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Research paper

Rohingya Crisis: a Possible Threat to the Character Strengths of Indians

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Abstract

The current study focuses on the influence of Rohingya crisis on the character strengths of Indian citizens. The study explains about the Rohingya crisis and its origination. It is discussed in the study that how chaotic conditions in Myanmar resulted in the exodus of Rohigya muslims from the country who are infiltrating neighbouring countries which are best approachable to them. Countries which are the signatories of UNHCR are supposed to allow them to enter their country but India not being a signatory of the same should not be forced to do that. However, the debate is still continuing on this issue referring few acts which support the permission to refugees to enter our country. In such circumstances Rohingyas are struggling for their livelihood and survival and getting involved in many antinational and anti-social activities. Consequently the legal citizens of India are substantially suffering and facing threat to develop their character strengths. The circumstances specially affecting the character strengths of forgiveness, social intelligence, kindness, humour, love and modesty etc. because their main focus is on the fulfilment of their daily necessities, based on the resources and peaceful social environment which is getting disturbed because of the Rohingya influx. This is resulting in the chaotic conditions in the society which are not letting the legitimate citizens of India to achieve mental peace and grow themselves from inside which is very important to strengthen the character strengths within ourselves. The current paper explains these issues in detail to generate a deep insight among the Indian citizens and to help Government of India in making decisions on this matter.

Keywords: *Rohingya, Indians.*

1. Introduction

The effort of Seligman of constructing a positive model of human being seems to face potential threats when it when it comes to the development of character strengths of Indian citizens particularly encountering hazardous life situations due to Rohingya infiltration in the country. The prediction of Positive Psychology by Seligman and Csikszentimihalgi appears to be rethought due to the prevailing conditions of chaos in the Rohingya affected areas of the country. This flourishing model of positive Psychology is evidently facing challenges to its generality under such circumstances. These prevailing conditions in the country are taking us back to the ages when psychology was more focused on disease model instead of any growth model.

Rohingya crisis is basically a chaotic condition emerging in the neighboring countries of Myanmar such as Bangladesh, India, Pakistan, and Indonesia etc. due to its internal political factors resulting in the exodus of Rohigya muslims from Myanmar. The national reposts from Myanmar support this exodus by asserting that these Rohingya Muslims do not originally belong to the country and hence they cannot be the legal occupants of national property. However, there are various historical claims suggesting the story of Rohingya Muslims which is essential to know before forming any opinion about this issue.

Rohingya is basically an ethnic community formed out of miscellaneous communities such as moors, turks, pathans, moghuls, central Asians, arabs, Indo-mongolians and Bengalis, origin of which can be traced back to the 7th century AD in Rohan (former name of arakan) [1] when Arakan faced intimidation by various invaders. The crisis began for the Rohingya community when many intruders including Myanmar, (which is the current occupant of Arakan) invaded Arakan due to the chaotic conditions prevailing in Arakan such as anarchy and unprice. The current status of rohingya Muslims is that they are not accepted by Myanmar because it considers them as migrants who migrated during the colonial rule. Myanmar justifies this conception on the basis of 1982 Burmese citizenship Law which asserts the eligibility of any ethnic minority for the Burmese citizenship only if they can prove their ancestral existence in the country prior to 1823 [2].

Recent decades present enough evidences posing towards the influx of Rohingya muslims in various neighboring countries due to the evictions they faced in Myanmar as a result of ethnic cleansing. Consequently, violence emerged between Rohingya Muslims and Buddhists when rohingya mistreated Rakhine women by raping and murdering them. This communal tension was handled by Myanmar government by deportation of Rohingya muslims [2], as a result of which these Rohingya infiltrations in other countries occurred as a survival approach.

The most affected country by these political disturbances of Myanmar was Bangladesh due to its closest neighborhood when UNHCR requested Bangladesh to allow them entering the country. But Bangladesh started to express its concerns when the country faced and foresighted the national complications because of Rohingya influx which other countries such as India, UAE, Malaysia, Thailand, Indonesia, Saudi Arabia and Pakistan are also facing. India, keeping the status of close neighborhood like Bangladesh has also become vulnerable for the infiltration by Rohingya muslims and this national crisis becomes more dominant when it comes to the legal aspects of entertaining refugees in the country.

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Thoughts are bifurcated in this regard that Rohingya should be allowed or prohibited to enter the country. A debate has started concerning the acceptance of Rohingya in the country. Views are expressed in the country supporting the humanitarian grounds which says we should accept Rohingya and continue the legacy of Indian culture which is known for its benevolent spirit and realistic situation which looks at the severe level of national distress and inconvenience caused by Rohingya infiltrations which can be most prominently seen in the areas nearing the Indo-myanmar and Indo-bangladesh boundaries which is an easy way for Rohingya to escape from their current location.

These controversies make us think about the constitutional reality which is the utmost priority of every country to be accepted and followed. But the confusion takes place when the contrasting facts come in the light that twists our minds and makes it complicated to understand and interpret real picture. As a matter of fact, India is not a signatory of UN Refugee Convention (revised in 1967) which safeguards the fundamental rights of refugees such as education, passports and access to courts etc. and forms certain rules in regard to the treatment of refugees.

This is also quoted by Rajnath Singh when he calls Rohingya as illegal immigrants- "By deporting them we are not violating any international law as we are not a signatory to 1951 Refugee Convention". — Rajnathsingh [2]. But there are some strong legislative regulations that safeguards refugees in India, such as, Registration of Foreigners Act 1939 [3], Foreigners Act 1946 [4] and Passport Act 1967 [5].

Here, let us consider a situation where a tenant occupies our house and doesn't vacate it even after several reminders? What do we do in such a situation? We fight with them, avoid them, make a police complaint or try to convince them to vacate the house? Most of us will opt the last two options. Another situation may be presented, when a new bride comes to our house and starts posing her right on everything. What will we do in such a situation? We probably would justify her right on everything because she is legally entitled to avail all this. Justified and logical thought if we have this in your mind. But what about a girl who enters your house without marrying your son and starts to establish right on the same things which are supposed to be availed by your daughter in law. Think for a while and answer yourself, what will you do and how would you feel in such a situation. Do you feel like throwing this unwanted female from your house or feel like disowning her or try to push her away? What matters in both the situations is legal implications.

How intolerant we are when any such situation comes to our family but we become big philosophers and idealists when we have to present our thoughts at a social platform on some social and political issue. Why do our thoughts suddenly contradict with our own when we don't see a direct harm to our own possessions? We talk of equality, humanity and constitution because by doing all this we are presenting ourselves in a manner which is socially desired, irrespective of the realistic problems.

Is it possible for a blind to donate eyes? Is it possible for a beggar to donate for social welfare? NO. How can we think of serving thousands of people when we have the limited resources? Think of a rikshaw puller. He earns suppose 400 rupees in a day. What would be his priority, to serve his starving family or to serve the society? It's a situation when he has to choose between his duties about his family and a society. Are we realistic or excessively emotionally sensitive while talking about Rohingya Crisis? Are we trying to disapprove globally accepted olden theories talking about the survival of human being? Abraham Maslow [6] talked about hierarchy of needs, which has five levels, according to which the basic human needs such as food, water, oxygen, sex etc. are the needs of utmost priority. These needs are also called deficiency needs or D-needs. After satisfying these basic physiological needs we move on for the fulfillment of the next needs that is security and safety. A person who is so unable to earn bread to for his survival cannot think of building his own house for security. Hence the first level has to be satisfied to reach up to the next one. Once these two needs are fulfilled we move to the next level that is a need for belongingness or social needs such as making friends, connecting to social groups, need for building relationships etc. When we satisfy our social needs, we strive for respect. A need to give and get respect arises which rarely end up to the last level that is self-actualization, which the basic drive of all human beings. The most important thing is that none of these needs can be achieved breaking the hierarchy because it's a natural process.

Indian scriptures are also well versed with such literary evidences. Maslow's thoughts come in accordance with Indian when Hinduism suggests aims of life i.e. '*purusartha'* [7], Kama (physical needs), artha (Wealth and security and attachments), dharma (knowledge and virtual respect i.e. esteem), and moksha (freedom, liberation and actualization). So the literature also suggests that we cannot serve others' needs until we are fulfilled and satisfied in ourselves. Self-fulfillment is the basic requirement of the survival of any living being and everything such as social, political, cultural and moral interests come afterwards. We should not forget that the helpers are always in the sufficient position to feed them first.

Seligman, who gave another direction to the psychological studies replacing the disease model with a model of positivity which creates a link to the character strengths, such as hope, wisdom, creativity, future mindedness, courage, spirituality, responsibility, and perseverance, needs to be a researchers' focus in the Rohingya affected areas where Indian legal citizens are compromising with their right of sharing national resources with their fellow citizens. Research studies also suggest that people who utilize their signature strengths are successful in establishing their overall well-being which combines higher life satisfaction, higher positive emotions, and lower negative emotions [8]. But in the Rohingya affected areas it is becoming really very difficult for the local public to maintain their well-being while they are suffering from a deprivation and scarcity for their basic fulfillments. The strengths of love, kindnesses which are considered to be the markers of social connection and positivity [9] are at stake when it comes to the areas of Rohingya infiltration. Positive emotions, sense of purpose, and mindfulness are the strengths, development of which is directly related to the development of the feelings of love towards self and others [10] and also are the key character strengths involved in the process of maintaining social bonds [11]. The local turbulence in the area due to the Rohingya infiltrations which further disturbs the whole country is significantly creating a threat to the development of character strengths among the Indian citizens being affected by them.

We belong to a country which is way higher on the character strengths of forgiveness, social intelligence, kindness, humor, love modesty, prudence, zest, industry and teamwork [12] which is contrary to few other countries. But these findings may not be so justified in the current situation prevailing in the border areas of India adjacent to Myanmar and Bangladesh, more dominantly in North East zone, where the Rohingya infiltration is happening and deteriorating the overall national well being. These observations become more clear when the finance minister of Assam, H.B. Sarma shares a 'very bad' experience of North East with the Rohingya immigrants which is making it a serious trouble for the North East states when these immigrants are occupying our lands, diluting our culture and the indigenous people of North East are loosing their identities. He also expressed his serious concerns about the country by fore sighting the possibilities that the whole country in the future may face troubles like North East [13].

The concerns expressed by Sarma should be really taken very seriously because it points towards some predominant immigrants because of whom the whole North East is facing a lot of troubles. These concerns can be supported and authenticated on the basis of report released by Myanmar Government where it mentions about the violence affected Rakhine state where the dead bodies of Hindus, including women and children were found, attributing the killings to the Rohingya. They also forced Hindus to convert their religion in Islam. This violent resulted in the displacement of 30000 Hindus and Buddhists from the state [14].

It makes a cup of tea for the skilled writers who express their philosophical and harmonious thoughts which are unfortunately far away from the reality. It is difficult to understand why they suddenly become active over the controversial issues serving the newspaper headlines. A question hits mind repeatedly is that '*are we really so vulnerable when it comes to the social security for which our forces are losing their valuable soldiers and officers at the front?'* A concern endorsed by defense quarters when we talk about the membership of India in the refugee conventions and the challenges they are facing everyday while dealing with terror elements in the various parts of the country.

We are surely not 'xenophobic' as commented by Mr. Chetan Bhagt [7] but what's wrong in taking precautions for the security of a country which is already suffering from a threat of its security. Why a community, which is recognized by its own country for creating social and communal tensions and threats to humanity, should be entertained, pampered and privileged by us when we already have the intelligence inputs confirming the indulgence of Rohingya in anti-national activities such as human trafficking, drug trafficking, fund mobilization, fake identity documents, communal violence etc. and terrorism having connections with ISI and ISIS [14]. Even after so many evidences if we are not taking any actions to stop them to enter our country or if our efforts are so mild that they are not bringing much difference to the current chaotic situations in the nation, we are surely inviting and catering the national threats and insecurities.

As far as the harassing treatments are concerned such as pepper spraying etc., it should not be done but here is no harm sending an immigrant back to his country from where he belongs to. It's not our discretion to interfere in the national matters of other country. It is highly disappointing when the so called substantial authors view the national security measure as 'close minded'. The situations prevailing in the country and specially in North East zone of India are clearly creating a state of unrest and political and social chaos resulting in a significant decrease in the character strengths of people affected by Rohingya infiltration. The are loosing their humility, kindness, accommodating nature, love modesty, forgiveness and social intelligence etc. as a result of the unfulfillment or poor fulfilment of their legitimate national rights which are necessary for the development of overall well being of an individual. A similar concern expressed by Jyortimoy Prodhani [15] in his article in the local newspaper *'The Shillong Times'*, when he talks about the possible rise to new social and demographic anxiety in North east.

In this connection an article in Hindustan Times [16], a national newspaper, also published about 'huge security concerns' of Bangladesh in regard to Rohingya infiltration in both the countries, India and Bangladesh when the high commissioner and the former foreign secretary Syed Muazzem Ali expressed the possibilities of security risk for everybody from Rohingya muslims, especially when he quotes about north east India. The report also points towards the expectation of Bangladesh from India to persuade Myanmar in this matter and to take proactive steps in early return of Rohingyas.

2. Conclusion

This situation of fidelity should drag us to a conclusion that the current social and political scenario is generating a substantial risk that Rohingya strength may increase in turning up involving themselves in antisocial and other anti-national activities for their survival in the country which will be a serious threat to the nation and defence quarters. This will surely emerge as a potential threat to the development of character strengths of the whole nation including the national security. Hence, over empathizing and presenting over conscientious thoughts avoiding the national security should be avoided by us being responsible and aware citizens of India. This is a contribution we can make towards the nation when we don't have a firsthand chance to serve the nation. Instead, some middle way can be worked out in a manner that Rohingya muslims get justice and relaxation and our country and citizens also be safeguarded from all the possible threats from Rohingya which is creating a significant hassle for our Indian nationals to grow their character strengths and strengthening the country as a whole.

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