

UPROOTED LIVES: A STUDY ON THE RESILIENCE AND INTEGRATION OF  
AFGHAN REFUGEES IN PAKISTAN.

By

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## **ABSTRACT**

Research has shown that refugees face numerous challenges after displacement which they have to cope with using different survival techniques, out of which, resilience plays a major role. Refugees in developing countries can prove to be a valuable asset if integrated into the formal economy bringing benefit to themselves and to their host countries. This study focused on Afghan refugees living in Pakistan and working either as a part of the formal economy or the informal economy. Afghans have informally settled in Pakistan over the years and many of them do not want to move back to an unknown country to which their forefathers once belonged. The researcher in this study focused on finding out in detail the hurdles in the way of successful integration of refugees in the social and economic milieu of Pakistan while looking at resilience as a major factor in determining their integration, thus making a case for an integrative policy that gives Afghans legal recognition to enable wider economic prospects. It was found through in-depth interviews with Afghan refugees that they have integrated socially and economically in the Pakistani society; however, this journey was marked with significant hurdles. To this day, they feel disillusioned due to a lack of rights since they are not recognized as citizens and face statelessness. They faced challenges in finding employment and decent housing. Afghan children are discriminated against in educational institutions however, social bonds with their own community help in dire times. All the Afghan refugees who were interviewed unanimously agreed that their lives would take a turn for the better if they had legal recognition which is a foundational characteristic of integration.

## **Dedication**

I dedicate my work to my late father and my superhero mother, everything I do, I do it for you.

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