

**The Role of Agents in Organization of Irregular Migration from
District Gujrat, Pakistan to Europe**

Inaugural-Dissertation

zur Erlangung des Doktorgrades der
Philosophie der Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität
München

vorgelegt

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Khushab, Pakistan

2021

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Tag der mündlichen Prüfung: 10.11.2020

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

It gives me immense pleasure to thank all those who contributed a lot during the phase of my Ph.D. First of all, I am very thankful to my first supervisor, Prof. Dr. Martin Sökefeld, who remained very kind and supportive throughout this journey. His prompt and thought-provoking feedback on my drafts played a decisive role to complete my dissertation. He always kept me in the right direction of my studies. I am also indebted to acknowledge Prof. Dr. Magnus Treiber who very kindly agreed to be my second supervisor.

As this project was started at Bielefeld University, I am very grateful to the Faculty of Sociology, Bielefeld University, and the administration of Bielefeld Graduate School in History and Sociology for providing me all logistic facilities during my stay as a Ph.D. student, and financial support for the fieldwork of the present study. I am also thankful to the German Academic Exchange Service (*Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst*, DAAD) for providing me DAAD ERASMUS+ grant (international dimension) during my Ph.D. Many thanks to the International Office of Bielefeld University and Examination Office of Humanities and Social Sciences of Ludwig-Maximilians-University Munich for providing me all necessary information regarding my Ph.D. Their support was really helpful to integrate myself in German academic culture and daily life matters. I am also very thankful to the central library, University Bielefeld, and the computer lab of the faculty of Sociology for providing me assistance whenever I needed it.

I am also pleased to extend my gratitude to all my Ph.D. colleagues for their critical comments on my research during our research classes both at Bielefeld and Munich. I am also grateful to my Ph.D. colleagues at the Institute of Social and Cultural Anthropology, Ludwig-Maximilians-University Shirin Dolatpur and Beatrice Odierna for assisting me to write Zusammenfassung. I am also very grateful to Ms. Maimoona Khalid, faculty member of the Beaconhouse School System Gujrat, for her valuable contribution in the proofreading of this dissertation.

My acknowledgements would be incomplete if I do not mention Prof. Dr. Muhammad Zakria Zakar, who is my mentor and MA thesis supervisor at University of the Punjab, Lahore, Pakistan. In the real sense, he supported me to establish my career immediately after my MA when he offered me a position of research assistant in his Research Cell. Special thanks to all my

research participants for sharing their experiences as they played a key role in my research because without their cooperation my dissertation could not have been completed. Likewise, special thanks to my field assistants for their very active assistance during my fieldwork.

It also gratifies me to admire my parents and parents-in-law for their best wishes during this whole journey. Here is a special tribute to my grandfather, (late) Faiz Ellahi Shah, who laid the foundation of my higher education. I always miss him. May his soul rest in peace!

Last but not least, I cannot express my feelings for my beloved wife, Dr. Huma Butt. Actually, she suffered more than me during the period of my Ph.D. She supported me emotionally, financially, and academically in all spheres of my study. Whenever I got stuck in any issue, I found her available to pull me out from that unpleasant situation.

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ABSTRACT

For the past few years, the nexus between migration and development has gained renewed significance, and the present study is at the centre of the debate held in this field. The present study not only asks about the consequences of migration for development in the places of migrants' origin, but it goes one step further and focuses on those migrants who eventually end up as irregular migrants that means they do not have proper documentation of the residence and/or work status in regions of destination. Irregular migrants are an especially difficult group to study. It takes a lot of methodological intelligence, communication skills, and an ability to build social relations based on intimate trust to study the category of irregular/illegal migrants in the discussion of migration development nexus.

Keeping in view the above-mentioned research gap, the present study focuses to examine how irregular migration is being facilitated and organized by agents and social networks from district Gujrat, Punjab, Pakistan to Greece in particular, and to other EU members states in general. Irregular emigration has become a major issue for Pakistan, since it is reported to be among the top ten most-detected countries that have been involved in irregular migration to the European Union, in recent years. Pakistan has a very significant geographical location in South Asia and is considered a transient site for migrant groups, in transit from various countries of South Asia, to destinations like Iran, Turkey, Greece, Central Europe, and Western Europe. Greece falls on the most common route for irregular migrants from Pakistan to enter other European countries, and is known as a junction of irregular migration from Pakistan to Europe. Irregular migration from Pakistan to Greece consists of three major steps. First, some major cities of Pakistan like Karachi and Quetta are used as entry points to Iran. Travelling through Iran to Turkey is the second step and consists of the rocky mountains, which divide Iran and Turkey. This track is most dangerous due to harsh weather and is usually crossed on foot, at night. Third, from Turkey, these irregular migrants enter Greece. For the present research, the term irregular migration is used as it is a preferred term in European policy circles.

There are various explanations of labor migration as research in this field is multifaceted and offers multiple levels of analysis. The neo-classical theory of migration considers migrants as individuals as rational actors who decide to move on the basis of a cost-benefit analysis. Whereas, a new economics explanation of migration assumes that migration decisions are not

taken by individuals but also involve families and households. Similarly, networks are also important to explain migration as interpersonal ties connect non-migrants and migrants in sending to destination countries. The present study uses social networks as a theoretical lens to explain international migration in the context of district Gujrat, Punjab, Pakistan. It is further supplemented by the concept of biraderi and kinship networking because, in the context of Pakistani rural areas, biraderi plays an important role in various aspects of social support in the local community. These concepts are further enriched by the concept of social capital as it unpacks the theoretical notions of social and symbolic ties, social structures, and how individuals get benefits from resources as members of the community.

The empirical data of the present study is based on ethnographic fieldwork in two adjacent villages of district Gujrat which is situated in Punjab province, the most populous province of Pakistan. District Gujrat and the surrounding districts are very famous for international regular and irregular migration to many countries of the world, especially to Europe. The adjacent city of Mirpur was replaced in the 1960s due to the construction of *Mangla* Dam and due to an official contract between the government of Pakistan and the UK, whereby a significant portion of the population is settled in the UK. Later on, networks of these Mirpuri migrants also triggered the trend of migration from its adjacent districts, for example, Gujrat. Based on the constructivist epistemological viewpoint, a qualitative research design is appropriate to study this issue because it provides the insider's perspective or an emic view instead of any external format. Semi-structured interviews have been conducted with the families of irregular immigrants and immigrants who once initiated such migration but deported back to Pakistan. Moreover, these semi-structured interviews were conducted with 32 interlocutors – 15 male family members of irregular migrants, 7 female family members of irregular migrants, and 10 migrants who once initiated their journey towards Greece but were deported back to Pakistan. The inclusion criterion was to select only those interlocutors who had at least one family member abroad through illegal means and those irregular migrants who had once travelled to Greece with the help of agents. Semi-structured interviews provide interlocutors with some margin or freedom to express more about their interests or what is of importance to them. The present study is strictly guided by the research ethics informed by renowned international professional academic bodies. I shifted recorded interviews from recording gadget to my laptop for translation. I translated interviews in English in full by using a software f4. This phase was very time consuming

because interviews were translated into English from Punjabi and Urdu as the official language of my dissertation is English, and it is always challenging to translate the text when both researcher and interlocutors have a non-English native language. For coding of the data, the present study employs constructivist grounded theory due to the nature of the research question. Since the primary research question deals with inductive logic, the grounded theory provides a frame for its scientific inquiry by providing rigorous guidelines on how to proceed further. It facilitates to manage and streamline the data collection process, which, as a result, is very helpful for a systematic analysis.

The findings of the present study indicate several important aspects of organization and facilitation of irregular migration from Pakistan to Greece and other EU member states with the help of agents. It is found that a very strong network of agents has been working in the rural areas of district Gujrat and has connections not only within the district but also with the neighboring districts which are also famous for irregular migration. Moreover, they are also well connected with a major network of agents working in other provinces of Pakistan and transit countries. These agents have their informal offices in their villages and provide all the information regarding the process and overall expenses of irregular migration. They also offer the whole package to the aspiring migrants. So, in the context of Pakistan, it is important to understand the position of agents in a broader social structure. The agent who is well connected in this social structure has more clientele as compared to the person who is loosely connected in this web of networking at the local level. In the context of Pakistani rural society, agents are not merely playing the role of a mediator to facilitate mobility across borders but are inextricably entrenched in the social fabric of the society as well, while providing assistance in migration decision-making. It shapes social interaction and provides basic information regarding processes of irregular migration while establishing a trustworthy network of migrants who have a similar mobility experience. Such social interaction and trust are linked with the social profile of the agents which is usually embedded in their position in biraderi based social stratification. Moreover, the present study gives an initial insight into the involvement of female agents in the organization of irregular migration. They play their role to facilitate the negotiation between the aspirant migrants, their families, and the main agent. Likewise, the present study also found it particularly interesting that female agents make profits through paper marriage with the aspirant migrants to enable the mobility of those aspirant migrants.

Furthermore, the present study also reveals the increasing role of women in migration decision-making which is also an initial insight into the patriarchal culture of rural areas of district Gujrat. The aspirant migrants are less educated and most of them are unskilled. In this context, data also reveals that the trend of irregular migration also triggers due to the geographical imagination of Greece and other EU member states. As a result, it encourages them to initiate the migration process because they believe in the information provided by the agents. The interlocutors are aware of the exchange value of Pakistani currency in comparison to the Euro but have no idea of the job opportunities and current economic situation of Greece and other EU member states. The aspirant migrants manage the cost of irregular migration by selling off their agricultural land, cattle, and crops. Some use savings and some borrow money from relatives and friends. However, some lend money from formal institutions on a high-interest rate. Mode of payment is also different and varies from case to case and is based on intimate relations with the agents. Immigrants take risks of irregular migration and justify it by surrendering to God, destiny (*Kismet, Muqaddar*), and masculine traits of the patriarchal society.

The findings also depict the role of chain migration to motivate the aspirant migrants. In the villages of district Gujrat, Punjab, the popular and well-established trend of international migration has become a normal practice. Even, in some cases, the interlocutors postpone the communal rituals, for example, performing Hajj¹, and prioritize the migration of their family members instead of spending money on the expenses of Hajj. Peer influence is another decisive factor in migration decision-making that encourages youngsters for taking the adventure of irregular migration. Moreover, this peer influence is further triggered by the hope extended to the transnational networks. The aspirant migrants and their families contact these transnational networks before and during their travel to Greece and other EU member states. These transnational networks facilitate the new arrivals in finding a job and accommodation. However, not all such social contacts are helpful and, in some cases, they also exploit the migrants due to their irregular status. These migrants are in a very vulnerable position and cannot resist their exploitation.

The results also show that living abroad is a symbol of social prestige in the rural areas of district Gujrat. People pay more respect to a family whose members are living abroad because, due to

¹ Muslim's pilgrimage to Saudi Arabia

their material resources, they are more influential in the local community. Material resources, especially the construction of lavish houses, create a social competition among the members of lower-status-biraderi and upper-status-biraderi. It gives an insight into the decay in the traditional social organization of the villages in the province of Punjab. Moreover, the results also reflect on the prestige of work in the home country. The interlocutors do not want to get engaged in menial jobs in Pakistan because it shows their low-status. However, they are willing to do the same work in the host society. They lose their social status in the host society but gain a middle-class status in the home country, as Nieswand (2011, p.2) calls it “the status paradox of migration”. The findings also depict gendered patterns of migration. In the rural areas of district Gujrat, irregular migration emerges as an exclusively masculine trait embedded in the framework of masculinity. In a patriarchal setup, male family members, especially the elder brother takes it as his responsibility to contribute to the household income. Similarly, women’s bodies are considered as family honor (*izzat, ghairat*) and, in some cases, the interlocutors consider women’s income as *Haram* (forbidden).

The present study also reflects on three dimensions of aspirations of migrants and their families for irregular migration. First, people consider remittances as a major source of household development. Their focus is to provide comfortable living to their families living in Pakistan. Some interlocutors interpret it to meet the pressing household needs, for example, to arrange reasonable dowry for marriages of their daughters. Similarly, they have to meet the economic exchange among the community members (*milna vertana*). Some consider it to show their social position in the village by spending more money on lavish arrangements of marriage functions. Moreover, some interlocutors challenge the traditional theory of push and pull factors of migration and claim that people migrate due to their own happiness and desires (*shaoq*). Second, people have strong intentions to return to Pakistan permanently after a longer stay in Europe and earning sufficient money. Sons are supposed to come back to the home country to look after their elderly parents. Third, in some cases, migrants have shown their desire for getting legal documents (*kaghaz, kagat*). They consider a voluntary return to Pakistan as wastage of time they have spent in Europe, and as a matter of shame in the native community, whereas, getting legal status in any EU member state is a symbol of success (*kamyabi*). The present study recommends further academic research for methodological and theoretical advancement in the field of irregular migration and networks of agents in the context of Pakistan to Europe.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

In den letzten Jahren hat der Zusammenhang zwischen Migration und Entwicklung wieder an Bedeutung gewonnen. Die vorliegende Studie steht im Mittelpunkt der in diesem Bereich geführten Debatten. Die Studie fragt nicht nur nach den Auswirkungen der Migration auf die Entwicklung der Herkunftsorte der Migranten, sondern geht noch einen Schritt weiter und konzentriert sich auf Migranten, die schließlich zu ‚irregulären‘ Migranten werden, d.h. über keine Aufenthalts- oder Beschäftigungserlaubnis in den Zielregionen verfügen. Die Situation irregulärer Migranten ist besonders schwer zu erforschen. Es erfordert viel methodische Kreativität, Kommunikationsfähigkeit und die Fähigkeit, auf intemem Vertrauen beruhende soziale Beziehungen aufzubauen, um die Kategorie irregulärer / illegaler Migranten im Kontext der Diskussion über Migration und Entwicklung zu untersuchen.

Unter Berücksichtigung der oben genannten Forschungslücke konzentriert sich die vorliegende Studie auf die Frage, wie irreguläre Migration aus Gebieten wie Gujrat, Punjab, Pakistan nach Griechenland im Besonderen und in andere EU-Mitgliedstaaten im Allgemeinen durch Agenten und soziale Netzwerke ermöglicht und organisiert wird. Die irreguläre Auswanderung ist für Pakistan zu einem wichtigen Thema geworden, da es in den letzten Jahren zu den zehn Ländern gehört, aus denen Menschen irregulär in die Europäische Union migrierten. Pakistan hat eine sehr bedeutende geografische Lage in Südasien und gilt als Transitstation für Migrantengruppen aus verschiedenen Ländern Südasiens mit Zielen wie dem Iran, der Türkei, Griechenland, Mitteleuropa und Westeuropa. Griechenland liegt auf der meist genutzten Route für irreguläre Migranten aus Pakistan in andere europäische Länder und ist als Knotenpunkt auf der Reise von Pakistan nach Europa bekannt. Die irreguläre Migration von Pakistan nach Griechenland besteht aus drei Schritten. Erstens dienen einige große Städte Pakistans wie Karachi und Quetta als Einstiegspunkte in den Iran. Die Reise durch den Iran nach der Türkei ist der zweite Schritt und besteht aus den felsigen Bergen, die den Iran und die Türkei trennen. Diese Strecke ist aufgrund des rauen Wetters die Gefährlichste und wird normalerweise nachts zu Fuß überquert. Drittens kommen die ‚irregulären‘ Migranten aus der Türkei nach Griechenland. Für die vorliegende Forschung wird der Begriff irreguläre Migration verwendet, weil er in europäischen Politikkreisen bevorzugt benutzt wird.

Es gibt verschiedene Erklärungen für die Arbeitsmigration, da die Forschung in diesem Bereich vielfältig ist und mehrere Analyseebenen bietet. Die neoklassische Migrationstheorie betrachtet Migranten als Individuen, als rationale Akteure, die sich auf der Grundlage einer Kosten-Nutzen-Analyse für eine Auswanderung entscheiden. New-Economy-Ansätze gehen hingegen davon aus, dass Migrationsentscheidungen nicht von Einzelpersonen getroffen werden, sondern auch von Familien und Haushalten. In ähnlicher Weise sind Netzwerke auch wichtig, um die Migration zu erklären, da zwischenmenschliche Bindungen Nicht-Migranten und Migranten in Sende- und Zielländern verbinden. Die vorliegende Studie verwendet soziale Netzwerke als theoretische Grundlage, um die internationale Migration im Kontext des Gebiets Gujrat, Punjab, Pakistan, zu erklären. Diese Perspektive wird weiter durch das Konzept der Biraderi und verwandtschaftliche Netzwerke ergänzt, da Biraderi im Kontext der ländlichen Gebiete Pakistans eine wichtige Rolle bei verschiedenen Aspekten der sozialen Unterstützung in der lokalen Gemeinschaft spielt. Diese Konzepte werden durch das Konzept des Sozialkapitals weiter bereichert, welches theoretische Vorstellungen von sozialen und symbolischen Bindungen, sozialen Strukturen und der Art und Weise, wie Individuen als Mitglieder der Gemeinschaft von Ressourcen profitieren, erklärt.

Die empirischen Daten der vorliegenden Studie basieren auf ethnografischen Feldforschungen in zwei benachbarten Dörfern des Gebiets Gujrat in der Provinz Punjab, der bevölkerungsreichsten Provinz Pakistans. Das Gebiet Gujrat und die umliegenden Distrikte sind sehr bekannt für ihre internationale reguläre und irreguläre Migration in viele Länder der Welt, insbesondere nach Europa. Die Bewohner*innen der benachbarten Stadt Mirpur wurden in den 1960er Jahren aufgrund des Baus des Mangla-Staudamms und eines offiziellen Vertrags zwischen der pakistanischen Regierung und Großbritannien umgesiedelt, weswegen sich ein erheblicher Teil der Bevölkerung in Großbritannien niederließ. Später lösten Netzwerke dieser Mirpuri-Migranten auch den Trend der Migration aus den benachbarten Distrikten wie Gujrat aus. Ausgehend von einer konstruktivistisch-erkenntnistheoretischen Perspektive wird ein qualitatives Forschungsdesign als geeignet betrachtet, um dieses Problem zu untersuchen, da es die Perspektive des Insiders oder die emische Sichtweise anstelle eines externen Formats in den Mittelpunkt stellt. Es wurden semistrukturierte Interviews mit Familien irregulärer Auswanderer durchgeführt, die diese Migration einst initiierten, aber zurück nach Pakistan deportiert wurden. Diese wurden diese semistrukturierten Interviews mit 32 Befragten durchgeführt, darunter 15

männliche und 7 weibliche Familienmitglieder irregulärer Migranten und 10 Personen, die einst ihre Reise nach Griechenland begonnen hatten, aber zurück nach Pakistan deportiert wurden. Ausgewählt wurden nur die Gesprächspartner, die mindestens ein Familienmitglied im Ausland hatten, welches mit aus der Perspektive des Ziellandes illegalen Mitteln eingereist war, und diejenigen, die einmal mit Hilfe von Agenten nach Griechenland gereist waren. Semistrukturierte Interviews bieten Gesprächspartnern einen gewissen Spielraum oder die Freiheit, mehr über ihre Interessen oder über Alles, was für sie von Bedeutung ist, zu sprechen. Die vorliegende Studie orientiert sich streng an der Forschungsethik bekannter akademischer Institutionen. Ich habe aufgezeichnete Interviews vom Aufnahmegerät zur Übersetzung auf meinen Laptop übertragen. Danach habe ich persönlich die Interviews mit einer Software f4 vollständig auf Englisch übersetzt. Diese Phase war sehr zeitaufwändig, weil die offizielle Sprache meiner Dissertation Englisch ist und die Interviews aus Punjabi und Urdu ins Englische übersetzt werden mussten. Es ist immer schwierig, einen Text zu übersetzen, wenn sowohl Forscher als auch Gesprächspartner Englisch nicht als Muttersprache sprechen. Für die Kodierung der Daten, orientierte sich diese Studie aufgrund der Art der Forschungsfrage an einer konstruktivistischen Grounded Theorie. Da sich die primäre Forschungsfrage mit induktiver Logik befasst, bietet die Grounded Theorie einen Rahmen für ihre wissenschaftliche Untersuchung, indem sie exakte Richtlinien für das weitere Vorgehen liefert. Es erleichtert das Management und die Planung des Datenerfassungsprozesses, was für eine systematische Analyse sehr hilfreich ist.

Die Ergebnisse der vorliegenden Studie weisen auf mehrere wichtige Aspekte der Organisation und Ermöglichung der irregulären Migration von Pakistan nach Griechenland und in andere EU-Mitgliedstaaten mit Hilfe von Agenten hin. Es wird festgestellt, dass ein sehr starkes Netzwerk von Agenten in den ländlichen Gebieten des Distrikts Gujrat arbeitet und Verbindungen nicht nur innerhalb des Distrikts, sondern auch zu den benachbarten Gebieten hat, die ebenfalls für irreguläre Migration bekannt sind. Darüber hinaus sind sie auch gut mit einem großen Netz von Agenten verbunden, die in anderen Provinzen Pakistans und in Transitländern arbeiten. Diese Agenten haben ihre informellen Büros in ihren Dörfern und stellen alle Informationen über den Prozess und die gesamten Kosten der irregulären Migration zur Verfügung, sie bieten auch ein ganzes Paket für die zukünftigen Migranten an. Im pakistanischen Kontext ist es also wichtig, die Rolle der Agenten in der breiteren gesellschaftlichen Struktur zu verstehen. Der Agent, der in dieser sozialen Struktur gut vernetzt ist, hat mehr Klientel als die Person, die der lokalen Ebene

nur lose verbunden ist. Im Kontext der ländlichen Gesellschaft Pakistans spielen die Agenten nicht nur eine Vermittlerrolle, um die Mobilität über die Grenzen hinweg zu erleichtern, sondern sie sind untrennbar im sozialen Gefüge der Gesellschaft eingebunden und bieten gleichzeitig Unterstützung bei der Entscheidungsfindung in Bezug auf die Migration. Sie prägen die soziale Interaktion und liefern grundlegende Informationen über Prozesse irregulärer Migration und bauen gleichzeitig ein vertrauenswürdiges Netzwerk von Migranten auf, die eine ähnliche Mobilitätserfahrung gemacht haben. Diese soziale Interaktion und dieses Vertrauen ist mit dem sozialen Profil der Akteure verbunden, das in der Regel auf ihrer Position in einer biraderi-basierten sozialen Stratifizierung basiert. Darüber hinaus gibt diese Studie einen Einblick in die Beteiligung weiblicher Agenten an der Organisation irregulärer Migration. Sie spielen eine wichtige Rolle, indem sie die Verhandlungen zwischen den Migrantenanwärtern, ihren Familien und dem Hauptakteur organisieren. Ebenso war es eine wichtige Erkenntnis dieser Studie, dass weibliche Agenten durch die Heirat auf dem Papier mit zukünftigen Migranten Gewinne erzielen, um die Mobilität derselben zu ermöglichen. In ähnlicher Weise zeigt die Studie auch die zunehmend wichtige Rolle der Frauen bei der Entscheidungsfindung auf, was ebenfalls einen neuen Einblick in die ‚patriarchale‘ Kultur der ländlichen Gebiete des Gujrat darstellt. Die Migrantenanwärter sind weniger gebildet und die meisten von ihnen sind unqualifiziert. In diesem Zusammenhang zeigen die Daten auch, dass der Trend der irregulären Migration auch durch die geographische Vorstellung Griechenlands und anderer EU-Mitgliedsstaaten verursacht wird, wodurch sie ermutigt werden, einen Migrationsprozess in Gang zu setzen, weil sie an Informationen glauben, die von Agenten weitergegeben werden. Die Gesprächspartner waren sich des Tauscherts der pakistanischen Währung im Vergleich zum Euro bewusst, hatten aber keine Ahnung von den Beschäftigungsmöglichkeiten und der aktuellen wirtschaftlichen Situation Griechenlands und anderer EU-Mitgliedstaaten. Migrantenanwärter decken die Kosten der irregulären Migration durch den Verkauf von Agrarland, Vieh und Feldfrüchten. Einige nutzten Ersparnisse und einige liehen sich Geld von Verwandten und Freunden. Einige leihen sich jedoch Geld von verschiedenen Institutionen zu hohen Zinsen. Die Zahlungsweise ist ebenfalls unterschiedlich und variiert von Fall zu Fall und basiert auf intimen Beziehungen zu den Vermittlern. Migranten gehen das Risiko irregulärer Migration ein und rechtfertigen es, indem sie sich Gott, dem Schicksal (Qismat, Muqaddar) und den männlichen Eigenschaften der patriarchalischen Gesellschaft ergeben.

Die Ergebnisse zeigen auch die Rolle der Kettenmigration für die Motivation von Migrantenanwärtern. In den Dörfern des Distrikts Gujrat, Punjab, wird der beliebte und gut etablierte Trend der internationalen Migration zu einer normalen Praxis. In einigen Fällen verschieben die Gesprächspartner sogar die gemeinschaftlichen Rituale, z.B. die Durchführung der Hadsch², und geben der Migration ihrer Familienmitglieder den Vorrang vor den Ausgaben für die Hadsch. Der Einfluss von *peers* ist ein weiterer entscheidender Faktor, welcher gerade Jugendliche ermutigt, das Abenteuer der irregulären Migration zu wagen. Darüber hinaus wird dieser Peer-Einfluss auch durch die Hoffnung verstärkt, die auf die transnationalen Netzwerke gesetzt wird. Migrantenanwärter und ihre Familien kontaktieren diese transnationalen Netzwerke vor und während ihrer Reise nach Griechenland und in andere EU-Mitgliedsstaaten. Diese transnationalen Netzwerke ermöglichen den Neuankömmlingen die Suche nach Arbeit und Unterkunft. Allerdings sind nicht alle diese sozialen Kontakte hilfreich, und in einigen Fällen beuten sie die Migranten aufgrund ihres irregulären Status aus. Diese Migranten befinden sich in einer sehr verletzlichen Lage und können sich ihrer Ausbeutung nicht widersetzen.

Die Ergebnisse zeigen auch, dass das Leben im Ausland in den ländlichen Gebieten des Distrikts Gujrat ein Symbol für soziales Prestige ist. Die Menschen zeigen einer Familie, deren Mitglieder im Ausland leben, mehr Respekt, weil sie aufgrund ihrer materiellen Ressourcen einen größeren Einfluss in der Gemeinschaft haben. Die materiellen Ressourcen, insbesondere der Bau teurer Häuser, schaffen einen sozialen Wettbewerb zwischen den Mitgliedern der *Biraderi* von niedrigem und hohem Status. Dies ermöglicht einen Einblick in den Verfall der traditionellen sozialen Organisation der Dörfer in der Provinz Punjab. Darüber hinaus reflektieren die Ergebnisse auch das Ansehen des Arbeitens im Heimatland. Die Gesprächspartner wollen sich in Pakistan nicht auf niedere Tätigkeiten einlassen, weil diese ihren niedrigen sozialen Status verdeutlichen. Sie sind jedoch bereit, im Gastland die gleiche Arbeit zu verrichten. Sie verlieren ihren sozialen Status in der Aufnahmegesellschaft, gewinnen aber einen Mittelklasse-Status im Heimatland, wie Nieswand (2011, S.2) es als "das Statusparadoxon der Migration" bezeichnet. Die Ergebnisse zeigen auch geschlechtsspezifische Muster der Migration auf. In den ländlichen Gebieten des Distrikts Gujrat zeigt sich irreguläre Migration als ein ausschließlich männliches Unternehmen, das vor dem Hintergrund von Vorstellungen von Maskulinität verhandelt wird. In

². Muslimische Pilgerreise nach Saudi-Arabien

einem ‚patriarchal‘ geprägten Umfeld nehmen männliche Familienmitglieder, insbesondere ältere Brüder, es als ihre Aufgabe wahr, zum Haushaltseinkommen beizutragen. In ähnlicher Weise werden Frauenkörper als Familienehre (Izzat, Ghairat) betrachtet, und in einigen Fällen sehen der Gesprächspartner das Einkommen von Frauen als *Haram* (verboten).

Die vorliegende Studie reflektiert auch drei Dimensionen des Strebens von Migranten und ihren Familien nach irregulärer Migration. Erstens betrachten die Menschen Remittance oder Rücküberweisungen als eine wichtige Quelle für die Verbesserung des Haushaltsstatus. Sie konzentrieren sich darauf, ihren Familien, die in Pakistan zurückbleiben, ein komfortables Leben zu ermöglichen. Einige Gesprächspartner interpretieren dies so, dass sie die dringenden Bedürfnisse des Haushalts erfüllen, z.B. eine angemessene Mitgift für die Hochzeit ihrer Töchter arrangieren. In ähnlicher Weise müssen sie dem wirtschaftlichen Austausch unter den Gemeindemitgliedern gerecht werden (Milna Vertana). Einige sind der Ansicht, dass sie ihre soziale Position im Dorf zeigen, indem sie mehr Geld für verschwenderische Arrangements von Heiratsfunktionen ausgeben. Darüber hinaus stellen einige Gesprächspartner die traditionelle Theorie der Push- und Pull-Faktoren der Migration in Frage und behaupten, dass die Menschen aufgrund ihres eigenen Glücks und ihrer eigenen Wünsche migrieren (Shaoq). Zweitens haben die Menschen starke Absichten, nach einem längeren Aufenthalt in Europa und dem Erwerb von genügend finanziellen Ressourcen dauerhaft nach Pakistan zurückzukehren. Von Söhnen wird erwartet, in die Heimat zurückkehren, um sich um ihre älteren Eltern zu kümmern. Drittens äußerten Migranten in einigen Fällen ihren Wunsch nach legalen Dokumenten (kaghaz, kagat). Sie betrachten die freiwillige Rückkehr nach Pakistan als Verschwendung der Zeit, die sie in Europa verbracht haben, und als Schande in der Herkunftsgemeinschaft, während der Erhalt eines legalen Status in jedem EU-Mitgliedstaat ein Symbol des Erfolgs ist (kamyabi). Die vorliegende Studie empfiehlt weitere akademische Forschung für den methodologischen und theoretischen Fortschritt zum Thema der irregulären Migration und der Netzwerke von Agenten im Kontext von Pakistan nach Europa.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AHTUs	Anti Human Smuggling Units
AD	Anno Domoni
AJK	Azad Jammu and Kashmir
BEFARe	Basic Education for Awareness Reforms & Empowerment
BC	Before Christ
BMC	BioMed Central
COMPAS	Centre on Migration, Policy and Society
DRC	Danish Refugee Council
DRC	Democratic Republic of the Congo
EBDM	Enterprise for Business and Development Management
ERIN	European Reintegration Network
EU	European Union
FIA	Federal Investigation Agency
GCIM	Global Commission on International Migration
GoP	Government of Pakistan
SOEP	German Socio-Economic Panel
GT	Grand Trunk Road
HEC	Higher Education Commission of Pakistan
HHDI	Household-based Human Development Index
ICMPD	International Centre for Migration Policy and Development
IDEA	Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance
IIER	Institute of International Economic Relations
ILO	International Labour Organization

INGOs	International Nongovernmental Organizations
IOM	International Organization for Migration
KM	Kilo Meter
MICS	Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey
MMO	Mediterranean Migration Observatory
MPI	Migration Policy Institute
M.Phil	Master of Philosophy
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organization
OHCHR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
PICUM	The Platform for International Cooperation on Undocumented Migrants
PILDAT	Pakistan Institute of Legislative And Transparency
PKR	Pakistani Rupee
PACHTO	Prevention and Control of Human Trafficking Ordinance
PRIO	Peace Research Institute Oslo
PSLM	Pakistan Social and Living Standard Survey
RMMS	Regional Mixed Migration Secretariat
SSIIM	Social and Spatial Inclusion of International Migrants
TEVTA	Technical Education & Vocational Training Authority
TSAS	Canadian Network for research on terrorism, security and society
UCs	Union Councils
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

UNICEF The United Nations Children's Fund
UNODC United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
USD United States Dollar

GLOSSARY

Biraderi	Wider hereditary kinship
Dera	A commonplace in the villages of Punjab, where men meet and socialize. It is also used as a place for the stay of the guests. Moreover, farmers also use this place for the stock of agricultural production, stock farming, and a garage for agricultural machinery. Usually, <i>Dera</i> is constructed nearby fields and outside the village. It is also away from the residential area of the village.
Donkey / Dunkey	Conceptualized as irregular migration
Haram	Forbidden
Huqqa	Water Pipe
Izzat, Ghairat	Honor
Jents	Agents
Kaghaz, Kagat	Legal Documents
Kammis	The artisans
Kamyabi	Success
Kismet / Taqdir	Destiny
Milna Vertana	Social exchange as a part of social organization of a village
Muqaddar	Destiny
Razai	Quilt
Tolai	Mattress
Zamindars	The landowners
Zimmadari	Responsibility

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The contemporary era has witnessed a rapid increase in human mobility across international borders, only between 1970 and 2017, the figure of international migrants amplified from 82 million to approximately 244 million, comprising 3.3 percent of the world's population (Betts and Kainz, 2017, p. 1; International Organization for Migration (IOM), 2017). Generally, it is assumed that globalization processes in line with advances in communication technology and transportation have accelerated the “volume, diversity, geographical scope and overall complexity of international migration”; however, main shifts in international migration are directional and leaned to Europe, the Gulf and Asia (Czaika and de Hass, 2014, p. 284). For example, in the year 2013, about 81.9 million international migrants born in the South were residing in the North, whereas, around 82.3 million international migrants born in the South were living in the South (United Nations, 2013, p. 1). Similarly, the Gulf Cooperation Countries (GCC) also attracted a huge number of skilled and semi-skilled economically motivated migrants, especially from South Asia, in the 1970s and 1980s (Wassan et al., 2017; Arif and Ishaq, 2017).

According to Massey et al. (1987, p. 4) international migration is a “dynamic, cumulative process” and based on several principles. Firstly, structural transformations of the home and host countries trigger international migration. Secondly, over time, social infrastructure also encourages people to migrate on a massive level. It further establishes social networks between sending and receiving societies, which further reduces the costs of international migration. Thirdly, families also take international migration as a strategy of survival of the household with the passage of time. Fourthly, the experience of international migration further motivates individuals, families, and community structures to increase further migration. Fifthly, though, initial flows of international migration may seem temporary, some migrants plan to settle permanently in the host society as they acquire social and financial stability. Lastly, migrants maintain social networks through repeated visits to their areas of origin (Massey et al., 1987, p. 6). The process of international migration becomes “self-perpetuating” (de Hass, 2010, p. 1588)

due to the number of settled migrants in the host country “because it creates the social structures to sustain the process” (de Hass, 2010, p. 1588).

In the above-mentioned context, although international migration facilitated millions of people worldwide to improve their lives both in countries of origin and destination, yet “not all migration occurs in positive circumstances. In the recent years, we have seen an increase in migration and displacement occurring due to conflict, persecution, environmental degradation and change, and a profound lack of human security and opportunity” (IOM, 2017, p. 1). As a result of these insecurities, irregular migration³ has been triggered and become a global and visible phenomenon at the start of the twenty-first century (Bloch and Chimienti, 2011). Now, it is not confined in any specific area but steadily growing across international borders in almost every region of the world (Kyle and Liang, 2001); though, the intensity of this issue varies from region to region. Moreover, irregular migration has become a popular form among aspired migrants in various countries due to its cheap and less complicated nature, for example, there are no documents, waiting time, or complex recruitment procedures (Vutha et al., 2011; Alpes, 2012; Dimitriadi, 2017).

However, irregular migration neither takes place in isolation nor is it a “straightforward activity” (Kyle and Liang, 2001, p 3), but organized through a network of agents or smugglers who facilitate this process by assembling various “actors, institutions and resources” (Chalhi et al., 2018, p. 850). While working together, these actors form an infrastructure to facilitate and control migration (Xiang and Lindquist, 2014; Cranston et al., 2018). Furthermore, these networks are well-connected across borders and perform multiple tasks, ranging from the provision of information (Faist, 2000) to linking migrants with opportunities (Ambrosini, 2017).

1.1 Statement of the Problem

The present research is conducted to examine the role of agents in the organization of irregular migration from the villages of district Gujrat, Punjab, Pakistan to Greece in particular, and, to other European Union (EU) member states in general. Irregular emigration has become a major issue for Pakistan since it is reported to be among the top ten most-detected countries that have

³ For the present research, the term irregular migration is used as it is the preferred term in European policy circles (Morehouse and Blomfield, 2011). However, in the text, some other terms like undocumented, unauthorised, and illegal are also used as quoted by the respective author(s). The purpose is to ensure the originality and the context of cited researches. So, the reader may be encounter with different terms on the same page.

been involved in irregular migration to the European Union, in recent years (UNODC, 2013, p. 1). Pakistan has a very significant geographical location in South Asia and is considered a transient site for migrant groups, in transit from various countries of South Asia, to destinations like Iran, Turkey, Greece, Central Europe, and Western Europe. Greece falls on the most common route for irregular migrants from Pakistan to enter other European countries and is known as a junction of irregular migration from Pakistan to Europe (Yousef, 2013). Irregular migration from Pakistan to Greece consists of three major steps. Firstly, some major cities of Pakistan like Karachi and Quetta are used as entry points to Iran. Travelling through Iran to Turkey is the second step (Dimitriadi, 2013) that consists of the rocky mountains, which divide Iran and Turkey. This track is the most dangerous one due to harsh weather and is usually crossed on foot, at night (Triandafyllidou and Maroukis, 2012). Thirdly, from Turkey these irregular migrants enter Greece.

For such irregular migrants, the support of human smugglers is the best possible option to flee out (Triandafyllidou, 2018; Alpes, 2013). There is a strong relationship between the migration industry and human smuggling (Awumbila et al., 2017) and it is prevailing in different regions of the globe (Gammeltoft-Hansen and Sorensen, 2013). The smugglers play a decisive role in the decision-making of their clients as regards migration and perform a variety of tasks to facilitate irregular migrants. They assist irregular migrants in illegal entry and stay, both in transit and destination countries. Such illegal assistance ranges from border crossing through unguarded areas and hidden pockets at border crossing points both inland and at sea. They also help migrants by providing false documents for entry and exit for a specific country. The human smugglers are very much familiar with how to roam around irregular migrants in specific geographical places (Triandafyllidou and Maroukis, 2012).

The empirical data of the present study is based on the ethnographic fieldwork in two villages of district Gujrat which is situated in Punjab, the most populous province of Pakistan (The Urban Unit, 2011). District Gujrat and the surrounded districts are very famous for international regular and irregular migration to many countries of the world, especially to Europe (Hasan, 2010). The adjacent city of Mirpur was replaced in the 1960s due to the construction of *Mangla Dam*⁴ and

⁴ “The Pakistan government built Mangla Dam in the Mirpur district to help manage water resources and to generate hydroelectric power. While its completion in 1966 was a benefit to the country as a whole, it came with a

due to an official contract between the government of Pakistan and the UK; whereby a significant portion of the population was allowed to settle in the UK (Hasan, 2010). Later on, networks of migrants from Mirpur also triggered the trend of migration from its adjacent districts like Gujrat, Jhelum, Sialkot, Gujranwala, and Mandi Bahauddin. A significant majority of irregular migrants from these districts and other migrant groups also coming from Afghanistan adopt the route from Pakistan to Greece via border crossing of Iran and Turkey (Tahir et al., 2018; Majidi and Danziger, 2016).

For the present study, I specifically focused on to study the processes of the organization of irregular migration in the rural areas of district Gujrat. There is a strong reason to select Gujrat due to its location in province of Punjab and according to IOM (2016) majority of the irregular Pakistani migrants who travelled to Greece via Iran and Turkey belonged to the Punjab province. In its annual report of 2015-2016, IOM (2016) reported that 94 % of the migrants departed from Pakistan to Greece, and 69% among them departed from Punjab province. Only 5 % belonged to the Federal Capital Territory, 5 % from Sindh province and the rest belonged to other provinces of Pakistan. The other 6 % departed from other countries. However, other than Greece, from Pakistan there are several other routes for international migration. A significant number of Pakistani migrants are working in the Gulf States and this international mobility is managed through *Kafala*⁵ system. Another emerging trend of migration from Pakistan is towards Australia by crossing Indonesia through boats (Hugo et al., 2017). Since past few years, a significant number of Pakistani migrants went to another emerging destiny i.e. South Africa (Meny-Gibert and Chiumia, 2016). However, the route towards Greece is the most significant one as it attracts

price to the people in Mirpur. Building the Dam flooded many villages and displaced over 100,000 people. Meanwhile England was having an acute labour-shortage in her textile industry. England offered visas to those who would fill the factory positions. The displaced Mirpuris used their compensation money from their lost lands to cover their travel expenses to England. They would, generally, commute back and forth to their homeland every few years or so" (Lothers and Lothers, 2012, p. 1).

⁵ According to Migrant Forum (2012, p. 1) "Kafala (sponsorship) System emerged in 1950's to regulate the relationship between the employers and migrant workers in many countries in West Asia. It remains the routine practice in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries of Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates (UAE), and also in the Arab states of Jordan and Lebanon... under a Kafala system a migrant worker's immigration status is legally bound to an individual employer or sponsor (Kafeel) for their contract period. The migrant worker cannot enter the country, transfer employment nor leave the country for any reason without first obtaining explicit written permission from the Kafeel. The worker must be sponsored by a Kafeel in order to enter the destination country and remains tied to this Kafeel throughout their stay... often the Kafeel exert further control over the migrant worker by confiscating their passport and travel documents, despite legislation in some destination countries that declares this practice illegal" (p. 1).

the aspiring migrants to further move to other EU member states especially Italy, Spain, and Germany.

1.2 Research Questions

The overall purpose of this research is to investigate how irregular migration from Pakistan to Greece and other EU member states is organized and facilitated by the networks of agents. The main research question is further divided into specific dimensions. The first aspect of the same deals with the organization of irregular migration, for example, how aspirant migrants approach the agents. What is the social profile of agents? How aspirant migrants take risk of irregular migration. How aspirant migrants negotiate with agents regarding cost and mode of payment. This study also aims to explore how the household plays its role in decision-making of irregular migration and their negotiations with agents. The second aspect reflects on how social environment of the community encourages the aspirant migrants, for instance, how chain migration and transnational networks motivate people to initiate irregular migration. Which social dimensions of the village organization influence people for migration? How does a cultural narrative influence aspirant migrants? The third aspect deals with how migrants and their families describe their future strategies, for example, whether they think about return migration. This research intends to explore how above-mentioned different actors, for example, aspirant migrants, their families, and agents including kinship and village community networks, are interconnected to manage irregular migration from rural areas of district Gujrat, Punjab, Pakistan.

1.3 Significance of the Study

Though, it is very challenging to study irregular migrants when they are engaged in migration decision-making. The migration agents and networks are useful lens to account for irregular migration from Pakistan to Greece and other EU member states. The present study has significance in this context due to three major reasons. Firstly, it provides a holistic approach to understand the process of organization of irregular migration from the rural areas of district Gujrat; which is considered merely human smuggling or trafficking by government officials (Government of Pakistan, 2016). Usually, government officials do not consider the importance of recruitment process of aspiring migrants and other contributing factors which shape “migration infrastructure” (Xiang and Lindquist, 2014, p. S124). It is very important for

concerned policy makers and authorities to understand irregular migration not only in the context of border control but also to know how it is inherent in the social structure of rural areas of district Gujrat. The law enforcement agencies of Pakistan usually roll their sleeves up when some group/s of migrants lose their lives in border encounter or deported by Iran, Turkey, or Greece. This dissertation goes beyond this approach and posits migration agents right in the centre of migration governance. It is hoped that the present study will significantly contribute to understanding how networks of agents are interwoven in the social fabric of the rural areas of district Gujrat. However, it is also important to understand that there are no clear-cut solutions, short-term remedies, or magic formulas to solve these complex challenges (Forin and Healy, 2018).

Secondly, there is a significant contribution of immigrants in the social and economic uplift of their countries of origin (de Hass, 2005, p. 1269). However, most of such studies are conducted in the context of “post-arrival migrants” (Tabor et al., 2015, p. 28), who are somehow engaged in the income generating activities. Such studies are usually conducted with a narrow focus on push-pull factors and the findings of specific cases are over-generalized because many studies have been conducted in destination countries with successful cases; so, the results may be limited by “destination bias” (Townsend and Oomen, 2015, p. 3). There is also a need to conduct more research about the aspirations of the migrants in origin and transit countries because “little attention is given to the dynamics of decision-making processes both pre- and post-departure. In fact, while the motives, constraints, and opportunities of people considering migration may differ” (Townsend and Oomen, 2015, p. 3). In the context of Pakistan, available literature on migration often focuses on migration and development, while studying economic migrants; especially usage of remittances in home country, for example, household development, construction projects both for personal usage and for the welfare of local community (Imran et al., 2018). Projects like pavement of a village street, construction of a Mosque or some community center⁶, or other household needs like arranging dowry for marriage of daughters, establishment of small scale business for siblings are taken note of (Khan et al., 2009). There

⁶ In the rural areas of Gujrat or Punjab province, the community centers are known as *Dara*, *Dera* or *Chaopal*, where male members of the community gathered on various events like marriages, funerals and other political meetings. It also used to sit together for gossip and discussion of local daily matters. Usually every biraderi has its own such place which is known by the name of that biraderi. Moreover, ownership of such place reflects the symbol of local power structure.

appears to be minimum focus on pre-departure circumstances of migration decision-making in Pakistan. So, keeping in view this research gap, this dissertation focuses on migrants' country of origin, Pakistan. It is designed to capture the pre-migration experiences of the family members of aspiring migrants and migrants themselves who once initiated irregular migration towards Greece or other EU member states by focusing on how agents had facilitated and organized this irregular migration. In the scientific literature, there are evidences of intense mediation of labor migration, for instance, Xiang and Lindquist (2014, p. S124) and (Lindquist et al., 2012, p. 7). So, we assume that the findings of the present research would be relevant to understand different components of migration industry, particularly how the migration of unskilled labor is mediated in rural areas of district Gujrat, Punjab, Pakistan.

Thirdly, the new economics explanation of migration stresses on the role of family or the household in migration decision-making (de Hass, 2008, p. 35). According to Stark and Lucas (1988, p. 470), the head of the family asserts strict control over the resources of the household and supports its family members in their education. These family members, as a return, are supposed to recompense their households after migration. The present research also highlights how the role of family is important in pre-migration decision-making through agents, which is less investigated in the context of rural areas of district Gujrat. In Pakistan, a significant majority of population, over 60 %, is living in the rural areas (Mughal, 2019, p. 81) and a significant majority of Pakistan prefers joint family system (The Express Tribune, 2010). This family system has a phenomenal control over individuals under customary practices and specific characteristics that highlight the importance of the joint family:

The joint family is a symbol tradition deeply rooted in Pakistani culture. It is a kinship group consisting of a family nucleus and various relatives, as grandparents, usually living in one household and functioning as a larger unit, where everyone has to live the norms and regulations set by the patriarch of the family. A well-managed joint family system portrays humanism, benevolence, mutual trust and co-operation, benefits the cognitive, intellectual, social, moral growth of each house member especially the children, increased depth and breadth of resources and mutual assistance (Awais et al., 2016, p. 10).

Moreover, familial bonding of a person plays important role in defining his/her position and obligations in the household. The position in the family hierarchy has a definite role in outlining various gender roles and individuals are appreciated to follow the codes of the family (Yasmin et

al., 2019). Moreover, kinship is also a strong reference for the identity of an individual and it not only exists in Pakistan but also prevails in other South Asian countries:

In South Asia, personhood is thought of in reference to a collectivity such as family, kin or caste group, whilst other broader differentiation occurs on the basis of religion and region. Traditionally, South Asian household have been defined on the basis of co-propinquity, a common hearth and patrilocal residence. A variety of norms surround generational and gender identity (Mand, 2004, p. 5).

So, in the above-discussed notions of the family, the present study assumes an important role of family in pre-migration decision-making in the context of rural areas of district Gujrat. We expect that the findings of this dissertation will increase our understandings of household needs, possible opportunity of migration in terms of finance, risk and expected outcome at the destination country.

As mentioned above, irregular migration is very challenging to study, so, it is very important to understand irregular migrants in different frames, for example, European context, the USA context, and in the context of Pakistan⁷. The following text explains these different frames.

1.4 Defining the Status of Irregular Migrants: Debate on Different Frames

It is difficult to explain the word migration because it is embedded in enormous and interlinked phenomenon which itself contains several dimensions like social, economic, political, historical, geographical, anthropological, demographic, and global issues of development (Düvell, 2014; Anderson and Keith, 2014). However, the study and analysis of migration is more inclined to humanities and social science as it “challenges the way in which we think of some of the foundational concepts of the social sciences and the humanities” (Düvell, 2017, p. 3). There are many debates on the appropriate use of terminology for the identification of immigrants without legal documents. The term irregular migration is broad and refers to irregular flows, while irregular migrant refers to the corresponding stock (Vogel, 2016). The term irregular migration can be used in different kinds or contexts of irregularity or illegality linked to the entry, stay, and work of foreign citizens (Triandafyllidou, 2010). To analyze the control mechanism of irregular migration is not an easy task for many reasons, and one of the major reasons is, for example, the

⁷ A separate chapter 2 is particularly focussing on the context of Pakistan to Greece. Here, I am shortly explaining these contexts to get an initial and better understanding of irregular migration and how it is conceptualised in the context of Pakistan.

recent emergence of irregular migration as political and legal construction (Schmoll, 2016; Düvell, 2011; Ngai 2004).

Moreover, Koser (2005) stated that irregular migration is difficult to analyze due to the complex terminology, unclear concepts, and very unsuitable data. It is criticized due to three reasons. Firstly, it is connected with criminality and majority of the irregular migrants are not criminals. It was also recommended by the UN special Rapporteur on the Rights of Non-Citizens, final report described as: “Immigrants... even those who are in a country illegally and whose claims are not considered valid by the authorities, should not be treated as criminals” (E/CN. 4/Sub. 2/2003/23 Para 29)⁸. Secondly, status as “illegal” may be considered to refute their humanity. Thirdly, the label “illegal” can further lead to jeopardizing the asylum claims of irregular migrants. On the other hand, some researchers are of the view that irregular migration cannot be completely considered undocumented because some indicators can define it in the specific context/s or condition/s of a particular country (Heckmann, 2004). The activities of the migrants define their status as legal or illegal and migrants are not illegal by themselves (Schrover et al., 2008). All terms replacing “illegal” such as undocumented, unauthorized or irregular are as problematic as the term illegal (Schrover, 2008). Some studies have chosen the term “illegal” regardless of its shortcoming because it would be helpful to understand the migrants’ construction of what is legal (Ngai, 2004). The following sub-sections describe irregular migration in the particular contexts of Europe, the USA, and Pakistan respectively.

1.4.1 Irregular Migrants in European Context

Irregular migration has become a major issue for the member states of the European Union (EU) since past few years (Maroufof and Kouki, 2017; Vrsanska et al., 2017; Gruber, 2017; Achankeng, 2017). The year 2015 was exceptional for the EU in terms of undocumented border-crossing along its external borders (Heidari and Khosravi, 2017; Sambaraju et al., 2017; Muenstermann and Van der Vorst, 2017; Radu, 2016; Frontex, 2016; Holtug, 2016). Almost 1.8 million undocumented entries had been estimated and it was a record since World War II. It was never seen before as six times higher numbers of detections were reported in 2014, which was itself an exceptional year (Frontex, 2016; Frontex, 2015). However, it was not all of a sudden as a significant increase in the number of undocumented migrants has been observed since 2011

⁸ Mr. David Weissbrodt, Final report on the rights of Non-Citizens, UN. Doc. E/CN. 4/Sub. 2/2003/23 (2003).

(Radu, 2016; Gil et al., 2014; Frontex, 2013). The recent bulk of undocumented migrants consist of the victims of war-affected countries like Syria, Afghanistan, and Somalia (Frontex, 2015).

There are many pathways to enter member states of EU; however, three major entry points to the European territory were identified. Firstly, the shore border between Turkey and Greece is an important entry point for undocumented migrants, especially coming from South Asia. Secondly, the central Mediterranean border which is the most dangerous one and many migrants have lost their lives while crossing it through their boats. Thirdly, the border with Western Balkan states while entering through the Greece (Frontex, 2016). Moreover, Morocco had been a main point for undocumented migrants to enter Europe till the mid of 2000 (Kuschminder et al., 2015). The patterns of undocumented migration to Europe are constantly changing and depend on the situation in the countries of origin, transit, and destination (Collyer and de Hass, 2012; Kuschminder et al., 2015). This situation is significantly influenced by security arrangements at borders and welcoming strategy for the destination countries.

The status of irregular migrants in Europe is defined in various situations. Vogel (2015) presented the definition of the European Migration Network (2013, p. 82) which regards irregular migration as “movement that takes place outside the regulatory norms of the sending, transit, and receiving countries” (p.82). Likewise, Morehouse and Blomfield (2011, p. 4) identified eight principal ways in which non-nationals become unauthorised migrants as under:

- Illegal entry (Illegal border crossing)
- Entry using false documents
- Entry using legal documents, but providing false information in those documents
- Overstaying a visa-free travel period or temporary residence permit
- Loss of status because of nonrenewal of permit for failing to meet residence requirements or breaching conditions of residence
- Being born into irregularity
- Absconding during the asylum procedure or failing to leave host state after a negative decision
- A state’s failure to enforce a return decision for legal or practical reasons (toleration)

(Morehouse and Blomfield, 2011, p. 4).

1.4.2 Irregular Migration in the USA Context

Though studying irregular migration in the context of the USA is not the topic of the present study, yet I would like to explain it briefly to get fundamental understanding of how the USA defines such a complex issue. The context of the USA on irregular migration together with the irregular migration in the context of Europe will enhance our understanding regarding various frames on this matter. As mentioned above, irregular migration is not restricted in specific regions rather it has been growing all over the world. So, the USA is not an exception; the number of unauthorized immigrants in the USA increased from 2.5 million in 1987 to 11.1 million till the end of first decade of new millennium (Gonzales, 2011). US-Mexico is the major corridor for entry to the USA (Sanchez, 2016) and despite enormous investments in the national border surveillance and large-scale deportation, this number is still high (Ambrosini, 2017). Like other regions, in the USA too, there is difference of opinion regarding the appropriate term used for irregular migration and advocates of policy framing have disagreement on this issue. Merolla et al. (2013) describes three terms which are used by the advocates of policy framing in their study on public opinion on immigration in the USA. They had examined different terms used in the different leading print and electronic media of the USA in their study of content analysis. These three terms are illegal, undocumented and unauthorized migration. The study has depicted that the liberals prefer to use the term undocumented instead of illegal. They were of the view that the term illegal leads toward restriction on immigrants' rights and also refers to the dehumanization and marginalization of the immigrants who fall in this category (Merolla et al., 2013; Vargas, 2012). On the other hand, conservative wing insisted on using the term illegal and argued that other terms provide an umbrella to the illegal migrants to violate visa regulations while overstaying or entering the country without legal permission (Merolla et al., 2013; Washington Post, 2010). However, many policy advocates, representatives of the federal government and demographers favored a third term, that is, unauthorized instead of illegal or undocumented. They were of the view that the term unauthorized immigration is expressively accurate and politically less burdened for those people who may be considered to deport (Merolla et al., 2013; Bean and Lowell, 2007; Congressional Budget Office, 2007).

1.4.3 Donkey / Dunkey Migration – A Case of Pakistan

In Pakistan, "*Ghair Qanooni*" is the official term in national language Urdu used for irregular migration, which is the literal translation of illegal. However, popular term for irregular

migration in Punjabi⁹ is “donkey” or “dunkey”. This term is also used in Indian Punjab for irregular migration to Europe especially to the United Kingdom (Smith, 2014)¹⁰. In her research on illegal immigration from Indian Punjab to the United Kingdom, Smith (2014, p. 2) defines donkey flights¹¹ as:

Indian immigrants refer to a popular route to the United Kingdom as “donkey flights.” The term is based on a Punjabi idiom meaning to hop from place to place. It describes a common ploy that would-be immigrants would use, in which they apply for a tourist visa for a European Union Schengen country. This visa allows them to roam freely in Europe’s border-free zone, with the intention of “leapfrogging” over into the United Kingdom (Smith, 2014, p. 2).

It is interesting to note that in the context of irregular migration from Pakistan to Europe, and irregular migration from India to Europe, two studies are available each from both countries explaining the term “donkey” or “dunkey”. Moreover, these two different terms are used with a same accent but difference in spelling. As mentioned-above, the first study is conducted by Smith (2014) in Indian Punjab and she used the term “donkey”. Another study is conducted by Tahir et al. (2018, p. 86) in Pakistani Punjab and they used the term “dunkey”. However, they did not explain what the etymology of this word is. Even, they used this term only for one time in their study and explained it as “a well-known local idiom for irregular migration” (Tahir et al., 2018, p. 86). In the present study, when interlocutors were asked to explain the term dunkey, majority told that it is irregular migration with the help of agents, except two interlocutors. Junaid explains it:

Irregular migrants are just like donkeys [*khotay*]. They have no liberty [and they are] just dependent on agents [...] similar like donkey [*khotay tarah*]. The master holds the stick and donkey follows the path [...]. Similarly irregular migrants are not familiar with the track [*rah*] and they [only] follow the instruction of their agents [...]. They don’t have passport, visa [...] because they are illegal [...]. If agents order them to lie-down, they lie-down [...] if agents order them to stand up and start journey [...], they stand up and start to walk [...]. Irregular migrants just

⁹ Local language of the province of Punjab. Most of the irregular migrants from Pakistan to the Greece and EU member states belongs to four major districts of the Punjab province i.e. Gujrat, Gujranwala, Sialkot and Mandi Bahauddin. They speak Punjabi language with a variation in accent.

¹⁰ Very less scientific literature is available on this term of donkey; I found the work of Smith (2014) on this issue which has no detailed explanation of this term.

¹¹ The major terminology is “donkey” that contains the meaning of irregular migration. There are two options for “donkey”, firstly; if it is by air then it might be known as donkey flights. If it is via Iran, Turkey and Greece by foot and other transportation like trucks, containers, horses, etc then it is simple donkey.

follow the instructions of the agents [...] like the donkey follows the instructions of the master.

Similarly, Fazal narrates it:

In the past times, the agents used donkeys as a source of transportation to cross the border for irregular migration [...]. The border areas were very rough and difficult to cross by foot [...]. But they [irregular migrants] have to cross it [...]. But the agents were riding their donkeys [and] the irregular migrants followed them by foot [...], a long queue of the migrants [...] around 100, 150, and so on [...]. The agents offer riding on donkeys only to those migrants who had money [...]. The agents charged 10, 20, and 50 Euros and allowed the migrants to sit on donkeys and cross the border instead crossing it by foot [...]. So, this is the reason why it is known as donkey migration.

In the present study, donkey migration is conceptualized as irregular migration from the rural areas of district Gujrat, Punjab, Pakistan to Greece and other EU member states, organized and facilitated by the networks of agents.

1.5 Structure of the Dissertation

Chapter two reflects on inquiry into migration from Pakistan to Greece and is divided into three sections. The first section traces the historical background of migration to and from Pakistan since 1947. It describes various waves of migration from Pakistan to different regions of the world, especially to the United Kingdom (UK), United States of America (USA), and the Gulf States. It also explains how the trend of irregular migration had started from Pakistan. The second section examines how the geographical location of Greece as a transit country attracts irregular migration from Pakistan. It also describes the corridor of irregular migration from Pakistan to Greece while crossing the borders of Iran and Turkey. The third section explains the difficulties in the management of data of irregular migrants and points out the challenges to estimate irregular migration both in Pakistan and internationally. It further highlights the efforts made by the Government of Pakistan to overcome the issue of irregular migration. This chapter is supported with statistical information and different figures to illustrate the magnitude of this issue.

Chapter three is divided into two major parts. The first part conceptually talks about social networks as a theoretical lens. Theoretical discussion revolves around understanding of the importance of social networks in the cross-border migration, how biraderi and kinship networks

are playing an instrumental role in a broader social mechanism of the rural areas of district Gujrat, Punjab. It is further supported by the theoretical notion of social capital which elaborates how resources of the community are useful for its members. In a nutshell, the theoretical part of this chapter helps to understand various dimensions of mobility and how migration infrastructure plays a key role in the organization and facilitation of irregular migration from Pakistan to Greece and other EU member states. Moreover, conceptual framework is tightly connected with empirical material of the present study and elaborates how it is preceded. The second part delimits the objective of the present research empirically and takes an account of available scientific literature in this field. This empirical investigation has been further divided into different categories, for example, aspirant migrants' geographical imagination of migratory trajectories, how social networks play their role in information dissemination regarding various possibilities of irregular migration, how migration agents practically facilitate the organization of irregular migration, aspiring migrants' motivation and risk assessment, and vulnerability of irregular migrants.

Chapter four explains material and methods employed in the present study. It explains the epistemological background and justification for the selection of qualitative research design. A detailed discussion presents how the procedure of data collection was carried out by explaining getting access to the field, role of gatekeepers, and selection and training of the field assistants. It also sheds light on the selection criteria of the interlocutors, how sample size was determined and which sampling technique was applied. Furthermore, it brings to the forefront how interview guide was prepared and what is the importance of a semi-structured interview as a tool of data collection. A complete sub-section reflects on how research ethics were applied in accordance with internationally-recognized professional academic associations, for example, informed consent and interlocutors' voluntary participation in the present study, how and where the interviews were conducted, and what measure were taken to ensure the confidentiality and anonymity of the collected data. Keeping in view the sensitive nature of the present study, it also explicates how personal security measures were ensured. This chapter further illustrates how the collected data were analyzed by explaining strategies for translation and transcription of the recorded interviews, use of analytical tools, and application of coding as informed by grounded theory (Carbon and Strauss, 1990; Charmaz, 2006). The final section of this chapter discusses the position of the researcher in the field by explaining insider and outsider domains.

Data analysis is presented in three succeeding chapters five, six, and seven in accordance with the research questions of the present study. Chapter five discusses management of irregular migration through agents in the context of rural areas of district Gujrat, Punjab. It analyzes how aspirant migrants and their families approach the agents, what is the social profile of these agents, and how they interpret the role of these agents to initiate irregular migration. It further discusses the emerging dimension of female agents working for main agents in the villages of district Gujrat. It offers an initial insight into gendered dimensions of agents which was once considered only a masculine task. It further elucidates how social contact especially belonging to a same biraderi facilitates the process of negotiation with agents. It also discusses the importance of information in migration decision-making and how agents' first-hand experience of migration gives them an advantage of having exposure of migratory tracks from Pakistan to Greece and other EU member states, which, as a result, increases dependency of migrants on these agents. It further enlightens how geographical imagination plays a role to motivate less-educated, unskilled, and semi-skilled migrants to come into contact with agents. This chapter also brings to light how bargaining between aspirant migrants and agents takes place, how these migrants manage the financial cost of the irregular migration and how they pay the required amount to the agents. Moreover, this chapter also discusses how their families and social contacts play their role throughout this process. The final section of this chapter discusses how interlocutors interpret risk in various socio-cultural contexts and belief system.

Chapter six discusses the role of social environment in decision-making of the aspirants for the irregular migration. This chapter is divided into three major sections. The first section discusses how the youth of rural areas of district Gujrat are inspired by the chain migration and how success stories encourage them to take a fancy to irregular migration. It also highlights how transnational networks play their role in this process, for instance, whether such networks are always beneficial for all migrants or they may also be exploitative in some cases. The second section looks at how interlocutors take international migration as a matter of social class and which aspects of international migration are most important for them. It further investigates how and in which dimension people from low-status-biraderi and upper-status-biraderi interpret importance of international migration. Similarly, this section also brings to the foreground how the interlocutors interpret various job opportunities and nature of work in Pakistan and Europe, which factors encourage them to search for a job in Europe instead of Pakistan. The third section

discusses how irregular migration is linked with the framework of masculinity and how interlocutors interpret the notions of responsibility (*zimmadari*), family honor (*izzat, ghairat*) and shame. It further explains the major customary traits and belief system that influence interlocutors in decision-making for irregular migration.

Chapter seven reflects on how several aspirations inspire migrants to initiate irregular migration through agents. It discusses three important dimensions of aspirations as investment aspirations, settlement aspirations and legalisation aspirations respectively. The first dimension discusses the importance of remittances in household development by explaining how interlocutors have utilized remittances in various pressing needs of the household. It also examines whether all interlocutors received remittances or it varies from case to case. Likewise, it discusses how families left behind suffer from the repayment of debt instead of getting remittances from the family member living abroad. Moreover, it further describes how irregular migrants explain their happiness in local context of Gujrat. The second dimension explores how the interlocutors interpret their strategies of return migration. What is their future planning in this regard? It also highlights how ageing parents suffer in the absence of their sons and how social support provided by sons to their ageing parents has some cultural interpretations in the rural areas of district Gujrat. The third dimension discusses the importance of getting legal status in any EU member state. It highlights how the interlocutors interpret legal documents or papers (*kaghaz, kagat*).

Chapter eight consists of the conclusion of the study and discusses its major findings. Moreover, this chapter focuses on reconnecting the results to the main research questions of the present study. Besides, it is followed by some recommendations for further academic research.

CHAPTER 2

INQUIRY INTO MIGRATION FROM PAKISTAN TO GREECE

This chapter discusses the context of migration to and from Pakistan and is divided into three sections. The first section explains the history of migration to and from Pakistan since 1947 when Pakistan came into being as an independent state after the partition of India. However, the history of such migration goes back to 1947 when people of those areas which are now part of Pakistan travelled to the United Kingdom, the United States, and South Africa as citizens of united India. This section reveals different waves of migration from Pakistan to different countries of the world and the state of refugees and international migrants living in Pakistan. The second section describes the importance of Greece as a transit country to the European Union (EU) member states, state of human smuggling from Pakistan to Greece, and mapping of the route from Pakistan to Greece via Iran and Turkey. The third section discusses the challenges to estimate human smuggling and official mechanism to control this issue in Pakistan. Moreover, all these sections are supported by data provided by different sources, for example, the Government of Pakistan, official authorities of Greece, and international organizations working on combating the issue of human smuggling.

2.1 Historical Background

Pakistan is among the top twenty Asian countries in terms of immigration and emigration (International Organization for Migration, 2017, p. 56). According to the Government of Pakistan (2019, p. 50), 8.84 million Pakistanis are living, working, and studying in various countries of the world. However, to understand the trends of migration from Pakistan to Greece, it is important to understand the “historical sequence” (Leghari, 2009, p. 2) of emigration from Pakistan to various other destinations because cross-border mobility is a distinct aspect of the history of Pakistan as this process is inherently entangled with Pakistan and there are several political, economic, and religious factors behind such mobility (Jan, 2010; Marouf and Kouki, 2017). Chronologically, the history of migration to and from Pakistan started right after its creation as an independent state in 1947, when millions of people permanently migrated between Pakistan and India due to their religious and political affiliations (Jan, 2010). This massive migratory movement had continued until 1951 when both countries restricted border crossing

(Arif and Irfan, 1997). Partition of India resulted in the migration of around 20 million people between Pakistan and India and became one of the largest forced migrations of the 20th century (Zamindar, 2013).

In the early 1950s, colonial links assisted migration from Pakistan to Europe when a significant number of young Pakistani males mainly from rural areas migrated to the United Kingdom (UK) and worked in the construction sector. This phase continued until the 1960s when the UK government tightened visa restriction on its “ex-colonial states including Pakistan” (Arif and Irfan, 1997, p. 990). Later on, in the late 1960s, another legal phase of migration started from Pakistan to Denmark, Norway, and the United States of America (USA) when educated population mainly from middle class migrated, and the number of Pakistani migrants in the USA significantly increased during 1990s (Lee, 2015; Rytter, 2010; Jan 2010; Abbasi, 2010). Furthermore, during the 1970s and early 1980s a significant number of semi-skilled Pakistani migrants rushed to the Middle East to work on short term contracts in oil fields (Wassan et al., 2017; Arif and Irfan, 1997). Their main destinations were Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), and Kuwait (Gazdar, 2003). Likewise, there was another wave of Pakistani migrants to Japan in the late 1980s and early 1990s. Owing to the economic boom, Japan attracted many labor migrants from inside and outside of Asia (Kudo, 2014). Pakistan reached a new peak when three million people left Pakistan for foreign-based jobs from 2011 to 2015 (Government of Pakistan, 2016, p. 1). Over a period of time, there were different phases of migration from Pakistan to various regions of the world and all these phases of migration were legal; however, it had been followed by an illegal migratory movement dominantly started in the early 1990s¹² (Maroufof and Kouki, 2017). It is important to note that all migration phases from Pakistan, as mentioned-above, were comprised of “economically motivated emigrants” (Jan, 2010, p. 2) but the era of 2000s onwards had witnessed a new phase of migration of students, as after the establishment of Higher Education Commission of Pakistan (HEC) in 2002, there was a significant increase in migration of students from Pakistan to developed countries for pursuing higher education (Zakaria et al., 2016, p. 75).

According to the Government of Pakistan (2019), the ministry of overseas Pakistanis and human resource development is mainly concerned with all matters related to overseas Pakistanis, for

¹² Specific details on illegal migration from Pakistan to Greece are given in the next section.

example, to address their problems and needs, and to launch different schemes for their wellbeing. Moreover, this ministry is also responsible to support Pakistani manpower abroad and “elevate the living conditions of the working class through better protection and decent working conditions for them. The area of its activities encompasses the management of human capital, social protection, and socio-economic uplift of the working class” (Government of Pakistan, 2019, p. 1). This ministry is further divided into different wings which are responsible to maintain data of overseas Pakistani, annual remittances received by these workers, re-integration of return migrants, coordination with international organizations, for example, International Labor Organization (ILO), and to take policy measures to promote export of manpower from Pakistan (Government of Pakistan, 2019). Table 2.1 represents the number of Pakistani immigrants living, working, and studying in various countries of the world.

Table 2.1 Numbers of Overseas Pakistanis

Sr No.	Region	Number of Overseas Pakistanis	Percentage Share
1	Africa	285, 271	3.22 %
2	Americas	1, 353, 255	15.3%
3	Asia and Far East	208, 259	2.35%
4	Australia & New Zealand	106, 000	1.20%
5	Europe	2, 123, 413	24.00%
6	Middle East	4, 761, 913	53.00%
7	Others	2, 621	0.02%
	Total	8, 840, 732 8.84 Million	100%

Source: Government of Pakistan (2019, p. 50)

As far as the matter of migration to Pakistan is concerned, it can be divided into three categories as illegal immigrants and refugees, foreign workers, and foreign students enrolled in different degree programs. Pakistan is hosting millions of illegal migrants and refugees mainly comprised of Afghans, Bangladeshi, and Burmese (EBDM 2009). Mehdi (2010) described in his report on irregular migration from Bangladesh to Pakistan that although there is no authentic data available on the exact number of Bengalis living in Pakistan, yet it is estimated that the number is approximately two million. These Bengali nationals got settled in Pakistan during two phases. Firstly, as Bangladesh was part of Pakistan from August 1947 to December 1971 and known as East Pakistan, during this era Bengalis came to West Pakistan¹³ and settled in Karachi¹⁴. Secondly, during the 1980s and 1990s a significant number of Bangladeshi illegally migrated to Pakistan.

A significant and largest number of Afghan refugees migrated to Pakistan in different cohorts of time. Massive migration from Afghanistan to Pakistan and Iran was observed in the late 1970s due to political instability, conflict, and economic crisis (Majidi and Danziger, 2016). EBDM (2009) stated that a massive flow of Afghan refugees arrived in Pakistan during the Soviet invasion as around 2.5 million refugees entered Pakistan between 1981 and 1990. Similarly, internal conflicts between various political groups in Afghanistan also mounted the flow of Afghan refugees to Pakistan in the 1990s. After the end of the Taliban era, a new wave of Afghan refugees emerged and approximately an influx of 300,000 refugees came to Pakistan as a result of the US-led war on terror in Afghanistan. Later on, by late 2000 this number reached 3.3 million in Pakistan. Furthermore, other than war and conflict, natural catastrophes also compelled Afghans from their homeland, as recent years witnessed the worst drought in thirty years as EBDM (2009, p. 197) states that “many Afghan families have been forced to migrate because of natural disasters while for others it has been a combination of conflict, drought and economic imperatives.”

However, a major problem to keep the track of accurate data of Afghan refugees in Pakistan is difficult due to its rocky and very porous border with Pakistan, which provides safe passage to enter in Pakistan even without legal documents or with a nominal difficulty (Majidi and

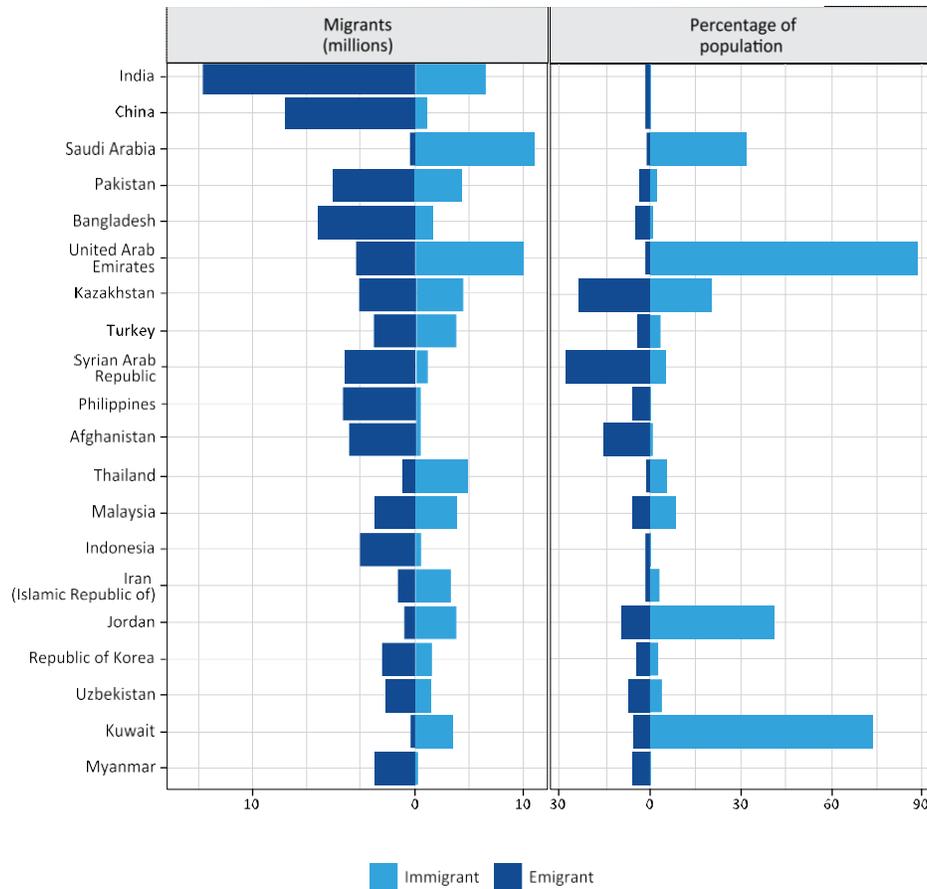
¹³ In 1947 Pakistan had two wings i.e. East and West. East Pakistan turned into Bangladesh in 1947 and West Pakistan remained as ‘Pakistan.’

¹⁴ The metropolitan city of Pakistan; known as the economic hub of Pakistan.

Danziger, 2016). Another reason for the difficulty to maintain data is the historic and social background of Pakistan and Afghanistan. Along the both sides of the border, the majority is comprised of the ethnic group of *Pashtuns* or *Pakhtoons*, who have relatives on both sides and can freely and frequently cross the border by using illegal safe passages. Such ethnic proximity attracts Afghans to select Pakistan as a destination country (Siddikogl, 2016). Moreover, religious closeness and Pakistan's "benevolent refugee policy, *prima facie*, during the cold war" also facilitated millions of Afghan refugees to come to Pakistan without proper registration (Siddikogl, 2016, p. 5). Moreover, Pakistan is also center for economic activities, education, and health facilities for many Afghans and they have to cross the border to avail themselves of these facilities (Shah, 2013; Davin and Majidi, 2009).

In recent years, Pakistan and China signed an agreement named as "China Pakistan Economic Corridor" (CPEC) which is part of China's initiative of "One Belt One Road" (OBOR), initially it as a forty-six Billion US dollar project but now it has reached up to sixty-two Billion US dollar (Afzal and Anum, 2018, p. 211). This amount is allocated for infrastructure development in Pakistan (Rashid et al., 2018). This project was initiated in 2015 and created a huge opportunity for employment both for local and foreign labor. As a result of this agreement, the number of Chinese workers significantly increased in Pakistan. During the past few years, this number rose up to sixty thousand in January 2018 as compared to twenty thousand in 2013 (Dawn, 2018). These Chinese skilled workers are working in various parts of Pakistan according to the CPEC agreement, mainly in the construction of roads and railways, Gwadar port, and installation of power grids. Since the establishment of HEC, the government of Pakistan is also striving to attract foreign students to enroll in various degree programs in Pakistan. Many local universities of Pakistan signed agreements with internationally reputed universities of the USA, UK, and Germany to start collaborative research projects and dual degree programs (Zakaria et al., 2016). Many international students mainly from Afghanistan, African, and Middle Eastern countries are also enrolled in Pakistan (Zakaria et al., 2016). Figure number 2.1 depicts the status of Pakistan in terms of immigration and emigration in Asia.

Figure 2.1 Top 20 Asian Migrants Countries in 2015



Source: International Organization for Migration (2017, p. 56)

In a nutshell, the above-discussed history of Pakistan reveals two major flows of migration from Pakistan to Europe. The first phase was legal which is followed by an illegal phase when the majority of males belonging to poor families moved to European countries with the help of smuggling networks (Yousef, 2013). These flows of illegal migrants approached Greece as an entry point for Europe. The numbers of illegal Pakistani migrants in Greece were very high as it became the largest Asian community in Greece (Yousef, 2013). Other than Pakistan, many illegal migrants from Asia and the Middle East mainly from Afghanistan, Iraq, and Bangladesh also selected Greece as an entry point to the European countries (Kasimis, 2012). The following section sheds light on how Greece is important for human smuggling to Europe especially in the context of Pakistan.

2.2 Greece –Junction of Human Smuggling

Geography and departure points play a significant role to determine the routes for human smuggling (Dimitriadi, 2013). As an entry point to Europe, Greece is a hub of irregular migratory flows and often highlighted in mainstream media (Kimourtzis et al., 2017). From the past twenty-six years, Greece stocked a high number of migrants (Triandafyllidou and Mantanika, 2016; Pavlopoulou et al., 2017). Moreover, since 2011, due to political violence in the Middle East and Libya the pressure of refugees and other irregular migrants to Europe and particularly Greece increased significantly, especially the Greek-Turkish border remained under pressure consistently (Triandafyllidou, 2015; Papadakaki et al., 2017). IOM (2015, p. 12) reported that Greece remained a major entry point for asylum seekers and undocumented migrants to Europe in 2015, as more than 900,000 illegal entries were observed which were eleven times higher as compared to the year 2014 when it was only 77, 163. A significant majority in 2015 was comprised of Syrian refugees. Some other major irregular entries consist of Afghans and Iraqis.

However, the geographic position is not the only factor for irregular migratory flows to Greece as Maroufof and Kouki (2017, p. 79) stated that despite the strategic location of Greece “inadequate policy responses and the existence of large informal labor sectors” also accelerate such migratory flows. They further narrated the situation of Greek migration law which is no more applicable on account of which irregular migration increased. In 1991, the Greek government approved their first migration law, and foreign workers were required to enter the country for employment and resident permits only if they were invited (*metaklisi*). However, “it is no longer a realistic way of accessing legal status in Greece as it no longer corresponds to the country’s changing labor market and the sectors where immigrants are usually employed” (Maroufof and Kouki, 2017, p. 83).

Greece is also a popular route for Pakistani illegal migrants as well as other groups of human smugglers who use Pakistan as an exit point. However, earlier very less scientific literature has been produced on this specific route of Greece via crossing Iran and Turkey but since past few years, this route is under discussion among the scientific community (Maroufof and Kouki, 2017). The following section particularly takes stock of trends of human smuggling from Pakistan to Greece while crossing Iran and Turkey. It also highlights the history of migration

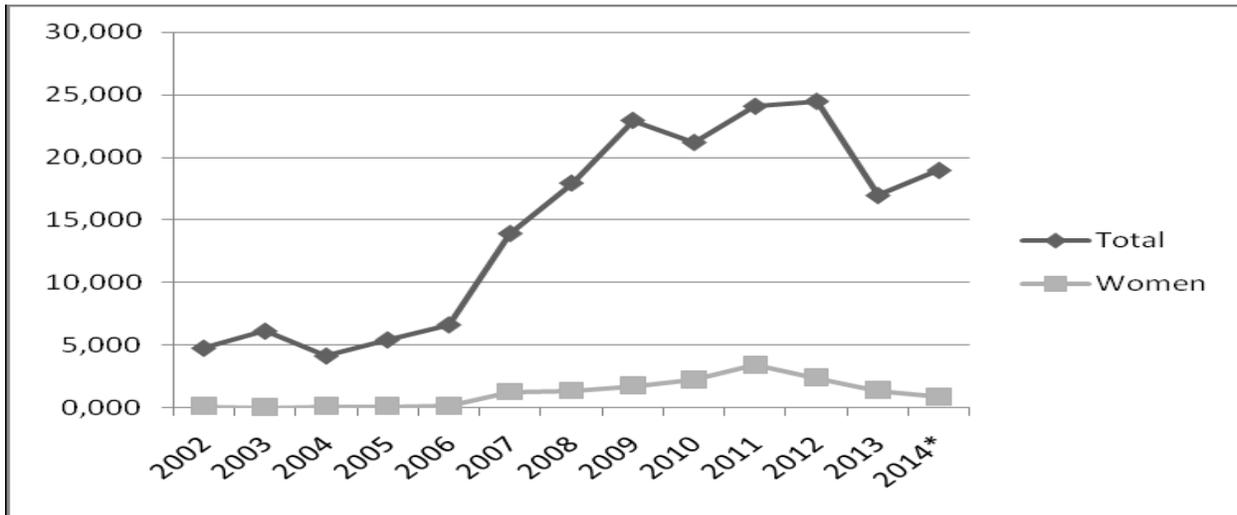
from Pakistan to Greece and how human smuggling gradually increased on this route. Moreover, the following section also depicts the latest information about Pakistani migrants in Greece.

2.2.1 Irregular Migration: In the Context of Pakistan to Greece

Pakistani and Filipinos were the nations who started the process of migration from Asia to Greece in the 1970s, later on, it was followed by Indians, Chinese, and Bangladeshis and for the last three decades, Asian communities in Greece have been increasing (Tonchev, 2007; Markoutsoglou et al., 2007). Migration from Pakistan to Greece started in 1970, due to a shortage of labor in Greece, Pakistan and Greece signed an agreement and a small number of Pakistani immigrants started to work in the shipping industry in Greece (Marouf, 2015, p. 13; Salvanou et al., 2009). Later on in the 1980s, the majority of Pakistani migrants were skilled workers in the textile industry of Greece as a result of two major recruitment programs initiated by the Federation of Greek Industries and signed a bilateral agreement with the government of Pakistan (Salvanou et al., 2009, p. 5). However, in the same decade, gradually Greece became popular transit destination for many migrants, including Pakistanis, “who mostly entered Greece illegally or ‘stopped-over’ on their way to other European destinations” (Salvanou et al., 2009, p.5). In 1991, there were huge bulks of human smuggling from Pakistan to Greece; as a result, it established a significant Pakistani community in various parts of Greece (Salvanou et al., 2009). Especially, after 2003, this established community of Pakistani migrants further facilitated the arrival of new migrants from their native areas (Tonchev, 2007).

As mentioned above, though, Pakistani migrants started to enter Greece in 1970 as a result of the intergovernmental agreement, later on, the majority of Pakistani migrants entered Greece on a tourist visa and became irregular as a result of overstay (Broersma and Lazarescu, 2009). According to Salvanou et al. (2009, p. 5), in the past Pakistani illegal migrants in Greece adopted two major strategies to become legal; firstly, they participated in “regularization procedures” and secondly, they applied for asylum. The asylum strategy became most common in order to buy time. Moreover, the majority of Pakistani migrants could not get the required stamps of social security and became illegal as non-renewal of visas (Broersma and Lazarescu, 2009). Figure 2.2 shows the trends of Pakistani migrants residing in Greece over time and the overwhelming majority is comprised of male migrants. Only a few numbers of females joined their husbands on a family reunion visa.

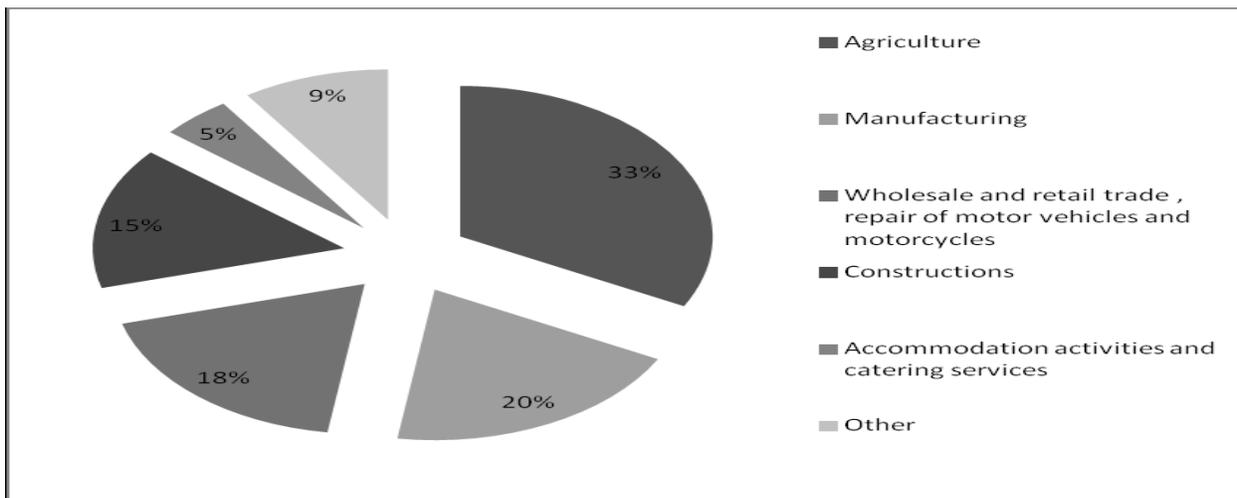
Figure 2.2 Pakistani Migrants Residing in Greece (2002-2014)



Source: Maroufof (2015, p. 13)

Pakistani migrants in Greece are working in various sectors; however, they have to work as manual laborers as the majority have less formal education and do not acquire technical skills. Figure 2.3 depicts the employment situation of Pakistani migrants in Greece.

Figure 2.3 Pakistani Migrants in Greece by Sector of Employment



Source: Maroufof (2015, p. 15)

According to Triandafyllidou (2015, p. 11), the number of entries of irregular Pakistani migrants in Greece remained high during the period of 2011 to 2015. The Pakistani migrants were

remained among the top five groups of irregular migrants towards Greece. Table 2.2 illustrates this situation.

Table 2.2 Number of Entries of Illegal Pakistani Migrants in Greece (2011-2015)

2011		2012		2013		2014		2015*	
Afghanistan	28,528	Afghanistan	16,584	Albania	15,389	Syria	32,520	Syria	175,375
Pakistan	19,975	Pakistan	11,136	Syria	8,517	Albania	16,751	Afghanistan	50,177
Albania	11,733	Albania	10,602	Afghanistan	6,412	Afghanistan	12,901	Pakistan	11,289
Bangladesh	5,416	Syria	7,927	Pakistan	3,982	Pakistan	6,184	Albania	10,985
Algeria	5,398	Bangladesh	7,863	Bangladesh	1,524	Somalia	3,621	Iraq	9,059

Source: Triandafyllidou (2015, p. 11)

According to the report of the Hellenic Police Headquarters (2019), 10,145 Pakistani citizens were apprehended in 2018. The number of total returns of Pakistani citizens by the Greek authorities in the same year was 1,336, out of which, 295 were forced returned and 1,041 were voluntarily returned through the assistance of IOM. Whereas, 1,909 Pakistani citizens were apprehended by the Greek authorities during the first three months of 2019. Similarly, the Greek Council for Refugees (2018, p. 49) stated that a total of 5,451 Pakistani citizens lodged their appeals before the independent appeals committees in 2018. It was the highest number of appeals lodged by any migrant group in Greece for the same year. However, the rate of rejection of the applications lodged by Pakistani migrants in the independent appeals committees in 2018 is also high as compared to the other migrants groups as shown in table 2.3.

Table 2.3 State of Pakistani Migrants in Independent Appeals Committees: 2018

Decisions on the merits by the Independent Appeals Committees: 2018			
Refugee status	Subsidiary protection	Humanitarian protection	Rejection
Total: 176	Total: 95	Total: 282	Total: 5,625
Syria: 32	Afghanistan: 54	Albania: 100	Pakistan: 2,773
Iraq: 24	Iraq: 12	Pakistan: 44	Albania: 1,052
Afghanistan: 21	DRC: 10	Georgia: 30	Bangladesh: 455
Iran: 19	Nigeria: 3	Armenia: 17	Georgia: 278
DRC: 17	Pakistan: 3	Nigeria: 12	Egypt: 188
Pakistan: 15	Syria: 3	Afghanistan: 9	Iraq: 154
Turkey: 15	Ukraine: 2	Iraq: 9	Afghanistan: 106
Other: 33	Other: 8	Other: 61	Other: 619

Source: Greek Council for Refugees (2018, p. 50)

Table number 2.3 reveals the highest number of rejection of the cases filed by Pakistani migrants in the independent appeals committees in 2018. It demonstrates that they were unable to justify their application with sufficient evidence to get protection in Greece, as many illegal Pakistani migrants tell fake stories for seeking asylum in Greece and the chances of prosecution in their country of origin. A significant majority of these illegal Pakistani migrants in Greece belong to district Gujrat and adjacent areas. The following sub-section gives information about the geographical location and socio-demographic characteristics of district Gujrat.

2.2.2 District Gujrat – Hub of Irregular Migration from Pakistan

Gujrat is an ancient place located between two famous rivers of the *Punjab* province, the *Jhelum* and the *Chenab* (District Health Office, 2011). It is well-connected with neighboring districts and the rest of the country:

Gujrat city is situated along G.T¹⁵ Road and main railway line, leading from Karachi to Khyber. The city is well connected to the major cities Lahore (134 Km), Sialkot (63 Km), Sargodha (195 Km), Gujranwala (62Km) by metalled road... It became city in 522 BC, became tehsil in 1856... Gujrat city is one of the Proto Historical 522 B.C (470 A.D Approx) settlement of the Punjab. It has undoubtedly an ancient origin and there is a reason to believe that it existed prior to Alexander's invasion (The Urban Unit, 2011, p. 3, 13).

According to the census report of 1998, issued by the Government of Pakistan (2000), the area of district Gujrat is 3,192 square Km. There are four¹⁶ tehsils¹⁷ namely Gujrat, Kharian, Sara-i-Alamgir, and Jalal Pur Jattan and 119 Union Councils¹⁸ in district Gujrat. Some important demographic information of district Gujrat is given below in table 2.4:

¹⁵ Grand Trunk Road constructed by Sher Shah Suri. It is situated between four South Asian countries Afghanistan, Pakistan, India and Bangladesh

¹⁶ According to the census of 1998 there were three tehsils but in 2016 another city Jalal Pur Jattan also declared as tehsil.

¹⁷ Sub-administrative unit after the district

¹⁸ Smallest administrative unit of a tehsil

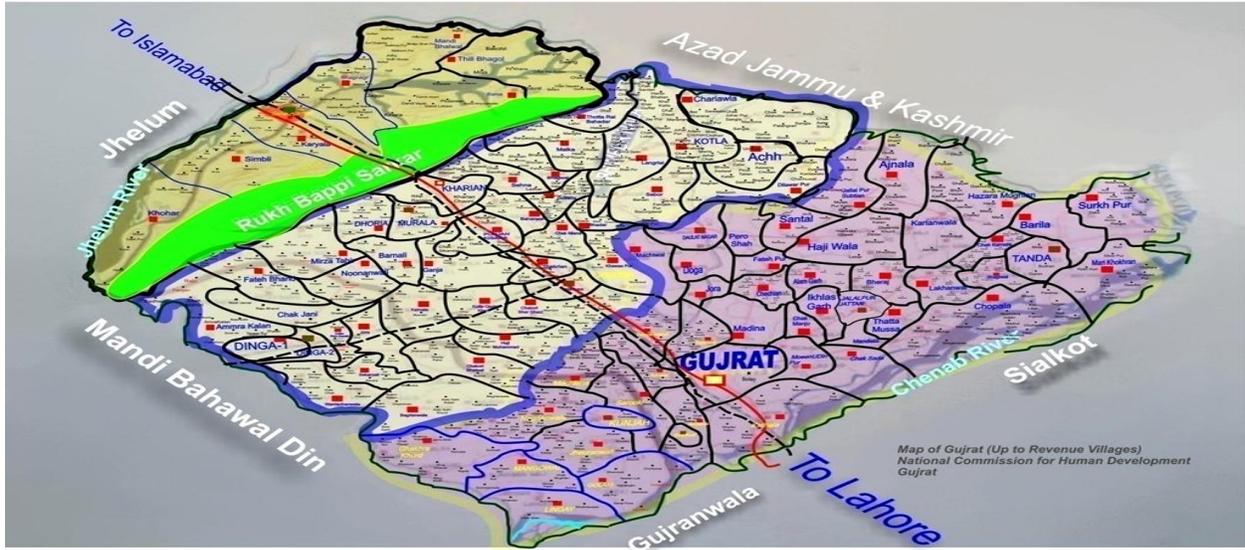
Table 2.4 Demographic Information of District Gujrat

1	Population -1998 census	2048008 persons
	Male	1026256 (50.10 %)
	Female	1021752 (49.89 %)
2	Sex Ratio (males per 100 females)	100.4
3	Population Density	641.6 per Sq. Km
	Urban Population	568172 (27.74 %)
	Rural Population	1479836 (72.25 %)
4	Average Household Size	6.7

Source: Government of Pakistan, (2000) census 1998, Pakistan Bureau of Statistics

District Gujrat is very famous for international migration, both regular and irregular. Moreover, in Gujrat, the rate of emigration to Europe is high as compared to other districts of the country (Tahir, et al., 2017). The district Gujrat is bounded by Azad Jammu and Kashmir, Jhelum, Gujranwala, Sialkot, and Mandi Bahauddin. These adjacent districts are also famous for irregular migration towards EU member states en route to Greece. As this district is located along GT road, main railway track, and newly-constructed Pakistan Motorways from Lahore to Islamabad, smugglers' networks easily commute in district Gujrat and bordering areas. Its location further facilitates travelling to Quetta which is located in the province of Balochistan, Pakistan which has its border with Iran. A map of district Gujrat is shown in figure 2.4.

Figure 2.4 Map of District Gujrat, Pakistan



Source: District Health Office (2011, p. 9)

2.2.3 Route from Pakistan to Greece¹⁹

To the Southwest, Pakistan has 909 kilometers long border with Iran²⁰. There are five major districts *Chagai*, *Washuk*, *Panjgur*, *Kech*, and *Gwadar* located on this border and mostly used for irregular border crossing between Pakistan and Iran²¹. In Pakistan, smugglers manage small and medium groups of aspiring migrants and usually these groups use *Karachi*²² and *Quetta*²³ for short term stay before the border crossing. A small town named *Mand Billo*²⁴ located at *Taftan* border town in district *Chagai* is an operational point. This small town is not only a gateway to

¹⁹ Here I am solely focusing on pre-migration processes of those migrants who adopted the route from Pakistan to Greece while crossing Iran and Turkey. Since past few years irregular migrants discovered many other routes to approach Greece or other EU member states; especially during Syrian crisis many Pakistani migrants merged themselves in Syrian refugees and made an effort to enter EU through Libya. To counter efforts of border security forces, irregular migrants constantly discover new corridors to approach their destination countries. Similarly UNODC (2013, p. 1) stated that “to enter the EU, Pakistani and Afghan nationals predominantly use the Eastern Mediterranean route, by both land and sea. Pakistani, Afghan, and Bangladeshi nationals have reported they rendezvous in Iran and travel in a mixed group to the EU through Turkey and then Greece. Pakistani and Afghan nationals both feature prominently on the Western Balkans Route for secondary movement within the EU and the Schengen zone. Both have also been detected in significant numbers along the sea route from Greece to the Southern Italian regions of Apulia and Calabria.”

²⁰ <https://www.dawn.com/news/884966> (last accessed on 22-04-2018)

²¹ <https://www.bbc.com/urdu/pakistan-43791615> (last accessed 22-04-2018)

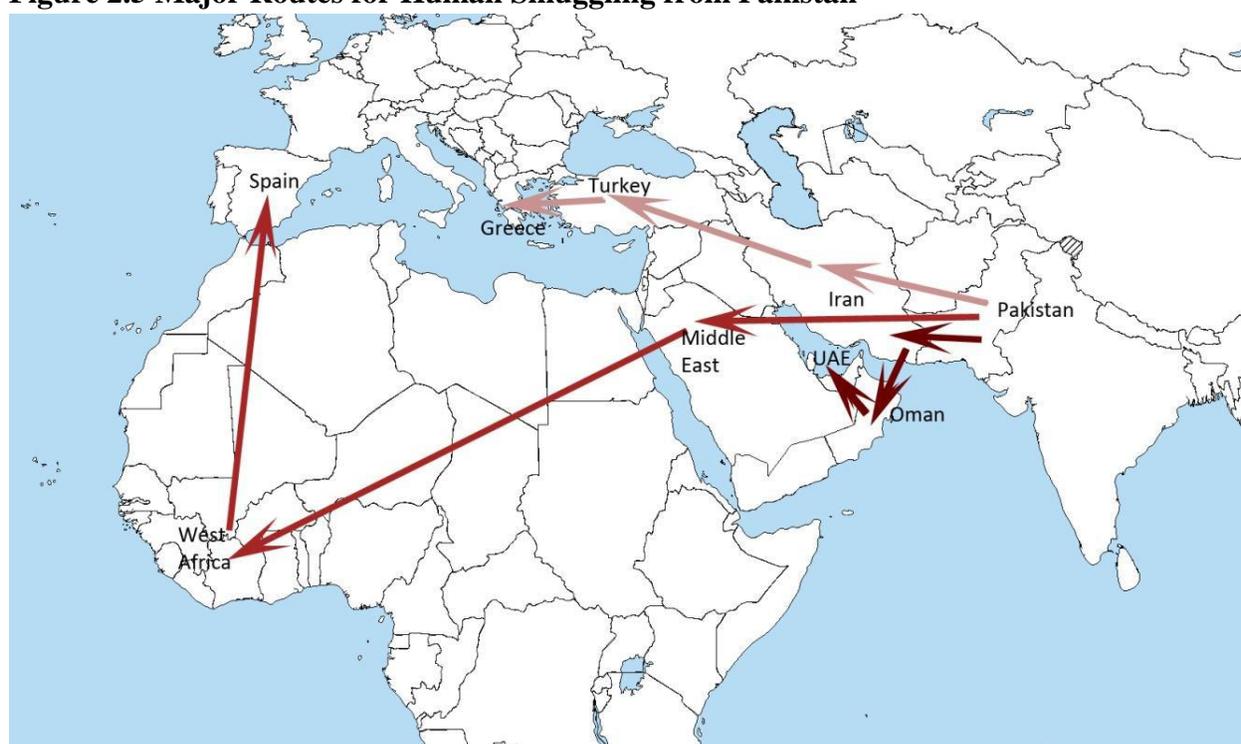
²² The metropolitan and most populous city of Pakistan located in Sindh province

²³ Capital of Baluchistan province which is located in the Southwest of Pakistan, having a border with Iran.

²⁴ <https://www.dawn.com/news/205948> (last accessed on 22-04-2018)

Iran but also used in sending irregular migrants to Muscat, Oman through motorboats. After entering Iran, migrant groups spend some time in safe houses and wait for their further travel plans towards the Iran-Turkey border. They cross the border and spend some time in various towns and cities of Iran like *Sheraz*, *Taft*, and *Tehran* and move towards an exit point of *Maku* located at the Iran-Turkey border²⁵. In Turkey, the cities of *Van* and *Tatvan* are used as the first destinations before moving to *Istanbul*, where they wait for some time and then undertake the next stage of the journey whose final destination is Greece (Terzioglu, 2004). Figure 2.5 illustrates the route of illegal migrants from Pakistan to Greece. However, it is very difficult to

Figure 2.5 Major Routes for Human Smuggling from Pakistan



estimate accurate numbers of illegal migrants commuting on this route. This issue of estimation is discussed in the following section.

Source: UNODC (2014, p. 8)

²⁵ <https://www.trtworld.com/magazine/istanbul-a-new-europe-for-illegal-migrants--16289>
(last accessed on 22-04-2018)

2.3 Challenges to Estimate Human Smuggling

Although human smuggling received reasonable attention from the public, media, and policymakers worldwide, yet what is going on in this field depends on the quality of available data (McAuliffe and Laczko, 2016). Globally, there is no authentic source yet which exclusively focuses on international trends and exact numbers of human smuggling because “the available sources are either not comprehensive or not adequately shared” (PICUM²⁶, 2013, p. 1). It is a complex phenomenon and no accurate statistics are available which can highlight various aspects of this issue (Heckmann, 2004). The major reason behind such complexity is the clandestine nature of this phenomenon and the literature on human smuggling is relatively scattered as well (Ardittis and Laczko, 2017; Schrover et al., 2008).

Another difficulty in measuring the data concerning irregular migrants is some challenges in methods used by different researchers. Koser (2009) described different dimensions and dynamics of irregular migration and pointed out various challenges in the existing literature in this area of study. He explained the inaccuracy of data regarding irregular migrant statistics, its incapacity to differentiate various types of irregular migration and practical challenges in methods of collecting data. He further highlighted some conceptual bottlenecks of counting irregular migrants, “variety of routes into irregularity” (p. 181), differentiating human trafficking from migrants’ smuggling and legal aspects of migrants’ status. Similarly, IOM (2015, p. 11) described the issue of measuring irregular migration as:

Irregular migration is hardly quantifiable or measurable, given its clandestine nature, the lack of data sources and or a universally agreed definition, and its highly dynamic character (e.g. migrants in an irregular situation can be regularized, and migrants entering regularly can become irregular upon expiration of their stay permits) – estimates of the irregular migrant population exist for some countries, although they are hardly comparable being based on different methodologies and indicators across countries (IOM, 2015, p. 11).

Likewise, a practical problem for correct estimation or counting of irregular migrants is the hidden nature of irregular migrants’ population as residents without documents tend to hide from the census for fear of detection. Normally, figures on undocumented migration are collected from national censuses that although systematically count both legal and irregular migrants. However, such censuses are not likely to provide the total size of the irregular migrants

²⁶ Platform for International Cooperation on Undocumented Migrants.

(Triandafyllidou, 2016). The more reliable recent estimated figure of irregular migrants around the world is at least 50 million and most of them rely on the services provided by smugglers (IOM, 2015). Moreover, different reports and statistics indicate the complexity of the measurement of irregular migrants as there is no consensus on the accurate and exact number of irregular migrants. Usually, some international bodies like IOM and local authorities of different regions or countries publish the estimated number of irregular migrants around the world or in a specific region or country. It can be concluded from the above-mentioned discussion that due to its clandestine nature, human smuggling is difficult to measure and a similar notion is applicable in the context of illegal Pakistani migrants which is discussed in the following text.

2.3.1 Official Mechanism to Control Irregular Migration in Pakistan

Pakistan inherited a colonial police system named Special Police Establishment which was replaced as Pakistan Special Police Establishment (PSPE) in 1947 after the independence of Pakistan as a separate state. With the passage of time, this police system has been given various responsibilities to curb different crimes and in 1975 it turned into Federal Investigation Agency (FIA), which is responsible to deal with different matters related to human smuggling (FIA, 2019a). This body works under the federal ministry of interior and is divided into different wings to perform different tasks, for example, anti-human trafficking and smuggling unit is responsible to maintain data of deportees (FIA, 2019b). Table 2.5 represents different zones of FIA across the country which are further divided into circles to curb the issue of human smuggling.

Table 2.5 Zones and Circles of FIA in Pakistan

Sr No.	Zone (Provinces and capital territory)	Circle (Major Cities)
1	Sindh	Karachi
2	Punjab Zone – I Punjab Zone – II	Lahore Faisalabad Gujranwala Multan

3	Baluchistan	Quetta
4	Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK)	Peshawar
5	Islamabad	Islamabad
6	Rawalpindi	Rawalpindi

Source: FIA (2019b, p. 121)

Moreover, FIA does not only operate in Pakistan but it has also established some international immigration liaison offices in different countries (FIA, 2019b). Table 2.6 shows international immigration liaison offices established by the government of Pakistan to combat the issue of human smuggling.

Table 2.6 International Immigration Liaison Offices of FIA

Functional Immigration Liaison Offices	Approved Immigration Liaison Offices (These offices are approved by the government of Pakistan and will be functional in due course)
Oman	Dubai
Iran	Turkey
Greece	Italy
	Spain
	Malaysia

Source: FIA (2019b, p. 2)

However, it is not possible to gather accurate data of illegal migrants except the availability of some scattered statistics which are usually issued by FIA, national and international press, independent research groups, international organizations, deportation records of host countries, etc. According to the Associated Press of Pakistan (2017) till November 2016, 1711 illegal Pakistani migrants were deported from the EU. This figure was 5279 in 2013, 4330 in 2014, and 2457 in 2015 respectively. UNODC (2013) also highlighted the problem of data in its report on trends of human trafficking and migrants' smuggling to and from Pakistan. The report further illustrated that getting updated and reliable statistical data posed a significant challenge. The available researches were based on anecdotal evidence and a small sample size. Most studies on irregular migration from Pakistan rely on the figures provided by government officials. Such statistics sometimes are found inconsistent in different reports and different formats. The type and capacity to scrutinize the irregular population and involvement of police in migration control not only have a notable impact on irregular migration but also affect the researcher's mean to study this issue (Vogel, 2016).

Keeping in view the above-mentioned challenges, FIA took several measures to collect information regarding human smuggling. The issuance of "Red Book" since 2006 is an important step taken by FIA to combat the issue of illegal migration and smuggling; it contains "most wanted human traffickers, proclaimed offenders and court absconders involved in illegal immigration" (Government of Pakistan 2016, p. 1). It also contains information of most wanted human smugglers including their name, parentage, home address in Pakistan, passport number, national identity card number, and nature of their crime. For example, FIA issued a list of most wanted human smugglers in Pakistan for 2019. The total number of most wanted human smugglers was 100 including 5 women (FIA, 2019b). Moreover, some legislation has also been made by the parliament to further enhance the mandate of law enforcement agencies of Pakistan:

In response, migrant smuggling issues, the government of Pakistan has taken important steps in developing strategies to combat this crime and protect the rights of victims. In 2002, the prevention and control of Human Trafficking Ordinance (PACHTO) was enacted. This was followed by establishment of Anti Human Smuggling Units (AHTUs) and circles under the jurisdiction of Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) to take legal action against this menace. FIA also established Immigration Vigilance Unit & Internal Accountability Unit to keep an eye over its employees to ensure principle of zero tolerance against connivance of officials (Government of Pakistan, 2016, p. I).

In addition, the government of Pakistan implemented two new laws namely “Prevention of Smuggling of Migrants Acts 2018 and Prevention of Trafficking in Person Act 2018” to protect the right of victims of human smuggling and to empower the law enforcement agencies (FIA, 2019b, p. 1; United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC, 2019). Furthermore, UNODC also assisted FIA to implement these laws in line with the standards and directions of the United Nations (UNODC, 2019).

2.4 Conclusion

Pakistan has a long history of immigration and emigration since it came into being in 1947. Colonial roots of Pakistan facilitated Pakistani migrants to move to the UK and work in the construction sector in the 1950s. This exposure further enabled potential Pakistani migrants to migrate to other European countries, the USA, and Canada. A significant number of Pakistani migrants shifted around the globe in various phases, especially to the Middle East. The constant contacts of Pakistani migrants back to the country of origin acted as a catalyst to encourage young people for migration. Their high ambitions for migration but lack of resources and information paved the way for human smuggling. As a result, during the 1990s the issue of human smuggling had significantly increased especially with regard to human smuggling from Pakistan to Greece. Greece became a popular destination country for Pakistani migrants due to access via Iran and Turkey and its location as a gateway to other European countries. Furthermore, Pakistan has not only a notable overseas diaspora but also hosted and still hosting millions of refugees and migrants from many countries of South Asia. Afghan refugees in Pakistan are the main example as once they constituted the single largest population of refugees in the world (Grare and Maley, 2011). Moreover, in Pakistan no official data is available on the number of illegal Pakistani migrants who left for Greece by crossing borders of Iran and Turkey. A government organization like FIA and other independent sources like IOM, UNODC, and local non-profit organizations (NGOs) keep records of illegal migrants. Often such records consisted of the statistics of deportees from EU member states, transit countries like Iran, Turkey, and other regions like the Gulf States which are famous for Pakistani labor migrants. However, the federal government of Pakistan has made various legislations to curb the issue of human smuggling but still this problem is very complex as many networks of smugglers from Pakistan and neighboring countries operate through Pakistan and are well-connected with other

networks in Iran, Turkey, and Greece. Moreover, many other socio-economic factors encourage the young population to migrate through such groups of human smugglers. The next chapter provides a detailed discussion of available theoretical and empirical scientific literature which highlights various aspects of this issue.

CHAPTER 3

MIGRATION, NETWORKS AND SOCIAL CAPITAL

3.1 Introduction

There are various explanations of labor migration as research in this field is multifaceted and offers multiple levels of analysis (Kurekova, 2010, p. 2). The neo-classical theory of migration considers migrants as individuals as rational actors who decide to move on the basis of a cost-benefit analysis (de Hass, 2007). Whereas, new economics explanation of migration assumes that migration decisions are not taken by individuals but also involve families and households (Kurekova, 2010). Similarly, networks are also important to explain migration as interpersonal ties connect non-migrants and migrants in sending and destination countries (de Hass, 2007). The present chapter discusses the scientific literature on the social networks and the role of social capital to facilitate international migration. This chapter is further divided into two sections. The first section reflects theoretical explanations of international migration in the context of networks and is further supplemented by the concept of biraderi and kinship networking because in the context of Pakistani rural areas, biraderi plays an important role in various aspects of the social support in the local community. This portion reflects how networks facilitate the process of international migration. These concepts are further enriched by the concept of social capital as it unpacks theoretical notions of social and symbolic ties, social structures, and how individuals get benefits from resources as members of the community. The second section provides empirical studies to contextualize various aspects of international migration, for example, aspiration for migration and the role of social networks, various services provided by the social networks, migrants' dependency on networks of agents and geographical imagination, the role of the migrants' social capital in the destination countries, selection of and negotiation with the networks of agents for irregular migration, the social profile of agents, violence and abuse by the agents during irregular migration, fatal journey and poor record-keeping, risk assessment by the migrants, trust on the agents, and cost of international migration facilitated by the agents and mode of payments to these agents. This broad range of scientific literature helps us to understand the context of the present study because some scholars, for example, Marouf and Kouki (2017)

pointed out that in the context of migration from Pakistan to EU, it is difficult to focus on only one dimension because it is embedded in various social, economic and structural features of the society. This chapter provides an overall picture of the international migration both under the theoretical lens and with empirical evidence which, as a result, helps to understand the issue of international migration from district Gujrat, Punjab to Europe. District Gujrat is very famous for international migration to Europe by using the migration corridor from Pakistan to Greece while crossing Iran and Turkey.

PART I – THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

3.2 Social Networks

International migration has both a social and economic basis (Massey et al., 1987, p. 3; Ritchey, 1976; de Hass, 2010). In the era of 1960s, international labor migration became a major element of immigration flows to the industrial nations like the United States, Canada, Australia, and many North European countries (Boyd, 1989, p. 638). Later on, these migration flows had been influenced by the economic downturns of the 1970s and 1980s in various industrialized countries (Boyd, 1989). However, over time, such trends showed the maturation of migration streams accelerated by social networks comprised of family members, friends, and connections among the members of the same community (Boyd, 1989). Though, plenty of literature on the role of social networks in the composition, direction, and persistence of migration flows had been started to be enormously produced since the late 1980s, yet scholars in 1960s and 1970s also studied how kinship and friends play a role in the provision of information to facilitate the process of chain migration (MacDonald and MacDonald, 1964; Ritchey, 1976; Boyd, 1989; Higgs, 1982). Even, according to Massey et al. (1987, p. 5) long ago in the 1920s, some researchers also focused on the tendency of migration from specific sending areas to be channeled to particular districts in the cities of the USA.

Barnes (1954) explained the social system of the Bremnes ethnic community in Norwegian Island and identified a social field in which there are no boundaries and coordinating organization. People are linked together by friendship and inherited membership in the same community. In such a social field, the majority of the people have equal status except few, for

example, an individual's relationship with the former employer but they still remain in contact. There are no fixed components of this social field and, as a result, "new ties are continually being formed and old links are broken or put into indefinite cold storage" (Barnes, 1954, p. 43). Moreover, there are "set of points some of which are joined by links" (p. 43). These points represent people or in some cases groups, whereas, links indicate the interaction among them. Barnes (1954) further elaborated that each individual has a set of his/her own cognatic kin and they are further linked with other people who have further circles of relatives or friendship in which some know each other and some do not. Barnes (1954, p. 43) coined the term "network" for this social field and such networks can be generated throughout the social life of a person. Furthermore, Mitchell (1974) explained that the notion of the social network emerged from "a metaphorical to a conceptual statement about social relationships in social situations" (p. 280). The metaphorical use of the notion reflects ramification of the social links of individuals in a society, whereas, the analytical use of this idea emphasizes that how such ramification affects the behavior of the people of those networks. The focus of the analytical use is "the way in which what occurs in pairs of 'knots' influences what happens in adjacent 'knots'" (Mitchell, 1974, p. 280).

Likewise, a social network refers to the people connected to each other by invisible bonds which are "knitted together into criss-cross mesh of connections" (Scott, 1988, p. 109). It is based on the ascribed or achieved social relationships among individuals, families, households, villages, communities, regions, and so on (Bandyopadhyay et al., 2011, p. 1). Family and kinship represent the ascribed social relationship, whereas, achieved social relationship is comprised of regular interaction among people or households which are seeking help, support or advice from each other on daily life matters or cultural activities (Bandyopadhyay et al., 2011). The role of social networks in migration decision making occupies a prominent position in the literature because migrants learn about various opportunities, conditions, and challenges at their desired country of destination prior to leaving their home country (Blumenstock et al., 2019). Moreover, "migrant networks are webs of reciprocal obligations" and their interconnecting social links not only provide information and facilitate the movement across borders but also helps newcomers to get a job and guide them in other matters of their settlement in the new environment (Massey et al., 1987, p. 316). In their renowned work on kinship networks, Tilly and Brown (1967, p. 142) used the term "auspices of migration" and explained:

By the auspices of migration, we mean the social structures which establish relationships between the migrant and the receiving community before he moves. We may say that an individual migrates under the auspices of kinship when his principal connections with the city of destination are through kinsmen, even if he comes desperately seeking a job. Likewise, we may say that he migrates under the auspices of work when the labor market or a particular firm provides the main organized relationship to the new community, even if he also has kinfolk there. Of course, he may migrate under several auspices at once, or under none at all (Tilly and Brown, 1967, p. 142).

Social relationships among people develop over time and gradually strengthen more. In the case of kinship networks, people gather on various occasions, for example, on rituals and other functions of sociability. Likewise, people from both lower-class and middle-class populations support each other in the time of crisis (Tilly and Brown, 1967). Thus, such moral and social support further extends during and immediately after migration and these networks offer a range of aid and encouragement (Blumberg and Bell, 1959; Litwak, 1960; Tilly and Brown, 1967). In this way, migrant networks steadily build up over the years, starting from a small base, first, they extend slowly and then the magnitude of connections among migrants expand rapidly due to the increasing number of migrants from the same community (Massey et al., 1987, p. 317). Such expansion of networks is further increased by the establishment of daughter communities which further multiply social connections and some specific places become migrants' favorite destinations due to these connections. Moreover, networks become self-sustaining gradually and help its members to search for job, housing, and also provide financial assistance (Massey et al., 1987). The strong base of networks attract more and more potential migrants and "over time, networks become so extensive that almost everyone has a social tie to someone" (Massey et al., 1987, p. 317).

In the context of Pakistan, an overwhelming population, more than 60 %, lives in the rural areas and the social organization of these rural areas is determined by a strong system of kinship through which people establish social networks (Mughal, 2019, p. 81). Moreover, the folklore of rural areas strongly reflects the moral obligations associated with the membership of kin (Coe and Palmer, 2008). Kinship system strongly encourages long-lasting cooperation among its members and such cooperation is not emerging automatically but is consciously promoted through traditions and customary practices (Coe and Palmer, 2008). In rural areas of the province of Punjab, the field of the present study, such a kinship system is locally known as biraderi

which plays an important role in social networking among people living in the same community. So, keeping in view the above-mentioned context, the following section explains the concept of biraderi and its role in kinship networking. It further defines some related concepts as well to understand this notion in a wider context.

3.3 Biraderi²⁷ and Kinship Networking

Biraderi or biradari is defined as “‘brotherhood’ originated by the Persian word *Baradar* meaning ‘brother’” (Chaudhry and Ahmed, 2014, p. 1863; Wakil, 1970). Similarly, Lieven (2011) explained that biraderi “is related to the Indo-European root for ‘brother’, which is supposed to denote the descendants of one common male ancestor. However, biraderi can be used to mean almost any kind of wider hereditary kinship link depending on context” (p. 66). Alavi (1972) argued that in general, in the context of rural societies of South Asia, social organization is based on caste. However, in Muslim West, Punjab, the field of the present study, kinship system has a central place in village organization rather than caste and “embodies the primordial loyalties which structure its social organization” (Alavi, 1972, p. 1). Furthermore, biraderi is the basic institution of this kinship system in Muslim West Punjab and can be translated as brotherhood which “emphasizes horizontal fraternal ties between contemporaries rather than convergence of vertical lines of descent which also implied in the concept of biraderi” (Alavi, 1972, p. 1). Likewise, in principle, biraderi includes all those people who are bonded by a common descent in the paternal line and, in this sense, biraderi is “indefinite in size” (Alavi, 1972, p. 2). Wakil (1970, p. 700) further elaborated it as following:

Biraderi is generally an endogamous group in which the most preferred mates for marriage are cross- and parallels-cousins. Although the rule of endogamy is sometimes broken, it is invariably frowned upon. The boundaries of biraderi are

²⁷ To understand context of biraderi in the province of the Punjab, Pakistan, one must also be familiar with some other commonly used related terms. For example, one main biraderi is further divided into sub-branches which are known as *Verhhi*. Another important concept is *quom*, it is next to biraderi and can be defined as “a confederation of several biraderis having a common ancestor several generations up” (Anwar, 2016, p. 19). *Quom* is further divided into *Zamindars*, the landowners and *Kammis*, the artisans (Anwar, 2016, p. 26). Nazir (1993, p. 2898) also mentioned a third category of landless labourers/tenants which also considered as *kammis*. Similarly, *Khandan* which “denotes both the immediate family and the extended family (often a joint family, in which several brothers and their families live together under one roof)” (Lieven, 2011, p. 66). It is important to note that though there are different terms used to explain nature of kinship system in rural areas of the province of Punjab, however; there is little consensus on the scientific literature of what constitutes or differs *quom*, *zat* and *biraderi*, but majority of scholars preferred to use the term *biraderi* “an an encapsulating term for the whole” (Loureiro, 2015, p. 318).

undefined and are usually very hazy. The size of the biraderi is as large as the distance at which one can recognize one's relatives. The boundaries are undefined since they depend on memory, contact over geographical distance, degree of strictness of endogamy and most of all on an intricate gift exchange system (Wakil, 1970, p. 700).

In his famous work on social structure, Murdock (1949) explained that, in general, a clan can be divided into two major types. Firstly, the residential kin group, which is primarily based upon a rule of residence (p. 65). Secondly, the consanguineal kin group, which is based on a rule of descent instead of a rule of residence. However, Murdock (1949, p. 66) further introduced a third kin group as a "compromise kin group" which is based on both a rule of residence and a rule of descent. This type of group is usually larger than an extended family and a unilinear rule of descent is an integral feature in the structure of a group (Murdock, 1949). In the context of rural communities of South Asia, especially in Muslim West Punjab, Alavi (1972, p. 2) used this third type of kin as an important feature of biraderi system. Moreover, Murdock (1949, p. 68) further explained three major characteristics to form kin. Firstly, to bind a group of people, there must be a unilinear rule of descent. Secondly, there must be a residential unity. Thirdly, a group must not be a mere unorganized aggregate of people but it must reflect actual social integration.

In the above-discussed context, biraderi plays a very significant role in the complex social organization of a village in the province of Punjab (Anwar, 2016). It influences various dimensions of the lives of its members. For example, it is a very strong component of identity, also linked with an association, social support, and collective action. It also strengthens the economic power of its members through informal organization and determines their voting behavior as well to become politically strong in the local community (Anwar, 2016). Farid and Abbasi (2019) also described that the social structure of the Punjab province is based on various diversified components with their own dynamics and dynamisms. Among all such components, biraderi is a prime feature that shapes members' daily life matters, marriage patterns, food selection, traditions, and customary practices. Moreover, it is also linked with social status, administers interaction patters, explains family lineage, determines political support, and presents common linguistic goals (Farid and Abbasi, 2019). However, it is important to note that the structure of biraderi has many dimensions as mentioned-above. In the Punjab province, the social organization is very complex because due to amalgamation of social hierarchies, individuals could be members of several groups at the same time. For example, "a Chaudhary, an

upper caste in Punjab, could be religiously Sunni, linguistically Punjabi and regionally Mahajer²⁸” (Farid and Abbasi, 2019, p. 1812). Such affiliations play an important role in identity formation determined by capital, family, and education. In addition, affiliation with a particular biraderi is also associated with the unequal distribution of resources and privileged family background reproduces its “privilege and power” (Farid and Abbasi, 2019, p. 1821).

The above-mentioned discussion on social networks and biraderi are consistent with the notion of social capital and has been confirmed through various empirical studies (Massey and Aysa, 2005, p. 2; Massey et al., 1987). So, the following section is discussing how social capital is linked with international migration.

3.4 Migration and Social Capital

First of all, we need to precisely understand the concept of social capital and its consequences, both positive and negative, before turning to its role in migration. There are many forms of capital, for example, economic, financial, physical, natural, social, cultural, and political (Coleman, 1988; Pieterse, 2003; Schuller, 2001). The concept of social capital has emerged as an increasingly popular concept on the heels of human capital and can be defined as individuals’ capacity to get access to scarce resources because of their memberships of social networks or institutions (Pieterse, 2003, p. 31; Widén-Wulff and Ginman, 2004, p. 449). In his renowned work, Bourdieu (1986, p. 247) described:

Social capital is the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition – or in other words, to membership in a group – which provides each of its members with the backing of the collectively-owned capital, a “credential” which entitles them to credit, in the various senses of the word. These relationships may exist only in the practical state, in material and/or symbolic exchanges which help to maintain them. They may also be socially instituted and guaranteed by the application of a common name (the name of a family, a class, or a tribe or of a school, a party, etc.) and by a whole set of instituting acts designed simultaneously to form and inform those who undergo them; in this case, they are more or less really enacted and so maintained and reinforced, in exchanges (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 247).

²⁸ People who migrated from India to Pakistan during the partition of United India in 1947.

Moreover, Putnam (1993, p. 167) argued that social capital is based on the notions of trust, norms, and networks which are the essential features of social organization, and through coordinated actions, it can improve the efficiency of society. According to Coleman (1988, p. S98), social capital is defined by its functions and is based on different entities, having two common elements – it consists of some aspect of social structures, and it facilitates certain actions of actors. Furthermore, social capital is productive in the sense that it makes it possible to achieve those goals that “in its absence would not be possible” (Coleman, 1988, p. S98). However; it is important to note that as compared to physical and human capitals, social capital is not completely fungible but may be specific to certain tasks – it may be valuable in certain actions but useless or even harmful for others (Coleman, 1988, p. S98). Similarly, social capital has its value in both economic and noneconomic spheres and based on obligations, expectations, trustworthiness of the social environment, and provides information channels (Coleman, 1988, p. S102-S104; Baker, 1990).

In addition, Briggs (1998, p. 178) further defined two types of social capital. Firstly, social leverage which helps people to “get ahead” by providing information regarding access to resources or recommend them for some loans or scholarship in other social circles. Usually, it emerges from relatively weaker ties such as friends or extended circle of networks. Secondly, there is social support which is a resource created by strong social ties, for example, family and close friends, and provides emotional and non-material supports. It helps individuals to “get by” or “cope” (p. 178) and they rely on those networks which are intimate and available in an emergency. Likewise, Massey and Aysa (2005, p. 4) further distinguish social capital as individual and general social capital. In individual social capital, resources that enhance one’s capacity come directly from personal and close ties from experienced people, whereas, general social capital refers to resources generated through weaker ties, for example, community, acquaintances, casual friends, friends of friends, and extended network of relatives.

In the above-mentioned context of social capital, plenty of scientific literature is available that highlights the positive consequences of social capital. However, many studies also pointed out that social capital also has negative consequences. For example, Portes (1998, p. 15) summarized at least four negative consequences of social capital. Firstly, exclusion of outsiders, as social capital enhances in-group solidarity by providing access to resources but also restricts the access

of members of out-groups. Secondly, excess claims on group members, this negative effect is the obverse of the first point because the closure of the community or group, in certain situations, prevents the individual initiatives in business success because due to shared normative structure, members of the community or group have precise access to the resources of fellow members. Thirdly, restrictions on individual freedom, group, or community participation create high demand for conformity. In a small village each person knows the other members and exerts strong social control on the members' activities and due to "multiplex networks" (p. 16) an individual's privacy and autonomy are compromised. As a result, young and independent-minded people always leave the community. Lastly, there are downward leveling norms. In certain situations, group solidarity is enhanced by a common experience of adversity that opposes the mainstream society. In such situations, individual success stories are discouraged because it weakens group integrity, which is based on alleged impossibility of such incidents. The outcome of such situations is "downward leveling norms that operate to keep members of a down-trodden group in place and force the more ambitious to escape from it" (Portes, 1998, p. 17).

After understanding the above-discussed theoretical background of social capital, now we look into its role in the context of international migration, as in the case of the present study, social capital also plays an important role to facilitate the process of migration through assistance provided by social ties with the prior migrants (Garip, 2008, p. 591). Faist (2000) explained that social capital is formulated by a set of resources based on social and symbolic ties between actors. Social ties are interpersonal transactions, in which participants attach mutual interests, obligations, expectations, and norms (Faist, 2000, p.101). On the other hand, symbolic ties are not necessarily continuing series of transactions and based on commonalities, shared meanings, and memories (p. 102). In the context of international migration, according to Faist (2000, p. 111), social capital contains plenty of tangible and intangible social resources and provides benefits to the group members, for example, provision of information of job market in potential destination countries, means of transportation, and how to finance the journey to the desired destination.

Furthermore, international migration is comprised of four major functions fulfilled by social capital (Faist, 2000, P. 121). Firstly, the selective function, in this point, kinship, community, and

friendship ties have a decisive role in migration decision making and possible exit. Secondly, the diffusion functions, in which we know whether successive exit turns into chain migration. It depends on positive or negative feedback, for example, positive feedbacks “steadily increase migration streams up to a possible tipping point” (p. 122), whereas, negative feedbacks keep the volume of migration “relatively constant” (p. 122). Next, it is bridging functions, in this stage, migrants maintain transnational ties and contribute in the development of their country of origin through remittances. Moreover, they familiarize their children with the cultural values of their country of origin through return visits or want their children to learn the native language of their country of origin. Lastly, it is the adaptation function which includes “various forms of insertion in the immigration” (p. 122) or reintegration in the former emigration country in different spheres like cultural, economic and political. The notions of reciprocity and solidarity embedded in kinship, friendship, and community networks help migrants to overcome problems of their daily life, for example, the search of job and housing, childcare, space for religious and political activities, and to celebrate cultural events. Often such support helps the migrants to “adapt to the new environment” (Faist, 2000, p. 123).

The above-mentioned part I examined theoretical explanations of international labor migration by explaining how social networks, biraderi and kinship networking, and social capital are important to understand this phenomenon. The following section is based on empirical literature to understand this issue in detail.

PART II – STATE OF THE ART

The present section thoroughly examines the available empirical literature in the field of international migration. It is further divided into various sub-sections by particularly focusing on the role of social networks, social capital, personal aspirations of the potential migrants, the role of agents in the provision of various services to facilitate irregular migration, the dependency of migrants and geographical imagination, the vulnerability of migrants, abuse and violence, risk assessment, trust in agents, cost of irregular migration, and mode of payment to the agents. The literature cited in this section is based on various studies conducted by employing sociological and anthropological research methods in different regions of the globe including Pakistan. The major purpose of this literature is to get an overall picture of different migration corridors and to

understand the context of migrants to initiate international migration. Moreover, this broad range of literature provides us with a direction and sequence of the arguments supporting the present study. Likewise, every section is summarized what we follow from this body of research and how it is linked with the research questions of the present study.

3.5 The Role of Social Networks in International Migration

Drever and Hoffmeister (2008) analyzed the role of immigrants' social networks to find a job in Germany. They used the data of the German Socio-Economic Panel (SOEP), which is a renowned longitudinal survey in Germany since 1984. This data source consists of the survey "Living in Germany" (p. 433), and contains questions regarding household members' education, health, income, housing, labor market participation, and household demographics. In 2002, this survey also focused on the module on social networks and working conditions. Their focus of the analysis was job changers. The results show that, in general, persons having immigrant background are more likely to rely on social networks to find a job in Germany, as nearly half of all the jobs among people having immigrant background used their interpersonal contacts to search employment. Their study also highlighted that economically vulnerable immigrants were especially dependent upon family, friends, and extended networks having information regarding employment opportunities. Similarly, younger immigrants and immigrants having fewer years of education were more likely to rely on social networks. These categories were also identified as less paid. They further argued that the rigid labor market of Germany may decrease the utility of networks for those who complete higher degrees or apprenticeship but "networks remain critical for those who lack formal training" (p. 437).

Cederberg (2012) studied the value of social capital in the positions and experiences of immigrants in the host country and how it is linked with ethnic inequalities. She conducted a number of biographical interviews with refugees from Bosnia, Somalia, Iraq, and Albania living in Sweden. The findings of her study highlighted several aspects of immigrants' lives as interlocutors talked about the functions and limits of their ethnic networks in the host society. Such networks performed several functions, for example, provision of social information, giving practical and emotional support, providing a sense of security and belonging to a community, opportunity to reproduce immigrants' heritage in terms of culture and language, providing access

to further social networks and employment opportunities. However, some interlocutors also shared their experiences that there are differences within similar ethnic groups and they are not well-connected as it is assumed, especially, there is a communication gap between those who recently came as refugees and those who came as labor migrants in 1960s and 1970s. Similarly, some gender-based power hierarchies within the same ethnic groups also hindered their in-group integration. For example, an Iraqi woman experienced gender violence within her family and was pressurized from the wider ethnic community to follow a particular feminine identity according to their native cultural values. As a result, she distanced herself from her co-ethnics. Moreover, it is also difficult to socialize and integrate into Swedish society as some interlocutors mentioned it as a closed society and told that, though, Swedish people are nice and friendly, they are guarded and it is not easy to maintain social connections with them on long-term bases and often they feel excluded from the mainstream of Swedish society. In this scenario, Cederberg (2012) emphasized that we must not only focus on the internal mechanisms of migrant/ethnic networks rather we should consider how they are positioned in a broader social context of the host societies.

Likewise, Anthias and Cederberg (2009) explored how ethnic networks of the migrants are linked with their self-employment. They used three case studies of family businesses operating in the UK. They came from Greece, the Middle East, and Turkey and ran their businesses of bakery, restaurant, and grocery shop respectively. The findings of the study revealed that the immigrants positively valued their ethnic belonging and were strongly associated with their co-ethnics in the host country. Their ethnic association, in turn, provided them a strong “ethnic customer base” (p.905), especially in the cases of the businesses of bakery and restaurant in which ethnic-specific delights and cuisine were served, and their outlets were expanded from a small scale home-based work to professional entrepreneurship. Moreover, their affectual and social connections also facilitated them to hire co-ethnic staff based on the notions of trust and ease of communication in their native language. Similarly, spatial dimension also played an important role to connect them with their co-ethnics because their areas of business were dominated by immigrants having the same ethnic background. However, the interlocutors refrain from having any racial conflict with other ethnic groups. Their second-generation also showed affiliation towards their ethnic background, however, in some aspects of their personal lives, they

differ from their parents. The authors argued ethnic bonds as an important resource that is used to pursue success.

Goodson and Phillimore (2008) took a gender perspective to examine the role and importance of refugee women in their daily lives and its implications on their citizenship and integration. They explored what type of networks and social capital has been accessed by the refugee women and their impact on their identity and well-being. They obtained data from two projects and conducted 66 in-depth interviews with refugee women in the UK having diverse backgrounds of Kurdish, Algerian, Somali, Cameroonian, Libyan, Iranian, Iraqi, Congolese, Zimbabwean, Burundian, Kenyan, Afghani, Sudanese, and Ivorian, out of which over 50 percent had dependent children with them in the UK. The findings of the study showed that all the participants faced a wide range of challenges, for example, racial harassment at public places from the local white community, separation from their family members and friends, witnessing the death of some of them, and the long intervals to wait for decisions on their asylum applications. Moreover, these refugee women faced several other issues as domestic and child care responsibilities doubled their burden and restricted them to stay at home. These challenges left them in need of social networks. Some of them maintained their networks with the local community and socialized themselves at recreational places, some were connected with the same ethnic group, some were integrated through faith communities like Mosques and Churches, and some were in contact with ethnic community associations. However, they also realized the importance of the English language for more integration and labor market opportunities. It was also found that social networks provided them opportunities to have friendships and get access to guidance and information regarding employment and housing.

Meeteren et al. (2009) examined the immigrants' aspirations and the role of cultural, economic, and social capital. They conducted 120 semi-structured interviews with various groups of irregular migrants including Turks, Bulgarians, Moroccans, and Congolese living in Belgium. They approached these interlocutors through snowball sampling. The results of their study identified three types of immigrants having different aspirations to stay in Belgium. The first type includes the investment migrants. In this category, some migrants arranged their work and accommodation prior to their actual migration. However, some interlocutors arranged it soon after their arrival. In both cases, their social networks played a significant role and provided them

jobs according to their skills. In this case, Meeteren et al. (2009) argued that family, friends and extended networks played their role as mediators and successful migrants “effectively used their cultural capital because of their social capital” (p. 892). The second type is that of legalization migrants. In this category, immigrants’ aspiration was to get legal residence and they used different strategies, for example, to get married with a co-ethnic spouse having citizenship of Belgium or their length of stay in Belgium. The migrants were introduced with the potential spouses through family members and close friends. However, this group was relatively small and it was not easy to get married with a co-ethnic having Belgium nationality because the family of the expected spouse suspected that the migrants might hide their intentions for marriage, or irregular migrants were less in social status as compared to the family of their expected spouse. In such situations, the family members of the migrants, already living in Belgium, played their role of social capital in the form of social support and convinced the families of the expected spouses through building trust and compensating the migrants to uplift their social status. Lastly, there are settlement migrants. In this category, the immigrants were aimed at settlement legally or illegally in the host country. They preferred to “steady employment than to go for hourly wages” (p. 896) by doing one regular job or combining many jobs at once which ensures a particular level of stability. These migrants managed to get these jobs through their contacts in their ethnic communities and acquaintances, which means “they have been able to successfully mobilize social leverage” (Meeteren et al., 2009, p. 897).

Likewise, Engbersen et al. (2006) conducted a study on rising presence and social relations among the irregular immigrants in The Hague, Netherlands. For their study, they used police data, cartographic, field observations, and interviews with the immigrants. The results described four major structural factors linked with irregular migration. Firstly, there was a constant increase in migration to Netherland, especially from the non-Western and Eastern-European regions. Secondly, the demand for cheap labor in some informal sectors of the post-industrial economy and the remnants of industrial and agricultural sectors. Thirdly, the role played by private ethnic communities and landlords in provisions of informal housing to immigrants in poor urban districts. Fourthly, demand for potential partners especially the ones who are in a vulnerable position. The geographic maps showed that migrants’ population was concentrated in particular areas, especially in the case of Turk migrants. The pattern of incorporation was embedded into “communal sharing” (p. 219), substantial help was provided to exclusive groups

like brothers and uncles in many areas, for example, aid to come to the Netherland, search for jobs, and facilitation in housing. Moreover, the pattern of support was based on enduring solidarity with one's family and it was a very important point that "if you bring someone over here, then you are responsible for him in every way" (p. 220). The legal compatriots became an important channel from which the irregular migrants mobilized resources. As a result, social capital became the more valuable currency for these irregular migrants (Engbersen et al., 2006, p. 223).

Massey and Aysa (2005) conducted a study on the role of social capital in international migration from Latin America. They analyzed the data from the Latin American Migration Project and the Mexican Migration Project to predict the taking of first and later trips to the USA from six settings as Mexico, the Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, and Peru. They were interested to know how social capital affects international out-migration and how these effects differ concerning contextual factors, for example, rural-urban status, cost and difficulty of migration. The findings of the study revealed the pervasiveness of immigrants' networks and universal effects of social capital throughout Latin America, however, the volume of these effects was not uniform across settings. It was observed that social capital has more powerful effects to determine migration on the first trips as compared to the later. Similarly, it was more effective in rural settings as compared to the urban areas, and more useful in those locations where out-migration is costly.

Despite the above-discussed factors in context of social support provided by the social networks, another related and important factor is how economically well established these diaspora networks are, because their economic position can determine their ability to support their co-ethnics. For example, Belloni (2016) conducted a multi-sited ethnographic research in Eritrea, Ethiopia, Sudan and Italy to study how the migration corridor between Eritrea and Europe is linked through different actors, their expectations from diaspora networks and exchange of information. She described that transnational family networks are important to facilitate undocumented migration. She further argued that other than the migrants and the human smugglers, family members living abroad also finance irregular border-crossing. In the process of negotiation, socio-cultural context plays a significant role that "highlights the importance of emic moral rules" (p. 47). She further explained that the migrants are proactive in the smuggling

process, especially when they initiate it without permission of their relatives living abroad. In this way, they gamble their kinship and emotional solidarity. However, due to the threat of retaliation from the smugglers, their relatives pay despite their initial refusal. In this context, “kinship-based moral economies” (Belloni, 2016, p. 49) also play a crucial role to facilitate the irregular migrants in the country of destination. Settled migrants also have economic requests from the kin living in their country of origin and have to bear their strong expectations. However, Belloni (2016) concluded that things are not as straightforward and, vice versa, relatives living abroad are also reluctant to support high risk journeys because they do not want to be accountable in front of the native community if “something bad happened to the migrant on his/her way to Europe” (p. 54). Interestingly, “these moral imperatives, which often prevent kinship support for high-risk journeys, are the same instrumentally employed by young Eritrean refugees to push their relatives to pay” (Belloni, 2016, p. 54).

Similarly, in context of expectations from kinship back home, Akuei (2005) researched social obligations on resettled Sudanese in the USA, who once came as refugees. She used case studies from the data collected among 40 families and individuals from Southern Sudanese men and women belonging to Dinka ethnic group. Findings of her study reveal that Dinka people were sent off with strong cultural reminders and directions for resettlement to the USA. They were strictly advised that while exploring new opportunities and new word in the host society “they should not forget who they are and what it means to be a Dinka” (p. 5). It was a reminder that they should maintain their ethnic identity. Moreover, they were also asked to help the relatives back home and should not forget their responsibilities and obligations in this regard. Their relatives back home considered them as their future. These refugees faced two major issues. Firstly, upon their arrival to the USA, they had to take part in the workshops on “cultural orientation” (p. 6). Secondly, they felt sheer magnitude of financial responsibilities they were expected from their kin back home. The main reason behind such issues was Dinka tradition in which the members of one lineage are responsible to contribute in various family affairs, for example, to arrange marriages of their women and if a crime is committed by the member of their group, they are also responsible to pay compensation money to the aggrieved family. Such obligations are not only for their direct family members but they are also responsible to take care of a person who is member of the “immediate three generations of one’s lineage in the father’s line” (Akuei, 2005, p. 7). Interestingly, these resettlers are aware of their responsibility to

support their relatives back home and, as a result, they send a sizeable number of their allowances as remittances, even they cut-off their expenses in the host society.

In sum, the above-mentioned section 3.5 reflects on many important aspects of the immigrants' lives in the host society and how social networks are important for them. This section explains that social networks share information with newcomers in many aspects related to their migration. They also help them to find a job and housing in the host country. Ethnic networks prefer co-ethnic newcomer migrants in self-employment for trust and ease in the communication. The migrants' social capital and networks also provide a sense of belonging and emotional support, especially to those who are not well-integrated in the culture of the host society. Ethnic networks can be helpful but they also have limitations in some cases or situations. These above-mentioned studies are important in the context of the present study because the majority of the immigrants from district Gujrat, Punjab, the field of the present study, belong to the rural areas and are connected through a strong kinship system locally known as biraderi. In this scenario, we expect that their social networks in the host society will consider their moral obligation as kinship members to support each other. Similarly, we assume that the immigrants from Gujrat, Punjab will also seek help from their social networks in the country of destination. Furthermore, other than the social networks comprised of household, friends, and common area of origin as discussed above, the networks of migration agents and human smugglers also play an important role in the organization and facilitation of irregular migration which is discussed in the following text.

3.5.1 Networks of Agents

The issue of irregular migration and the smuggling of migrants has become a major and complex issue of the member states of the European Union (Kuschminder, 2015). Human smuggling is a form of irregular migration and has become a global phenomenon (Aronowitz, 2001, p. 164; Baird, 2013). However; often human smuggling is confused with human trafficking as both smugglers and traffickers exploit people's desire for betterment in their lives by securing future somewhere else (Kleemans and Smith, 2014, p. 381). Despite various definitions, both concepts contain some shared and common elements as well (Aronowitz, 2001). IOM (2000) explained the smuggled migrant as "an individual requests assistance to cross into another nation state where (s)he has no right of residence and the smuggler's involvement goes no further than

crossing the border” (p. 21). Whereas human trafficking “involves elements of coercion, deception, violence and physical or psychological abuse and that it often implies the involvement of networks or syndicates of organized crime” (p. 21). Though consent of an individual to be smuggled is not always a decisive factor to distinguish smuggling from trafficking as, in some cases, it ends up as trafficking victim (Kleemans and Smith, 2014, p. 382). However, the trafficked persons are exploited over a long period as compared to the smuggled persons (Aronowitz, 2001). Another important distinction between both concepts is that human smuggling is a migration issue but trafficking is linked with the human rights aspect (IOM, 2000).

Achilli (2018) argued that human smugglers may not be necessarily seen as “wicked villains” (p. 77) rather their relationship with migrants is based on solidarity and reciprocity which is embedded in the local notions of morality. In his ethnographic study on Syrian migrants in Turkey, Jordan, Lebanon, and Italy, he found that migrants consider smugglers not as good or bad but take them as service providers. They facilitate migrants to reach their desired destinations when state authorities refuse to allow them to enter in its territory. As a result, the migrants and the smugglers constitute a “moral community” (p. 83). Moreover, the migrants consider facilitation by the human smugglers to cross the border as a social and religious duty (Achilli, 2018). Similarly, Aloyo and Cusumano (2018) explained that in certain conditions, human smuggling is morally permissible (p. 1). They further pointed out three conditions for such permission. Firstly, smugglers must provide accurate information to the client because it enables the client to make consent to the journey. Secondly, the human rights of the clients should not be violated by smugglers. Lastly, as reciprocity, clients should not exploit the smugglers by taking unfair advantage of the deal (p. 9).

Bilecen (2009) explored the involvement of human smuggling networks operating in the Middle East to facilitate irregular migration into the European Union, especially to the Netherland. She conducted 11 semi-structured interviews with the smuggled migrants from Afghanistan, Iran, and Iraq. The results depict that the migrants were facilitated by the smuggling networks and they used various tactics for their entry into the Netherlands. Mainly, her study found three levels of human smuggling networks. Firstly, smuggling with little organization (p. 9), in which the migrants are supported by their family members or relatives already living in the host society.

They receive an invitation by those family members or kinship networks in the receiving country and after their arrival they overstay and apply for asylum. However, it is not very common because it requires a formal invitation which itself is very complex because they have to produce enough documentary evidence to get a tourist visa. Secondly, the most common level is the involvement of relatively small groups of smugglers secretly operating at a lower level. These smuggling groups operate at different levels and are well connected with other smuggling groups at various points. However, interestingly it was also found that some smuggled migrants also contact various smuggling networks by themselves during travel as they use “at least more than one smuggler or small scale smuggler groups” (p. 10). The third level of human smuggling was operated by “transnational organized criminal groups” (p. 10) which is more threatening and often controls smaller groups of smugglers. Her study concludes that since smaller groups of smugglers are more flexible and there are more chances that such groups may dominate in future.

Some studies show that human smugglers themselves have experience of irregular migration and are well aware of this process. For example, Sanchez (2016) conducted a study on the facilitators of human smuggling groups along the US-Mexico border. She analyzed 66 human smuggling cases and also conducted face-to-face interviews and noted field observations as well. These smuggling facilitators are known as coyotes and defined as “anyone who facilitated a specific segment of a person’s entry into the United States without authorization, for a fee” (p. 278). The study revealed that the majority of human smugglers were once irregular migrants themselves and there were no specific characteristics of such groups as they comprised of different age groups and gender, for example, teenagers to elderly men and women. They were also employed at the local level but none of them held luxurious or stable jobs and except one participant, none of them was holding a professional or skilled job. The precarious nature of their job was a challenge for their survival and to support their families, they got engaged in additional jobs and “smuggling constituting in fact a supplementary cash-generating activity in most cases” (Sanchez, 2016, p. 278).

In sum, the above-mentioned studies show that often the irregular migrants do not consider the human smugglers as criminals or villains. Their relationship is based on the notions of morality. The irregular migrants consider it a social and religious duty of the agents and the human smugglers to facilitate their mobility. The human smugglers work in interconnected networks.

Some irregular migrants are proactive to contact human smugglers during migration and also replace them, and migration experience of some migrants turns them as human smugglers. These points guide the present study, for example, how the aspirant migrants and their families in the villages of district Gujrat define the role of agents to facilitate their migration to Europe, what is the social profile of the agents working in the rural areas of district Gujrat, do they have their own migration experience, who contact with whom, for example, the aspirant migrants contact the agents or the agents contact the aspirant migrants, is there any organized network of agents working in district Gujrat or some individuals are operating as agents. These questions will be addressed in the empirical chapters of the present study.

Other than the role of social networks in international migration as discussed-above, several other factors also enable the migrants to decide. For example, an individual's aspiration for migration, available resources and mechanism are important factors to determine migrants and non-migrants. The following section explains this important issue.

3.5.2 Migrants' Aspirations, Remittances and Household Development

Carling (2002, p. 8) presented the model of migrants' aspiration for migration and their ability to do so within the available resources and constraints. He divided people in three categories like migrants, voluntary non-migrants, and involuntary non-migrants. He further defined these categories and pointed out that some people have aspiration to leave their home country and migrate to another country with a notion that migration must be preferred to non-migration. Among this category that has the wish to migrate and has the ability to do so are called migrants and such migratory movements can be seen internationally. The second category is comprised of those people who can migrate but believe that non-migration is better. This category is called voluntary non-migrants. The last category, which consists of those people who want to migrate but fail to do so, is called the involuntary non-migrants.

According to Carling (2002) various modes of migration can better define the nature of migration. Each mode is linked with specific rules, regulation and immigration policy. These modes can be labor migration through proper channel, family reunion, political asylum, overstaying after visa expiry and illegal entry. The important factor is that each of these modes is connected with certain barriers to migration and a major hurdle for the potential migrants to migrate. Aspiration is a prerequisite for trying to migrate, and overcoming the constraints is a

prerequisite for actually migrating. Aspiration is further divided into two categories i.e. macro level question and micro level question. In macro level question, it is important to know that why a huge number of people want to migrate and the answer is emigrant environment. It can be explained in a wider context of prevailing socio-economic and political conditions of that particular community. It also deals that how migration is socially constructed and defined within community. People usually understand the importance of migration through the meaning constructed by society. The second important category is micro level question and it deals with “who wants to migrate and who wants to stay” (Carling, 2002, p. 9). Some individual traits like family, age, gender, family migration norms, social class, education, and personality characteristics can provide some answers. These traits are linked with the criteria to encourage or discourage migration. Individual factors also depend on social context. So, understanding and description of aspiration needs concentration to both macro level and micro level dimensions. In addition, migrants’ aspirations are also linked with remittances and household development. The following text explains this notion.

Migrants’ remittances are an essential component of labor migration (Carling, 2008, p. 581). These remittances are considered as an important source of external financing for many countries in the world (Mirza et al., 2014). Adams (1998, p. 155) defined remittances as “the money or goods sent home by migrant workers”. He further argued that, in most of the developing and underdeveloped countries of Asia, Africa, and Latin America, internal and external migration can have a profound impact on the accumulation of assets in the rural areas. However, such impact depends on several questions, for example, who migrates from the family, how much net income remitted, and how these remittances have an impact on household consumption and investment (Adams, 1998, p. 155). In the case of Pakistan, the flow of migrants’ remittances significantly increased during the first decade of the 21st century as it amplified more than quadrupled. In 2008 it reached more than \$7 billion or 4.2 percent of GDP (Kock and Sun, 2011, p. 189).

Khan et al. (2009) conducted a study on the impacts of remittances on the living standards of the families of the immigrants living back home in tehsil Gujrat, Pakistan. They selected 100 emigrants’ families through purposive sampling because no registration system can indicate the actual numbers of emigrants’ families living in their area of study. The interlocutors were

interviewed about how they invested remittances sent by their immigrant family member(s). Through the application of different statistical techniques, they compared the proportioned difference in the situations of before and after the emigration in their household. The results showed a significant improvement in the financial status of the household after getting remittances from their migrant family member(s). The remittances enhanced the household's consumptions and their standards of living were improved. They found that there was a significant positive impact of remittances on household accessories and facilities, especially, the families invested remittances to improve their food, clothing, children's education, and health care.

Similarly, Imran et al. (2018) analyzed household-based human development through remittances in various regions (South, North, and Central) of the province of Punjab, Pakistan. They used the data from Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) 2014-15 that was comprised of 41,413 households and after dropping cases having incomplete information, the total number of the sample consisted of 36,400 households. It was observed that the migrant households have higher human development as compared to the non-migrant households, and remittances were significantly used to improve health, education, and housing. The findings of the study indicated a positive impact of remittances on household development in all three regions of the province of Punjab. However, the highest and lowest differences in human development between the migrant households and the non-migrant households were observed in the South and central Punjab respectively. The major reason behind such difference is the fewer opportunities for jobs in South Punjab and, as a result, remittances have a profound impact on the development of the migrant households as compared to the non-migrant households. Whereas, in central Punjab, there are many working industrial units and people have more opportunities to find employment. The big cities like Lahore, Gujranwala, Sialkot, Faisalabad, and Sheikhpura are also located in central Punjab and provide more trading activities as compared to the South Punjab.

Fatima and Qayyum (2016) explained the effect of remittances on households in the rural areas of Pakistan. They used the data from Pakistan Social and Living Standard Survey (PSLM) 2012-13 that consisted of total of 75,516 households, out of which 48,918 were rural households and 26,598 urban households. Their analysis was based on the rural households of the survey. The findings of the study showed that overall, the external remittances have a significant effect on the

accumulation of household assets because the emigrants' families considered remittances as transitory income that could secure them from insecurities in future. However, interestingly, the education of the household head has a significant negative effect on assets accumulation in the rural areas. In those cases, where household heads were more educated, the accumulation of assets decreased because they had different preferences instead of holding assets.

Likewise, Erdal (2012) explored the use of remittances on the construction of houses in the rural areas of tehsil Kharian, district Gujrat, Pakistan. She used the data from a collaborative research project on remittances from the immigrants in Norway. She included quantitative survey (n=664), 45 semi-structured interviews out of which 30 interviews were conducted with the migrants in Norway and 15 were conducted with the relatives of the migrants in Kharian. Moreover, informal interaction with the relatives of the migrants was also utilized to understand their perspectives. Findings of the study revealed many aspects of transnational practices, for example, remittances were spent on building houses because the migrants feel rooted in the country of origin and there should be "a place to stay in Pakistan" (Erdal, 2012, p. 629). Furthermore, the immigrants aimed to construct or renovate their houses for the comfort of their parents and also to help out relatives living in their native areas. Some participants of the data collected from Kharian also pointed out that they built houses for a business point of view and took it as an investment.

In sum, the above-mentioned studies describe that people have aspirations for migration depending upon their ability and resources. The migrants' remittances are an essential component of labor migration. Remittances can be useful for household development, education, health, construction of houses, and security from future insecurities. In this context, the present study will also focus on how the aspirant migrants and their families were inspired for migration, how they planned it, were the families of the migrants receiving remittances after migration of their family members. If they were receiving remittances, then did it have an impact on household development, and if they were not receiving remittances then what was the main reason behind. The section 3.5 explains the importance of social networks in international migration. These networks perform various roles in the organization and facilitation of irregular migration which are discussed in the following section.

3.6 Multiple Services Provided by Networks

Some studies revealed that often the irregular migrants don't have any particular destination choice while starting their journey through irregular means (Schapendonk, 2012; Collyer, 2007; Grillo, 2007; Hamood, 2006). The decision about destination choice depends upon the information and social networking with other irregular migrants. The role of a human smuggler is very important to decide the destination choice. The irregular migrants are usually dependent on smugglers and follow their instructions because the smugglers are well-connected with other human smugglers in the destination countries. Moreover, different researches pointed out that the services of human smugglers are commonly used by the irregular migrants throughout the travel or at some point during the journey. For example, it had been found that human smugglers facilitated almost 80 percent of illegal crossing of the Mediterranean from Africa to Europe (Reitano, 2015). Similarly, irregular movement from Indonesia to Australia has also been facilitated by human smugglers and around two-third of the irregular migrants used this facility (Hugo et al., 2017). The following text describes how human smugglers play a role to facilitate the irregular migrants.

Throughout the world, human smugglers have become an integral part of irregular migration (Kuschminder et al., 2015). They perform a variety of tasks to facilitate the irregular migrants like assisting in illegal entry and stay both in transit and destination countries. Such illegal assistance ranges from the facilitation of the migrants through unguarded areas of the border, hidden pockets at border crossing, both inland and at the sea. They also help the migrants by providing false documents for entry and exit for a specific country and rotate them in specific geographical places (Triandafyllidou and Maroukis, 2012). In the context of irregular migration, information plays an important role to initiate the process of migration and influences the destination choice of the migrants (Kuschminder et al., 2015). The decision of irregular migration is not sudden and it takes time and consideration of many influencing factors in this regard. However, it can be changed and amended radically when the migrants are underway to the destination country. They can change their initial plan to reach a particular country and it depends on the circumstances and information they receive during the travel or transit points. Some time the smugglers make unilateral decisions to change the route and the desired destination country without consulting the migrants (Barsky, 2000).

In their study on decision making of asylum seekers in the UK, Robinson and Segrott (2002) found that if the migrants have to select one desired country among several choices, then they rely on the available information and the context of that information, otherwise, they let the smugglers decide. Other than the provision of information, the smugglers also perform different facilities like arranging transportation, provisional shelters, and supply of food (Triandafyllidou, 2018). Similarly, the human smugglers are also well-connected with their networks and perform various roles at different stages. For example, in their study on human smuggling from South Asian region, Jayasuriya and Sunam (2016) explained the complex nature of the networking of the human smugglers in Pakistan and Sri Lanka:

Field research in Pakistan and Sri Lanka involving interviews with migrant smugglers highlighted multilayered networks of smugglers with more or less clear roles. Multilayered smugglers include local village sub-agents, main agents, logistic handling agents, transit country agents and destination country agents, each performing various specific roles from motivating people for irregular migration, dealing with State authorities for fake documents to facilitating travel (Jayasuriya and Sunam, 2016, p. 192).

Maroufof (2015) conducted a study on the decision-making process of irregular migration of Pakistani migrants in Greece. She conducted 30 interviews with Pakistani irregular migrants in Greece, representatives of association of Pakistani migrants in Greece, government officials, and some stakeholders from NGOs. The study found a smuggling network as a “highly influential” (p. 9) factor that influenced the decision-making process of irregular migration. Smugglers played various roles in this regard, for example, provision of information regarding different control policies of the destination country, how to tackle obstacles, better economic opportunities waiting for them in the destination country, and “reassurance that in all cases turned out to be by large untrue” (p. 9).

Similarly, Ambrosini (2017) explained the role of intermediaries in various dimensions of mobility and settlements of the irregular migrants and presented five types of action to understand intermediation. First is the connection, which entails some promises and links the migrants with opportunities and possible resources regarding “entrance, work, and accommodation” (p. 1816) in the host society. The aspiring migrants without legal status have no access to an official mechanism to get such services and often rely on the bridge provided by intermediaries. Such bridges consist of migrants’ needs and “the most important are jobs and

accommodation. Immaterial goods, like information, reference, and sponsorship, are the key objects of this first type of intermediation” (p. 1816). Second is the provision of certain services, as the migrants cannot get support from formal institutions, these intermediaries play a role of “alternative suppliers that not only connect with resources but act to provide the services required” (p. 1816). Such services range from providing safe passages for border crossing including transportation, an arrangement of false documents, operating in the underground economy, etc. The mediators are not only familiar with geographical locations of safe passages but are well-connected with state officials across the borders that provide forged documents or turn a blind eye while crossing the borders. They also mold plans regarding the stay at transit points and even change route plans during mobility. The third activity is help, which is “concrete first-hand support in meeting the actual needs” (p. 1816). Ambrosini (2017) distinguished help from the provision of services as it is immediate and does not base on some organization. The irregular migrants require some money, food, or shelter for some time as an immediate need and such difficulties can be overcome through some networks. In such cases, sometimes, “native actors, like churches and religious institutions, are particularly sensitive to people in need” (p. 1816). The fourth type is tolerance, which is some sort of “implicit intermediation” (p.1817). In this case, some actors like official authorities, private owners of houses, NGOs, or employers are less vigilant regarding the legal identity of the migrants. Such negligence “becomes a bridge towards access to some opportunities or services, or it makes it possible to gain time, or to avoid arrest and deportation: in any case, it intermediates unauthorized immigrants’ settlement in receiving societies” (p. 1817). The fifth form is political pressure. It is a typical role played by several stakeholders like ethnic associations, trade-unions, NGOs, social movements, and civil society. In several countries such organizations provide legal assistance and guidance to the irregular migrants and “pave the way to amnesties or other provisions in favor of unauthorized migrants” (p. 1817) and it also influences political authorities to relax regulations.

In sum, networks provide various services including information, assistance in illegal stay and entry both in transition and destination countries, arrange forged documents, identify sleeping cells, and finalize the destination countries. We assume that the aspirant migrants in the villages of district Gujrat are also dependent on the networks of agents for the above-mentioned services. A major reason that enhances the aspirant migrants’ dependency on agents is their fantasy about Europe. This point is discussed in the following section.

3.6.1 Migrants' Dependency and Geographical Imagination

In migration decision making, economic explanation backed by social networks and political factors remained prominent in the literature (Thompson, 2017). However, less attention has been paid to study migration decision-making through the lens of geographical imagination, which deals with the mental descriptions of different places and people living there (Thompson, 2017). Since we witnessed major migratory flows towards Europe (Czaika and de Hass, 2014), the “meaning of Europe has been prominent in various disciplines”, however, it usually focused from “within the EU” and perceiving Europe from the non-EU perspective is still largely unexplored (Timmerman et al., 2018, p. 223). Likewise, Bal and Willems (2014) argued that social and cultural aspects of migration decision-making are studied considerably, but the conviction of a better life “away from home” (p. 249) is still understudied. Koikkalainen and Kyle (2016) also pointed out that migration research often focused on the migrants’ experiences after settlement in the host society. They further stressed for more empirical research on the immigrants’ narratives of imagining themselves as inhabitants of foreign destinations before actual physical mobility.

The idea of geographical imagination was developed from “sociological imagination”, a concept coined by Mills (1959, p. 5) to understand individuals’ biographies in a larger historical context (Harvey, 1973). Hume first time used the term geographical imagination and, later on, theorized by Harvey (1973, p. 24). He described geographical imagination as a notion which “enables the individual to recognize the role of space and place in his own biography, to relate to the spaces he sees around him, and to recognize how transactions between individuals and between organizations are affected by the space that separates them” (p. 24).

Timmerman et al. (2018) further explained geographical imagination as “subjectivity of the human conception of locations, spaces, countries, and the people inhabiting these physical places. In other words, people hold certain images of the world’s geographical regions and of the people inhabiting these regions” (p. 227). In her study on the Pilipino healthcare migrants in the UK, Thompson (2017) described that for Pilipino immigrants, “the West” (p.79) has a specific image and has created inspiration for their mobility. These imaginations consist of better life and characteristics of people in the host society. Moreover, such imaginations were mounting by information given by networks, portrayed by media and culture of migration. Thompson (2017)

further argued that the geographical imagination approach not only provides an understanding of various motivating factors of emigration but also determines how specific countries become popular destinations.

Marcus (2009) explored the trends of Brazilian migrants to the United States. He found that local sending communities consider emigrants as heroes because they contribute to the development of locality through remittances, which is a dignified benefit to Brazilian society. However, the trend of emigration in the local community is linked with geographical imagination and “produced a ‘culture of out-migration’ fettered to the chains of unrealistic financial expectations” (p. 481). Moreover, this imagination led to the gold-rush mentality among local Brazilians and some successful returnees propelled their perceptions “that they indeed found the gold and brought it back home” (Marcus, 2009, p. 481).

Nyamnjoh (2010) investigated how fishermen in Senegal had a desire for migration to Europe through boat opportunity – boat conceptualized as irregular migration. He described that desire for boat migration among Senegalese has become a popular trait as it is accelerated by their networks. The fisher community in Senegal has a long-lasting culture of migration and it symbolizes social prestige in the local community. This culture is fostered by some successful cases and has become a motivation for youngsters since their childhood because they used to observe such cases in their community and imagine Europe as a utopia and a paradise. Furthermore, such images are made more alluring by media portraits and stories told by networks. For example, an only young boat survivor among sixty irregular migrants explained his image about Europe as:

When I watch TV and I see Europe, it is as if I should enter the TV. Since I was a child, I have always dreamt of going to Europe. Europe is beautiful; there is wealth and a lot of opportunities (Nyamnjoh, 2010, p. 134).

For Senegalese, once they reach Europe then all their problems would be solved as Europe is a land of prosperity, and “Europe is the Euro” (Nyamnjoh, 2010, p. 134). In his study on trends of migration in Hyderabad, India, Ali (2007) noted that though this city is a hub of information technology (IT) professionals, enormous job opportunities for residents could not decrease a desire for migration. He further argued that a culture of migration compelled Hyderabad Muslim professionals and laborers to pursue opportunities in the United States and Saudi Arabia. This

culture of migration is swelled by some beliefs, myths, and media images of immigration as well. It is linked with their social status and also affects their marriage patterns. Del Re (2018) argued that perceptions play a significant role in understanding international migration. Transportation facilities and mass communication in line with human smuggling networks enable a large number of people to think of migration. People take migration decisions considering various social and cultural contexts both in the home country and the host society, for example, “ideas about how people live in Europe” (Del Re, 2018, p. 6).

Mescoli (2014) analyzed the imagination and preparation process of migration among young residents of Khouribga, Morocco, who intended to migrate to Italy. This city is renowned for the world’s largest phosphate reserves. Instead of searching job in local mining industry, the surprise is “the ‘reputation’ of this city as a place where almost everyone seems to be yearning to move to Italy” (Mescoli, 2014, p. 3). A culture of migration towards Italy created a social environment to imagine migration as a source of an affluent life. This imagination is also triggered and facilitated by the networks operating in the area. The young aspired migrants imagine their journey even they have not yet physically left the country. Crawley and Hagen-Zanker (2019) conducted a research on the Syrians, Eritreans, and Nigerians immigrants and found that perception about Europe was a significant factor along with the effects of networks, the intension of family reunion, and the availability of information and economic opportunities in the host society. The results showed that few interlocutors have specific destinations in their minds like Germany and Sweden; however, the majority have intentions to go to Europe and imagine it “as a place of safety, security and hope for a better future” (Crawley and Hagen-Zanker, 2019, p. 24).

In sum, the aspirant migrants’ mental descriptions of life in Europe enhance their wish to migrate. For them, the concept of Europe seems as a gold-mine, utopia, paradise, opportunities of getting enormous amount of money once they enter Europe, etc. In this context, the present study will also focus on how the aspirant young migrants from district Gujrat imagine Europe. Similarly, the present study also supposes that irregular migration through such a hazardous track is a hard task for the young migrants having meager education and least exposure to rugged geographical terrain and unfamiliarity of destination countries like Greece. However, they embrace it due to their imagination of Europe as full of economic opportunities. We will come

back to these questions in empirical chapters. The fantasies of the aspirant migrants regarding Europe encourage them to take risk of irregular migration. In spite of their dreams about a better life in the destination country, they face many challenges which are discussed in the following section 3.7.

3.7 Irregular Migration, Violence and Abuse

Human smuggling and corruption are interlinked and irregular migrants often face several challenges concerning human rights, like abuse and violence (Crepeau, 2017). OHCHR (2016) explained that there are different types of abuses or human rights violations of the migrants during transit. They are being treated as destitute in the transit country as they have no legal claim to protect them or are unable to seek protection. They are more vulnerable to such violence and abuse as compared to those who initiate their journey by legal means. Often it has been observed that the irregular migrants are at high risk of abuse during this travel or journey. Moreover, the nexus between the human smugglers and the government official provides a joint venture to promote corruption and exploit irregular migrants (OHCHR, 2016, p. 9).

Another important feature of human smuggling and irregular migration is the vulnerability of the irregular migrants in terms of dangerous border crossing. It can be divided into two parts. Firstly, the threat deals with some natural hurdles. Secondly, it is linked with abuse from the smugglers as Collyer (2010) explained it as “dangers on the journey” (p. 277). He further described that during the journey, the irregular migrants may encounter some natural obstacles like seas, deserts, or mountainous areas. The irregular migrants have to cross all these obstacles because in this way they can hide from the border security forces. The situation may become worse if violence and abuse are practiced by the smugglers. Such a situation varies and depends on different factors. For example, it can be misinformation from the smugglers at the start of the journey. They exploit the irregular migrants during the journey especially at the transit point. Such misinformation can be “in the hope of increasing their own profits, to extreme cases of physical violence, armed robbery or enslavement” (Collyer, 2010, p. 277). For the last two decades, the Mediterranean Sea has become a very hazardous and porous crossing point between Europe and other countries (Fargues and Bonfanti, 2014).

The stories of exploitation of the irregular migrants by human smugglers during travel are almost similar in different regions of the world. For example, a study on the extent of violence and miserable conditions of the irregular migrants during travel had been conducted by UNODC (2010). The common problems of the migrants were extreme hunger and thirst, bad hygienic conditions, tiredness, and long intervals of waiting times. Likewise, Triandafyllidou and Maroukis (2012) also found some stories from the irregular migrants that the local gangsters at Iran-Turkey border especially Kurdish tribesmen kidnap the irregular migrants and demand for money. If they don't have cash then they torture them and force them to call back home and ask to provide money to the kidnapers. One interlocutor, who witnessed such torture by Kurdish mafia at the Turkish-Iranian border, explained it as "they (kidnappers) were telling them "call your home to bring money. They were pulling out nails, cutting ears...they were talking with their dad and mum on the phone and he [the mafia guy] was screaming, he was cutting and they were screaming..."(p. 27). It is astonishing that in spite of such hazardous tracks, how migrants decide to take a risk which is elaborated in the following text.

3.7.1 Risk Assessment by Migrants

Risk is an important notion in various scientific disciplines. However, still, there are several interpretations of this concept and there is no consensus on a particular definition (Brown, 2016). Often, people use the same word "risk" (p. 18) to address various situations and consider it subjective and epistemic (Šotić and Rajić, 2015). Risk is also associated with uncertainty, both encountered in several aspects of everyday life (Zinn, 2016; Williams and Balaz, 2012). Risk and uncertainty have many explanations but according to Williams and Balaz (2012) the differentiation between these concepts originated in Knight's (1921) work as "respectively, known and unknown uncertainties" (p. 4). The concept of risk can be studied in various contexts. For example, the economic approach usually focuses individual, or "the individual household, as a decision making unit", while sociological theories focus "more social constructionist approaches" in day-to-day life regarding various factors, for example, media, individual experiences, moral convictions, biographies, and personal judgments (Williams and Balaz, 2012, p. 13).

In the case of irregular migration²⁹, the risk is an integral part of the decision making process as it helps to perceive possible consequences before starting the journey (Townsend and Oomen, 2015, p. 3). The risk assessment is also intervened by smugglers as they assist the aspirant migrants and assure the successful completion of the trip. Together with the availability of smugglers and access to information, the personal motivation of the migrants is another important attribute of migration decision making. However, keeping in view the perceived risk associated with several mediating factors during departing the country of origin, crossing the transit, and entering the host country, the motivations of migrants often change (Zimmermann, 2009). In some cases, the irregular migrants do not have a particular destination choice in their minds before leaving the country of origin. This choice can be influenced due to various reasons like access to information regarding the policies of different countries, social networking, or suggestions of smugglers (Düvell, 2014; Schapendonk, 2012). Furthermore, the hardships during the journey may influence the migrants to change their plan because the journey was not easier or simpler as per their expectations (Townsend and Oomen, 2015) and all the dreams of the irregular migrants are not necessarily to be fulfilled because they may fail to do so, or get pushed into unwanted decisions (Schapendonk, 2012). So, motivations and ambitions of the irregular migrants play an important role in conceiving the idea of irregular mobility, assessing the possibility of risk, planning, and execution. But over time, due to several intervening causes the migrants may have to reconsider or reorganize all their plans in accordance with the existing circumstances.

Risk calculation is another important aspect of irregular migration. Even though several thousand irregular migrants lost their lives during their journey in the previous few years, still many new migrants continue to start this hideous journey. Townsend and Oomen (2015) answered this puzzle and argued that, usually, irregular migrants are not able to realize the risk during the journey and are not familiar with less dangerous alternatives, especially when they are guided by smugglers' networks. Though, European Union's Mediterranean Task Force alarmed all the stakeholders about the poor quality of the information provided to migrants and prepared some

²⁹ The present study is focusing on irregular migration, so the focus of discussion is risk in irregular context. However; Williams and Baláž (2012, p. 168) also explained risk and uncertainty in case of legal migration, for instance, "a migrant moving to a pre-arranged job, who has received information about housing and other costs from social contacts in the destination, faces elements of uncertainty; for example, how (s)he will adapt to new working and social conditions" (p.168).

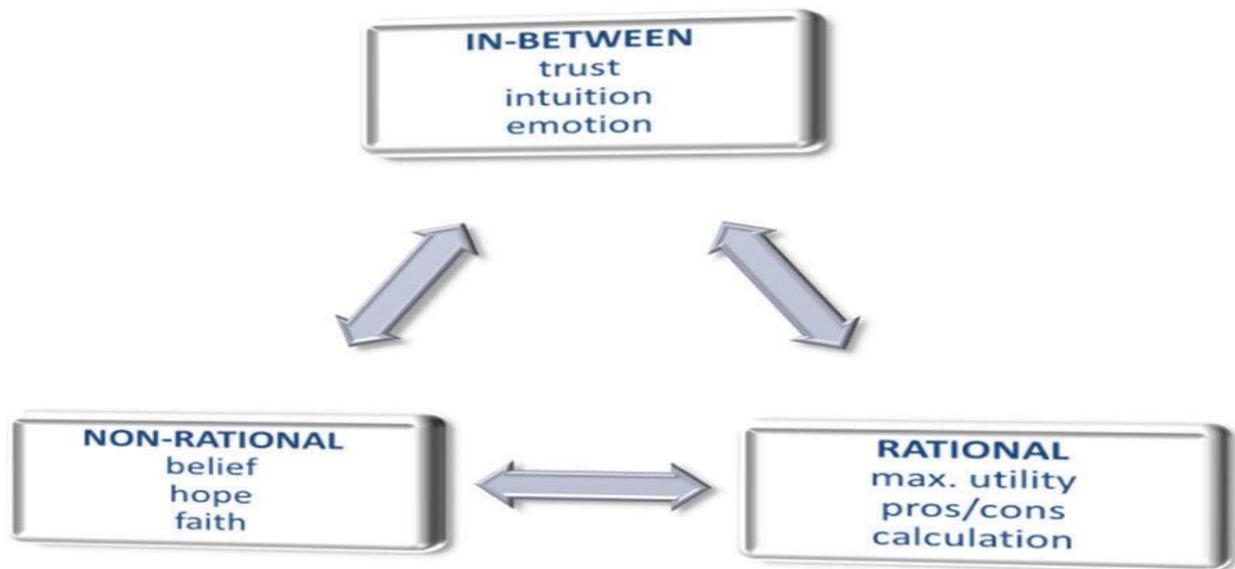
guidelines to alert about “the grave risks and dangers” (p. 5) of this illegal crossing (Townsend and Oomen, 2015). Such precautionary measures couldn’t influence the decisions of the migrants to put themselves in danger due to the following factors:

- People are generally not very good at calculating risk, and routinely discount risk in everyday decisions.
- The risk of death or injury may seem worth taking, especially when compared with immediate threats to personal safety.
- Long-term risks are weighed against short-term risks, and may appear more important in a given moment; for example, the migrants may worry more about future obstacles to finding work or summoning family members than about immediate risks to life and limb (Townsend and Oomen, 2015, p. 5).

Many studies on human perceptions of risk deal with temporary and corporeal situations like mistreatment and injury but ignore the important point that the migrants value their moment in a long-lasting opportunity. In such a situation, the migrants may be well concerned with the expected threat but fail to calculate the extent of a threat as compared to their desired objective like a settlement in a destination country of their choice in Europe. So, they evaluate short-term physical threats to their long-term objectives of planning for a better future in some Western countries (Townsend and Oomen, 2015).

Zinn (2016, p. 348) analyzed how people adopt various strategies to deal with risk and uncertainty. He divided it into three types as rational strategies, in-between strategies, and non-rational strategies. For Zinn (2016, p. 351), the in-between strategies are more fruitful for people in adverse situations in which they foresee their future very miserable. They get motivation from “*non-rational*” like hope, faith, and ideology to overcome their fear and act accordingly. However, these strategies are not linear but situated and reasonable in various conditions under which people apply them. Figure 3.1 illustrates this model.

Figure 3.1 Strategies to Manage Risk and Uncertainty



Source: Zinn (2016, p. 359)

Hernandez-Carretero and Carling (2012) presented risk-taking among the Pirogue migrants from Senegal to Spain – how awareness of the risk of return or even death influences decisions of the aspiring migrants regarding irregular border crossing. They argued that the aspired migrants perceived boat migration as the only possible strategy to flee from socio-economic stagnation in Senegal. Moreover, limited opportunity for legal migration escalated to take risk of boat migration, even aware of its adverse consequences in terms of death or return. Additionally, context-specific attitudes to risk also motivated the aspired youth to initiate high-risk migration, for instance, masculinity traits to embrace danger and religious connotation of death during migration (Hernandez-Carretero and Carling, 2012).

IOM (2016) also assessed the possible risks of irregular migration from Iraq and Nigeria to Europe through the routes of the Central and Eastern Mediterranean. These risks were divided into three categories – in the origin country, transit, and destination respectively. The main risks in countries of origin were many attempts to exit, threats of capture by the state officials and the militant groups, etc. Major risks during transit were a shortage of money, being smuggled among different parties, separation of family especially children, maltreatment and dangerous boat journey, etc. Risks in the destination countries include uncertainty about future, rumors and poor information, inconsistent procedures that create doubts and weaken the trust and even accommodation centers were looked like as worse as situations in countries of origin, especially

in Iraq. Another important factor which helps the migrants to take risk is their trust in the agents as discussed in the following text.

3.7.2 Trust in Agents

Plenty of scientific literature is available on the concept of trust, especially since 1980. However, due to the elusive nature of this concept, there is no single agreed definition (Welter, 2012). Generally, due to complex and diverse nature, the concept of trust is being explained by its types and context (Welter, 2012, p. 193). Lewicki and Bunker (1995, p. 139) adopted the definition of trust given by Boon and Holmes (1991, p. 194) as “a state involving confident positive expectations about another’s motives with respect to oneself in situations entailing risk” (193). In Sociology, Sztompka (1999) theorized trust as an essential element of human actions. Some other scholars like Blyth (2016), Bo et al. (2017), and Ellingsen (2014) argued that trust is based on reliability and is socially constructed. Lin and Dong (2017) explained trust in terms of interaction and evaluation. Ellingsen (2014) described trust both as the feeling of individual and a social outcome, having three social aspects as pre-contractual, relational processes, and formal structures respectively (p. 9).

In the context of irregular migration, Achilli (2016) found that “smuggling requires a great deal of trust” (p. 101). He further explained that trust and cooperation are very important patterns of interaction between the aspired migrants and the networks facilitating this mobility. Usually, politicians, media, and security officials take smugglers as brutal criminals. However, a strong bond has been observed between the smugglers and the aspired migrants. Among various migrant communities, smugglers portray themselves as “service-providers” (p. 101) and it is considered beneficial for those who cannot manage mobility through legal channels. Surprisingly, local people consider these smugglers as “philanthropists who save others or ordinary people who just want to make some money” (Achilli, 2016, p. 101).

It is important to reveal that maintaining credibility and winning the trust of the clients are core points in the process of smuggling in the context of migrants’ places of departure. In her study, Alpes (2013) argued that the level of trust between the migrant brokers and the aspiring migrants cannot be simply explained in the context of legal frameworks like trafficking and smuggling. The better way to understand this relationship is under the dynamics of moralities that takes place at departure. This economy of departure “refers to the production and circulation of values,

emotions, and norms as they are evoked by the event of departure” (Alpes, 2013, p. 4). In the context of the local value system, the aspiring migrants appreciate the promises and commitment made by the smugglers regarding a successful journey regardless of the legal or illegal means. As one interlocutor of Alpes (2013, p. 11) replied “I will respect both of them because they have the power to get visa. They have the power to make you have the visa in your passports. I don’t know what they do or what it takes, but [...] the important thing is that you are in Europe and it’s because of [them]”.

Koser (2008) observed that human smugglers have established their offices on a long term basis. They want to establish their reputation to facilitate an irregular migration journey and make it a success story. In this way they can win the confidence and trust of the aspiring migrants. Through their successful clients, their reputation as a trustworthy smuggler can travel and they can get more and more clientele, which is an indicator of trust and shows that the smuggler is credible to facilitate mobility. The notion of trust is also important for all human smugglers working in the same community because they have competition with each other.

In sum, the above-mentioned section 3.7 and its sub-sections reflects on various dangerous aspects of irregular migration. It describes that the irregular migrants face abuse, extreme physical torture by smugglers and local gangsters, human rights violations as they have no legal claim, they are very vulnerable during border-crossing. They face corrupt officials and bear hunger and thirst. Despite all these dangers, the aspirant migrants take risk of irregular migration due to various socio-religious notions. Another important aspect of irregular migration is the aspirant migrants’ relationship with smugglers and it depends on their level of trust. The present study will also focus on the trust of the aspirant migrants in their agents, how they interpret trust, how the aspirant migrants from district Gujrat explain risk, how their agents behave with them and whether these agents fulfill their promises or they deceive the aspirant migrants and their families. Irregular migration is also very expensive and depends on different condition. This issue is discussed in the following section.

3.8 Cost of Irregular Migration

Flexibility in negotiation and payment of money is an important feature of human smuggling. Such negotiation or dealing with human smugglers varies and it depends on several factors like

the relationship with the smugglers. For example, if they belong to the same biraderi, are living in the same village, or contacted through some friends or family members, then he may be agreed on a relatively small amount. Many human smugglers and traffickers are involved in this business, yet it is not clear how much money is exactly made by the smugglers through irregular migration (Koser, 2008). But one thing is obvious that it contains a worth of multibillion-dollar enterprise (UNODC, 2010a; Koser, 2008). Some studies are available in this context but it varies from the area of origin and destination of the irregular migrants and depicts only one-sided story (Koser, 2008). The reputation of the smugglers is also an important indicator of high or low payment (Koser, 2008). Such a reputation can be measured to take stock of success stories, like how many people successfully reached the desired destination through a particular smuggler. Sometimes, the competition between different smugglers also plays a role in the negotiation of money (Koser, 2008). Different smugglers offer different packages to attract more and more clients. In this case the migrants can easily negotiate lower prices (Koser, 2008). Similarly, Petros (2005, p. 2) reviewed 538 secondary sources to estimate the costs of human smuggling. She argued that it is very difficult to specify the exact amount paid to human smugglers because it depends on various factors, for example, geographical location, the characteristics of migrants, and the mode of transportation. She further compared various regions and found routes between Asia and America as the most expensive. In the case of irregular migration from Asia to Europe, many routes were identified like China to the UK, Afghanistan to Germany, Pakistan to Ukraine, and India to Poland, and the mean cost was \$9,374 (Petros, 2005, p. 6).

In some cases, price depends on the chances of success or mode of travel. For instance, Mbaye (2014) examined the factors that motivate the potential illegal migrants from Senegal to Europe. He conducted a survey in Dakar and interviewed 400 individuals. The findings depicted wage differences and methods of migration to the Western countries from Senegal with a significant variation in prices. He identified three different ways to migrate, firstly, the “visa method” (p. 9) in which migrants directly apply for visas by using legal means and travel through aircraft. Secondly, the “pirogue method” (p. 9) which involves smugglers and uses illegal means of travelling through boats or routes by crossing several countries to reach the desired destinations like Spain, Italy, or France. Thirdly, the “embassy method” (p. 9) which means bribing corrupt officials to get forged documents, which is also a form of illegal migration. It was found that all the three methods charged different prices but migration through smugglers is much cheaper as

compared to the other two methods. However, the chances of success in migration through smugglers are much lower but the majority of the interlocutors replied that they would risk their lives in order to reach the desired destination. Similarly, Van Hear (2014) stated that the economic status or paying ability of the migrants is linked with the mode of travelling. Those migrants who cannot pay a high price for travel by air usually take a boat or bus which is relatively cheaper or even prefer to travel by foot. In another study, Zohry (2006) also indicated a price difference in irregular and regular migration from Cairo to Italy. The interlocutors of his study were aware of the fact that legal migration to Europe is not easy and much costly as compared to migration through the help of human smugglers. The route of irregular migration consists of Egypt-Libya-Italy by using boats through the Mediterranean (p. 23).

UNODC (2010a) explained some other important factors which determine the cost of irregular travelling through smugglers. Some major factors that determine the cost are the distance and risk or obstacles on the route. People also count the institutional control on the route and facilitation during transit and reception in the destination country. A very interesting finding in the report indicates that often there is a fixed cost on a particular track. However, sometimes it varies to different nationalities or diaspora backgrounds. UNODC (2010a) further explained that the irregular migrants expect lower prices for illegal travelling as compared to the formal fee of legal visa process or other tactics to enter the destination country. They also calculate the official charges for the application of a legal visa. These charges are extra and they have to pay the separate visa fee to the relevant embassy. However, the smuggling of the irregular migrants is much segmented and depends on the payment made by the migrants for services.

In the case of South Asia, Jayasuriya and Sunam (2016) argued that this region is a hub of legal and illegal migration within South Asia and to other countries as well. For illegal migration, human smugglers play a pivotal role. They calculated the cost for irregular migration and found that it depends on the destination country like Europe, the United States, or others. It is also linked with several other factors like the chances of getting a job in the destination country, the number of stay or transit countries, and the transportation facility during travel. In the South Asian region, the cost of irregular travelling from Pakistan is relatively lower as compared to other countries of the region (Jayasuriya and Sunam, 2016, p. 194). The profit of smugglers varies and depends on its operating mechanism. In Pakistan and Sri Lanka, it is estimated that

migrant smugglers and their assistants charge 25 percent profit margin but the migrants believed that they pay up to 60 percent profit margin (Jayasuriya and Sunam, 2016). Jayasuriya and Sunam (2016, p. 194) presented a comprehensive figure of the cost being charged by the human smugglers in the South Asian region. It is reflected in the following figure 3.2.

Figure 3.2 Estimated Cost of Irregular Migration

Origin Country	Destination	Costs
Bangladesh	France	USD 13,000
	Greece	USD 3,000 to 13,000
	Turkey	USD 4,000 to 6,000
	Middle Eastern Countries	USD 2,300 to 2,600
	Malaysia	USD 2,700
	United Kingdom	USD 7,800
	Italy	USD 9,100
	United States	USD 6,605
	India	USD 40 to 60
India	Europe	USD 6,500 to 30,000
	United Kingdom	USD 22,500 to 42,000
	Canada	USD 65,000
	United States	USD 25,000 to 50,000
	Australia and New Zealand	USD 13,000
Pakistan	Germany	USD 11,000
	Sweden	USD 6,800

	Indonesia (Jakarta)	USD 7,000
	Greece	USD 4,000
	Islamic Republic of Iran	USD 3,400
	Turkey; South Africa; Hong Kong; China; Bangkok; Abu Dhabi; Libya	USD 5,500
Sri Lanka	Dubai	USD 1,481
	Canada	USD 7,000 to 16,700
	London	USD 21,000 to 33,000
	Switzerland	USD 22,000
	Germany	USD 18,800 to 23,000
	Italy	USD 8,333 to 19,500
	France	18,800 to 27,800
	New Zealand	USD 23,000

Source: Jayasuriya and Sunam (2016, p. 194)

Figure 3.2 depicts the holistic picture of costs being charged by human smugglers in different countries of the South Asian region. The cost varies from the country of origin to the country of destination. However, it is noted that the prices to all the destination countries in Europe especially for Greece were significantly lower in Pakistan as compared to all other countries of the region. We assume that the major reason for lower prices charged by human smugglers in Pakistan maybe its geographical location and easy access to Greece which is considered as a gateway to Europe especially via Iran and Turkey. Moreover, many irregular migrants from Afghanistan also use Pakistan as the main route to entry into European territory through Greece (Majidi and Danziger, 2016, p. 163). So, as a result, many human smuggling networks are working in Pakistan and offer lower prices to attract more and more people. From the migrants’

perspective, another important aspect linked with human smuggling is how to manage finance for payment to human smugglers which is discussed in the following section.

3.8.1 Management of Finance and Mode of Payment

Majidi and Danziger (2016) conducted a study on human smuggling from Afghanistan to Europe and explained that the migrants have to pay costs for their travel regardless of the distance and nature of travelling. In the case of irregular migration, the potential migrants from Afghanistan arrange money by selling-off valuable assets of the household or by borrowing money to finance their journey with the help of human smugglers. They further described that arrangement of money becomes a collective responsibility of the family and in some cases, relatives and other members of the community also contribute to financing such a journey. In some cases, the migrants sold their houses, household furniture, and cars as well (Dimitriadi, 2017). Likewise, in his study on Pakistani and Afghan irregular migrants, Koser (2008) found various sources to arrange money to pay the human smugglers. The majority of the interlocutors used their savings to pay money for their travel. Other significant sources were selling off property, land, and jewellery. In some cases, the migrants took loans from relatives, friends, and money lenders as well; a few of them also used community funds (Koser, 2008, p. 13).

Davy (2017) also identified that the general method of payment to the smugglers is cash and the majority of the irregular migrants pay money to human smugglers through informal means of money transfer, for example, cash in hand (p. 15). However, in the scientific literature, there is less focus to study the specific mode of payment to the smugglers in different regions (UNODC, 2010). In some cases payments were divided into two parts, first is in advance and the second is upon arrival at the destination country. In Morocco, for example, the irregular migrants who belong to the local community have a right to a second trip with a single payment. The second trip was allowed, in case, if the first attempt was unsuccessful. However, this opportunity was only allowed to the residents of the local community and not for outsiders (UNODC, 2010). Friebel and Guriev (2006) examined the negotiation of money between the irregular migrants and the smugglers. They found that many irregular migrants couldn't pay money to the smugglers at once or in advance, they preferred to make contracts with the smugglers and assured them that the remaining money would be paid after getting work in the destination

country. In some cases, the migrants paid money through a third party to ensure the chances of success (Koser, 2008).

In sum, the above-mentioned studies explain the cost of migration, how the migrants managed money to pay for their migration, and how they paid this money. There is no fix amount of irregular migration and varies from case to case and region to region. The present study will also focus on what was the cost of irregular migration from district Gujrat to Greece and other EU member states. How the aspirant migrants negotiated with the agents, how they managed finance, and how they paid this money.

3.9 Conclusion

This chapter presents theoretical as well as empirical accounts of irregular migration. The first section elaborates that social networks play an important role in migration decision making and such networks are further supported by kinship networking, and social capital. As field of the present study is comprised of rural areas of district Gujrat, Punjab, we assume that the migrants from this area are well-connected through these networks. The second section explains the empirical account of the present study. The above mentioned empirical studies on different aspects of irregular migration show that it is a complex phenomenon with various conceptual and methodological challenges and there are many explanations to understand this issue. The aspired migrants who cannot pursue legal migration due to various reasons are inclined to approach migration agents. These agents provide them information and other logistic support during travel to reach their imaginary lands. Despite how state authorities consider these agents, in some cases, the migrants take them as service providers who help them to reach their desired destinations. However, agents pose many threats to the lives of the migrants and violate their human rights by using violence and abuse. Moreover, such incidents are not properly recorded due to hazardous tracks. However, the migrants take risks for such a fatal journey and it depends on their level of trust in the agents, faith in God and destiny, and masculine traits to face challenging situations. The cost of irregular migration, management of finance and the mode of payments to the agents vary from region to region and depend on the mode of transportation and time.

CHAPTER 4

MATERIAL AND METHODS

The present chapter provides the detailed strategy regarding methodology and methods used in the present study. It is divided into four sections. The first section explains the methodological approach employed in the study along with the research design. Second section explains the data collection procedures by explaining semi-structured interviews, development of interview guide, sampling and access to the field, ethical considerations, challenges faced during fieldwork, information of the research interlocutors, and strategy of translation of the recorded interviews. Third section depicts the data analysis procedures and discusses coding in grounded theory methodology with example from the data of the present study, memos, diagrams, and constant comparison analysis. It also presents some diagrams that helped to understand the nature of data and facilitated the analysis. Last section discusses the issue of subjectivity and explains my position in this research.

4.1 Methodological Approach

4.1.1 Research Design

The present study is based on six months ethnographic fieldwork in district Gujrat, Punjab, Pakistan. Ethnographic research provides in-depth understanding of individuals' lives and makes sense of their reality (Hesse-Biber and Leavy, 2006). Ethnographers "provide detailed accounts of the everyday practices and customs of a culture, subculture, or group, often collecting artifacts and other cultural materials. They record and analyze the variety of social structures within their settings, paying attention to religious, familial, political, and economic life" (Hesse-Biber and Leavy, 2006, p. 230). In the present study, qualitative research design has been used because it provides the insider's perspective or an emic view instead of an external format (Hesse-Biber and Leavy, 2006). It also provides a contextualized approach to understand social phenomena under investigation (Hesse-Biber and Leavy, 2006). The focus of the qualitative research is to capture experiences of individuals rather draw conclusions of large groups (Nicholls, 2017). The major question the present study tries to answer is how irregular migration from Pakistan to Greece and other EU member states is organized and facilitated by agents – such questions can

only be answered by knowing the interlocutors' perspectives and do not fully apparent in assessment of attitudes in terms of close ended questions (Denzin and Lincoln, 2000). Likewise, interlocutors have the opportunity to state their circumstances and experiences in their own words in a larger detail and in a personal way through face to face interaction (Tonsing, 2014).

Moreover, the interpretive nature of the qualitative research facilitates data analysis, as the present study aims to reconstruct the interlocutors' experiences of the issue of irregular migration in the context of local realities and thereby assign meanings to several patterns (Cresswell, 2014; Berg, 2007; Orlikowski and Baroudi, 1991). This method also provides a chance to understand the social construction of various symbols or augments as discussed by research participants themselves because "what we call our data are really our own constructions of other people's construction of what they and their compatriots are up to" (Geertz, 1973, p. 9). The role of the researcher, therefore, is to interpret the meanings of daily accomplishments of social actors and make them understandable that "how other people understand their lives" (Barglowski, 2016, p. 125).

A researcher's own philosophical position also plays an important role in the selection of an appropriate methodology (Birks and Mills, 2011). I found myself deeply entrenched in the symbolic interactionist perspective; as a result, I was comfortable to conduct the present study by employing the grounded theory because "symbolic interactionism and grounded theory make a powerful 'theory-methods package'" (Charmaz, 2009, p. 134). Though Glaser and Strauss (1967) did not specify the philosophical foundations of grounded theory in their seminal work; yet, years later, in the evolved version of grounded theory, Corbin and Strauss (2008) provided symbolic interactionism as the epistemological foundation for grounded theory (Chamberlain-Salaun et al., 2013, p. 2).

In the present study, symbolic interactionism as a theoretical foundation helps us to understand how the process of irregular migration is organized and facilitated through agents in district Gujrat, Pakistan. Moreover, symbolic interactionism deals with the importance of symbols and how people utilize them to construct the meanings of their views and communicate them with each other. As Barglowski (2016) also pointed out, most of the authors using symbolic interactionism emphasize on "the interaction and meaning-making processes than on the transformation and reproduction of broader social formations" (p. 126). In the present study, this

notion facilitates us to understand how various factors and actors are involved in this process of decision-making regarding the choices of destinations for irregular migration, contact and negotiations with agents, role of the family, and considerations of gender aspects in organizing the irregular migration. Other than the above-mentioned rationale for employing qualitative research design in the present study, the existing scientific literature on different aspects of irregular migration (Alpes, 2012; Kovras and Robins, 2016; Hernandez-Carretero and Carling, 2012; Schapendonk et al., 2015) also provides deeper insights on the use of qualitative research design for uncovering the complexity of irregular migration from district Gujrat, Pakistan to Greece.

4.2 Procedure of Data Collection

The specifications of the procedures for data collection are an important part of the qualitative research because it requires special attention in determining and choosing the study population (Lopez and Whitehead, 2012). This section describes the data collection procedure of the present study by explaining various steps, for example, access to the field, selection criteria for the study population, sampling technique and sample size, semi-structured interviews, and information of the interlocutors.

4.2.1 Access to the Field

Access to the field in qualitative research is a dynamic and multidirectional process “by which a researcher and the sites and / or individuals he or she studies relate to each other, through which the research in question is enabled” (Riese, 2018, p. 1). Researchers’ awareness of the possible challenges and complexity of the access to the field helps them to make more deliberate and conscious decisions about the research criteria and safety of the interlocutors and themselves (Riese, 2018). Access to the field requires us to tackle at least two steps – firstly, successful entry into the area of study which is the fundamental step – secondly, to approach key informants who may share information and help the researcher to persuade others (Shenton and Hayter, 2004, p. 223). Keeping in view the above-mentioned principles, I also made necessary arrangements to select the field area and key person to assist my fieldwork well before the start of the fieldwork. I made travel plans, decided upon the means to commute, living arrangement during data collection, consideration of weather conditions and arrangement of dressing accordingly,

photocopies of the interview guide, diary for field notes, recording gadget, important stationery, and complete contact details of my field assistants. Moreover, keeping in view the sensitivity of my research topic, I obtained a permission letter from my graduate school to start fieldwork which stated my status as a doctoral researcher and outlined the objective of my study.

Fieldwork of the present study was carried out in two adjacent villages of district Gujrat in Pakistan. For initial contact with the interlocutors, I consulted with two of my ex-students³⁰ who were residents of the area of my field – one from each village. During field visits, I was accommodated by these two men who helped me in arranging my residence and provided other logistic support. Both agreed to work as my field assistants. I selected them due to the following two reasons. Firstly, they were local residents and knew the community and irregular migrants well; moreover, their families were also very cooperative and eager to facilitate me in my fieldwork in their locality as they were well connected in the community. Secondly, both were well aware of the process and ethics of data collection in Social Science Research, as one of them had a Masters in Sociology degree and was enrolled in M.Phil³¹ in Sociology degree program and the other one had a Masters degree in Mass Communication. However, in spite of their academic credentials, they were provided with extensive training regarding the objectives of the present research before data collection. I also briefed them about the inclusion criteria of the interlocutors and they identified them accordingly. I had arranged short meetings with my assistants before starting a new interview because it was very useful to remain focused on the selection criteria of the interlocutors. The family members of my field assistants were also very helpful in identifying the potential interlocutors.

4.2.2 Selection Criteria

The fieldwork of the present research consists of 32 semi-structured interviews with 15 male family members of the irregular migrants, 7 female family members of the irregular migrants, and 10 irregular migrants who once initiated their journey towards Greece but were deported back to Pakistan. The inclusion criteria were to select those interlocutors who have at least one family member who has reached abroad with the help of agents.

³⁰ They were my students when I was lecturer in Sociology at University of Gujrat, Pakistan.

³¹ In Pakistan it is 18th years of education starts after MA.

4.2.3 Sampling Technique and Sample Size

In the present study, no sampling frame was available due to the hidden nature of irregular migrants. The Federal Investigation Agency only contains data of the most wanted human smugglers and no data were available on the numbers of irregular migrants from Pakistan to Greece (FIA, 2019b; Yousef, 2013). The interlocutors were approached by using non-probability sampling and within non-probability sampling, snow-balling technique was employed as the topic was very sensitive and it was difficult to directly identify and approach irregular migrants. I did not find any official information regarding the data of irregular migrants in district Gujrat to know the exact number or addresses of such population. In the present study, snow-ball sampling was used as initial sampling to fix the selection criteria to identify the interlocutors; however, for further elaboration and identification of categories and themes, theoretical sampling was employed (Charmaz, 2006). It provided the direction for further data collection and helped to clarify, expand and confirm various issues which arose during data collection (Birks and Mills, 2011, p. 70). Since grounded theory methodology recommends a back and forth contact with processes of data collection and analysis. It helps to identify gaps in already collected data and guides to collect more data which, in turn, facilitates the researcher in focused analysis (Charmaz, 2006).

Sample size is an important aspect of social research; however, usually qualitative researchers do not work with a huge sample from the studied population (Ishak and Bakar, 2014). Interlocutors and cases are selected due to their relevance to the research topic and not on the basis of their representativeness or generalizability (Flick, 2006). Qualitative researchers do not estimate sample size before starting the fieldwork because they do not have extensive knowledge about the population before actual field visits (Ishak and Bakar, 2014). Saturation point is very important criteria to fix the number of participants in qualitative research (Charmaz, 2006; Birks and Mills, 2011). In the present study, the fieldwork continued until getting to the saturation point when after interviewing 32 interlocutors, it was realized that there was no new information. When the stories were repeated by the participants, I decided to stop selecting new participants (Charmaz, 2006; Glesne and Peshkin, 1992).

4.2.4 Semi-Structured Interviews

The present study employed semi-structured interviews because it provides an opportunity to extend the conversation through probing, and an active role of interviewer in the interview process serves the “aim of generating fodder for the developing theory” (Birks and Mills, 2011, p. 75). The researcher shows interest to know more and focuses on the important issues by requesting detailed explanation (Charmaz, 2006; Rose, 1994, p. 24). Through such practices both the interviewer and the interlocutor develop a structure of mutual understanding and trust without dominating each other (Rose, 1994).

Moreover, semi-structured interviews provide interlocutors with some margin or freedom to express more about their interest or what is of importance to them (Hesse-Biber and Leavy, 2006). Through this practice, the interviewer allows the conversation to flow in natural way and, as a result, some new or unexpected information may be shared by the interlocutor (Hesse-Biber and Leavy, 2006). In a situation “when such knowledge emerges, the researcher using a semi-structured design is likely to allow the conversation to develop, exploring new topics that are relevant to the interviewee” (Hesse-Biber and Leavy, 2006, p. 126). In the present study, for example, during preliminary interviews, when the interlocutors were asked about how the decision of irregular migration was taken, some interlocutors shared that the female family members were also actively involved in the decision making process. The participation of female in decision making of irregular migration in a patriarchal set up in rural areas of Pakistan was an unexpected information, because some researchers had already declared it as a purely masculine matter in the context of Pakistan (Maroufof and Kouki, 2017; Ahmad, 2008; Koser, 2008). In the present study, semi-structured interviews also provided a chance for the interlocutors to reveal their sensitive or personal matters (Aleandri and Russo, 2015). For example, contact with agents, negotiation of money, arrangements of finance, and the mode of payment, such matters are considered very personal and people usually keep them very secret.

An interview guide was developed to conduct semi-structured interviews; however, I started the fieldwork with some broader questions in mind regarding the role of agents in organization and facilitation of irregular migration (Jerolmack, 2007). Later on, after some interviews, gradually, I obtained more knowledge about the involvement of agents in organization and facilitation of irregular migration. Through initial phase of fieldwork, I got many new themes and inferences

regarding the whole process of irregular migration from Pakistan to Greece and included such themes in interview guide for further interviews (Jerolmack, 2007). For example, as mentioned above, the role of women in decision making of irregular migration was a new dimension explored through preliminary interviews. This theme was included in the interview guide for further interviews. I particularly focused on the themes which were often used by the interlocutors. As a result, this practice facilitated analysis phase (Edhlund and McDougall, 2016; Tariq and Syed, 2017). This practice also helped me to remain focused on the major research question and to keep the sequence of the conversation with the interview partners, and to delete some irrelevant questions to avoid repetition.

4.3 Contemplation of Ethics

Research ethics are an essential part of the process of research and are applicable in different types of scientific inquiry (von Unger, 2016; Orb et al., 2001). American Sociological Association (ASA, 1999, p. 6) recommends the researchers to be aware of the fact that they are socially responsible to conduct their research with scientific and professional eagerness while working or living in the societies or communities. The conduct of researchers must be inspirational to build trust and confidence of the interlocutors (ASA, 1999). In the present study, I followed ethical codes throughout the fieldwork. Following sub-sections explain the different steps adopted in line with the ethical guidelines set by various international professional academic bodies during the process of data collection.

4.3.1 Informed Consent

Informed consent is the basic principle of ethical practice for all researchers which involve human beings, except those cases or situations specified in the ethical standards (ASA, 2018; Macnish, 2019). Interlocutors may be influenced by the position of the researcher and it is the duty of a researcher to inform them about all aspects of the research and “indicate to them that their participation or continued participation is voluntary” (ASA, 2018, p. 12). Moreover, it must be ensured that the interlocutors are aware of the possible risks they may incur (Social Research Association, 2003, p. 28).

In the present study, first of all I identified the interlocutors with the help of my field assistants and got permissions and fixed time for the interview as per their convenience and availability.

Before starting the interview, I introduced myself and thoroughly briefed them about the objectives of the research. The interlocutors were told that their names would not be disclosed and all their information and discussion would be highly confidential. Furthermore, they were also informed that their participation is voluntary and they can withdraw during interview if they are not willing to share their information. The interviews were recorded after the consent of the interview partners except one male interlocutor who refused to allow the recording of his conversation. While conducting interviews with the female interlocutors, due to patriarchal values of Pakistani society, their male family members were also briefed about the research objectives and their permission for the interview was also obtained. Most of the interviews were conducted at residences³² of the interlocutors, two interviews at a *Dera*, four interviews were conducted at my temporary residence in the field, one interview was conducted in a local barber shop, and one interview was conducted in a local hotel, whereas one interview was conducted at the workplace of a interlocutor. I had conducted interviews and my field assistants facilitated me in note taking. A significant number of interviews were conducted in *Punjabi*³³ and a few in *Urdu*³⁴ as per their ease in conversation as majority of the interlocutors were illiterate or semi-literate. Interviews were conducted at different timings. Since most of the female interlocutors were housewives and were available at home between 9:00 to 12:00 hours. Two interviews with female interlocutors were also conducted in evening as per their availability. However, the male interlocutors were usually not available during this time as they were on their work or busy in household tasks. Interviews with male interlocutors were conducted in the evening and some in the afternoon.

4.3.2 Anonymization and Confidentiality

Trust of the interlocutors can be achieved by maintaining anonymity and confidentiality of their data because it lies at the center of ethical practice in social sciences (Crow and Wiles, 2008). Tolich (2004, p. 101) described two types of confidentiality; firstly, *external confidentiality* or traditional confidentiality in which researchers do not disclose the identity of the interlocutors in their reports or publications. Secondly, *internal confidentiality*, relatively less-known in which researchers make sure that the participants of the same study would not be able to recognize each

³² In rural areas of Pakistan, almost each house has a separate room for guests and it is called "*Baithak*" literal meaning a place to sit together.

³³ Local language of the Punjab province.

³⁴ National language of Pakistan.

other when the results will be published (p. 807). It is the ethical obligation of the researchers to keep the privacy of their interlocutors and strip off their personal information by anonymizing their names and places in written documents (Hammersley and Traianou, 2012). An anonymized data set “is one from which the individual subjects providing the data cannot be determined” (Macnish, 2019, p. 14). However, Wiles et al., (2008) argued that anonymity is only one dimension of confidentiality, whereas confidential information is “when an individual can reasonably expect that the information will not be made public in a personally identifiable manner. This is especially critical when the public release of the information could be harmful to the person to whom it refers” (ASA, 2018, p. 10). So, other than anonymity, the researcher must ensure all aspects of protection of interlocutors’ information because it is also a concern of human rights (Surmiak, 2018; Orb et al., 2001, p. 96).

On the other hand, some researchers are of the view that though distortion of identity of the interlocutors is considered as a mandatory feature of qualitative research and an ideal view of anonymity is an “unachievable goal” (van den Hoonarrd, 2003, p. 141; Jerolmack and Murphy, 2019). Due to inductive nature of qualitative research, sample size is relatively small as compared to the quantitative surveys and findings of the research are often based on interlocutors’ verbatim which as a result are more traceable to a participant of small group (Ummel and Achille, 2016, p. 807). Moreover, it is also argued that complete anonymization of the data can affect the “information richness” of the data because it hides many aspects of the information which can be useful to understand the context, for example, gender, age, or ethnicity (Macnish, 2019, p. 14).

In the present study, the above-mentioned principles are thoroughly followed because it addresses a sensitive topic and I was aware of my ethical and professional responsibility to maintain the privacy of the interlocutors. I took many practical measures during the fieldwork and later during translation and analysis of the interviews. For example, interview guide of the present study does not contain space for the name of interlocutors and their village as it creates curiosity among the interlocutors if they are being asked to tell their name. During the fieldwork, I assigned a numerical number to each interview immediately after its completion. For translation, these numeric were further given categories of interlocutors, for example, father, mother, uncle, brother, sister, and self. Furthermore, each category was given a pseudonym for

data analysis. The pseudonyms were assigned in a way that it could not reflect *biraderi*, kinship, family name or any religious affiliation of the interlocutors. Similarly, during fieldwork, I recorded interviews myself, and my field assistants facilitated me only in note taking, and had no access to the recorded data (though they were trustworthy). Moreover, after completion of the fieldwork, recorded interviews were kept under strict control and nobody had access to the electronic files saved in my computer. Similarly, hard copies of the transcripts were also kept in lock. In sum, all measures were taken in a manner that it could not affect the richness of the data (Macnish, 2019; Ohm, 2009).

4.3.3 Deception

Deception occurs when a researcher presents false information to the interlocutors or deliberately misleads them about a specific aspect of the study (University of California Berkeley, 2015, p. 1). Similarly, incomplete disclosure occurs when a researcher “withholds information about the specific purpose, nature, or other aspect of the research. Withholding information may or may not be considered deception” (p. 1). However, it is argued that deception cannot be avoided to get certain data in certain fields, for example, psychology or for clinical purpose (Goode, 1996; Tonsing, 2014).

In the present research, no deception and incomplete disclosure are involved because as mentioned in section 3.3.1, interlocutors were thoroughly briefed about the research objectives and were assured about the confidentiality of data. I made no false promises with interlocutors in case of their participation and they were fully autonomous in making informed decisions to participate or not in the present study.

4.3.4 Safety Measures

In qualitative research, the researchers cannot control the field settings and there are chances of risk to their safety (Bloor et al., 2010, p. 45). Safety measures are also important for the interlocutors and researchers must consider the social environment and location of the interview (Tonsing, 2014, p. 133). In the present study, I particularly focused on the issue of my safety before starting fieldwork because the topic of my study was sensitive. During fieldwork, I remained connected with one of my family members through telephone because such connection can be helpful in case of any unpleasant situation (Tonsing, 2014). Overall, I did not face any

problem with personal safety; however, fieldwork was very challenging in many other aspects as discussed in the following section.

4.3.5 Challenges during Fieldwork

I was aware of some of the possible challenges in the field as the topic of my research was sensitive. Although, I started interviews with the help of my field assistants who were local residents, but in spite of this, it was really challenging to convince the interlocutors for an interview in first encounter with them. Although, I communicated with them in the local language, even then it took some time to build a rapport for the interviews. Some interlocutors were reluctant for the interview because they considered me a spy of law enforcement agencies³⁵. However, I remained polite and patient and briefed them about the objectives of the study and started interviews after winning their confidence and consent. This practice was very useful to restore their confidence for interview because gradually they became more enthusiastic in sharing their experiences. It also provided me a chance for further probing. Some interlocutors were amazed about my knowledge regarding local terms of irregular migration. As one interlocutor commented “*apparently you seems young, but your questions are very mature*”. I also faced some comments like “*now you are asking some tricky questions.... [laughed]... I’ll only tell you those points which I know*”. Similarly, some interviews started very smoothly but became frustrating especially when some interlocutors withdrew from further continuation of interview after few initial questions even though they had started interviews with consent and enthusiasm. Such situations encouraged me to rephrase the language and order of the questions for next interviews. Gradually, I became better prepared and more confident in handling such situation.

During the process of interview recording, some natural events happened which were spontaneous and out of control. For example, in some cases during interviews, some street vendor visited the street or some sudden announcement was made from a nearby Mosque³⁶. Although I was sitting inside the room but such voices were also recorded as my recording

³⁵ Though, they did not directly blame me as spy; but the way they discussed the possible threats to be interviewed, it was easy to grasp their understanding towards my position.

³⁶ It is very common in rural areas of Pakistan that other than prayers’ call, Mosque is often used to announce the death of a person in village or if somebody lost something then they also announce it through loud speakers of the Mosque.

gadget was sensitive to record any minute sound. In some cases, when I would put a question to my interlocutor, a family member sitting nearby would be more enthusiastic to reply and abruptly start talking. Sometimes, my key informant would interrupt the interview and facilitate discussion as he considered himself more “competent” on the topic of how irregular migration is being facilitated by agents in his village. However, in such situations, I had managed to continue interviews smoothly without annoying anybody.

4.3.6 Information of the Interlocutors

The fieldwork of the present study was conducted in district Gujrat, Pakistan. This district is very famous for international migration, both regular and irregular. The rate of emigration to Europe from this district is high as compared to other districts of the country (Tahir et al., 2018). As mentioned in the above preceding section 4.2.4, the fieldwork of the present research consists of semi-structured interviews with 32 interlocutors – 15 male family members of irregular migrants, 7 female family members of irregular migrants and 10 migrants who once initiated their journey towards Greece but were deported to Pakistan, except two. The inclusion criteria were to select only those interlocutors who had at least one family member abroad through illegal means and those irregular migrants who once travelled to Greece or other EU member state with the help of agents. The following text shows the basic and important information of the interlocutors. The major aim of this information is to connect the readers with the background of the participants and their stories (Tonsing, 2014, p. 157). Furthermore, this section is aimed at introducing the research interlocutors in a more narrative way. It explains where and how we met, what kind of interaction we had, etc. In this chapter of methodology, I generally introduced some of them. However, they are more specifically introduced when they appear for the first time in the empirical chapters again. The major goal of referring them in subsequent chapters is to make connections and relations more explicit, not only within a given chapter, but the way a more holistic image of the issue of irregular migration from district Gujrat, Punjab can emerge. In sum, individual biographies or family histories that allow the reader a much better grasp of who the people I am writing about actually are.

Ghafoor

Ghafoor was the key person and the first interviewee of the present study. He was the father of Amjad. The interview took place after dinner in his *Baithak* and was conducted in Punjabi. It

lasted for an hour. Moreover, we also discussed many aspects of irregular migration other than the recorded interview, and I took notes of that discussion. The dinner was specially served for me as a guest because in rural areas of Punjab, to serve a guest has a very high symbolic value. The room (*Baithak*) was typically decorated according to the emerging cultural traits of the rural areas of Punjab. It contained sofas, chairs, one table, and a double bed. There was also a big iron trunk in one corner of the room which, usually in rural areas of Punjab, contains bed sheets, pillow covers, quilts (locally known as *Razai*), and mattresses (locally known as *Tolai*). Ghafoor also took his water pipe (*Huqqa*) along with him during the interview. When I reached his place, he warmly welcomed me. However, I noticed that apparently he seemed cool but he was a bit curious about the purpose of my interviews of the families of the irregular migrants (however, I completely informed him about the purpose of my interview, the detail is given in section 4.3 on the contemplation of research ethics). We started a general discussion on irregular migration. He told that he had four sons and two of them went to Greece via Iran and Turkey, and later on, they moved to Spain. Their journey was arranged with the help of agents. He pronounces it as *jents* and the whole process of irregular migration is known as *donkey* or *dunkey*. His third son was also on his way to Greece at the time of the interview and his journey was also facilitated by an agent. Ghafoor further told that his fourth son, who was in Pakistan at the time of the interview, was also insisting to follow his brothers. His elder son passed primary school³⁷ and married at the time of migration. Ghafoor was not sure of the age of his elder son at the time of migration. His second son passed intermediate and took a certificate in paramedical training; however, he did not practice in Pakistan and went to Greece. He was unmarried at the time of migration. His second son made six attempts to go to Greece but failed five times and was deported back. His age at the time of the first attempt was 16 years. Ghafoor's third son passed BA (Bachelor of Arts) and took admission in MA (Master of Arts) in a public sector university in a nearby city but did not complete his degree and left the university. He was also unmarried at the time of migration and his age was 21 years. All three sons of Ghafoor were unemployed in Pakistan before migration and went to Europe as unskilled laborers (more details are in the empirical chapters 5 and 6). Ghafoor has his own cemented house in the village and also owns agricultural land in the same village where he cultivates with the help of his fourth son. He also has few

³⁷ In Pakistan, primary education is consists of the first five years of school, middle education is first eight years of school, matriculation is ten years of school, intermediate is twelve years of school which is an university entrance degree. Bachelor of Arts (BA) is the first university degree which leads to Master of Art and Master of Philosophy.

buffalos and takes it as his pride because ownership of cattle is a common customary trait in the rural areas of district Gujrat, Pakistan. However, he told that he also worked in a restaurant³⁸ in a major city of Pakistan but after some period he returned to his village and started cultivation on his land.

Riaz

I met Riaz at the *Baithak* of Ghafoor as he agreed to come there for an interview. He came thereafter offering the *Isha* prayer³⁹. He was living with his wife and his only son went to Greece 11.5 years ago with the help of agents and never came back. For some years, his son remained connected with him but then he had no contact with the family living in Pakistan. For the last 4 years, the family had not been aware of his position in Europe because he did not make even a single phone call to his parents in Pakistan. During the whole interview, the tone of his voice remained very down and slow. Riaz told that his son left the school in class 10 and did not complete matriculation. His age at migration was 22 years, and he was unmarried. He went to Greece as an unskilled laborer. However, Riaz was still optimistic that one day his son would come back to Pakistan and his optimism was based on a belief in God. Riaz is still dreaming of that when his son comes back to Pakistan, he will arrange and celebrate his marriage.

Asmat Bibi⁴⁰

It was a very pleasant morning when I met Asmat Bibi at her residence. I fixed an appointment with her with the help of my field assistant who was the resident of the same village. She invited us at her house. The house was newly constructed, with attached bathrooms with very good sanitary fitting, and paved with fancy tiles. Her husband was also there. I thoroughly briefed them about the objective of the present study. I started a general discussion with Asmat regarding migration trends in district Gujrat. Her husband, who was sitting next to her, was more enthusiastic to talk about his sons. He told me that they had 5 sons and 3 of them went to Greece with the help of agents through Iran and Turkey. Later on, two of them moved to Spain and the third one shifted to Italy. The remaining 2 sons were working in a grocery store in Pakistan. He

³⁸ Name or field of the job is changed due to the confidentiality of the data, however, the nature or category of the job remained the same, for example, his work category was similar to that of a restaurant.

³⁹ The *Isha* prayer is the night-time daily prayer of the Muslims.

⁴⁰ Bibi is a common second name of women in rural areas of Punjab. I used this second name to differentiate the gender of the interlocutor. So, the reader who is not familiar with the composition of names according to the gender in the context of Punjab may recognize it.

showed the picture of his second son and pointed his finger to a family photo hanging on the wall in front of me. He told me that his second son went to Europe 15 years ago. Before migration, he also worked in a grocery store and his age was around 30 years at the time of migration. He passed the middle school and was unmarried at that time. Later on, after 5 years, he made a first visit to Pakistan and got married. After marriage, again he went back to Europe and his wife used to live with in-laws in a joint family system. However, after some years, he arranged a spouse visa and took his wife along with him. Now he has two sons and one daughter. Asmat's husband, who started his conversation very excitedly, suddenly took a deep breath and the tone of his voice became very low while talking about his son. Asmat told in detail that how they planned and managed the migration of her sons. Our conversation was very lively because her husband also added some information side by side. They also told that their son maintained a diary during his travel and had written details of his mobility (further details are given in empirical chapter 6). Later on, he also managed the migration of his younger brother, who was at number 4, because he did not develop any interest to work in Pakistan and insisted to go to Europe. Similarly, their youngest son also insisted to go to Europe. He was a high school student but did not show any interest in his studies and was more interested in sports. Even, he did not appear in the final exams and during the days of examination, he went to play cricket matches in a nearby city. His parents were not aware of his activities. They came to know about his activities when the result was announced and he failed. So, in this context, they decided to send him to Europe with the help of agents.

Sultan

I met Sultan in a small local hotel in the village. My field assistant already fixed time and place for an interview. This hotel was located near the bus stop. There was a very small "family hall" of the hotel which was partitioned with a curtain from the front hall of the hotel. There were a few plastic chairs and a table. One plastic jug of water and some glasses were also placed on the table. We sat in this "family hall". Sultan told that he was the only son of his parents. He went to Greece 4 years ago with the help of agents but his attempt was unsuccessful and he was caught by security forces in Istanbul. He was imprisoned for a few months and was deported back to Pakistan. He also spent some days in the custody of Pakistani security agencies. However, later on, he was fined by the local court and was allowed to go home. He was 22 years old at the time of migration and passed the middle school. He had managed a small vegetable shop in the village

before leaving for Greece. He also had a very horrific experience while crossing the border of Iran and Turkey (further detail is given in empirical chapter 7). After deportation, now he runs a vegetable shop in his village again.

Ashraf

Ashraf belongs to a Chaudhary⁴¹ family. His family is the *Numberdar* or *Lambardar*⁴² of the village. They are very influential in local politics and other matters related to their village. My field assistant fixed an appointment with him. We visited his house in the evening. He warmly welcomed us. We sat in a well-furnished *Baithak*. His house was relatively bigger and construction style was more urban as compared to the structure of other houses of the village. It had a big grassy lawn as well. Other than the recorded interview, we had a detailed discussion on various matters related to irregular migration in district Gujrat and possible working conditions in the destination countries including Greece and other EU member states. From his discussion, I inferred that he was well aware of different tactics of irregular migration, its legal aspects, and the possibilities of getting asylum in or residence permit of the destination countries of Europe. Ashraf told me that they were 4 brothers and his father was a retired government official. He further told that his elder brother went to Europe with the help of agents. His age was 16 years at the time of migration and he passed matriculation. His route was very long and he crossed many destinations. First, he went to Romania by air. He overstayed there and became irregular. Later on, he went to Hungary with the help of agents. However, he did not stay there and later moved to Switzerland. He spent some time there and then shifted to Germany. He could not get legal documents in Germany and was deported back to Pakistan. According to Ashraf, they were financially very stable but his brother went to Europe due to the social competition among different biraderis in his village (further detail in empirical chapter 6).

Baksh

A very informative and detailed interview was conducted with Baksh because he not only sent his nephew to Europe but he also went to Greece in 1998 with the help of an agent by crossing Iran and Turkey and, later on, moved to Italy. He told that at that time it was difficult to go to

⁴¹ In Punjab, Chaudhary is an upper-status biraderi in Punjab.

⁴² Lamberdar is a sub-category of village officers. According to the Punjab Land Revenue Act 1967, Lamberdar means "any person appointed under this act whose duty is to collect or to supervise the collection of, the revenue of an estate" (p. 2).

Italy directly. So, he decided to go to Greece and then planned to move to Italy. He told me that he also sent his nephew to Italy with the help of an agent 6 months before the time of the interview. The agent arranged a visa of Libya for his nephew. Baksh advised his nephew to move to Italy because the situation in Libya was very bad due to the political unrest and, in those days, there was extreme violence against the irregular migrants. The age of his nephew was 23 years at the time of migration. He passed matriculation and was unmarried. He was also unemployed in Pakistan before migration.

Bashir

Bashir is 60 years old and the head of the joint family. He invited me and my field assistant inside his house because he was disabled from one leg and could not move easily. He had no children and his wife died some years ago. However, he was living with the family of his younger brother, who also died, and now Bashir is living with his sister-in-law (*Bhabhi*) and his nephews. Bashir is the head of the household because, in the context of Pakistani rural society, the elder male family member is considered as the household's head (Awais et al., 2019; Yasmin et al., 2019). His two nephews went to Europe with the help of agents. Firstly, his younger nephew went to Greece 10 years before the time of the interview. He was 20 years old at the time of migration and passed the intermediate school. Later on, he moved to Spain. Secondly, his elder nephew went to Greece 6 years ago and then moved to Germany. He was 24 years old at the time of migration and was also unmarried. He passed the middle school. His both nephews were working in a restaurant before moving to Europe. Earlier, both of his nephews also stayed in Saudi Arabia as labor migrants but after some time they came back to Pakistan and decided to go to Greece with the help of agents. Though Bashir was physically disabled, yet he was very energetic and very enthusiastic while discussing the stories of his nephews. He seemed very satisfied with the decisions of his nephews to go to Europe with the help of agents.

Raza

Raza is 31 years old. He was in a very good mood during the interview. Raza told that they were 5 brothers but one of them died. His youngest brother went to Greece 5 years ago with the help of an agent and, later on, he moved to Italy. His brother was 23 years old at the time of migration. Before migration, he appeared in the annual examination of matriculation but failed in some subjects. He was not interested to reappear in the examination and started playing cricket in

his village. Later on, he went to a major city in Pakistan along with Raza, and started working in a factory. However, he could not develop an interest in his work and planned to go to Greece. In this context, they contacted an agent and planned the whole journey. Yet, he did not visit Pakistan.

Zafar

Zafar told that they are 6 brothers and two of them are living abroad. One is a driver in Qatar and the other went to Greece. The guy who went to Greece was 20 years old at the time of migration and he was at number 4 among them. He was unmarried at the time of migration and passed matriculation. He was not interested to get further education and before migration, he worked in a local furniture shop for a few months but left it soon. He went to Greece 5 years ago through the corridor of Iran and Turkey with the help of an agent. Since then, he has been in Greece and had not visited Pakistan. However, last year, he was captured by the Greek police in a case and was imprisoned.

Akbar

I met Akbar at his *Dera* which is a common place in the villages of Punjab, where men meet and socialize. It is also used as a place for the stay of the guests. Moreover, farmers also use this place for the stock of agricultural production, stock farming, and as a garage for agricultural machinery. Usually, *Dera* is constructed near fields and outside the village. It is also away from the residential area of the village. After the formal interview, Akbar started to feed his buffalos and also kept talking to me regarding general trends of migration in his area. During the interview, he told me that he spent 28 years in Saudi Arabia as a driver. After earning sufficient money, he permanently came back to Pakistan. He had a son who went to Italy 8 years ago at the age of 18 years. He passed the middle school but, later on, left the school and did not complete his matriculation. He was also unmarried at the time of migration. He made first visit to Pakistan after 2.5 years. Akbar further told that with the help of an agent, his son directly went to Italy on a tourist visa, and, later on, he overstayed as per instructions of the agent. His son was unemployed before leaving for Europe. However, in Italy, he completed a driving course and got an international license after getting legal documents. Now he is working as a driver and moves across Europe. Akbar further told that his son got married in Pakistan and has two kids, a son, and a daughter. They all live together in a joint family in the village. His son often visits Pakistan

and it depends on his schedule of work. For example, sometimes he visits Pakistan after one year, sometimes after one and a half year, and sometimes after two years. Akbar was very fluent during the interview and other than telling the story of his son, he also talked about how he spent his time in Saudi Arabia. He also made a comparison between the trend of migration in district Gujrat in the late 1980s to the Gulf States and the recent trend of irregular migration to Europe which started in the late 1990s and early 2000 (more details are in empirical chapters 6 and 7).

Aslam

Aslam is a farmer and I met him at the *Dera* of Akbar. He has 5 children but two of them died in their childhood. Now he has three sons and his youngest son went to Greece in 2009 at the age of 18 years. At the time of the interview, his son completed 5 years in Europe and did not come back. He was unmarried at the time of migration and did not complete his high school and left the school during 10th class. His son went to Greece by air by using forged documents arranged by an agent. Later on, he moved to Spain. Before going to Greece, he was working in a garment factory in a major city in Pakistan. The other two sons of Aslam live with him in the same village. Aslam further told that his wife died when his youngest son was just 1.5 years old. During the interview, sometimes he was more enthusiastic to talk about his son's aspiration for migration, but sometimes took pauses with a deep breath. He also asked me to pray for a successful stay of his son in Europe.

Sakina Bibi

I met Sakina Bibi in her *Baithak* at around 11:30 am. She is illiterate and her husband is a retired government official. She told that her two sons went to Europe. Firstly, her elder son went to Greece 9 years ago with the help of an agent. She was not sure of the age of her elder son at the time of migration. He passed intermediate and was unmarried at the time of migration. He was a temporary employee in a textile factory in a nearby city before migration. He went to Greece but, later on, moved to Denmark (she pronounced as dey-mark and den-marak) and after few years further shifted to Poland. In Poland, he is working as a manual laborer. For 9 years, he did not visit Pakistan (further detail is given in empirical chapter 7). She wept while talking about the long absence of her son. However, I managed the situation and her neighbor woman, who was also sitting next to her, also consoled her. She became normal very quickly. Secondly, her younger son also went to Greece with the help of an agent 6 years ago. He was also unmarried.

Later on, he also moved to Denmark with his elder brother. He is working in a bakery. Yet, he did not visit Pakistan, too. To my surprise, though she was illiterate but was very well aware of different hurdles in getting legal documents in Europe. She was also aware of the economic situation prevailing in Greece, Denmark, and Poland (details in empirical chapters 6 and 7).

Nasim Bibi

I visited the house of Nasim Bibi along with my field assistant at around 7:00 pm after getting prior permission. We sat in the *Baithak* of her house. Her nephew was also there. We started the general conversation. Nasim told me that her son went to Greece 9 years ago. She took a little pause and recalled that time. He was around 18 years old at the time of migration. He appeared in the annual examination of matriculation and left for Greece immediately after the examination. His result was announced later on. He was unmarried at the time of migration. He made the first visit to Pakistan after 4 years. He was her elder son (details in empirical chapter 6).

Hassan

Hassan is 35 years old and I met him on a fine afternoon at the *Baithak* of Ghafoor. I had two sessions with Hassan. He told that 12 years ago he planned to go to Greece with the help of an agent. His age at that time was 23 years. He passed matriculation. He successfully reached Izmir, Turkey but then was caught by Turkish border police while trying to enter Greece. He was imprisoned for some months and was then deported back to Pakistan. He had the terrible experience of border crossing (further detail in empirical chapters 5 and 6). He considered his failure as the will of God (further detail in empirical chapter 7).

Munir

It was around 8:00 pm when I met Munir at the *Baithak* of Ashraf. He was an old man. He told that he sent his two sons to Europe. His first son went to Greece 10 years ago at the time of the interview via Iran and Turkey with the help of an agent and then moved to Germany. Munir was not sure about the age of his son at that time. However, his son was married at the time of migration and had 4 children. His family is living in Pakistan in a joint system. He passed his middle school and was a taxi driver in Pakistan. After 4 years of migration of his first son, Munir sent his second son to Greece with the help of an agent. His second son was illiterate and just 13 years old at the time of migration. He was not interested in getting education. According to Munir, his younger son had a very bad company in the village and started stealing petty things

from the village, for example, the handle of the village's water pump. They all (his son and his friends) were very profligate and sold such things to get money to fulfill their desires. He used to spend the whole night outside with his friends. Munir was very much worried about his son and arranged a job for him in a furniture manufacturing shop in the village but he left the job after two months because his friends allured him to do so. In such circumstances, Munir decided to send him to Greece and arranged his journey with the help of an agent.

Kalsoom Bibi

I met Kalsoom Bibi along with my field assistant. She invited us inside her house and we sat in a veranda (locally known as *bey-randa*). She told that her son went to Greece but she was not sure when he left. She had an idea that he went almost 10 years ago. He was 18 years old at the time of migration and passed the middle school. He was also unmarried at the time of migration. He was enrolled in high school but failed in class 9 and then left the school. He also left the village and managed a small shop in a major city of Pakistan (further detail in empirical chapter 5). However, after some time, he also left that shop and came back to the village. After some time, he went to Greece with the help of an agent and, later on, moved to Italy. He made first visit to Pakistan after 8 years on forged documents.

Nasreen Bibi

I visited the house of Nasreen Bibi along with my field assistant. We sat in the *Baithak* of her house. Nasreen Bibi told that her husband died a few years ago. She told that her elder son went to Greece 7 years ago with the help of an agent. His age was 20 years at the time of migration and he was unmarried. He passed matriculation. He worked in a factory in a nearby city. However, after some time he left the job and came back to the village and started cultivation, and also domesticated buffalos. However, he planned to go to Greece, and with the help of an agent, he left Pakistan. In Greece, he is working on a dairy farm. Yet, he did not visit Pakistan. She further told that her younger son also went to Greece but he was not successful and was deported back. At the time of the interview, he was not present at home.

Naeem

Naeem is a young man and runs a sweets shop in his village. I met him at his work place. We sat inside the shop. His mother was also present there. She was helping him. Naeem told that his father died a few years ago. Naeem further told that his elder brother went to Greece 6 years ago

with the help of agents. His age was 26 years at the time of migration. He passed the middle school and he was unmarried at the time of migration. He used to live in Oman and worked as a driver. However, he came back to Pakistan and decided to go to Greece. He contacted some agents and successfully reached Greece. He spent 7 years in Greece and did not visit Pakistan during that period.

4.4 Process of Data Analysis

The process of data analysis in qualitative research is the most important step (Leech and Onwuegbuzie, 2007). It is not only an integral part of the science but also a defining aspect as it is “bread and butter of research in all sciences” (Roth, 2015, p. 3). This section explains my strategy of management of collected data. I followed a series of steps for analysis which directed me to engage back and forth with my data very carefully and, as a result, I was able to make sense out of the stories told by the interlocutors (Hesse-Biber and Leavy, 2006; Strauss and Corbin, 1990). In addition, this process helped me to understand the nature of my data especially its relevance to my research objectives (Hesse-Biber and Leavy, 2006). The following sub-sections discuss how the recorded interviews were transcribed, which analytical tools were used for coding, how constant comparative analysis, memos and diagrams, and coding of the data for analysis were carried out. These sub-sections are also supported by examples from the data of the present study.

4.4.1 Translation and Transcription of Recorded Interviews

In the present study, I shifted recorded interviews from recording gadget to my laptop for translation. I personally translated interviews in full by using a software f4. This phase was very time consuming because interviews were translated into English from Punjabi and Urdu as the official language of my dissertation is English, and it is always challenging to translate the text when both researcher and participants have non-English native language (van Nes et al., 2010, p. 313). A major challenge during the translation was to find direct equivalence of some Punjabi terms in English (Ruitenberget al., 2016). However, I also prepared a separate list of verbatim in Punjabi language used by the interlocutors because it contained very powerful symbolic meaning in the context of local culture and realities. Moreover, I was very careful while translating such terms because I wanted to maintain the special cultural contexts of my interlocutors and did not

influence translation with my personal biasness (McCurdy and Ross, 2017). Similarly, before translation, I actively and continuously listened the recorded interviews several times. This practice helped me to understand the nature of the collected data as per my research objectives. It was also useful to maintain trustworthiness and validity of my data collection procedure.

Moreover, observation during the note taking process facilitated me to capture the symbolic or non-verbal communication of the interlocutors during the interview (Gu, 2013, p. 515). Often, people use gestures during conversation and such gestures have specific meanings in a particular situation. It is very important to capture all such non-verbal communication and it must be reflected in the transcription of data. The appropriateness of such reflections makes strong impact to understand the hidden cultural meaning of a situation. In my project, I took special care to capture the covert meanings of the interlocutors' conversation. I transcribed full interviews and mentioned the emotional expressions of the interlocutors as they were (Hesse-Biber and Leavy, 2006). During the fieldwork, these expressions were very helpful in understanding the context and I got some clues for further probing. I also mentioned such expressions in the transcription of the interviews and explained the gestures with the situation. Such explanations facilitated me to understand the untold stories of the interlocutors and provided me an opportunity to understand their experience. I constructed the meaning from their stories and this practice was very useful to understand the context of irregular migration from Pakistan to Greece. After translation of the interviews, I took print-outs of the material for reading and corrections of any typing mistakes. These transcriptions were also very helpful in understanding the data and I used them for initial diagramming and memos (Strauss and Corbin, 1990). Furthermore, these transcripts were useful for coding process through analytic techniques which are discussed in following section.

4.4.2 Analytic Tools

Analytic tools comprise of different techniques which enhance a researcher's ability to draw codes (Corbin and Strauss, 2008). In grounded theory methodology, a researcher engages back and forth with the material throughout the data collection and analysis process; so, these analytic tools are very helpful in understanding the nature of data. In the present study, I followed some of the analytic tools explained by Corbin and Strauss (2008, p. 69). The following sub-sections discuss these tools by quoting examples from the data of the present study.

4.4.2.1 The use of questioning

The use of questioning is an important step which familiarizes the researcher with data and enhances her/his understanding towards the subjects under study (Charmaz, 2006; Corbin and Strauss, 2008). It helps in conceptualizing the data by breaking it down and analytically asking questions like, “what is this? What does it represent?” (Tonsing, 2014, p. 135). The following example depicts how I interacted with my data by critically analyzing it. One interlocutor told me how he reacted when his son planned to go to Greece through agents:

I replied to him [son] why you want to go to Greece. I asked him what will I do if you go to Greece by selling this house which has only one room. Search some work here. But he said no, I must go to Greece. By the grace of God, some agents came and he ran away somewhere with them.

The above-mentioned statement forced me to raise many questions before analysis of the data. For example, why the father was not ready to agree with his son? What does it mean “what will I do”? What were their financial conditions? Why did the son not follow instructions of his father in-spite of the fact that in rural areas of Punjab, elder member of the family or father has moral authority and family members are supposed to follow his decisions (Stewart et al., 2000)? Why did the son repeatedly insist on going to Greece? What does by “grace of God” means if the father was not willing to send his son through agents? What does “agents came” mean? Why did the son prefer to migrate through agents? Why did he use the word “somewhere” instead of Greece or transit countries like Iran and Turkey? Such critical questions enhanced my familiarity with the data as I read interview transcripts several times (analysis of above-mentioned passage from one interview is reflected in empirical chapter 5).

4.4.2.2 Indication of time

Corbin and Strauss (2008, p. 83) stated that the researchers should also focus on the words that indicate time because it helps them to understand different conditions and change over time. In the present study, this practice enabled me to understand various contexts as well. For example, one of the excerpts from an interview of the present study indicates:

Once there was a time when people migrate due to hunger. They went abroad. I myself spent 28 years in Saudi Arabia [...] spent 28 years in Saudi Arabia and the reason was hunger. Nowadays people migrate due to their own desires.

In the above-mentioned statement, words like “once there was a time”, “28 years”, and “nowadays” indicate different trends of migration in the area of field of the present study. Moreover, it also reflects what changes took place in these 28 years, for example, now people prefer Greece instead of Saudi Arabia or other Gulf States (for further analysis see empirical chapter 6).

Overall, the use of questioning, words that indicate time, use of language, emotions and other non-verbal communication as mentioned in section 3.4.1, were useful in making sense of the data and enabled me to complete the process of coding which is explained in the following text.

4.5 Coding of the Data

4.5.1 Grounded Theory

The present study employs constructivist grounded theory due to the nature of research question. Since the primary research question deals with inductive logic, grounded theory provides a frame for its scientific inquiry by providing rigorous guideline regarding how to proceed further (Charmaz, 2011, p. 127). It facilitates to manage and streamline the data collection process, which, as a result, is very helpful for a systematic analysis (Charmaz, 2006). Grounded theory discovered by Barney G. Glaser and Anselm L. Strauss in their study on experience of dying (Glaser and Strauss, 1967; Birks and Mills, 2011). This method was considered more rigorous, systematic and ordered and never applied to data before (Stern and Porr, 2011; Charmaz, 2006). Later on, the idea of generation of theory through systematically analyzed data as compared to testing existing theories became popular among social scientists (Birks and Mills, 2011, p. 2). Moreover, in historical context, in late 1930s and especially after WW II, quantitative methodology became more prominent in producing scientific knowledge and “the work based on qualitative data was either not theoretical enough or the theories were too ‘impressionistic’” (Glaser and Strauss, 1967, p. 15). The discovery of grounded theory challenged the then prevailing notion that theory cannot be generated through qualitative research (Glaser and Strauss, 1967; Charmaz, 2006).

The rationale for the grounded theory methodology in the present study was based on various components identified by Charmaz (2006, p. 5). First, it engages the researcher in the process of

data collection and analysis simultaneously. For instance, I remained constantly engaged with data collection and making sense of it until the completion of field research. Second, it helps to construct codes and categories for analysis rather than conceiving deduced hypothesis. In this study, for example, I started fieldwork with general questions about how irregular migration is being facilitated and organized from Pakistan to Greece. The consistent involvement with data enabled me to draw new themes in the interview guide for further interviews. Third, the method of constant comparison helps to draw categories during different stages of data analysis. I compared several codes and categories which emerged during the first phase of analysis with the categories which emerged during the second phase of analysis. Fourth, memo-writing practice helps to explain categories, relationship between categories and to spot the gaps. Fifth, theoretical sampling enables the researcher to extend field research till the point of saturation. This sampling was aimed towards advancement of theory, not to represent population under scientific investigation. Last, the researcher conducted the state of the art after data analysis instead of completing the desk research before starting the fieldwork. In the present study, these practices facilitated me to maintain control over the research process and make systematic sense of the collected data (Charmaz, 2006, p. 6).

In the present study, the data were coded according to the grounded theory method as explained by Strauss and Corbin (1990) and Charmaz (2006). According to Chamberlain-Salaun et al., (2013, p. 2), since its discovery, grounded theory methodology can be divided into three versions as classic grounded theory, evolved grounded theory, and constructivist grounded theory. However, it is very hard to take a dichotomous position while adopting grounded theory methodology; a balance can be maintained through learning from all “antecedent grounded theorists” (Birks and Mills, 2011, p. 3). Coding is the central process in data analysis as it breaks down data and conceptualizes it by providing rich and tightly woven explanations (Strauss and Corbin, 1990, p. 57). The process of coding is the first step to move beyond the abstraction and make the analytical interpretations (Charmaz, 2006). Codes are applied to various concepts which are identified by the researcher through continuously interacting with the data (Birks and Mills, 2011). Moreover, codes are some kind of shorthand used by the researcher to identify the conceptual reoccurrences and similarities in the experiences of the interlocutors (Birks and Mills, 2011, p. 93). Codes further formulate categories to facilitate higher level of conceptual understandings of the material (Flick, 2006; Birks and Mills, 2011). In the present study, three

major types of coding were employed as suggested by Strauss and Corbin (1990), which are discussed in the following sections.

4.5.2 Open Coding

Open coding is the first and basic analytical step to examine the data (Strauss and Corbin, 1990). During this step, a researcher remains open to explore new theoretical possibilities from the data (Charmaz, 2006). This step facilitates further analysis by breaking, examining and comparing the similarities and differences in the data (Strauss and Corbin, 1990, p. 62). Breaking down and conceptualizing the data refers to dividing an observation, sentence and paragraph by giving them specific labels, which represent a phenomenon (Strauss and Corbin, 1990, p. 63). This process further helps to organize the same concepts, which in turn, constitutes categories. These categories contain conceptual power to pull related concepts and subcategories (Strauss and Corbin, 1990). Open coding can be started by coding word-by-word, line by line, sentence or paragraph and incident by incident (Charmaz, 2006; Strauss and Corbin, 1990).

In the present study, I employed open coding by examining the interview transcripts. At the early phase of data collection, through a very careful reading of the transcripts of first few interviews, data were split according to their categories. This practice was very helpful in generating new ideas, which as a result, provided the base for theoretical sampling (Strauss and Corbin, 1990). New themes were included in the interview guide for further interviews. Tables 4.1 and 4.2 describe examples of open coding in the present study.

Table 4.1 Open Coding Example from the Data of the Present Study

Initial Codes	Excerpt from Interview
Social profile of agents Reached at destination Deported to Pakistan Personal experience	These agents are the people who themselves went to Greece [...] some were successful and some were unsuccessful... Once they were migrants and now they are agents. Who else becomes agent...? [for example] me, this guy (my field assistant sitting next to me) you...

Importance of information dissemination	no... we can't [act as agent] because we don't know how to migrate... those people who went abroad... faced difficulties... came back [to native village]... then they became agents... [because once they travelled illegally] they talked with other people from other countries... they discussed their plans... [like] how to shift people... through this way... or through this way... how much money to charge... they [agents] sales people... they start this sale from this village... agent from Gujrat sell to agent in Lahore... he further sells to agent from Multan... he further sells to agent from Karachi... [and so on]... migrants are being sold till the end... after being sold seven times... then they reach Greece.
Hardships during travel	
Networks of agents	
Iran, Turkey, Greece	
Negotiations among networks	
Migratory tracks	
Charges, cost of irregular migration	
Very strong networking among agents	
Human smuggling as established business	
Sufferings during trajectories	
Destination country	

Table 4.2 Open Coding Example from the Data of the Present Study

Initial Codes	Excerpt from Interview
Migrants' networks	Many people from our village and nearby villages were already living in Greece. Then my son and a group of his three to four friends decided to go there [Greece] because many people were going to Greece. So my son and his friends also decided that they should go to Greece.
Established trend of migration	
Peer influence	
Social environment of the community	
Peer influence	

4.5.2.1 In Vivo Codes

Naming a category is an important exercise in open coding; however, at the beginning, one must not be overburdened and “the important thing is to name a category” (Strauss and Corbin, 1990, p. 67). An important source of naming a code is “in vivo codes” – which are some catchy words or phrases used by the interlocutors (Strauss and Corbin, 1990, p. 69). These in vivo codes help to understand the specific contextual meanings given by the interlocutors and provide an “analytic point of departure” (Charmaz, 2006, p. 55). In the present study, as mentioned in section 3.4.1, during transcriptions of interviews, I prepared a separate list of catchy verbatim used by my interview partners. These verbatim were very helpful at the stage of open coding, as later on, I chose some of these in vivo codes as names of major categories or sub-categories. Following are some examples of in vivo codes from the data of the present study:

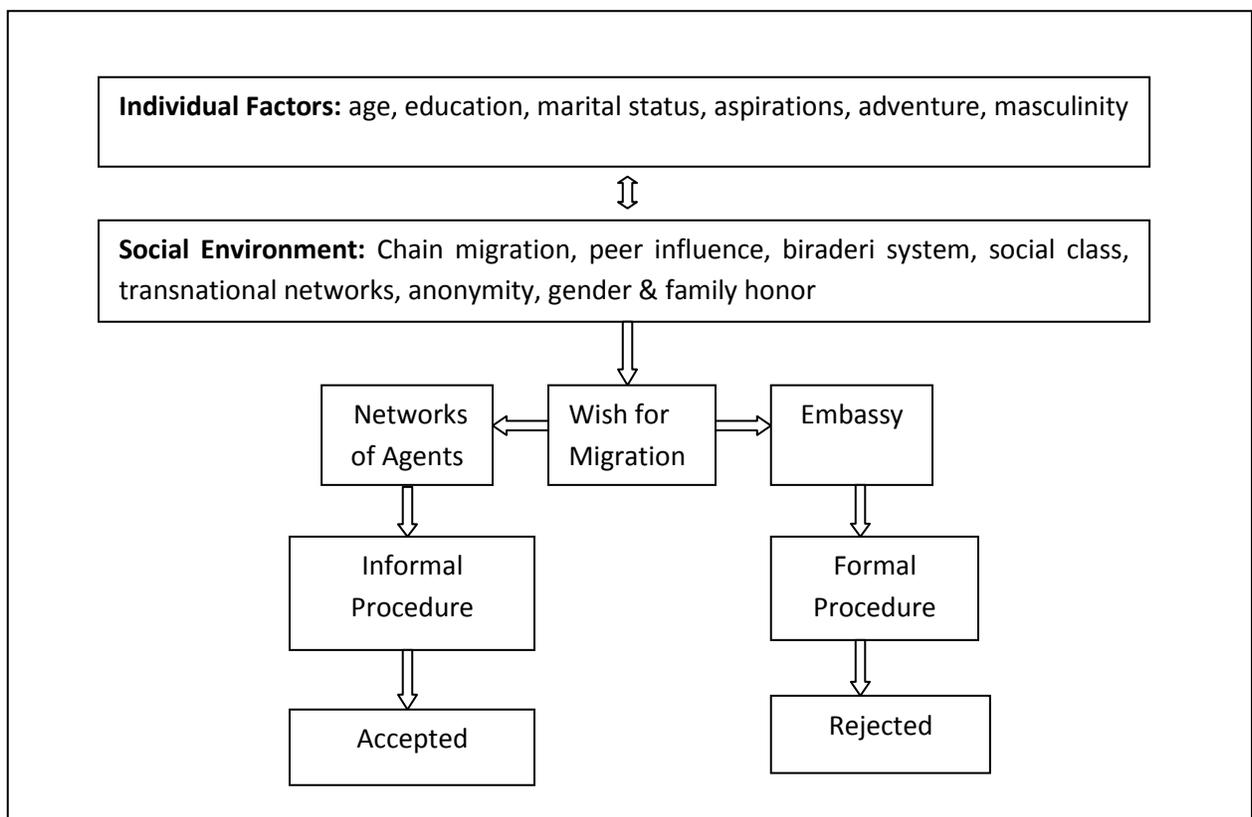
- *Khudai ja rai cee* – Everyone was going to Greece.
- *Duhai pay gai Agents* – Talk of the town
- As a mother, I made last decision
- In God we trust (Migrants’ risk-taking behaviour)
- I can’t carry a basket here in Pakistan
- We are honourable; we don’t allow our girls to work in front of others
- Legalisation aspirations: It makes no sense to come back without papers

4.5.2.2 Memos and Diagrams

The researchers often use initial names for concepts on their documents, for example, field notes and transcripts of interviews (Strauss and Corbin, 1990). In the present study, I also practiced code notes for initial names during my back and forth interaction with data. However, it was only at the initial stage. Later on, by extensive and repeated readings of transcription of the data and the field notes, I also prepared some memo (Hesse-Biber and Leavy, 2006). At the end of every interview, I often discussed some points with my field assistants in order to gain maximum familiarity with the data without missing any minute observation. This practice provided me with a sequence of presentation of the data to find answers of my research questions and made a scientific link with how irregular migration is organized and facilitated by agents from district Gujrat, Punjab, Pakistan to Greece and other EU member states. Moreover, I also used diagrams for the analysis of my data, as diagramming provides a map for analysis (Birks and Mills, 2011).

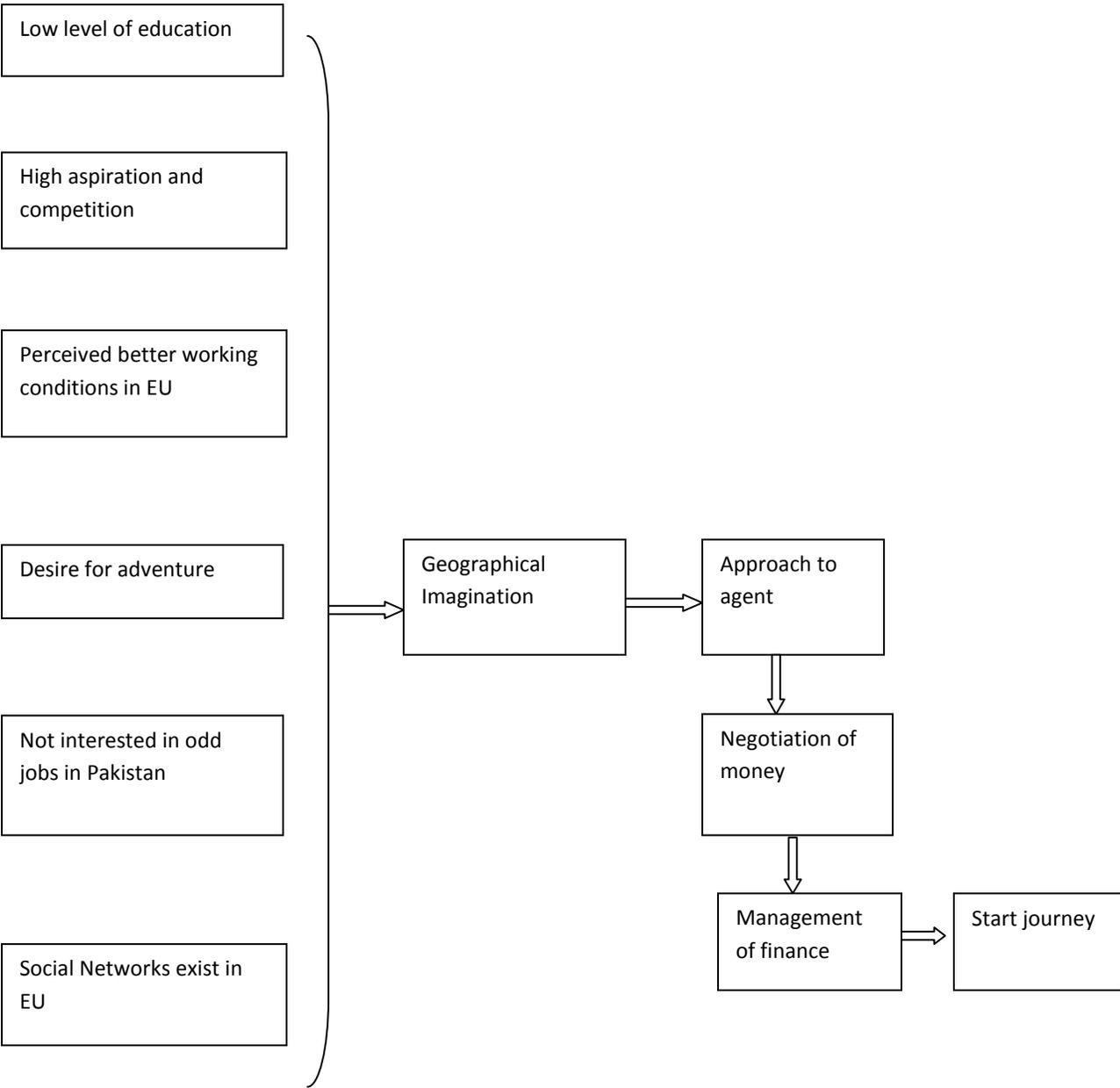
I underlined, highlighted and wrote various codes on the transcripts and also drew diagrams. Such schematic presentation enabled me to understand my data with a better focus on important parts of the data without wasting time on relatively irrelevant details. Moreover, this practice helped me to identify similarities and differences between various categories and sub-categories. This practice provided an insight to understand the meanings, experiences and situations of the interlocutors regarding various aspects of irregular migration from district Gujrat, Punjab to Greece. The following figures 4.1 and 4.2 reflect how schematic presentation of data enabled me to make sense of collected data.

Figure 4.1 Factors Affecting Irregular Migration



Source: Authors' construction based on empirical data

Figure 4.2 Factors affecting migration decision-making and destination choice in the context of irregular migrants from district Gujrat, Pakistan to Greece



Source: Author's own construction based on empirical data

4.5.2.3 Constant Comparative Analysis

Through constant comparative analysis similarities and differences in data can be identified (Charmaz, 2006, p. 54). This method is useful in drawing open coding and identification of subcategories (Tonsing, 2014, p. 141). In the present study, constant comparative analysis helped to identify subcategories. For example, “aspiration for migration” was recognized as a category. It was expanded through constant comparative analysis, and three subcategories of aspiration were constructed. These subcategories were; firstly, *investment aspiration* in which people migrated to earn money for the betterment of their families, for instance, marriage of siblings, construction of houses or material comfort for the household. Secondly, *settlement aspirations* in which people migrated for long term stay in the host country. Thirdly, *legalization aspiration* intended to get permanent citizenship of the host country, for example, Greece (detail analysis is given in empirical chapter 7).

4.5.3 Axial Coding

Axial coding establishes connections between categories and sub-categories which are identified during the process of open coding (Strauss and Corbin, 1990, p. 97). Axial coding, by using paradigm model, focuses on specifying categories in terms of context, conditions, action / interaction strategies and consequences – as a result, analysis gets density and precision (Strauss and Corbin, 1990). In the present study, I identified links between various categories through a rigorous exercise of axial coding. However, it is pertinent to know that the lines between various stages of coding in grounded theory are artificial; especially, researchers unconsciously and quickly move between open and axial coding (Tonsing, 2014; Strauss and Corbin, 1990). Axial coding paves the way for selective coding.

4.5.4 Selective Coding

In the present study, selective coding was employed for establishing the core categories and interpretation of data. Selective coding refines the network of conceptual relationships between various categories identified in axial coding (Strauss and Corbin, 1990). This process constitutes a meaningful story line by establishing systematic relationship between core category and sub-categories (Strauss and Corbin, 1990; Tonsing, 2014). The story itself reflects its properties. It identifies what phenomena occur repeatedly and what type of hidden meaning it contains, and how and why it fits in the context of the study. The central argument in grounded theory lies in

the middle of integration of various components. Once the core category is identified then the remaining categories can be easily integrated to construct a story. According to Strauss and Corbin (1990), a core category is like sun, having orderly relationships to its planets (subcategories). The relationship between subcategories and a core category depends on conditions, context, strategies and consequences, which constitutes a “paradigmatic relationship” (Strauss and Corbin, 1990, p. 124). This knowledge provided me an insight into the contexts of the participants regarding their particular events, activities and groups (Finnegan, 2014), especially in understanding the different social contexts in which they consulted with the agents for irregular migration. The overall arrangement or rearrangement of categories in terms of their paradigmatic relationship shapes a story. Appropriate fitting of categories reflects the analysis; otherwise, it would be just a list of items. Table 4.3 indicates how selective coding is used in the data of the present study.

Table 4.3 Selective Coding example from the Data of Present Study

Themes	Sub-categories
Management of Irregular Migration	Easy availability of agents Complex procedure in the embassy Source of information Level of trust – agents are fair dealers <i>Beraderi</i> and belonging Flexible bargaining Management of finance Mode of payment Risk taking behavior

<p>Social Environment</p>	<p>Everyone was going</p> <p>Upward social mobility</p> <p>Matter of social class</p> <p>Degrading work in home country</p> <p>Social networks</p> <p>Hope for assistance at destination</p> <p>Issue of gender</p> <p>Only male migrants</p> <p>Sense of responsibility</p> <p>Risk taking behavior</p> <p>Masculinity</p> <p>Family honor</p> <p>Males are custodians</p>
<p>Aspirations for Migration</p>	<p>Investment</p> <p>Settlement</p> <p>Legislation</p>
<p>Greece as Destination</p>	<p>Geographical location of Pakistan</p> <p>Access to Greece from Pakistan</p> <p>Greece as gateway to Europe</p> <p>Organized networks of agents operating in this corridor</p>

	Relatively affordable expenses on this route
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4.6 Position of the Researcher

Before starting the fieldwork, I was much conscious about my position as a researcher, and kept the issue of subjectivity in my mind. Being a researcher, I was aware of the possible threats of that how my position can affect the process of data collection (Bumbuc, 2015). In qualitative research, subjectivity is always present; however, it depends on the researcher how s/he is aware of the threats (Bumbuc, 2015; Mohamed, 2017). The position of the researcher as insider or outsider is very important and varies in different situations (Shinozaki, 2012), as the researcher is also a product of social relations and can be influenced by the conditions in which s/he is working (Barglowski, 2016; Dowse, 2016). In qualitative methodology, the participants have a chance to express their views and experiences without any distortion and prosecution, and the task of the researcher is to explore meanings from the responses of the participants (Alase, 2017). For this exercise, the researcher must be aware of the boundaries of the scientific knowledge and everyday knowledge because “everyday knowledge is largely implicit, incomplete, and unconscious, and the major role of Sociology is to uncover and bring to consciousness those tacit and implicit rules of social practice” (Barglowski, 2016, p. 159).

In the present study, as far as my position is concerned, I considered myself as a partial insider because I shared the language and the regional belonging of my interlocutors. However, mainly, I considered myself as an outsider as it was also reflected from the conversation of interlocutors. The main indicators of my outsider position were education, my status as a doctoral student in a foreign university having followed the legal procedure⁴³ for getting the visa from the German embassy, lecturer in the local university of Gujrat, and urban resident. As education, age, status can be some indicators of outsider (Barglowski, 2016). In some cases, I felt that being outsider was in my favor because the interlocutors had no worries about my neutrality (Barglowski, 2016; Shinozaki, 2012). The insights I gathered from the field helped me in analyzing the data without any bias.

⁴³ As I was dealing with illegal migrants, so my status as legal visa holder was a difference between “me” and “them”

4.7 Conclusion

This chapter examined the materials and methods employed in the present study. An ethnographic fieldwork was carried in two villages of district Gujrat, Punjab, Pakistan. A qualitative research design is used because it provides an emic view. Moreover, semi-structured interviews are found as an appropriate method for data collection. The fieldwork was challenging but it was managed by practicing ethical codes prescribed by the international academic and professional organizations. Interviews were translated in English for data analysis because the language of thesis is English. Interview transcripts were coded as per process informed by grounded theory through a back and forth interaction with the data of the present study.

CHAPTER 5

Management of Irregular Migration through Agents: In the Context of District Gujrat, Pakistan

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the empirical evidence from the fieldwork of the present study regarding the role of human smugglers, locally known as agents in district Gujrat Pakistan, in the organization of the irregular migration from Pakistan to Greece, which is the central argument of the present research. Based on ethnographic fieldwork in the district Gujrat, Pakistan, the data were analyzed by employing the coding technique in grounded theory to explore major categories of the data (Strauss and Corbin, 1990; Charmaz, 2006). The themes of the data that emerged from the interviews with the interlocutors have been organized in a manner that reveals their experiences and represents a meaningful storyline by establishing a systematic link between core category and sub-categories (Strauss and Corbin, 1990; Tonsing, 2014).

For the present chapter, four major themes have emerged. The first, how to approach the agents, has been further divided into sub-sections, shedding light on the social profile of the agents, in response to several questions related to how irregular migration was organized and facilitated by the agents in district Gujrat, Pakistan. Almost all the interlocutors admitted that they were facilitated by agents to plan irregular migration towards Greece. It was also found that these agents are residents of the same village or nearby villages of the interlocutors. To my surprise, the interlocutors talk about agents in a very casual manner and consider them as a part of their daily life matters. They do not consider agents as criminals contrary to the government officials who always usher these terms as a crime for people who organize and facilitate irregular mobility. This theme further explains how interlocutors of the present study were convinced to start the journey with the help of agents. It also reveals how women are also facilitating this process, and are working as agents of the main smugglers, which give a new insight in the context of Pakistani society. This section further elaborates how biraderi and belonging affect their negotiation with agents, and how local networks of the aspirant migrants inform each other about these agents. The second theme, factors behind migration through agents instead of the

embassy, shows how agents become popular among aspiring migrants, and how they prefer them instead of initiation of the process of migration through the embassy of the concerned destination country. The third theme explains how migrants bargain and manage finance for their migration, and how the money is paid to the agents. The fourth theme, migrants' risk-taking behavior, explains how the interlocutors conceptualize risk during migration, and how belief system and cultural traits in the framework of masculinity encourage them to take risk of irregular migration. It further shows how the interlocutors conceptualize trust, which they have on the agents. The following text explains all four themes identified for the present chapter as mentioned-above.

5.2 How to Approach the Agents

This section explains how aspirant migrants in district Gujrat, Pakistan identify human smugglers and contact them for irregular migration. It is further divided into sub-sections on the social profile of the agents, biraderi and belonging, and agents as talk of the town.

5.2.1 Social Profile of the Agents

Around the globe, due to various socio-economic and political reasons, thousands of people flee from their homelands to reach new destinations by using legal as well as illegal means of migration which, in turn, also provides an opportunity to agents to exploit such aspiring individuals or groups (İçli et al., 2015, p. 1). However, it is important to understand the nature of the relationship between human smugglers and migrants because it is not a simple case of cruel criminals and their passive victims, rather "mutual interest" of migrants and smugglers make this phenomenon more complex (Van Liempt and Doornik, 2006, p. 173). Identification of human smugglers in a particular area is very difficult because they live as ordinary people; usually they operate some formal businesses, for example, restaurant owners or car salesmen but behind such businesses they carry their secret activities to organize human smuggling (Zhang and Chin, 2002). Moreover, they operate such activities at various levels and geographies (Pastore et al., 2006).

In the present study, the interlocutors also told about the agents operating in their areas and their initial contacts with them. Ghafoor is one of the interlocutors in the present study. He has four sons and three of them went to Greece with the help of human smugglers. His fourth son, who was in Pakistan at the time of the interview, was also insisting to follow his brothers. Ghafoor

has his own cemented house in the village and also owns agricultural land in the same village, where he cultivates with the help of his fourth son. He also has few buffalos and takes it as his pride as it is a common customary trait in the rural areas of district Gujrat, Pakistan. Furthermore, he told that he also worked in a restaurant in a major city of Pakistan, but after some time he returned to his village and started cultivation on his land, and later on, he sent his three sons to Greece. During the interview, Ghafoor told that agents are the residents of the same community and the only thing which makes them important is their exposure to travelling to Europe:

These agents are the people who themselves went to Greece [...] some were successful and some were unsuccessful [...] Once they were migrants and now they are agents. Who else becomes an agent? [for example] me, this guy (pointed his figure to my field assistant sitting next to me) you [...] no [...] we can't [act as the agent] because we don't know how to migrate [...] those people who went abroad, faced hardships [...] came back [to the native village in Pakistan] then they became agents [because once they travelled illegally] they talked with other people from other countries [...] they discussed their plans [like] how to shift people [...] through this way, or through that way [...] how much money to charge [...] they [agents] sell people [...] they start this sale from this village [...] agent from Gujrat sell to an agent in Lahore [...] he further sells to an agent from Multan [...] he further sells to an agent from Karachi [and so on] migrants are being sold till the end [...] after being sold seven times [...] then they reach Greece. [Moreover] agents also offer money to people there [countries of transition] and they accept this offer. Dishonesty prevails in every country.

The above-mentioned conversation with Ghafoor reveals several aspects of agents operating in the rural areas of district Gujrat, Pakistan. It shows the importance of access to information in the migration decision-making process. Due to their first-hand experience of migration, agents start guiding other aspiring migrants about how to initiate irregular migration. His notion "they talk with other people from other countries" shows that there is a strong chain of networking among the agents. This networking is not only operating in Pakistan but also connected with networks in Iran, Turkey, and Greece. Moreover, the notion of dishonesty discloses that these networks are also linked with the official authorities of immigration and border control of transit and host countries. These authorities are involved by providing safe pockets for border crossing and also offer forged documents if necessary. They charge a handsome amount and the migrants have to bear this entire financial burden indirectly because agents charge all expenses from their clients. This entire networking fosters the business of irregular migration because they are well-

connected with each other. Another interesting point mentioned by Ghafoor in the above-mentioned conversation is his concept of “seven times”. In rural areas of Pakistan, especially in the province of the Punjab, where the site of this fieldwork is located, people use number “seven” as a metaphor⁴⁴ to indicate the intensity of something. In this context, the phrase, migrants are being sold seven times, shows the established networks of human smugglers within Pakistan and across borders.

The data of the present study also describe that in the rural areas of district Gujrat, Pakistan, agents cannot be solely blamed for irregular migration because they do not force the aspired migrants for irregular migration. For example, Riaz is another interlocutor of the present study whose only son went to Greece 11.5 years ago with the help of agents and never came back. For some years, his son remained connected with him but then he had no contact with the family living in Pakistan. Riaz told that he himself spent some time in Saudi Arabia and asked his son to go to Saudi Arabia if he wanted to migrate, but he insisted to go to Greece. Riaz expressed the view that agents are not responsible for irregular migration in this area. During the whole interview, his tone remained very down.

My son, ⁴⁵[...] agents do not come to us, actually, we go to agents. The thirsty man goes to the well; the well does not go to the thirsty man. They [agents] can survive and manage their living, they have money, and they do not need to rush to follow people. The only issue is that agents know some tricks to go abroad. In the past, some agents have the proper license from the government to manage the migration of people. I also went to Saudi Arabia with the help of an agent and he showed me his license and also assured that all processes will be legal.

Riaz’s views shed light on the fact that people approach agents because they consider them as a competent source to facilitate the process of their irregular migration and it is also beneficial for agents because they do not have to make many efforts to reach their clients. They establish their informal places to finalize the deals and the local community is familiar with such places; often it happens through snow-ball effects. He also pointed out the wave of semi-skilled Pakistani immigrants to the Gulf in the late 1970s and early 1980s (Wassan et al., 2017), when the government issued licenses to the agents for the management of legal migration. He appreciated

⁴⁴For example, if people want to wish peace and success to someone then they use the word “*Satay Khairan*”, here *Satay* is a Punjabi word stands for seven, and *khairan* means that everything will be ok.

⁴⁵ He addressed me as a son, as it is a popular trend in rural areas of Pakistan to address young people as a son.

the license holder agents but criticized aspired migrants who follow the human smugglers without confirming their credibility to initiate the process of irregular migration.

Similarly, Aslam shared his story and told that he contacted agents for the migration of his son. His son went to Greece in 2009 at the age of 18 and did not come back yet. At that time he was unmarried and did not complete his high school. His son went to Greece by air by using forged documents given by the agent. Later on, he moved to Spain. Before going to Greece, he was working in a garment factory in a major city in Pakistan. Aslam further told:

One day I met the agent and requested him to do something for my son. He said ok [...] He [agent] contacted me after some time and asked to send photocopies of the passport and identity card of my son. He asked me that he will not take my son to Greece directly, but he will send the contact number of another person [agent]. Actually it happened only with the mercy of God. After three months we received the [forged] documents for my son. We could not understand those documents and what to do next. Some boys from my village came to me and demanded to present [them] sweets because I received papers for my son. I replied that I do not know anything [about these papers]. Then I made a call to the agent and asked to explain us what was going on. He replied that we had received [forged] papers for travelling of our son.

Aslam's conversation shows the dependency of people on the agents to make arrangements for migration. Ignorance from the official and legal process of migration plays an important role to contact the smugglers. People are not familiar with the whole process and they consider it a difficult task. Aslam did not know how to initiate the process of migration but he knew that the agent can do this. Despite having a passport and national identity card of his son, he preferred to depend on the agent, who in turn, arranged forged other necessary documents for his son. It shows that these agents are also well-connected with corrupt officials to get fake documents. In Pakistan federal government issues a national identity card to every citizen at the age of 18 years and it is a mandatory document to get a passport. The federal ministry of interior is responsible to issue these documents.

Another interesting aspect of the above-mentioned story is that people who have the desire to go to Greece through the agents are inter-connected and know each other, and remain updated regarding the "work-in-progress". However, the general community does not know what is going on among such groups as they operate secretly. Similar happened in this case when Aslam got fake documents, then some other people who were also in the same process came and greeted

him. It shows that people consider it a big achievement if they get some documents for their travel to Greece. The demand for sweets from the people who visited Aslam highlights the traditional practice of Pakistani society; usually people distribute sweets to celebrate their achievements or success.

In contrast to Riaz and Aslam as mentioned-above, Akbar revealed that some agents are also proactive to target their clients and use different strategies to reach and convince people for irregular migrations. Akbar sent his son to Greece 8 years ago at the age of 18 years. He did not complete his high school, and was unmarried at the time of migration. He also told that the agent who arranged the travel of his son was his younger brother. He further described:

Mr. Safdar⁴⁶ [agent] went to Italy some years ago and at that time I was in Saudi Arabia. He himself started the process of migration for my son and arranged documents. Later on he insisted that I must send my son to Greece. He said that he spent a lot of money on this arrangement [for his son] and he [son] must join me in Europe. He talked with another agent to facilitate my son.

Another important point reflected in the data of the present study is the involvement of female mediators in the process of negotiation with the agents. It gives some initial insight into this dimension of irregular migration in Pakistan because in Pakistani rural society it is strange that females are taking part in an organization of irregular migration which was once considered as a masculine task (Koser, 2008). In some cases, male agents are not solely involved in the management of irregular migration but also assisted by females. For instance, Kalsoom Bibi told that her son went to Greece. In Pakistan, he completed his middle school but could not pass in class 9 and left the school. They (family) managed a small shop for him in a major city of Pakistan, but that business could not flourish. He sold out the items of his shop and came back to the native village. He did not take permission for such activities from his father⁴⁷. As a result, his father became angry and did not speak with him for 6 months. The son insisted her mother to take some steps to initiate the process of his migration to Greece because at home he could not face his father. In this context, Kalsoom Bibi shared how her family consulted with the male agent through the help of a woman mediator:

⁴⁶ Fictitious name of the human smuggler.

⁴⁷ In the context of Pakistani society, parents, especially father has moral authority in decision-making of all matters related to the family.

The aunt of the agent belonged to our village, we [family] requested her to ask her nephew [agent] to arrange for my son [for his migration to Greece]. She asked her nephew, who was also her son-in-law to make some arrangements for my son. So, I am very grateful to him [agent] that he sent my son to Greece.

An interesting point in the above-mentioned passage is how Kalsoom came to know that the nephew of that female was an agent. In rural areas of Gujrat, usually women are housewives and spend some time of the day with other relatives for gossip on domestic issues. During such meetings, Kalsoom came to know that the nephew of that woman was a human smuggler. Kalsoom's story highlights that the females are also involved in the organization of irregular migration, although they are not directly involved but facilitate the main agent and act as their "frontwoman". In her case, the agent was the son-in-law of that woman, and in rural areas of Gujrat; mother-in-law is very influential and can exert pressure on her son-in-law. In the cultural context of Pakistani society, a son-in-law cannot refuse the command of his mother-in-law. Kalsoom thought that the female mediator can play an important role to convince her son-in-law to make arrangements for his son's migration. She did not directly consult with the agent but preferred to request his mother-in-law.

Moreover, the data of the present study also reveal the direct involvement of some women to facilitate the migration of aspired migrants through paper marriage. There are two dimensions of such marriages. Firstly, the aspired migrants marry the women who hold European citizenship just for getting legal documents and both parties are aware of this fact. Secondly, these migrants deceive such women and after getting legal documents they dissolve the marriage without prior consent of their partner. But it only happens when migrants have reached Greece or other EU member states⁴⁸. But data of the present study describes that some EU nationality holder women come to Pakistan and marry the aspired migrants and charge a huge amount. They dissolve such marriages after their arrival in Greece or other EU member states because the prime purpose is to provide safe passage to enter the EU territory. Ghafoor explained this fact as:

Nowadays some female agents are also involved in this business [of irregular migration] before departing to Greece. Females having the nationality of some European country visit Pakistan and get married to the local residents who want to go abroad. These women introduce the aspired migrants as their husband and after

⁴⁸ However, it depends on the legal system of the country of destination. Recently, some EU member countries introduced new legislation to avoid such types of fraud marriages.

their arrival in Europe they dissolve the marriage [...] and these women charge a huge amount for such a facility.

The aspirant migrants usually use such marriages for vertical social mobility because after getting the legal status of some EU member states, they can earn money and develop their infrastructure back in the home country. It would also increase their social status among the extended family and local community in the home country. Such short-cut of paper marriage can foster the process of becoming a legal citizen of an EU member state. Otherwise, it would be difficult for the aspirant migrants to get visas of an EU member state, integrate into a new culture, learn a new language, and get adapted to social values of the host country, etc. By getting the legal status of an EU member state, a person can get all the social benefits from the state and can establish his family back in the native country as well.

The aforesaid data reveal that in some cases migrants approach the agents and in some cases agents encourage the aspirant migrants to pursue irregular migration. The data also found that belonging to the same biraderi or residing in the same village are also important factors that facilitate the negotiation between agents and the aspirant migrants. The following sub-section explains it.

5.2.2 Biraderi⁴⁹ and Belonging

Alpes (2013, p. 8) explained that an important aspect of irregular migration is how to contact with the human smuggler. She stressed to study the local power dynamics to understand this mechanism of irregular migration. Through local connections the aspiring migrants approach these brokers for further negotiation. The data of the present research shows that usually, people come to know about agents through some local social networks:

My son contacted an agent and showed his desire to go abroad [...] He had been told [about the agent] by his friends. It was so confidential [...]. So, we went at that [suggested] place which was a nearby village and met the person [agent]. I don't remember the exact number of meetings with the agent. [Ghafoor]

Ghafoor's notion of "place" reveals that the agents had their informal points of meetings in their villages and they provide all information regarding the travel as a complete package to the

⁴⁹ The concept of biraderi is theoretically explained in chapter 3, section 3.3. According to Lieven (2011, p. 66) it is "related to the Indo-European root for 'brother', which is supposed to denote the descendants of one common male ancestor. However, biraderi can be used to mean almost any kind of wider hereditary kinship link depending on context" (p. 66).

aspirant migrants. The view of “confidential” reflects that people do not leak such type of information until their departure. Such confidentiality is embedded in three local cultural contexts of district Gujrat. Firstly, people consider confidentiality as the first step to their success and they believe that if things are kept confidential then the chances of success increase. Secondly, people believe in the evil eye which can result in misfortune or bad luck. They consider that some metaphysical forces can spoil their entire plan if it is disclosed pre-mature. Additionally, people have a fear that if they share this information, somebody may inform the police or other law enforcement agencies. Even, it is so confidential that the local community comes to know about somebody when he has reached Greece. Furthermore, Ghafoor’s notion of “we went” reflects the familial approval and social support for the aspirant migrants. It also reveals the presence of an elderly person during negotiation. In rural areas of Pakistan, people pay much respect to elderly people and it is difficult to refuse any request made by an older person as compared to a young one (Qidwai et al., 2017). The intention of Ghafoor while accompanying his son was not only to provide social support but also to facilitate negotiation with the agent. The presence of Ghafoor not only ensured the negotiation of all matters regarding irregular migration but also secured his son not to be deceived by the agent.

The data of the present study also reveal that in the rural areas of district Gujrat, reference-based on biraderi and belonging to the same community are important determinants of approaching and negotiating with the agents. These agents offer a special package to those clients who belong to the same biraderi or community. In rural areas, people from similar biraderi usually live in the same village or extended network of relatives in nearby villages and have a biraderi-based identity (Alavi, 1972). Such biraderi-based identity can be used while negotiating with the agents for arrangements of irregular migration. The biraderi is also a reflection of social class and local people are familiar with the financial details of each biraderi. These financial details can be reflected by the ownership of agricultural land, housing structure, and education of children whether they are enrolled in expensive private schools or relatively cheaper government schools. Human smugglers also know the paying capacity of each client and can be flexible in negotiating money with the potential migrants. Sometimes they offer a concession to their customer as Nasreen told “We paid five and half hundred thousand rupees to the agent [...] earlier he finalized six hundred thousand rupees [...] however, later on, he did not charge fifty thousand rupees”.

Sakina Bibi told that her son went to Greece almost 9 years before the time of the interview. Later on, he moved to Poland. She was not sure about the age of her son. He completed higher secondary school. Before departing to Greece, he was a temporary employee in a garment factory in a nearby city. He got married to a Polish lady and started living there. In response to a question that how the family conceived the idea to send their son to Greece, she replied:

The Mangana⁵⁰ family, our village fellows, informed us about the procedure of this [irregular] migration. There is an agent in this family and they informed us that if we were willing, they would send our son to Greece. Some of my son's cousins had already gone to Greece, so, my son also showed his desire to go there.

Similarly, another interlocutor, Nasim Bibi, told that her son migrated to Greece at the age of 18 and has been there in Europe for 9 years. He did not complete his high school, though he appeared in the examination. His result was announced after he had left for Greece. He was also unmarried at the time of migration. She also described that her family came to know about human smugglers from local networks of the village:

Interviewer: Can you please tell me how your son went to Greece?

Nasim: Yes, he went with the help of an agent.

Interviewer: How you approached the agent [or] came to know about the agent?

Nasim: He was a resident of my parents' village.

5.2.3 Agents – Talk of the Town

In the rural life of a village in district Gujrat, Pakistan, there is less anonymity among the residents and usually people know family details of each other. So, information sharing among the aspirant migrants plays a vital role to identify the agents. Another interlocutor, Bashir, told that his two nephews went to Greece. Later on, one moved to Spain while the other moved to Germany. Both were unmarried at the time of migration. Bashir told these details in a very relaxed mood and he immediately responded to all the questions during the interview without taking any pause of reluctance, which shows the smoothness of the whole process. The following conversation took place with Basir:

Interviewer: How you came to know about the agent?

⁵⁰ Fictitious name of the biraderi

Bashir: It is very easy to know about the agent as everybody talks about them in the town. People [who have the desire to migrate illegally] tell and guide each other about the agent.

Interviewer: Ok, would you please further explain where the agent belonged to?

Bashir: He belonged to Fateh Pur,⁵¹ a nearby village.

Interviewer: Ok, how many visits did you make to the agent to finalize your deal?

Bashir: No sir [...], for the first son we made only one visit to the agent and all the matters had been settled down easily. Then my son arranged the [forged] documents for his brother.

The notion of “only one visit” to the agent shows the importance of one window facility provided by the agents as compared to the bureaucratic procedure of the government officials. His notion of “son arranged [forged] documents for his brother” also demonstrated the social support system among family members in the rural areas of district Gujrat. Especially, the elder brother considers himself responsible to help his younger siblings. There are two reasons behind this responsibility. Firstly, it is important to maintain family ties which are considered as a symbol of social status as it increases family income and prestige in the rural areas of Gujrat. Secondly, the presence of two brothers in Europe could be a source of social and emotional support for each other.

The data in the above-mentioned section discusses several aspects of the social profile of agents operating in district Gujrat, Pakistan. In the rural areas of district Gujrat, agents are the only available source of information regarding all the possible aspects to initiate irregular migration. They play a decisive role in the migration of the aspiring young migrants. They perform a variety of tasks to facilitate the irregular migrants, for example, they assist them in illegal entry and stay both in transit and destination countries, and provide false documents. These findings confirm the previous studies which showed that irregular migration through human smugglers is prevailing in different regions of the globe as a business and there is a strong relationship between the migration industry and human smuggling (Gammeltoft-Hansen and Nyberg Sorensen 2013; Awumbila et al., 2017). Moreover, the agent can be a village fellow, a family member, or a close relative. The nature of the relationship with human smugglers affects the

⁵¹ Fictitious name of a village

negotiation. The findings in section 5.2 are also in line with previous researches, which explain that human smugglers and their clients have mutual interests (Van Liempt and Doomernik, 2006; Zhang and Chin, 2002). The aspirant migrants are well-connected with each other and share information about agents. As discussed above, the present study also shows some initial insight into the involvement of female mediators in district Gujrat, Pakistan to organize irregular migration. This is an addition in the existing scientific literature in the context of Pakistan because the previous studies showed that only male human smugglers are operating in Pakistan, for example, Koser (2008) found in his study on human smuggling from Pakistan to Europe that there is no evidence of women mediators in the organization of irregular migration from Pakistan.

The Data of the present study also found that people prefer to start the process of irregular migration through the agents instead of applying in the embassy of the desired destination country by using legal means. The following section discusses this issue.

5.3 Migration through Agents Instead of Embassy

Access to information is an important factor for the decision-making process, especially; it can play a vital role for individuals in developing countries (Mitchell, 2012). Lack of information and complex procedures in embassies discourage the potential migrants to opt for legal channels as Hing et al. (2011) examined various factors of irregular migration among Cambodian migrants. They described that migration through illegal means was a popular trend among the Cambodian workers. There were several reasons behind this choice but the important was the lengthy, complex, and expensive legal recruitment. The aspired migrants were unable to pay the high cost of the legal visa process and other formalities. In the present research, the majority of the youth who went to Greece has only primary education and the family members are also illiterate. As a result, they give up following the legal procedure through embassy. As Nasim Bibi explains it:

We [family] did not have enough information about the visa process when my son planned to go to Greece. Once he tried [to apply for a visa] and submitted application documents in the embassy in Islamabad⁵² but due to a mistake in the spellings of his name, his application was rejected. At that time we spent 2-3

⁵² Capital of Pakistan

hundred thousand rupees [for official process]; now people are spending 8-14 hundred thousand rupees to get visas by legal means.

Visa rejection from the embassy is a big disappointment for the aspired migrants and they prefer to contact the agents. Nasim realized it and suggested, “Government should intervene in this matter and facilitate the aspired migrants by relaxing visa fees and process of application. In this way people can get rid of the traps of agents”.

Migration through legal visa can ensure security, reduce irregularity, and has more potential for economic gains (Vezzoli and Flahaux, 2017). In the context of migration, the visa can serve the purpose to control the mobility of people, prevent irregular entry and also control requests of asylums. The state can also keep an eye if anybody is overstaying after the expiry date (Czaika and de Hass, 2014; Mau et al., 2015; Neumayer, 2006; Vezzoli and Flahaux, 2017). Through a visa, a country can control the undesirable entrance of “non-citizens” and it serves as the “first line of defense” (Torpey 1998 in Vezzoli and Flahaux, 2017, p. 1141). However, strict visa policy and rejection of asylum applications lead to an increase in irregular border entries (Czaika and Hobolth, 2016).

Keeping in view the sensitivity of visas, every state takes serious measures to ensure transparency in the issuance process of the visa. Often, the verification process is very complex and takes time and much paperwork. This complexity can be of various types like; firstly, due to the latest technology now embassies require an advance appointment through the internet. Secondly, the applicant must submit some attested or verified documents along with the application; thirdly, it cost a high fee. When people compare the legal cost vs. illegal, they prefer the latter:

Interviewer: Why didn't you get a permanent visa for your son from the embassy in Pakistan, instead of going through the agent?

Aslam: Oh my dear [...] one cannot get a permanent visa here in Pakistan, it is very difficult [he stressed on his statement] [laugh].

Interviewer: Ok, can you please further explain how it is difficult?

Aslam: For this purpose, a huge amount of money is required.

Interviewer: Were you aware that your son may not get legal documents in Greece very soon?

Aslam: Yes, I knew a guy [of the same village] who came back after 9 years.

Sanchez-Barrueco (2017) pointed out that due to the outsourcing of visa; many private business partners are involved in the process. Such private companies charge some extra fee to provide different services to the consumers. In Pakistan, many consultants are working in this field and provide visa assistance. It increases the dependency of migrants on such companies and they prefer to contact the smugglers, who provide them all the services in a very less amount as compared to the embassy. Bashir had a similar experience:

Sir, we could have not been able to arrange the huge money to fulfill all these [legal] requirements [like processing fee, etc]. At that time the [legal] fee was 9 hundred thousand rupees, now it is 10-12 hundred thousand rupees [...] but at that time it was 9 hundred thousand rupees. As I told you that we took 3 years to arrange 400 thousand rupees to pay the agent for the illegal process. Those 3 years were very stressful.

Bashir's experience revealed that he was more aware of the legal process as compared to the other interlocutors, but was unable to arrange the payment for the high cost of legal procedure. In rural areas of Gujrat, people from the lower middle class have no savings like 400 thousand rupees. It is a huge task to arrange such an amount. During this period the family suffers many hardships because they have to save money and cut down their household expenses.

Application through the embassy does not guarantee that the applicant will get a visa as there are chances that the applicant pays a handsome amount as processing fee but the visa may be rejected by the authorities due to some technical reasons (Alpes, 2013). In case of migration from Pakistan to the EU member states, usually, there are four different categories of application for a visa. Firstly, a student visa requires an admission letter from the foreign university and financial statement from the applicant that how s/he bears expenses every month. Secondly, a business visa requires a money trail and business plan. Thirdly, tourist visa also requires sufficient financial evidence. Fourthly, a family reunion requires that the partner must be in the host country. Now, in all such situations, the aspired migrants cannot fulfill the eligibility criteria. In such a situation people adopt an alternative source because the legal channel is not working for them (Simon et al., 2016):

In Pakistan you cannot get a permanent visa of Greece or Italy. My son went to Europe [Greece] and used some tricks to get permanent documents or legal

documents to live over there because one has to reapply after reaching there.
[Akbar]

Akbar's notion of "tricks" means various strategies to get a visa. For example, many people apply for asylum by showing themselves as a member of some religious minority group or a political worker of some opposition parties – facing serious threats to their life. Otherwise, there is no other option to flee from the home country. Once, a popular tactic to get residence permits was to get married to a woman of the host society. The majority learn such tricks from agents, which shows that agents are not only active to provide a safe passage to enter the desired country of destination but also provide services for settlement procedures (Ambrosini, 2017). However, it depends on the nature of financial negotiation between the agents and the migrants.

From the above-mentioned responses of the interlocutors, it is revealed that irregular migration fostered due to a lack of legal mechanisms provided by the state institutions. Space emerged from such lack of institutional facility of legal migration; as a result, agents fulfill such space and become a reliable source of information. The majority of the aspirant migrants from district Gujrat is illiterate or has only primary education; so, they cannot enter the EU member states by using a student visa. Neither they have sufficient amount to present in the embassy to get business or visit visa, nor do they have some technical skills to become skilled migrants. Consequently, the only possible option is migration by using illegal means and such a quest leads them to contact the agents. However, in a more critical and political perspective, the growth of "irregular migration is a result of restrictive immigration policies of rich countries" (Castles, 2003, p. 15). Other than the legal procedures of the embassy, migrants are also unaware of the migratory tracks and are dependent on the agents. This issue is being discussed in the following text.

5.3.1 Agents' Knowledge of Migratory Tracks

In the case of irregular migration from Pakistan to Greece, people have to cross the borders of Pakistan, Iran, Turkey, and Greece. Usually, crossing points or pockets identified by the agents are very rough and difficult to cross. Sometimes, the migrants have to cross some sloppy mountains, and sometimes they have to swim through streams or rivers. They have to walk by foot, locked in containers, or squeeze in the trunk of a car or van. Sometimes they have to walk briskly or may be ordered by the smugglers to run with full speed. The smugglers prefer to travel

at night, and during day time they have to hide in some shelters or sleeping cells. However; despite all these hardships, the data shows that the interlocutors were not aware of the tracks and other hardships during travel:

[Laugh] We didn't know anything [about] Europe. My dear, I was only familiar with Karachi [mega city in Pakistan] where I used to live. From Gujrat, I took the train and closed my eyes until I reached Karachi and then took a train back to Gujrat and closed my eyes and reached back home. It was too simple. I just handed my matters over to God. [Aslam]

Some interlocutors told that somehow they had the idea of travelling towards Greece but were not much familiar with transit routes and other information:

We did not know anything [...] we did not know anything. I don't want to tell a lie, it was just a trend in our area to go to Greece. Nobody knows where it is located and other details about Greece or other countries situated on this route. In those days it was a huge trend in our area to go to Greece. [Asmat Bibi]

All the information regarding migratory tracks comes from the agents or migrants' networks. As Sakina told, "No [...] we did not have such information. The agent told us everything about this country and track". Similarly, some more examples from the data are:

I don't have any idea of such information. My son or his father may know about such information, I just knew that people shift from one country to another by crossing different countries [...] [smiled] yes [...]. Sometimes other people who travelled this way are the source of information. [Nasim]

I never knew anything about Greece or the adjacent countries. I just heard that people go to Greece from this route which is very dangerous and people suffer a lot if they approach Greece from this way. My son insisted to go abroad either in Saudi Arabia or Europe. God helped us to implement the plan for my son to send him to Greece. [Kalsoom]

The above-mentioned findings reveal that the aspirant migrants imagine Europe as a dreamland or utopia. Their unrealistic expectations are shaped by their networks and information provided by the agents. These findings confirm the results of previous studies on migration and geographical imagination (Thompson, 2017; Marcus, 2009; Nyamnjoh, 2010). Another important aspect of irregular migration is the negotiation between the aspirant migrants and the agents to finalize the cost of travelling and how the migrants manage it, which is discussed in the section below.

5.4 Bargaining and Management of Finance

The data of the present study shows that there are no hard and fast rules to fix the final amount for a trip to Greece. Social capital plays a pivotal role and it depends on the relationships of the migrants' family with the agents. If the agent belongs to the same village or biraderi of the migrants, then there are chances that they can fix the final amount as per the convenience of both parties. If one approaches the agent through some friends or extended family members then there is a chance to finalize the deal easily:

The agent demanded one hundred and thirty thousand rupees⁵³. At that time we were not financially strong and could only manage one hundred thousand rupees. We struggled hard to manage thirty thousand more but failed. It was his [son] first experience to go abroad. We appealed the agent that being poor we could not manage thirty thousand. We requested him [agent] to manage within one hundred thousand only. Then one of our friends who belonged to the same village [of the agent] intervened in the matter and [successfully] convinced him to manage our case within one hundred thousand rupees. [Ghafoor]

The above-mentioned case also reveals two aspects; first, social capital can exert moral pressure on community fellows. People oblige the community of their village and they cannot refuse some appeals made by their relatives or extended family members. Second, the flexibility of the agent is his "marketing strategy" because many agents are operating in the same village or nearby villages. He obliged the migrant and his father to increase his clientele. Management of finance was the next step for Ghafoor and he told how he managed it:

Believe me we did not have enough money to manage this travelling. When God helps you then nobody can stop you. By the grace of God, the money had been managed automatically. People themselves helped us by giving money like somebody gave us 10,000; somebody arranged 50,000 and someone 20,000 and so on. We had not struggled for it. It had been arranged automatically.

Actually, Ghafoor borrowed money from his relatives but he narrated it as a blessing of God. The word "automatically" symbolizes God's help and social support from his relatives. In the rural areas of district Gujrat, people manage money by borrowing from family, friends, or extended relatives. Usually people need such money on special occasions like marriages of daughters or in this case to manage migration. In the rural context, lending money to a needy relative contains highly symbolic importance, especially when people give it to arrange the

⁵³ Pakistani currency

marriage of one's daughter. They consider it as a collective responsibility and a source to please God. Similarly, people help each other to manage finance for migration.

Another interlocutor, Riaz, paid five and half hundred thousand rupees to the smuggler which is significantly different from what Ghafoor paid. It shows that there is no fixed amount and it depends on personal contacts and bargaining with the smugglers. He further told:

I sold out my two buffalos and my son borrowed some money from his maternal grandparents. They also sold out some animals [like] buffalos, some rice, and some land; somehow they also managed some money for my son. In this way God helped us and he [son] managed to travel to Greece. [Riaz]

The data of the present study also opens the window of another social dimension in rural areas of Gujrat that married women also seek financial help from their brothers. Usually, in rural areas, women do not claim their rights of inheritance and withdraw from it in the favor of brothers. The local community appreciates such women and it is considered as a culturally approved behavior and those women who claim their inheritance rights are criticized in the community (Ahmad et al., 2016). However, in return, brothers contribute to the expenses of marriages of the children of their sisters, especially, by contributing to dowry. But in most of the cases land withdrawn by sisters is much more valuable as compared to the brothers' contribution in dowry. Other than contribution in dowry, brothers also take financial care of their sisters as Kalsoom told:

I paid around six hundred thousand rupees to the agent for the migration arrangement of my son. I am very grateful to my brothers because they sold out some agricultural land to manage it. Yes [...] my dear [...] I am so grateful to my brothers for their help and I can't forget their help. May God bless my brothers because they supported my son.

Ahmad et al. (2016) stated that by law women can get their share in inheritance, however, they withdraw from their share due to societal pressure. Women do not want to pursue legal assistance because in this way they don't want to hurt their parents. They think that by taking any legal step, they can be deprived of the affection or care from their parental family, especially from brothers. Customary practices are stronger than religious values, and civil laws are compromised and settled down under such customary practices (Khalid et al., 2015).

The data also shows another source to manage finance i.e. to lend money on high-interest rates from formal and informal institutions. Formal institutions are some banks, microfinance

organizations and informal are local shopkeepers, investors, and money lenders. Often, people take money from both sources. However, the formal source is complicated and needs some official procedures to follow, for instance, money trial or income sources of the applicant. On the other hand, the informal sector is a bit flexible and requires no official procedure, though it charges high-interest rates as compared to the formal sector. Bashir told about this vicious circle of interest:

Interviewer: How much money you paid to the agent?

Bashir: We paid four and half hundred thousand rupees.

Interviewer: Ok, would you please tell me how you arranged that money?

Bashir: We lent some money from a bank and [some] from [different] people of a nearby village; from both sources we lent money on interest rate. They charged 10,000 rupees per 100 thousand rupees per month. Now you can count by yourself how high [interest] rate it was [.....] so, in this tension my son spent 9 years abroad. He suffered very much for those 9 years and wandered in different countries. First, he went to Greece then moved to Italy, Spain and for the last 2 years, he has been in Germany.

It can also be inferred from Bashir's experience that for time being people relieved themselves by getting money from formal or informal institutions but, later on, they suffered due to a high-interest rate. Every month, they have to pay an installment with a high-interest rate and it exerts pressure on the guy who went to Greece. He is supposed to earn money as soon as possible and send it to the family living back home, so, they can pay back the borrowed money. But the realities in Greece are different as compared to the geographical imaginations of the aspired migrants and their families.

The notion of "tension" and "suffered" reflects the vulnerability of the irregular migrants in Greece because their status is illegal and they have to hide from official authorities. In such a situation most people apply for asylum or become part of the underground economy by getting some odd jobs from the existing diaspora networks. Often, the owner of the business exploits such migrants and pays less as compared to legal wage. The owner also forces the irregular migrants to work for extra hours without extra charges; otherwise, he may be kicked off from the job. The migrants are helpless in such a situation and cannot resist, however, sometimes people escape from Greece and flee to other EU member states. But ultimately they have to suffer until they get some legal status.

Some interlocutors have some savings and also sold out their crops as most of them are engaged in agricultural activities. Asmat Bibi told:

My elder son had a bakery in Karachi and regularly sent money back home. We also sold out some cattle and grains to meet these expenses. So, in this way, we managed the money to bear expenses [of migration].

It is a usual practice in rural areas of Pakistan that people save extra grain in homemade godown and sells it in time of need. Sakina told:

We [family] borrowed money from relatives [...]. I don't want to tell a lie. Who can pay for us? [...] We don't have such type of relative [who are well off] later on we spent all of our income to pay back the borrowed money. One has to suffer while paying back the borrowed money.

Nasim shared a similar story and described, “We had some savings and [also] borrowed [some] money from different people and in this way we managed all the expenses. But most of the money was arranged by borrowing from others”. This finding of the present study is also backed by the results of some early studies (Koser, 2008; Majidi and Danziger, 2016). The mode of payment to the agents is also an important aspect of the study of irregular migration because it needs more secrecy and intimate trust. The following sub-section describes how money is being paid to the agents.

5.4.1 Mode of Payment

Mode of payment differs from case to case, in some cases agents took money in different installments and each installment was linked with successful completion of each step. As Bashir told:

He [agent] charged two hundred thousand rupees in advance [before the start of travelling] and the remaining two and half hundred thousand rupees were charged after the arrival of my son to Greece. My son made a call to me and confirmed that he had safely reached there. Then we paid the remaining money.

Same thing happened in the case of Nasim:

Interviewer: How much money the agent demanded for this journey?

Nasim: He demanded three and half hundred thousand rupees.

Interviewer: How did you pay this money?

Nasim: I paid in three installments. The first time we paid when my son left home for travelling. I think we paid 28 or 35 thousand rupees, I am not sure.

Interviewer: Ok, and what about the remaining installments?

Nasim: I did not write the record [Laugh]

Interviewer: No, no [...] I mean that did you pay all the [remaining] money when your son was travelling or you paid it when he had reached Greece?

Nasim: We paid half money during the travel and the rest of the money was paid when my son had reached Greece.

Nasim's expression of "no written record" shows that such dealing is just oral because the whole process is illegal and no one takes a chance to keep the record like receipts with signatures etc. If they keep the written record, then anyone among them can exploit it by showing it to the police and they might have to face legal procedures to break the law. Asmat Bibi told that when her son was on his way to Greece they paid money. However, the smuggler ensured all the aspects of privacy:

The agent gave [us] a number and [mentioned] the place where we had to send money. My husband went to that place and it was a private money transfer shop. He paid the money on the desired number [given by the agent]. My husband was directed that everything was ok and he must go home. He was also told that the agent would contact him soon. [Asmat Bibi]

The discussion during interviews also covered questions that, in spite of dangers, why irregular migrants take a risk going to Greece. The answers are analyzed in the following section.

5.5 Migrants' Risk Taking Behavior

5.5.1 In God we Trust

Migration decision-making and perception of risk before starting the journey are inter-linked. However, understanding of different policymakers regarding the motivation of migrants is still incomplete as many studies have been conducted in destination countries with successful cases, so, the results may be limited by "destination bias" (Townsend and Oomen, 2015, p. 3). There is a need to conduct more research about the motivations of the migrants in origin and transit countries as well (Townsend and Oomen, 2015). The present research is focused on pre-departure motivations of migrants in the home country. The results show that in the case of

district Gujrat, the interlocutors were not familiar with the migratory tracks to Greece and were highly dependent on agents. The majority of the interlocutors were not familiar with the travel plan designed by the agents – like transit and entry points during mobility. Even families left behind were not sure about the mobility experience of their sons:

God better knows how he [son] went to Greece. I am only familiar with the major cities of Karachi and Quetta [of Pakistan]. I don't know what happened to them [whole group of the migrants] after leaving Pakistan [...] God knows better [...] it all depends on the agents. [Ghafoor]

Similarly, in another case, Riaz also told:

God better knows how he [son] went to Greece. He went to Gujrat [and] took a bus to Karachi [...] we were not familiar with any of these [geographic and weather] conditions. [Riaz]

Most of the interlocutors used the phrase “God better knows”; it has two meanings in the context of Gujrat. Firstly, as Muslims they use it as a metaphor to get satisfaction from this symbolic language. Secondly, it shows that they were not familiar with the overall mobility experience and just took a risk. It is important to understand how people perceive or deal with risk or uncertainty. Zinn (2016) argued that often people use in-between strategies while dealing with risk and their decisions are neither solely based on “standards of instrumental rationality” nor are “irrational”, rather a mixture of trust, emotions, and intuition (Zinn, 2016). People find out some workable solutions under given circumstances:

Interviewer: Were you and your son aware of the geographical location or weather conditions of the track before departing to Greece?

Bashir: Sir, [...] we were well aware of each and everything [...] like the weather is extremely cold and there is very bad situation on the track and even he [son] may not survive in this condition and may lose his life.

Interviewer: Ok, [...] having known the risk, why did you send him [son] then?

Bashir: Because, in God, we trust; [and] took this risk. We can't avoid fate [...] everything is written in our destiny [...] even one can lose life in Pakistan as well [...] it's all about [...].

Usually agents do not share their mobility plan with the aspired migrants or the family left behind. However, such plans are not fixed and agents can change their travel plan as per their convenience and situation on borders. All the information regarding tracks and the start of the

journey depends on the agents. The migrants or their families can do nothing in this regard because if they pressurize the smugglers, then it is a chance that they refuse to take them or exploit them during mobility. The travel plan also depends on the expected cost and ease of the track. It means that smugglers also offer different deals to the aspirant migrants and their families, and people prefer the tracks where cost is relatively low. However, in spite of all such dangers, people take the risk and agree on the plan given by the agents:

We had no information on the track. It was just a matter of chance. I used to visit the seashore when I was in Karachi. During my visits to the seashore, often I observed the sea, the place around, and the people visiting there. Surprisingly, I often thought that how is it possible to cross the sea to approach Greece [...]. [Ghafoor]

Gao et al. (2017) argued that chanting and offering prayers are major religious activities and can minimize people's negative emotions or fears. Prayers and religious activities "may have cross-cultural universality in emotion regulation" (p.1). The family members of the irregular migrants have fears regarding the travel and expect threats to their lives or failure in case of deportation. They minimize their fear by offering prayers and chanting some holy verses during the travelling period. The sons also believe in such prayers and request mothers and sisters to pray for their success:

He [son] asked me to pray for him that he could successfully cross the border and come out [alive] from the container [...]. Yes, I prayed for my son that he may successfully reach Greece. [Sakina]

Seeking help from God to minimize the risk during irregular migration is not only prevailing in Pakistan but also in other Muslim societies like Indonesia. Bastide (2015) argued that Indonesian labor migrants are a major source of remittances for the last many years. They explore new tracks with the help of agents, informal networks, and corrupt officials. However, such tracks are very risky, full of abuse, violence, and endanger the migrants' life. In spite of all such threats, the number of migrants on these tracks has increased. The reason behind this puzzle is argued as follows:

How, then, migrant workers relate to this risky adventure? As it appears, local conceptions of "fate" help to neutralize fear; the opacity of migration routes is not conceived of in term of uncertainty; as it rather perceived in terms of destiny, and since destiny lays ultimately in the hands of God, dealing with it is a matter of

faith: Only by surrendering sincerely to Allah⁵⁴ is one able to insure his future in this dangerous milieu. In this cognitive framework, incidents are lived as *cobaan Tuhan*--- godly trials-, full of meanings, which are meant to test one's faith in God. And bad experiences, rather than being seen as contingent are perceived as godly signs, which need to be interpreted in order to comply with God's will This ethos tends to reduce the perception of risk and / or uncertainty under the concept of fate; destiny, and through its connectedness to God and faith (Bastide 2015, p. 1).

The majority of the population of Indonesia and Pakistan consists of Muslims; so, there is a strong similarity in how migrants from both societies perceive risk and its interpretation as fate or will of God. In Pakistan, irregular migrants and their families strongly believe that their prayers can reduce the threat and risk during the journey:

God is his [son] custodian. [When my son left home] I put the shadow of the Holy Quran on my son and requested [prayed] God that my son is under the custody of his holy book, and I believe that he [God] will take care of him. We are sinful people. [Aslam]

My wife prayed that our son safely reached Greece. My daughters prayed that their brother safely reached Greece. They offered prayers for his survival [...] may God save him from all troubles and bad conditions during the journey. They wished him good luck for his earning in Greece [he may safely reach his destiny to start earning]. [Ghafoor]

The success or failure is also lined with destiny as Nasim described her situation, "At that time [when the son left for Greece] we could not bear all the expenses [to manage migration]. We borrowed money keeping in mind that we return the money if he [son] is successful [to reach Greece]. If he fails then it is our fate or luck and he will return back". The interlocutors of the present study also shared their experience of dealing with the agents. This is discussed in the following sub-section.

5.5.2 Agents – Fair Dealers or Deceivers

Apart from information dissemination, another important factor that increases the dependency of migrants on the agents is their reputation to fulfill their promises. Such promises range from deciding the transit points, stay during mobility, flexible in negotiation, protection from border security forces, provision of transportation, and meals and drinking water during mobility, etc. Two important aspects are linked with trust; firstly, whether or not the smugglers deceive the

⁵⁴ Arabic word, means God and often used by Muslims

migrants during transit, secondly, did families of the migrants remain in contact with the smugglers during the period of transit. There are some evidences that irregular migrants have to face many risks during their mobility (Ullah et al., 2016; Collyer, 2010; UNODC, 2010) and they are vulnerable to be victims of abuse and violence (IOM 2016) and even they can lose their lives (Last et al., 2017; Weber and Pickering, 2011). Migrants who are getting help from illegitimate networks are at high risk (Ullah 2013).

The findings of the present study show that the agents use various tactics to attract the aspired migrants, for example, by offering relatively small amounts for travelling, provision of fake documents and surety of safe transition, etc. The agents can win the trust of the aspiring migrants and their families by showing their commitment towards the fulfillment of the promises made before initiating the journey. As Akbar told, “The agent assured me that the process of irregular migration of my son will be done smoothly”. Here the notion of “smooth” refers that the agent is responsible to arrange and take care of the overall procedure of migration. As a result, these smugglers enjoy high respect and prestige in the local community due to their services to facilitate irregular migration. The aspiring migrants consider them a powerful source to facilitate their journey towards Europe; such respect reflects their satisfaction and trust on the agents.

However, some interlocutors told that agents deceived them during mobility. Generally, the families of the irregular migrants living behind consider the smuggler’s responsibility to update them regarding the travel progress of their son. In their point of view, it is the responsibility of the agent to provide safe passage to the migrants until they reach Greece. However, some interlocutors told that agents left the migrants alone and escaped when they encountered the police. Ghafoor told how he remained updated regarding the travel progress of his son:

In those days there was a very rare facility of the telephone. So, if somebody meets the agent then he gets some information regarding the mobility of his son. So, it was the duty of the agents that he must update about the travel progress of the person. Usually, the agents update in this regard that now the person is crossing this place [...] now he has stopped travelling further due to some tight security from the border authorities or harsh weather [...] and so on [...].

However, the agents prefer their own security in a time of raid from border security forces. Ghafoor continued the story of his son that what happened when security forces captured them

while crossing the border and how agents deceived them in such circumstances. He told how his son sketched that situation:

On such occasions [when security raids] the agents who were travelling with us suddenly disappeared due to the fear of security officials. We couldn't guess where these agents had disappeared, whether vanished in the earth or flew to the sky. Even these agents are often loaded with arms. [Earlier] they instructed the boys that if security officials come then how to run away. They were very strict in discipline and often instructed what to do and what not to do [during the border crossing]. But in spite of entire instructions, one cannot guess when security officials may come and arrest them. Security comes suddenly and one cannot guess whether they came from the front or the back, from the sky or earth. When security officials come, then nobody can guess that where the agents have disappeared. God knows better [...] agents are also very clever and they know each and every thing that what to do in such a situation. You know people are very clever.

The above-mentioned story also revealed that security officials are so professional that they can trace such breaching of border laws and have the ability to protect the borders and can stop the illegal crossing if they want to do so. However, often agents bribe security forces and easily cross the border. It also showed how agents deceive on such occasions and suddenly disappear on such encounters. Usually, migrants are newcomers and are unfamiliar with the geographical location of tracks, so, they are easily caught by the security forces.

Sanchez (2017) argued that many tragic events can occur during irregular mobility. Such events can be extremely fatal like the death of the migrants during transit points etc, mainly due to various actions of the agents. Such actions of the smugglers can be based on violence or greed to earn more money etc. A common type of deception during the mobility was that agents demanded more money and threatened the families living behind in this regard. They also threatened them to pay more money otherwise the life of their son would be in danger. Such a situation is very critical because the families neither refuse to pay more money nor are able to report police or other security agencies due to the life threat of their son. Nasim told the story of her son during transit:

Interviewer: Did the agent update you about the travelling progress of your son?

Nasim: No, he did not have any contact with us during the travelling period. He was only in contact with us till Turkey, and then he had no contact with us.

Interviewer: Ok, what was the reason behind. Why he had no contact with you onward from Turkey?

Nasim: He excused that from Turkey he is unable to continue this travel. My son had to manage another agent from Turkey to Greece.

Interviewer: Ok, did the first agent promise to help your son till Greece or only to Turkey. Why he left your son?

Nasim: He promised to help my son till Greece but he deceived and left my son in Turkey.

Interviewer: Did the agent demand more money during the travel?

Nasim: No, at that time [when he left the son in Turkey] he did not demand further money. My son arranged another agent from Turkey. But when the first agent came to know that my son had successfully entered Greece, then he exploited us and we had to pay double amount.

Interviewer: Didn't you ask him [agent] that he deceived you and why you pay the double amount?

Nasim: What we can do in Pakistan, nobody respects his/her commitment or promise.

Interviewer: Ok, then did you pay the double amount?

Nasim: Yes, we [family] paid a double amount. We were concerned about our son and had a fear that they may harm him if we did not pay more money. My son was under the custody of different agents and for his safety we paid double amount. Both agents demanded money and then we had to pay both to secure our son. I was only concerned with the safety of my son.

Another interlocutor Sakina told that her son was very confident about the agent's promise for a fair deal:

My husband was not willing to send him [son] to Greece through this track because the track is not safe. He advised him and asked if something happens with us [parents] then who will bring you back to Pakistan from such a long distance. During travel, the agent can deceive you [...] but he [son] replied that agents do not deceive.

Similarly, Bashir was satisfied with the agent and told:

He [agent] honored his promise a hundred percent [...]. He was completely committed to his promise. He was only responsible to send my son to Greece within specific days. He was not responsible to arrange some work for my son. His responsibility was to drop my son to Greece safely.

However, Bashir was aware of many other cases of deception of agents during mobility and once another smuggler also cheated him:

We [family] were too much worried and prayed for his [son] successful and safe arrival over there. We wished he does not come back. In case of failure, it could have been wastage of money which we paid the agent. Another fear was the deception of the agent, as it was very common in some cases that agents took the money and then disappeared [...]. Like in another case, I paid 200 thousand rupees to an agent for my younger son, but since then the agent has disappeared. He neither sent my son to Greece nor returned the money back.

The above-mentioned section 5.5 took stock of how interlocutors of the present study perceive risk and defines it in various cultural and religious contexts. They consider risk under notions of destiny, trust, masculinity, the responsibility to support family, and the will of God. Similarly, there is variation in their experiences with agents. In some cases, the travel was according to their expectations but, in some other cases, they were deceived and had to pay a double amount to save the life of their sons.

5.6 Conclusion

The experience of the journey of irregular migrants is different from those who follow the legal protocols to go abroad. Access to the relevant information is a key factor to initiate irregular migration. The majority of the irregular migrants from district Gujrat are illiterate and they do not have sufficient information regarding the legal process of migration. They are dependent on the agents to get some information regarding Greece and other procedures to initiate irregular migration as UNHCR (2015) also pointed out that majority of the irregular migrants use the services of networks agents at some point during their travel to the destination country. Another example is from Africa where 80 percent irregular entries from Africa to Europe through Mediterranean crossing were facilitated by human smugglers (Reitano et al. 2014). People showed their trust in the agents and they relied on the information given by them, as participants were not aware of the geography and harsh weather conditions of the route to Greece. It was also found that negotiations of money and management of finance vary from case to case and also depend on personal relations with the agent. Similarly, the mode of payment also varied and the interlocutors followed the instructions of the agents. The interlocutors' ignorance of complex procedure of the visa process in the embassy is also an important factor to rely on the agents for

irregular migration. It can be inferred that in Pakistan, agents are very active in the provision of services and facilitation of irregular migration.

In sum, in the context of Pakistani rural society, role of agents to facilitate irregular migration is not just a mediation to facilitate mobility across borders but is intricately ingrained in the social fabric of the society, while providing assistance in migration decision making. It shapes social interaction and provides basic information regarding processes of irregular migration while establishing a trustworthy network of migrants who have a similar mobility experience. Such social interaction and trust are linked with the social profile of the agents, which is usually embedded in their position in biraderi-based social stratification.

CHAPTER 6

MIGRATION AND SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT OF THE COMMUNITY

6.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the empirical evidence from the fieldwork of the present study that how the social environment of a community influences the aspirant migrants and their families to initiate the process of migration. The data of the present research highlights some structural factors which are embedded in the social environment of the rural areas of district Gujrat, Punjab, Pakistan. Such factors are interlinked with the migration industry and foster the youngsters' tendency towards irregular migration. Based on the ethnographic fieldwork, the present study employs an emic view or insider's perspective to understand an interlocutor's point of view instead of external format (Headland, 1990; Morris et al., 1999). Data of the present study were analyzed according to the coding technique informed by grounded theory (Strauss and Corbin, 1990; Charmaz, 2006). Moreover, some original catchy words as used by the interlocutors of the present study were also used as in vivo codes (Strauss and Corbin, 1990, p. 69).

For the present chapter, three major themes were selected. The first theme, chain migration, deals with how the popular trend of migration from a village influences the desire for migration among other community members. The data reveals that a huge trend of migration in the rural areas of district Gujrat, Pakistan triggers the aspirant migrants and their families to start the process of migration. Some success cases also play a role of catalyst to encourage other members of the family, relatives, or residents of the same village. A sub-section of the first theme also discusses the importance of transnational networks as a hope for migrants. This theme explains how networks of Pakistani migrants in Greece and other EU member states attract aspirant migrants in rural areas of district Gujrat, Pakistan. It further reflects how interlocutors of the present study define the importance of these transnational networks in their desired countries of destination. How these transnational networks accommodate the migrants in the countries of their destination. The second theme is how competition within a biraderi⁵⁵ influences people's desire

⁵⁵ Detailed theoretical notion of biraderi is given in chapter 3, section 3.3. According to Lieven (2011, p. 66) biraderi is "related to Indo-European root for 'brother', which is supposed to denote the descendants of one common male

for migration and how the biraderi based power dynamics of rural organization are being transformed. Moreover, a sub-section also sheds light on the status paradox of migration that explains how degrading work in the home country and anonymity in the destination country persuade people for migration. The next theme is about migration, masculinity, and family honor (*izzat*) that reveals how people (only interlocutors of this study) think about the gendered dimension of irregular migration. It further explains why only young males from rural areas of district Gujrat, Punjab, Pakistan migrate with the help of agents and which reasons hinder them to restrict the migration of their female family members through agents. Moreover, this section also describes how interlocutors of the present study explain the standards of family honor (*izzat*) and shame (*bay-sharmi*) in the local context under the framework of masculinity.

6.2 Chain Migration

According to MacDonald and MacDonald (1964, p. 82) chain migration is “that movement in which prospective migrants learn of opportunities, are provided with transportation, and have initial accommodation and employment arranged by means of primary social relationships with previous migrants”. Similarly, Wegge (1998, p. 958) argued that chain migration can be viewed in two different aspects. Firstly, it encourages more migration over time. Secondly, it produces different cohorts of immigrants and the later cohorts are different in age and wealth as compared to the former ones. Likewise, it is noted that many young migrants from a community are inspired by other people who successfully reached the destination country (Carling, 2002). In various home countries of the immigrants, due to different social, economic, and political deprivations, migration becomes a “multigenerational experience” and reality of everyday life (Belloni, 2019, p. 25). Moreover, the availability of migration agents triggers the trend of irregular migration in a particular area to facilitate migration because it is woven in the broader social structure of the society. In her study on unauthorized migration decision-making in the context of Mexico-USA border, Ryo (2013) pointed out that at macro level many factors affect the decision-making process of individuals and these factors can be in the context of community, national or at the household level. The social environment of the community plays a pivotal role in the decision-making of irregular migration because if there is a popular trend of irregular

ancestor. However, biraderi can be used to mean almost any kind of wider hereditary kinship link depending on context” (p. 66).

migration then the youngsters are more likely to follow it. The trend of migration in some societies is so common that people consider it “normal” and young people put it on the top of their agendas (Hagen-Zanker and Mallett, 2016, p. 33). Such a trend is a result of various social and psychological practices and people consider it an “acceptable thing to do” (p. 33). Gradually, the routines and habits of border-crossing intensively established. It further leads to the institutionalization of such social practices (Berger and Luckmann, 1991, in Ellingsen 2014, p. 31, quoted by Hagen-Zanker and Mallett 2016, p. 33). Usually, it is hard to prevent migration when people consider it a normal activity:

In certain countries --- the idea of migration appears almost automatically on the agendas of young people, particularly young men. It is part of the culture in which people surrounded by limited domestic livelihood options grow up. To go is not seen as extraordinary by any measure, rather, is expected of certain people. As an option, it is taken for granted (Hagen-Zanker and Mallett, 2016, p. 33).

The data of the present study significantly indicates that in rural areas of district Gujrat, Punjab, Pakistan, there is a huge trend of migration to Greece and other EU member states. This trend influences the potential migrants as well as their families for migration. Moreover, contacts with previous migrants also play an important role to accelerate the trend of migration in the villages of Gujrat. Keeping in view this context, the following sub-section explains how the interlocutors of the present study have learnt of opportunities in Europe and how they are influenced by the previous migrants of their community.

6.2.1 *Khudai ja rai cee: Everyone was going to Greece*

During the fieldwork of the present study, I had many formal and informal sessions with my interlocutors on how the trend of migration started in their villages in particular, and district Gujrat and other adjacent districts in general. From the data of the present study, I inferred that there are many reasons for migration from this area but the major among them is the popular trend of migration that, later on, became an established norm. Many interlocutors told that over time, in their villages, the trend of migration has been so established that the majority of the young population took it as a normal practice and flees to Greece through agents. For example, Bashir, who is the head of a joint family, talked about his two nephews, who went to Greece. He was very passionate during our discussion. When I asked him how he and his nephews got the idea of migration to Greece and expected wellbeing, he described that they came to know about

economic prosperity in Greece from other migrants. Bashir further told that some of his village fellows were already in Greece. They had established business as contractors and they facilitated his nephews to get work. He told that at that time, when his nephews went to Greece, the economic situation in Greece was very good (*bahot waddhia*), however, now the economic situation in Greece is bad (*kharab*). He further told me that one of his nephews who passed intermediate school got better work in Greece and his salary was handsome. He got enough work with many benefits, for example, pension rights. The story of Bashir's nephews is endorsed by MacDonald and MacDonald (1964) in which they stated that previous immigrants facilitate the newcomers from their community in getting a job and accommodation. Bashir further highlighted the popular trend of migration in his village:

Khudai ja rai cee, everybody was going to Greece. We also thought to go [because there was a huge trend in this area to go to Greece with the help of agents]. So, we [family] also thought to go [*thail da'ey*] in this way by the help of God [*Allah day asray tay*]

The notion of “*Khudai ja rai cee*” is very important to understand the practice of irregular migration in the local context of district Gujrat, Pakistan. It means that an overwhelming majority of people are migrating. It shows the popular trend of migration as a significant majority of the residents of the village is rushing to Greece with the help of agents. Similarly, Bashir used the word “*thail da'ey*”, which means to follow an act without any pre-planning. It shows that they follow the popular trend of irregular migration. Another important aspect of Bashir's story is his idea of “by the help of God”. His notion is also confirmed by many other studies. For example, many narratives reflect that for migrants, “involvement of God” in their migration-related experiences actually gives them strength and satisfaction for their decision. It is a source of strength to secure the future at the destination country (Belknap, 2016). Surrendering to God (Bastide, 2015) also reflects the matter of luck (Belloni, 2016), and provides protection and spiritual support (Sheringham, 2013) and source of hope and liveliness (Valdez et al., 2013). By acknowledging God, Bashir showed his humbleness that he was nothing but by the help of God his nephews managed migration to Greece and their effort was successful which includes initiation of the idea of irregular migration, contact with the agent, and management of finance. His stress on “we” also reflects that the whole family was involved in the decision-making process of migration. They made mutual decision for migration, which is in line with the new economic explanation of migration (Kurekova, 2010).

Likewise, Zafar told that his youngest brother went to Greece. His age was 20 years at the time of migration and he was at number 4 among 6 brothers. He was unmarried then and had passed matriculation. He was not interested to get further education. He went to Greece 5 years ago through the corridor of Iran and Turkey with the help of an agent. Since then, he has been in Greece and has not visited Pakistan. However, last year, he was captured by the Greek police in a case and was imprisoned. When Zafar was asked how the decision to send his brother to Greece instead of any other country was taken, he laughed and then replied:

How we planned [...]? All the people (*sari awam*) were going to Greece by following each other (*waikho waikhi*). All were going to Greece by following each other. My family also [...] my father also planned that we should send our guy (*munda*). [So, we] talked to an agent who suggested to accompany someone [*sang bana lao*]. So, we [family] searched a person to accompany. One of my cousins [*massair*] was ready to go with him. [But], he [cousin] was deported from Turkey but my brother reached Greece. In those days, all the people were going to Greece, many groups [*tolayan day tolai*] of people were going. He [brother] also showed his desire to go in the same way.

When I further probed the reason behind this trend, why so many groups of people went to Greece in those days, Zafar immediately replied that agents started this trend and it was followed by a huge majority of aspirant migrants in district Gujrat. He continued:

People observed those who went abroad in early phase. They constructed lavish houses [*kothian*]. Other people of the village also planned to send their sons to Greece, [so, they thought that] they would also be able to construct the similar lavish houses [*kothian*]. We should earn more money. Many guys from my *mohalla* and village went to Greece. Majority of them constructed new houses.

The above-mentioned cases of Bashir and Zafar reflect that there is a huge trend of irregular migration in their village. However, data of the present study also reveals that though people follow the popular trend of irregular migration with the help of agents, it is not a straightforward process because an initiation of journey towards Europe does not guarantee the successful completion of the trip. In this context, those people who successfully reach the destination country play a role of significant others for aspirant migrants (Carling, 2002) as they also follow the same way to go to Greece. Here we can discuss the story of Ghafoor, the key interlocutor of the present study. His 2 sons went to Europe. His third son was on his way to Greece during the time of the interview. He told how his elder son was inspired by the previous migrants of his village:

Earlier, one of our relatives went to Greece through an agent. It was a miracle [*Qudrat Allah de*] that his matter settled and he successfully reached there. It encouraged my son as well. I mean [...] he also planned [to go in the same way]. He went to Iran without the help of the agent. There [in Iran] he contacted an agent [for further travel to Turkey and Greece]. He was a local agent [...] then by Grace of God [*Allah keeta*] he also successfully reached Greece.

The above-mentioned story of Ghafoor further explains that, in some cases, people do not get the services of agents throughout their journey. They travel by their own means of information provided by the previous migrants, and they only contact the agents when they feel that it is not possible to travel further without the help of the agents. This finding of the present study is confirmed by the results of a research conducted by Bilecen (2009) in which she found that migrants from Afghanistan, Iran, and Iraq on their way to the European Union, especially to the Netherland, contact the smuggling networks by themselves during travel.

Now we turn to the case of Asmat Bibi and her husband. During the interview, her husband was also sitting next to her. She told that her two sons went to Greece and, later on, one moved to Spain and the other moved to Italy. When I asked that what was the age of her sons at the time of migration, her husband responded promptly and said “Look at his picture [...] on the wall [...] in front of you”. He pointed at the picture of his elder son, who was in Spain, and told that at that time his age was 30 years and he was unmarried. However, when I asked him for how long he has been there, he took a deep breath and murmured that he had been there for the last 15 years. When he was asked how his family conceived the idea of irregular migration to Greece, he replied “*eh duhai paa’y gai*”. The notion of “*eh duhai paa’y gai*” is very important to understand the practice of irregular migration in the local context of district Gujrat, Pakistan. It contains the meaning of a situation in which people are fleeing with thrill to get something; especially, a situation in which somebody publically announces or advertises something, which is usually beneficial for the general public. Generally, such announcements or advertisements are for a very short period. People show a prompt response to such announcements and rush to the person who is announcing a benefit because they have fear to lose the opportunity if they show late response. For the husband of Asmat Bibi, the trend of irregular migration was so popular in his community that he and his family did not show any laziness and quickly planned the strategy to go to Greece.

The conversation with Asmat Bibi and her husband reveals that the trend of irregular migration became as much popular in the rural areas of district Gujrat that some people took it as their first priority to go to Greece and they postponed other important matters of their lives. Even some people postponed some very important rituals. As Asmat Bibi told her story:

My elder brother arranged some money for our [including husband] *Hajj*⁵⁶ but I asked my elder son to use this money for the arrangement of [irregular] migration of my younger son. I thought that we may rearrange money to perform *Hajj* later on. Actually it is a trend [of irregular migration] in this area [Gujrat] and now it seems a kind of race among the people. People follow each other; if one person from the village goes to Greece then other people also follow him.

The conversation with Asmat Bibi provides initial insights into the changing opinion of people (only sample of the present study) about the importance of the religious practices in the rural areas of district Gujrat, Pakistan. The postponement of the *Hajj* and priority to migration is a striking finding of the present study because communal rituals are very important especially in Islam as compared to the other religions of the world (Clingsmith et al., 2008, p. 5; Black, 2011). The *Hajj* is one of “The Five Pillars of Islam” (McCleary, 2007, p. 61) and according to the Islamic holy book Quran “those who act righteously (fulfill the five activities required of a Muslim) will enter heaven” (McCleary, 2007, p. 61). But Asmat Bibi prioritized the migration of her son instead of performing *Hajj*. Similarly, her notion of “race among people” and “one goes to Greece and other people also follow him” also indicates the popular trend of migration in the rural areas of district Gujrat, in which networks of migrants inform each other regarding the process of migration. Furthermore, the concept of the race also reflects a competition within the social class, which is discussed in detail in the section 6.3.

The data of the present study also found that peer influence is an important factor that influences young people to initiate the process of irregular migration in rural areas of district Gujrat, Pakistan. Some interlocutors told that they had no planning to go to Greece at all but were influenced by their peer group, for example, friends and cousins. Here we can take the example of Kubra Bibi. I met her in her house with my field assistant. Her mother and a cousin were also present during the interview. Kubra Bibi graduated from the university. She was the only graduated participant of the present study. The interview was conducted in Urdu in contrast to

⁵⁶ Muslim’s pilgrimage to Saudi Arabia

other interlocutors who preferred to talk in Punjabi. She told that how her brother suddenly planned for Greece:

My brother had no plan to go to Greece. Actually, my cousin was going to Greece and visited our home to say goodbye before departure. During his [cousin] presence, my brother also decided to go to Greece along with his cousin. So he arranged all the matters [with the agent] within three days. It was so sudden [...] it was not pre-planned.

The above-mentioned concept of “within three days” also indicates that migrants’ networks are well-connected with agents in the rural areas of district Gujrat, and they can manage their travel as soon as possible. Similarly, “not pre-planned” also shows that, in some cases, migrants take such type of travelling as an adventure and they are willing to take risks. Moreover, along with peer pressure, the present research also found that, in some cases, when young aspirant migrants show their desire for migration to Greece through agents, their parents do not agree to such migration. However, the aspirant migrants convince them because they are financially dependent on parents. A similar argument is mentioned in a study conducted by Sumartono et al. (2019), that unmarried youth having no big responsibility, is still dependent on parents to fulfill their daily needs. Recall Riaz, an old man, who participated in the present study, and his son went to Greece 11.5 years ago and has not come back. He has no contact with parents in Pakistan. During the interview, he told how his son was fascinated by the trend of migration and planned to go to Greece:

[The whole] story is that I suggested my son to go Saudi Arabia. I already used to live in Saudi Arabia. [I asked him] to spend 2-3 years in Saudi Arabia and then we may be able to construct house [*kothay chhatna*] and arrange his marriage with the money he would send. But he [son] refused to go abroad, even in any country. He said that you [father] must construct a small house [*kotha*] with the little savings you [father] already had. He would live here [in Pakistan]. I said ok. I constructed a small room for him which was not comfortable [*marra jya kotha*]. I said it was for him. He stayed here [in Pakistan] and wasted his time [*khajjal kharab*]. He used to sit with his friends. They discussed the plan to go [to Greece]. They were 4-5 boys. They planned to go to Greece [because] people discuss Greece. He came to me and said ‘*Abba Jee* [father] can I go to Greece?’ I replied, ‘What you will do there? We don’t have money [to go there]. If you are planning to sell this one-room house, then where will I live? You must work here [in Pakistan] or go to Saudi Arabia’. He said, no, he must go [to Greece]. Then by the grace of God, some agents [*dunky or donkey a’lay*] came and they ran away somewhere. Then they reached [to Greece].

The above-mentioned case of Riaz reveals many social aspects. First, it reflects the changing patterns of migration in the rural areas of district Gujrat. In the historical context of early migration waves from Pakistan, once there was a popular trend of migration to Saudi Arabia and other Gulf States in the era of 1970s (Wassan et al., 2017; Arif and Irfan, 1997). Riaz was eager to send his son to Saudi Arabia through legal process instead of any other country with the help of agents. The main reason behind this wish was his familiarity with Saudi Arabia because he himself visited Saudi Arabia and was aware of the income opportunities there. Many Pakistani migrants went to Saudi Arabia, Gulf countries and Libya as skilled and semi-skilled workers (Wassan et al., 2017). They earned handsome money and it lifted their social status and living conditions in their native villages in Pakistan (Wassan et al., 2017; Jan, 2010). However, during the early 1990s, the trend of irregular migration started and a significant number of people from Gujrat went to Greece with the help of agents (Marouf and Kouki, 2017). Later on, early migrants facilitated the migration of their family members, relatives, and community fellows as well. Second, the son's notion of "*Aba Jee* [father] can I go to Greece?" reflects an interesting point, because he refused his father's suggestion to go to Saudi Arabia, but on the other hand, he was seeking permission from his father to go to Greece. It reflects the symbol of the moral authority of father over children in Pakistani society (Stewart et al., 1999). Third, "some agents came" shows the established networks of agents working in this area. Lastly, "ran away somewhere" depicts that the family in Pakistan was not aware of the track of migration. Riaz only knew that his son was on his way to Greece.

Similarly, Ghafoor also told how his elder son insisted for migration:

After five months of his marriage, my son told [that] he wanted to go abroad. I replied, don't go [...] don't go, because we [...] thank God, we own agricultural land. Here, people in our villages own one *bigha* [measurement of land] or two *kanals* [measurement of land] of land. We [villagers] take too much care of our [agricultural] land [...] like you people own plots in cities [and takes care]. Then, God bless you, I asked my son not to go, [but he replied] no, he wanted to go. Then, here in a nearby village, there was an agent. My son contacted him.

Ghafoor's notion of "we own agricultural land" reflects customary practices linked with the ownership of agricultural land because in rural areas of Pakistan, ownership of agricultural land defines the social status of a person. The acquisition of agricultural land is a source of respect in the community. In the local narratives of the rural areas of Gujrat, people consider agricultural

land as a mother and dislike a person if he is not paying attention to the cultivation of his land. Likewise, when Ghafoor addressed me as “like you people”, he considered me as an outsider, which is discussed in detail in chapter 4, section 4.6, the researcher’s position, and the issue of subjectivity in the qualitative research. When Ghafoor was asked that why he was not willing to send his son to Greece, he replied:

[Pause] Ehhhhhh [laugh]..... [Ehhhh] God bless you [...] there was no wish in my heart to go abroad [pause]. We [also] had our business; we had a business in a major city. Our business was very settled. My son developed a desire to go abroad. He observed people [...]. This person went abroad [...] that person went abroad. This person went from this way [...]. Another person went from that way [...].

The story of Ghafoor reveals that his son learnt of the opportunities in Europe from other people who went to Greece and other EU member states. His notions of “he observed people”, “this person went”, “that person went”, “from this way”, and “from that way” all reflect how people from one village were connected with each other. This finding is in line with the notion of chain migration defined by MacDonald and MacDonald (1964), in which it is stated that people learn of the opportunities from other migrants. Ghafoor further told that after winding up his business in the city, he came back to his native village and started farming on his land with his son. But he noticed that his son did not show interest in agriculture and other household tasks. He only demanded to go abroad. This finding of the study shows that the aspirant migrants are inspired by their social environment because many people go abroad and, as a result, the aspirant migrants are no more interested to work in the traditional agricultural activities. This argument is backed by Hernandez-Carretero and Carling (2012), who explained that the process of modernization has affected different aspects of migration among youth in West Africa and they are no more dependent on the traditional sectors like agriculture and fisheries. Their exposure to wealth due to media and transnational connections has created aspiration and ambition for migration.

The data of the present study also shows that the aspirant migrants always travel in groups because it gives them a sense of security as such groups consist of people who belong to the same village or from the adjacent villages having similar cultural traits. Ghafoor was aware of this fact as he was told by his younger son, who was deported back to Pakistan for five times,

and was planning for another try. Ghafoor was worried about his security during travel but his son replied:

Abba [father], don't you worry [about my trip to Greece]. People are with me [...]. From this village, we start to travel only two or four or six people, then [further] people will join us from other cities [as travel proceeds]. It becomes as a coffle [...], at least we travel in a coffle of 150 people [...].

Interestingly, the data of the present study also reveals that, in some cases, migrants are already settled in some other countries like Saudi Arabia but are eager to move to Greece or other EU member states. Due to strong networking among migrants and agents, they finalize all the matters regarding migration to Greece, in spite of their physical distance. Usually, people pursuing irregular migration are also indulging in other fraudulent activities as Bashir told:

My two nephews were working as laborers in a restaurant in Pakistan. My brother [later on died] had savings of 50,000 rupees and sent my elder nephew to Saudi Arabia, now he is in Germany. I'll tell you the whole story in order [...] when one brother went to Saudi Arabia; he arranged a visa for the younger brother to come to Saudi Arabia. Then the elder brother made two tries to go to Greece through agents but failed. From Saudi Arabia, he was expelled back to Pakistan as he was caught in a fraud [*koi chakar ho gya*]. He submitted some fake papers and was kicked out by his company. In Pakistan, he did not have enough resources; so he had no other option to try for irregular migration to Greece.

The above-mentioned section describes a detailed account of the interlocutors that how chain migration influences them to initiate migration towards Greece. They are inspired by the social environment of their community and, as a result, such aspirations play an important role in the decision-making of their migration (Carling, 2002; Alpes, 2014). The data of the present study also shows that majority of the migrants from Gujrat, Pakistan (only sample of the present study) are semi-literate and unskilled (detail of the profile of the interlocutors is described in chapter 4, sub-section 4.2.5). The data of the present study also reveals that these semi-literate and unskilled migrants are attracted by the transnational networks already existing in Europe, which is discussed in the following section.

6.2.2 Transnational Networks: A Hope for Migrants

Much emphasis has been given to various dimensions of irregular migration like migrants' route, costs, distance, and exploitation by agents and tragedies during mobility (Sanchez and Natividad, 2017). Another aspect that stimulates the desire of migration among the youth is the existing

networks in the host country. The aspirant migrants select those destinations where they already have some contacts (Dekker and Engbersen, 2012). These networks are based on a common area of origin, ethnicity, or family bindings, and play an important role to motivate the migrants to take risks of irregular migration because they consider such networks will support them upon their arrival in the desired destination (Adelowo et al., 2016). Often, these irregular migrants exploit common cultural values and emotional bindings with the networks living in the host country (Belloni, 2016). These transnational networks not only provide social support but are also linked with the migration industry. In some cases, migrants already living in the host society also work as agents and facilitate the aspirant migrants in the home country for their process of irregular migration.

Some scholars argue that only existence of networks is not enough, rather it depends on how these networks are being maintained. For instance, Betsill and Bulkeley (2004) explained that the maintenance of networks plays an important role in the exchange of information; however, it depends on the capability of its members to take advantage of the resources, both material and nonmaterial, provided by the networks. Moreover, the expectations of the irregular migrants from transnational networks are multifaceted, for example, Ambrosini (2017, p. 1814) discussed the role of intermediaries who facilitate the irregular migrants and provide several services. Due to these services, the aspirant migrants are attracted to the host country and remain over there:

In this fluid and dynamic context, a crucial role is played by various intermediaries: people or institutions who favor the entrance of immigrants, their entry into the labor market, accommodations, response to their social needs, and possibly regularization. These intermediaries are often, but not only, co-ethnics. They can act for profit, but also for moral reasons. They can break the laws and work in the shadows, but they can also work in legal forms, and they can be firmly embedded in receiving societies, and even in public bodies (Ambrosini 2017, p. 1814).

Irregular migrants prefer to contact the networks of their community holding different legal statuses (McIlwaine, 2015) and they are highly dependent on such networks, instead of contacting the other regular sojourners (Bloch and McKay, 2016 in Ambrosini, 2017). Such social networks are very important to support the irregular migrants, no matter “even if weak” (Ambrosini, 2017, p. 1814). Not only the irregular migrants but their family members are also connected with these networks to facilitate the aspirant migrant upon his arrival in the host

country; so, the aspirant migrants are not inactive victim, rather they are very active to contact their relatives already living abroad (Long and Crisp, 2010; Belloni, 2016).

The data of the present study also reveals that the interlocutors and their families are in contact with other family members, relatives, and village fellows already living in the country of their destinations. Nasim Bibi told me that her son went to Greece 9 years before the time of the interview. The following text depicts my conversation with her regarding her contact with some relatives already living in Europe:

Interviewer: Did you have any relatives living abroad before the migration of your son?

Nasim: [...] yes, many of our relatives [*la'g-gay la'ey*] were there. I mean they are in Italy and Germany as well.

Interviewer: Ok. Did you contact any of those relatives to tell that your son was also coming?

Nasim: Yes, we were in contact [responded slowly, her daughter, sitting next to her, quickly added] yes, we were in contact with our relatives. Two of my uncles [*mamoon and khalu*] were there. My brother had planned to inform them about his arrival. But he could not contact them upon his arrival. I don't know what happened. I think their cell numbers changed or whatsoever. Then my brother along with his friend, who was with him during travel, went to the relatives of that friend. They came to receive him. My brother also went with them.

Similarly, Riaz told about his son:

Riaz: There were many people who had already gone [abroad]. Three or four guys [including his son] planned to go to Greece as other people were also going, so, they also decided to go (*asi vi cha'liay*) [...] so, they also decided that they should go. [Now] he is living with some boys [*mundday*] who belong to the village of his maternal grandparents [*na'nkay*]. Earlier, he used to live with the boys from our village. I received news [*khabar atar*] in this regard. Later on, he moved to another place and is currently living there.

Interviewer: Ok. Other than the people from these villages as you mentioned, do you have some relatives living abroad, too?

Riaz: No, no relatives or people from this village were living there. They [son and friends] just heard that some people from nearby villages were over there. They also went.

The above-mentioned conversation with Nasim Bibi and Riaz reveals an important aspect of the hospitality and social support among Pakistani migrants as Nasim's son went to the relatives of

his friend and Riaz's son "just heard" that some people from the nearby village were over there. They were expecting to get support from these social networks. In the rural areas of Pakistan, in general, there are many narratives of hospitality, which appreciate people to help those who belong to the same area of origin, regardless of their biraderi or social status, and such hospitality is based on Islamic values and customary practices. These findings of the present study are supported by Sucher et al. (2013), in which it was argued that in Asian countries, hospitality has strong historical and cultural roots, and is based on "kindness and giving" (p. 1). Likewise, Black (2011, p. 11) also described hospitality as an Islamic value. Moreover, in the Pakistani context, the guest is considered as a blessing of God, who brings his/her fate with himself or herself. The cases of Nasim and Riaz also show another aspect of cultural identity among immigrants, as Prinz (2019) described that due to cultural distance between the country of origin and country of destination, immigrants prefer to stay in the co-ethnic community and have less inclination to integrate into the culture of the host society.

Likewise, the data of the present study also shows that migrants' networks not only provide support for the settlement, as mentioned-above, but also provide basic information regarding the employment situation in Greece or other EU member states. They also make a comparison between different EU member states for permanent settlement according to the financial and political situations of that country. Moreover, transnational networks also facilitate the irregular migrants to take different legal steps in getting nationality or residence permit of the desired EU member state, as Sakina Bibi told:

From *Junan* [Greece], my sons moved ahead [...]. My three nephews were in *Demark* [Denmark]. They asked me "*Khala* [auntie] since you are trapped [*phha'ey la'ey nay*] your sons in *Junan* [Greece], have no earning, no benefit [*na lain na dain*], nor can they get legal documents [*kagat*], you should push them out from here [Greece] by any means [*kisi ta'reqay ethon kadho*"]". Then we pushed them [sons] to *Demark* [Denmark]. One of them went to Poland and got legal status [*kagat*]. Then he again moved back to *Demark* [Denmark]. There he consulted a lawyer and paid him. Now, through a lawyer, he will get a work permit and then start some work [*kam lagna*].

The above-mentioned story of Sakina Bibi reveals that migrants are not only guided by their social connections in the country of destination but are also well-connected back home. Furthermore, her notion of "we" depicts that migrants are not making decisions by themselves; rather the whole family is involved in the mutual decision-making process to take further steps. It

also depicts an interesting aspect that apparently Sakina Bibi was an old lady, having no formal education and living in a village, but she was much updated on prevailing migrants' situations in different EU member states as informed by her sons. The results of the present study are also confirmed by the findings of the previous researches, which shows that migrants' networks share information and facilitate the new migrants upon their arrival in the host country (Faist, 2000; Ambrosini, 2017; Tilly, 2007).

In case of Nasreen Bibi, her two sons went to Greece. One was deported back but the other reached successfully with the help of agents. She told:

Some of my close relatives [...], yes they were already there. Sons of sister-in-law [*ney-nan*] were already there [abroad]. Sons of my other sister-in-law [*jithani*] also went. Then my two sons also went. People face many hardships during such travel.

However, in contrast to the above-mentioned cases, the data of the present study also reflects that, in some cases, social networks also deceive the aspirant migrants. For example, Luqman told that he went to Greece five years before the time of the interview. His age was 30 years at that time and he had passed matriculation. He was engaged in agriculture before departing to Greece. He further told:

I went through an irregular way but I was deceived. They were my own people, relatives; they, you can say [that] they allured me [*sabz bagh way-kha'ey*]. They said, "There [in Greece] are many work opportunities [*kam sham changa othay*]. You should also go with us". I paid ten thousand rupees [...] and [...]. I mean [...] decided to go illegally. It took two and a half month to reach over there [in Greece]. My family also allowed me to go because they [who attracted him to go to Greece] were my relatives, close relatives [...], they gave me confidence that they would arrange a job for me in Greece and I wouldn't face any difficulty during transit, too [*rah wich*]. They will take me directly to Greece [...]. So, my all family was confident [about travel and the job in Greece].

In some cases, there was a difference between relatives and village fellows to facilitate the newly arrived migrants. For example, Hussain went to Greece immediately after his matriculation at the age of just 16 years. He is the only son of his parents. He has two sisters. His father is a government official. Hussain told how he was supported by his relatives but exploited by one of his village fellows in Greece:

Hussain: One of my relatives received me in Greece. My parents had already informed him. He took me to his place and [...] gave me clothes [*kapray shapray*]. I stayed there [...] for almost one complete year. I stayed with him. I was totally free, no work, no duty, just sat there with them [a group of relatives] and took meals [...] and just nothing else [...].

Interviewer: Did they [relatives] have some work or job?

Hussain: They had their own work of welding⁵⁷. They had very handsome income. They had no family there. They all were young men. They gave me residence and food as well. I did not take money from my family during that period.

Interviewer: Have they ever demanded some money for all the services they provided you?

Hussain: No [...]. They never demanded money, however, they asked me to search some work because how long could I stay without work. Then after one year, I myself left that place. I left it and went to another place and started work as a vendor. But it was illegal. I sold illegal items. Then one of my partners and I had a row with a group and I ran away and went to the previous place. There, I met an old man who belonged to my native area in Pakistan. I left the place of my relatives and shifted to his place. He also gave me a job in his restaurant on daily wages. I had to deliver food at different places. I became familiar with that area but my earning was very limited. He gave me just fifteen Euros per day because I was an illegal employee.

The above-mentioned case of Hussain reveals the exploitation of the irregular migrants. It is in line with previous studies, for instance, Benton (2014) also noted that some bad actors exploit the migrants and fail to provide them legal standards of minimum wages and overtime work. The data of the present study also reflects that in the rural areas of district Gujrat, migration is considered as an indicator of social status, which is further discussed in the following subsection.

6.3 Migration and Biraderi System – A Matter of Social Class

There is a link between class inequalities, possibilities, and impossibilities of migration (Bonjour and Chauvin, 2018). In the rural areas of district Gujrat in particular, and in the rural areas of Pakistan in general, living abroad especially in Europe, is considered as a symbol of social status in the local community and people pay more respect to such families (Erdal, 2012). There are

⁵⁷ Fictitious occupation due to the confidentiality of data.

various reasons for such respect for the immigrants' families. Firstly, people in the local communities like to marry the members of immigrants' families because such marriages can help them to settle in Europe on a family reunion visa (Shaw, 2001). Secondly, immigrants' families are economically strong and people seek financial help in times of need. Moreover, immigrants also contribute to the local development of their areas of origin and donate charity to the needy people (Johnson, 2007). Thirdly, usually, such families are politically influential and people consider them as a source of help in case of some trouble, for example, if they face any problem in the local community, then they seek help from such families to intervene because these families have strong relations with the state officials, especially in the police stations. They can also settle such matters in private meetings⁵⁸ with the grieved families. The above-mentioned factors are also important for immigrants because often they maintain strong familial, cultural, economic, and political connections to their countries of origin (Levitt, 2001).

The data of the present study also reveals several aspects of migration and social class. For Ghafoor:

A person who lives abroad, hundred people will wish to become his relative [...] they cooperate with him [...] to attract him to develop relationships, [in contrast] a person who is living here [in Pakistan] and taking care of animals [*pathay paa' raya*], nobody will go near him [...] I mean who is living in Pakistan, due to various reasons, he is not clean, this is what I am observing. People who are living here, we are simple people [...] some people are smoking cigarettes, some are taking Marijuana [*Charas*] with cigarettes, even some are taking a fatal drug like heroin [*powder*]. Right? [...] nobody is obeying mother, nobody is obeying father, no respect [*Haya*] for elders. People do not feel embarrassment about their acts [for not obeying elders].

From Ghafoor's notions of "wish to become relative" and "develop a relationship" with people living abroad, it can be inferred that living abroad determines social status in the rural areas of Punjab, Pakistan. Similar findings are mentioned by previous studies, for example, Yasmin et al. (2019) and Shaw (2001). In the context of migration and social status in the villages of district Gujrat, the present study finds some interesting and contrasting results. For example, it is found that there is inter- and intra-biraderi competition. People from upper-status-biraderi and people from lower-status-biraderi compete with each other, which is a new insight into the power

⁵⁸ In rural areas of Gujrat and Pakistan; people settle their matters with the help of local influential families and do not report such cases to Police or other law enforcement agencies. Such meetings are locally known as *Panchayat*.

dynamics of biraderi system in Punjab. Here we can discuss two examples from the data; the stories of Ashraf and Munir, who belong to the upper and lower status biraderis respectively. Ashraf belongs to the upper-status-biraderi which is known as *Chaudhry* family and they (family) are the *Numberdar* or *Lamberdar*⁵⁹ of the village. During our discussion on the popular trend of irregular migration in his village, he explained:

There is another important reason [*muamla*] behind this issue [of irregular migration]. Though you [*khair tusi*] cannot apply it to all [migrants], but somehow [*kisi na kisi tarah*] it exists in our social spectrum, that's why I want to share it with you [...], it is true that apparently people go to Europe to earn money, but here we have another reason, even those people who have sufficient money [in Pakistan] they also go [to Europe] because here [*ethay*] we have a sense of competition [to go to Europe]. Nobody will discuss it openly. It is competition. To earn money is a very big factor to go to Europe but not for everybody. Some people are financially very strong [without migration]. I tell you the example of my own family. It was not a wise decision of my family to send my brothers to Europe because [before migration] we had a small factory here [in Pakistan], we also had an established business here, and everything was ok. We had no financial hardships here. Our circumstances did not force us to send brothers to Europe as we were able to maintain good living standards in Pakistan [without migrating to Europe], but here it was a trend, there was a sense of competition.

In contrast to Ashraf, Munir belongs to a lower-status-biraderi in the village. He told that his two sons went to Greece. Later on, one moved to Germany. The elder son departed to Greece 10 years before the time of the interview. He was married and had 4 children, but Munir was not sure about his age at the time of migration. He passed the middle school and was an un-skilled laborer. After 4 years of the departure of the elder son, Munir sent his younger son to Greece. He was illiterate and unmarried as he was too young at the time of migration; he was just 13 years old. Munir described the importance of migration for his family:

Have you seen their house [pointed his finger to a house in his street]? It is newly constructed. Their son went to Greece. They often considered me lower in status. I decided to send my two sons to Greece. I wanted to show them that I can also build a similar house as they have. [Later on] I constructed my house [*kothay bna'ey nay*] from the money sent by my sons [...] constructed house [...] now people are jealous [*sarday nay*] of me when they see my house [because people think that] how is it possible that *Mirrassi*⁶⁰ [a lower-status-biraderi] owns this house. Yes, they are jealous. I must tell you the truth. *Chaudhris* (upper-status-

⁵⁹ A sub-category of village officers, further explained in Chapter 4, section 4.2.5, information of the interlocutors.

⁶⁰ Original caste of Munir is replaced due to the confidentiality of data.

biraderi] are also jealous that *Mirrassi* constructed his own house [...] I always speak right, there is no mistake in my thoughts [that people are jealous]. They [upper-status-biraderi] think that how is it possible that *Mirrassi* constructed his own house [...] Right? [...] I speak the complete truth [*sola a'nnay*].

Munir's statement reveals that people use remittances to construct houses in their communities which not only shelters them but also reflects inequalities among the residents of that area. This finding is also confirmed by a study conducted by Erdal (2012), in which it was found that such huge buildings constructed by immigrants' families affect those people who are without transnational connections and, as a result, they also put pressure on male family members "to go abroad so that the family can maintain their status and not be looked down upon by others who are receiving remittances from abroad" (Erdal, 2012, p. 635). Moreover, the determination of Munir for competition with people from the upper-status-biraderi also shows a resistance mounted among the lower-status-biraderi, which was once considered an integral part of the social organization of the rural community in Pakistan, in which biraderi-based social stratification is considered necessary to maintain various activities of the villages. It also shows deterioration in biraderi-based social stratification in the rural areas of district Gujrat, Pakistan, and people's desire for upward social mobility. It gives some initial insights to understand migration and biraderi-based social stratification in the rural areas of district Gujrat, Pakistan.

The data of the present study also reflects that people observe those families that receive remittances and, as a result, they imagine foreign countries as an affluent place. In the context of the present study, due to geographical imagination, people consider Greece and other EU member states as a land of opportunities and blindly follow the agents and other migrants' networks to initiate irregular migration. However, the realities in Greece and other EU member states are different and often these irregular migrants suffer due to their irregular status. Their families also suffer because they spend all their savings and assets for the arrangement of the journey through agents. For example, here we can take the case of Sakina Bibi. Her two sons went to Greece and, later on, moved to Denmark and Poland. Sakina Bibi told that instead of getting remittances, her family in Pakistan sent more money to her sons because they had no job in Greece. During the interview, when she was asked whether she or her family ever competed with some community fellows whose sons went to abroad, she explained:

[Yes] it happens [*ehh tay honday nay*] and [it is natural that] people compete [*rees*] with each other. My sons did not send money, so, I couldn't construct a new house and everything remained the same [*othay day othay*], everything remained the same [...]. [My] daughters are now at the age, when one should be getting married [*dhian wayanh jogian nay*] but I could not arrange their marriages. I only arranged the marriages of one son and two daughters. I have a total of six daughters [and] still I have to arrange marriages of [remaining] four daughters. If my sons had been able to send money back home, then we could have arranged the marriages of [all] my daughters. They [sons] could have been settled down in their life. But they were not settled and suffered [*dhakay khanday rai nain*]. They had been doing nothing in Pakistan and suffered a lot, [then] we borrowed money and sent them abroad [deep silence].

The above-mentioned story of Sakina Bibi narrates two important social aspects in the rural areas of district Gujrat, Punjab. The first point reflects a big family size, especially the number of daughters, which reveals the desire for sons in rural areas of Gujrat. Usually, people in rural areas do not take contraceptive measures. In Pakistan, though family planning program was started in 1951, the rate of contraceptive use is particularly low in rural areas (Mubarik et al., 2016, p. 1576). However, it depends on many structural factors, for example, urban or rural location, level of education of both husband and wife, structure of the family, and agricultural or nonagricultural households (Saeed, 2015, p. 17; Atif et al., 2016, p. 994). However, in some cases, a couple continues to reproduce until the birth of a son or more sons. As a result, they have a big family size and need more resources for their upbringing. In the case of Sakina Bibi, her sons were impressed by the material comfort of the immigrants' families in their village. So, they also decided to go to Greece. The second aspect of the conversation of Sakina Bibi is reflected in her notion of "daughters are now at the age, when one should be getting married". It points the social pressure on parents to arrange the marriage of their children, especially daughters. This point is thoroughly discussed in empirical chapter 7.

In another case, Akbar, who sent his son to Europe with the help of agents, expressed his views and told that migration to Greece is a matter of pride and respect in the local community. It is another issue whether the migrants get some work or not upon their arrival in the host country. However, Akbar also narrated it with the notion of destiny or fate (*Nasseb or Nasib*). However, he made an interesting narration of fate and further explained that even nobody is fully dependent on his/her fate. We should not only depend or rely on fate. The almighty God created human beings and he is responsible for our livelihood. God holds some ultimate matters in his

own hands, for example, respect (*izzat*), disgrace (*zillat*), subsistence (*rizq*), life (*zindgi*) and death (*maut*). No one can intervene in these ultimate matters because it is God who can decide on these matters. But, at the same time, God bestowed other matters to the human beings to fulfill their desires and needs. For example, God gives us eyes, hands, and feet (*nain prain*) and directs us to make sincere (*haq halal*) efforts to earn our livelihood. For instance, if we need milk, then we must feed our buffalo. God only helps those who make efforts.

However, in contrast to the above-mentioned stories, Nasreen Bibi showed contentedness and refuted any competition with the members of other biraderi:

No [stressed on word], we never felt competition [*rees*] with other people. People can only get what is written in their fate. One should not feel competition in this regard. However, it is human nature to think about the betterment of his/her children or family, hmmm?⁶¹ One must avoid competition with others. It depends on opportunities and resources one has [*plla 'y hon de gal a 'y*]. If one has good resources, then s/he can impress others [and create competition].

It is pertinent to know that people are very conscious about their social position in the native community and are engaged in labor or work according to that social position. Often, migration is a result to avoid social humiliation, and through migration it is possible to maintain “social distance” (Fan and Stark 2011, p. 2). The data of the present study also shows that the nature of work in Pakistan and Europe is also an important factor that encourages people for migration, which is discussed in the following sub-section.

6.3.1 *Ethay Tokri Nai Dhon Hondi Saday Kolon: The Status Paradox of Migration*

The prestige of work plays an important role in the decision-making of migration; often such decision is influenced by several factors like values, family, wages, security and many other reasons embedded in the broader social structure (Goldin et al., 2011). People do not like to engage in less prestigious or degrading jobs in their home country because they have fear of being exposed within the native community and it is a matter of their social prestige. However, they engage in less prestigious work abroad because “they are surrounded by a non-familiar reference group” (Neubecker, 2013, p. 14). In the home country, people measure the success of a

⁶¹ Here, Hmmm used in an interrogative sense – like what you think about this situation. It is popular in the local context of Gujrat.

foreign-based migrant only by his financial success and they do not know the migrant's nature of work in the host country (Stark and Fan, 2011, p. 1):

Thus, we have two distinct explanations for why migrants end up working almost as slave labor: either they are being deceived, tricked into bondage; or they willingly undertake degrading employment because they witness in their home community the financial success of the former migrants. While the *rewards* of migrants' work are visible in the community of origin, the *conditions* of their work are not. People in the home community see the glitter that results from degrading work; the work experience itself in foreign lands is unseen, and often disguised (Stark and Fan, 2011, p. 1).

Nieswand (2011) developed the concept of "the status paradox of migration" (p. 2), in which he described that a huge number of people from developing and underdeveloped countries migrate to Western countries. However, their education from their native countries cannot meet the higher standards of the educational requirements of the receiving countries. Moreover, usually they migrate through "difficult legal conditions" (p. 2) that devalued their qualifications in the host country, and consequently, they accept low-income jobs including the informal sector. This new status does not suit them according to their education, professional experience, and family background in the country of their origin. However, such a loss of social status in the host society can be used to channelize the resources to their native regions. It helps them to "build up symbolic representations of a middle class status in their countries of origin" (Nieswand, 2011, p. 3). They simultaneously lose status in the host country but gain it in their country of origin. In this context, the data of the present study shows that in the rural areas of district Gujrat, the prestige of work is very important because people socially degrade a person who is engaged in low-skilled or manual work. People place such a person in the socially low category of the social organization of the village. In rural areas of district Gujrat, all manual workers especially helpers of a mason are considered less prestigious.

Hassan, once, left for Greece through an agent but from Turkey he was deported back to Pakistan. He passed matriculation and his age at migration was 23 years. He told his intentions to go to Greece:

Interviewer: Can you please tell me why you left for Greece?

Hassan: I left for Greece to search for some [manual] labor [daily wages] work.

Interviewer: Ok. If it was in a search of manual labor in Greece, then why not Pakistan?

Hassan: [Long pause] here in Pakistan [...] what type of labor? Here in Pakistan, I can't carry a basket [*ethay tokri nai dhon hondi saday kolon*]. [But] there [in Greece] such work seems easy, nobody knows us, we [migrants] can do anything over there. Even we can carry a cart [*reh-ri*] over there. But not here [in Pakistan].

In his conversation, Hassan made a comparison between Pakistan and Greece and he was very conscious about his social standing in the native community. The notion of “can't” does not mean hard to do physically; rather it explains the social degradation of the manual work in Pakistan. But he is not hesitant to do similar work abroad because nobody from his native village is the witness of such work. The term “basket” and “carrying a cart” are typical less prestigious work in the context of rural areas of Pakistan. Basket usually represents the work with mason or manual work in fruit and vegetable markets, where laborers carry baskets full of fruits on their heads, and it is considered very low paid and less prestigious work. Similarly, carrying a cart also contains similar meanings while working with mason or in fruit markets on daily wages. In the rural areas of Pakistan, being a daily wager itself is a symbol of less prestige and shows that the person is not competent to get a permanent job especially in the public sector.

Zafar told that his brother went to Greece with the help of an agent. He passed matriculation and his age at migration was 20 years, and he was unmarried. Zafar told the nature of work abroad:

[Abroad] one has to work to earn money. People who used to live there [Europe] tell that some people work in the fields of potatoes [...] some plucked flowers [...] somebody, I mean, somebody [...] there is different nature of jobs. Some sell glasses and some sell rings [*cha'lay, cha'pan*]. Work is hard as compared to Pakistan. In Pakistan, they [migrants] show off as elites [*nawab*] but there [in Europe] sell rings, and some sell undergarments [laugh], it's difficult *Na?*

Zafar felt amused while telling the nature of work in Europe for the unskilled migrants. However, he was aware of the fact that in Europe, it is not easy to earn money and one must put very hard efforts to earn money. His notion of “work in the fields of potatoes” reflects an interesting comparison between the nature of job in Pakistan and Europe. It is important to note that in the rural areas of Gujrat, possession of agricultural land is considered as a symbol of power and prestige in the biraderi, but it is considered a degrading work if someone is picking vegetables or flowers from the fields of others as a laborer on relatively low wages. Similarly, to sell some items like glasses, rings, undergarments as a vendor is also considered as a less

prestigious work. Zafar's notion of "elites" [*nawab*] depicts the social standing of migrants in the native community, where they do not like to be engaged in such type of work. They earn money from Europe through some degrading work and their success is measured by their material position in their country of origin regardless of the nature of the job in the host society (Fan and Stark, 2011; Nieswand (2011). Similarly, selling undergarments is also considered "hard work" in terms of "shame" in the native community.

Another interlocutor, Baksh, went to Greece by crossing Iran and Turkey, 16 years ago, and later on, shifted to Italy. Now, he also works as an agent to facilitate other people. He also sent his nephew 6 months before the time of the interview. Interestingly, he told that his nephew went to Libya on a legal visa, and then he advised him to move to Italy as an irregular migrant through some agents. His nephew passed matriculation and his age at the time of migration was 23 years, and he was also unmarried. While responding a question that why aspirant migrants do not work in Pakistan, he stated:

I am living abroad, in Italy. Right [...]. Here [in Pakistan] if you need some laborer, no one will be available on daily wages [*deh-h'ar*] [...] right? [...] if we need some laborer [*banda rakhna*] for household chores [for example] my family can afford, for the last six months I could not find such laborer [...] right? Why? [Could not find a laborer because] no one is ready to take care of animals or do other labor work just for seven thousand rupees as salary. [But] we there [in Europe], to get jobs like a laborer in crops, we [migrants] really implore [*ta'rlay*] the owners to get such jobs [...migrants also engage in jobs like] plucking of oranges and work in the fields of onions and potatoes [...] right? I am there for the last fifteen to sixteen years. Even to get labor in fields of wheat or other similar jobs, we [migrants] really implore, I mean, we really search a person who can give us such jobs. We have to implore [...] because to get a job in Europe is not like something inherited [*wirra'sat*] from parents. They [migrants] are not ready to take such labor here [in Pakistan] but there [...].

Akbar also told about cultural approvals regarding the nature of work in Pakistan and Greece or other EU member states:

The difference is [that] in Pakistan nobody is willing to do manual labor. Nobody is willing to do hard work in Pakistan. If the parents are alive and you have some savings or own some agricultural land then nobody is willing to do manual work or labor in Pakistan. If you ask such people to do work with mason [then] they simply refuse it and consider such work as disgraceful. Abroad, one can do any sort of manual work or disgraceful work like carrying basket or to taking care of dogs [...] like bathing dogs [*kuttay nawana*] etc. People can do any sort of work

abroad which they consider as disgraceful in Pakistan. The youth is not willing to work here in Pakistan, but they are ready to work abroad regardless of the nature of the job.

It is important to know the disgraceful or degrading work in the local context of the rural areas of district Gujrat. In all the above-stated responses of the interlocutors, manual work, laborer, working as a mason, and carrying a basket have been found as degrading. It was also a common finding that migrants are willing to do all such activities abroad but not in Pakistan. In Akbar's case, it is also interesting to know the symbolic importance of dog care. In Western countries, people love to domesticate dogs (Jenkinson, 2016, 2011) but in Pakistan, dogs are considered as disgraceful⁶² animals. Actually, Akbar made a satire on those people who take care of dogs in Greece and earn their livelihood. His point was that migrants do not work in Pakistan but are willing to do those jobs abroad which are difficult or socially less prestigious. This finding of the present study is in line with the study of Subasi (2011), as she explained that in Muslim societies, usually, people have negative views of dogs, and traditionally they consider dogs as impure. Similarly, Muslims do not like to take dogs inside the home because they have a belief that "angels don't enter a home where there is a dog in it" (Subasi, 2011, p. i). Furthermore, in the context of difficult jobs, Orrenius and Zavodny (2012), also argued that many immigrants hold "three D jobs: jobs that are dirty, dangerous, and difficult" (p. 1). Moreover, such risky jobs are attractive to the immigrants having little education, low skill, and limited fluency in the language of the host society (Orrenius and Zavodny, 2012).

The data of the present study also sheds light on the gendered dimension of migration from Pakistan to Greece. The interlocutors of the present study told that migration from the rural areas of district Gujrat, Pakistan to Greece and other EU member states through agents is exclusively revolving around masculinity, which is discussed in the following section.

⁶² In Pakistani society, due to some religious and cultural values people categorize animals. Like buffalos, cows and goats are being considered as "socially approved" animals. People in rural areas domesticate these animals for commercial and household use like to fulfil the need for meat and dairy. But some animals like pigs, dogs, and donkeys are considered as "low ranked" and even some people consider it sin to touch such animals especially pigs and dogs. Donkeys are used as a medium of transportation for commercial purposes. Usually dogs are used as a purpose of security and hunting both in rural and urban areas.

6.4 Migration, Masculinity and Family Honor (*Izzat*)

There is a strong relationship between gender and migration, and the “gendered pattern of migration” significantly varies across countries, even within the same regions (Antman, 2018, p. 13). However, stereotyped images of women prevail and get reproduced in international debates on policy and research on gender and migration (Dannecker and Sieveking, 2009, p. 4). There are many pieces of evidence of smuggling and trafficking of people including women to EU member states, especially from the Horn of Africa (UNHCR, 2013). During transit, such women suffer from many hardships including sexual abuses by traffickers, corrupt officials of different state institutions, and even volunteers of some NGOs in detention camps (Danish Refugee Council, 2017). Such hardships play a pivotal role in pre-migration decision-making at the household level, for example, who migrates from the family. In the context of South Asia, especially in Pakistan, such migration decision-making processes are backed by the framework of masculinity. The traditional concept of masculinity encourages men not to be dependent on female members of the household (Sowad, 2016, p. 51). Furthermore, in the context of Pakistan, masculinity concept is further elaborated by conventional and stereotypical gender roles, in which men are responsible for earning and women are supposed to cook for children and take care of the family (Rutgers, 2018, p. 19).

In the above-mentioned context, the data of the present study also reveals two major aspects of gender and migration in rural areas of district Gujrat, Pakistan. Firstly, the interlocutors of the present study take men’s migration under the notion of responsibility. They consider male family members, especially the elder son of the family, responsible to earn for the family and take care of his siblings and parents. Secondly, interlocutors of the present study also consider women’s migration through agents under the notion of family honor (*izzat*, *Ghairat*) and shame (*bay-sharmi*). The following sub-sections explain both aspects of gender and migration in the context of rural areas of district Gujrat, Pakistan.

6.4.1 His siblings were younger than him: Responsibility

Responsibility encourages people not to be isolated from the environment, evaluate prevailing norms, forward-looking, and solve problems with collective efforts (Voegtlin, 2016, p. 581). In the context of migration from rural areas of district Gujrat, Pakistan (only sample of the present study), the data of the present study reveals that the young aspirant migrants recognize the

importance of their gender status as a son under the framework of local patriarchal narratives, and decide to fulfill the economic needs of the household.

In responding to a question that how the family conceived the idea to send their son to Greece, a female interlocutor Nasim Bibi told that how her elder son insisted to go to Greece and described it as under:

The idea (*Khyya'l*) of migration was conceived due to poverty [*Gharibi*]. It was poverty. His [son] siblings were younger than him and [his] father was a heart patient. Here [in Pakistan] we couldn't manage the household expenses. He [son] said "Ami (mother)! I want to go abroad." I replied that as you wish [...] but he faced many hardships [during travel]. He went there by foot [through the route of Iran and Turkey].

From the discussion with Nasim Bibi, it is pertinent to note that in Pakistani society the elder son has a special role in the household decision-making and income generation. In this case, the father was patient and the siblings were not able to earn as they were too young. The elder son realized his responsibility to assist the whole family and decided to go abroad because he estimated that while living in Pakistan, he could not earn sufficient money to fulfill the needs of the household. This finding is supported by previous studies in the context of Pakistan, for example, Shafiq (2015) explained that though the father is the main breadwinner in the family, usually the son takes over the responsibility of his father "when he grows up" (p. 24). Similarly, Stewart et al. (1999) also pointed out that "a boy like his father" (p. 752) because "Pakistani culture differentiates gender roles much more strictly than does Western culture" (p. 767).

Moreover, appreciation from family encourages migrants to earn money for the betterment of the whole family. During my discussion with Riaz, I asked how he preferred Greece instead of finding a job in Pakistan. He explained:

The thing is [...] when a person goes long away [abroad], then [he is] like a trapped person [and he] has to face hardships [*ma'r kha'nna*]. In hope to earn sufficient money [...] and when a person gets the money once or twice [...] or [...] he sends it back home, then all the family appreciate him that he is a good son [*acha beta*] and also give him hope that they will purchase something for his future use, like this thing, that thing, and I mean also save that money, and upon his arrival back home, they [family] will do something for him [...]. So, [as a result of such hope] possibly that young man [living abroad] thinks that he is doing good work [*changa kam*] and [as a result, earn more money]. And a person

who is unconcerned [of earning for the family] nothing can be done for him. No matter he sends money back home or not.

Other than the sense of responsibility, Riaz's views as mentioned-above depict another important aspect of male migrants' sexual desire and marriage. In the context of the rural areas of Pakistan, the notion of hope that "family will do something for him" means that family will arrange marriage for the migrant when he comes back. Similarly, the purchase of "this thing, that thing" for future use also means the preparation of marriage ceremony or shopping for marriage because according to the customary practices of Pakistani society, families start marriage arrangements well in advance. This finding is in line with the study of Ahmad (2011), in which Pakistani migrants in the United Kingdom (UK) described that they send money back home not only to show their commitments to the household but also in the hope of their marriage when they will go back. The data further explored how the concepts of family honor (*izzat*, *ghairat*) and shame (*bay-sharmi*) are linked with migration, which is discussed in the following subsection.

6.4.2 *Izzat, Ghairat and Bay-sharmi: We don't allow our daughters to go in this way*

Walby (1990, p. 20) defines patriarchy as "a system of social structures and practices in which men dominate, oppress and exploit women". Pakistan remains a "rigidly patriarchal society" in both rural and urban areas (Alavi, 1991, p. 125). However, the status of women has changed over time and varies according to their social class, economic conditions, and geographical areas (Tarar and Pulla, 2014, p. 56). In patriarchal structures, the honor of family and community is linked with women's bodies (Iqbal, 2006). In the patriarchal structure of Pakistani society, irregular migration is a masculine phenomenon. Data of the present study shows that in the patriarchal context of rural areas of district Gujrat, women are being considered as family honor and encouraged to stay at home, follow Islamic dressing codes, and accept decisions taken by male family members regarding the important phases of their life. But, on the other side, local narratives always encourage males to embrace difficulties, hardships, and uneven circumstances throughout their life course. During the fieldwork of the present study, during interviews and general discussions with my interlocutors, masculinity emerged as an important theme for further interviews. The participants of the present study expressed their opinion on the trend of irregular migration only among young male family members. They expressed their views regarding

irregular migration of their female family members through agents and were very clear of their customary practices. They explained this issue under several notions. For example, Aslam who requested me to pray for the success of his son in getting legal status in Europe expressed his views on women's irregular migration as follow:

[...] I mean [...] those who send their girls abroad [through agents] have less quantity of honor [*ghairat da mada*]. We people, no doubt, we are poor but we are honorable. We Pakistanis [...] we are honorable. We villagers [even] we don't like that our girls appear in front of other males.

Aslam's notions of "poverty" and "honor" explain a very important point of how people define their family honor in broader cultural context, for example, as Paulusson (2013) described that in poor socio-economic settings "honor is the family's insurance for their well-being" (p. ii). Moreover, in kinship societies with a patrilineal and collective structure, individuals are considered responsible to maintain the collective identity of the group by following norms of the community (Cinthio and Ericsson, 2006, p. 2). Aslam, by expressing his views, was showing conformity to the customary values of his community.

Similarly, Bashir was very delighted while discussing how his nephews went to Greece and, later on, moved to Germany and Spain. He had different opinion about the irregular migration of women. He expressed his views about why only men go to Greece from Pakistan:

No [...], no girl [go to Greece through agents], my nephew told me [that women from other countries are there in Europe]. He is there [in Europe]. Here [in Gujrat] it is a trend that boys must go [abroad], people don't like to send their daughters abroad [through agents]. What do you think? This is shameful that girls go abroad and earn money. This is not our value. Yes [...] sons must go, face hardships, and bear all humiliation [during travelling and in search of work in the host country], it's no problem [*koi gal nai*]. But girls should not go. What do you think?

In the above-mentioned cases of Aslam and Bashir, notions of "honor", "shame" and "disgrace" are culturally constructed and embedded in the social structure of rural areas of district Gujrat. Furthermore, these notions also define gender roles. In local narratives of rural areas of Pakistan, men are encouraged to face hardships of life and take it as a challenge to overcome all hurdles. For example, as Bashir mentioned that boys must face "hardships" and bear the "humiliation". Moreover, during the interviews, some interlocutors expressed that failure to initiate irregular migration is a shame for men. In this context, Sakina Bibi told:

When he [son] discussed his plan [to go to Greece] with us [family] we rejected his plan and were not willing to send him in this way. But he insisted that he had to go because everybody was going to Greece. Actually he did not follow our instructions. He was stuck on his point and said that one has to face easy and difficult periods during the life course. He was of the view that what his cousins and other relatives would think about him if he failed to go to Greece. Anyway, he went to Greece and reached in one month.

The above-mentioned statements of Bashir and Sakina are confirmed by the results of previous studies which indicate that, in the context of Pakistan, men are supposed to be tough both emotionally and physically, and must embrace hardships (Rutgers, 2018).

The data of the present study also shows that local narratives of honor and shame are not only applicable to the irregular migration but also affect other spheres of women's lives, for example, education:

As you⁶³ are an educated person and you studied at University and now you are teaching at university. You are familiar with the environment [of University]. But in our villages [of Gujrat] I mean people are against it [co-education]. They question [co-education] why boys and girls are studying together. Our elderly villagers are against it [co-education system]. They question it that how is it possible that boys and girls study together [laugh]. This is the matter. [Aslam]

The above-mentioned result of the present study regarding women's education is confirmed by the study conducted by Human Rights Watch (2018, p. 74), in which patriarchy is found one of the major factors that hinder girls' education in Pakistan. Similarly, Choudhary (2014, p. 29) also noted widespread gender disparities in education in Pakistan.

Other than education, as mentioned above, the data of the present study also describes some restrictions on women's empowerment to decide their own careers. In Pakistan, patriarchy restricts women to choose their career; especially women's labor force participation in the formal sector is extremely low. Women mainly work in the home or on the agricultural farms (Asian Development Bank, 2016). However, "despite increases in recent years, female labor force participation in Pakistan, at 25 %, is well below rates for countries with similar income levels" (Asian Development Bank, 2016, p. 1). The data of the present study also reflects this issue, for example, Nasim Bibi told how her son did not allow his sister to get a job:

⁶³ Addressed me, before the interview I introduced myself and told that I taught at the University of Gujrat.

[Pause] our people do not like to send their daughters abroad [through agents]. Male family members dislike even if a girl goes from one house to another [in the same village]. They do not allow a female to do a job [...] as my daughter is educated but my son is not willing to allow her to do a job. He said that during his life he would not allow his sister to do the job.

Her notion of “male family members dislike even if a girl goes from one house to another” also reveals the restriction on women’s mobility. This finding is supported by a study conducted by Adeel (2017) in which it is found that in the context of Pakistani society, women’s bodies and their mobility are linked with family honor and must not be visible to others. Similarly, it also indicates gender inequalities in Pakistani society (Ali et al., 2011). Moreover, restriction on women’s mobility and control on their bodies is also prevailing in many other conservative societies, for example, in the context of Yemen, Ouis (2009, p. 453) noted that “laughing in the street is sufficient to get a bad reputation as being a loose girl”. The discussion with Nasim Bibi also reflects that physical distance does not restrict men to lose their control over household matters. For example, her son was in Europe and her daughter was in a village of district Gujrat, but he did not allow her to apply for a job.

According to the data of the present study, in the rural areas of Gujrat, a male’s gender identity is also linked with his female family members; often people of the local community curse a person if his unmarried sister is contributing in household income. It is linked with the “honor” and “dignity” of the male family members because it is their responsibility to take care of their family. Nasim Bibi further explained:

I tried to convince him [to allow his sister for the job] but he did not accept it [...] and refused it. He said that after her marriage if she was allowed by her husband then she could work [...] it is ok [...] but in his house, he will not allow her to do a job.

The notion of “his house” depicts the male’s sense of ownership and decision-making power at the household level. Usually, males possess the legal ownership of the house and enjoy the assets left by parents, and women are encouraged to withdraw their rights of inheritance in the favor of their brothers (Ahmad et al., 2012, p. 197; Lodi et al., 2012). Though under law and constitution of Pakistan, adult women have the right to hold, acquire, transfer, sell, or dispose of property (Ahmad, 2010). However, women are expected not to claim their right to inheritance. Her notion of “if she was allowed by her husband” shows that, even, after marriage, women are not

empowered in taking decisions of their career and are further dependent on their new custodian. In the rural areas of district Gujrat, these new custodians can be husband, father-in-law, and elder brother-in-law. Riaz further shared his ideas about women's bodies and dressing codes:

Islam does not allow females to live without proper dressing even at home. Due to this reason only parents [before marriage] and husband [after marriage] can look after a woman. After marriage a husband is responsible to look after his wife and fulfill all her needs.

His notion of "proper dressing" reveals the dress codes in Islam because according to his opinion:

Women must wear the veil; they are more secure under the custody of parents as compared to some other person. Parents can better look after their daughters. No one can provide security to women, other than parents, this is not possible. However, men are different. [Riaz]

The notion of "men are different" depicts gender inequality, identity, and roles in the local context of district Gujrat. Some Pakistani migrants already living in Europe are not only conscious of their own dressing codes but also of the host society:

I tell you the story of my neighbor; his two sons were living in Spain with families. One of his grandsons came back to Pakistan, when I inquired him why he came back to Pakistan, he replied that, in Spain, girls wear shorts, and he felt ashamed of. He was uncomfortable there, so he came back. [Aslam]

However, some interlocutors told that though migration through agents is not acceptable in their village but some people allow their daughters to get higher education from Europe. For example, Kalsoom Bibi told that for education, women can go abroad:

[Pause] we don't dare to send our daughters abroad [through agents]. In our society daughters do not like to go abroad, only a few girls may be going abroad who wish to get higher education.

An important and interesting point reflected through the discussion with Kalsoom Bibi was when she favored her unskilled and handicapped son to go abroad. For the interview, Kalsoom Bibi invited me and my field assistant in her house. During the interview, her handicapped son was sitting next to her:

Look at my son [pointed to her son sitting next to her], he is dumb but continuously insisting to go abroad [similarly] as his brother went, but we are

reluctant to send him because he is dumb. However; some people, already settled in Europe, informed us that disabled persons are very much welcomed to Europe and they have a separate quota of jobs with handsome salaries [...] The system in Europe accommodates such people.

The above-mentioned case of Kalsoom Bibi reveals an interesting point that she was well aware of the benefits and equal opportunities given to handicapped in Europe. Similarly, despite the fact that people don't like to send their daughters abroad through agents, they also wish to have strong familial relationships with people who are settled in Europe. They are willing to send their daughters to Europe on a spousal visa after getting married to a Pakistani migrant living in Europe. As Sakina Bibi told:

Our sons go abroad; we do not send our daughters [...] No, in Pakistan this is the principle that one must send his sons abroad and not daughters. Look! The daughter-in-law of my sister recently went to Denmark, but only after when she got permanent residential documents. No, no [...] our daughters do not go to Europe through agents.

Faisal told that his elder brother went to Greece 7 years before the time of the interview. The age of his brother at the time of migration was 26 years, and still he is unmarried. He passed the middle school and went to Greece as an unskilled laborer. Faisal's opinion about the migration of female was as following:

[...long pause...] what we think are [...] we [...] every person has [his/her] own opinion, the work of a woman is *Haram*, what we think. Outside of home; the man should work outside [and] household chores must be done by a woman. We consider her [woman who is performing household chores] beautiful and wise, too. If a woman goes outside, it is not good.

Faisal stressed the word *Haram*, which is an Arabic word that stands for those things forbidden according to the Islamic principles (Kashim et al., 2015). He favored the typical gender division of labor. Similarly, he declared those women "beautiful" and "wise" who remain at home and perform household chores. Another interlocutor Shakeel told that he went to Greece 8 years before the time of the interview. He passed matriculation and his age at that time was 28 years, and he was married. He ran a small shop in his village before departing to Greece. He responded to the question regarding the migration of women as under:

Look [...] every country has its own culture (*Saqafat*) [...] every country has its own [...] ours, no person who is Muslim can bear it, especially we Pakistanis, that any of our daughter or sister (*Dhee, Bhain*) go abroad through agents. Or she goes

to any other country and runs a business, nobody tolerates it, nobody wants it [...] they themselves want to go [abroad] and do labor.

Similarly, I met Qadir at his workplace. He told that he is the only son of his parents. He went to Europe 6 years before the time of the interview. His age at the time of migration was 22 years and he passed matriculation. He managed a small shop before departing to Europe. He replied to the question that why only male members of the family go to Europe through agents:

Sir, obviously these are boys who go, girls cannot go [...] it is very clear, it is not allowed in our Islam [that] woman go outside and work [...] right? [...] that is Europe, their system is different, we do not have [such system here] our Islam does not allow us that our female goes outside [...] our honor (*Ghairat*) cannot tolerate it that our female goes outside and work.

Qadir's notion of "that is Europe", "their system is different" also reflects symbolic boundary between the cultures of Pakistan and Europe. Likewise, another interlocutor Arshad told that his brother first went to Libya and then moved to Italy. His age at migration was 30 years and he had been there for 14 years at the time of interview. He passed the middle school. He is the elder brother among siblings and before departing to Libya, he was a semi-skilled laborer. Arshad expressed his views regarding women's migration:

In our society [*mua'shra*], in Islam, a woman is [...] not allowed to work. Right [...]. Women must live within four walls of the house [*ghar de char-devari*]. Right, and we people are Islamic people, we follow Islam, daughter and sister must be educated, let them get education, no difficulty. But, if somebody [...] says that women must go to Europe for a job or business, then our people do not like it. They imagine it [...] very dirty [*ganda*], especially in the culture of our Punjab [Province]. If women go in another way, for example, going with her husband, then it is a legal way. But if my sister wants to go to Europe, alone, for a job, then nobody would like.

In the above-mentioned cases of Faisal, Shakeel, Qadir, and Arshad one thing is common as they took religion to justify their arguments regarding the gender roles of women. It shows how gender, religion, and patriarchy are interwoven and operate as foundational social constructs based on the social organization of society (Attoh, 2017, p. 158; UNICEF, 2012, p. 33). It further illustrates an important point that these interlocutors favor patriarchal gender roles and explains it under the umbrella of religion; however, on the other side, some researchers argue that in Islam, there is no restriction on women's work outside their houses. For example, Sidani (2005) explained that in the history of Islam, many women participated in the spiritual, social,

economic, and political affairs of their societies. He further explained that according to some Muslim scholars, women can only work “in fields that are women’s domain, such as female education, nursing, and medical care” (p. 503). They oppose the free mixing of men and women in the work domain because it “leads to the decay of Muslim society and its demise” (Sidani, 2005, p. 503). In sum, the data depicts patriarchy and masculinity as essential frameworks to explain the gendered dimension of migration in the rural areas of district Gujrat, Pakistan.

6.5 Conclusion

The present chapter discussed how the social environment of the community influence the aspirant migrants from the rural areas of district Gujrat, Punjab, Pakistan to initiate the process of migration en route to Greece and other EU member states. The findings of the present chapter showed that there is a popular trend of migration in this area which shapes a strong network of chain migration. Migrants and their families play a proactive role to prioritize migration while considering household needs. It is also found that migrants use their familial and social relationships with the transnational networks in the host society to seek work and accommodation. However, such social networks are not always supportive but, in some cases, exploitative as well. The chain migration is further accelerated by relative positions of individuals and families in the local community and considers migration as a matter of social class. Though, biraderi-based social stratification highly prevails in the rural areas of Pakistan, some results of the present study give initial insight into resistance among lower-status-biraderi members against prevailing social inequalities. Moreover, people are mindful of their biraderi-based social position in the local community and do not engage in degrading employment in the home country but are willing to take less prestigious jobs in the host society due to anonymity. They compromise on their lower social status in the host country but also gain a middle-class status in the regions of their origin due to the financial resources they transferred to their native towns. Furthermore, patriarchy and masculinity emerge as decisive frameworks for migration and people take men’s migration as their responsibility as breadwinner and to support their families. Similarly, women’s bodies and mobility are considered as a matter of family honor [*izzat*] and are interpreted under reference to a mixture of cultural values and religious belief systems.

CHAPTER 7

REMITTANCES, RETURN OR REMAIN STRATEGIES

7.1 Introduction

This chapter reflects the empirical findings of the present study that how interlocutors share their views of the usage of remittances, and future strategies of their stay in the host country or return back to the home country. One major theme is identified as the aspiration for migration that reflects the motives of migration and is further divided into three sub-sections. These sub-sections reflect various motives of the interlocutors, for example, what was their major objective of migration, whether they accomplish it or not, and what are their future strategies whether to remain in the host society or they plan to return to Pakistan.

7.2 Aspiration for Migration

Migration's decision making is not a simple process rather it is embedded in broader and complex structural dynamics of social identities, moralities, affection and desire for a luxurious life. Money is the central point of migratory decisions linked with many dimensions like social, material, and symbolic (Thorsen 2017; Lin and Yang 2017; Boccagni 2017; Panzaru, 2015). Migration aspiration among youth is also influenced by modern lifestyles but there are many constrain to fulfill such desires like family structure, discrimination, and regional marginalities (Brown et al., 2017; Sugden and Punch, 2016). The decision of migration is also linked with the images of a successful life in the host country and un-successful life in the home country. The images of bright future increase the desire for migration (Karimzad, 2016) and the process of migration consists of many phases (Hoppe and Fujishiro, 2015). People take stock of many possible options while making decisions for international migration.

Moreover, there are two reasons to understand migration aspirations. First, it is an integral part of "migration dynamics" and, second, it can affect the allocation of resources especially in case of unsuccessful migration (Carling, 2013). However, aspiration for migration may differ from one local community to another and the wish for migration doesn't need to always turn in actual

migration; it depends on the migration control policies. But through understanding migration aspirations, one can understand the management and processes of migration and its effect on transnational networks (Carling, 2013). Data of the present study also reveals various aspirations for migration among interlocutors. The following sub-sections explain those aspirations respectively.

7.2.1 Remittances and Household Development: We know that we have money

Global inequalities and persistence of migration flow from South to North accelerated the debate of migration and development (Geiger and Pécoud, 2013; Kabbanji, 2013; de Hass, 2007). Migrants' remittances sent to their families back home are considered as an important source of local development in their native areas (Eversole and Johnson, 2014). These remittances are linked with various dimensions of development, for example, social, economic, and sustainable livelihoods (de Hass, 2005; Eversole and Johnson, 2014). In the context of the present research, data shows variation and major aspirations of the interlocutors for the usage of remittances were the construction of a house, be able to social and economic exchange among community members, to finance and arrange marriages of migrants and their siblings, especially to arrange dowry for daughters and sisters, purchase other important household items and luxuries of life, and to save reasonable money to start their business upon their arrival back to the native country. The data further reveals that the interlocutors were much focused on their above-mentioned set objectives or aspirations and took all the possible measures for their household development or up-ward social mobility in the native country.

In the rural areas of district Gujrat, ownership of a house is considered as an important asset and re-construction or renovation of an already constructed house reflects social class, and many people like to construct a house. Aslam told the usage of remittances received from his son:

Constructed cemented house [...] yes, now it is cemented [*pakay kothay*]. I mean, [also] constructed a boundary wall [*char deevari*]. He [son in Greece] asked me that he didn't want to see naked bricks then [*nangi itt nai vaikhni cha'nda hun*]. It must be cemented [*pluster hona cha'ey da*]. It [boundary wall] must be cemented alike, both inside and outside [*andron bahron*]. So, I constructed it [with cement], from the money he [son] sent [...], constructed the boundary wall and put [decorated] glasses on the main door [...]. There are two rooms [in the house], I don't want to be whimsical [*envain pia kawan*], it is enough for us [and we] passing our time reasonably.

Aslam's notion of "cemented house", "boundary wall" and "I didn't want to see naked bricks then" reveals how remittances affects the housing patterns (for a sample of the present study) in the rural areas of district Gujrat. For example, "cemented" reflects the changing pattern of housing, as once adobe housing was very popular and widespread in the rural areas of Pakistan, and it was also less expensive (Lodi et al., 2012). Similarly, Mumtaz (1978, p. 479) mentioned that clay soil, sun-dried bricks, and timber are the prominent forms of rural architecture in Pakistan. In the case of Aslam, as mentioned above, after sending money to his father in Pakistan, now his son wanted to construct a boundary wall and cemented house for the comfort of his family living there because "boundary wall" stands for security and "cemented" reflects the good quality of housing. This argument is supported by Erdal (2012, p. 633) as she mentioned that the migrants spend remittances on building housing or improving housing because they consider it "a key component of the standard of living that migrants want to improve for their relatives" (p. 633).

The data of the present study also shows that, in most of cases, interlocutors prioritized to spend remittances on the marriages of their daughters by arranging reasonable dowry. Similarly, they also spent money on daily expenditures and to maintain their social standing in the community by the economic exchange. A female interlocutor Nasreen told the purpose of her son for migration. She has a big family of three sons and four daughters. Her elder son went to Greece. When she was asked about the reasons for the migration of her son, she replied:

Nasreen: We were helpless [*majboorian*] and [circumstances] compelled us [to send our son abroad] [otherwise] a mother's heart wishes that her sons live with her [...]. These were the circumstances. What can one do?

Interviewer: Ok, how were you helpless or what were those circumstances which compelled you to send your son abroad?

Nasreen: There are many conditions or reasons [Laugh].

Interviewer: Ok, for example? Name any reason.

Nasreen: Like we have to arrange marriages of our children, we have to construct their houses, to exchange gifts [*virtana kerna*] among brothers, sisters [...]. To give and to take [*dain laain*]. Look [*vaikho na*], reasons are always there.

In the above-mentioned conversation with Nasreen, there are many economic and social aspects behind the decision of migration. In her case, the major reason for migration was the economic

burden of the household, as she had four daughters among her seven children and she had to arrange their marriages. In Pakistani society, dowry is an integral part of marriages of daughters and has become a social practice (Afzal and Subhani, 2009). Dowry contains all the important items of the household like furniture, crockery, clothes, gold jewellery, and many other household items. Even in some cases, the in-laws of the bride demand a huge dowry and present a list of all the required items before marriage, and sometimes they also demand a plot of land and a car as well. Dowry is not only a financial burden on the bride's parents but also reflects the social class of both families and often on the occasion of marriage, relatives and other residents of the community are keen to know all of the items in the dowry given by the bride's family. Due to this reason, in some rural areas of Punjab province, parents present dowry for public "examination" before one or two days of marriage. A similar argument was developed by Gulzar et al. (2012) that the dowry system is prevailing in both rural and urban areas of Pakistan. It is also a discrimination against unmarried girls because people define their value based on the quality of the dowry given by their parents (p. 785). Similarly, Nasreen's notion of "to construct their houses" stands for her three sons, as parents are responsible to give dowry to their daughters; similarly, they are responsible to construct a house for sons after their marriage. It is a social and familial responsibility of parents in the local context of the rural areas of Gujrat. In some cases, when sons grow to the marriageable age, parents provide them a plot of land, usually as a share in the inheritance, for separate construction. Sometimes, sons construct a separate unit as an appendage to the already existing building or construct an independent unit near the parents' house (Lodi et al., 2012, p. 7).

Another interesting notion mentioned by Nasreen in her conversation as mentioned-above is "vartana", which reflects the economic exchange among the community members and the extended family. It also reflects the social organization of rural society and reciprocity (Mughal, 2018). In her seminal anthropological study on village life in district Gujrat, Pakistan, Eglar (1960) used this local term *vartan bhanji* which reflects the complex mechanism of rural life to exchange gifts and services which plays an important role in the integration of society. The literal meaning of *vertan* is dealing and *bhanji*⁶⁴ stands for sweets, thus *vertan bhanji* "signifies

⁶⁴ In some rural areas of Punjab Province, *bhanji* is also pronounced as *bhaji*, which means exchange. In rural areas of Punjab, it is a common practice to exchange gifts and sweets on different occasions especially on marriage or any event of happiness or celebration. People maintain a register or a notebook in which they write how much

the exchange of sweets” (Nasir and Mielke, 2015, p. 5). Moreover, the practice of *vartana* or *vartan bhanji* “includes both social and economic exchange between members and determines and structures mutual expectations and a respective degree of certainty among them” (Nasir and Mielke, 2015, p. 5). Participation in social events and exchange of gifts or sweets are strong customary practices in the rural areas of district Gujrat, Pakistan in which people exchange gifts on different social and religious events like marriage, Eid⁶⁵, celebrations on a child’s birth, and when children pass examinations and are promoted to the next grade, etc. Nasreen’s notion of “have to” reflects the social pressure exerted from society to participate in all such activities. It is highly appreciated and desired to exchange gifts on such occasions and people criticize those who fail to follow all such customary practices. She has no other option but to follow all the customary practices. In these circumstances her elder son decided to go to Greece for a specific period of time and to earn money for all such expenses. He was successful in this regard as Nasreen further told when she was asked whether her son sent money back home:

Nasreen: Yes, he sends money [*paisay torda*] back home [...]. Sends five hundred monthly, in their currency [Euros].

Interviewer: Ok. How did you utilize that money in household?

Nasreen: With that money I arranged the marriages of daughters. I have four daughters, arranged marriages of three of them, one is left. Recently, also arranged marriage of one son with that money. Some money was consumed in household expenses. Also constructed this house by selling off some agricultural land and some money was sent by my son. Still I have to arrange marriage of one daughter and three sons [...] yes [...].

money is paid by a relative or friend or other community members on the marriage ceremony of that family. Later on, they also pay the money back to those families, friends, or community members on marriages of their family members. Usually, it is a customary practice to pay more in return. For example, if somebody paid 1000 rupees, then the receiver is expected to return 1500 or 2000 to another party. It is considered a desired social practice, otherwise, people criticise those families who pay less in return. Similarly, details of gifts are also maintained in written form. These gifts can be a gold ring, watch, unstitched cloths or dresses, etc. Similarly, sweets are an integral part of felicitation in the rural culture of Punjab, Pakistan. Earlier, people used to exchange packets of toffees, sugar, and solid candies of white sugar locally known as *patasay* or *batashay*. However, over time, due to more access to media, now people are more familiar with some new practices, for example, many sweet shops are available in villages as well. People also buy sweets from branded sweet shops available in nearby cities, now people usually exchange bakery sweets.

⁶⁵ Religious festivals of Muslims, two majors Eids, and many small Eids per year in which they are supposed to visit their relatives and vice versa.

Another interlocutor Asmat Bibi talked about her material comfort after her son went to Greece and sent remittances. When she was asked how her family utilized remittances, her husband, sitting next to her immediately responded:

[Managed marriage of] one daughter [...] yes, we arranged marriage of all of three simultaneously, two sons [*do mundian de*] and one daughter [*ik bachi de*] and money was sent by my son who was there [in Europe] and also constructed house.

However, regardless of their material comfort, Asmat Bibi missed the family members as she described in a slow tone:

In spite of all what we did, good or bad [*marra changa*], but the issue is [...], often it also brings worries as all family members [*jee*] are scattered [*khilray pulray*]. Some are here [and] some are not here [*koi kidray koi kidray*]. [Her husband abruptly added that] now, here we are two elder people [*mai baba*] and two daughters-in-law, just.

Asmat Bibi and her husband's narrations of "dispersed family", "some are somewhere" and "*mai baba*" (Literal meaning older couple, as *mai* stands for a woman and *baba* stands for a man) reflects the impact of sons' migration on elderly parents left behind. This finding of the present study gives an initial insight in context of the loneliness among immigrants' elderly parents in the rural areas of Gujrat, Pakistan. In the context of Pakistan, much scientific literature is available on impacts of remittances on social and economic development and wellbeing of the families left behind (Khan et al., 2009; Ahmed et al., 2010; Wassan et al., 2017; Awan et al., 2017). However, no study is available on the impact of sons' migration on the sense of loneliness among elderly parents left behind. The present study provides initial evidence in this regard, which needs to be further explored.

The data of the present study also explored that for some interlocutors, remittances changed their life style. Bashir expressed his experience of material comfort very enthusiastically:

Now circumstances [*halat*] are totally ok [...] for the last six months [...]. Very high status [*alishan*], lavish [*vadhha*]. We want that he should get marry now [son who is living abroad], even if he comes tomorrow, we will arrange his marriage because we know that we have money [*paisay hain nain*]. We installed motor pumps for water [*motran lawa dittian pani alian*], this that [*yeh who*] and completed all other necessary tasks [*saray kam ho gaey*]. Earlier, [before son's departure to Europe] we did not have money [*innay paisay*]. Now we are ready to

construct new houses for sons [who are in Europe]. Construct houses [...] Right [...].

Bashir's notion of "lavish" shows the material comfort after purchasing necessary household items and arranging some facilities. Similarly, "for the last six months" shows the comparison of household's financial conditions before and after migration. Moreover, availability of some basic facilities at home is also considered as a symbol of social status in the rural areas, for example, installation of water pump shows the ease for household in a sense that in many barren rural areas of Pakistan, people have shortage of clean drinking water. In many villages of barren⁶⁶ rural areas of the province of Punjab, there is a central well in the village. Men and especially women have to fetch water from that point. This practice is very hard and time taking because, in some cases, especially the areas in which population is scattered, they have to walk several miles to fetch water. However, now, the situation is better and people have installed water pumps in their houses and got rid of fetching water from wells. For Bashir, availability of plenty of water within house is a sign of a comfortable and lavish life. Siegmann and Shezad (2005) also argued that by hydrological definition of water, Pakistan may not be a water-scarce; however, poor quality of water, water stress, and inequitable distribution of water adversely affect a large segment of the population. In Pakistan, it reflects the problem of water management rather than availability of water (Siegmann and Shezad, 2005, p. 3).

Bashir also told that other than improving household conditions, he did not purchase agricultural land or other assets. However, he arranged marriages of his daughters with the money sent by his sons. He talked very enthusiastically:

Bashir: Arranged marriage of two daughters [...] [not two] three daughters. Yeh [...] we gave them full dowry [*saman*], everything [*her chez*] I mean full ration [...]. He knows [pointed to my field assistant, sitting next to me] that we arranged tents [*tanboo kanatan*], high status, they [sons in Europe] sent money [*paisay ghalay*]. They [sons in Europe] could have got documents [*kaghaz*] from the money they sent [back home], but they said "arrange the marriages of our sisters" we don't know how long it will take to get documents [...]. Three of their sisters

⁶⁶ Fetching water from central well of the village is a common practice in barren district of Punjab province, especially remote villages of district Chakwal, Khushab, Attock, Rawalpindi and Gujrat. However, now situation is better and government started water supply schemes but not in all areas. Now people have constructed underground small cemented water tanks or installed plastic made blue coloured water tanks on roof tops of the houses. They purchase water from local water supplier, who fetch water from wells in big tankers and supply at household level and charge money. In this scenario, having own motor pump in house is considered as a symbol of wealth and relatively better social status in the village.

got married, they are three brothers [...] yes [...] and all three are unmarried [*kuwaray*]. It was also a big task done [*eh vee tay kam bara hoya*]. It is real task [*asal kam*].

Interviewer: Ok. Did you purchase new furniture for your house?

Bashir: No, nothing else, why we should purchase. When they [sons] will marry, then their wives will bring it.

Conversation with Bashir as mentioned-above reveals many interesting points in the context of the rural areas in district Gujrat. His notions of “full dowry” and arrangement of “tents” on wedding ceremonies of his daughters reflects a symbolic meaning of lavish arrangements to show their social status in the native community. Generally, there are three trends of serving meals on marriages in the rural areas of Gujrat. Firstly, the host family invites guests and arranges meal in their own house or a house of neighbor, where people bend forward and take meal while sitting on the floor of a room or in an open courtyard. Secondly, the host family arranges chairs and tables for dining in their own courtyard, nearby available open place or ground, or in their own street, and cover the dining area with tents. Usually, such arrangements are made by local catering service providers. Thirdly, the host family invites guests directly to a nearby marriage hall or a marquee, and serves food. The second and third trends are considered as expensive and a symbol of high social status.

Another term “ration” as used by Bashir is usually a term used for a fixed amount of a commodity officially allowed to each person during a time of shortage, as in wartimes. When Bashir used this term, it reflected the overall background of this area. In British colonial era, district of Gujrat and its adjacent districts of Jhelum, Chakwal and Attock were chosen as major areas for military recruitments. In Pakistan armed forces, mostly men are recruited from these areas (Pak Institute for Peace Studies, 2011, p. 6). The term ration is being added from the army terms into the local language. In local linguistic context, it reflects household items for daily consumption. Similarly, notion of “arrange the marriages of our sisters” depicts the social pressure on and responsibility of brothers to contribute in the household income for marriages of their siblings. In rural areas of Gujrat, many proverbs reflect sacrifices of brothers for their sisters, and they are considered as the guardian of the family. Due to this social pressure, sons remain unmarried and prefer to arrange marriages of their sisters. Furthermore, his view of “big task” and “real task” also reflects that Bashir is satisfied over the role of his sons to fulfill their

responsibility and it was also a matter of social prestige in the local community. The core point of his discussion was availability of financial resources to fulfill all household needs and it was only possible after his sons went to Europe and sent money back home.

The data of the present study also reveals that, in some cases, though migrants sent money back home but they had to wait for a long time to get some work in the host society. Conversation with a female interlocutor, Nasim, depicts this situation as following:

Interviewer: When did your son sent money back home after his departure to Greece?

Nasim: In this sense [...], if I tell you the truth [*sachi gal keriyay tay*] then almost after seven [*sat sal bad*] years he started to give us money. Yes, earlier, he hardly managed his own expenses [*pehlay tay masan kharcha apna ee torda raya*]. Had no work [...] or little bit work [*koi thora baota ee*].

Interviewer: Then how you paid back that money, which you borrowed for his travel to Greece?

Nasim: That we paid back meanwhile. Their father [*inhan day abu*] worked here as tractor driver [...]. We also owned some cattle [*danger shanger*], in his [son] absence we paid back the money.

Interviewer: When he sent money back home, then what impact it had on your household?

Nasim: Yes, now we did many things [*hun bara kuch kita*].

Interviewer: Ok, for example?

Nasim: For example, constructed house, also purchased some land adjacent to the house, constructed house, then purchased one tractor trolley, now we are planning to get another one, we purchased many things, all things are deposition to God [*Allah de amanat*], purchased refrigerator for house [...] yes, then purchased TV, then I mean spending money on education of our children [*apnay bachay perhhanayan paey*], bearing all expenses of the education of this daughter [pointed to her daughter sitting next to her], all children are dependent on his money.

The conversation with Nasim provides an initial insight into the transitory period between migration and start of sending money back home in the context of the rural areas of district Gujrat. Though, plenty of scientific literature is available on remittances and household development in Pakistan but less attention is paid to study this transitory period that how a family manages household expenses and social pressures to pay back the borrowed money

during this period. Moreover, her notions of “after seven years”, “no work” and “little bit work” reflect how unskilled newly arrived migrants face difficulties while entering the labor market of the host country in Europe. For example, Benton et al., (2014, p. 3) explained such difficulties of new arrivals in findings jobs and stated that less education, poor proficiency of the language of the host country, lack of familiarity with labor market of the host country, and limited professional networks affect the migrants labor market integration. The data of the present study also shows that the migrants in the sample of the present study were also unskilled with very low levels of education (section 4.3.6). Another interesting aspect reflected in this conversation is gender relations in names and naming practices among husband and wife in the rural areas of district Gujrat. Nasim preferred to mention his husband by addressing “their father” instead of “my husband” or his actual name, and “their” means her all children. In rural areas of Pakistan, in general, it is a customary practice that women do not address their husbands by their first name or family name.

The data of the present study also reveals that the migrants’ families give more value to remittances due to difference in currency of Pakistan and Euro. As mentioned-above that people who went to EU member states (sample of the present study) were unskilled or low-skilled laborers. In Europe, they are engaged in low-skilled jobs, too, but only value of currency makes difference. Nasim explained the difference in low-skilled jobs in Pakistan and Europe as following:

The difference is [*faraq ay na*], here it’s just five [*panj*] or ten [*das*] rupees, but there [*othay*] if one gets five rupees then it covers our household expenditure [*ghar da kharcha pora ho janda sada*]. Five rupees of here [*ethay dian panjan nal*] cannot cover household expenditure [...]. There the currency has more [*ziada*] value. If one gets one thousand there [Europe], it becomes one hundred thousand here, but if gets one thousand in Pakistan, we can’t spend even one day [*sadi dhehari nai laghdi*].

Responding to a question that how he compares Pakistan with Europe in term of income because otherwise his son could have had work in Pakistan, Aslam narrated:

[...] the only difference is [*siraf faraq tay eh hai*] that, which we felt, earning in Pakistan is being spent side by side [*nalo nal kharch pai hondi ay*], and a person living abroad, if he spends one, two months or a year, then he can save some money [*char paisay kathay honday nain*] which fulfills many needs [*kisay pasay lag janday nain*].

The results of the present study as shown in the above-discussed cases of Nasim and Aslam are supported by previous researches which argue that due to exchange rate, migrants are motivated by the prospects of higher earnings at the destination country and increase in the value of the currency of the host country results in the increase in household remittances received by the home country (Keita, 2016; Yang, 2008, p. 593).

However, in contrast to the above-mentioned cases of remittances and significant improvement at household level, some interlocutors have told that there is no major impact of remittances on their existing conditions and they hardly manage the marriages of their daughters and sons, while other conditions of the household remain the same. When Ghafoor was asked that whether or not he added something in his household assets from the money sent by his sons, he replied while stressing on his tone:

Not added anything [*koi shay na banae*]. Nothing happened like this. If you are talking about assets, then nothing happened like this. Yes, arranged the marriage of elder son [...] but at that time, I was under debt. Then after him, I had younger daughters, also arranged their marriage. Some money was sent by my sons [in Europe] and some was already saved by the household. Anyhow, managed it by mutual [...] efforts. We arranged marriages of three daughters, I mean, since my sons [*munday*] went [to Europe]. Thank God, nothing else, neither had we purchased land [...] nor [...] did we do other work.

In some cases, the family back home further suffered due to migration of son instead of getting remittances. Riaz told that his son had been in Europe for the last eleven years and he (Riaz) borrowed money to arrange his travel. When Riaz was asked about any money sent by his son back home, he replied:

Riaz: Money [*paisa shaisa*] had not been sent [deep silence].

Interviewer: Ok. Now question is that how you paid back the borrowed money.

Riaz: That we returned by facing difficulties [*wakhhat vaiday nal*]. We domesticated animals [*danger pall poll kay*] and sold, returned them money after two, three four years [...]. Yes [...]. He did not send us even one rupee [*hik ropaeaa nai torya*] till today [*aj tak*]. Even, now he does not call us, for the last four years, he has left [us], does not call.

Another female interlocutor, Khadeeja, told that her son went to Greece just at the age of sixteen years. He appeared in annual examinations of Matriculation and then left for Greece. He was her only son and insisted to go to Greece. The family borrowed money and spent seven and half

hundred thousand rupees to pay the agent. Her son spent three and half years in Greece and only sent three hundred Euros back home. When she was asked that how the family paid the borrowed money back, she replied:

Until now [*hun tak*] we used to contribute in committees [*komaitian panday rae an*] then [laughed in low pace], due to contribution in committees, we used to pay back that money. It's us [who is] responsible to pay money back.

Her reference of “committees” depicts informal source of finance. In this informal source, a group of people pool in specific money and one person from the group is entitled to get total amount of the group on monthly basis. Usually, each person is given an equal chance to get the money as lottery system is used to select the nominee. However, as this system is informal, people can request to get money on priority basis if they are in dire need. In both rural and urban areas of Pakistan, committees are an important source of finance in informal sector (Nenova et al., 2009).

The above-discussed cases of Ghafoor, Riaz and Khadeeja shed light on relatively new dimensions of impact of migration on families left behind in context of the rural areas of district Gujrat, Pakistan. It gives initial insights to understand that, in some cases, migration further puts the families back home into difficulties or miserable situation instead of household development as found by some previous researches mentioned-above.

In sum, section 7.2.1 highlights how remittances affect lives of the families left behind. In this context, the major aspiration of migrants is to earn money and send it back to the native country for the betterment of their families and for their own future. This argument is supported by the findings of Meeteren (2012). In her study on irregular migrants' aspirations, she found that some migrants have investment aspirations, in which their major purpose is to earn money and send it to the families back home. The data of the present study also shows that, in some cases, migrants also have different aspirations instead of only earning money, which is discussed in the following sub-section.

7.2.2 Its not Poverty, people migrate for their own happiness

In the context of Pakistan, the desire for migration is not always restricted to only economic reasons but one should also take account of “what it means for male individuals” as they also

want to see something new in Europe (Marouf, 2015, p. 10). As in the present study, one male interlocutor Luqman told his desire for migration as following:

Luqman: Just, it was one desire [*shauq*] of my own [...]. Yes [...].

Interviewer: How this desire had been developed?

Luqman: Desire like [...], which was [...]. I mean, what is my inner feeling [*meray ander de gal*], I am telling you the reality [...]. Desire was to see this world by having a tour [...]. Yes [...].

Likewise, another interlocutor, Aslam, told that it was his son's desire to go abroad and he could not resist his son because:

My wife died when my son was only one and half year old. Just one and half year old [...]. Look, actually the thing is [...], he used to sit on my shoulders until he reached seven [...], at the age of seven, he left my shoulders [*mayrian mondhian ton latha*] and walked on his own feet [*apnay paireen turia*], and those seven years [*oh jehray nayn na sat sal*], that, I mean, I used to carry him on my shoulders. Wherever we went [*jidher vee jana*], even not a single step he put on ground, if I dropped him from my shoulders and walked one step ahead, he resisted, from here to here. So, in this way he was pampered [*lad pyar*].

However, Aslam also mentioned another aspect of migration from this area and told that in the rural areas of district Gujrat, people own small units of agricultural land, and in past, they got engaged in agriculture but as this area is barren and crops depend on the quantity and time of rainfall in the crop season, so, their income was not sufficient in spite of the fact that they got engaged in agricultural activities throughout the year but income was not sufficient as compared to their cost. So, gradually they left farming and adopted alternatives for income generation, and migration is one of the possible options to mitigate the livelihood challenges. Responding to a question on reasons of migration from district Gujrat, Aslam told:

The reason [*waja*] is, I mean, this is barren area [*barana ilaqa*], little land is owned by people [...]. Other districts, like Sargodha⁶⁷, there people own several

⁶⁷ According to Hayat (2007, p. 10) "land in Sargodha is irrigated by canals and tube-wells. Canal work established at time of British period in subcontinent. Underground water in district Sargodha is very suitable for agriculture. Farmers in Sargodha use underground water for agriculture purposes, at the time of deficiency of water in rivers. Agricultural products from the markets of Sargodha can be easily transported to other cities due to motorways. Sargodha is famous for crops like wheat, rice, cotton and sugarcane, but it is particularly famous for oranges. Oranges from Sargodha are not only being supplied in the country, but also exports to international markets. Some small factories for polishing and packing of oranges have been established in Sargodha by the coordination of local farmers".

*Murabba*⁶⁸ [*othay murabbian day malik nain*], some own two Murabba, some own four, and some own one, nobody is there who owns less than one Murabba. There, a person who owns relatively less land, even such person owns at least one Murabba, otherwise, everyone owns one and half, two, three, four [...] [also available] canal water [*pani nehr da*], canal flows in the middle [*nehr wichon jandi*], isn't it? [*enjay gal ay?*], beautiful [*sohna*], I mean, water is available, [there are] fruit farms [*bagh nay*], people earn hundreds of thousand [*lakhan ropaeey*] from these fruit farms annually [...]. And we here, look, I mean, in this season, people sow the rice crop [*munji lae see*], but it is ruined [*hun onhan nu mar ho gae ay*], people spent much money on it, but even they can't recover their cost from this crop in this season [*kharcha vee pora nai hona*], due to this reason [...].

Another interlocutor, Akbar, partially agreed with the notion of having small units of barren land as a reason of migration and elaborated that, in past, the major reason for migration was poverty. People were poor and possessed very small units of barren land and due to lack of water there was no sufficient income from crops. There was no other source of income or employment in this area. However, interestingly, he was not convinced to take poverty as a push factor for irregular migration from district Gujrat in the present context:

First of all [*pehlay number tay*], earlier people went to other country [*bahar pardais*] due to hunger [*bhokhh toon*]. I myself spent twenty-eight years in Saudi Arabia [...], twenty-eight years spent in Saudi Arabia [...], the reason was hunger. Nowadays [*ajj kal*], people go due to their own wish [*chah*], a person who can pay [*bharda ay*] ten hundred thousand rupees, fifteen hundred thousand rupees or twelve hundred thousand rupees [on migration] is not hungry [*ohnoo bhokhh tay koi nai*] [...]. He is going happily [*khushi nal ja ria way*], uttering by joy 'we must go abroad' [*assi jee bahir jana*].

Akbar's mentions of words like "earlier", "twenty-eight years", and "nowadays" indicate different waves and trends of migration in the area of the field of the present study. Moreover, it also reflects what changes took place in these twenty-eight years, for example, now people prefer Greece or other EU member states instead of Saudi Arabia. Moreover, his notion of "own wish" illustrates that youth is inspired by many structural factors and decision to migrate has been taken by their own will. However, Akbar denied poverty or hunger as a typical push factor for migration in the rural areas of district Gujrat, because in his views, the amount paid to an agent

⁶⁸ Murabba is a unit of area; consists of 25 acres, approximately 10.117 hectares.
<https://www.sizes.com/units/marabba.htm>

for arrangement of migration shows their financial capacity. Those who belong to lower class cannot afford such a huge amount. Similarly, the notion of “going happily” explains the social class (see chapter 6 for more detail) in local community, and accomplishment of their desire to go to Europe to earn more money, because in this way one can show his/her social class in the local community by upward social mobility. Youth want to improve their lifestyle and it exerts pressure on parents to provide all such facilities as Akbar pointed out:

Youngsters are not interested to get education [...], expenses are high. Every guy compares himself with others [...] that he wears pants and boots, so, he must wear pants and boots, too [*main vee pant boot pawan*]. But he does not know whether or not his father has money for these pants and boots. Yes. And parents then try to provide better socialization to children. If [people] people get proper education, then one can get job in Pakistan, too.

The above-mentioned views of Akbar as “a guy compares” and “one can get job in Pakistan, too” provide some initial insight into reasons of migration in terms of comparison of social class and job opportunities in the home country, as Akbar is not convinced to take poverty and unemployment as classical push factors of migration in the rural areas of district Gujrat, Pakistan. These findings are in contrast to push and pull factors of migration as proposed by Lee (1966).

Another interlocutor, Arshad told an interesting reason of migration of his brother. He was the eldest among the six siblings. He went to Europe at the age of thirty and at that time he was unmarried. He had reasonable earnings in Pakistan but was careless and did not take care of family. Responding to a question that how family conceived the idea to send him Europe, Arshad explained:

[...] Idea to go abroad [*bahir da khyal*], here he had work [*kam sham hai see*], but not good. Moreover, [his] habits were not as good, too [laugh in slow tone], [and due to those habits he was] not able to live here. Then parents decided that it is better to send him abroad. Because here [in Pakistan], he spent all what he earned [*jo kamanda oo othay ee kharach ker dainda*], did not give money to us [laugh in slow tone]. [Instead of giving money to family] After every six months demanded to buy a new van [and gave false information that] previous van was not working. Parents thought it's better to send him abroad [*behtar ay kay es nu bahir ghallo*], he would learn a lesson while bearing hardships of abroad; he would understand what is abroad and how to manage there. So, due to this reason [parents] sent him abroad.

For some interlocutors, migration is an escape strategy to avoid some unhappy familial or social atmosphere of the community. They consider Greece as a safe place to stay for a specific period of time, especially for their young sons. In rural areas of Gujrat, number of sons is a symbol of social strength in the prevailing system of social stratification. Masculinity framework encourages the desire for sons. Families having only one son are over conscious to protect their son. In such cases, most of the time parents do not force their son to continue education or get engaged in some job. However, some parents take decision to send their son to Greece due to domestic enmity within their biraderi or clan. They consider Greece or other EU member states as a safe place due to their established social institutes. Akbar sent his son to Greece eight years ago, at the age of eighteen years. He left school in 9th class, remained free and didn't get engaged in any agricultural work or job in Pakistan:

It was our [including wife] mutual decision to send our son to Greece. The reason [was] nowadays youngsters are jobless and they are just wasting their time to wander here and there in streets. So, parents are worried about their future. The youth is not willing to work here in Pakistan but ready to work abroad regardless of the nature of job. [So], my wife was of the view that our son is wasting time by wandering in streets and she had fear that he [son] may have some fight with somebody. It was not good that our son wasted time, so the better solution to avoid any mishap was, he should go to Greece. It could have been better if he continued his education or do some job. But if he is not willing to do job or continue his education then it is better he must go to Greece.

Another female interlocutor Kalsoom told about her son:

My dear, no body advised us to go to Greece. We managed a small shop in nearby city for son but this business failed with no further progress. Then he sold out the items in the shop just for 40,000 rupees and came back to home. He did all this without permission of his father [...]. He also came back to village without informing his father. His father became very angry to all of us and did not speak with son for six months. My son was fearful of his father's behavior and asked me, it seemed that father would kick him out from the house. He felt the misbehavior of his father and discussed it with me. He requested me to do something to arrange his travel to Greece.

The above-mentioned cases of Arshad, Akbar and Kalsoom provides interesting initial insights into some unexplored reasons of migration from the rural areas of district Gujrat, Pakistan. Earlier studies identified some classical push factors of migration from Pakistan, for example, unemployment, fear of prosecution and poverty (Maroufof, 2015). However, results of the present study explored few more interesting factors of migration in the rural areas of district

Gujrat, Pakistan, for example, discipline the behavior or escape from disturbed familial relationships within household.

In sum, cases discussed in section 7.2.2 reveal that migration is not always motivated by investment aspirations but is also triggered by the quest to explore the world, disturbed familial relationships, comparison of different destinations, and to discipline the behavior of male family members. The data of the present study also sheds light on how interlocutors define plans of return and to permanently settlement in Pakistan. The following sub-section explains this issue.

7.2.3 Intentions of Return: They will come back permanently

Migration patterns in 20th century started to differ from those of the previous century when international migration had been taken as “one-way movement” (Gmelch, 1980, p. 135). However, 20th century has witnessed many international migrants who returned back to their home countries (Dustmann and Weiss, 2007, p. 239). Return migration describes “a situation where migrants return to their country of origin by their own choice, often after a significant period abroad” (Dustmann and Weiss, 2007, p. 238). Often, international migrants are reluctant to take explicit decisions to stay permanently in the country of their destination, and always endorse the idea of return in future (Carling, 2015). It is also observed that “most migrants do not leave their home country with the intention of never returning” (Mwaura, 2018, p. 5). The decision of return is influenced by immigrants’ ties with the country of residence and country of origin (Carling and Pettersen, 2014). Moreover, such decisions are further influenced by several other aspects, for example, images of homeland, return visits, and influences of wider networks of kinship (Bolognani, 2007; Carling and Pettersen, 2014).

According to the data of the present study, interlocutors reveal that the purpose of their migration to Europe was to stay for a relatively longer period of time and earn to support their families back home. However, they have plans to permanently return to Pakistan after reasonable earnings. The decisions of return were influenced by some cultural myths and local narratives. For example, Asmat Bibi showed her disagreement for permanent settlement of her sons in Europe. When she was asked about the future planning of her sons, whether to return to Pakistan or permanently settle in Europe, she replied with a very determined way:

No [*nai*], will come back permanently [*aon day pakay pakay*]. No [...]. They often come [Pakistan] and go back [*aonday janday rehnday nay*]. They should come back [...]. [Her husband sitting next to her, laughed and added] Today, if something happen with us, good or bad [*ajj jay saday nal marri changi ho jaey*], they will reach at that time [*tay os waylay poch jana*]. Yes, if God wills [*In sha Allah*] [stressed on words] they will reach, our sons are very obedient [*saday putter halal day nay*], I fed them with virtuous earning [*rizaq vee halal da khawaya*]. We suffered with poverty [*gharibi catti ay*]. Whatever is to be done, we will decide. What we decide, will happen [...]. Yes. They [sons] can't dare [to refuse decision]. Yes. Whatever we do, they [sons] said it is right [because] it is done by our parents [*saday mann payo kita*]. Yes.

The above-mentioned conversation of Asmat Bibi and her husband reveals several aspects of return migration in context of the rural areas of district Gujrat, Pakistan. The notion of “come and go back” reflects migrants’ frequent visit to the home country, and it can influence their decision to return permanently. It is in line with the study of Bolognani (2007), in which she mentioned that return visits can be one of the reasons to decide return migration. Similarly, husband’s mention of “something happens” depicts their expectation and social support from their sons. In the context of rural areas of Gujrat, “something” means any occasion of celebration or mourning. They expect from their sons to accompany them on celebrations. Similarly, they also expect that their sons must attend their funerals, because in the local context, it is highly appreciated that son(s) must be present at the funerals of their parents. Moreover, in the context of rural as well as urban areas of Pakistan⁶⁹, on the death of parents, sons are considered responsible to arrange and lead the procession of funeral, take part in burial procedure, arrange communal meal not only for all the relatives but for the whole village or community as well, recite the Holy Quran, and to receive all the visitors who come for expression of grief. The expressions and expectations of Asmat Bibi’s husband about his sons provide us understandings of the role of gender in socio-religious environment of the rural areas of district Gujrat. These findings are supported by previous studies, for example, Suhail et al. (2011), VanSteenhuysen (2012), and OHCHR (1995).

⁶⁹ It is important to note that Pakistan has very rich ethnic diversity and death rituals can be varying according to the local traditions and customary practices of different ethnic groups. However, in general, as Pakistan is a patriarchal society and family lineage is carried by men, so sons are responsible to perform all rituals. Moreover, religion also plays important role to determine different rituals, for example, women are not allowed to participate in funeral prayer. Likewise, different sects like Sunni Muslims and Shia Muslims perform different rituals according to their own belief system. Similarly, within Sunni Muslim, *Barelavi* and *Wahabi* sub-sects further differs each other in performing different rituals (Suhail et al., 2011).

Another important notion mentioned in the above-discussed conversation of Asmat Bibi and her husband is the use of word “Halal” to express their sons obedient and fed by virtuous earning. The word Halal “comes originally from Arabic language meaning: allowable, acceptable, permitted, and/or permissible. The concept of Halal is not only related to food or food products (as more people will expect or think), but it goes beyond food to cover all the aspects of a Muslim person life, both for male and female” (Khan and Haleem, 2016, p. 33). In this context, the concept of “Halal son” is rooted into the sexual practices of reproduction among Muslims. According to the Islamic belief system, reproduction is only allowed to couples after their marriage, as cohabitation is prohibited in Islam. Children born to a couple after marriage are considered as Halal. The antonym of Halal is Haram that means “forbidden based on the Islamic religion” (Kashim et al., 2015, p. 17). Similarly, virtuous earning means the money honestly earned, and because it is earned according to Islamic principles, so, it is also Halal. In context of the local narratives, Halal is always considered as full of blessings in any sense; in this case, for example, sons are “Halal” because they were fed with “Halal” earning. Likewise, Asmat Bibi’s husband mention of “we will decide”, “sons can’t dare” reflects the moral authority of parents, especially of father’s in household decision-making in the rural areas of district Gujrat, Pakistan. These findings are parallel to the previous studies, for example, Awais et al. (2016) and Yasmine et al. (2019), in which they mentioned that position in the family hierarchy plays an important role in defining gender roles. Usually the patriarch of the family sets the norms and regulations of the family and all family members are expected and appreciated to follow it because it has cultural as well as religious connotations.

Another interlocutor Bashir expressed his views regarding return of his sons and permanent settlement in Pakistan:

No Sir, their house will be constructed here [Pakistan] [*ohnah day ghar vee ethay banan gay*], their marriages will also be arranged here [*ohnah dian shadian vee ethay hon gian*]. This thing we can’t afford [that they permanently settle in Europe] [*eh tay gal varay ech ee nai*], [laughed] they may wish to be settled there [Europe] but it is not a right thing [...], this issue is not right. [We] raised children, with difficulties [*wakht keetay nay*], faced hard time throughout life, now when it is time to get peace [from them] then they settle there [laughed]. What do you think? I want to see their children, to see their wives [...] right.

Bashir's views shed light on the culture and economics of parental expectations. In context of the rural areas of district Gujrat, when parents are getting older then they become financially, physically and emotionally dependent on their sons. His idea of "raised children with difficulties" reflects the sacrifices of parents during child bearing and rearing process. In context of Pakistan, children are sensitized through the process of socialization that they must serve their parents during their old age. Moreover, the notion of "time to get peace from sons" reflects two important gender dimensions in the rural areas of district Gujrat, Pakistan. Firstly, Pakistan is a patrilineal country and families have preference for sons because they are supposed to carry on the lineage. Secondly, sons are considered as social capital and parents invest in their brought up, and as return, they expect to be served in their old age. These findings are supported by Lee and Marwell (2013), as they argued that in context of the Asian countries, parents take investment approach to raise their sons in hope of old-age support. They coined the term "children capital" (p. 3) to explain parental expectations. Similarly, OHCHR (1995) also pointed out that a son is considered a family pillar who must provide support to parents in their old age (p. 6). Bashir's desire "to see their children" and "to see their wives" is a reflection of joint family system which is still strongly prevailing in the rural areas of district Gujrat, Pakistan.

However, interestingly, Bashir was not willing that his sons immediately come to Pakistan for permanent settlement after their marriage. When he was asked that whether he wanted his sons come to Pakistan after marriage and start some business here, he replied:

No, Sir, they must stay there [*othay ee rehn*], their wives stay here [*beviaan ethay rawan*], they can come after one year or can come after six months [...]. Now it is not any problem [*hun tay koi masla ee nai*], now it depends on money, a matter to afford fare [*kiraey bharay de gal ay*], they can visit even after every month, there are many people who visit [Pakistan] after three or four months [...]. I knew a guy, has good relations with me, he is living in Amreeka [America], last week he came here, visited my place to have gossip with me, he told me that Uncle [*chacha jee*] I came after three months.

In Bashir's views, one must stay in Europe for long time but on temporary basis, to earn money and visit family in the home country on regular basis. These findings of the present study are supported by Meeteren (2012), as she argued that in some cases, migrants are less interested to get permanent residence permit of the host society but focus to live a better life as compared to their native country. For such aspirations, she coined the term settlement aspirations. Migrants

have orientation to live in the host country on a long term basis and their major objective is to stay in the host country (Meeteren, 2012). Often, settlement aspirations are linked with expected economic prosperity in the host country. As Mounir, an interlocutor of the study of Meeteren (2012, p. 1648) explained, “Everybody in Morocco wants to come to Europe because life is much better here. Moroccans are corrupt. You can only get things done if you pay for it. I have come to Europe to get a better life.” However, it is also important to note that economic prosperity is not always a source of inspiration among migrants (Meeteren, 2012). They are also inspired by better medical and education facilities in Europe (Fozdar and Torezani, 2008). In this category they earn money and enjoy the luxuries of life in the host country, however, they are also concerned with the needs of their families living behind in their native country.

Another female interlocutor Nasreen expressed her wish for return of her son as under:

A mother’s heart wishes to meet her son(s). My heart wishes that right now, my Ahmad⁷⁰ [son] comes in front of my eyes [*merian akhan day agay away*]. He is not engaged yet. When he comes to Pakistan, then we will search for his match [for marriage]. I have three sons. Mothers can feel the difficulties of sons during travelling, mothers dream at night about the difficulties of their sons.

The section 7.2.3 discusses the interlocutors’ intentions regarding future planning for the return migration. It is found that return intentions are embedded in cultural narratives of building house in the home country and to look after elderly parents and other family members. However, in spite of return intentions, people also prefer Europe for long term stay to earn money. The data of the present study also shows that some interlocutors also postpone their visit to Pakistan because they want to get legal residence status of some EU member states instead of temporary stay or earning money. The following sub-section explains such cases.

7.2.4 Struggle to Get Legal Resident Status: Now, I will come back only after getting papers (*kaghaz, kagat*)

Meeteren (2012) argued that, in some cases, migrants have legalisation aspiration and want to get legal residence status and permanent citizenship of the host society. They have a long term planning in this regards and do not go back to the native country without getting legal residence permit, because they consider it as wastage of resources. They want to start a new life in the host

⁷⁰ Fictitious name

country as an interlocutor, Mehdi, in the study of Meeteren (2012, p. 1649) told “I plan to build a future here (...) I will do anything to get a residence permit. I know that it is going to take much effort; nevertheless, I will do anything to become a full citizen of Belgium.”

In the present study, it was also found that some migrants have legalisation aspirations and they do not want to come back to Pakistan without getting legal residence permits. Ghafoor told the aspirations of his son in this regard:

My son spent enough time there [Greece]. There, I asked him to come back to home [Pakistan]. He [son] replied, I reached here [Greece] after facing many hardships [*aya baray wakht nal an*], I also faced torture [*maran kuttan khadian nay*]. Now, I will come back only after getting papers [*kagat*]. It is very hard to get legal documents here. I made many efforts, but could not get [...]. Then from there, after spending some time, he directly went to Speen [Spain] to my brother. My son had hope, so he also reached there.

The data of the present study also reveals that some migrants spend many years in Greece to get legal status, even some of them make first visit back to the home country after nine to twelve years. Moreover, it is also found that some migrants move to other EU member states, when they realize that it is not possible to get residence permit of Greece. Their personal networks help them to get information in this regard (See chapter 6). A female interlocutor Sakina told:

My son told that he would not come back to Pakistan without achieving anything. He was determined that he would not come back to Pakistan and moved to other country. Then we borrowed more money and he left Greece and moved to Denmark, still we have to pay back that borrowed money.

Her mention of “without achieving anything” showed the determination of her son to get legal residence permit of some EU member state. It is also a matter of shame in native community to come back without getting legal status as legalisation is very important for their up-ward social mobility (Meeteren, 2012). Moreover, in both above-mentioned cases of Ghafoor and Sakina, their sons left Greece and moved to other EU member states instead of coming back to Pakistan. This point refer to the study of Kuptsch (2012, p. 18), in which she also mentioned that unemployment does not influence the immigrants’ decisions to leave their host countries automatically, it depends on the prevailing situations in the home and host country. Similarly, the sons of Ghafoor and Sakina did not opt to leave Europe and come back to Pakistan because in Pakistan the conditions were same but in other EU member states they had some hope to be

settled. However, in contrast, some migrants decide to come back to Pakistan because the situation in the host country is not favorable. Asghar told how his brother decided to come back:

Asghar: For one and half year [in Greece] he just wasted time [*enjay phirday turday raey*], then on and off he got work on daily basis [*kidray dhehar dhappa lag janda cee*], sometime got work otherwise no work. He did not get proper work [*khas kum koi nai milya*]. That's why he came back [*tan ee tay wapus aa gya*].

Interviewer: After how long he came back?

Asghar: Five years. Only for a little time he sent small amount of money. He went there, as he took training of welder [in Pakistan], he searched work of welder, but work of welder was not available there [in Greece]. Then on and off, he worked on daily basis, whatever work he found [*jehra kum labh jaey*], [like] fruit market or there here [*agan pichan*]. Whatever he found, he did. He spent five years there, in hope that may be [he] get something [*panj sal othay rya tay hay way, essi aas tay challo wai mattay koi bun ee jaey*].

However, in some cases, those migrants who did not get work, they used many strategies to get legal documents in the host country; and getting married to an EU national woman was one of the options:

My elder son got documents from Poland and he has been there for the last nine years. He married a [Polish] white girl [*gori*]. I allowed him to get married in Poland. Earlier, my son informed his father that if he wished him [son] to come back to Pakistan and get marry here instead of Poland, then there are no chances to get documents. So due to this reason I am going to marry in Poland. [Sakina]

Aslam was also praying for his son that he may get legal documents in Greece:

Interviewer: What do you wish that your son may come back to Pakistan or permanently settle in Greece?

Aslam: No, no, why son should come back to Pakistan without getting legal status [replied aggressively]. My dear, he's been there for the last five years and faced many hardships. Now, I pray that by the help of God he may receive his documents. You must pray for my son as well. If he will get papers, then he is successful.

His notion of "successful" shows his wish that his son must get legal status in Greece; otherwise it would be a failure. Moreover, failure also depicts the fear of loss of all those resources which they invested to initiate the process of migration. Similarly, the notion of "hardships" reflects emotional suffering as he had been in Greece for the last five years. So, getting legal status can compensate all these sufferings, otherwise it may be an unsuccessful adventure.

7.3 Conclusion

The present chapter discussed various aspects of migrants' experiences after arriving at destination countries. Three main dimensions of such experiences were identified. First, in some cases, the major aspiration for migration was to earn money and support family back home. Such support further varied into different usage of remittances, for example, house construction, marriages of siblings and arrangement of dowry for daughters, to maintain reciprocity through social and economic exchange because it is a necessary feature to regulate life in village, and to secure livelihood. Such aspiration for migration can be titled as investment aspirations (Meeteren, 2012). However, some initial insights were also found into effects of sons' migration on the loneliness of elderly parents, and transitory period of migrants in the host society and its affect on the economy of their household back in Pakistan. Similarly, the results of the present study also revealed that not all migrants were motivated by economic intentions, but in some cases, they took migration as to explore new world, regulate personal discipline, and to protect youngsters to have disputes in the local community. Another major sub-theme was identified as some intentions of return to Pakistan. The interlocutors were not willing to allow their sons to permanently settle in Europe; however, interestingly they were also not willing that their sons immediately come back to Pakistan. They considered Europe to stay for a long-term for better life. The interlocutors' intentions of return were influenced by the images of homeland, importance of joint family in Pakistan, and sons' gender role in social support and care of elderly parents. Moreover, to get permanent residence documents of the host country is identified as another important sub-theme. Interlocutors were of the view that it makes no sense to come back to Pakistan without getting residence permit of any EU member state. For this purpose, migrants moved between different EU member states and adopted different strategies, for example, marriage with an EU national woman. In sum, the above-mentioned different aspirations of migrants and their families help to understand different dynamics and processes of migration in the context of the rural areas of district Gujrat, Pakistan.

CHAPTER 8

CONCLUSION

The present research was focused to study how irregular migration from Pakistan to Greece and other EU member states is being organized and facilitated with the help of networks of agents in rural areas of district Gujrat, Punjab, Pakistan. The word migration has several dimensions ranging from social, economic, political, historical, and geographical contexts, and is interlinked with development at the global level (Düvell, 2014; Anderson and Keith, 2014). Whereas irregular migration also has a broader canvass and is embedded in various socio-economic and political dimensions (Vogel, 2016; Düvell, 2014). Due to its political and legal standing, it is very difficult to analyze the control mechanism of irregular migration (Schmoll, 2016). The complex nature of this issue is also a major reason that there is no consensus of experts on a unique terminology and it can be defined in various contexts depending upon the policy frame of a country (Merolla et al., 2013; Morehouse and Blomfield, 2011).

Cross-border mobility is inherently intertwined with the history of Pakistan since 1947 (Maroufof and Kouki, 2017). Several studies investigated the process of migration from and to Pakistan, its link with development, and Pakistani migrants' integration in the host society. The focus of many such types of research was to study the impact of remittances on household development in Pakistan (Khan et al., 2009; Imran et al., 2018). Similarly, most studies are conducted in the context of post-arrival and focus on those migrants who are living in the host society after their successful arrival. Less focus has been given to the context of pre-migration decision-making, especially, how the networks of agents are playing their role in organizing the whole process of irregular migration from Pakistan to Greece and other EU member states. Likewise, less focus has been given to study how the families of irregular migrants in Pakistan are involved in the pre-migration decision-making process and negotiation with the migration agents. To bridge this research gap, the present research is exclusively intended to explore the role of agents in the organization and facilitation of irregular migration from Pakistan. It is not only focused on irregular migrants who once initiated such type of migration but failed to achieve their target and were deported to Pakistan during transit, but also includes the families of irregular migrants to know how they play their role in the whole process.

Building on the concepts of social networks, biraderi, and social capital as a theoretical lens, the present research has used qualitative research design because it provides the insider's perspective or an emic view instead of any external format. Moreover, the interpretive approach is applied to reconstruct the meanings of the subjective explanation of the participants of the present research regarding the organization of irregular migration through agents. The fieldwork of the present research consists of semi-structured interviews with irregular migrants and their families in two villages of district Gujrat, Punjab, Pakistan. Due to the hidden nature of irregular migrants, no sampling frame was available and these respondents were approached by snow-ball techniques. The major focus of the present study is to explore the experiences of the families of irregular migrants and the migrants themselves that how they contacted the agents. The present study is not focusing on the perspectives of the agents because due to the sensitive nature of the study, it was very difficult to approach these agents despite the involvement of local residents as field assistants of the present study. Though, the agents live in the same villages or nearby villages as their clients, however, due to the illegality of their business, it was extremely hard to convince them for interviews. Through employing the coding technique in grounded theory (Strauss and Corbin, 1990; Charmaz, 2006), the present study has shown important insights into the research questions of the present study.

The findings of the present study indicate numerous important features of organization and facilitation of irregular migration from Pakistan to Greece and other EU member states with the help of agents. The results show that the most important aspect of an organization of irregular migration is the approachability of agents to the aspiring migrants and this mechanism can be understood through the social organization of the village and local power dynamics. The present study reveals that these agents have established a very strong chain of networks in rural areas of district Gujrat. This well-established chain of networks is not only prevailing within district Gujrat but is also linked with the networks working in the adjacent districts and other provinces. Likewise, they are also connected with the agents in transit and destination countries. These results are backed by Pastore et al. (2006), in which they argued that such networks operate at various levels and geographies. In this scenario, the social profile of the agents helps us to understand their working mechanism. The findings further show that through village networks or peer connections, the aspirant migrants identify the agents and initiate further negotiation. These

findings are in line with Alpes (2013), in which she argued that close personal connections with brokers and their position in the community are important factors to approach them.

Moreover, the present study reflects that the aspirant migrants and agents are living in the same village, or, in some cases, agents are living in the adjacent villages. In such cases, belonging to the same village and biraderi-based references are solid indicators to approach and negotiate with the agents. In the context of rural areas of district Gujrat, biraderi-based social stratification is still a strong determinant of the social identity of a person in the local community. Moreover, in rural areas of Pakistan, often people oblige each other based on similar geographical belonging and consider all people belonging to the same district as their community fellows. Such a mechanism is very important to understand the existing links between the migrants and the agents. These results are supported by the studies of Lucht (2012) and Lindquist et al. (2012). In the present study, it is also found that the aspirant migrants are also interconnected and well aware of the planning of irregular migration of each other. Their interconnectivity enables them to contact and negotiate with the agent. However, data also shows that, in some cases, agents are also proactive in contacting the aspirant migrants and their families. As they are secretly operating in the villages, so, they meet people on the street or they have secret meeting places. This argument is confirmed by Zhang and Chin (2002), in which they narrated that human smugglers live as ordinary people, engage in formal business but behind such businesses, they operate their activities in secret.

The present study also reflects on some very interesting and important new dimensions of organization of irregular migration in district Gujrat. For example, it reveals that female agents are also working in the villages of district Gujrat. It gives some initial insight into gendered dimensions of the agents in Pakistan. It challenges the results of previous studies in which male agents are exclusively involved in the organization of irregular migration from Pakistan, for example, Koser (2008) and Maroufof (2015). Though, there is some evidence of the increasing role of women in facilitating irregular migration in other regions of the globe, for instance, the US-Mexico border (Sanchez, 2016, p. 1). However, in the context of Pakistan, it gives us a new dimension of gender and facilitation of irregular migration. Moreover, in the present study, the role of women agents is found in two dimensions. They identify the aspirant migrants, contact their families, and facilitate the recruitment process. In such cases, they work as a facilitator of

the main agents or networks. Additionally, they enable the migration of the aspirant migrants through paper marriages. In such cases, these women agents are directly involved because they identify the potential migrants and arrange paper marriages. Similarly, another important initial insight emerged from the present study is female-to-female contact, for example, recall the case of Kalsoom Bibi, a mother of an irregular migrant, who was approached by a female agent (section 5.2.1). Likewise, at the household level, the role of women was also found very influential in the pre-migration decision-making process. They encourage their sons for irregular migration and support them both in terms of finance and emotions. These findings are very important because it gives us some new explanations regarding the increasing role of women in household decision-making in a patriarchal structure of the rural areas of district Gujrat.

The present study has shown the importance of information dissemination regarding the organization of irregular migration from Pakistan to Greece and other EU member states. Access to the information dissemination system enhances the capability and efficiency of people and broadens the scope of success in any field (Dev et al., 2017). Similarly, access to information is the key step to initiate irregular migration which provides all necessary information in this regard. In the villages of district Gujrat, migration agents have been found as a fundamental source to disseminate information regarding the organization of the whole process of irregular migration. They not only provide information but also assure potential “clients” to become a success story. The aspired migrants are dependent on such information due to their low level of education. Socio-demographic profile (chapter 4) of the aspirant migrants shows twenty years as the mean age of the migrants at the time of migration. The majority passes a primary or middle school and leave high school without completion. They are less-educated and it increases their vulnerability to being dependent upon migration agents. These findings of the present study are confirmed by Faist (2000) and Ambrosini (2017) in which they stressed the importance of information to initiate the process of migration.

The results of the present study also depict geographical imagination as another important factor that linked the aspirant migrants and their families with the networks of agents. A significant majority of the interlocutors admitted that they did not know much about the migratory tracks to Greece and other related information regarding weather and security vigilance, etc. As mentioned above, the majority of the aspirant migrants and their families was illiterate or semi-

literate, and did not have sufficient information about migration trajectories. They only had a hunch or roundabout specific geographical imagination of Greece or other EU member states as sketched to them by the agents. Moreover, multiple services and activities performed by the agents allured the young migrants of Gujrat regarding a bright future, and their geographical imagination enhanced the illusion regarding socio-economic and political opportunities to get legal status in Europe. These results are supported by the study of Thompson (2017), as she also argued that geographical imagination plays an important role in migration decision-making and selection of destination.

The findings of the present study also highlight some structural constraints regarding the issuance of visas in embassies by following the legal protocols. For migration, the aspired migrants have two choices. The first one is the embassy which imposes formal requirements for issuance of visa, and the second one is the agents, who work without any formal procedure and are easily available in the same village or surrounded villages in a radius of five kilometers. Moreover, the institutional mechanism requires some bureaucratic procedure which these aspired migrants cannot fulfill. As a result, they consider migrants as a competent source to initiate irregular migration. Moreover, fear of rejection of visa due to not fulfilling legal requirements, for example, verification of educational testimonials, money trail for establishing a business, family reunion, and high cost as visa processing fee lead to the disappointment of the aspired migrants. On the other hand, agents provide all the facilities very quickly including forged documents, and all arrangements are made orally and for the level of trust, and credibility of agents based on the traditional patterns of rural areas of district Gujrat. These traditional patterns encourage people to respect their promises even if they are legally not admissible. Due to less procedural complexity, the aspired migrants prefer to contact the agents instead of embassies. Similar arguments are made by Alpes (2013) as she argued that applying through the embassy does not guarantee the issuance of visas. Simon et al. (2016) also stated that when legal opportunities are not practicable, people adopt an alternative way. The above-mentioned findings of the present study can also be seen from a more critical and political perspective. For instance, results depict that some of the interlocutors are very well familiar with the fact that these young men from Gujrat would never get a visa to Greece or any other country, and that, this is not the fault of their families who do not know how to navigate the visa system. It is a consequence of what Castles called the European non-arrival regime, that first of all aims at preventing migration,

except for highly desirable persons. The growth of “irregular migration is a result of restrictive immigration policies of the rich countries” (Castles, 2003, p. 15).

As discussed above, biraderi-based reference and belonging to the same village facilitates the aspired migrants to approach the agents. It further plays a role in flexible negotiations regarding the cost of the migration and mode of payment. The results reveal that the negotiation with the agents regarding money is easily adjusted according to the financial position of the migrants. Moreover, agents are also residents of the same community or belong to the same biraderi. As a result, they are familiar with the families of the aspirant migrants and also know who belongs to lower economic class and cannot afford to spend a large sum of money. The agents are also aware of the fact that the aspirant migrants cannot qualify the requirements in embassies, so, they take advantage of this situation and are always available to facilitate these “clients” in haggling rates and negotiating other concerned matters and formalities, as per ease of the aspiring migrants. The aspirant migrants and their families manage finance through various resources, for example, borrowing from relatives and friends, selling cattle, agricultural land, and grain. Some also lend money from formal institutions, for example, banks, on high-interest rate. The rural areas of district Gujrat consist of a joint family system and social support from an extended network of relatives, which play a pivotal role to manage finance. Such a social support reveals a strong social bond among the families and the extended relatives as well. People appreciate their relatives and friends for help which shows the social support mechanisms in the social organization of villages of district Gujrat. Findings of the present study further reveal that the mode of payment is also flexible and the agents use various strategies to attract the potential clients and increase their clientele. The agents guide the families of the aspirant migrants on how to pay the amount. Some money has been paid as advance and the rest depends on the successful arrival of the migrants in the destination country. These findings are supported by other studies, for example, Koser (2008) and Majidi and Danziger (2016).

The present research also highlights that the irregular migration from Pakistan to Greece or other EU member states is embedded in the risk-taking behavior of the aspirant migrants. They ignore temporary and corporeal situations during mobility like mistreatment or injury and take migration as a long-lasting opportunity. They interpret risk, success, and failure in various dimensions according to their local cultural narratives, for example, surrendering to God (*Allah*

kay hawalay), luck (*Kismet*), fate (*Muqadar*), and destiny (*Taqdir*). However, it is interesting that on one hand they are surrendering to God or declaring it luck, fate, and destiny, but on the other, they are also contracting with the agents and are fulfilling their requirements. It can be explained as Zinn (2016, p. 348) called “in-between strategies”, by adopting a non-rational approach such as faith, hope, and belief and rational approaches like calculation of all pros and cons. Similarly, the level of trust in agents is another determinant of the risk-taking behavior. There is variation in results regarding their experience with the agents. Some are deceived during mobility, especially, during transit. While others successfully reach the destination as communicated by the agents. Sanchez (2017a) also argued that often tragic events occur during mobility particularly during transit because human smugglers may become greedy to demand more money and they exercise extreme torture and violence on the migrants. In some cases, it can be extremely fatal, like the death of the migrants.

The broader social environment of the community also influences people’s decisions of migration (Ryo, 2013). The young aspirant migrants put migration on priority on their agendas and such normality boosts their tendency to migrate (Hagen-Zanker and Mallett, 2016). The results of the present study also reflect on how chain migration motivates the aspirant migrants. In the rural areas of district Gujrat, Punjab, there is a huge trend of migration. This popular and well-established trend of international migration has become a normal practice in these villages. Even, in some cases, the interlocutors postpone the communal rituals, for example, performing Hajj, and prioritize the migration of their family member instead of spending money on the expenses of Hajj. It gives us an initial insight into how people prefer international migration instead of rituals because in a Muslim majority country like Pakistan Hajj is among the major pillars of Islam and has a special significance (McCleary, 2007; Black, 2011). Likewise, peer influence is another dominant aspect in migration decision-making that encourages the young migrants to initiate the adventure of irregular migration with the help of agents. Furthermore, this peer influence is triggered by the hope extended to the transnational networks. People expect help and cooperation from these transnational networks. In most of the cases, the aspirant migrants and their families contact these transnational networks before starting the journey and remain in contact during the transitory period. However, the data of the present study shows the variation in this context as some migrants are facilitated by these transnational networks in search of a job and accommodation. However, in some cases, some interlocutors told that they

were exploited by their social network in the host society. They could not resist because they were not familiar with the new culture and their irregular status brought them in a very vulnerable position.

The present study also reveals that the trend of migration in the rural areas of district Gujrat has also created a social competition that is embedded in the notion of social class. It reflects on the competition prevailing among members of low-status-biraderi and upper-status-biraderi. Such a trend shows that traditional rural social organization is being transformed. Now, the local power dynamics are layered in the social, economic, and political standing of the migrants' families instead of traditional biraderi-based social stratification in the villages of district Gujrat. It shows a move of resilience among the lower-status-biraderi. They can't change their ascribed status of biraderi but can achieve social class through upward social mobility through international migration. In addition, the prestige of work also triggers aspiration for migration among youth in rural areas of Gujrat. The prestige of work contains symbolic meanings and is influenced by the normative values and is linked with the construction of shame (Goldin et al., 2011). Belonging to an upper-status-biraderi is a powerful determinant in rural areas of Gujrat which define the status of one's work in the local community in the context of customary practices and local narratives of respect and prestige. It restricts the aspirant migrants to engage in menial work in their village or nearby cities because they have a fear of being exposed within their villages and biraderi. People do not get engaged in some manual jobs which are symbolically linked with lower-status-biraderi, but prefer to get the same work abroad due to anonymity (Neubecker, 2013a). Nieswand (2011, p. 2) coined the term "the status paradox of migration" for those migrants who lose their status in the host society but, at the same time, gain middle-class status in their native community.

Similarly, the social environment of the community also defines the gendered dimensions of migration. In the villages of district Gujrat, the interlocutors explain international migration under the notion of masculinity. The local narratives of young age encourage people to migrate for the betterment of their family and embrace any difficulties and hardships during mobility. They consider it their responsibility to take part in income-generating activities and feed their siblings and parents. They define women's mobility as a matter of family honor (*Izzat, ghairat*) and consider those families disgraceful (*bay-sharam*) who do not restrict the mobility of their

female family members. However, they agree on female migration only for higher education or family reunion through legal means. It is surprising that they do not hesitate to negotiate with female agents for their own mobility; however, they are not willing to send their female family members through female agents.

Other than the above-mentioned aspects of irregular migration, the present research also depicts some other important aspects of migrants and their families, for example, remittances and household development, aspirations to get legal status in Europe and remain or return strategies. In the first aspect of remittances and household development, they take remittances as a prime source for a comfortable life for their families living in Pakistan. They also consider it very important to meet some pressing needs of the household, for instance, marriages of the siblings, especially, to arrange dowry for daughters and sisters and to maintain social reciprocity in the social organization of the village (*Milan vertana*). The results of the present study also challenge the traditional push and pull factors of international migration as some of the interlocutors identify irregular migration as their own happiness (*Khushi*) and desire (*shaoq*). In some cases, people have a strong desire to permanently return to Pakistan. They want to earn money by prolonging their stay in Europe. They attach their intentions of returning to Pakistan under notions of sons' socio-religious obligations to provide social support and look after elderly parents. These findings are confirmed by some previous studies, for example, Suhail et al. (2011) and OHCHR (1995). In contrast, in some cases, migrants refuse to return to Pakistan without getting legal status (*kaghaz, kagat*) of some EU member states. In their opinion, the voluntary return is a matter of shame in their native villages. Moreover, they consider it as wastage of time they have spent in Europe. The present research is aimed at studying the processes of the organization of irregular migrants with the help of networks of agents in the rural areas of district Gujrat, Punjab, Pakistan. The focus of this research is on pre-migration context. For a future research, I would recommend to study migratory tracks, for example, by following the migrants on their route to get more insights into the actual process of migration.

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ANNEXURE

INTERVIEW GUIDE

The Role of Agents in Organization of Irregular Migration from District Gujrat, Pakistan to Europe

Starting time of Interview: -----

Ending time of Interview: -----

Demographic Profile of the Interlocutor:

Age: -----

Education: -----

Age of the migrant when left Pakistan-----

Education of the migrant when left Pakistan-----

Marital status of the migrant at the time of migration-----

If married, total number of children-----

What is the order of birth of the migrant-----

General Themes

Sr #	Major Theme	Probing
1	Why Irregular Migration	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• How the idea of irregular migration had been conceived• Cost and complex procedure on legal visa process• Duration of official formalities• Low level of literacy among emigrants• Lack of awareness among emigrants• Strict visa policies of European countries• Bank Statements etc
2	Reasons to Select Greece	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Greece as a gateway to Europe• Access to Greece from Pakistan• Geographical location of Pakistan• Expenses on this route• Migration to urban area of Pakistan
3	Source of Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Social networking• Observation

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Popular trends of migration in local community • Contact with agents
4	Management of Finance and mode of payment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Major source(s) of finance • Loan • Selling of household items • How money was paid
5	Family Migration Norms / Chain Migration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trend of illegal migration in family • Peer pressure • Contact with relatives already in Europe • Fantasy about future
6	Role of Agent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agent as a key informant • First contact with the agent • How many trips to agent • Accuracy of information received from the agent • Fee of agent • Any deception during journey • Liaison with agent during journey
7	<p>Networks</p> <p>Social Status</p> <p>Geographical Imagination</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social Class • Socio-economic status (household possessions) • Comparison with extended network of relatives • Improvement in infrastructure (Material comfort) • Poverty • Lack of permanent employment opportunities Pakistan • Reluctant to do menial jobs in Pakistan • Dependency ratio of the household • What kind of work did he do before moved to Greece • Europe as dream land • Better job opportunities in Greece • Menial jobs in Greece • Lavish life style • Better social security • Currency difference • Success stories in neighbourhood
8	Family Consensus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Please describe the opinion of family members • Involvement of female family member(s) • Motivation level of your son • Motivation level of whole family • Dominance in decision making process
9	When Journey Started	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The moral level of your son while leaving home

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact during journey • Any difficulty during journey • Please describe the emotions of family • Settlement in Greece
10	Present Situation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Job / work opportunities in Greece • Results as per expectations • Amount of money received • Repayment of loans • Purchase of agricultural land • Increase in household luxuries
11	Feelings of the Family	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most critical movements • Satisfied or repent on decision • Social Events
12	Gender of Migrant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Please describe why you have sent your son • Please describe why you have not sent your daughter
13	Knowledge of Geography	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Route of Irregular Migration
14	Knowledge of Weather Conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hardships of weather
15	Comments / Suggestions	