Civic Association, ACA), in collaboration with some semi-government and private sector agencies, facilitate health, food, and nutrition services to low-income immigrants, including refugees, living there. Many refugees are currently not connected with the ACA because they have either already settled down or moved to another community and do not need the organization's assistance any longer. There is also a group of refugees who are hesitant to reach out to any administrative or social institutions. Some also prefer to reach out to the already-settled community from their native land for social and cultural reasons than take assistance from a government institution.

The Muslim refugee couple interviewed are from a war-torn country. In this paper, I will not mention their real names, country of origin, or any personal information that might reveal their identity. They are now citizens of the USA, well-educated, and well-established. As a part of ethical practice, I will maintain confidentiality regarding my interviewees. So, I will use pseudonyms for them and their country of origin.

The interviewees' families came to the USA in the mid-1990s, separately, but along with many others from the same country, 'Chaotica' (pseudonym for their country of origin). Abdul (pseudonym for the husband) and Ayesha (pseudonym for the wife) have many siblings – between 9 to 14. Their fathers were engaged in respectable jobs in Chaotica. But they became the target for doing

awareness-raising among general people against the dictatorial activities of the Chaotica government. Their families came to the USA as refugees with the assistance of the then US Government to avoid persecution and possible killing by their own government. With an apprehension that the education system is better on the East Coast, Abdul and Ayesha's fathers decided to move and settle in New York. Both fathers tried to ensure a better education for their children in the USA as well as the continuation of their native culture and religion.

Abdul: my father was not fluent in English...he still is not...but he never compromised with our learning.

Ayesha: every time my report card came to our house, my father was the first one to get it and open it. We, me and my siblings, were not allowed of getting less than 95 percent marks!

In the USA, Abdul and Ayesha's fathers worked in different places and their mothers worked as housewives. That is, the parents' role has remained the same both in Chaotica and the USA – fathers are the bread-earners, and mothers are the caregivers. I asked Abdul and Ayesha if this role was maintained for religious reasons or were there any other reasons. It may be noted that many Muslim families maintain the conservative cultural and religious practices of Islam such as the practice of 'purdah' (which literally means 'curtain, is the practice of preventing women to be seen by men other than their close family members – father, own brother, husband, and/or son). Both Abdul and Ayesha responded that their mothers remained to be housewives in the USA not so much for religious reasons, but for language and economic reasons.

Abdul: we are many siblings. So, my parents could not afford babysitter or day-care facilities. It was cheaper and convenient for my mom to stay home and take care of the family. Besides, she had a language problem...she could hardly do any outside work...she still has this.

Ayesha: yes, we had the same situation.

Abdul: even now, my siblings and I leave our kids with our parents. This way, they can be with family rather than a babysitter. Kids enjoy their time with their grandparents. Almost every week all of us...my siblings, their spouses, their kids...gather at our parents' home, which is not far from here...we have a good time. Kids also get to learn about our culture.

In contrast, both Abdul and Ayesha are working full-time now. Abdul has a relatively flexible working schedule. So, he can give more time to their child than Ayesha. Other times, the child, who is yet to reach the school-going age, is with the extended families who live nearby.

From the discussion with Abdul and Ayesha, it became apparent that administrative institutions (e.g., American Civic Association), as well as social institutions (e.g., church and mosque), can play important roles in a refugee

settlement in a foreign land. The couple praised administrative officials and stated that these officials were quite cooperative with their families during the initial days of settling down. Both the refugee families received assistance from local churches and mosques as well. This was the same for other refugee families who came to the USA during that period. These services not only helped them to move on with their daily lives but also to become a part of the local community. This reinstates Baxter's [30] findings on the impact of resettlement and social agencies on the lives of refugees in a host country.

Ayesha: at the beginning, someone would come every week to check if we needed anything...grocery or anything...or a ride somewhere. We used to get 'hand-me-down' things from the local church. These were very useful for us...for such a big family.

Abdul: the local mosque also helped us to get connected with other Muslim immigrants. Now both my wife and I do voluntary works at the mosque on weekends to help immigrant children. We teach them the Quran and other Hidayahs [the Islamic guidance] there.

With regard to racism, xenophobia, or Islamophobia, Abdul and Ayesha at first said that they did not face any of this in their childhood. Then, Ayesha said she had to face some 'ridicules' at school for wearing a headscarf (which most Muslim women and girls wear as part of purdah). The social workers at a community school also shared a similar opinion about Muslim girls wearing a headscarf. According to them, students, other than Muslims, sometimes show reactions toward girls wearing a headscarf. "Visual effects have more impacts", said one of the social workers, continuing, "we try to make students understand that it is okay to accept differences...in looks...in attire". Both Abdul and Ayesha commented that, like many Muslims living in the USA, regardless of being American citizens or not, they feel that the situation has changed for Muslims after the 9/11 incident in the US. Even then, Abdul did not have to face too much because, as Ayesha jokingly said, "he could be easily passed as an American for his looks and skin color". Visual effect!

Abdul and Ayesha mentioned another intriguing observation: the refugee families who had to wait longer periods, say three/four years, in refugee camps in their own country (as internally displaced people) or in a third country (as refugees) before migrating to a final country of resettlement, had to suffer more than what eyes could meet in terms of not getting access to facilities such as education. Many of these refugee children could not do 'well in life' as they missed out few years from their lives - a loss they could not overcome in later years. Fortunately, Abdul and Ayesha's families were migrated from Choatica to the USA in a relatively shorter time. So, Abdul, Ayesha, and their siblings were not delinked from education for too long, despite the fact that they had to learn English from scratch after coming to the USA.

Ayesha: after coming here we saw that those who came

before us...who had to live several years in camps...are at a loss. Their children became 'Americanized'...do not maintain our religion nor our culture. My elder brother, who was a college student when we came here, made sure that we focus on our studies as well as follow our religion and culture. He became an icon in our community. All of us are well-educated, working here...except one, who went back. We are also maintaining our religion and culture.

I also observed a tension between Abdul and Ayesha on leaving near extended families. Ayesha has never liked living in a small city, which, according to her, is "living in a village in my native country". Now that they are 'established', she wants to move to a bigger city with more opportunities. Abdul, on the other hand, likes to live around his parents and extended family. This, according to him, "will help their child to nurture home country's culture and grow up within their norms and values." Is patriarchy playing a silent role here? Or is it the tension between traditionality and modernity, i.e., extended versus nuclear family [31]?

The other notable issue that I have observed is that the educated second-generation Muslim refugees prefer Muslim names (or at least which is common between Islam, Christian, and Jews) for their children, but less-educated ones prefer 'Christian-American' names for their children. Additionally, educated second-generation Muslim refugees tend to marry another Muslim from their own country, whereas inter-racial marriage is observed among the less-educated group.

4. Discussion

The following findings can be underscored from the ethnographic study of a Muslim refugee couple living in a small city in the USA and from the interviews of selected stakeholders.

- Language is the biggest barrier for accessing resources, acquiring information, and developing skills and capabilities required for acculturation, assimilation, and/or integration into a new society. Thus, language caters to social exclusion and inhibits social inclusion for refugees.
- An educated parent is like 'an already acquired social-capital' that helps the next generation of refugee children to value the importance of education in building their own lives and that of the next generation (e.g., Abdul and Ayesha's child). Education, therefore, helps refugees to better integrate into the new culture, while maintaining their own culture.
- For a minority group, support from extended family is crucial for continuing with the home country's cultural and religious practices with the next generation.

- Administrative institutions (e.g., ACA), as well as social institutions (e.g., church and mosque), can play important roles in a refugee settlement in an unknown, foreign society with a different culture.
- A central place of assistance is not only convenient for the refugees but also is effective in terms of obtaining facilities and establishing the required social as well as professional network.
- Although bigger cities have bigger challenges, those also offer greater job opportunities. So, refugees prefer to live in relatively bigger cities once they are relatively more settled in the host country. Nonetheless, some of them, who value to protect their culture for their next generation, tend to prefer smaller cities with a higher presence of immigrants and/or with the close-knit of similar communities.
- There is a group of refugees who tend to accept anything, and everything given to them during the process of resettlement and even after that. Maybe this is because of the distress they had to encounter in their native land before becoming 'refugees'. Nevertheless, there is another group, mostly educated, who want to maintain their own social and cultural norms to the extent possible while adopting that of the host community for getting 'situated'.
- The ones with some level of social capital or human capital tend to go for upward assimilation and/or integration, while lack of any of such capital makes the refugees settle for downward assimilation and/or marginalization. It may be noted here that most refugees refer to white, middle-class American's social, and cultural norms as the benchmark.
- Lessons on cultural humility should begin from the early stage, preferably from the school level.
- The political environment of the host country plays a major role in immigrants' lives, more specifically for the refugees (e.g. discontinuation of refugee resettlement program). The minority refugees may face additional challenges. For instance, a personal preference of a Muslim girl or woman, such as wearing a headscarf, can become an explicit policy-level discourse in a different dominant culture (as has been in certain parts in France, Germany and Canada) or a matter of tacit public contentious (as is in the USA).
- Islamophobia has intensified, overtly and/or covertly, alongside racism and xenophobia particularly after 9/11. The attacks both by Islamic fundamentalists and by Islamophobic groups are complicating the matters for Muslim immigrants, including Muslim refugees. Now they face a constant unease situation, mainly because they cannot practice their religious rituals freely and openly as before and have to live in a concealed fear.

In brief, language, race, ethnicity, xenophobia, degree of adaptability, and acceptance by the local community

played significant roles in social exclusion for the first generation of refugees. And, access to resources and services (such as education) influenced their social inclusion process. The resettlement experience and outcome of the first-generation refugees, on the other hand, influenced the next generations' acculturation decision as well as the process itself. Additionally, the minority refugees face Islamophobia in the USA which further impacts their decision on assimilation, integration, or marginalization.

The neo-classical assimilationist perspective hypothesizes that immigrants forgo their ethnic culture, including the mother tongue, and adopt those of the host country to become assimilated. The current study with the refugee couple, however, indicates that there is more in this simplistic, bipolar process, especially when social capital and other factors come into play. More precisely, it revealed that social capital within the family and the community had helped to generate human capital for the interviewed refugee couple and their siblings who belong to the second generation. A combination of already-existent social capital and acquired human capital have helped them to integrate into the new country by becoming a part of its society while maintaining their ethnic cultural and religious practices. Studies [for example, 5] have also found that maintaining group membership and retention of original cultural patterns can lead to adaptive advantages for ethnic minorities.

The findings of this study are, intriguingly, in line with the perspectives of segmented assimilation theory which posit the multiple possible paths of incorporation: upward mobility through selective retention of ethnicity, and downward mobility through assimilation into the "underclass" [5-7,9]. Notably, Abdul and Ayesha suggested a similar view: although they arrived in the USA approximately at the same time, some of the refugees could retain their ethnicity and integrate, while some were to join the "underclass". According to this refugee couple, education, the existent social capital, and later acquired human capital were the crucial factors that influenced the diverged acculturation process. I tried to interview some less-educated Muslim refugee families 'who are not doing so well', but none was interested. Maybe, in the future, once I build a trustworthy relationship with them, they might cooperate. It would be of scholarly interest to know 'what did not work out for them and why' as well as some of the dichotomies mentioned in earlier sections.

The participant observation at the local mosque revealed another thought-provoking matter in terms of immigrants' communication: people, regardless of male and female, tend to communicate with people of similar race and ethnicity. There is minimal cross-racial, cross-ethnic interaction. Is Islamophobia, coupled with xenophobia, the prime reason behind this? Does this affirm Yosso's [32, pp. 70] statement: "*racism would continue to emerge as one of the United States' key social*

problems”?

This ethnographic study has opted to show how the resettlement of refugees influences the next generations' acculturation process, especially for the minority refugees. Although the findings of this study are more aligned with the segmented assimilation theory, these also support some 'common-grounds' between neo-classical and segmented assimilation theories: the refugees' adaptation has been multi-generational and the divergence in descending generations is prominent in terms of socio-economic matters such as level of education and skill and societal status.

The USA has been at the top among countries in terms of refugee resettlement [3]. Since 1975, the USA permanently resettled more than 3.3 million refugees – more than any other country in the world [3]. In terms of refugee arrivals in the USA, nationals of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Iraq, and Syria were the top three origin groups, comprising of 46 percent of all arrivals, followed by Somalia, Myanmar, Ukraine, Bhutan, Iran, Eritrea, and Afghanistan. In general, the USA resettled more Christian refugees than Muslims [34]. The Fiscal Year 2016 marked the first time when the USA resettled more Muslim refugees than Christians: 46 percent Muslim refugees and 44 percent Christian refugees among a total of 84,944 refugees [34]. More than half of Muslim refugees were from Syria (32 percent) and Somalia (23 percent). Other top Muslim refugee groups were from Iraq (20 percent), Myanmar (8 percent), and Afghanistan (7 percent). Of these Muslim refugees, children under age 14 and women made up 67 percent who came from Iraq and Myanmar, and 71 percent from the DRC, Somalia, and Syria [34]. Therefore, research has to deepen and broaden its scope within this changed pattern of migration in the USA, particularly that with the refugee population.

Thus, literature, as well as this study, elucidate that refugees face many challenges during their adaptation process in a new country even when the host country may have a supportive policy framework. This study contributes to the existing literature and raises additional issues in relation to refugee acculturation, assimilation, and/or integration, particularly on the basis of race, ethnicity, gender, and religion. There are quite a number of seminal works on immigrants' acculturation, assimilation, and/or integration, but not so much on specific to the refugees, particularly the minority refugees. The refugees are a distinct population among migrants and the increasing number of refugees demand more scholarly works on different aspects related to this particular population.

5. Conclusions

With the changes in the dynamics of migration, scholars (e.g., 5-11,33) have revisited and rekindled some crucial concepts and processes, such as acculturation,

assimilation, and integration, related to the immigrants. For some refugees, these can be a deliberate, self-conscious activity. But many refugees, as Phillimore [35] argues, lack choices about acculturation strategy, are vulnerable to psychosocial stress, and struggle to integrate. Moreover, different factors of social exclusion and social inclusion limit their freedom to choose and decide. The situation is complex for minority refugees, such as Muslim refugees in the USA, where they additionally have to face Islamophobia. Nonetheless, for some minority refugees, the already-acquired social capital and close network with the ethnic communities can help them to maintain their original culture side-by-side the American culture, and, hence, it becomes relatively easier for them to integrate into the new society. Further studies in this area would, certainly, help to have a more conclusive argument in this context, specifically which assimilation theory is more generalizable for the minority refugees.

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