

Immigrant Generations and Gender Equality: A Study of Sikh Immigrant in Italy

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The Sikh community is one of the most dynamic and versatile communities in terms of migration. This particular community is spread all over the world and established their own different identity not only in terms of their religion but in the work they do, cultural activities and their social lives. Now people in western countries no more feel astonished when they see any Sikh man walking on the streets.

Immigrants from various developed and developing countries settled in European continent with their families. Sikh immigrants in Italy consider Italy as their own homeland. They are fascinated by several things like rules and system, money, bright future for their children and lifestyle. For the first generation migrants Europe is the second home after their country of origin. For others, who are primarily second generation there is conflict about which is the primary? First generation migrants are more attached with their own culture and they always maintain boundaries when it comes to the integration with mainstream Italian society. On the other hand second generation migrants who born and brought up in Italy are very well integrated with Italian society and less attach with their own culture. It gives rise to conflict, clashes of ideas, stress and friction between different immigrant generations, sometimes elderly group who are basically the parents of first generation immigrant and sponsored later on by their children find difficult to adjust in the western society and have conflict with first generation immigrant. These differences and conflict among different immigrant generations becomes a frontier of the reconstruction of changing family structure in both intimate or private and public sphere. These differences and tensions not only limit the private sphere of the family but also affecting the public sphere like school, work place and peer group. First generation immigrants are insecure about their children's. They have adapted language and food of the alien land but in terms of culture they have generally tended to recreate the environment of their country of origin, minimizing contact with others. Truth is that all this clearly doesn't foster mutual understanding and intercultural exchange.

Another very important innovation after migration was gender equality. This particular Sikh community migrates from very small villages of Punjab, India where women's are only limit to domestic work and taking care of family but after migration to developed nations with their husbands they started working outside of their homes in factories and stores and also becomes equal decision maker in their families. They have freedom to wear clothes and have own life separate from their husbands and children's.

In short migration has another very important facilitating factor of social innovation. It not

only brings changes in the family structure but also the transition of new ideas and methods in social system. My paper will focus on different Sikh immigrant generations in Italy and gender equality which was another outcome of transnational migration. This paper will be based on my fieldwork in Italy which was funded by European Union.