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From Migration to Reintegration: Examining the Post-Return Experiences of Georgian Women

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Abstract

Over the past three decades, there has been a significant rise in female migration globally, a trend also evident in Georgia. The 2014 general population census in Georgia revealed a higher number of female migrants compared to male migrants, with many women engaging in care work in countries such as Greece, Turkey, and Italy. This study aims to examine the challenges that returned women migrants face in Georgian society, focusing on their reintegration at the micro (family), mezzo (community), and macro (labour market) levels.

Utilising a qualitative research approach, the study involved in-depth interviews with seven returned women migrants and five daughters of migrant mothers who remained in migration. Additionally, ethnographic analysis of Facebook posts and comments provided further insights into the reintegration experiences of ex-migrants. The research sought to understand the factors that facilitate or hinder the reintegration process, including the impact of separation periods and family members' experiences during migration and the reasons for returning from migration.

The findings indicate that reintegration is a complex process influenced by various factors. On the labour market level, returned migrants face significant challenges due to their age, deskilling, and the new labour market dynamics that emerged during their absence. Due to unfamiliarity and limited resources, many prefer to continue working in care roles, which they performed abroad. On the community level, cultural and behavioural differences between the host and home countries complicate resocialisation. Social inequality and a perceived decline in service standards also hinder reintegration.

Long-term migration has significantly altered family dynamics at the family level, making it difficult for returnees to readjust. Increased irritability and feelings of exclusion are common among returnees,

who struggle to reintegrate into family roles and responsibilities. Families' financial dependence on remittances further complicates the reintegration process.

Despite these challenges, continuous communication with family members and the support of relatives can facilitate reintegration. From a functionalist perspective, the reintegration challenges are seen as disruptions to the social equilibrium, where returning migrants struggle to reclaim their former roles and functions within the societal system.

Keywords: Female Migration, Reintegration Challenges, Georgian Migrants, Labour Market, Functionalist Perspective of returned migration

Introduction

Over the last three decades, a notable rise in female migration has occurred worldwide. According to the International Labour Organization, there were 135 million international female migrants globally in 2020, representing 3.5 per cent of the world's female population (IOM et al., 2024, p. 4). This trend is also evident in Georgia. The 2014 general population census revealed that the number of female migrants is significantly higher than that of male migrants (National Statistical Service of Georgia, 2014). Further studies confirm that 2015-2016, 60% of Georgian immigrants residing in OECD member countries were women (OECD iLibrary, 2020). Additionally, the share of Georgian immigrant women has increased by 15% since 2000, marking the third-largest increase among the selected research groups in this study (OECD iLibrary, 2020). The census results also indicate that more women than men emigrate for work, with Greece, Turkey, and Italy being the primary destinations. In these countries, Georgian women are predominantly engaged in care work (Georgian National Statistics Service, 2014).

Russell King and Aija Lulle, in their publication titled "Gendering Return Migration," acknowledge that return migration, particularly the gender aspect, has received less attention from researchers (King & Lulle, 2022). It is important to emphasise that around a quarter to a third of migrants eventually return to their home countries (Azose & Raftery, 2019). One of the most significant aspects of the migration process is the reintegration of returning migrants into their homeland. According to Preston, migrant integration is an adaptation involving give and take on both sides, as returnees and those who remained at home learn to live together (Preston, 1993, as cited in Arowolo, 2002).

Regarding the return and reintegration of migrants in Georgia, it is essential to note that Tbilisi, Imereti, and Kakheti have the highest rates of returned migrants (Krelinova & Ormotsadze, 2021). According to the same source, many emigrants returned to their homeland in 2020 due to insecurity or the impossibility of living abroad during the pandemic. Consequently, the reintegration process has been more challenging for returning migrants during the pandemic due to the disruptions in social life and changes in work regimes. This difficulty was particularly acute in terms of former migrants finding new employment.

One of the most difficult challenges for women returning from labour migration during the reintegration process is restoring relationships with family members, especially with their children. Almost all Georgian sources we have encountered highlight this significant issue. For example, Krelinova and Ormotsadze (2021) discuss how parents who migrated without their children now face communication problems with them. Similarly, Mary Chachava's research emphasises that mothers who have returned from migration find it particularly challenging to reestablish relationships with their children (Chachava, 2022).

The indicators of reintegration in Georgia are also revealing. Research shows that women have a 4.7% higher rate of social reintegration than men but a 6.6% lower rate in the psychosocial dimension (Krelinova & Ormotsadze, 2021). One of the main reasons for this disparity may be the negative attitudes toward women who have returned from labour migration. These women often face harassment because their families have come to rely on the financial support they provided for years, and their absence has left a void.

The relevance of this research issue in Georgia is underscored by the active efforts of the Internally Displaced Persons, Ecomigrants, and Livelihood Agency, which is dedicated to reintegrating returned migrants. Their programs assist people returning from illegal migration with employment, reintegration, and education. However, these programs have drawbacks, primarily focusing on those returning from illegal migration. Additionally, the agency has allocated funds for the education of returnees, business projects, and various initiatives to support post-migrants in their reintegration process.

Given this context, this research aims to examine the challenges that returned women migrants face in Georgian society. The objectives of the research are to study: a) the challenges of reintegration for Georgian returned women migrants at the micro (family), mezzo (community), and macro (labour market) levels; b) to assess how the separation period and family members' experiences during migration affect the reintegration process; and c) the connection between the reasons for returning from migration and the reintegration process. The key research question is: What factors help or hinder the reintegration of returned female migrants into Georgian society?

Considering that the experiences and histories of migrant women are highly individual and the reintegration process depends on various subjective factors, along with the sensitivity of discussing family reunion challenges, a qualitative research approach was chosen. We used in-depth interviews and ethnography (Kozinets, 2010). For in-depth interviews, we selected two target groups: returned women migrants and daughters of migrant women who remained in Georgia. Both groups were selected using purposive sampling.

The criteria for selecting returned migrants were: a) labour migration to common Mediterranean countries (all interviewed women were labour migrants in Italy, Greece, and Cyprus, primarily engaged in household or other unskilled work such as shop assistants and cleaners); b) middle-aged women (all

between 52-65 years old); and c) migration driven by the need to support their immediate or extended families financially. Based on these criteria, seven ex-migrants were interviewed using a semi-structured interview guide.

The criteria for selecting the second group, daughters of migrant mothers, were: a) having a mother who had been abroad for more than three years; b) experiencing this migration during adulthood; and c) being women aged 18-29. We interviewed five women using a semi-structured interview guide based on these criteria.

To capture the sincere attitudes of returned migrants, we also conducted an ethnographic analysis of different Facebook closed groups, analyzing the posts and comments written anonymously by ex-migrants about the challenges of reintegration. After generating qualitative data through interviews and Facebook posts/comments, we conducted qualitative content analysis, coding, and categorising the data.

Literature Review

After the dissolution of the Soviet Union, population mobility between and out of the successor states increased significantly. Political crises, ethnic tensions, and economic disasters drove millions of ex-Soviet citizens to seek opportunities beyond their communities, whether in urban centres or foreign countries. Piotr Sztompka links this surge in migration to ways of coping with the changes caused by the "victory trauma" of the Soviet Union's collapse, as people sought to accumulate more economic and social capital to overcome the rapid changes (Sztompka et al., 2004). While population mobility within the Soviet Union was not uncommon (Sahadeo, 2007), Georgians were less inclined to migrate outside their republic; as Suny (1996) notes, "Georgians [...] tended to stay within their homeland and had the highest concentration in the home republic (96.1%) of any Soviet nationality" (p. 386).

However, in the post-socialist era, migration from Georgia escalated significantly due to various triggering factors such as the difficult socio-economic situation, wars, and the new political system. These factors forced people to change their residence, migrate for work, and ensure their families' well-being with the money they earned. In the early years of Georgia's independence, male migration to Russia was predominant (Zurabishvili & Zurabishvili, 2010). During the first 15 years of independence, it was common for male household members, particularly from rural areas, to migrate to the capital city, Tbilisi or Russia. The historical proximity of the countries and the familiarity with the Russian language were key factors facilitating this migration (Mataradze, 2015).

After 2006, the worsening political climate increasingly complicated migration to the most popular destination, the Russian Federation. Rumours about discrimination against Georgian labour migrants in Russia further enhanced Georgian residents' political alienation and feelings of insecurity about living and working there. Although Russia resumed issuing visas to Georgians in a limited way at the beginning of March 2009, Georgian labour migrants faced great difficulty obtaining legal work and residency permits (Mataradze & Mühlfried, 2009). These developments caused a shift in the migration

patterns of Georgians, especially among the youth, who did not feel a connection to Russia, did not speak the Russian language, and viewed Russia as an occupying force after the 2008 Georgian-Russian war. Moreover, the creation of a common market in Europe provided employment opportunities for people in developing regions, leading to a gradual shift in the direction of Georgian emigration from the north to the west (Gogsadze, 2018).

While male migration was dominant in the first years of Georgia's independence, the feminisation of migration began in the 2000s. Studies of global migration trends indicate that the number of female migrants has increased since the 1980s as women began to seek work in other countries (Caritas Internationalis, 2012). On average, half of international migrants worldwide are women, which is why the term "feminisation of migration" has been used more actively in recent years.

When discussing the gender aspect of migration, the authors focus on several key points. First, women have fewer opportunities than men to migrate legally. However, migration can become a positive experience for women as they often assume the role of breadwinner, thereby gaining access to more power. Second, employment opportunities for women in migration are influenced by gender stereotypes, leading many to be employed in the care work sector. Lastly, women are particularly vulnerable during migration due to the lack of support and protection networks, making them more susceptible to sexual exploitation and trafficking (Chammartin, 2002).

The trends above in women's migration are also evident in Georgia. One of the main reasons for women's migration is the gender-specific fields of employment in the country. Women and men often occupy different positions, commonly in education, healthcare, and social services, while men dominate fields such as construction, information technology, and real estate (Kaladze & Davituliani, 2018). In male-dominated fields, wages are typically higher, leaving women less economically empowered and independent. Consequently, migration often becomes the primary solution for women seeking better economic opportunities.

Furthermore, women's domestic work in Georgia is primarily unpaid and influenced by historical and cultural norms. According to patriarchal standards, household work is unequally and unfairly distributed between the sexes (UN Women, 2022). Due to this labour burden, women often cannot fully engage in paid work. Migration allows women to be compensated for the domestic work they have traditionally done for free (Chachava, 2020).

In an ethnographic study of a Georgian village known for high out-migration, Mataradze (2015) examined how families cope with the effects of migration and how gender and family roles shift during this process. When men migrate, the women left behind face social pressure to justify their husbands' absence and contend with suspicions of infidelity, which strains conjugal and family relations and disrupts social and work life in the village. Remittances from migrants can alleviate some economic pressures, allowing families to accumulate wealth and improve their status by purchasing property or funding children's education. However, the stigma of being "left behind" imposes significant social

pressure on these women, often relegating them to diminished roles. Conversely, when women migrate, their absence creates a more pronounced vulnerability within the family structure, making it harder to manage household responsibilities and cope with challenges (Mataradze, 2015).

The migration of women has altered the division of labour in Georgian families, with women increasingly becoming the primary breadwinners. Additionally, despite facing opposition, women often assume decision-making roles regarding migration-related issues. Zurabishvili's research highlights that Georgian women find it safer and more convenient to engage in domestic work abroad, as living with the families they work for allows them to save on housing costs. However, living in someone else's house can lead to significant psychological stress (Zurabishvili & Zurabishvili, 2010). In contrast, Kaladze and Davituliani (2018) found that some respondents were compelled to return home due to family circumstances, often unplanned. This unplanned return negatively affected their psychological well-being and hindered their reintegration process.

Female immigrants from Georgia often become "transnational mothers," caring for other people's children while leaving their family members behind (Zurabishvili & Zurabishvili, 2010). Studies indicate that children separated from their mothers for four or more years experience the highest levels of emotional distress (Vanore, 2015). Despite this emotional toll, these mothers endure the hardships of migration to provide materially for their children. While migrant remittances positively impact children's education and health and reduce child labour, researchers have noted that the adverse effects of parental absence can outweigh these benefits (Antman, 2012).

Although living and integrating into a foreign country is one of the most challenging aspects of labour migration, reintegration upon returning to one's homeland can be equally tricky. Sociologist Georg Simmel's concept of a stranger is relevant here; he defines a stranger not as someone who comes today and leaves tomorrow but as someone who comes today and stays tomorrow (Simmel, 1908). This stranger does not belong to the group and introduces qualities that are foreign to the group itself. This challenging process is experienced by immigrants both at the beginning of their migration journey and upon their return. In both stages, they are initially strangers to the surrounding society, complicating the integration process.

Cerase proposes four different types of migrant return: "return of failure," when the migrant has not managed to integrate into the country of migration; "return of conservatism," which includes those migrants who have achieved their goals; "return of retirement," referring to retired migrants; and "return of innovation," when individuals are ready to use the tools and skills they acquired during their migration experience (Cerase, 1974, as cited in Cassarino, 2004).

Kaladze and Davituliani, who studied the reintegration of Georgian women returning from Greece into the labour market, add a fifth type to Cerase's classification: return due to unforeseen, undefined reasons, such as health conditions of loved ones or deaths in the homeland (Kaladze & Davituliani, 2018). Research suggests that immigrants' willingness to become agents of development and change

depends on their level of preparation for return. Successful reintegration requires time, resources, and the migrant's willingness to mobilise these assets (Cerase, 1974, as cited in Cassarino, 2004).

Kaladze and Davituliani's study confirms this, showing that women who returned to Georgia from Greece for unforeseen and unspecified reasons struggled to integrate into the labour market (Kaladze & Davituliani, 2018). In contrast, those who planned and prepared for their return were better suited to the labour market. This difference can be attributed to the capital accumulated during migration and psychological readiness for change, both crucial for adapting to a new environment.

Reintegration into family and society is crucial for women returning from labour migration. Despite maintaining contact with their loved ones through social networks or video calls, the virtual world cannot replace the real one. Immigrants and their families often live in countries with different cultural, socioeconomic, or political characteristics, leading to differing lifestyles. Upon return, both parties experience significant disruptions to their daily routines, causing discomfort (Chachava, 2020). Relationships often need to be rebuilt from scratch, which can be particularly challenging when it involves children who may have become parents. Mary Chachava's research highlights that it is easier to reconnect when children are young, as mothers do not miss the crucial years of their child's development, which are vital for emotional bonding and support.

Returning migrants also face social changes in their home society. According to Dumon (1986, as cited in Cassarino, 2004), a returnee must adapt to their homeland's changed behaviours and cultural norms to be re-accepted, a process known as resocialisation. This adaptation requires time and varies based on the duration of the migration. Despite the higher incomes earned abroad, returning women often do not gain bargaining power within the family. Upon their return, they typically revert to their original familial roles, even if they were the primary financial supporters during migration. This reflects the persistent patriarchal division of labour in Georgia, which remains essentially unchanged by migration experiences (Chachava, 2020).

Reintegrating into the labour market is another significant challenge for returning women migrants. Years spent abroad often mean a separation from the Georgian labour market and missed opportunities for skill development. Studies indicate that reintegration is particularly difficult for post-migrant women over 50, as employers in formal sectors prefer younger, more qualified personnel (Chachava & Zubashvili, 2023). Starting their own business is seen as a potential solution for economic integration, but many migrants lack the necessary savings. Kaladze and Davituliani (2018) found that women returning from Greece face uncertainties about the type of work they can do and where they will be employed, leading to fear and insecurity about their future income stability.

Age also poses an obstacle for post-migrant women, compounding issues such as estrangement from family and labour market reintegration. This challenge is not unique to Georgia. Studies in Canada show that immigrant women face various forms of violence and threats from husbands and children (Guruge et al., 2010). The attitudes of family members towards them can shift dramatically from the

pre-migration to the post-migration context. Chachava's research revealed that negative attitudes from children towards elderly immigrants led one 75-year-old woman to return to emigration (Chachava, 2020). Post-migrant women of retirement age often cannot meet their minimum needs with the pension provided and are excluded from the cumulative pension system (Chachava & Zubashvili, 2023). This situation complicates their reintegration and can drive them towards repeated migration.

In summary, women returning to their homeland must reintegrate with estranged relatives, a process that is incredibly challenging with adult children. They must adapt to new social norms and enter the labour market, facing dual challenges of inadequate qualifications and age, which often do not meet employer requirements. This situation is more problematic for older immigrants. Consequently, many post-migrant women face difficulties that force them to return to emigration, seeking financial independence and a stable income. Several factors influence their reintegration, including the reason for return, the level of integration in the host country, the socio-economic situation at home, and their qualifications.

Theoretical Framework

To explain the reintegration of returned migrant women in Georgia, we utilise the functionalist approach. Functionalism operates on the principle that society functions as a cohesive system, where each part contributes to the stability and continuity of the whole. This perspective examines the roles and functions of different societal elements in maintaining and reproducing the overall social structure (Little, 2013). As highlighted in the introduction, this research focuses on studying the reintegration process on three levels: macro (labour market), mezzo (community), and micro (family).

Building on Durkheim's insights, structural functionalism views society as a complex system composed of interconnected parts that work together to address its members' biological and social needs. Society functions like a body, where various organs perform essential roles to maintain stability and health (Little, 2013). Durkheim argued that modern societies are more complex than earlier ones, with individuals fulfilling various roles that depend on others performing their functions. Modern society is unified through a division of labour or organic solidarity, where a network of interconnected parts collaborates to sustain stability, much like a living organism (Durkheim, 1893). This perspective emphasises that the components of society are interdependent and work together to maintain overall equilibrium.

Using this view, we can imagine migrants, before leaving, as integral parts of society at different levels: within families (performing caregiving functions), within communities (as active members of social networks, sharing communicative, emotional, and material functions), and within the labour market (being teachers, agricultural workers, medical assistants, etc.). They were part of modern organic solidarity, taking on various essential functions.

Talcott Parsons's (1961) AGIL schema offers a valuable framework for analysing the dynamics of a migrant family as a system with four essential functions:

1. **Adaptation (A)**: Examines how the family adjusts to its environment before and after migration.
2. **Goal Attainment (G)**: This focuses on how the family identifies its goals and strategies to achieve them, whether migration is involved or not.
3. **Integration (I)**: Looks at how the family fosters cohesion and harmonious participation among its members, regardless of migration.
4. **Latent Pattern Maintenance (L)**: Investigates how fundamental cultural patterns, values, and belief systems are preserved and regulated within the family before and after migration.

Finally, Robert Merton's (1957) concepts of manifest, latent, and dysfunctional functions can help us understand the processes of migration and return migration. If the migration of female household members proves functional for the family, their return migration could initially be dysfunctional, at least temporarily, until the family adjusts to the resulting structural changes. Manifest functions of migration could include improved financial stability, while latent functions might involve family dynamics and role shifts. Dysfunctional aspects could emerge if the return disrupts established routines and dependencies.

In summary, the functionalist perspective provides a comprehensive framework to analyse the reintegration of returned migrant women in Georgia by examining how their departure and return impact family structures, community roles, and labour market participation.

Research Results

Drivers of Migration: Analyzing Push and Pull Factors

Migration is a complex cycle that begins with the decision to migrate and includes both the process of adaptation in the host country and reintegration after returning to the country of origin. To fully understand the reintegration challenges faced by women returning from labour migration, it is crucial to examine the initial stage of migration: the factors that stimulate emigration. Everett Lee's migration theory identifies four categories of factors influencing the decision to migrate: (1) factors related to the place of origin, (2) factors related to the destination, (3) intermediate obstacles (physical or cultural characteristics that impede movement to the destination), and (4) personal factors (Lee, 1966).

Lee's theory highlights significant differences between the factors related to the area of origin and those related to the destination. People living in their area of origin possess long-term knowledge and information about their location, enabling them to make informed and deliberate decisions. Conversely, knowledge about the destination is often incomplete, with its pros and cons only fully understood through experience. Nonetheless, certain positive and negative factors associated with both places are predetermined, acting as stimuli and attractions for migration.

Our research identified vital push factors that significantly influence Georgian women's decisions to migrate for work. These factors operate on macro, meso, and micro levels.

At the macro level, the primary focus is on the challenging economic situation in Georgia. Factors such as inflation, the enduring impacts of the 1990s economic turmoil, post-war conditions, low wages, exploitative labour practices, and inadequate pensions are significant drivers. All respondents had prior work experience before migrating, revealing a tendency that one of the provoking factors of migration was the imbalance between irregular working hours, workload, and pay. The unregulated labour market often resulted in unpaid excessive hours and workloads disproportionate to the pay received. Respondents reported that low salaries amid high inflation only allowed them to meet basic needs, such as food and utilities: "There is no other perspective to talk about here; it is just about covering the basic needs like food and utilities" (returned woman migrant, May 9, 2024). The problematic socio-economic conditions hinder financial and career development, as income often does not correspond to the position held.

At the meso level, factors such as the cancellation of services or the closure of employment organisations due to economic issues, including restrictions on petty trade, were identified. Social inequality within communities also emerged as a significant factor: "One day, I saw my elder son's classmates gathering for a birthday party, and he told me he could no attend because we could not afford the gift, with the price of the gift we will buy bread for two days. That moment made me decide to migrate for my children's sake" (returned woman migrant, April 19, 2024).

On the micro level, the primary motivating factor was financial problems within the family, such as the expansion of the family, children's growth, and their increasing needs: "The children were getting older, and their needs were growing. I had to leave to provide for them" (returned woman migrant, April 27, 2024). Individual factors such as overcoming psychological problems or seeking novelty by changing the environment were also identified but were more prevalent among childless migrants. Mothers consistently indicated that they "dared" to leave their children only for their children's sake. Interviews with women migrants' daughters echoed this justification. They revealed societal pressure, blaming them for their mothers' migration: "People would ask if my mother went abroad for me, making me feel blamed for her departure" (Daughter of Migrant Woman, May 16, 2024).

Another significant factor was the difficulty of finding employment and the necessity to balance service and care work. Before migration, respondents often performed unpaid care work, and migration provided an opportunity to be compensated for this labour (Chachava, 2020). However, as Barkaia (2016) points out, this does not change gender inequality issues, as care work is merely "redirected" from more privileged to less privileged women. Despite this, migration offers significant financial opportunities. After women migrate, care responsibilities are redistributed among family members. The lack of residential apartments also emerged as a micro-level factor, influenced by Georgia's patriarchal norms, where women lived in their father's houses before marriage and their husband's houses afterwards. Therefore, buying an apartment becomes a primary goal of migration.

In addition to push factors, pull factors related to the destination also play a crucial role in migration decisions. Two main pull factors were identified: perceptions of migration and social capital in the destination country.

Misconceptions about migration often play a significant role, driven by narratives created by migrants. According to Lee (1966), perceptions influence migration decisions more than actual factors, as knowledge about the destination is usually based on personal contacts or incomplete information.

The presence of social capital in the destination country is a key pull factor, helping overcome intermediate obstacles. Social capital, represented by relatives and close friends, provides various forms of support, including assistance in organising migration, reception, information sharing, adaptation, and employment support. For many respondents, social capital eased migration-related expenses.

Two Worlds: Migrant Experiences and Family Dynamics

After deciding to migrate, the initial stage involves entering the host country, often done in violation of immigration laws: “At first, I was exhausted because I travelled so many roads in a foreign country. I arrived in Turkey and then travelled by bus to Vienna, Milan, and Bari in southern Italy for two days. The journey was long and difficult, especially without knowing English or Italian” (returned woman migrant, March 12, 2024). All survey respondents reported migrating illegally, typically entering the destination country legally on a tourist visa before overstaying and working without authorisation. “We were all Georgians like this” (returned woman migrant, April 23, 2024).

The research revealed that many respondents were initially unaware of the dangers and legal implications of illegal migration, often due to limited awareness and lax enforcement in the host country. The psychological impact of illegal status was significant, causing stress and health issues: “Not having documents had a terrible effect on my health. I got headaches and high blood pressure” (returned woman migrant, April 27, 2024). To avoid detection, migrants often confined themselves to their workplaces, further isolating them from other Georgians and exacerbating feelings of loneliness and stress.

Integration into the host country presents numerous challenges, including adapting to a new environment, people, labour market, language, and cultural norms. This was their first migration experience for many respondents, making the adjustment period particularly acute. Social networks and social capital in the host country play a crucial role in aiding psychological and social integration and facilitating employment. However, in some cases, such assistance is provided at a cost: “When you do not know what to do, you agree to pay for job placement. You do not look at the cost; the main issue is to start work” (returned woman migrant, April 13, 2024)

Despite these challenges, many migrants support each other out of solidarity: “Georgians have rented apartments in all European countries. You go there, and they give you a bed. You live and pay fees until a job appears. Word spreads that a new migrant is looking for a job, and if a job appears, she starts

working. This is how Georgians help each other" (returned woman migrant, April 19, 2024). Similar challenges are typical for first-time migrants, whereas repeated migration benefits from more robust social support networks, familiarity with coping strategies, and overcoming language barriers.

Many migrant women prefer care work, which offers lighter duties than in Georgia. It often includes accommodation, reduced living expenses and more money to be saved or sent home. Despite the low wages by local standards, the income is substantial compared to Georgian wages. Most respondents were the primary financial supporters of their families, sending the majority of their earnings back home: "The only thing I needed was travel money of 10 euros. I saved up to 50 euros for food, phone, and travel; the rest went to Georgia" (returned woman migrant, April 13, 2024).

The initial working period in a foreign family was challenging due to language barriers, cultural differences, and often humiliating treatment from employers. Migrants endure these conditions out of necessity, lacking legal leverage to protect themselves from exploitation. While providing certain benefits, living at the workplace often leads to psychological and emotional strain due to the lack of personal time and space.

The emotional toll of missing family was a significant adaptation challenge, with respondents identifying homesickness as the hardest part of migration. Daily communication with loved ones helped mitigate this, but the distance inevitably affected personal relationships. Most respondents became prominent financial supporters of their families but did not gain corresponding bargaining power within the family. They remained less involved in decision-making processes despite their financial contributions, reflecting the persistent patriarchal norms that undervalue their role: "Despite sending money home, I felt I had no say in family decisions" (returned woman migrant, April 13, 2024).

Interviews with the daughters of migrant women highlighted the emotional and practical challenges they faced due to their mothers' absence: "It was tough to suddenly not have my mother by my side, especially since I spent every day with her. She was not there for me during my teenage years when I struggled to understand the changes in my body and mind. She was absent when I was finishing school and studying hard, and she was not present when I began university, eager to share my successes. Even when I graduated and started living independently, she was not there. My mother was never truly by my side" (Daughter of migrant woman, April 22, 2024). Some respondents reported severe psychological issues due to the lack of maternal support: "I experienced severe psychological issues, to the point where I felt unable to leave my room all day and was constantly unwell. If my mother had been there, she would have responded differently. At that moment, no one encouraged me to 'get up and leave the room'" (Daughter of migrant woman, March 13, 2024). In families where other relatives, such as grandparents, took over childcare duties, children experienced fewer emotional challenges: "Generally, parents are crucial for a child, but for me, it was my grandparents who filled that role. They expressed that they loved us even more than our parents typically do, and whereas our parents might refuse certain things, our grandparents always did everything for us. I remember feeling a sense of emptiness when my parents migrated when I was little, though it did not last long. Living with our

grandparents was far more engaging than being with our parents" (Daughter of migrant woman, March 15, 2024).

In addition to severing the emotional connection with the mother, the study revealed difficulties in organising daily life in the family: "[When the mother migrated] I was a minor who knew absolutely nothing, especially about family affairs. I did not know how to cook or even make tea by myself. However, suddenly, everything changed. I learned to do everything, and today I do not like it when someone else does it for me" (daughter of migrant woman, April 22, 2024). In some cases, daughters not only learned to take care of themselves but also took over the roles of mother and housewife for other family members: "I lived with my father and younger brother, and according to social norms in Georgia, I was expected to take on the role of a mother. This included managing household chores and caring for my brother, which felt like an additional burden. I was a child, missing my mother, yet I had to fulfil a maternal role for my brother as well" (Daughter of migrant woman, March 12, 2024).

After migration, most migrant women become the leading financial supporters of their families, playing a significant role in meeting the family's primary needs. Despite this, many do not gain bargaining power within the family and are less involved in critical decision-making processes. They remain distant financial supporters, reflecting the cultural perception of a "strong Georgian woman" who sacrifices her well-being for others. According to the research, "Georgian women" are often viewed as victims of cultural norms, sacrificing themselves for the sake of their families and failing to value their own needs. Respondents highlighted traits associated with strong women, such as self-sacrifice, dealing with problems alone, suppressing emotions, and doing everything possible for their children's well-being. These perceptions often lead women to cope with all problems independently.

As a result, the image of the migrant woman is shaped by these cultural representations, leading to labels such as "milk cow" and "ATM" in the sending society. Netnographic analysis suggests that these epithets stem from the migrant's role as a financially independent woman who sacrifices her psychological health. For those remaining in Georgia, the migrant is seen as a source of income, leading to ever-increasing demands as extended families seek to maintain a stable income. Female migrants are, therefore, compelled to adapt to any working conditions to meet these financial obligations: "It is like you do not allow yourself to get sick or take a break because every hour is wasted there. I stood firm and told myself I have to work and provide for my children" (returned woman migrant, April 27, 2024). Ultimately, the image of the migrant woman evolves into that of a financial supporter, losing the functions of a housewife, an emotional supporter of children, or a sexual partner of a spouse. This transformation is not solely an individual process but is shaped by cultural, societal, and familial expectations.

Research has shown that the migrant and the community left behind undergo significant changes at the initial migration stage. Over time, the situation stabilises, new functions are integrated, and adaptation to the new reality occurs. For migrants, this involves learning the language, expanding social networks, becoming closer to the host family, and adapting to the culture and lifestyle of the host

society: “I have not changed jobs much because, like children, elderly people become very attached to their caregivers. They grow accustomed to you and find it difficult to part with you. As caregivers, we become part of their family; we live with them, eat with them, and share their daily routines. This bond develops over years, not just days. In my experience, I have never had a situation where I had to leave due to a problem at work” (Returned woman migrant, April 19, 2024).

Adaptation involves developing new communication strategies between the migrant and their family. Most migrants do not share the challenges and stress they experience during the migration process with their families. Children use two types of strategies: either they avoid discussing their problems to prevent worrying their migrant parent, or they become more communicative: “Since I knew my mother should not worry, I decided to change my approach and tell her everything” (daughter of migrant woman, April 22, 2024).

The study also revealed that over time, both migrants and their families across the border adapt to the situation, which can lead to delaying or refusing return migration. For example, a daughter of a migrant woman noted: “Migration continues to this day. I sense that he no longer wants to return to Georgia. In some respects, he is right because he cannot envision how his life in Georgia would progress or how he would manage work here. He has grown accustomed to his current life and finds comfort in it” (Daughter of migrant woman, March 12, 2024). Conversely, a former migrant explained: “When I spoke with them at home, I felt reassured that they were doing okay. The children had grown up, learned to care for themselves, and pursued their dreams with the money I sent. However, their needs continued to increase. They initially required private lessons for entrance exams, then faced tuition, apartment rent, and food demands. Over time, new expenses emerged—such as securing an apartment—that were never fully met” (Returned woman migrant, April 19, 2024).

The migration journey is fraught with challenges, from initial illegal entry and integration difficulties to the emotional toll of family separation and the complexities of adaptation. Migrants and their families undergo significant changes, gradually adapting to their new realities. However, the cultural and social expectations placed on migrant women often lead to enduring challenges, compelling some to extend their stay abroad or consider re-migration.

The Return Dilemma: Navigating Reintegration and Unforeseen Challenges

Within the research framework, a tendency was revealed that from the social networks of migrants known to the respondents, only a few individuals return to their homeland. Most migrants continue to live abroad; some have decided to stay permanently and have obtained legal status, while others remain due to unfulfilled migration goals or the inability to reintegrate into their homeland. Returning to the homeland has become an exceptional case, and deciding to end years of migration is complex significantly, as it will inevitably impact the reintegration process positively or negatively.

As noted in the literature review, various factors influence the decision to return. Cerase (1974, as cited in Cassarino, 2004) distinguishes several types of returns: "return of failure," "return of retirement,"

"return of conservatism" (where migrants return after achieving their goal), and "return of innovation " (where the returning migrant is ready to use the knowledge, experience, and capital acquired during migration). Additionally, research in Georgia indicates that returns often occur due to unforeseen or undefined reasons (Kaladze & Davituliani, 2018). The complexity of the reintegration process is significantly related to the type of return. Failed returns or returns due to unforeseen reasons are often sudden and rapid, leaving the returning migrant without resources. Returning due to age can create problems in reintegrating into the labour market and family due to the migration length. Conversely, innovative returns or returns after achieving a goal can facilitate reintegration, as the migrant uses accumulated capital or feels satisfied with having fulfilled their migration goals. However, even in these cases, the reintegration process can be challenging.

Among the respondents in the study, the most frequent type of return was due to unforeseen, unspecified reasons. One case involved an innovative return, and another combined achieving a goal with returning due to unforeseen reasons.

Respondents who returned due to unforeseen reasons cited factors such as the health of a family member, their own deteriorating physical and psychological health, the inability to adapt to the host country despite years of migration fully, job loss, fear of adapting to a new job, and missing their family. In the case of an innovative return, the main goal of migration was to start a private business with accumulated capital. One respondent quickly returned after receiving financial assistance from a relative to achieve this goal.

Although the return decisions of the study's respondents align with Cerase's categories, they also mentioned other motivating factors, such as forgetting the reality and problems in Georgia, which made it easier to decide to return. Propaganda in Georgia, encouraging migrants to return with promises of a better socio-economic situation, also influenced decision-making: "Here, how many times I heard on TV - 'Come, immigrants, return to your country' - I thought there was a way. It had really improved during these seven years, and I hoped there would be jobs, and I could earn more easily" (returned woman migrant, April 27, 2024).

Personal circumstances, unforeseen events, and external factors such as media propaganda influence the decision to return to Georgia. The return type significantly affects the reintegration process, with sudden and unplanned returns posing more significant challenges. Even those who achieve their migration goals face difficulties in reintegration, highlighting the complex and multifaceted nature of the migration experience.

Reintegration Challenges and Strategies

Although the return of the labour migrant completes the most significant part of the migration cycle, this still does not mean that the migration cycle is entirely over. One of the most critical parts is reintegration, which significantly impacts the post-migrant's quality of life and can even influence the decision to re-migrate. The migrant's reintegration process and return to the homeland after many

years of migration can be adapted to Georg Simmel's definition of a stranger, according to which a stranger is a person who comes today and stays tomorrow (Simmel, 1908). The process of reintegration is an adaptation that involves giving and receiving, with people relearning to live together, including those who migrated and those who were at home in their absence (Preston, 1993, as cited in Arowolo, 2002).

Of course, reintegration does not only include adaptation within the family; it encompasses many aspects. In this study, three main dimensions of reintegration are examined: micro (family), mezzo (community), and macro (labour market) levels. Reintegration into the labour market, family, and society and the facilitating and hindering factors of reintegration at these levels are analysed.

The willingness of immigrants to become agents of development and change depends on how well they prepare in advance for their return (Cassarino, 2004). Time, resources, and desire are necessary for the migrant to achieve inevitable success. Based on the above, there are different types of return and different degrees of preparation for return, which differ in readiness and mobilisation. The reintegration process is strongly influenced by how the migrant decided to return, how prepared they were financially and psychologically, and how much they desired it. In the study by Kaladze and Davituliani (2018) on the reintegration of former migrants into the labour market, it is noted that those migrants who decided to return quickly find it difficult to establish themselves.

Labour Market Reintegration (Macro Level)

In most cases, post-migrant women discuss their difficulties during reintegration into the labour market. The reason for return is directly related to the degree of reintegration of migrants into the labour market, as either the migrant arrived mobilised with accumulated capital and a development plan or they did not. Although in some cases, the return was involuntary (due to family or personal health conditions) and in others, it was intentional, most returned migrants tried to find employment. Migrants highlight many difficulties they encountered in this process. The most frequent impeding factor is the age of the former migrant. The Georgian labour market mostly looks for young staff, a requirement that former migrants cannot meet: "There was an age limit that I was already well past" (returned woman migrant, April 23, 2024)

In one case, the problem of deskilling was revealed, causing regret in the former migrant and aggravating the feeling of wasted time. A returned migrant woman, a high school teacher before migration, says: "After returning, I have not even considered the option of employment at the school. So many years have passed... who would have kept me in employment place!... since then, if I had been teaching, how many things have changed: the approach, the program, people have changed their certification, and I was busy caring for the elderly at that time!" (returned woman migrant, April 19, 2024).

There is also the factor that the imbalance between pay and workload in Georgia is unacceptable after working abroad. They believe that the work performed does not correspond to the income received

from the given work, excessive hours are not paid at all or only partially, and the few jobs where there may be a possibility of employment offer no development perspective. Even though their work rights were not protected even during illegal migration, they often had to perform exploitative work. They believe that the rights of employees in Georgia are significantly violated. Returned migrants mostly try to find employment in the field of care work. Lack of finance and collected capital to start a business is also an impeding factor. According to the respondents, low salaries in the country often do not allow them to meet their basic needs, let alone rest. As Maya Barkaia (2016) points out, people are often forced to choose between starvation and exploitative labour, so some are unable to rest and are punished with exploitative labour, while for others, rest is punished with unemployment.

Additionally, it is crucial to understand the lack of information. Migrants spend many years away from the Georgian economic system, and it is natural that after their return, they need orientation and information on how to engage in economic activities. They do not know exactly what type of work they can do or where they will be employed after returning (Kaladze & Davituliani, 2018). This factor had a significant impact on the reintegration of one respondent, who could not receive help from the state reintegration program to start her own business precisely because of the lack of information about the current situation in Georgia's economic sector: "I was a new arrival, alienated from that point of view. You don't know what's going on for five years, five and a half years, what's going on here, who makes a living, what could be more profitable" (returned woman migrant, April 23, 2024).

There was also a trend that respondents who did not attempt employment after migration considered the experiences of other ex-migrants or people living in Georgia regarding barriers to employment and, therefore, did not attempt employment.

The scepticism of the daughters of migrant mothers about their parents' return is also engaging. None of them mentioned for sure that their mother should or was planning to come back shortly. In some cases, they wished their parent to obtain legal documents to travel freely and, in one case, to take the family with them. One daughter's position is particularly noteworthy: "When I think of my mother's return, I am very concerned. What would she do here? Going back to the village and continuing cattle breeding or gardening? No way! Doing the same here [in the capital]? How much will she earn, 100-200 EURO? So after some worries, I say to myself that her coming back is far away and try not to think about it" (daughter of migrant mother, March 12, 2024).

These worries reveal the moral and economic judgments migrant family members have. In a society like Georgia, migration, even doing care work, is seen as upward mobility. Family members do not want their mothers to lose this position, as agricultural work or care work in Georgia is perceived as lower status than doing the same job in Europe. Additionally, these jobs in Georgia do not guarantee as much income as migration. Migrants working in households experience deskilling, and the youth are aware that their mothers may struggle to maintain their status and income upon returning. The only optimistic case involved a migrant who transitioned from care work to studying stomatology and now works in that profession: "My mother is planning to come back. She wants to open her clinic. But

I doubt she will manage to return here finally; at least she will open her own business" (daughter of migrant mother, Date). She explained that her worries are based on the years since her mother's migration and the significant changes in Georgian society.

Because most returned migrants performed care work during their time abroad, they often prefer to continue in similar roles upon returning to their home country. This preference is influenced by their willingness to engage in familiar activities and objective realities such as their age, which is not favoured in the local labour market, deskilling, and the emergence of new labour market trends during their absence. These new trends create challenges for returnees who lack the information and adaptability to navigate the current job market effectively.

From a structural-functionalist perspective, the labour market in the sending society can be seen as a social system that continues to evolve, adapting to new tendencies and demands. As migrants leave, the local labour market progresses by incorporating younger and more adaptable local workers, leaving returning migrants estranged from the local context. This alienation is compounded by the fact that returning migrants are often not well-prepared with new qualifications, skills, or financial resources, making it difficult to find their place in the local labour market.

Structural functionalism, which views society as a cohesive system where each part contributes to stability and continuity, supports this observation. When migrants leave, the labour market and social systems adapt by filling gaps with local talent. Upon their return; migrants find that the labour market has moved on without them, preferring younger and more qualified candidates better aligned with current demands. This situation aligns with Durkheim's concept of organic solidarity, where various parts of society are interdependent and function collectively to maintain stability (Durkheim, 1893).

Additionally, Parsons's AGIL schema can be applied here to understand the challenges returned migrants face. The labour market's adaptation (A) to new trends and younger workers, goal attainment (G) in terms of meeting current demands, integration (I) of the local workforce, and maintenance of latent patterns (L) all work against the reintegration of returned migrants who lack up-to-date skills and resources (Parsons, 1961).

Merton's concepts of manifest and latent functions also highlight that while the manifest function of migration is economic improvement, the latent function may include deskilling and social estrangement, making reintegration challenging. The dysfunctionality experienced by returning migrants underscores the complexity of their situation, where their previous roles no longer exist, and they struggle to adapt to new ones (Merton, 1957).

In summary, the labour market reintegration of returned migrants is hindered by their age, lack of up-to-date skills, and the evolving nature of the local labour market, which prefers younger, more adaptable workers. Structural functionalism provides a framework to understand these challenges, emphasising the interconnectedness of societal roles and the difficulty of reintegrating into a system that has progressed in its absence.

Community Reintegration (Mezzo Level)

A returnee from migration must adapt to the community's changed behaviour and cultural norms in their homeland, a process referred to as resocialisation (Dumon, 1986, as cited in Cassarino, 2004). The period of resocialisation depends on the duration of migration. Many respondents emphasised the radical differences in culture, behaviour, and dress between the sending and receiving communities. Adjusting to these differences proved difficult for the respondents, who often held more positive attitudes towards the customs and behaviours in their country of migration: "These people's behaviours and something was very unacceptable after how polite they are, I don't know, they are different people" (returned woman migrant, April 25, 2024).

Differences in behaviour were also observed in the service sector. Migrants found the work culture in Georgia unacceptable, not only due to the difficulty of employment but also due to the perceived rudeness of staff, especially when compared to the more polite service they experienced abroad. They highlighted the stark contrast in the behaviour of employees in transport and supermarkets, noting that the service was generally more courteous in the countries where they had migrated.

Social inequality and hardship in Georgia pose significant obstacles to resocialisation, as post-migrants compare these conditions to those in the country of migration, making it difficult to adjust to their new reality. For some, the process of socialisation in society is closely tied to reintegration into the labour market. Respondents who struggled to find employment felt they could not adapt to the societal norms, cultural innovations, and rules after many years abroad: "What do I know, how can I tell you, I'm sitting at home, and it's hard for me, yes, I told you to find a job, it turns out that I couldn't do it, I couldn't do it anymore" (returned woman migrant, April 23, 2024).

Environmental conditions further complicate the resocialisation process. Many returnees negatively evaluated Georgia's urban development and environmental opportunities compared to what they had experienced in more developed countries. Despite these challenges, some positive factors also supported their resocialisation. Improved conditions in their residential areas and the development of the construction sector were noted as facilitating factors.

Family and community support played a crucial role in the reintegration process, especially for those who returned due to unforeseen circumstances. Respondents emphasised the importance of nostalgia and the fact that, unlike in a foreign country, they did not have to adapt to complete strangers: "You feel like an outcast there, in a foreign country, that you can't be with your home people and you're with strangers and everything happens to you there, it's nostalgia and everything, and nothing here, usually" (returned woman migrant, May 9, 2024).

However, the expectations of finding the same environmental opportunities and conditions as in the country of migration often led to stress upon their return: "I was under terrible stress for 3-4 months, I was looking for that space, I was looking for that beauty" (returned woman migrant, April 25, 2024).

This stress was particularly pronounced when their perceptions of their pre-migration and migration period differed significantly from the current reality in Georgia.

Migration significantly changes an individual's way of life and values. Respondents often felt better during their migration due to the receiving country's culture, people, positive support, and beautiful environment. These values and lifestyles became an integral part of their daily lives. Many migrants, finding the Georgian reality unacceptable, chose to take their families with them and remain abroad: "It is so unacceptable to live in Georgia anymore, I don't think they [other migrants] will ever return" (returned woman migrant, April 25, 2024).

An exciting factor identified in the research is the change in dressing styles and living a freer lifestyle. In the country of migration, practical and simple clothing was preferred, reducing the pressure to maintain a specific appearance constantly. This change positively impacted their lifestyle, making them less concerned with others' opinions.

When discussing their relationships with the local community, returned migrants often mentioned the loss of close friends: "Unlike my family, I couldn't maintain the same relationship with my friends; I even lost some of them, although those who were close to me returned from the moment of my arrival, as usual, we celebrated our arrival and caught up with each other's lives" (returned woman migrant, March 12, 2024). Another challenging aspect was the community's expectations: "There are already two categories. One who is interested in how I am, and I continue to be in close contact with them. And the second part, which thinks because I was abroad, I brought millions, and they are asking me for money" (returned woman migrant, April 19, 2024).

The expectation for migrants to provide financial support or gifts is widespread. Ernesto Castañeda (2012) describes the frustration of Maria, a Georgian immigrant in New York, who feels pressured to send money despite her financial struggles. She notes that her relatives expect substantial amounts and view her as wealthy, constantly demanding financial assistance and gifts. Maria likens her situation to being a “Santa Claus,” where the gifts are often unappreciated, reflecting her family's dependency on her remittances.

This tendency can be explained by two reasons: a) migrants often present themselves as successful in avoiding the stigma of failure, raising the community's expectations, and b) reciprocal expectations, as highlighted by the interviews with daughters of migrant mothers. The daughters often spoke about the physical and emotional support they received from community members while their mothers were abroad: "At school age, when all the other children's parents come to the meeting and your mother can't come, it's also psychologically difficult. I also remember cases where I brought my neighbor to my meeting instead of my mother" (daughter of migrant mother, March 12, 2024). Another respondent mentioned that friends' families shared food, invited her home, and cared for her: "When my mother wasn't here, my friends, even their parents, stood by me. Without them standing by my side, it would

have been much more difficult for me to get through this time, if I had been alone with this problem" (daughter of migrant mother, March 13, 2024).

As children sometimes hide the challenges they faced after their mothers' migration, returned migrant women often do not know much about the past relationships between their family members and the community. This lack of awareness can make the community's demands and expectations seem strange upon their return.

Summary: Community reintegration for returned migrants involves adapting to changed behaviours, cultural norms, and environmental conditions. Factors that support reintegration include family and community support, nostalgia, and local infrastructure development. Hindering factors include negative comparisons with the country of migration, unrealistic expectations, and social inequality. The functionalist perspective helps to understand these dynamics, highlighting the interdependence of societal roles and the challenges of resocialisation in a changed community context.

Family Reintegration (Micro Level)

Before the end of many years of migration, the migrant must adapt to long-distance relationships and learn to live with their family again, as their daily lives have been radically different over the years. In this case, factors hindering and facilitating reintegration into the family were also distinguished.

One of the most significant hindering factors is the length of migration. Almost all interviewed respondents noted that their prolonged absence had radically, significantly, and negatively changed their relationships with family members. As they were reluctant to share the stories of their own families, they recounted stories of other Georgian women emigrants they met during their migration who failed to reintegrate into their families because they were no longer considered full members: "She came to her family, to her own house, to the house she built, she struggled so much during so many years to build this house… but when she came to that house, she did not find her bed, there was no sleeping space left for her anymore" (returned woman migrant, April 25, 2024). Migrant women's daughters tell a similar situation from a different angle: "When my mother got the legal documents, she came back. My sister and I were preparing for her to meet. We wanted our mother to feel everything was the same as she left. However, it was not... there were new items, new orders... We even had difficulties recalling how it was before Mom left. It was impossible to reconstruct" (daughter of migrant mother, March 12, 2024). This change in environment can be seen as symbolic, reflecting more profound shifts in relationships, functions, and roles within the home. One migrant woman who openly admitted conflict with her husband explained: "By migrating, I took such a big burden on myself that I expected my husband to share the responsibility. I thought we were both obligated to take care of our children together, me financially, him physically and emotionally at least. A few years later, I came from a vacation in Georgia, and then I felt that I was the only one, both mother and father and that the entire load was transferred to me. From here, the relationship between me and my husband got mixed up, and finally, we got to the point where he continued to live for himself and I for myself.

I decided that I prefer to be alone, I am more at peace, I have no complaints against anyone, and I do what I can and as I can for my children" (returned woman migrant, April 19, 2024).

As we see, the family structure and relationships also change significantly after the migrant's return, making it difficult for people to adapt to living together again. The main solution often seems to be re-migration, as confirmed by one respondent's story: "After her migration, her husband met her so aggressively that she said she can't live with him anymore, she got up and emigrated again" (returned woman migrant, May 9, 2024).

In addition to the increased aggressiveness of family members who remained in Georgia, irritability among post-migrants is also common, as confirmed by respondents' experiences: "It was too difficult for me, do you know how I was?! I was very agitated; I used to fight all the time and with family members at home all the time." Respondents attributed their increased excitability and irritability to several factors. One reason is that they became accustomed to solitude during migration, which became their comfort zone. The return home significantly disrupted the new lifestyle they had acquired abroad, which was incompatible with life in Georgia. Another reason is the changed environment at home, which was almost nothing like the one before migration.

While listening to the stories of migrant women's daughters, one additional disrupting factor appears. While left alone, the children learned how to live independently: "My mother's departure primarily taught me to live independently. Of course, it wasn't easy at first, but then I got used to the fact that the day would come when I would have to be without my parents and I would have to take care of myself. Because when you do not always have your mother by your side to help you make decisions, you have to make those decisions yourself. Therefore, it can be a catalyst in my life to achieve something independently, on my own" (daughter of migrant mother, March 12, 2024). Another daughter mentioned, "Mom's departure taught me independence, but real independence, not just to wash the dishes and cook. You do not have anyone. Here is a simple example: if you want to make an appointment with a doctor, you cannot tell the doctor, 'My mother called,' and know you are scheduled at one o'clock. No, I talked to you and made the appointment myself. It is a simple example, maybe even absurd, but you start making decisions on your own" (daughter of migrant mother, March 12, 2024). Simultaneously, one of the daughters mentioned that when her mother returned, she felt discomfort: "Although we had close communication via the internet while she was gone, it felt different when she came back. For me, it was like controlling me, and I protested. I was not used to questions like: Where are you going? Why? With whom? I am ashamed, but sometimes I reacted negatively to my mother's comments" (daughter of migrant mother, March 12, 2024).

One of the most important reasons is that family members who remained in Georgia do not understand the migrant's experience, creating a feeling of exclusion and foreignness: "I had an inner scream somehow that they are all together, here they are together, and I am alone. Why did I come back? I thought many times that I should not have come." The respondent also noted that the COVID-19 period further separated migrants from their families. According to Krelinova and Ormotsadze's

research, many Georgian migrants returned to their homeland during the pandemic due to the impossibility and insecurity of living abroad (Krelinova & Ormotsadze, 2021). Consequently, the pandemic has also become an essential obstacle for post-migrants in terms of both family reintegration and resocialisation in society.

Additionally, reintegration is significantly complicated by the financial dependence of the family remaining in Georgia on the migrant's remittances. Most respondents noted that during the migration period, they were the prominent financial supporters of their extended families. The more the family and relatives depend on financial remittances, the more difficult it is for them to adjust to the migrant's return, especially if the migrant returns without savings. Both from in-depth interviews and from the netnography, it is evident that the majority of returned migrants feel undervalued: "The main thing is to feel that they [family members] understand your sufferings and appreciate what you did" (returned woman migrant, April 13, 2024).

Post-migrants expect the return of given favours from their family members, and failure to receive this harms the reintegration process. However, the main problem, as revealed by the netnography, is the lack of awareness among household members about the problems faced by the migrants. Influenced by the image of a migrant woman, they have different ideas about the financial capabilities of a migrant. Identifying the factors supporting reintegration in the family is crucial, among which is the migrant's role in daily communication with family members. Keeping family members informed about their lives positively impacts the reintegration process after return, as migrants are not entirely deprived of information about their families. The reintegration process is facilitated by nostalgic and strengthened emotional attitudes towards family members that arose during the migration period. The financial or psychological support of relatives and family members also plays an important role, especially when migration ends due to unforeseen reasons.

Describing the post-migration experiences of women using Parsons' AGIL Schema might help to explain the disruptions of the reintegration process:

Adaptation (A): The family's ability to adapt to the migrant's absence and eventual return is crucial. Migrants adapt to new environments and roles during their time abroad, while family members adapt to new responsibilities and routines in the migrant's absence. Upon return, both parties must readjust to living together, often leading to conflicts and a reevaluation of roles within the family.

Goal Attainment (G): Migrants and their families set goals related to migration, such as financial stability and improved living conditions. The attainment of these goals influences the reintegration process. If the goals are achieved, the family may find it easier to reintegrate the migrant; if not, tensions and dissatisfaction may arise.

Integration (I): The integration process involves reintegrating the migrant into the family unit and re-establishment of familial bonds. This can be challenging due to changes in family dynamics, roles, and

relationships during the migrant's absence. Effective communication and mutual understanding are essential for successful reintegration.

Latent Pattern Maintenance (L): The family's ability to maintain cultural values, norms, and traditions during the migrant's absence and upon their return is critical. Migrants may adopt new values and behaviours from their host country, which can conflict with those of their families. The ability to reconcile these differences is crucial for maintaining family cohesion.

According to Merton's theory (1957), the return of the migrant can be seen as dysfunctional. The family, having adapted to a new lifestyle and independent social system, may find the return of the migrant disruptive. The family members have adjusted to new roles and responsibilities in the migrant's absence, creating a new equilibrium. The migrant's return may challenge this balance, leading to conflicts.

Family reintegration is a complex and challenging process influenced by several factors. Hindering factors include the length of migration, increased irritability among returnees, financial dependence on family members, and a lack of understanding of the migrant's experiences. Facilitating factors include continuous and honest communication with family members, nostalgic feelings, and the support provided during and after migration. Analysing these findings using Parsons' AGIL schema highlights the importance of adaptation, goal attainment, integration, and latent pattern maintenance in understanding the dynamics of family reintegration for returned migrants.

Conclusion

This research examined the challenges that returned women migrants face in Georgian society, focusing on the reintegration process at the micro (family), mezzo (community), and macro (labour market) levels. The study sought to understand how the separation period and family members' migration experiences affect reintegration and explore the connection between the reasons for returning from migration and the reintegration process.

Most returned migrants prefer to continue working in the care sector upon returning to Georgia, influenced by their prior experience and the limited opportunities for older workers in the local labour market. Their challenges include age discrimination, deskilling, and a lack of updated knowledge about the emerging labour market trends during their absence. Through a structural functionalist lens, it is evident that the Georgian labour market has adapted to new trends and demands, often leaving returned migrants feeling alienated and without a clear role.

The reintegration process at the community level involves adapting to changed behaviours and cultural norms. Returned migrants often find the differences between the host and home communities stark, complicating their resocialisation. Compared to the more favourable conditions in the host countries, social inequality and hardships in Georgia further hinder this process. Despite these challenges,

community support and nostalgia can facilitate reintegration, though the expectation to provide financial support can create tension.

Lengthy migration periods significantly alter family dynamics, making it challenging for returned migrants to re-establish their roles within the family. Increased irritability and aggressiveness among both migrants and family members further complicate reintegration. Financial dependence on remittances creates additional pressure, as family members often have unrealistic expectations about the migrant's financial capabilities. Continuous communication and emotional support from family members during the migration period positively impact the reintegration process.

Analysing these findings through Parsons' AGIL schema, it becomes clear that:

- Adaptation (A) involves migrants and their families adjusting to new roles and environments.
- Goal Attainment (G) focuses on achieving financial stability, which influences the success of reintegration.
- Integration (I) highlights the importance of re-establishing familial bonds and roles.
- Latent Pattern Maintenance (L) underscores the need to maintain cultural values and norms, which can be a source of conflict if the migrant has adopted new values from the host country.

Merton's concept of dysfunctions further illuminates the complexities of reintegration. A migrant's return can disrupt the family system that has adapted to a new equilibrium in the migrant's absence. Family members have adjusted to new roles and responsibilities, and the migrant's return may challenge this balance, leading to conflicts.

In conclusion, the reintegration of returned women migrants in Georgia is a multifaceted process influenced by factors across different levels. Addressing age discrimination, providing updated labour market information, fostering community support, and maintaining continuous family communication is essential to facilitating successful reintegration. These measures can help mitigate the potential dysfunctions that arise from the disruption of established family and community systems, thereby reducing the likelihood of re-migration. However, in cases where families, communities, labour markets and the returned migrants fail to adapt to each other, re-migration remains viable for post-migrant women. As one of the interviewed ex-migrant women mentioned: "I have said to my migrant friend, if a good job comes up, I will go back there again... If there is, what do I know? I hope there will be, and I will go" (returned woman migrant, month, date, year).

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მატარაძე, თეონა[1], შორენა თურქიაშვილი[2], ელენე ელიკაშვილი[3]

[1]დოქტორი, ასოცირებული პროფესორი, ივანე ჯავახიშვილის სახელობის თბილისის სახელმწიფო უნივერსიტეტი, **https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8248-2992**; [2]დოქტორი, ასისტენტ პროფესორი, ივანე ჯავახიშვილის სახელობის თბილისის სახელმწიფო უნივერსიტეტი; [3]სოციოლოგიის საბაკალავრო პროგრამის სტუდენტი, საქართველოს საზოგადოებრივ საქმეთა ინსტიტუტი

აბსტრაქტი

უკანასკნელი სამი ათეული წლის განმავლობაში მსოფლიოს მასშტაბით შეიმჩნევა ქალთა მიგრაციული ნაკადების ზრდა, რაც ასევე დამახასიათებელია საქართველოსთვის. მოსახლეობის 2014 წლის საყოველთაო აღწერის შედეგების მიხედვით, ქალი მიგრანტების რიცხვი ბევრად აღემატება კაცი მიგრანტების რიცხვს (საქართველოს სტატისტიკის ეროვნული სამსახური, 2014) და ქართველი ქალი მიგრანტები ძირითადად დასაქმებულნი არიან საბერძნეთის, იტალიის თუ თურქეთის შინამეურნეობებში, ხშირად ლეგალური

დოკუმენტაციის გარეშე. წარმოდგენილი სტატიის მიზანია შეისწავლოს დაბრუნებული ქალი მიგრანტების გამოწვევები მიკრო (ოჯახი), მეზო (თემი) და მაკრო (შრომის ბაზარი) დონეებზე.

წარმოდგენილი სტატია ეფუძნება თვისებრივ მიდგომას, რომლის ფარგლებში შვიდი სიღრმისეული ინტერვიუ ჩატარდა დაბრუნებულ ქალ მიგრანტებთან, ხუთი სიღრმისეული ინტერვიუ - მიგრაციაში მყოფი ქალი მიგრანტების ქალიშვილებთან და ეთნოგრაფიული მიდგომით მოხდა ფეისბუქ გვერდებზე გამოქვეყნებული ყოფილი მიგრანტი ქალების პოსტებისა და კომენტარების შესწავლა. კვლევამ გამოავლინა ფაქტორები, რომლებიც ხელს უწყობენ ან აფერხებენ დაბრუნებულ ქალ მიგრანტთა რეინტეგრაციის პროცესს, რომელთა შორისაა განშორების ხანრგძლივობა და ოჯახის წევრთა გამოცდილება.

კვლევის მიგნებები მიუთითებს, რომ რეინტეგრაცია რთული პროცესია, რომელზეც გავლენას ახდენს სხვადასხვა ფაქტორი. დასაქმებისას დაბრუნებული მიგრანტები მნიშვნელოვანი გამოწვევებს აწყდებიან ასაკის, კვალიფიკაციის და მათი არყოფნის პერიოდში შრომის ბაზრზე გაჩენილი ახალი ტენდენციების არცოდნის გამო. არაინფორმირებულობისა და შეზღუდული რესურსების გამო ბევრ დაბრუნებულ მიგრანტს ურჩევნია გააგრძელოს ზრუნვის შრომა, რომლებსაც ისინი საზღვარგარეთ ყოფნისას ასრულებდნენ. თემის დონეზე, მიმღებ და გამგზავნ ქვეყნებს შორის კულტურული და ქცევითი განსხვავებები ართულებს რესოციალიზაციის პროცესს. სოციალური უთანასწორობა და მომსახურების დაბალი სტანდარტები ასევე ხელს უშლის რეინტეგრაციას.

გაჭიანურებული მიგრაცია საგრძნობლად ცვლის დარჩენილი ოჯახის დინამიკას, სტრუქტურას და წევრთა შორის ვალდებულებების გადანაწილებას, რაც ართულებს დაბრუნებულთა ადაპტაციის პროცესს. დაბრუნების პროცესის თანმხლები ნეგატიური ემოციები და გარიყულობის გრძნობა გამოწვევაა ყოფილი მიგრანტებისთვის, რომლებიც იბრძვიან ოჯახის სტრუქტურაში ადგილის დასამკვიდრებლად. ოჯახების წევრთა ფინანსური დამოკიდებულება ფულად გზავნილებზე კიდევ უფრო ართულებს აღნიშნულ პროცესს. ოჯახის წევრებთან ხშირი და გულწრფელი კომუნიკაცია და ახლობლების მხარდაჭერა ხელს უწყობს დაბრუნებულ ქალ მიგრანტთა წარმატებულ რეინტეგრაციას.

ფუნქციონალისტური პერსპექტივიდან, რეინტეგრაციის გამოწვევები შეიძლება განვიხილთ, როგორც სოციალური წონასწორობის დარღვევა, სადაც დაბრუნებული მიგრანტები იბრძვიან თავიანთი ყოფილი სტატუსების, როლებისა თუ ფუნქციების დასაბრუნებლად საზოგადოების მიკრო, მეზო და მაკრო დონეზე. მაშინ როდესაც ეს პროცესი წარმატებით არ მიმდინარეობს, ყოფილი მიგრანტები ხელსაყრელ გარემოებებს ელოდებიან მიგრაციაში დასაბრუნებლად.