

Children of Afghan migrants in Iran¹

Maryam Naghsh Nejad

Institute for the study of labor (IZA)

Bonn, Germany

Email: Naghshnejad@iza.org

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Abstract:

According to UN data Afghan refugees are one of the largest displaced populations in the world. Based on 2012 estimates, there are between 2.4 to 3 million Afghan immigrants living in Iran. Afghani immigrants in Iran face a multitude of barriers that natives do not have to overcome. These barriers are likely to affect their children's upward mobility as well. This papers aims to identify the sources of disparities between second generation Afghans and natives. At the current stage, this paper finds that controlling for parents' education, age, and occupation, Afghan children are less likely to attend school in all age categories. Additional data (which has been located and requested) is required to identify the causes of this disparity.

¹ Preliminary, please do not cite or circulate

1. Introduction

According to UN data Afghan refugees are one of the largest displaced populations in the world. Since the 1980s the instabilities at home has driven many Afghans away from home mostly to Pakistan and Iran. According to the same source, as of 2012, there are one million registered refugees in Iran with another half a million with other types of temporary status. These figures do not include the large number of illegal Afghan refugees in Iran. According to the 2012 estimates by Iran's official Bureau for Aliens and Foreign Immigrants' Affairs (BAFIA), some 1.4 to 2 million Afghans who are not registered as refugees live and work in Iran. Together with the registered refugee population, that makes for a total of between 2.4 and 3 million Afghans in Iran. Afghans in Iran constitute one of the largest urban refugee populations in the world, with only 3 percent of Afghan refugees living in camps located in rural areas.

This study aims to examine the extent of integration of second generation Afghan children in Iran. Specifically by looking into their school attendance while controlling for parents education, and occupation as well as controlling for province fixed effects, this paper finds that Afghan children are less likely to attend school in all the age categories. This might be due to many different factors. It might be due to the difficulties that Afghan immigrants face on their day to day life in Iran. Afghani immigrants face a multitude of barriers that natives do not have to overcome. For example, the reform of 2004 mandated that immigrants must pay a fee to receive education, while natives receive the same time of education for free. Because of the lack of data from before the reform, I cannot show whether this reform has an impact on the differences in educational attainment, but it provides one example of the many hurdles that create disparities between natives and immigrants. To identify the causes of disparities between Afghan children and natives, more data is required which I am hoping to obtain in the coming month.

2. Background on Afghan migrants in Iran:

Afghan migration to Iran has an old history. The similarity in culture and language has made Iran a destination for migration of Afghan over the history. Afghans emigrated often as economic strategy (seasonal agriculture cycles) or out of political necessity, as for the time that Hazaras were discriminated in infrastructural provisions. Before 1978 Afghans came to Iran for working, as pilgrims or merchants. All Afghans immigrated to Iran in the nineteenth or early twentieth century was naturalized as Iranians. After the of 1978 in Afghanistan and the start of the Marxist government of Nur Mohammad Taraki and the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA) the resistance, civil war, and repressive theocratic government in Afghanistan, Afghans started to fled and immigrate to Iran in large numbers. The number of refugees increased steadily and peaked in 1991. About 3 million Afghans were in Iran in 1992 (not all registered).

In theory as of 1983, registered refugees have enjoyed widespread social benefits, including access to free education, adult literacy training, health care, and employment. Most were able to settle freely on the outskirts of cities. In reality, they suffered from poverty, poor nutrition and serious health/sanitation problems. From 1992 until 1994 most of the blue cards were confiscated. Afghans had to return to Afghanistan or were granted a permit to stay for one month in Iran. The civil war in Afghanistan (1992-1996), created new refugee flows to Iran. In 1993, Iran started the first repatriation program. 500,000 temporary registration cards were issued to not register Afghans, but they were declared invalid in 1996. The Government of Iran announced in 1995 that all Afghans need to leave Iran and repatriation was suspended until 1998. In 1998 Iran resumed the repatriation program. (Repatriation programs in cooperation with UNHCR: United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees). In 2001 the government of Iran tightened the legislation on employment of refugees. Afghans were

restricted to sixteen categories of work, mostly manual. A new repatriation program was agreed on in 2002. These are just some example of Iran's unstable policy towards Afghan migrants.

However, despite this instability, Afghans were able to attend school in Iran. Many Afghans didn't want to leave Iran because of the education they got there and the little opportunity to get good education in Afghanistan. Moreover, girls were also allowed to attend school in Iran. School was overall free of charge up until 2004. Sometimes Afghans taught Afghans in "illegal" schools, which were tolerated by the government. In 2004 Iran implemented a fee for foreign students. Afghans attending school or university had to pay a small fee. (\$150 which later was reduced to \$50)

Although some Iranian laws discriminate against women, particularly with regard to their legal status in matters related to marriage, divorce, inheritance, and child custody, Afghan women and girls in Iran enjoy a number of freedoms denied to them at home. In particular, they have greater freedom of movement, access to quality education, and ability to seek divorce than do women and girls in Afghanistan. As one Afghan government official told Human Rights Watch, "People hear about honor killings [of women and girls] et cetera [in Afghanistan], and then they don't want to come back."

Most of registered Afghan population in Iran had lived in Iran for up to twenty-five years or more and many younger Afghans are born in Iran and lived there their entire lives. Over 95 percent of Afghans who live in Iran are integrated into Iranian communities or are in their own communities within Iran's cities and villages. Unlike Pakistan, in Iran, less than 5 percent of Afghans live in refugee camps.

3. Second generation immigrant's school attainment:

There are mixed evidence on the education attainments of second generation migrants and natives. Gang, and Zimmerman (2000) using the German data find that both ethnicity and the size of diaspora affects the school attainments of second generation migrants. Trejo (2003) using current population survey in the US, finds that improvements in earnings for the second generation Mexican in the US can be explained by the return to their human capital that was acquired in the US. Algan, Dustmann, Glitz, and Manning, (2010) provide evidence that Second-Generation Immigrants in France, Germany and the United Kingdom have smaller gaps with natives in educational attainment compared to first generation migrants. In the case of Western European destination countries Heath, and Cheung (2007) find that controlling for parental class and parental education, second-generation minorities whose parents came from less-developed non-European origins have substantially lower test scores or exam results during the period of compulsory schooling than do the majority groups in the countries of destination. Most disadvantaged groups in this respect in almost all the countries concerned are young people of Turkish, Moroccan and North African, Pakistani, Bangladeshi and Caribbean heritage.

Betts, and Lofstrom (1998) find that the upper half of the immigrant population has been and continues to be at least as highly educated as the upper half of the native population. Observed decline in mean level of immigrants' education relative to natives reflects decline in relative educational status of the bottom half of the immigrant population. Educational attainment increased among immigrants in absolute terms but decline in relative terms.

In a comparison of France and the United States, Alba, and Silberman (2009) found that the magnitude of the North African/native French disparity in dropout rates was similar to that for Mexicans and Anglos. For Germany, Kalter (2011) indicates that the children of the guest-

worker groups generally have lower rates of earning the more valuable secondary-school credentials than native German students, with Turkish students performing the worst.

4. Data and empirical results:

The data in this paper is from the Integrated Public Use Microdata Series (IPUMS,2014). The 2006 General Census of Population and Housing is conducted by Statistical Centre of Iran over the period of October, 28th to November, 17th 2006. The microdata is on the household level and represents 2% of the population including 1,299,825 individuals out of which 19,218 have indicated Afghanistan, as their country of citizenship.45 percent of the Afghans in this data are women compared to 49.92 percent in the Iranian citizens. Afghans are on average 6 years younger than the Iranian population in this dataset (27 compared to 21).

57.84 percent of Iranians in this survey live in urban areas compared to 55.97 percent of that Afghans. Afghan population has lower education levels and is mostly working in low skilled jobs. Also, Afghans on average have bigger household size.

Table 1,2 shows the summary statistics of the variables used in the empirical exercise for the individuals with Iranian citizenship and for Afghan citizens residing in Iran respectively.

With a logit estimation model, I test whether Afghan children have lower likelihood of attending school in different age categories. Controlling for parent's education and age; father's occupation, urban living and the number of household members. The estimation finds that children of Afghan immigrants are less likely to attend school in all age categories. The age categories have been chosen based on the schooling categories in Iran: primary school from age 7 to 11, middle school from age 12 to 14, and high school from age 15 to 18.

Province fixed effects has been included in all of the estimations. The first estimation does not include the father's occupation categories. All other three estimations include father's occupation categories. The first two columns are estimations for the primary education

students. For this age category adding the father' occupation categories wipe away the Afghan's dummy variables' significance. However, for school categories, the Afghan's dummy variable is negative and significance suggesting the gap with natives in school attendance in higher than primary school level. Other variables have expected signs, Father and mothers education and age positively impacts the school attendance probability. Lower skilled fathers have children that are significantly less likely to attend school in all of the schooling categories.

To further address this gap, more data is required which has been identified and requested.

5. Conclusion:

According to UN data Afghan refugees are one of the largest displaced populations in the world. Based on 2012 estimates, there are between 2.4 to 3 million Afghan immigrants living in Iran. Afghani immigrants face a multitude of barriers that natives do not have to overcome. These barriers are likely to affect their children's upward mobility as well. This papers aims to identify the sources of disparities between second generation Afghans and natives. At the current stage, this paper finds that controlling for parents' education, age, and occupation, Afghan children are less likely to attend school in all age categories. Additional data (which has been located and requested) is required to identify the causes of this disparity.

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Tables:

Table 1- Summary statistics of Iranian population

	mean	min	max	sd	count
Percent female	0.50	0.00	1.00	0.50	1299825
Age	27.91	0.00	100.00	19.07	1299825
Education level	1.86	0.00	4.00	1.04	1049625
Percent urban	0.58	0.00	1.00	0.49	1299825
Number of household members	4.87	1.00	29.00	2.10	1299825
Percent employed	0.34	0.00	1.00	0.47	1072354
Percent in senior, managerial jobs	0.02	0.00	1.00	0.15	349570
Percent in Professionals jobs	0.08	0.00	1.00	0.27	349570
Percent in Technicians jobs	0.04	0.00	1.00	0.20	349570
Percent in Clerks jobs	0.03	0.00	1.00	0.18	349570
Percent in Service	0.11	0.00	1.00	0.31	349570
Percent in agricultural	0.24	0.00	1.00	0.43	349570
Percent in Plant, factories	0.12	0.00	1.00	0.32	349570
Percent in Elementary jobs	0.15	0.00	1.00	0.36	349570

Table 2-Summary statistics of Afghan citizens in Iran

	mean	min	max	sd	count
Percent female	0.45	0.00	1.00	0.50	19218
Age	21.40	0.00	100.00	16.40	19218
Education level	1.13	0.00	4.00	0.92	10601
Percent urban	0.56	0.00	1.00	0.50	19218
Number of household members	6.16	1.00	22.00	2.73	19218
Percent employed	0.45	0.00	1.00	0.50	13807
Percent in senior, managerial jobs	0.00	0.00	1.00	0.05	6004
Percent in Professionals jobs	0.01	0.00	1.00	0.09	6004
Percent in Technicians jobs	0.00	0.00	1.00	0.07	6004
Percent in Clerks jobs	0.00	0.00	1.00	0.04	6004
Percent in Service	0.04	0.00	1.00	0.21	6004
Percent in agricultural	0.14	0.00	1.00	0.34	6004
Percent in Plant, factories	0.07	0.00	1.00	0.26	6004
Percent in Elementary jobs	0.48	0.00	1.00	0.50	6004

Table 3-The probability estimation of school attendance

	(1) 6<age<12 schooling	(2) 6<age<12 schooling	(3) 11<age<15 schooling	(4) 14<age<19 schooling
Afghan d	-1.5627*** (0.1802)	-0.0550 (0.9778)	-1.6070*** (0.1850)	-0.8176*** (0.1535)
Father's education	0.0742** (0.0374)	0.0999** (0.0444)	0.2776*** (0.0451)	0.2613*** (0.0199)
Mother's education	-0.1845*** (0.0421)	-0.1699*** (0.0411)	0.3507*** (0.0454)	0.2722*** (0.0205)
Father's age	0.0083 (0.0059)	0.0152** (0.0059)	0.0263*** (0.0052)	0.0207*** (0.0024)
Mother's age	0.0169*** (0.0063)	0.0132** (0.0062)	0.0295*** (0.0056)	0.0395*** (0.0025)
Father's employed	0.1278 (0.0911)			
Mother's employed	-0.1825** (0.0801)	-0.2067*** (0.0772)	-0.3900*** (0.0794)	-0.0578 (0.0430)
Urban d	-0.0649 (0.0557)	-0.0921 (0.0563)	-0.5603*** (0.0582)	-0.3754*** (0.0261)
# of household mem	0.0385** (0.0195)	0.0149 (0.0186)	-0.1371*** (0.0142)	-0.0091 (0.0074)
Father in senior j		-0.0490 (0.1762)	-0.4333 (0.2440)	-0.0395 (0.0835)
Father in professional j		-0.2501 (0.1421)	-0.2915 (0.2194)	-0.0235 (0.0742)
Father in technicians j		-0.2766* (0.1525)	-0.1019 (0.2304)	-0.1683** (0.0741)
Father in clerks j		-0.1272 (0.1346)	-0.3271* (0.1805)	-0.2741*** (0.0614)
Father in agricultural		-0.3296** (0.1331)	-1.0250*** (0.1680)	-0.7165*** (0.0601)
Father in crafts j		-0.1702 (0.1312)	-0.6400*** (0.1705)	-0.4657*** (0.0597)
Father in factories j		-0.1228 (0.1303)	-0.5110*** (0.1699)	-0.3810*** (0.0584)
Father in elementary j		-0.2755** (0.1350)	-0.8122*** (0.1711)	-0.6223*** (0.0627)
Province fixed effects	yes	yes	yes	yes
N	52618	58785	34705	45575
pseudo R ²	0.018	0.018	0.123	0.199

Standard errors in parentheses

* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$