

Partition and Border making in Okara



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Declaration of Work

I, **Muhammad Abdullah**, hereby declare that this thesis and the work presented in it is entirely my own. Where I have consulted the work of others, this is always clearly stated.

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Dedication

I would like to dedicate my work to those who have lost their lives, family or property at the time of partition of Subcontinent, especially my grandfather, Karam Deen, as he was one of those who were affected by this partition badly.

DRSML QAU

Acknowledgment

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Abstract

This thesis studies the impact of Partition and border making on the definition of community in Okara has been discussed at the time of Partition of Punjab in June 1947 to July 1950. It does so by collecting the oral history of Muslims who came as migrants in Okara in 1947, the Sikhs and Hindus who migrated from Okara to East Punjab in 1947 and the Muslims who stayed in Okara during British period and after the creation of Pakistan. There are three objectives of the present study: Firstly, the effect of the border making on the lives of the people in Okara will be seen; Secondly, the experience of the migrant and local in Okara related to the border making will be analyzed; Thirdly, the assimilation of the migrated people with the local people will be analyzed. The research looks at three aspects of Partition in Punjab by A) looking at the inter-communal relationship between Sikh, Hindu, and Muslims in Okara during the British rule in India. B) Then it discusses the border making between India and Pakistan in the Punjab region generally and the Okara district specifically. C) It discusses the relationship between the local and the migrant in Okara. The study argues that in Pre-Partition Punjab the identity was derived on the basis of locality in Okara, but at the time of Partition of Punjab, and the creation of India and Pakistan, the identity was constructed on the basis of religion, the basis of identity again became localized when the refugees arrived in Okara, and the tensions surfaced between refugees and locals.

Key words: Communal Violence, Community of Interest, Community of Residence, *Janglee*, Border Making, Partition.

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Chapter: 1

1.1 Introduction

This thesis studies the impact of Partition and border making on the definition of community in Okara has been discussed at the time of Partition of Punjab in June 1947 to July 1950. It does so by collecting the oral history of Muslims who came as migrants in Okara in 1947, the Sikhs and Hindus who migrated from Okara to East Punjab in 1947 and the Muslims who stayed in Okara during British period and after the creation of Pakistan

I have divided this thesis into two/three parts. First, the inter-communal relationship between Sikh, Hindu, and Muslims in Okara has been discussed during the British rule in India (Saif, personal correspondence, 2021). Second, Then the border making between India and Pakistan in the Punjab region generally and the Okara district specifically has been discussed because the communal violence between Muslims, Sikhs and Hindus in Punjab has reached its peak at the time of announcement of 3rd June Plan (Ahmed, 2012; Ali, 2020; Jamil, 2018). Thirdly, the relationship between the local (Farooq, personal communication, 2021) and the migrant in Okara (Akhtar, personal communication, 2021) has been focused .It is argued in the study that in Pre-Partition Punjab the identity was derived on the basis of locality in Okara, but at the time of Partition of Punjab, and the creation of India and Pakistan, the identity was constructed on the basis of religion, the basis of identity again became localized when the refugees arrived in Okara and the tensions surfaced between refugees and locals

Before the Partition, there was a predominant population of Sikhs in Okara city. They were mostly merchants. They used to purchase the vegetables from the rural areas and then sold

them in markets of Okara city. There used to be one Gurdwara, one Church, and two Mandir which represent the multicultural composition of population in Okara city before the Partition of Punjab. There was only one Mosque in Okara Railway station which was constructed to facilitate the Muslim passengers (Saif, personal communication, 2021). Even the rural areas were also predominantly populated by the Sikhs. Most of the agricultural lands were allotted to those who were serving in the military of British India (Singh, 2021).

At the time of Partition of Punjab, the Sikh population of Okara migrated to the Eastern Punjab, India. On the other hand, the Muslim population from East Punjab migrated to West Punjab. However, the arrival of the Muslim population in Okara did not mean that the identity based on Islam brought cohesion among the local and the migrants. Pakistan was created on the name of the Islam. It was contemplated by the Muslim leaders that the force of religion Islam would bring unity among the migrants and the local population. But the empirical reality was different from the expectation of the people.

In 1947, the Partition of the Indian sub-continent compelled people to leave their homelands. As a result of which almost 12 to 14.5 million people migrated crossing the nascent demarcated border between India and Pakistan. When Pakistan came into being there were two wings of Pakistan. Migrants came to West Pakistan from the region of United Province, Princely States, Delhi, and East Punjab. On the other hand, Migrants also came to the Eastern Wing of Pakistan from East Bengal. On the other hand, the migrants left West Punjab, Sindh, NWFP, and Bahawalpur for India. (Ali, 2020).

It has become difficult for both India and Pakistan to bear the burden of the refugees and to provide safety to the migrants who are crossing the borders from both sides. Pakistan coordinated with India and the British and established Punjab Boundary Force PBF) in July 1947, but it was unable to control the violence in the border regions and the trains still came full of corpses. To provide security to the refugees the Military Evacuation Organization (MEO) was established in September of 1947 (Jamil, 2018; Ali, 2019). By the year 1948, both India and Pakistan decided to close their respective border on the region of Punjab to stop the flow of refugees. Finally, Liaqat Ali Khan, Prime Minister of Pakistan and, Jawaharlal Nehru, Prime Minister of India signed pact in 1950. Under this pact the minorities in each country was granted equal citizenship rights (Ahmed, 2012; Ali, 2020).

In this manner, the refugees became the citizens of Pakistan (Ahmed, 2012; Ali, 2019). The refugees were settled in the nearby bordering districts of Pakistani Punjab so that they could return to their homelands once the conditions become normal, but the settlement of the border made it clear to the refugees that they are not going to return to East Punjab, they must stay in Pakistani Punjab (Virdee, 2018). When the border was settled the definition of the community again became localized and the community of residence again came into being in Okara (Ansari, 2015).

Many of the migrants came to Okara city due to the employment opportunities that it offered at that time. There was a cotton mill Birla group of industries. They used to manufacture clothes and towels. It was due to this reason that many people who arrived in Lahore city travelled to Okara city due to the overcrowding of Lahore from refugees arriving from Eastern Punjab (Azhar, personal communication, 2021). The refugee was concentrated on the cities

because it provided employment opportunities in different factories, mills, and small business. Hence, the city of Lahore, Sialkot, Gujranwala, Kasur, Shiekpura, Gujrat, Lyallpur (Faisalabad) (Talbot, 2007; Chatta, 2009; Jamil, 2018), and Okara were concentrated with the refugees (Saif, personal communication, 2021). The employment opportunity also decreased in this manner. The Government of Pakistan was unable to pay more attention to the refugee rehabilitation in Okara. The refugees faced food, shelter, water, and clothing shortage when they came to Pakistani Punjab from Indian Punjab (Akhtar, personal communication, 2021)

As soon as the number of refugees increased in Okara. The tensions between locals and refugees started to develop. The locals started to construct the identity of the migrants as uncivilized (Saif, 2021), and the migrants started to construct the identity of the locals as uncivilized (Azhar, 2021). For the locals the migrants have taken away their resources. The migrants have broken the locks of the evacuee property and assumed the possession by force on which the locals laid their claims (Saif, 2021). On the other hand, the migrants also accused the locals of taking over the evacuee property. They accused that the locals have bribed the patwari and forcefully assumed the possession of the houses (Azhar, 2021). In this manner, a unified community of locals and migrants did not come into being after the migrants arrived in Okara city.

However, neither the Punjabi culture nor the Islam proved to be a combining force between the migrants and the local Muslims in Okara. The migrants established their neighborhoods on the name of their ancestral villages in Eastern Punjab. The migrants usually marry within the migrated community and the locals marry within the local community (Saif, personal communication, 2021; Azhar, personal communication, 2021). In this manner, the

community based on residence reemerged in Okara after the Punjab border was settled between India and Pakistan.

1.2 Significance of the Study

The existing literature on the Partition and migration in Punjab could be broadly divided into two categories. The first category of the literature discusses general issues of violence, settlement, gender, and refugee's crisis without any regional focus in Punjab (Ali, 2020; Ali, 2019; Jamil, 2018; Ahmed, 2012). The second category of literature has adopted a regional focus to discuss the impact of Partition and border making on the socio-economic dynamics of Punjab. The regional focus has adopted a comparative perspective whether it is the comparison of the city of East Punjab and the West Punjab (Virdee, 2019; Talbot, 2007) or the comparison between the cities of the West Punjab (Chatta, 2009).

In the present study the Okara has been selected as the locale of the research study. The Okara city has been selected because of the developed market that it has achieved from the British period that attracted many of the migrants at the time of the Partition. Most of the population of the Okara was composed of Sikhs and the Hindus and the Muslims were in minority.

Moreover, instead of discussing the high politics that was surrounding the Partition and the border making of Punjab has not been discussed in the present research rather the focus of the present research is on the identity construction by the migrants and the locals in the Post-Partition period in Okara city. The Okara city has not been discussed in the existing literature with reference to Partition and border making. The research has only been conducted with a Marxist

lens that discusses the relationship of the peasant and the military in the military farms of Okara in the post-partition period (Akhtar, 2006; Murphy, 2013).

1.3 Statement of the Problem

This research has contributed to the existing literature on Partition of Punjab and the migration from Eastern Punjab to Western Punjab. Hitherto no study has been conducted to study the impact of Partition and Border making in Okara. This study is significant in the manner that it has included the experience of the migrants , and locals at the time of Partition and Border making in Okara. This study argues that the definition of community was based was based on the local level in Okara before the Partition of the Punjab was announced The Hindus, Sikhs, and the Muslims were living in peace and harmony in Okara city (Singh, personal communication, 2021; Farooq, personal communication, 2021; Saif, personal communication; Kumar, personal communication, 2021)..

However, when the 3rd of June Plan was announced the definition of community was changed (Jamil, 2018; Ahmed, 2012; Ali, 2019). Pakistan was created on name of Islam, so every Muslim in India became part of that community. In this way (Ansari, 2015), the Muslims migrated to West Punjab. Although the international border was demarcated between India and Pakistan in the Punjab region by British, but the border was not settled due to the exchange of population. In 1950, Liaqat Ali khan and Nehru signed a pact according to which the border was closed, and the minorities were given status of citizen by India and Pakistan (Ali, 2020).

In this manner, the definition of the community based on Muslim nation was replaced by the community of residence again. Neither Islam nor the Punjabi culture was able to become combining force between locals and the migrants, rather the migrants married in their own community and maintained their own separate neighborhood (Saif, personal communication, 2021). In this way, this research has

contributed to the existing literature by bringing to the forefront the experiences of the local and migrant at the time of Partition and border making in Okara.

1.4 Research Questions

- How Partition affects the lives of the people living in the borderland region of Okara in Punjab?
- How did the migrants experience the border making at the time of Partition in Okara?
- How did the migrated people assimilate with the local people in Okara?

1.5 Aims and Objectives of the Study

- To see the impact of border making at the time of Partition on the lives of the people in Okara.
- To analyze the experience of the migrated people at the time of Partition in Okara.
- To analyze the assimilation of the migrants with the local population.

1.6 Literature Review

The literature review has been divided into two broader categories of literature. In the first category the general pattern in Partition of Punjab has been discussed (Ali, 2020; Ali, 2019; Jamil, 2018; Ahmed, 2012). In the second category, the literature with regional focus has been selected (Talbot, 2007; Chatta, 2009; Virdee, 2018).

1.6.1 General Patterns in Partition of Punjab

Rabia Umar Ali (2019) has written another article on the Partition of Punjab, “Reshaping identities: Migration, dislocation, and the trauma of Refugees in the Punjab, 1947”, discusses the steps taken by the governments of India and Pakistan to bring an end to the violence that has

been erupted at the time of the Partition of the Punjab. The author argues that the governments of the India and Pakistan were unable to avoid the violence at the time of the Partition of the Punjab.

The identity was constructed at that time based on the religion due to which the those who belonged to other religion was killed. In this way the Hindus and Sikhs were killing the Muslims. The issues of the women at the time of the Partition have also been highlighted by the author. The military evacuation organization was created so that India and Pakistan station their troops in the border to avoid the killings of the people.

In 1950, Liaqat Ali Khan, the Prime Minister of Pakistan, and Nehru, the Prime Minister of Pakistan signed a pact for the security and the rights of the minorities. This pact made sure that the minorities in each state would have complete equality in terms of citizenship. In this manner the author explains the journey of the migrants first as refugees and then a citizen.

The author has discussed the high politics between the newly created states of Pakistan and India. The author has not considered the regional dynamics rather the focus has been placed by the author on the general pattern of the migration and the refugee's crisis. The author has not considered the regional dynamics at the time of the Partition of the Punjab. For instance, Pipa Virdee (2018) has mentioned that there was no incident of violence in the princely state of Malerkotla in East Punjab.

It is not to deny that the focus should not be placed on the violence rather it is argued that the exceptional situations at the time of the Partition should also need to consider. The author has not considered on the construction of the identity by the state, the construction of

the identity by the locals and the migrants or refugees. The present research study would fill the gap by focusing on the construction of the identity by the locals and the migrants in the city of Okara at the time of the Partition of Punjab. The regional focus has also been missing in the research.

However, the research is significant for the present research because it informs about the border making in Punjab. The present study is focusing on the border making in Okara, it is necessary to have a general picture of the border making in Punjab to analyze the local differences and commonalities from the general pattern. The present research study would fill the gap by focusing on the construction of the identity by the locals and the migrants in the city of Okara at the time of the Partition of Punjab.

Busharat Elahi Jamil (2018) in his study, "Miseries of the West Punjab (1947-1955): Moment of Truth", discusses the role of Government of Pakistan in tackling the issues related to the influx of the refugees into West Punjab from East Punjab. The author has not selected any locale for the discussion of the government initiative to tackle the issues of the refugees. The author mostly relies on the archival data for making his argument.

The author argues that the government of Pakistan faced a difficulty to deal with the accommodation, facilitation, settlement, and rehabilitation of refugees. The Punjab Boundary commission was established to control the law-and-order situation prevailing. However, the Punjab boundary commission has failed to control the situation. The Military evacuation organization was also established to control the situation on the border of Punjab between India

and Pakistan. The economic pressures originating from the settlement and rehabilitation of refugees has given rise to many social, fiscal, and political suffering of the West Punjab.

The author has provided a description of the steps that the government of Pakistan and India has taken to resolve the problems of the refugees across the border. However, Busharat Elahi Jamil (2018) has adopted the same perspective to study the Partition of Punjab as Rabia Umar Ali (2019) has adopted in her study. Jamil also discusses the Partition problems of the refugees from the vantage point of high politics. He mostly relies on the official archival data for making his argument. The official account of the rehabilitation of the refugees is useful for the present research but it has three gaps that the present research would fill.

Firstly, the official account that the author has taken do not consider the opinion of the migrants who migrated at that time to the Punjab. Secondly, the locals have not been discussed while conducting the problem of the refugee rehabilitation. Thirdly, the regional focus has not been the priority of the author. This study would take the in-depth study of the situation which was prevailing in Okara city with reference to the migrants and the locals. The focus has been placed on the experiences of the locals and the migrants.

Ishtiaq Ahmed (2012) in his study, "The Punjab Bloodied, Partitioned, and Cleansed" discusses the conflicts and contradictions originating among the leaders of Hindus, Sikhs, and Muslims at the time of Partition of Punjab specifically and India generally. The author has selected the regions of Lahore, Multan, and Rawalpindi areas from West Punjab and Amritsar and Jullundur from East Punjab. The author has collected archival data from the secret fortnightly

report of British, Partition papers, and newspaper. In addition to the archival data the author has also conducted oral histories.

The author has adopted the framework of ethnic cleansing for discussing the violence of the Partition. The author has argued that the people in Punjab were living in harmony with each other without any prejudice or discrimination based on religion in the beginning of 1947. But as soon as the Partition was announced. The ethnic cleaning was initiated by Hindus, Sikhs, and Muslims against each other. The author has elaborated this argument through conducting the research from the January of 1947 to December of 1947. Moreover, the study has also discussed the questions of individual and collective identity in the context of Partition of Punjab.

The author has taken a wide sample for his study in which the major regions of East and West Punjab has been discussed. But the focus of the author is on the temporal period of the 1947 and ethnic cleansing. The author has covered the migration on the eve of the Partition of the Punjab in different phases from January to December 1947.

The author has not dwelled into the discussion of the experiences of the refugees or the locals in Punjab. The author has discussed the oral histories from Montgomery district which is the old name of Okara city. But the focus of the author is on the ethnic cleansing and violence, and he did not discuss the time after the 1947, when the border making process was on going and the identities were shaping. The literature is important for providing the background of the present study.

1.6.2 Comparative Regional Focus in Partition of Punjab

Although the trend towards the regional focus in the Partition literature of Punjab has assumed momentum. Ian Talbot (2007) has conducted the seminal work in the comparative study of Amritsar and Lahore at the time of Partition. Ilyas Chatta (2009) conducted the comparative study of the cities of Sialkot and Gujranwala. Pipa Virdee (2018) conducted the comparative study of Lyallpur (present day Faisalabad city of Pakistan) and Ludhiana and Malerkotla from Indian Punjab.

However, no one has attempted to conduct the study of the Okara city at the Partition of Punjab. The studies that have been conducted on Okara has adopted a Marxist perspective to discuss the peasant struggle against the military authority in Okara military farms (Akhtar, 2006; Murphy, 2013). This study is aimed to fill this gap in the existing literature by conducting an oral history of the survivors of Partition in Okara city. The thematic focus has been placed on the experiences of the refugees and the locals at the time of Partition of the Punjab, and consequently the construction of the identity by refugees and the locals.

Ian Talbot (2007) in his article, "A Tale of two cities: The Aftermath of Partition for Lahore and Amritsar 1947-1957", discusses the impact of the Partition on the cities of Lahore and Amritsar. The author has divided the studies into three parts. In the first part the author discusses the damages that happened in Lahore and Amritsar and the steps taken for the rebuilding of the two cities. In this part the author discusses the functioning of the Amritsar improvement trust and the Lahore improvement trust in rebuilding the two cities.

In the second part the reasons due to which there has been little tensions between locals and migrants in Amritsar and Lahore in comparison to the case of Karachi and Calcutta. In the

end of the article the author discusses the steps taken by the government to restore the commercial activity in Lahore and Amritsar.

The author has conducted a seminal comparative analysis of the Lahore and Amritsar with reference to the Partition of Punjab. The article is useful for the analysis of the relationship of refugees and locals in the context of the Okara city. This is because the Okara city is also located on the borderlands with India in the same way as Lahore and Amritsar has been located.

The author has argued that the tension between the locals and the migrants were less in Amritsar and Lahore if compared to the case of Calcutta and Karachi. It is also relevant for the case of Okara where the tensions between locals and migrants have not achieved the shape of violent politics, but it did not mean that the friction between locals and migrants did not exist on non-violent level, rather the identity construction by locals has made the migrants as other and vice versa. Ian Talbot (2007) has mostly relied on the official archival sources in his study, this study would use the oral history methodology to bring the experiences of the migrants and locals of Okara city at the time of Partition to the forefront.

Ilyas Ahmed Chatha (2009) in his dissertation, “ Partition and its aftermath: Violence, Migration and the role of refugees in the socio-economic development of Gujranwala and Sialkot, 1947-61” discusses the violence, migration, and resettlement in Gujranwala and Sialkot, Pakistan. The author has selected Gujranwala and Sialkot as locale of the study due to two reasons. Firstly, most of the violence was experienced in Gujranwala and Sialkot. Secondly, more Hindus and Sikhs migrated from these cities to East Punjab. The archival data is collected from census report,

budget report, revenue report, district police first information report, transfer of power papers, and the newspapers.

The author argues that the violence at the eve of Partition was not motivated by the cultural or religious reasons rather the violence was political in nature. Moreover, the author discusses the problems of findings accommodation and employment by the refugees. The role of the refugees and locals in building the economies of the two cities has been discussed. The commercial classes were mainly composed of Hindus and the Sikhs who migrated to East Punjab. However, the development of the economies of the two cities were not mainly due to the refugees rather it was due to the developments that took place during the British period. The two cities have inherited a developed market from the colonial period.

In Okara city, the same demographic composition existed before the Partition of Punjab as it existed in Sialkot and Gujranwala. In Okara city, most of the commercial classes belonged mostly from the Sikh community and the Hindus. The Muslim composed minority population. The Okara city also inherited the developed market from the colonial period which is evident from the Montgomery District Gazetteer and the oral history that has been conducted for the sake of present research study. However, Ilyas Chatta has discussed mostly the socio-economic development of the Sialkot and the Gujranwala from the Pre-Partition period to post-Partition period. This study would focus on the experiences of the locals and the migrants at the time of Partition and border making in Okara with a focus on the construction of the identity by the locals and the migrants.

Pipa Virdee (2018) in her study, "From the Ashes of 1947: Reimagining Punjab " compares Ludhiana From East Punjab, India, and Lyallpur (Faisalabad) from West Punjab, Pakistan. A Muslim princely state of Malerkotla has also been selected by the author. The reason for the selection of the two localities that is Ludhiana and Lyallpur was because of the economic progress that these two cities experienced after 1947. Malerkotla on the other hand was selected because it was a haven for the Muslims .

In Malerkotla no event of violence was recorded. In addition to it, the experiences of the women have also been included in the study. The case study method and oral history method was used in the study for the sake of data collection. The author revisits Punjab Partition and the violence that the people experiences, and the divided and displaced Punjabi Lives. The author then focusses on the Partition of the Panjabiyat identity, and the creation of new identities based on the religion. Those who migrated became citizens from the status of the refugees.

The author has discussed the socio-economic development of the Faisalabad in West Punjab and Ludhiana and Malerkotla in East Punjab. Pipa Virdee (2018) has also selected these cities for comparison due to the socio-economic progress these cities achieved in post-Partition period, this is like the analysis of Ilyas Chatta, who have conducted the study of the socio-economic progress in post-Partition period in Sialkot and Gujranwala. Moreover, the transformation of the identity of the migrants from being refugees to citizens that Pipa Virdee (2018) has discussed is also like the discussion of Rabia Umar Ali (2019) of the conversion of the refugees into citizens.

However, the author has not considered the case of the Okara city. In addition to it the author has not focused on the development of the relationship of the Locals and the migrants in Okara city. On the other hand, Pipa Virdee (2018) has emphasized on the Partition of the identity of Punjabiya at the time of the Partition of the Punjab. In this study it is argued that the identity created based on the religion was not sustained in the post-Partition period and the differences started to surface between the locals and migrants in Okara city soon after the migrants reached in Okara city.

1.7 Theoretical Framework

Sarah Ansari (2005) in her book, "Life after Partition: Migration, Community and Strife in Sindh 1947-1962" has discussed the tensions between the communities in Sindh generally and in Karachi specifically after the Partition of British India. Her work provides significant analytical tools for Punjab as well.

She suggested two types of community that are community based on interests and the community based on territory. The community based on geography is based on the concept of shared residence. The people share the sentiments of community because they share the residence geographically. But in the case of community of interest, it is different. The community of interest is geographically dispersed and did not share the residence. Hence, the independence movement was based on the community of interest. However, soon after the independence it changed to community of place.

The permutation of community attributes which subsequently applied (once independence had been achieved) to the majority of Indian Muslims turned

Pakistanis was different to the set that had been accepted as common currency by large numbers of them in the period leading up to August 1947 (Ansari, 2005, 3)

Ansari argues that the community is constructed symbolically in which the meaning is embedded. The meaning that is signified in the symbols is used for the construction of the identity. Ansari stressed on the definition of the borders in constructing the identity of the community. She said that the borders discriminate the community from other people.

In other words, people construct community symbolically, making it a resource and a repository of meaning, and a referent of their identity. Indeed the potential for community identity to be constructed around certain symbols.....yet, from whatever source community identity is derived, the consensus remains that the definition of the boundaries or borders, which serve to discriminate the community from other places and groups is crucial to the whole process (Ansari, 2005, 6-7).

In this manner, Ansari explained that the community of interest that was created perceived themselves as Pakistanis when Pakistan came into being. The set of people who were migrating from the Indian regions to Pakistan perceived themselves as Pakistani in the same way as the people who were already living in the region that became Pakistan perceived themselves as Pakistanis.

Muslims leaving India for Pakistan at perceived themselves as "Pakistani"
[emphasis in original] just as much as it did to the Muslims who already lived there.

This not, unexpectedly complicated the whole issue of their settlement. They presumed themselves to be there not by kind humanitarian invitation but by right, and those who received them were equally expected to be bound by duty to make that reception as positive as possible (Ansari, 2005, 10).

For Ansari the nationalist sentiments which were rampant during the independence movement was changed when the borders were drawn between India and Pakistan. The tribal, ethnic, and the religious based identity re-emerged after the Partition. Pakistan was failed to maintain national unity which is evident from the separation of the East Pakistan. In her study of the Karachi city, she argues that when Sindh became part of Bombay, the Hindus has started to migrate to Karachi to find commercial opportunities.

The growth in the business of Hindus has given rise to communalism in Sindh. The Muslims has started to gather animosity against the Hindus. But the creation of Pakistan has compelled the Hindus to leave Sindh. The migrated community of Urdu speaking from Delhi, United Province, and Gujrat started to form their community in Karachi, and Hyderabad. Then the politics changed into migrant and local. In this way the Sindhi nationalism emerged (Ansari, 2005).

In the similar manner the case of Punjab could also be seen through the conceptual framework of community that Sarah Ansari has constructed for the study of Karachi city. But there is a difference of demographic change that is experienced by Punjab comparatively to the case of Sindh. Sindh was not Partitioned at the time of Partition and Punjab was Partitioned due to which the large number of Sikh and Hindu population moved from West Punjab to East Punjab

while the Muslim population moved from East Punjab to West Punjab. In this way, in Punjab the demographic change was much larger compared to the case of Sindh.

In Okara there were large number of Sikh and Hindu population which migrated to the Indian Punjab, while the Muslim population migrated to Okara city from different regions of Indian Punjab. In the case of Sindh in post-Partition period the Sindhi nationalism emerged due to the distribution of the resources among the migrant population.

In the similar way the sense of community of locals and migrants also emerged in the Okara in the wake of the Partition and the border making. The locals started to construct the migrants as other who are taking over their resources, on the other hand the migrants also started to construct the locals as other who are taking over the resources. In this manner the community of territory was reemerged in Okara soon after the Partition took place. No longer the community of interests, which was constructed at the time of Partition, served to be the cause of the bonding between the locals and the migrants survived in Punjab as well

1.8 Research Methodology

1.8.1 Research Design.

The research starts from the oral history of the migrant and the local population of Okara. Initially the interview guide that is constructed from reviewing the secondary data will be used to conduct the oral history of the people. The similarities and differences between the respondent's story and the interview guide will be evaluated and the interview guide will be improvised. After the collection of data, the coding of the collected data will be done for the sake of generating themes

of the study. After coding of the collected data, the analysis of the data will be done by placing it along with the secondary data.

1.8.2 Explanatory Study

The present research study is explanatory study. The explanatory study is built on the exploratory and descriptive study. In the explanatory study the researcher finds the reasons and the explanations for the already explored research area (Neuman, 2014). Partition studies is now an established field in which a lot of research has been done on Punjab along with Sindh, and Bengal. In the present research the focus is on the region of Punjab. Okara has been selected as the locale of the study.

1.8.3 Sampling

In the present research the purposive sampling is used. It is a non- random sampling technique in which the researcher uses methods to locate all possible cases of a highly specific and difficult to reach population (Neuman, 2014). In the present research the purposive sampling technique is used because the people who were selected for oral history are difficult to reach , most of the people who have experienced Partition have died. There is a limited number of the people surviving due to which it is difficult to locate the respondents.

1.8.4 Sample Characteristics

6 Respondents were selected from Okara for the sake of oral history. The sample has been divided based on locals, and migrant. 2 respondents were local, 2 respondent was migrant, and 2 respondents has been migrated to East Punjab in 1947. The sample has been divided based on local and the migrant.

1.8.5 Data Collection

The data for the present research was collected using oral history method. The focus of the oral history is on the memory of the respondents about the past events . The respondents provided the interpretation of the past in the present by remembering the past events. The collective experience of the respondent is analyzed by conducting the interview of an individual. Joanna Bornat (2003) has defined the oral history as,

“Oral history draws on memory and testimony to gain a more complete or different understanding of a past experienced both individually and collectively”

(Bornat, 2003, 35)

The oral history could also be said to have an element of life review in it because the interviewees dwell into recalling their past experiences and they interpret it as per the present conditions (Bornat, 36). In this way, the oral history is subjective in nature because the respondents are not considered just an object of collecting information. The person narrating the story is considered as central to the story that he/she tells. The interviewer and the interviewee both are involved in reproducing the past event (Ahmed, 2012).

The oral history method is concerned with a particular period or specific events in the past. Hence, the oral history allows the researcher to get the knowledge of the socio-cultural context which the interviewee tells about a particular phase of a history. To put it in a different way, the oral history is concerned with the memory of the lived experiences of the respondents with reference to the Partition and border making in Okara (Legard, Keegan, and Ward, 2003).

In this manner, in the present research the focus has been placed on the memory of the Partition and border making in Okara. The oral history method has been selected because the aim of the research is to get the knowledge of the experiences of the migrants and the locals with respect to Partition and border making in Okara.

However, the method of interviewing was in-depth interviewing of the same respondent two or three times to get richer data from one person. An interview guide was prepared before interview three separate interview guides were created one was for conducting the interview of the local person of Okara, one interview guide was for the migrant person in Okara, and one interview guide was for that person who have migrated from Okara to East Punjab. The questions were asked about their place of birth, their religion, and their relationship with other communities before partition of Punjab took place.

The questionnaire for the people who have migrated from Okara to East Punjab was restricted up to the time of their migration. The locals and the migrants were also questioned on the post-Partition period in Okara. The migrants and the locals were asked about the socio-economic conditions and their inter relationship during the border making process in Okara, Punjab.

The interviews were done in an interactive way. This was done to revise the questions of the questionnaire. When the researcher conducts the research in a flexible way the respondents also dig deeper to explain more extra things which might not be relevant for the researcher, but which could lead to something that the researcher has not thought of before (Legard, Keegan, and Ward, 2003).

I belong to the migrated community of Okara. My grandfather migrated from East Punjab in 1947. Although my grandfather has died but he has once introduced me to his friend Rana Azhar who has lot of information regarding the Partition of Punjab and the experiences from which he has been through. When I started thinking about my research project for MPhil dissertation, I came up with an idea to conduct oral history of the people of Okara to get more in-depth knowledge of impact of Partition and border making in Okara.

Hence, I asked Mr. Rana Azhar that I am interested in conducting research on the oral history of Punjab. He gave me a reference of a person in Okara library through which I got archival sources of Okara. Then he introduced me to a WhatsApp group in which the migrated Punjabi from both sides of the border have membership. Rana Azhar was also interviewed by Ishtiaq Ahmed who wrote a book, *Punjab bloodied, Partitioned, and cleansed*, on communal violence in Punjab during the Partition of Punjab. First, I joined that WhatsApp group then I wrote in the group that I am interested in conducting oral history of Okara. Many Sikhs who have migrated from Okara to East Punjab volunteered to give interview to me. In this manner, I was also able to collect the data from across the border. Mr. Rana Azhar also introduced me to a person who has experienced affects of Partition on the Okara.

1.9 Organization of the Study

The first chapter has provided the introduction, background, literature review, theoretical framework, and research methodology adopted for the present study. In the second chapter the history of Okara city has been discussed. The inter-religious or inter-communal relationship between Sikh, Hindu, and the Muslim in Okara Pre-Partitioned Punjab has been focused in

second chapter. In the third chapter the experiences of the locals and the migrants at the time of border making have been discussed. The fourth chapter provides the conclusion of the study which has been divided into three parts: a summary of the study, findings of the study, and the recommendations for the future researchers.

1.10 Limitations

Moreover, the dimension of the gender and the experiences of the women has also not been included in the study. I was unable to collect the data from the women due to the cultural setup of Punjabi villages and cities. The men do not allow their women to talk to the strangers and they are mostly restricted to their homes. In this manner, I was unable to hire a female who could collect data on my behalf. Moreover, the women of that age are usually not technological literate enough to use a mobile phone due to which it was not possible to talk with them on mobile phone.

I was unable to find more people who experienced Partition and border making in Okara whether they are migrants or the locals because many of the people who experienced the Partition of Punjab have died. In this way this study also does not consider the memory of Partition that has been passed to 2nd and the 3rd generation of migrants.

The cultural differences that lead to the difficulties of the assimilation of the migrants in to the locals such as the difference of dialect, diet, or any other cultural practice has not been discussed. Although an attempt is made to open the discussion of cultural differences between locals and migrants in the context of Okara with respect to the marriage pattern among them

The high politics between the state of Pakistan and India has also not been included in the study because the aim of the study was to bring to the forefront the lived experiences of the local and the migrated people in Okara. The focus on the state level politics lead to the ignorance of the ground realities. For instance, the government account mentioned that a Ministry and a commission was created for the rehabilitation of the refugees but the respondents from Okara have rejected this claim of the government. This study was intended to study the politics outside the domain of the state management of a policy. This is because of this reason the priority has been given to the lived experiences of the people in Okara who have experienced Partition whether they are local or migrant.

The politics of remembering Partition in Okara has also not discussed in the present study. There are differences in the way the Partition is remembered officially and how it is remembered by the migrants in Okara, and how it is remembered by locals in Okara, and how this interpretation of the Partition is shaping the identities in present of the migrants and the locals.

Chapter:2

Pre-Partition Inter-Communal Relations in Okara

2.1 Introduction

In this chapter the inter-communal relationship has been discussed in the context of Okara, Punjab from the British period up to the Partition of Punjab in 1947. The major argument of this chapter is that the definition of the community in the context of Okara changed when the Partition Plan of the Indian subcontinent was announced in which the Punjab was to be Partitioned. Before the community identity was constructed based on their locality. The people were known due to their ethnic affiliation, the religion did not play an important role at that time, however, the announcement plan of the Partition of Punjab has changed the basis of identity construction from ethnic affiliation to religion.

The chapter has been divided into four sub-parts. After introduction of the chapter, the socio-economic context of Pre-Partition Okara has been discussed. During the British period the Okara was Tehsil of Montgomery district (Fagan, 1900). Most of the economy was depended on agriculture in Okara.

In 1865, Okara city was also established initially for administrative purposes. In villages mostly Sikh from the British army came as settlers from East Punjab. Muslims also lived mostly in the rural areas. The Hindus were prominent in trade and commerce and even established factories and mills in Okara city (Ahmed, 2012; Saif, personal communication, Kumar, personal communication, 2021; Singh, personal communication, 2021).

The inter-communal relationship has been discussed at the time of British rule in Okara after examining the socio-economic context of Okara. Generally, there was peace and harmony between Sikh, Hindu, and Muslims in Okara. If some tensions emerged between the Muslims and Sikhs, it was resolved without violence (Harinder, personal communication, 2021; Kumar, personal communication, 2021).

In the last section the change in the definition of the community has been discussed from the community of residence which was locality based to community of interests. The community of interests means that the population was not living closer to each other, but they share a common interest. In this way, Muslims of India were not living together when the Partition of Indian sub-continent was decided they were in majority in some regions and minority in other regions. They shared the interest of creating a Muslim state in India (Ansari, 2015). The existing pattern of community in Okara was based on community based on territory their community was symbolized in living together.

As soon as the 3rd June plan was signed the communal violence increased in Punjab. The governor of Punjab warned the viceroy Lord Mountbatten that the conditions in Punjab are going out of hand, but Nehru the Leader of Indian National Congress (INC) has advised viceroy that the massive level migration would not take place. The position of Muhammad Ali Jinnah the leader of the All-India Muslim League (AIML) was also like that of Nehru. But the reality was different, the communal violence increased soon after two or three weeks after Partition of Punjab was done in September of 1947. The British were not prepared to control the violence because they have not anticipated it.

In this manner, it could be seen the role of border making in determining the political identity of the people between two states. The Muslims who were living in India became Pakistani, and the Sikhs and The Hindus who were living in Pakistani Punjab became Indians. Now the Muslims who are living in Pakistani Punjab at the time of the Partition of Punjab are Pakistani in the same manner as the Muslim living in the Eastern Punjab in India. The same applied to the identity of the Hindus and the Sikhs living on both sides of the border (Ansari, 2015).

As the communal violence heightened, it soon engulfed all places including the British military. The Baluch regiment attacked the Sikh army personnel who were migrating with their covey (Harinder, personal communication, 2021) . However, there were also exceptional situations where the Muslims gave protection to the Hindus and even escorted them up to the border (Kumar, personal communication, 2021).

2.2 Socio-Economic Context of Pre-Partition Okara

The Okara was tehsil of Montgomery district. The economy of Okara was predominantly agricultural at the time of the Partition due to project of canal colonization in Punjab. The British has constructed canals in different regions of Punjab. British constructed nine canal colonies in Punjab from 1880s to 1920s in Punjab.

The canal colonies were consisted of Sidhnai, Sohag para, Chunian, Jehlum Chenab, Lower Bari doab, Upper Chenab, Upper Jehlum, and Nili Bar. Montgomery district was part of three canal colonies that were Lower Bari Doab, Nili Bar, and Sidhnai. It is due to this reason that the economy of Montgomery district was pre-dominantly depended on agricultural production (Ali,

1989). However, The British has also established a town in Montgomery district, Okara to administrative purposes.

The Okara was established in 1865 by Blyth, deputy commissioner of Gugera district. The name of the Gugera District was changed to Montgomery at the same time. The name of the district was named after Lieutenant Governor of Punjab Robert Montgomery. The reason for establishing the Town in Montgomery was to link the regions to other regions of Punjab, Sindh and with Delhi,

“Montgomery....lies on the Sindh, Punjab and Delhi Railways between Lahore and Multan” (Montgomery District Gazetteer, 1883-1884, 178).

The British established police-lines, police office, post office, munsif court, session court, jail, dispensary, church, bungalows (for the British population), travelers inn, dispensary and two markets that was Blyth Ganj and Ford Gan in the newly established Okara (Montgomery District Gazetteer, 1883-1884). The market resembled the pattern of the union jack if the aerial view of the market is taken (Saif, personal communication, 2021).

When the Hindus and Sikhs started to settle in Okara a mandir and a Gurdwara was also constructed. In 1892, a mosque was also established in railway station so that the Muslims travellers could pray during their stay in Okara (Saif, personal communication, 2021). But, At the time of establishment of Okara the trade was not flourished, and it only served as the administrative functions,

“The town has little or no trade, and is in fact nothing but the headquarters of the district staff” (Montgomery District Gazetteer, 1883-1884, 178).

However, when the Hindus and Sikhs started to settle in Montgomery town the trade and commercial activities started to flourish. The Hindus also established factories and mills in Montgomery (Ahmed, 2012).

2.2.1 Sikhs

The total population of the Sikhs and Hindus comprised of 28 percent in Montgomery (Ahmed). Many Sikhs were given agricultural lands in Montgomery canal colony. The personnel from British army were allotted land in the Montgomery canal colony. But Muslims and Sikhs who served in British army were given land there. However, the villages were communally divided, the Muslims lived in separate village vis-à-vis the Sikhs in Okara. At the time of the Partition the Sikhs left the area and migrated to East Punjab in India

Harinder Singh belonged to the Montgomery canal colony, and he migrated to Hoshiarpur in East Punjab. His father was Havildar in British army. In 1921, the British army allotted his father land in village 4 Chak 1R/A in Okara. Harinder Singh was born in 1936 in Okara. He was in 4th grade when the Partition of Punjab was announced in 1947. Most of the villages in Montgomery canal colony was predominantly populated by the Sikhs.

There were five villages in which the land was allotted to the British army personnel. There was just one village of the Muslim army personnel, 2 Chak, out of 4 villages, 1 Chak, 3 Chak, and 5 Chak of the Sikh. The two non-military villages, 7 Chak and 9 Chak belonged to the indigenous population of the Muslims known as *Janglee* (Singh, personal communication, 2021).

2.2.2 Janglee (Muslims)

Imran Ali has mentioned in his book, *Punjab under Imperialism: 1885-1947* that the indigenous nomadic tribes of Punjab who used to practice shifting agriculture along with the cattle rearing were known as Janglee in Punjab (Ali, 1989). Michael R. Dove (1992) has argued that the word Jangal which is used for Forest in Pakistan is erroneous because the word Jangal has its word in the Sanskrit word Jangala which means a savanna.

The earlier nomadic pastoralist practiced the shifting agriculture and converted the forest into grasslands in Punjab, but the onset of the British rule has changed this and the land use for agriculture was increased, and forest were cleared. The British also changed the meaning of Jangala to Jangal to denote a negative connotation of something bad or undesirable. In this way, British promoted the settled agriculture by changing the meaning of the word Jangala .

Initially when the British was colonizing the lands and extending their control in Punjab the Janglee resisted the expansion of British authority in their regions. There used to be a thick forest in the Montgomery region where these nomadic tribes used to wander and exercised control. They also rebelled against the British authority in 1857 mutiny. It is evident from the mutiny records of 1857 that the Janglee people resisted the expansion of the British authority in Googira (old name of Montgomery),

“Matters proceeded thus smoothly until the 17th of Septmeber, when the Googira Bar tribes, many of whom graze their flocks in this district, rose and according to a preconcerted plan attacked and plundered almost all the small police posts situated in the Jungle Bar,.... I may here mention that these police chowkees are, with one

exception, mere open sheds guarded by three to four Burkundazes, and consequently incapable of defence” (Mutiny Report Record, 1911, 2:37)

The British established their control through clearing the forest in Montgomery, Googira, and extended agriculture through construction of the canals. Initially there was resistance from the indigenous Janglee Muslims. They also resisted the immigrants to be settled in the newly constructed canal colonies. Later, the Janglee were also settled by the British when the canal was constructed by the British. They were also allotted lands in the canal colonies under the name of Janglee and settled them (Ali, 1979).

2.2.3 Hindus

The Hindus were associated mostly with the occupation of trade, commerce, and some of them have also established factories and mills in Okara. However, the trade and commerce started to flourish with the arrival of the Hindus and Sikh in the town. There used to be markets of fruits, vegetables, and other eatable crops like wheat in Okara. The vendor used to purchase the items from the agriculturalist and farmers and then they used to bring it to the market of the Montgomery town. The merchants were consisted of primarily Sikh or the Hindus.

Birla, who was a famous Hindus industrialist of British India, established their factory in Okara. The factory used to manufacture the clothes and towels. It was considered as the largest cotton mill of South Asia at that time. Many people came to Okara to work in that mill. The Birla cotton mill also established the residential area for the local Christian laborers which means that

there were also the population of Christians in Okara, but it was not considerable as compared to Hindus and Sikhs. (Saif, personal communication, 2021).

2.3 Inter-Communal Relationship in Okara

Generally, the inter-communal relationship in Okara during the British period were not violent (Ahmed, 2012). The Hindus, Sikhs and Muslims lived side by side with each other in peace and harmony. If there was dispute or conflict between any group of people, it was not severe to the extent that it would become violence (Talbot, 2007). This is evident from the presence of two mandirs and one gurdwara, along with masjid in Okara (Saif, 2021, personal communication, 2021).

The identity at that time was not constructed based on the religion. The identity at that time was constructed based on the shared residence or the shared territory in Okara. To put it in another way, the common interest of the people was dependent on their living together in a specific territory. In this section the minor tensions and harmony between Sikh, Hindus, and Muslim in Okara has been discussed.

Janglee Muslim were known for the profession of cattle lifting in Montgomery district. Until 1856, The British was unable to establish their control in the forest region in which the Janglee were more powerful. (General Report on the Administration of the Punjab Territories, 1854-55 and 1855-56). The Janglee Muslim lived mostly in the Nili Bar regions of Montgomery district. Although the police station was established in the Bar regions of the Montgomery district, but the cattle theft was not controlled in those regions. The *thanadars* (police station officer), were not able to exercise their control in the Nili Bar regions,

“The thanadars seldom went outside their stations...as they were quite helpless without the assistance of the local zaildar and could not even get speech with the nomad graziers”. (General Report on the Administration of the Punjab Territories, 1854-55 and 1855-56, 11)

In this way the British was compelled to accept the authority of the tribal chief of the Janglee Muslims. After the 1860s, the British to devolve power to local influential introduced the position of zaildar. The zaildars were those local influential who assisted the British in revenue collection, settlement work and law enforcement in the territorial limitations (Roseberry, 1988).

Hence, the British incorporated the Janglee Muslims by giving their tribal chief an official position in the administration of the region. The local chief of the Janglee was locally known as *Rat* at that time. It was impossible for the British to control the region under the *Rat* without making compromise with the *Rat*. In this way British make *Rat* zaildar of their respective locality. The *Rat* was given power to assist the police in their respective locality.

In this way it could be seen that the community that existed at that in Punjab was based on the shared interest based on living together. The Janglee also lived together and resisted the foreign rule of the British who has established their rule in their locality.

In this way the Janglee Muslims did not accept the authority of the British easily. However, when the Janglee Muslims were brought by British in the settled agriculture by allotting them agricultural lands the continued their profession of cattle lifting. The example of Harinder Singh

has been discussed below who first the example of Harinder Singh who lived in the rural regions of Okara.

However, the villages were divided based on communal affiliation of the people. There were separate village of the Muslims and the Sikhs. Harinder Singh's Bull was stolen by the Janglee Muslims from another village. He went to recover his stolen animal to the Janglee Muslims. First the Janglee Muslims refused then they agreed to give him back the animal,

My bull was stolen by the people from Janglee Muslim village. The village was located on the bank of the river Ravi, when I went to their dera with my brother, the *Janglee* said to me that the bull is tied there take it with you if you are enough courageous. However, we requested the man to show some mercy and give us our bull back, then when he satisfied that I am not challenging his authority he agreed (Harinder Singh, personal communication, 2021).

In this example Harinder Singh has referred to their village as the village "*on the bank of the river Ravi*", which means that there existed the community of residence at that time in Punjab he is not referring the *Janglee* as the Muslim, rather he is using just the word of *Janglee* that has been introduced by the British to criminalize the non-agricultural based economy in Punjab.

In this manner, the meaning of *Janglee* that Harinder Singh is communicating is based on the British construction of the word *Janglee*. The British was promoting agriculture due to which the British has criminalized other economic pursuits like shifting agriculture and nomadism. It is due to this reason that British has misused the word Jangala which means savanna into Janglee the wasteland. The Janglee word as interpreted by British become popular

by the 20th century (Dove, 1992). It is still used for the local population in present day Okara (Azhar, personal communication, 2021)

The second example of peace and harmony in inter-communal relationship before Partition is the story of one Hindu, Rakesh kumar, who lived in Okara before the Partition took place. He was born in Okara. His maternal grandfather belonged to Lahore. His grandfather was a doctor and served in Punjab civil medical service. His grandfather settled in Okara in 1932. During his stay in Okara, his grandfather opened a clinic and attended the patients without any charges. His father treated everyone equally without any discrimination based on religion or caste,

“He opened a clinic in Okara where he asked his dispenser Hari das to keep a box on his reception table and never ask anyone about money, just leave this to the patients and their attendants it is up to them how much they could contribute in promotion of this cause” (Kumar, personal communication, 2021).

There is another example of a Hindu petty shop keeper, Arjun Arora, who used to have three Muslim employees with him. He was born in 1899 in Okara. Interestingly, he was a Hindu, but he lived in the village where the Muslims were in majority. He mentioned that there was one more Hindu family in that village and one Sikh family all the other were Muslims. In the nearby villages of Muslims their relatives lived. In this way, Arjun and other Hindus were living between the Muslims in some villages of Okara in harmony,

I never charged more money from my Muslim customers, I also sold them the best available items. They were nice to me, and the elders usually treated me like their own son. (Arora, personal communication, 2021).

2.4 From Community of Residence to Community of Interest

However, the conditions were not to remain the same as soon as the Partition plan of Punjab was announced by the British in June 1947. The British Prime Minister Attlee has announced in February 1947 that India would be given independence by the June of 1948 (Ali, 2019). As soon as the Partition plan was announced the violence in the Punjab started to assume momentum.

On 3rd June 1947, Lord Mountbatten the last viceroy of British India announced the Partition of the Indian sub-continent after getting approval of the local political leaders of British India. It was decided under the 3rd June plan that the Punjab and the Bengal provinces were to be Partitioned. The departing British government formed a boundary commission for determining the borders between India and Pakistan in the provinces of Punjab and Bengal.

Sir Cyril Radcliff was appointed as the chairman of both the boundary commission of Bengal and Punjab. In Punjab boundary commission the representatives were present from the Sikh, Hindu, and Muslim community. Justice Meher Chand Mahajan was the Hindu member, Justice Teja Singh, and Justice Munir.

The Partition of the Punjab was done based on the distribution of the population of Hindus, Sikhs, and Muslims in the districts of Punjab. The census of 1941 was used to determine the Muslim majority districts and Hindu and Sikh majority regions in West and East Punjab. As per the statistical information of the census report of 1941 the Muslim comprised almost 56.95%

of the total population in Punjab. On the other hand, the Hindus consisted of 26.52 %. And Sikhs were 13.48% (Jamil, 2018).

The British as well as the political leaders of India particularly Muhammad Ali Jinnah from All India Muslim League (AIML) and Jawaharlal Nehru from All India National Congress (INC) have not anticipated that the announcement of the Partition Plan of Punjab would bring so much bloodshed. Up to the August of 1947, both Jinnah and Nehru were unaware that a migration would take place in Punjab on a massive level (Pandey, 2001).

At that time the governor of Punjab was Sir Evan Jenkins. He warned the viceroy of India Lord Mountbatten that the conditions would lose control in Punjab, but the viceroy has not paid attention to his warnings because Nehru has assured the viceroy that such massive migration would not take place in Punjab (Spunner, 2017).

In this manner, by the September of 1947, almost 200,000 thousand refugees were crossing the border from both directions of India and Pakistan in Punjab, and both the newly established India and Pakistan were not prepared to handle the situation because the leaders of both countries had confidence that such a large-scale migration would not take place (Pandey, 2001). Soon, the violence erupted all over Punjab and the people started to leave their homes and migrate. Rabia Umar Ali has narrated the incident of violence at the time of Partition in Punjab in the following words,

“In the specific case of Punjab the widespread violence and the death of half a million people, abduction and sexual assault, arson and looting, trauma of both the mental and physical type became a common phenomenon” (Ali, 2020, 211)

Interestingly, all the political forces in Punjab were sponsoring the violence at the time of Partition of Punjab. Whether they were from AIML, INC or Akali party of the Sikhs. The governor of Punjab Sir Evan Jenkins has written a letter to the viceroy Lord Mountbatten that the political parties are sponsoring the violent activities (Ali, 2019).

In this manner, on the one hand the leader of INC Nehru was advising the viceroy that such a migration would not take place and Jinnah is also not anticipating such huge transfer of population but at the same time they were the ones who were also sponsoring the violence at the time of Partition. Ishtiaq Ahmed (2012) has also argued that it was the political leaders in Punjab who were responsible for the genocide in Punjab,

“Placing this study in the context of the Partition of India, the dynamics of the Partition of the Punjab are identified primarily as conflicts and contradiction emanating among the leaders of, on the one hand, Hindus and Sikhs, and on the other, Muslims” (Ahmed, 2012, xii).

In this manner all the political forces in Punjab were involved in the promotion of the communal disturbances at the time of the Partition of Punjab. Ilyas Chatta (2013) have also put the responsibility of Muslim separatism on the elite power politics. The impact of the Partition was not felt by the political leaders or the departing British leaders, rather the social impact of Partition was on the local poor population of Punjab. As Rabia Umar Ali (2020) has narrated it,

“The shock of this sudden change was not felt by the leaders, the authorities, the administrative units and the law enforcing agencies or the political organization

but by the common people residing in these areas, not knowing where to go and which part of land to call their own” (Ali, 2020, 212).

The same people who were living in harmony with each other and who were having shared interests with each other became enemies of each other. The identity constructed based on the shared territory was changed as soon as the Partition plan was announced. The identity constructed based on the religion became primary for everyone in Punjab whether they were Hindus, Sikhs, or the Muslims in 1947.

In this manner, the change in the definition of community was surfaced in Okara as the Partition Plan of Punjab was announced. The existing pattern of community in Okara was based on community based on territory their community was symbolized in living together. The community of interest became dominant at the time of Partition of Punjab in Okara. Community of interest means that the people are not living together but they share some interest with each other. For example, the Muslims in British India were not concentrated in one region. they were in majority in some regions, and they were in minority in some regions, but they shared the common interests of creating an Islamic state in India.

Thus, the definition of community reached to the national level and the local definition of community was undermined and disrupted. The change in the definition of community brought an end to peace full co-existence of different communities. Now the local peace and harmony was disrupted, and the people started to commit violent activities against each other based on the religion.

In this manner, it could be seen the role of border making in determining the political identity of the people between two states. The Muslims who were living in India became Pakistani, and the Sikhs and The Hindus who were living in Pakistani Punjab became Indians. Now the Muslims who are living in Pakistani Punjab at the time of the Partition of Punjab are Pakistani in the same manner as the Muslim living in the Eastern Punjab in India. The same applied to the identity of the Hindus and the Sikhs living on both sides of the border.

The British was unable to control the violence because by September of 1947, the communal violence has spread in most of the places and neither Mountbatten, nor Jinnah and Nehru were prepared to control the situation. The British army was not allowed to intervene in the communal violence. Their jurisdiction was limited to the protection of the British citizens (Ali, 2020).

In this way, India and Pakistan became as an independent state from British rule in August 1947 but the border which was demarcated by Sir Cyril Radcliff in July of 1947 was not settled. It remained in the process of making because the population was moving from India to Pakistan or from Pakistan to India based on their religion. The state was also unable to control the violence at that time (Jamil, 2018, Ali, 2019)

In the previous section of inter-communal relationship in Okara, the story of Harinder Singh has been discussed in which he retrieved his stolen bull from the *Janglee* Muslim village. The same *Janglee* Muslims who spared Harinder Singh before the Partition was announced, the same *Janglee* Muslims started to commit genocide against the local Sikh population,

In July 1947, we left our area to migrate to Hoshiarpur. An army personnel came, and he said that your area now belong to Pakistan you should leave the area, as our village was populated by the Sikh army personnel, we all were asked to leave the village. When we were leaving, the area the Janglee people from 7 Chak and 9 Chak located on the bank of the river Ravi started looting and plundering our belongings. But as our village consisted of all the army personnel so army convey came and escorted us to the border region. In this way, the Janglee Muslims were unable to finish their mission. All the Sikhs from all the Sikh village gathered in a camp which was establish in another Sikh village 5 Chak, then we all migrated from there we went to the border which was established at head Sulemanki. We reached our village in Hoshiarpur in 24 days on bullock carts (Singh, personal communication, 2021).

The communal violence was not just restricted to the general population rather it has also engulfed the British army. The Baluch regiment has also started to attack the Sikh and the Hindu population. Harinder Singh experienced this attack by the Baluch regiment when he was migrating to Hoshiarpur from Okara,

As we started our journey and reached Kissan Adda (farmer's station) the train which was loaded with the Baluch regiment crossed us. The Baluch regiment opened fire against us as they came closer to us. Fortunately, we did not lose the lives of the people, because we ran away. Most of our animals died due to that firing by the Baluch regiment (Singh, personal communication, 2021).

Ishtiaq Ahmed in his book Punjab Bloodied, Partitioned and Cleansed has narrated in an oral history that the Baluch regiment was deputed in the Montgomery district as soon as the communal violence broke out. At the that time of communal violence the curfew was launched in the Montgomery district and the Baluch regiment was given order to shoot at sight after giving a warning. Ishtiaq Ahmed narrated the oral history of Sardar Jarnail Singh Pasricha in the following words,

“A Baluch unit of the army was trying to control the atrocities ; I recall one Muslim who did not obey the curfew rules and came out shouting on the street. The soldiers told him to go back, but when he refused, they shot him dead, since they had orders to shoot-on-sight” (Ahmed, 2012, 396).

Although there is agreement in the oral history that Ishtiaq Ahmed (2012) has mentioned and the oral history of Harinder Singh, which has been discussed above regarding deployment of Baluch regiment in Okara, the Montgomery district. But at the same time there is contradiction with respect to the shoot-on-sight order. If the Baluch regiment was given the shoot-on-sight order why they have started shooting on the army personnel who were migrating with the army convey?

The change in the definition of the community was the major reason due to which the communal violence engulfed the whole of Punjab generally. The tensions between the communities no longer remained tied to the neighborhood crime or dispute, rather the religion determined the actions of the people. As discussed above that the same Junglee people who have spared the cattle of Harinder Singh started attacking him due based on the religion.

Similarly, the communal tensions also entered in the British army as it is evident from the attack of Baluch regiment on the Sikh army personal who were being escorted by army convey.

However, the problem was also becoming severe because the Muslim refugees who were coming from the Eastern Punjab have suffered during their whole journey. They have also faced the massacre on their way to Okara city. In this way, the religious emotions were high on both sides of the Punjab when Partition plan was announced. When the news of Muslims massacre reached the Western side of Punjab which was to become part of Pakistan the Muslims in that part reacted by doing massacre of the Sikhs and the Hindus (Ahmed, 2012).

Despite the heightened communal tensions, still the example of Muslims helping the Hindus in safely reaching their destination was also evident at the time of the Partition of Punjab. However, the Pakistani version of historiography mostly ignores this fact and only represent the violence against the Muslims perpetrated by the Sikhs. Thus, the Sikhs are criminalized, and the Muslims are constructed as criminals but there is instance where the Muslims in West Punjab gave asylum to the Hindus and escorted to the border regions (Jamil, 2018). The Hindus were also given safe passage in the village of West Punjab by the Muslims, despite of ongoing communal violence everywhere.

The story of Rakesh Kumar is also like the case of violence that emerged due to the news of the violence on Muslims on the Eastern side of Punjab where Muslims were a minority. As soon as the Partition plan was announced the Tahsildar and the Lambardar of the village came to the grandfather of Rakesh Kumar and asked him to stay with them and not to leave the place. The Lambardar and Tahsildar protected his grandfather and even escorted them to the border,

“Lambardar and Tahsildar came to our house and said to my grandfather that he should not leave Okara. Even when the disturbances started in the adjoining areas, Lambardar and Tahsildar offered their houses to my grandfather to live. Conditions changed when the Muslim refugees from the Eastern Punjab started to pour in Okara. They were injured, their clothes were soaked in blood, and mentally suffering from the trauma of the bloodshed. The arrival of the Muslim refugees from the Eastern Punjab heightened the communal violence in Okara also. The same Lambardar and Tahsildar came to my grandfather and requested him to leave because the conditions have gone beyond their own control. They could not guarantee the protection of my grandfather. But they assured my grandfather that they would take our family up to the border region. And they safely took us to the border area” (Kumar, personal communication, 2021).

2.5 Conclusion

In Pre-Partitioned Okara the identity constructed based on religion did not matter. The Hindus, Sikhs and Muslims were living in harmony. Even if some criminal activity like cattle theft was committed it was resolved on the village level (Singh, personal communication, 2021). The combining force in community at that time was the shared residence, their interests were common in living together. However, the announcement of the Partition Plan in June 1947, changed the definition of community in Okara. The community of residence was replaced with the community of interests.

The community of interests means that the Muslims of India were not living together when the Partition of Indian sub-continent was decided they were in majority in some regions

and minority in other regions (Ansari, 2015). They shared the interest of creating a Muslim state in India. The definition of identity also shifted its scale before the definition of the community was based on the locality in Okara but when the Partition of Punjab was announced the definition of community reached the national level. Hence, the interests of the Muslims were to join Pakistan, Islamic state.

In this manner, it could be seen the role of border making in determining the political identity of the people between two states. The Muslims who were living in India became Pakistani, and the Sikhs and The Hindus who were living in Pakistani Punjab became Indians. Now the Muslims who are living in Pakistani Punjab at the time of the Partition of Punjab are Pakistani in the same manner as the Muslim living in the Eastern Punjab in India. The same applied to the identity of the Hindus and the Sikhs living on both sides of the border.

When the 3rd June plan was announced both Jinnah and Nehru were at the same time reassuring that the communal violence would not take place and at the same time they were fanning the communal sentiments in Punjab by committing violence against each other. This is evident from the letter of governor of Punjab Evan Jenkins to Viceroy Lord Mountbatten. In this manner the British were not prepared to control the violence because they have not anticipated it (Spinner, 2017).

However, in the present research this could be seen that there were some exceptional conditions which happened during the Partition. For example, the attack of the Baluch regiment of the British army on the Sikh army personnel of the British army. The identity constructed based on religion has heightened the communal tensions that no social space of Punjab was

spared of its haunting specter. Despite of the heightened communal tensions there were exceptional conditions where the Muslims gave refugee/asylum to the Hindus in their own homes, and then even escorted them to the border safely (Kumar, personal communication, 2021).

Chapter 3

Border making and Identity Construction in Okara

3.1 Introduction

The Muslim separatism was a consequence of the elite political competition which is reflected on the eve of Partition that they did not think about the common people rather they just wanted to win their political competition (Ahmed, 2012; Chatta, 2013; Ali, .2020). The British also left the common people to suffer because they have already transferred power to India and Pakistan in August 1947. The conditions went beyond the control and Jinnah and Nehru both were unable to control the immense task of controlling violence, deciding for the rehabilitation of the refugees (Jamil, 2018). In this way the border was not settled between India and Pakistan in the region of Punjab.

In the first section of this chapter the challenges the refugees as well as the locals suffered in Okara at the time of border making in Okara has been discussed. The border which became the international boundary between India and Pakistan in August 1947 was not settled in the region of Punjab up to the year 1950 when Liaquat Ali Khan, the Prime Minister of Pakistan, and Nehru, The Prime Minister of India signed a pact in which it was decided to bring an end to the migration and the problem of refuge by restricting the movement of the refugees across the border. As per the Liaquat-Nehru Pact of 1950, it was decided to give the minority population in their respective states the equality in the citizenship's rights (Ahmed, 2012; Ali, 2019).

In the second section the change in the definition of the community has been discussed. The definition of the community was based on religion at the time when the Partition of Punjab

was finalized. The communal violence has increased all over in Punjab. However, the border which was demarcated was not settled even after the independence of the two states India and Pakistan. The border has impact on the definition of the community. The refugees who reached in Okara were confronted with the lack of shelter, food, water, and employment issues. The government of Pakistan was unable to provide the rehabilitation to the refugees in Okara.

The locals were also unwelcoming towards the refugees because they thought that the refugees would take over their resources. They accused that the refugees were occupying the houses and committing the crime in the region. The locals constructed the identity of migrants as uncivilized and barbarian people who are doing loot and plunder in Okara (Azhar, personal communication, 2021; Akhtar personal communication).

On the other hand ,the migrants also started to perceive that the locals are taking over the resources they are occupying the houses and treating them badly when asking for food. In this manner, the migrants also constructed the locals as uncivilized and Barbarian (Saif, personal communication, 2021; Farooq, personal communication, 2021).

In this manner, it could be seen that after the 1950 Liaqat-Nehru Pact, the meaning of the community was changed again. The migrants were thinking that their migration is temporary, and they would return to their own homeland as the conditions became normal (Virdee, 2018). But the situation was different, the migrants became the citizen of a new state that is Pakistan. Their status was changed from refugee to citizen (Ahmed, 2012; Ali, 2019).

In this manner, the definition of community which was based on Islam was changed as soon as the Partition violence was finished, and the border was settled in 1950. The Islam did not

prove the binding force in between the migrants and the locals rather the community based on shared residence assumed primary. Although the migrants have become the citizens but still, they are known from their place of migration. There are Mohallas in villages and city of area of Okara on the names of the regions from East Punjab. For example, the Mohalla of Jullundur, Hoshiarpur, and Amritsar (Azhar, personal communication, 2021; Hakeem, personal communication).

3.2 Partition of Punjab and Border making

In August 1947, the international boundary was demarcated between India and Pakistan when the British left the sub-continent. The boundary commission appointed by the British for the Partition of Bengal has demarcated the border of the respective provinces. However, the migration was continued on both sides from both sides of the borders of India and Pakistan. The people who were migrating became refugee on reaching their destination whether it was Pakistan or India (Ansari, 2015; Ali, 2020; Jamil, 2018).

Many Muslims who were leaving East Punjab, India believed that they are migrating for the time being to save their lives. They thought that they would return to their homelands once the conditions became back to normal. It is due to this reasons that many of the Muslims who were migrating to Pakistan from India from the boundary of Punjab preferred to stay on the border districts so that they could easily return to their homelands (Virdee, 2018; Ali, 2020; Jamil, 2018).

On the international level, the migration and border making in Punjab has become major issue for both India and Pakistan. The Pakistani government faced immense problems of

establishing control over the borders of Punjab on the one hand and on the other hand to provide rehabilitation like the availability of food, shelter, and water facilities to the refugees.

A Punjab boundary force (PBF) was created under the command of British Major General Pete Rees in July of 1947 to control the violence on the borders. However, the PBF was failed to establish law and order in the border regions of divided Punjab (Jamil, 2018). Then to provide security to the movement of the refugees the Military Evacuation Organization (MEO) was established. It provided military protection to the refugees (Spinner, 2007). This organization was operated by the military, but it also coordinated with the civilian officers. The MEO was later dissolved into two organization one was MEO India and the other one was MEO Pakistan. It played an important role in giving protection to the refugees (Chatta, 2013).

However, the communal violence in which attacks on trains was involved continued from July of 1947 to November of 1947. However, the scale of migration has increased so much that the two governments of India and Pakistan started contemplating to ban the entry of the refugees from the borders of Punjab on both sides. In this manner, India took the first step and imposed Control ordinance in July of 1948 to stop the movement of the refugees from Pakistan to India. In the similar way, Pakistan also responded by issuing control of entry ordinance in October 1948 (Jamil, 2018).

In this manner it could be seen that the government of Pakistan and India both were unable to settle their international border in Punjab despite of deploying PBF and MEO. In the end both the states were compelled to close their borders for further entry of the refugee whether it was Pakistani government or was the government of India.

3.3 From Community of Interest to Community of Residence

The rehabilitation of the refugees added to the already struggling state of Pakistan with border making in Punjab. Although the violence was controlled through the deployment of army by Pakistan and India around the border of Punjab and the safety of the migrants was assured, but in the end both countries received massive influx of refugees. It is due to this reason that India and Pakistan closed their border. In this manner, Pakistan denied the entry to those Muslims who were potential candidate for their sense of community based on religion. In this manner the definition of community that became popular at the creation of Pakistan and Partition of Punjab was based on the shared religion, it did not matter from the Muslim is in India he/she is part of that nation. The common interest was the establishment of the community based on Islam.

However, it started to change when the number of refugees increased in the border cities of Pakistani Punjab. The influx of massive refugee population in the border cities of Pakistani Punjab meant that the local Muslim population must face the influx of the massive refugee. The refugee was concentrated on the cities because it provided employment opportunities in different factories, mills, and small business. Hence, the city of Lahore, Sialkot, Gujranwala, Kasur, Shiekpura, Gujrat, Lyallpur (Faisalabad) (Talbot, 2007; Chatta, 2009; Jamil, 2018), and Okara were concentrated with the refugees (Saif, personal communication, 2021).

When the refugees arrived in Okara, they were faced with the issue of shelter, food, water, and clothes. Although the government has established refugee camps in different regions of Punjab like Wahga (Lahore), Dali, Kasur, and Sulemanki camps (Jami, 2018). Sulemanki camp was near to Okara, but people also came to Okara from the Wahga camp of Lahore at the time of border making in Punjab. Rana Azhar who was migrating from Haryana to Pakistan first

reached Lahore then came to Okara. When he reached Okara there was no food, water, clothes, and shelter for him in Okara. His experience as a refugee has been mentioned,

“I was born in 1935 in village of Haryana District. I was in 4th class when I migrated with my family. We first arrived in Lahore refugee camp through Wagah border. Then we moved to Okara city. In Okara city, the government of Pakistan had not established refugee camp. But the people were coming to Okara city because it offered employment opportunities. There were many cotton mills and factories in Okara, in which the most prominent was the cotton mill of B. When we arrived in Okara city we also suffered from the food shortages in addition to the problem of shelter. We used to ask for food from the local population. We waited days for taking bath, our clothes were teared and dirty we were unable to wash them because there was no water available for us” (Azhar, personal communication, 2021).

There is example of another migrant from Amritsar, Waleed Akhtar, who first came to Lahore refugee camp and then came to Okara because the Lahore refugee camp was already crowded with the people. He also faced the issue of food, shelter, and water when he came to Pakistan with his family. The experience of Waleed Akhtar as a refugee has been narrated as under,

“I was born in 1921 in Amritsar city, my father was a tailor by profession, he also gave me the skills of tailoring. I was 26 years old when the Partition took place. My father and mother died during the communal riots in Amritsar, I took my wife

and two children with us and fled from there for Lahore. Luckily, I was able to safely bring my family to Lahore. When I first arrived in Lahore there were too many people, so I thought to move somewhere else. The people from our *Biradari* went to Okara so we also proceeded to Okara. But the conditions in Okara were miserable there was no refugee camp, there were no relief facilities for the refugees. It was due to the network of our relatives due to which we were able to subsist in those days” (Akhtar, personal communication, 2021).

It is true that the Government of Pakistan was unable to provide relief to the refugees who were coming from the Indian side to Pakistan. Although, Government of Pakistan has established Ministry of Refugees and Rehabilitation in September 1947, but the focus of the activities of the Ministry was restricted to Lahore it did not include the other regions of Punjab. West Punjab received almost 5.5 million refugees (Jamil, 2018). In 1948, Refugee Rehabilitation cooperation was formed to provide relief to the refugees (Chatta, 2013), but it also did not reach the migrants of Okara (Azhar, personal communication, 2021; Akhtar, personal communication, 2021).

As the government of Pakistan was only focusing on the development of Lahore in Punjab other bordering regions were then marginalized. There is another reason that most of the wealth was in the hands of the Hindu businessman, and traders, and Sikh Landlords and commercial classes. When they left Punjab, they also took their wealth away. When the refugees came to West Punjab, they were not wealthy rather they have abandoned their meagre belonging and migrated to West Punjab. In this manner, the economic conditions of the other bordering regions of Punjab had deteriorated (Chodhari, 1952).

The absence of the involvement of government of Pakistan in the rehabilitation of the refugee in Okara was not just a problem for the refugees but it also provided the refugees as well as the locals to occupy the evacuee property left by Hindus and Sikhs in Okara. The Muslims refugees has migrated in the form of the Biradari (local community in Punjab that belong to one specific caste). In this manner those who have more men in their Biradari they exercised more power and occupied the evacuee property. This has been narrated by Waleed Akhtar as,

“At that time man people were also unlocking the homes which the Hindus and the Sikhs have left in Okara city. They were taking the possession of the houses by their own men power, because the government was not existing to keep check and control on this activity of illegal occupation of the houses. We came in the form of Biradari from India. So those migrants who had more men in their family were more in power to get the occupy the house forcefully. We also decided to occupy a house. All the men of our Biradri sat together and we discussed about the possible solution for the problem of our shelter. Then we also unlocked a home and occupied it forcefully” (Akhtar, personal communication, 2021).

However, Rana Azhar who migrated form Haryana to Okara said that it was not just the migrants who were occupying the houses using the force rather it was also the locals who started to occupy the houses. Rana Azhar put the blame on the patwari for illegal transfer of property to the local population,

“The local population also got allotment of the houses in Okara city; they bribed the patwari due to which the patwari allotted the land to them. In some cases, the

local population of Muslims also occupied some houses forcefully” (Azhar, personal communication, 2021).

Rana Azhar complained that he had agricultural lands in Haryana and the Pakistani government has not compensated his claim of Land. He argued that it was due to the prevalence of corrupt practices by the local village patwari,

“At that time there were problems related to land allocation, and government of Pakistan was not paying attention. We had agricultural lands in our village in Haryana. But when we arrived in Okara, Pakistan, the government of Pakistan had not compensated us the claim of agricultural land that we have filed. This was because I did not have the allotment papers of our agricultural lands in village of Haryana. The patwaris who were responsible for keeping the land records of the village were corrupt. Whoever bribed the patwari, he allotted the land to him. When I asked the patwari that I do not have papers and filed claim to the land in evacuee property, the patwari declined and said that without the allotment papers I would not be compensated” (Azhar, personal communication, 2021)

However, the Government of Pakistan has introduced the allotment of land to the migrants from East Punjab in 1950. The barren lands of Layyah and Bhakkar were sold to the migrants on cheap rates and easy installment which they could even pay during their lifetime

In 1950s the lands were allotted to the migrants in Bhakkar and Layyah. We were also allotted land in Bhakkar and Layyah. In those regions the lands were barren due to which the population density was very low. The government was charging

very low amount of money for allotting the land to the migrants in Bhakkar and Layyah. The government of Pakistan also divided the charges of the allotment of the land into installments. The installments were extended to the lifetime of the owner who purchased it (Akhtar, personal communication, 2021).

It could be seen that the competition over the resources has been surfaced in Okara with respect to the evacuee property. The migrants started to blame the locals for taking over their resources and the locals started to blame the migrant for taking over their resources. Muhammad Saif who was born in Okara in 1949, has heard from his father that what happened at the time when the refugee arrived in Okara,

“When the migrants came to Okara, Pakistan from East Punjab, India in 1947, they started make claims on the evacuee property with forged documents. They wanted to make claim of the thing that they did not own in East Punjab. The migrants also started to occupy the houses illegally using the force” (Saif, personal communication, 2021).

In this manner, when the refugees’ numbers increased the tensions between the locals and the migrants was started. Ian talbot (2007) argues that the tensions in Lahore between the locals and migrants had not reached the violent stage as it reached in the case of Karachi, but it did not mean that there were no tensions. The nature of the tensions between local and migrant in the case of Punjab was based on the differences of diet, dialect, and the feeling of superiority among the middle-class Refugee from East Punjab. In this similar manner the tensions have surfaced between refugees and locals in Okara

3.3.1 Identity Construction by Locals

The community based on residence was resurfaced as soon as the number of the refugees increased in Okara. The local community started to construct the identity of the refugees as uncivilized who have taken over their resources. However, the construction of refugee identity could be seen from the treatment of the locals by the refugees.

As Ian Talbot (2007) has mentioned that there was a sense of superiority in the middle-class refugee from East Punjab. In the similar manner the refugees in Okara whether they were from Jullunder, Amritsar, or Hoshiarpur they considered the local *Janglee* Muslims as uncivilized. Umer Farooq was born in 1934 in Okara, when the influx of refugees was started, he was in 7 grades. Umer Farooq is from the *Janglee* Muslim community of Okara. His experience of interacting with refugees is as under,

“The refugees are uncivilized they have taken over our resources when they came here, and they label us as *Janglee* who do not have sense of civilization. We are considered by the refugees as dacoits and those who do loot and plunder”
(Farooq, personal communication, 2021)

The refugees established their settlement based on their Biradari. Hence, the people from Amritsar established the Mohalla of Amritsariya, (neighborhood of people from Amritsar), and the people from Jullunder formed the Mohallah of Jullunderiya. In this manner it could be seen that the refugees do not own the identity of West Punjab they are still considered as migrant in West Punjab so they adopted the identity of Eastern Punjab based on their homeland rather than religion,

“The migrants do not make claim to the Punjabi identity that the local population affiliate to. Rather they derive their identity from the area from where they have migrated that is either they are Amritsari, Jullunderi, but they are not considered as natives of Okara till the present time period. The migrants have their own neighborhood (Mohalla) and they are known due to their residential area. The neighborhoods of the migrants are scattered all over the Okara and the city area. For example, there is the Mohalla of Jullunders, Mohallah of Hosiharpur, Mohallah of Amritsar” (Saif, personal communication, 2021).

Finally, the locals do not intermarry with the migrant’s community because they cannot conduct an inquiry into the reputation of the potential son-in-law or potential daughter-in-law because not more people know them who could tell about them. Ian Talbot (2007) has discussed this in the case of Lahore in which he argues that

“The limits of assimilation between migrants and locals were seen clearly in the most intimate social arrangements – marriage” (Talbot, 2007, 168).

Muhammad Saif has mentioned that they do not marry in the migrant community because it is easier to get the information of a potential son-in-law or potential daughter-in-law who belongs to local community than the migrant community. He rejected that there is some sort of solidarity with the migrant community in terms of being a Punjabi or being a Muslim rather the identity is based on local and migrant,

“There is no solidarity based on Islam or the Punjabi language or culture. We do not consider migrants as civilized due to which we do not inter-marry them. The

locals marry with the locals and the migrants marry within their migrant community because it is easier to get the biographical information of the potential son-in-law or daughter-in-law” (Saif, personal communication, 2021).

3.3.2 Identity Construction by migrants

The British was promoting agriculture in Punjab due to which the British has criminalized other economic pursuits like shifting agriculture and nomadism. It is due to this reason that British has misused the word Jangala which means savanna into Janglee the wasteland. The Janglee word as interpreted by British become popular by the 20th century (Dove, 1992). It is still used for the local population in present day Okara (Azhar, personal communication, 2021).

The migrants also used the same word which signify a negative meaning because the *Janglee* Muslim in Okara were famous for their cattle lifting profession (General Report on the Administration of the Punjab Territories, 1854-55 and 1855-56). in West Punjab due to which the migrants also followed that construct associated with the *Janglee* identity,

“The local population of Muslims is uncivilized and Janglee, on the other hand we are also considered by the local population as uncivilized and barbarian” (Akhtar, personal communication, 2021).

The migrants also preferred to marry their son or daughter in their own migrant community because they did not have the option of trusting the locals. Ian Talbot (2007) has explained this in the context of Lahore as,

“Aside from securing employment and accommodation, the contracting of marriages in a strange locality was one of the greatest problems facing refugees families” (Talbot, 2007, 168)

In the similar way, Rana Azhar was reluctant to marry his children in the local community. He preferred the migrant family because in that way he was able to know the whereabouts of the families from his network of Biradari. For him it was not enough that they family of the local belong to the same caste or they have similar language. The Punjabi culture and the Islam do not play a role when it comes to the marriage,

“The Muslim identity on which Pakistan was established did not pay any significant role in bringing solidarity and cohesion between local and migrant community in Okara. The Punjabi culture also did not become the source of unity among the migrants and the local population of Okara. The differences have not withered away rather the differences between local and migrants are still existing in Okara. They do not inter-marry each other despite of belonging to same caste and same Bridari” (Azhar, personal communication, 2021).

However, the migrants were not just thinking that the locals have taken over their resources rather the migrants from the Urdu speaking regions of UP and CP are also considered by the Migrants from East Punjab as having more privileges. Waleed Akhtar mentioned that in Birla cotton mill the Urdu speaking dominated the bureaucracy due to which they brought the Urdu speaking people from UP and gave them residential facilities and the educational facility for their children,

“There was a person named Dalmiya from UP, he was incharge of the Birlacotton mill in Okara city. He brought the Urdu speaking people from UP and CP. The bureaucracy of the Birla cotton mill was primarily composed of the Urdu speaking community from UP and CP. But the labor class was from Pathan, local Janglee, and migrants Punjabi. The Urdu Speaking population was given accommodation inside the residential area of the Birla cotton mill. The Urdu speaking migrants did not suffer like we were suffering at that time. There were also two schools inside the Birla cotton mills for the children of the workers” (Akhtar, personal communication, 2021).

3.4 Conclusion

The international borders were demarcated between India and Pakistan but due to the migration of the people in Punjab the border of the Punjab was not settled. The newly established state of Pakistan was confronted with twofold problems firstly, Pakistan must settle its border through the deployment of the forces, secondly, Pakistan must provide the rehabilitation to the refugees.

For solving the first problem Pakistan coordinated with India and British and established PBF, but it was unable to control the violence in the border regions and the trains still came full of corpses. To provide security to the refugees the MEO was established initially it worked collectively by Pakistan and India. Later it was divided between two countries. In 1948, the government of Pakistan and India decided to close the borders to avoid the influx of refugees from both sides of the border. In 1950, Liaqat and Nehru signed pact in which it was decided that minorities in India and Pakistan would be given equal citizenship rights (Ahmed, 2012; Ali, 2019).

In this manner, it could be seen that the change in the definition of the community surfaced when the border making was completed. The community which was established at the time of the Partition of Punjab was based on the shared religion. But by closing the border and declaring the equal rights for minorities meant that no longer those Muslims who are in Eastern Punjab are Pakistanis.

The influx of the refugees was more concentrated in the city regions of bordering districts of West Punjab (Talbot, 2007; Chatta, 2009; Jamil, 2018). this was since the migrants considered their stay as temporary in West Pakistan and thought that they would return to their homeland. In this way when Liaquat-Nehru Pact was signed they realized that they must settle now in Pakistan as a citizen (Virdee, 2018).

The government of Pakistan was unable to provide food, shelter, water, and clothing to the migrants (Jamil, 2018) in Okara. The migrants used to ask for food from the local population, who in turn looked down on them. The migrants were unable to take bath for many days, and there was not a single refugee camp in Okara. There was one refugee camp near Okara at Sulemanki area. But it was also concentrated. However, In 1950, the government announced the allotment of the lands to the migrants in Layyah and Bhakkar on cheap rates and easy installments that the person could even pay during his lifetime (Akhtar, personal communication, 2021; Rana Azhar, personal communication, 2021).

The absence of the Pakistani government was not just the problem it was also an opportunity because there was no one who could look after the allotment of the evacuee property. The migrants as well as the local population of Okara started to occupy the houses

forcefully. Those families who have more men were more powerful (Akhtar, personal communication, 2021).

This was mainly due to the reason that the departing population of Okara comprised of the industrialist and business men from Hindus and traders and landlords from Sikhs. The Muslims who came from East Punjab were not businessmen due to which they started to compete for resources with the local population, but this competition did not become violent (Chodhari, 1952).

The locals started to blame the migrants of bringing forged documents for allotment of the lands (Saif, personal communication, 2021), whereas the migrants accused the locals of bribing the patwari for the allotment of the land. The migrants were not allotted land by patwari because they did not have the allotment papers of lands from East Pakistan . In this way the tensions started to increase between locals and migrants in Okara (Azhar, personal communication, 2021).

The locals constructed the migrants as uncivilized as response of migrant's construction of locals as *Janglee* (forest dwellers) who do not know about civilization. It is evident from the British period that the British have invented this word to criminalize those tribes who lived in the forest regions and do not practice settled agriculture. In this manner, the British construction of the word became popular by the 20th century (Dove, 1992). The migrants used the word *Janglee* in the similar way as the British employed it against the forest dwellers (Azhar, personal communication, 2021).

In this way neither the Punjabi culture nor the Islam proved to be a binding force between the migrants and the local Muslims in Okara. The migrants established their neighborhoods on the name of their ancestral villages in Eastern Punjab. The migrants usually marry within the migrated community and the locals marry within the local community (Saif, personal communication, 2021; Azhar, personal communication, 2021).

In this manner, it could be concluded that the definition of the community again became localized with the process of border making. The border making process kept the migrants in the illusion that they would return to their homeland, but when the border settled, they realized that they must stay in Pakistan forever. In this manner, the community based on residence reemerged in Okara after the Punjab border has been settled between India and Pakistan.

Chapter 4

Conclusion, Findings, and Recommendations

4.1 Conclusion

In the present research the change in the meaning of the community in Okara has been discussed at the time of Partition and border making in Punjab. In Pre-Partitioned Okara the identity constructed based on religion did not matter. The Hindus, Sikhs and Muslims were living in harmony. Even if some criminal activity like cattle theft was committed it was resolved on the village level. The combining force in community at that time was the shared residence, their interests were common in living together.

However, the announcement of the Partition Plan by British government in India in June 1947, changed the definition of community in Okara. The community of residence was replaced with the community of interests. The community of interests means that the Muslims of India were not living together when the Partition of Indian sub-continent was decided they were in majority in some regions and minority in other regions. They shared the interest of creating a Muslim state in India. The definition of identity also shifted its scale before the definition of the community was based on the locality in Okara but when the Partition of Punjab was announced the definition of community reached the national level. Hence, the interests of the Muslims were to join Pakistan, Islamic state.

In August 1947, the international borders were demarcated between India and Pakistan but due to the migration of the people in Punjab the border of the Punjab was not settled. The newly established state of Pakistan was confronted with twofold problems firstly, Pakistan must

settle its border through the deployment of the forces, secondly, Pakistan must provide the rehabilitation to the refugees. For solving the first problem Pakistan coordinated with India and British and established PBF, but it was unable to control the violence in the border regions and the trains still came full of corpses. To provide security to the refugees the MEO was established initially it worked collectively by Pakistan and India. Later it was divided between two countries. In 1948, the government of Pakistan and India decided to close the borders to avoid the influx of refugees from both sides of the border. In 1950, Liaqat and Nehru signed pact in which it was decided that minorities in India and Pakistan would be given equal citizenship rights (Ahmed, 2012; Ali, 2020).

In this manner, it could be seen that the change in the definition of the community surfaced when the border making was completed. The community which was established at the time of the Partition of Punjab was based on the shared religion. But by closing the border and declaring the equal rights for minorities meant that no longer those Muslims who are in Eastern Punjab are Pakistanis.

Moreover, neither the Punjabi culture nor the Islam proved to be a binding force between the migrants and the local Muslims in Okara. The migrants established their neighborhoods on the name of their ancestral villages in Eastern Punjab. The migrants usually marry within the migrated community and the locals marry within the local community (Saif, personal communication, 2021; Azhar, personal communication, 2021).

In this manner, it could be concluded that the definition of the community again became localized with the process of border making. The border making process kept the migrants in the

illusion that they would return to their homeland, but when the border settled, they realized that they must stay in Pakistan forever. In this manner, the community based on residence reemerged in Okara after the Punjab border has been settled between India and Pakistan.

4.2 Discussion

During British period the Okara was Tehsil of Montgomery district (Montgomery District Gazetteer, 1883-1884). Most of the economy was depended on agriculture in Okara. In 1865, Okara city was also established initially for administrative purposes. In villages mostly Sikh from British army came as settlers from East Punjab. Muslims also lived mostly in the rural areas. The Hindus were prominent in trade and commerce and even established factories and mills in Okara city (Ahmed, 2012; Saif, personal communication, Kumar, personal communication, 2021; Singh, personal communication, 2021).

Generally, there was peace and harmony between Sikh, Hindu, and Muslims in Okara. If some tensions emerged between the Muslims and Sikhs, it was resolved without violence (Harinder, personal communication, 2021; Kumar, personal communication, 2021). As soon as the 3rd June plan was signed the communal violence increased in Punjab.

The governor of Punjab warned the viceroy Lord Mountbatten that the conditions in Punjab are going out of hand, but Nehru the Leader of Indian National Congress (INC) has advised viceroy that the massive level migration would not take place. The position of Muhammad Ali Jinnah the leader of the All-India Muslim League (AIML) was also like that of Nehru. But the reality was different, the communal violence increased soon after two or three weeks after Partition of

Punjab was done in September of 1947. The British were not prepared to control the violence because they have not anticipated it.

In this manner, it could be seen the role of border making in determining the political identity of the people between two states. The Muslims who were living in India became Pakistani, and the Sikhs and The Hindus who were living in Pakistani Punjab became Indians. Now the Muslims who are living in Pakistani Punjab at the time of the Partition of Punjab are Pakistani in the same manner as the Muslim living in the Eastern Punjab in India. The same applied to the identity of the Hindus and the Sikhs living on both sides of the border (Ansari, 2015).

As the communal violence heightened, it soon engulfed all places including the British military. The Baluch regiment attacked the Sikh army personnel who were migrating with their covey (Harinder, personal communication, 2021) . However, there were also exceptional situations where the Muslims gave protection to the Hindus and even escorted them up to the border (Kumar, personal communication, 2021).

The international borders were demarcated between India and Pakistan but due to the migration of the people in Punjab the border of the Punjab was not settled. The newly established state of Pakistan was confronted with twofold problems firstly, Pakistan must settle its border through the deployment of the forces, secondly, Pakistan must provide the rehabilitation to the refugees.

For solving the first problem Pakistan coordinated with India and British and established PBF, but it was unable to control the violence in the border regions and the trains still came full

of corpses. To provide security to the refugees the MEO was established initially it worked collectively by Pakistan and India. Later it was divided between two countries. In 1948, the government of Pakistan and India decided to close the borders to avoid the influx of refugees from both sides of the border. In 1950, Liaqat and Nehru signed pact in which it was decided that minorities in India and Pakistan would be given equal citizenship rights (Ahmed, 2012; Ali, 2019).

In this manner, it could be seen that the change in the definition of the community surfaced when the border making was completed. The community which was established at the time of the Partition of Punjab was based on the shared religion. But by closing the border and declaring the equal rights for minorities meant that no longer those Muslims who are in Eastern Punjab are Pakistanis.

The influx of the refugees was more concentrated in the city regions of bordering districts of West Punjab (Talbot, 2007; Chatta, 2009; Jamil, 2018). this was since the migrants considered their stay as temporary in West Pakistan and thought that they would return to their homeland. In this way when Liaqat-Nehru Pact was signed they realized that they must settle now in Pakistan as a citizen (Virdee, 2018).

The government of Pakistan was unable to provide food, shelter, water, and clothing to the migrants (Jamil, 2018) in Okara. The migrants used to ask for food from the local population, who in turn looked down on them. The migrants were unable to take bath for many days, and there was not a single refugee camp in Okara. There was one refugee camp near Okara at Sulemanki area. But it was also concentrated. However, in 1950, the government announced the allotment of the lands to the migrants in Layyah and Bhakkar on cheap rates and easy

installments that the person could even pay during his lifetime (Akhtar, personal communication, 2021; Rana Azhar, personal communication, 2021).

The absence of the Pakistani government was not just the problem it was also an opportunity because there was no one who could look after the allotment of the evacuee property. The migrants as well as the local population of Okara started to occupy the houses forcefully. Those families who have more men were more powerful (Akhtar, personal communication, 2021).

This was mainly due to the reason that the departing population of Okara comprised of the industrialist and businessmen from Hindus and traders and landlords from Sikhs. The Muslims who came from East Punjab were not businessmen due to which they started to compete for resources with the local population, but this competition did not become violent (Chodhari, 1952).

The locals started to blame the migrants of bringing forged documents for allotment of the lands (Saif, personal communication, 2021), whereas the migrants accused the locals of bribing the patwari for the allotment of the land. The migrants were not allotted land by patwari because they did not have the allotment papers of lands from East Pakistan . In this way the tensions started to increase between locals and migrants in Okara (Azhar, personal communication, 2021).

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In this way neither the Punjabi culture nor the Islam proved to be a binding force between the migrants and the local Muslims in Okara. The migrants established their neighborhoods on the name of their ancestral villages in Eastern Punjab. The migrants usually marry within the migrated community and the locals marry within the local community (Saif, personal communication, 2021; Azhar, personal communication, 2021).

In this manner, it could be concluded that the definition of the community again became localized with the process of border making. The border making process kept the migrants in the illusion that they would return to their homeland, but when the border settled, they realized that they must stay in Pakistan forever. In this manner, the community based on residence reemerged in Okara after the Punjab border has been settled between India and Pakistan.

4.3 Recommendations

First recommendation is that in the future research on oral history in Okara should also include the dimension of gender which has not been included in this research, the researcher like Rabia Umar Ali (2020) and Pipa Virdee (2018) have included the dimensions of the gender in their research. However, Rabia Umar Ali (2018) lacks the regional focus and mostly quotes from the work of Pipa Virdee (2018). Pipa Virdee has conducted the study with regional focus, but she focused on Lyallpur (Faisalabad). Okara has not been focused.

More, as Ilyas Chatta (2009) has written on the role of the refugees in building of Gujranwala and Sialkot also provide future dimensions of research on the context of Okara. The role of refugees in building the city of Okara could also be conducted to understand the attachment of the migrant population in nation building.

Moreover, the study could also be conducted on the memory of the Partition that has been transferred to the 2nd generation and 3rd generation of the migrated and local population. The work could also be done on comparing the memories of 2nd generation and 3rd generation migrants and locals in the context of East and West Punjab. The study could also be conducted on the politics of the remembering of the Partition and border making in Punjab generally and specifically Okara. The differences could be seen in the remembering of the partition by the state, by the migrants, and by the locals.

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Appendix- A

Interview guide for those who migrated from Okara to East Punjab

1. Where and when you were born?
2. How do you recall your relationship with people from other communities?
3. What type of markets were there in Okara before Partition?
4. Who were involved in the business sector of Okara before Partition?
5. What religious places were there in Okara before Partition?
6. What type of relationship existed between local and migrant before Partition in Okara?
7. What role the cultural similarity played in uniting people?
8. What role religion played in relationship between different groups?
9. What changes the border making has on your life at the time of Partition?
10. What effect do you think the border making had on the Okara City?

Interview guide for those who belonged to Local community of Okara

1. Where and when you were born?
2. How do you recall your relationship with people from other communities?
3. What changes the border making has on your life at the time of Partition?
4. What effect do you think the border making had on the Okara City?
5. What arrangement do you think the government made for the evacuation of the Hindus and Sikhs?

6. Have you involved in resolving the accommodation problems of the refugees? Or have you provided shelter to any refugees?
7. Have you arranged the food for the refugees? Or were there any collective food arrangements like langar?
8. What role the government of Pakistan played in resolving the problems of accommodation and food for refugees?
9. How did you recall your relationship with the migrant Muslim community in Okara?
10. Did you think that the Muslim identity played an important role in assimilating with the migrant Muslim population?
11. What role do you think that the cultural similarity has played in interacting with the migrant Muslim population?

Interview guide for those who migrated from East Punjab to Okara

1. Where and when you were born?
2. How do you recall your relationship with people from other communities?
3. What changes the border making has on your life at the time of Partition?
4. What effect do you think the border making had on the Okara City?
5. How you resolved the issue of accommodation when you came in Okara ?
6. How you arranged the food for your family when you arrived in Okara? Or were there any collective food arrangements like langar?
7. What role the government of Pakistan played in resolving the problems of accommodation and food for refugees?
8. How did you recall your relationship with the local Muslim community in Okara?

9. Did you think that the Muslim identity played an important role in assimilating with the local Muslim population?
10. What role do you think that the cultural similarity has played in interacting with the Local Muslim population?

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