

Partition, mobility, and identity transformation among Sindhi Hindu migrants

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Abstract

This article examines how Sindhi Hindu migrants and their descendants narrate and interpret post-partition experiences across different diasporic contexts. Drawing on qualitative interviews with ten participants living in Canada, China, Hong Kong, Oman, the United Arab Emirates, the United Kingdom, and the United States, the study approaches migration not as a completed historical event, but as an ongoing condition shaped by memory, mobility, and adaptation. The analysis shows that partition is remembered not only as a traumatic rupture marked by loss of homeland, property, and security, but also as the beginning of a sustained process of movement and reorientation extending across generations. Rather than treating migration as a linear transition from displacement to settlement, the article argues that Sindhi Hindu experiences are better understood as narratively constructed trajectories in which trauma, mobility, opportunity, and identity transformation coexist. The findings highlight a central tension between mobility and continuity: the same flexibility that enabled migrants to rebuild their lives across multiple national contexts simultaneously contributed to language shift, cultural dislocation, and a weakening of rooted forms of belonging. By foregrounding narrative and intergenerational memory, the article contributes to broader debates on diaspora, post-partition memory, and the processual nature of identity and migration.

Keywords

diaspora, mobility, identity transformation, intergenerational memory, Sindhi Hindus

1. Introduction

Migration is often treated as an event: a rupture, a crossing, a moment after which life is reassembled elsewhere. In the case of the Partition of the Indian subcontinent, this framing has been particularly influential, with scholarship emphasising displacement, violence, and trauma as defining features of forced migration.¹ While such perspectives have been indispensable, they also risk obscuring a more unsettling possibility: that for some communities, migration does not end.

The case of Sindhi Hindu migrants suggests precisely this. Dispersed across multiple national contexts after 1947, Sindhi Hindus did not simply experience a singular rupture followed by settlement, but entered trajectories marked by repeated movement, adaptation, and reconfiguration of belonging.² In this sense, migration appears less as a completed transition than as a durable condition—one that extends beyond the historical moment of partition into the organisation of everyday life across generations. The Sindhi community itself is religiously diverse and geographically dispersed, with Hindu, Muslim, Christian, and other affiliations represented across South Asia and wider diasporic settings.³

Existing studies have documented the consequences of this displacement in terms of loss, marginalisation, and linguistic and cultural transformation. Yet less attention has been paid to how these processes are retrospectively interpreted by migrants themselves, particularly when partition is not directly experienced but inherited through family narratives, memories, and silences. This raises a crucial question: what happens when migration is no longer remembered as a past event, but lived as an ongoing horizon shaping identity, mobility, and belonging?

This article approaches post-partition migration as a field of meaning-making rather than a bounded historical episode. Drawing on qualitative interviews with a small and geographically dispersed group of Sindhi Hindu participants, it examines how migration is narrated, remembered, and reinterpreted in the present. Rather than treating these accounts as

¹ BHAVNANI, Nandita. *The Making of Exile: Sindhi Hindus and the Partition of India*. India: Tranquebar Press, 2014.

KOTHARI, Rita. Sindhis: Hardening of identities after partition. *Economic and Political Weekly*, 2004, 3885-3888.

² COOK, Matthew A. and Maya K. DAVID. Language shift and identity reproduction among diaspora Sindhis in India and Southeast Asia. *Modern Asian Studies*. 2020, 55(3), 734–763.

SHAHANI, Uttara. Language without a land: Partition, Sindhi refugees, and the Eighth Schedule of the Indian Constitution. *Asian Affairs*. 2022, 53(2), 336–362.

³ ALI, Ameer; DAVID, Maya Khemlani. Investigating Interfaith Harmony and Religious Tolerance through Text Messages: A Case Study of Sindhi Hindus and Sindhi Muslims in Sindh, Pakistan. *Language in India*, 2021, 21.6, 186–203.

transparent reflections of historical reality, the analysis understands them as situated narratives through which displacement, mobility, and identity are continuously rearticulated.

Importantly, only a minority of participants directly experienced partition; for most, it exists as inherited memory. This shifts the analytical focus from migration as movement to migration as narration—an intergenerational process through which the past is reconstructed and made meaningful in the present. In doing so, the article engages with broader theoretical approaches that conceptualise identity and diaspora as processual and relational rather than fixed.⁴

Within this framework, the study asks:

(1) How do Sindhi Hindu migrants and their descendants narrate and interpret post-partition migration?

(2) How are themes of trauma, mobility, and identity transformation articulated within these narratives?

(3) What forms of belonging emerge when migration is experienced not as a completed transition, but as an ongoing condition?

Rather than advancing a universal theory, the article proposes a reconceptualisation of post-partition migration as a narratively sustained condition, in which displacement persists through intergenerational memory and ongoing mobility. By foregrounding narrative and intergenerational memory, it contributes to a more nuanced understanding of post-partition migration as a continuing and open-ended process.

The article proceeds by situating the study within existing scholarship, outlining its methodological approach, and then presenting the empirical material, which is subsequently analysed in relation to broader debates on migration, identity, and post-partition memory.

2. Literature review

Building on the dominant framing of partition as rupture, research on Sindhi Hindu migration in the aftermath of the Partition has largely focused on themes of displacement, trauma, and loss. A substantial body of work documents the profound disruptions experienced by the community, including dispossession, marginalisation, and the psychological consequences of

⁴ HALL, Stuart. Cultural identity and diaspora. In: RUTHERFORD, Jonathan, ed. *Identity: Community, Culture, Difference*. London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1990, pp. 222–237.
BRAH, Avtar. *Cartographies of Diaspora: Contesting Identities*. London: Routledge, 1996.
COHEN, Robin. *Global diasporas: An introduction*. Routledge, 2008.

forced migration.⁵ Within this perspective, migration is typically conceptualised as a moment of rupture that fractured previously stable social, cultural, and economic worlds.

Closely related to this emphasis on rupture is a strand of research examining the cultural and linguistic consequences of displacement. Studies have shown that the dispersal of Sindhi Hindus across different national and regional contexts contributed to language shift, reduced public visibility, and the gradual erosion of heritage linguistic practices in India as well as in diasporic settings such as Malaysia and the United Kingdom.⁶ In these accounts, language loss is not merely a communicative change, but an indicator of broader transformations associated with adaptation to new social environments.

Beyond language, scholars have also explored how migration reshapes identity and belonging. Sindhi Hindu migration has been described as a process of fragmentation and reconstitution, in which dispersed populations become minorities within new political and social contexts.⁷ Such transformations often involve the renegotiation of identity, including shifts from locally embedded or syncretic forms of belonging towards more standardised or nationally framed identities.⁸ These processes are frequently interpreted through the lens of loss—of homeland, continuity, and cultural rootedness.

At the same time, a number of studies have pointed to the diversity and variability of migrant experiences. Narrative-based and autobiographical accounts suggest that migration cannot be reduced to a uniform experience of trauma. While some contributions emphasise

⁵ BHAVNANI, Nandita. *The Making of Exile: Sindhi Hindus and the Partition of India*. India: Tranquebar Press, 2014.

KOTHARI, Rita. Sindhis: Hardening of identities after partition. *Economic and Political Weekly*, 2004, 3885-3888.

⁶ DAVID, Maya Khemlani. The Sindhi Hindus of London—Language Maintenance or Language Shift?. *Migracijske i Etnicke Teme/Migration & Ethnic Themes*, 2001, 17: 215.

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⁷ KOTHARI, Rita. *The burden of refuge: Partition experiences of the Sindhis of Gujarat*. Orient Longman, 2007. SHAHANI, Uttara. Language without a land: Partition, Sindhi refugees, and the Eighth Schedule of the Indian Constitution. *Asian Affairs*. 2022, 53(2), 336–362.

ANAND, Subhadra. Migration and socio-cultural identity crisis—a case study of Sindhis in post partition India. In: *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress*. Indian History Congress, 1996. p. 633-640.

⁸ COOK, Matthew A. and Maya K. DAVID. Language shift and identity reproduction among diaspora Sindhis in India and Southeast Asia. *Modern Asian Studies*. 2020, 55(3), 734–763.

KOTHARI, Rita. Cartographies of Sindh: Religion, region, language. In: *The Routledge handbook of refugees in India*. Routledge, 2022.

marginalisation and identity crisis⁹, others highlight forms of economic adaptation, mobility, and the use of community networks in rebuilding livelihoods.¹⁰ More recent work has further drawn attention to resilience and the creative reworking of identity, showing how displacement can be transformed into cultural memory and narrative agency.¹¹ Similarly, transnational approaches emphasise the multiplicity of migrant trajectories and the persistence of connections across different locations.¹²

To situate these findings more broadly, it is useful to draw on theoretical approaches in diaspora and cultural studies that conceptualise identity and belonging as processual rather than fixed. Stuart Hall's¹³ notion of cultural identity as a continuous process of becoming rather than being provides a useful lens for understanding how migrants negotiate shifting forms of identification over time. Avtar Brah's¹⁴ concept of "diaspora space" further emphasises that migration involves not only movement across territories, but also the reconfiguration of relationships between memory, location, and belonging. Similarly, Robin Cohen's¹⁵ work highlights how diasporic formations are shaped by both shared histories of displacement and ongoing processes of adaptation within new social contexts.

These perspectives suggest that migration should not be understood solely in terms of rupture or, conversely, as a linear process of integration. Rather, it involves ongoing negotiations between loss and adaptation, continuity and change. However, while such theoretical frameworks are well established, there remains a need for empirically grounded studies that examine how these dynamics are articulated in specific contexts and through migrants' own narratives.

This article addresses this gap by analysing how a small group of Sindhi Hindu migrants and their descendants narrate and interpret their post-partition trajectories. Rather than seeking

⁹ BHAVNANI, Nandita. Unwanted refugees: Sindhi Hindus in India and Muhajirs in Sindhi 1. *Partition of India*. Routledge India, 2018. p. 149-169.

AGGARWAL, Saaz. *Sindhi tapestry: An anthology of reflections on the Sindhi identity*. 1st ed. Black & White Fountain, 2020.

¹⁰ KUMAR, Priya; KOTHARI, Rita. Sindh, 1947 and beyond. *South Asia: Journal of South Asian Studies*, 2016, 39.4: 773-789.

¹¹ GOVINDANI, Vandana; MENON, Nirmala. Sindhi literature in post-partition India: marginalization, challenges, and digital interventions. *Diaspora, Indigenous, and Minority Education*, 2026, 20.1: 87-103.

GOVINDANI, Vandana; MENON, Nirmala. From Homeland to Exile: Fragmented Identities and Displaced Voices in Post-Partition Sindhi Short Fiction. *Journal of Sindhi Studies*, 2026, 5.1: 1-30.

¹² RAJU, Dilna. Transnational Turn in Partition Memories: A Study of the Sindhi Migration. *Teresian Journal of English Studies*, 2022, 14.2: 27-32.

¹³ HALL, Stuart. Cultural identity and diaspora. In: RUTHERFORD, Jonathan, ed. *Identity: Community, Culture, Difference*. London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1990, pp. 222-237.

¹⁴ BRAH, Avtar. *Cartographies of Diaspora: Contesting Identities*. London: Routledge, 1996.

¹⁵ COHEN, Robin. *Global diasporas: An introduction*. Routledge, 2008.

to produce generalisable claims about the community as a whole, the study approaches these accounts as situated narratives that reflect both lived experience and intergenerational memory. In doing so, it contributes to a more nuanced understanding of how broader processes of migration, identity transformation, and belonging are experienced, remembered, and rearticulated within a particular diasporic context.

3. Methods

This study adopts a qualitative, interpretive research design based on semi-structured interviews.¹⁶ Its aim is not to reconstruct historical events or to produce representative findings about Sindhi Hindu migration as a whole, but to examine how participants narrate, interpret, and make sense of post-partition experiences in the present. The analysis therefore focuses on subjective meanings, narrative constructions, and processes of intergenerational memory rather than on verifiable historical accounts.

Data were collected in April 2024 through interviews conducted via WhatsApp and mobile phone calls. In total, ten interviews were carried out, each lasting approximately forty-five minutes. The use of remote communication technologies enabled access to geographically dispersed participants located across multiple countries. Interviews were conducted in English and guided by a set of open-ended questions designed to elicit reflections on migration, identity, memory, and life trajectories. While the interview structure ensured a degree of comparability across cases, participants were encouraged to elaborate on issues they considered significant, allowing for narrative depth and variation.

Participants were selected using purposive sampling. The criteria required that they identify as members of the Sindhi Hindu community and that they either directly experienced partition or were descendants of migrants. The final sample consisted of ten participants (seven male and three female) residing in different countries and engaged in professional occupations. The average age of participants was sixty-two years. Importantly, only two participants had direct childhood memories of partition, while the remaining accounts are shaped primarily by family narratives and intergenerational transmission of memory. This distinction is analytically significant and is taken into account in the interpretation of the data.

The interviews are treated as narrative material rather than as straightforward factual testimony. The analysis follows an inductive, bottom-up approach, in which responses were

¹⁶ CRESWELL, John W. *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches*. SAGE, 2014.

manually coded to identify recurring motifs, patterns of meaning, and points of convergence and divergence across participants. These initial codes were subsequently grouped into broader analytical categories that reflect how participants organise and articulate their experiences of displacement, mobility, and identity. Particular attention was paid to how similar themes—such as loss, movement, or belonging—are narrated differently depending on personal trajectories and generational position.

Ethical considerations were observed throughout the research process. Participants provided informed consent and were assured anonymity. All names were replaced with coded identifiers (SH1–SH10). The use of encrypted communication platforms provided an additional layer of data protection.

The study has clear limitations. The sample is small, geographically dispersed, and not statistically representative. Moreover, the majority of accounts are based on inherited or mediated memories rather than direct experience. For this reason, the findings should be understood as exploratory and interpretive rather than generalisable. The value of the study lies in its ability to illuminate how post-partition migration is remembered, narrated, and reinterpreted within a specific diasporic context, rather than in providing a comprehensive account of the Sindhi Hindu experience.

4. Narrative findings: memory, mobility, and belonging

The following analysis does not aim to present generalisable findings about Sindhi Hindu migration as such. Rather, it examines how a small group of participants narratively construct and interpret post-partition experiences in the present. The interview material is therefore approached as a set of situated accounts through which displacement, mobility, and belonging are retrospectively organised and given meaning.

Across the narratives, participants repeatedly return to the moment of Partition as a point of reference. However, this moment is not described as a closed historical episode, but as an interpretive starting point through which subsequent experiences are understood. The analysis is organised into four analytically distinct yet overlapping dimensions that reflect recurring ways in which participants articulate displacement, movement, and identity.

4.1 Narrating partition as rupture

In participants' accounts, the Partition is consistently framed as a moment of abrupt and involuntary rupture, characterised by the loss of home, property, and established livelihoods.

Migration is rarely described as a matter of choice; rather, it is narrated as an imposed necessity. As one participant noted, “the Sindhis in Pakistan had to leave their homeland, homes and belongings” (SH1), while another described the experience as “a choiceless surrender” (SH2). Such formulations emphasise the lack of agency and the coercive nature of displacement.

These narratives of rupture are closely linked to the loss of economic stability and social position. Participants recall not only the abandonment of material assets, but also the disruption of established life trajectories. As SH3 observed, “Sindhi Hindus lost their well-established secure livelihood”, indicating that migration is remembered as a collapse of continuity rather than merely a spatial relocation.

At the same time, these accounts extend beyond individual experience to include broader interpretive framings of the historical context. Some participants explicitly situate Partition within narratives of political failure or elite decision-making. For example, SH4 described it as “a wrong move” driven by “individual benefit”, suggesting that displacement is retrospectively understood as a consequence of decisions imposed upon ordinary populations. In this sense, personal loss is embedded within a wider narrative of collective injustice.

This framing is reinforced by descriptions of Partition as chaotic, unplanned, and destabilising. Terms such as “unnatural” and “hasty” (SH5) highlight the perceived mismatch between the scale of its consequences and the manner in which it was executed. Similarly, the statement that “all were losers” (SH6) reflects a broader narrative in which Partition is interpreted as a process of generalised loss rather than a clearly differentiated political outcome.

Importantly, however, these narratives do not treat rupture as a self-contained event. Even when describing the initial moment of displacement, participants frequently situate it within longer trajectories of movement and adaptation. The departure from Sindh is thus narrated not only as an ending, but also as the beginning of a sequence of subsequent relocations and adjustments.

In this sense, Partition functions less as a completed historical episode than as a narrative anchor through which later experiences are interpreted. The emphasis on rupture coexists with an implicit understanding that migration extends beyond this initial moment, unfolding over time through continued movement and reorientation. The following sections explore how this extended condition is articulated in relation to trauma, mobility, and identity.

4.2 Narrating trauma and its afterlives

In participants' narratives, trauma is not presented solely as an immediate psychological response to the events of partition, but as a layered and enduring element of how displacement is remembered and interpreted. Rather than being confined to a single historical moment, trauma appears as something that is repeatedly revisited, reformulated, and embedded within broader life trajectories.

Participants frequently describe the initial phase of displacement through expressions of distress, deprivation, and insecurity. Terms such as "psychological pain" (SH7), "serious transition" (SH8), or being "mentally traumatised" and "raped of their belongings" (SH9) function not only as descriptions of past experience, but also as narrative devices that convey the intensity and moral weight of displacement. These formulations emphasise a rupture in both material conditions and social status, framing migration as a collapse of normality.

Narratives of trauma are often anchored in recollections of drastic changes in living conditions. Participants refer to experiences of scarcity, dependence, and loss of dignity, particularly in relation to refugee camps. For example, the account that "people were not getting water and had to stand in queues for only one bucket... food was in short supply" (SH9) highlights how bodily hardship becomes central to the narrative articulation of trauma. Such accounts foreground the material and embodied dimensions of displacement.

At the same time, violence occupies a prominent place in these narratives. References to "bloodshed, fighting, and killing" (SH4) or "dead bodies on the railway track" (SH10) illustrate how extreme events are retained within both personal and family memory. Importantly, many of these accounts are mediated rather than directly experienced, indicating that trauma is not only remembered but also transmitted across generations. In this sense, trauma functions as a shared narrative resource through which the past is made meaningful in the present.

Participants' narratives also extend beyond the immediate context of partition to include later experiences of marginalisation, such as racial discrimination in diasporic settings. These accounts suggest that trauma is not temporally bounded, but is reactivated and reinterpreted in new social contexts. As such, trauma appears less as a closed historical episode and more as an ongoing interpretive framework.

Crucially, however, trauma is not narrated solely in terms of vulnerability or passivity. Participants frequently link experiences of insecurity and loss to subsequent orientations towards mobility, economic activity, and self-reliance. In this sense, trauma is narratively

reworked into a source of motivation and strategic adaptation. Rather than disappearing, it becomes integrated into patterns of decision-making and life organisation.

This narrative transformation of trauma into a resource for action becomes particularly visible in accounts of continued movement, to which we now turn.

4.3 Narrating mobility as condition

Participants' accounts consistently portray migration not as a single, completed event, but as an ongoing and, in many cases, open-ended process. Rather than describing a trajectory from displacement to settlement, narratives emphasise repeated movement across multiple locations, suggesting that mobility itself becomes a defining feature of life.

These trajectories are often recounted as sequences of relocation spanning different countries and regions. As one participant explained, “from Sindh to Taiping... from Taiping to Canada... now I am contemplating moving to the USA... we are rootless and constantly shifting” (SH5). Such accounts do not present movement as an exception, but as a normalised condition, in which relocation remains a recurring possibility rather than a one-time necessity.

In narrative terms, mobility is framed both as a response to constraint and as a strategy of advancement. Initial movements are typically associated with the search for safety and escape from violence, while subsequent relocations are linked to education, employment, and improved living conditions. Participants frequently describe the need to “start from scratch” (SH1), positioning migration as a process of continual rebuilding rather than a transition towards stability.

At the same time, these movements are embedded in social relations. References to relatives, community networks, and existing diasporic connections indicate that mobility is structured rather than random. Narratives highlight how migration pathways are facilitated by social ties, which provide both practical support and a sense of continuity across different locations.

Taken together, these accounts suggest that mobility is not only a consequence of displacement, but also a mode of organising life. What begins as forced movement is retrospectively framed as a pattern of adaptability, flexibility, and openness to relocation. In this sense, migration becomes less an event than a condition—one that shapes how participants understand both their past and their present.

However, this condition of ongoing movement also raises questions about stability and belonging. Participants' repeated references to rootlessness indicate that mobility is

accompanied by a weakening of attachment to any single place. This tension between movement and belonging becomes particularly visible in narratives of identity.

4.4 Narrating identity transformation

Participants' narratives frequently address questions of identity, often through the language of loss, adaptation, and change. However, rather than describing identity transformation as a straightforward or uniform process, these accounts reveal a more complex negotiation between continuity and adjustment.

A recurring motif is the sense that displacement and mobility have disrupted previously stable forms of belonging. Statements such as “we lost identity though we escaped the violence” (SH2) illustrate how migration is retrospectively framed as both a necessity and a source of ambivalence. Identity loss is not presented simply as a consequence of migration, but as something intertwined with the very processes that enabled survival and adaptation.

Language emerges as a key site in these narratives. Participants frequently describe the gradual shift away from Sindhi towards dominant languages in host societies. As one respondent noted, “the biggest thing they lost was their language... if we speak in Sindhi, non-Sindhis don't understand” (SH5). Here, language loss is framed not only as cultural erosion, but also as a pragmatic adjustment to social environments in which communication and integration require linguistic change.

At the same time, identity transformation is narrated as a process of substitution as well as loss. Participants describe acquiring new forms of identification—such as national identities linked to host countries—while recognising the weakening of earlier attachments. This duality reflects a broader pattern in which belonging is continuously renegotiated rather than definitively replaced.

Importantly, these narratives suggest that identity change is closely connected to mobility. The capacity to adapt linguistically, culturally, and socially enables movement across different contexts and access to new opportunities. Yet this same flexibility contributes to a loosening of ties to language, place, and inherited forms of identity. In this sense, identity transformation is not simply an outcome of migration, but part of the conditions that make mobility possible.

Rather than presenting identity loss as a purely negative outcome, participants' accounts point to a more ambivalent process in which adaptation and disconnection coexist. Belonging

becomes less tied to a single place or tradition and more dependent on context, relationships, and circumstance.

Taken together, these narratives suggest that post-partition experiences are organised around an ongoing interplay between displacement, mobility, and identity transformation. Rather than forming a linear trajectory from loss to integration, they reflect a continuous process in which meanings of home, identity, and belonging remain open, negotiated, and situational.

5. Discussion

The analysis presented in this article revisits established insights in migration and diaspora studies by approaching post-partition experiences through the lens of situated narratives. Rather than merely confirming well-documented dynamics such as displacement, trauma, or identity transformation, the interview material demonstrates that these processes acquire a different analytical significance when examined as narratively constructed and contextually embedded. What emerges is not a simple reiteration of familiar themes, but a reconfiguration of their relationships within a specific diasporic formation shaped by both lived and inherited experiences of partition.

A central implication concerns the temporal framing of migration. The findings challenge approaches that treat migration as a bounded transition from origin to destination, followed by eventual settlement or integration. Instead, participants consistently narrate trajectories marked by repeated relocation, adjustment, and reorientation. Migration must therefore be understood not as an event, but as an ongoing condition that unfolds across time and, in some cases, across generations. While this resonates with theoretical perspectives that conceptualise mobility as constitutive of modern social life, the material presented here shows that such mobility is not experienced as abstract fluidity, but as a historically grounded and often necessity-driven mode of existence rooted in the legacies of partition.

This condition of sustained mobility is inseparable from processes of identity transformation. The narratives reveal a structural tension between the capacity to adapt and the desire for continuity. Linguistic shift, cultural adjustment, and social repositioning enable migrants to navigate new environments and access opportunities; at the same time, these processes generate forms of disconnection from language, place, and inherited cultural practices. What emerges is not simply “identity loss”, but a dynamic in which adaptability and dislocation are mutually constitutive. Identity transformation is therefore not only a

consequence of migration, but one of its enabling conditions: the very flexibility that facilitates mobility simultaneously undermines the stability of identity and continuity of belonging.

This tension extends to the notion of belonging itself. Participants rarely articulate attachment in terms of a singular homeland or a definitive destination. Instead, their narratives point to a form of ongoing positionality, characterised by being located across, rather than within, specific places. The recurring motif of rootlessness does not indicate the absence of belonging, but its reconfiguration. Belonging becomes situational, relational, and contingent—shaped by networks, opportunities, and life trajectories rather than anchored in fixed territorial or cultural frameworks. In this respect, the findings provide an empirically grounded illustration of deterritorialised identity, while also demonstrating how such abstractions are lived and narrated in concrete social contexts.

The role of trauma further complicates any linear interpretation of migration as either rupture or adaptation. While participants emphasise the violence, deprivation, and insecurity associated with partition, trauma is not confined to a closed historical episode. It persists as an enduring interpretive framework through which both past and present experiences are understood. Moreover, the material indicates that trauma is not only remembered but actively reworked: it becomes embedded in orientations towards mobility, economic activity, and precaution. Trauma thus functions not merely as a legacy of displacement, but as a structuring element of practice and decision-making, shaping how individuals and families organise their lives across time and space.

Taken together, these findings suggest that the analytical value of the study lies in demonstrating how familiar categories—trauma, mobility, identity, and belonging—are not separate dimensions, but mutually constitutive processes that are narratively organised within a specific diasporic context. Migration emerges simultaneously as loss and possibility; identity as both continuity and transformation; belonging as both attachment and displacement. Rather than unfolding as a linear trajectory from rupture to integration, post-partition experiences take the form of an ongoing condition in which meanings remain open, negotiated, and contingent.

At the same time, the limits of the material must be acknowledged. The analysis is based on a small, non-representative sample, and many of the narratives are shaped by intergenerational transmission rather than direct experience. For this reason, the article does not claim to provide a comprehensive account of Sindhi Hindu migration. Its contribution lies in offering a theoretically informed and empirically grounded interpretation of how post-partition

experiences are narrated, remembered, and made meaningful within a particular diasporic configuration.

6. Conclusion

This article has explored how a small group of Sindhi Hindu migrants and descendants of migrants narrate and interpret post-partition experiences across different diasporic contexts. Rather than approaching migration as a singular historical rupture followed by integration, the analysis has shown that participants frame it as an ongoing and open-ended process, characterised by continued movement, adaptation, and renegotiation of belonging.

A central insight emerging from the study is that migration is not only something that happened, but something that continues to structure how individuals understand their past and present. The Partition, while consistently invoked as a moment of rupture, functions in the narratives less as a closed historical event than as a reference point through which subsequent experiences are interpreted. In this sense, migration becomes a condition that extends beyond geography into memory, identity, and everyday decision-making.

The analysis has also highlighted the close interrelation between mobility and identity transformation. The ability to navigate different social and cultural contexts is closely tied to processes of adaptation that reshape language use, cultural practices, and forms of belonging. Rather than interpreting these changes solely in terms of loss, the study suggests that they are part of a broader dynamic in which continuity and transformation coexist. Identity, in this context, is not fixed but continuously reconfigured in response to shifting circumstances.

Furthermore, the findings indicate that trauma, while rooted in the historical experience of partition, is not confined to the past. It persists as a narrative and interpretive resource through which both past and present are understood, and it is often rearticulated in ways that inform strategies of mobility, economic activity, and adaptation. Migration thus emerges not only as a response to trauma, but also as a means through which its effects are managed and transformed over time.

Given the exploratory nature of the study, these insights should not be understood as representative of the Sindhi Hindu diaspora as a whole. Rather, they point to the value of examining migration through the lens of narrative and intergenerational memory. Future research could build on this approach by engaging larger samples, comparative cases, or longitudinal perspectives that further explore how displacement is remembered and reinterpreted across different contexts.

Ultimately, the article suggests that post-partition migration is best understood not as a completed historical episode, but as a continuing field of meaning-making—one in which displacement, mobility, identity, and belonging remain open, negotiated, and subject to ongoing reinterpretation.

In this sense, the legacy of partition lies not only in what was lost, but in the ongoing condition of living without a final point of arrival.

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