

LEBANESE  AMERICAN UNIVERSITY

Second-Generation Lebanese–Venezuelan Return Migration: Reintegration
and Re-Emigration in Times of Concurrent Crises

by

Andrew Denison

A Thesis

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of Master
of Arts in Migration Studies

School of Arts and Sciences

July 2021

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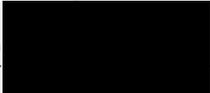
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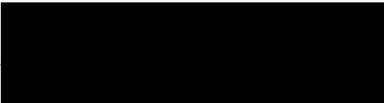
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To my family and friends—for their transnational love and support.

Second-Generation Lebanese–Venezuelan Return Migration: Reintegration and Re-Emigration in Times of Concurrent Crises

Andrew Denison

ABSTRACT

This dissertation will first introduce the concepts of return migration, re-emigration, and provide an outline of the related theoretical frameworks and their limitations including return preparedness and migration cycles. Generational migration cycles are proposed to capture the nuances of second-generation returnees, specifically their directionality. This research adopts a mixed-methods approach to assess the return preparedness and generational migration cycles of second-generation Lebanese–Venezuelan return migrants to Lebanon. Re-emigration is examined with a focus on the decision-making process undertaken by the returnees upon return. This research reveals the existence of a unique childhood mobility, compelled-youth returnees, and it dispels the bias surrounding re-emigration, specifically it being a failure of reintegration. Finally, second-generation Lebanese–Venezuelans returnees are uniquely adept at managing the current political and socioeconomic crises occurring in Lebanon. Their prior experiences in Venezuela, along with their fluid conceptions of identity and ‘homes’; dynamic transnational links; transnational consciousness/ease of mobility; strong familial and community networks; and assuredness from their faith in God has provided many returnees with a sense of calm in the context of concurrent crises.

Keywords: Return migration, Re-Emigration, Return Preparedness, Migration Cycles, Second-Generation, Lebanon, Venezuela, Crises,

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Part I

Definitions, Theoretical Development, and Introduction to Generational Migration Cycles

Chapter One

Introduction

The Institute of Economics and Peace (2021), in the latest publication of its Global Peace Index, has reported a decline in global peacefulness with a sustained rise in civil unrest in the last decade, which is set to worsen as the economic impact of Covid-19 takes hold. Civil unrest has doubled since 2011 with 96 countries recording violent demonstrations in 2019. Economic hardship, police or security force brutality, and political instability were the main contributors to citizen protests (Institute of Economic and Peace, 2021). It would be safe to assume that instability, civil unrest, crisis, and conflict are on track to continue growing given the plethora of prospective disruptions over the horizon. These may be (but are not limited to): climate change, global recession, pandemic health crises, economic and social inequality, intra- and international conflict, and growing authoritarianism around the world. We may now see countries, which were once perceived as secure, safe, and stable, undergoing various forms of unrest and conflict. Migrants now are more often compelled to make the difficult choice of returning to their country of origin—regardless of whether they were optimally prepared to do so or not. They must, as a substantial bulk of scholarly literature has outlined, make necessary and painstaking decisions, mobilize the sufficient resources whether they are tangible (money, assets, property) or intangible (social contacts, relationships, skills, networks), weigh the pros and cons, evaluate the risks and benefits, and consider the conditions in both the country they are leaving (destination country) and the country they are returning to (origin country).

Yet, what happens if the country of origin, upon return, undergoes its own economic, social, or political unrest? As of today, this appears to be the reality for the many Lebanese-Venezuelans returning from Venezuela. Lebanese-Venezuelan return migrants are now faced with a repeat scenario whereby they must *again* make the painstaking decisions, assess their resources, weigh the pros and cons, and decide whether

to remain in their country of origin, re-emigrate to the country they, or their family, initially left, or migrate onwards to a third country. Furthermore, living in a globalized and hypermobile world has added new layers of complexity when examining return migration. The children, grandchildren, or even great grandchildren of first-generation emigrants will undoubtedly have different conceptions of ‘home’, identity, and belonging towards both the origin and destination country, and thus the patterns of reintegration and intentions to re-emigrate will differ considerably. Herein lies a new phenomenon for research which appears to be increasing in ubiquity.

This research seeks to provide in-depth analysis using a mixed-methods approach to study the phenomenon of second-generation Lebanese–Venezuelan return migrants in Lebanon, their experiences living in Venezuela, the return preparedness of their return, their reintegration into their origin country, and their intentions to re-emigrate or migrate onwards given the concurrent political and socioeconomic crises. Part I will explain the concepts and definitions this research utilizes; namely, definitions and the theoretical development of return migration and second-generation return mobilities (Chapters 2 and 3). The theoretical development is presented to understand the fundamentals of Cassarino’s (2004; 2008a; 2014) model of return preparedness and migration cycles—which constitutes the theoretical models and primary independent variables this research builds upon. Chapter 4 will revisit the theoretical models of return migration within the context of second-generation return migration. This is illustrated to emphasize the theoretical limits of conventional theories of return migration in explaining second-generation return mobilities. Chapter 5 will introduce the major chronotopes¹ of return migration which tackle the nuances and complexities of second-generation return migration; a relatively nascent sub-field within the larger return migration phenomenon.

Chapter 6 seeks to combine the second-generation return chronotopes and reframe salient aspects within Cassarino’s return preparedness theoretical model. As return preparedness has yet to be applied to second-generation return migration, this research

¹ First proposed by Bakhtin (1981) in an essay called “Forms of Time and of the Chronotope in the Novel”, chronotopes are the configurations of time and space which are represented in language and discourse. By framing second-generation return mobilities as ‘chronotopes’, it seeks to capture the time-space element which generates diverging narratives of return based on conceptions of where and when such mobilities take place.

will provide summaries of second-generation return within the return preparedness framework to illustrate gaps in the literature. This research found that the majority of theoretical research in the field of second-generation return migration describes the variegated aspects of return mobilities within circumstances of returnees exercising significant degrees of agency in their return. In other words, scholarly research has paid attention to second-generation return mobilities where return migrants *choose*, based on their own free will, to return to the origin country. Thus, second-generation return migrants are often wealthier, maintain more resources, and, in general, return based on more favorable circumstances rather than negative. Given the political and socioeconomic crises afflicting the destination (and origin) country, the theoretical model of return preparedness strongly incorporates the notion of *compelled* return to also capture return mobilities in circumstances of crises. Furthermore, because Cassarino's concepts of return preparedness do not adequately capture the added complexities of the second-generation, new concepts—specifically, the diaspora–transnational spectrum and *generational migration cycles*—will be introduced to account for the dynamic and evolving complexity of second-generation return migrants.

Chapter 7 will outline the procedures this study took to implement the mixed-methods approach. Both quantitative and qualitative research methods were utilized to not only mitigate any shortfalls, but also to provide more illustration and depth of analysis in this unique and understudied return phenomenon. Specifically, this research seeks to discover what the impacts of return preparedness and generational migration cycles have on their resettlement and reintegration into their origin country—a country, perhaps, they have never visited. Furthermore, given the similarities between Lebanon and Venezuela in terms of challenging socioeconomic conditions, what decision-making factors do returnees find salient when considering the option of re-emigrating will be examined.

Part II will provide a historical account of the pre- and post-return conditions for both Venezuela and Lebanon (Chapter 8) and present the quantitative data for this research. Returnees' migratory links between the two countries will also be elaborated on. Chapter 9 will provide the research sample's demographic information, return preparedness, and their migration cycles. This research also introduces a new childhood return mobility, which will be referred to as *compelled-youth return* and their migration

cycle as *interrupted-youth migration cycle*. With the inclusion of this new childhood return mobility, Chapter 10 examines the perceived push/pull factors while in the destination country, and the decision-making factors which second-generation Lebanese–Venezuelan returnees are currently weighing when considering re-emigration back to Venezuela or migration onwards to a third country. These re-emigration (onwards) intentions are examined in Chapter 11 within the theoretical scope of generational migration cycles.

Part III, presents the qualitative component of this study and includes a ‘thick description’ technique as part of its qualitative analysis to provide extensive details about the demographics, pre-return conditions, and push/pull factors of second-generation Lebanese–Venezuelan returnee interviewees (chapter 12); their return preparedness, (re)integration in the post-return conditions, and intentions to re-emigrate (or migrate onwards) (Chapter 13); and the decision-making factors—based on economic, family/lifestyle, political, social protection/services, and culture—to understand the specific rationale for their intentions to re-emigrate (onwards) or remain in the origin country (Chapter 14).

Part IV concludes this thesis with a discussion of both quantitative and qualitative findings combined into one holistic analysis. Chapter 15 seeks to answer this research’s first question by examining the impact of returnees’ generational migration cycle on the (re)integration experiences of second-generation Lebanese–Venezuelan return migrants. Chapter 16 will discuss the decision-making factors and intentions of re-emigration, onwards migration, or remaining in the origin country across their generational migration cycles.

Chapter Two

Introducing Return Migration and Re-Emigration

Return migration (or remigration) is not a new or necessarily understudied element of international migration. In fact, sociologist Frank Bovenkerk (1974: 4) attempted to unify what he found as the “terminological sloppiness” found in the amount of literature at the time. He mentions that the plethora of definitions and classifications (i.e., back migration, countercurrent, counterflow, re-emigration, reflux migration, second-time migration, repatriation) presents researchers with considerable difficulties when studying return migration. One difficulty, which specifically pertains to this dissertation, are the terms ‘remigration’ and ‘re-emigration.’ Both are often taken as terms which imply, broadly, migration for a second time, however, they will be analytically untangled for the purpose of this research. Cassarino (2004) further weighs in by suggesting that return migration has been under extensive study dating back to the 1960s. However, due to its magnitude and configuration, there has been a persistent lack of reliable quantitative data to draw upon conclusively. Nevertheless, aggregations of studies on return migration, often measured from destination country data, show that return rates vary from 20-75% among immigrants within their first five years after arrival in OECD² countries (OECD, 2008). Furthermore, new estimates illustrate that across the globe, 26-31% of migration movements constitute a return to the migrant’s home country (Azose & Raftery, 2019). These numbers should be taken cautiously as return movements are challenging to quantify. Rather, they ought to be seen as indicative of the scope and extent return migration exists in the realities of global mobilities and how little is understood about the phenomena.

Further analysis on the topic of return migration has produced an abundance of literature on an array of different topics. Researchers’ focus have tended to lie primarily

² Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).

on issues pertaining to: remigration and development (or sustainable return) (Black & Gent, 2006; van Houte & de Koning, 2008; Thomas-Hope, 1999); the voluntary/involuntary return of migrants, asylum-seekers or refugee rejection/repatriation (Ruben, van Houte, & Davids, 2009; Dimitrijevic, Todorovic, & Grkovic, 2004; Dolan, 1999; Al-Ali et al., 2001; Ammassari & Black, 2001; Ghosh, 2000; Knoll, 1999); ‘ethnic’ identity and the construction or meaning of identity, ‘home’, ‘belonging’, and the meanings of place within the context of remigration (Huggins, 2014; Timotijevic & Breakwell, 2000; Tsuda, 2010); transnational or diasporic networks (King, Christou, & Levitt, 2014; Hornstein Tomić, Pichler, & Scholl-Schneider, 2018; Chan & Tran, 2011; Potter, 2005); or labor—low- and high-skilled/entrepreneurial—return migration (Kubat, 1984; King, 1986; Lowell, 2001; McLaughan & Salt, 2002; Vertovec, 2002; Cervantes & Guellec, 2002; Cassarino, 2000). These references merely represent a small sample of the bulk of literature available on the topic of return migration. This relative boom in scholarly literature comes after a particular lull during the late 1980s and 1990s. According to King and Christou (2011), the 2000s saw a resurgence of interest in return migration, which may be attributed to new conceptualizations in the study of the migration phenomenon and less about the actual growth of return movements.

2.1 Previous Definitions of Return Migration and Re-Emigration

According to Bovenkerk (1974: 5), *return migration* occurs when “people return after migration for the first time to their country (or region) of origin.” *Re-emigration*: “when people emigrate once again to the same destination after having returned for the first time” (1974: 5). Gmelch (1980: 136) expands by stating that *return migration* entails emigrants moving back to their “homelands to resettle.” He further states that *re-emigration* involves emigrating a second time. Although difficult to distinguish analytically due to confounding intentions like vacation, transnational connections, or seasonal work (i.e., *circular migration*), return migration necessitates the process of relocating from the return migrant’s country of residence—or destination country—back to their country of origin to re-settle. Re-emigration expounds on the definition of return migration by referring to the (re-e)migrant emigrating from their country of origin ‘back’ to the initial destination country to re-settle. Additionally, *onward migration*—also

referred to as second-time emigration—denotes re-emigrating from the country of origin (or destination country) to a different, third country (Bovenkerk, 1974; Gmelch, 1980).

One concern regarding return migration worth mentioning is the attention which has been paid by governmental, intergovernmental, and international organizations. Their particular focus places more emphasis on the links within the migration and development nexus and preserving the reliability of the immigration and asylum systems. The European Union (EU) has stated that ‘return’ is an “integral part” of the instruments used to deal with unauthorized or “illegal migration” (European Commission, 2005: 2). Additionally, the EU has defined return as “the process of going back to one’s country of origin, transit or another third country” (European Council, 2002: 29). Critics argue that the EU euphemistically uses ‘return’ to actually imply removal of unauthorized migrants, rejection of asylum seekers, or forced repatriation (Cassarino, 2008a). It was Mary Kritz (1987) who raised the notion of conceptual problems with the definitions of an immigrant. They often reflect the politicization and policy orientations at the time. This concern can be dually forwarded to the issue of return migration and return migrants. Such definitions can play an essential part in orientating or even shaping the perceptions, taxonomies, and policies of governmental and intergovernmental organizations.

Nearly all academics within the field of return migration state that return migrants (or returnees) constitute a highly heterogeneous group of people. Furthermore, Constant and Massey (2002) posit that return migration is hardly a random event, in fact, it is considered an intricate socioeconomic, cultural, and psychological process. The degree and nature of selectivity—i.e., those who choose to stay versus return—among return migrants varies from group to group and is affected by the strong heterogeneity of immigrants already abroad. They also depend on prior migrants in the destination country, conditions in the origin and destination country, and other unobservable factors and unknowns. In fact, the original decision to emigrate abroad may or may not be made simultaneously with the decision to stay or return, and decisions to return may change as migrants encounter new and unforeseen circumstances and realities. For example, those that planned to stay abroad for a few years may remain indefinitely or move on to a third country. Some migrants may circulate back and forth between their destination and origin country regularly. And importantly, for the purpose of this research, children of original

migrants may return to their parents' ancestral homeland/country of origin; these particular returnees are *second-generation* migrants and will be discussed in further detail in Chapter 4 and 5 (Constant, 2020; King & Christou, 2011).

2.2 Expanding the Definitions of Return Migration and Re-Emigration

This research will build upon the definition of return migration proposed by Constant (2020: 5) as “the relocation of first or higher generations from a country that is the host country of the first generation or one’s immigrant ancestors to the birth and citizenship country of the first generation/ancestors planning to stay for more than one year.” For this research, Constant’s definition will be slightly expanded upon as *the relocation of first or higher generations from a country that is the destination country of the first-generation or one’s immigrant ancestors to the birth, origin, and/or citizenship country of the first-generation/ancestors planning to resettle temporarily or permanently for more than one year*. Thus, terms like ‘return migrant’ or ‘returnee’ will refer to emigrants (or their subsequent generations) who fulfill the definition provided. Re-emigration will expound upon the return migration definition by referring to return migrants, after settling in the country of origin for at least one year, relocating ‘back’ to the original destination/birth country from which they originally came for the purpose of resettling. A re-emigrant, then, fulfills this definition of re-emigration.

These revised definitions fit the purpose of this research for several reasons. Firstly, it retains Constant’s (2020) conceptual concern regarding the understanding of return migrants and mobilities confined within a 20th century, modern nation-state basis (i.e., moving back to the country of *citizenship*). Yet my definition goes further than Constant’s by including not only the country of birth, but also country of origin to also leave space for ancestral or ethnic elements of return (King, Christou, & Levitt, 2014; Tsuda and Song, 2019a; Wessendorf, 2013). Secondly, emphasizing the ancestral component of return is salient to the return migration of the second-generation. In many cases, second-generation children of original emigrant parents may never have visited nor lived in their parent’s country of origin, yet that does not negate the strong familial ties, transnational links, social networks, and feelings of identity and belonging the second-generation may have to the ancestral ‘homeland’. Finally, to eliminate the extraneous

forms of other return mobilities (i.e., circular migration like seasonal work or vacations) emphasis on the intention of return and length of stay is included. Intent to return to the country of origin ought to be based on the intention to resettle (albeit even if it is temporarily). This is important because, as Cassarino (2004; 2008a; 2014) outlines, the extent of a returnee's preparedness has significant impact on their experiences returning to their country of origin and ease of (re)integrating. When a returnee has decided (whether by his/her own volition or compelled) to return, a number of critical processes are engaged which motivates and readies the returnee to ensure they are optimally prepared for their return and thus completing their 'migration cycle'. The theoretical models of return preparedness and migration cycles will be outlined further in Chapter 3.

2.3 Country of Origin (and Destination) Definitions Explained

A further clarification on terminologies is the use of the *country of origin* (or *origin country*) in lieu of what is commonly referred to as 'home country', 'sending country', or 'homeland' in the migration literature. This term is selected to avoid any inferences regarding where the return migrant feels is 'home', how they may identify themselves within their transnational reality, and where they feel they 'belong', as these intimate and personal feelings may not only be ambiguous, but also multilayered. Furthermore, in using the term 'origin country' as a viable alternative to 'home country,' it further encapsulates the return migrants who may have been born outside of their country of origin (second-generation) and, therefore, may never have visited it. Yet, they still maintain transnational links—ethnic, cultural, legal (citizenship), or social/familial—which connect them to their country of origin. Still, by using this terminology to refer to the ancestral 'homeland', there is an acquiescence to the hegemony of the nation-state as the primary demarcation of origin and/or ethnicity. *Destination country* is also adopted in lieu of 'host country' to further avoid the assumption that a country is 'hosting' them, rather it may be another intimate and personal place that one may call 'home'.

Given the inherent confusion notions like return migration, re-emigration, origin, and destination country embody, having clear delimitations about what exactly constitutes these terms and who are returnees and (re)emigrants is vital to maintain clear operational definitions as layers of return migration become more complex and nuanced.

Chapter Three

Theories of Return Migration

“It is important to appreciate the complexities of the [return migration] process and to try to understand the nature of the dynamic of migration in its entirety, including return as being not simply a further element of population displacement but as a phenomenon itself” (Thomas-Hope, 1999: 201). Numerous theoretical frameworks have been proposed to try and explain the return migration phenomenon beginning from merely economic push/pull factors to meta-theories that seek to draw in crucial elements and contributions made through migration’s theoretical evolution. Specifically, neoclassical economics and new economics of labor migration (NELM) seek to describe the economic push/pull factors like poverty and higher wages abroad as motivating emigration. Return migration, thus, is seen as a failure to neoclassical economics. NELM offers more nuance with the notion of remittances. Migrants may eventually plan to return as part of their migration strategy. Structural approaches like Cerase’s (1974) typologies of return offered further distinction and paved the way for broader analysis in a theoretically budding field. Transnationalism and social network theory shed light on the identities, relations, networks, activities, and mobilities across national borders; how they are created, maintained, and (re)negotiated over time and space; and the impact such transnational links and networks have on not only motivating return migration but also determining its perceived success as well. Furthermore, such links, networks, and activities are increasingly made possible by the advancement of information communication technologies and globalization processes. Finally, important elements of these theories are coalesced into what Cassarino (2004; 2008a; 2014) calls *return preparedness*. The context in the country of origin, the duration and type of migration experience, and factors and conditions in destination and origin countries—including the *willingness* and *readiness* of the returnee—determine the outcome of their migration cycle and (re)integration into the country of origin.

3.1 Neoclassical Economics and New Economics of Labor Migration

The theoretical approaches of understanding return migration have historically been *neoclassical economics* and the *new economics of labor migration (NELM)*. These theoretical concepts are based on notions of wage differentials between origin and destination countries; accordingly, migrants will relocate to seek higher wages in other countries. Specifically, migration abroad is seen to maximize one's wages and earnings abroad. Neoclassical economics focuses on the labor market in which 'rational' agents try to maximize their wealth or utility under the assumption that they have perfect information regarding the wage differentials and financial accumulation. It is a rudimentary cost-benefit analysis which compares the present value of lifetime wages in the origin and destination countries with the intention of permanently settling in the destination country (Constant, 2020). Thus, neoclassical economics does not acknowledge return migration as beneficial because it is assumed that return would be irrational and a failure of the migrant.

NELM, on the other hand, moves away from the individual motivations for maximizing earnings and considers the mutual interdependence migrants have with their family, household, or community in the country of origin (Stark, 1991). Thus, remittances become an integral part of the calculated migration strategy. However, these theories offer limited understanding to the complexity of return migration motivations as return is often considered the outcome of a failed migration experience. Because a migrant was not able to maximize their potential earnings and settle permanently in the destination country—seeking their family to then reunite with them abroad—they are constrained to return to their home country as disappointments. Yet, NELM does offer more nuance with the inclusion of remittances. Remittances are an essential category which diversifies migrants' resources (i.e., investments in the home country) to better mitigate their potential risks (Cassarino, 2004). NELM leaves space for migrants to formulate their strategies, as returning to their home country is not necessarily seen as a migration failure. When migrants feel the necessary financial resources have been achieved, many may return home as part of their migration strategy.

Yet, neoclassical economics and NELM both have significant shortcomings in explaining the dynamic process of return migration, and neither introduces fresh insight on the re-emigration experience. These theories tend to be overly focused on the financial or economic factors while not explaining *how* such factors, like remittances, are used as part of a migrant's strategy. Furthermore, these theories do not take into consideration important variables that explain return migration, including origin and destination countries' conditions, migration experiences, social networks/transnational links, and the importance of identity and belonging.

3.2 The Structural Approach and Typologies

The structuralist approach to return migration expands the analysis beyond the individual experience of the migrant. It further includes the reference to social and institutional factors in the country of origin and incorporates the notion of *context* when examining return. Such structuralist theoretical frameworks often provide typologies or categorizations to explain return while still elaborating on the notion that the decision to return is based on the economic and financial resources brought back by the returnee. Thus, 'success' or 'failure' are understood by relating the 'reality' of the returnee's migration experience and their expectations.

In reviewing the literature on return migration, we begin with one of the first academics who brought forth a set of typologies for return migrants. Upon examining Southern Italian return migrants from the United States, Francisco Cerase (1974) proposed four distinct typologies: *return of failure*; *return of conservatism*; *return of retirement*; and *return of innovation*. His typologies revolve around the notion that, from the migrant's point-of-view, successful return migration involves achieving economic success so as to meet the prevailing cultural objectives. In other words, Cerase takes into account the situational and contextual factors in the country of origin as a prerequisite to determining if the return experience is either a 'success' or a 'failure' (Cassarino, 2004).

Return of failure: Cerase (1974) discovered that those who spent one or two years abroad found their immigration experience 'miserable,' and often worked in an unskilled job that they rarely enjoyed. They did not have a sense of 'home' in the destination country and would often reside in temporary residences. Integration in the destination country—

saving enough money, acquiring the language or other cultural markers, or maintaining secure social networks—was low. Such difficulties in the destination country thus compelled them to return without living up to the high expectations of emigration.

Return of conservatism: These returnees, when in the destination country, maintained their eye on acquiring enough resources for return. Oftentimes, the length of emigration is longer—ten to fifteen years—with many opting to move back and forth several times thus interrupting their stay in the destination country. This is often done to make enough money to pay off debts incurred and to have more time to accrue the needed assets. Importantly, this typology is marked by their final return occurring at the peak of their productive life. More often, these returnees see themselves as different or detached from their origin community; they are seen by their community as distinctive; and they often hold a positive attitude towards the destination country (Cerase, 1974).

Return of retirement: As the title suggests, returnees, whose productive peak has passed, decide to live out their old age in their origin country. Their family is often found in the origin country, and they seek to spend the last stage of their life at ‘home.’ They feel they have lived a full life in the destination country and have taken satisfactory part in its economic, social, and political life. However, their sense of belonging does not exceed a certain threshold, and, as their health decreases, they wish to return to live out their pension with, if present, the social security nets and feelings of belonging provided by family and friends in their ‘homeland’ (Cerase, 1974).

Return of innovation: These returnees see themselves as ‘carriers of social change’. They believe that the economic capital and newly acquired skills ought to be brought back to their country of origin in the hopes of promoting positive change. These returnees expect their new ideas and capital can challenge the entrenched interests and traditional ways of thinking in the country of origin. This is indicative of Peggy Levitt’s (1998) research on *social remittances* whereby the return migrants may bring back and reconstruct the ideas, behaviors, networks, values, identities, or other social capital acquired from time spent abroad in the destination country. However, Cerase (1974) cautions that oftentimes migrants may become disillusioned if information about the conditions in their country of origin was inaccurate. Nevertheless, these returnees often

have integrated well in the destination country with the acquisition of substantial savings and skills abroad.

An important contribution by structural approaches is the focus on the contextual factors that impact migrant's ability to be innovative and act as 'agents of change' upon return. More important than merely any economic gains are the skills, experiences, traditions, values, and relations which impact a returnee's capacity to invest in their migration experiences once they return (Cassarino, 2004). However, the structural approach is hindered by its limitations in understanding the variegated resources and array of experiences migration often provides and their impact on the origin country. These experiences tend to be limited to the acquisition of capital, skills, education, etc. which are more often squandered by the structural constraints and conditions of the origin country. Moreover, the impact of such resources and experiences is often lost within the cultural, traditional, or familial contexts of the origin country, which help define the symbolic and behavioural patterns of return migrants (Cassarino, 2004). The structural approach, owing to its top-down framework of analysis, pits the origin country as the primary actor who structures the local power relations that shape return migrants' opportunities for success. Therefore, when a migrant has lived abroad for a significant amount of time, their 'traditional ways of thinking' deteriorate and may erode their social and familial relationships. *Transnationalism* and *social network theory* are introduced to account for the dynamic and maintained linkages migrants possess throughout time and place.

3.3 Transnationalism, Social Network Theory, and Social Capital

Transnationalism and social network theory seek to examine the alternating and ongoing movement of people crossing borders. Specifically, transnationalism is a conceptual framework which aims at understanding the enduring social and economic links between migrant's destination and origin countries. These linkages operate by the "regular and sustained social contacts over time across national borders" (Portes et al., 1999: 219). Glick-Shiller et al. (1999: 73) further contextualize transnationalism in the perspective of migration stating that "transnational migration is the process by which immigrants forge and sustain simultaneous multi-stranded social relations that link

together their societies of origin and settlement.” Importantly, these conceptualizations take into consideration the influence such transnational linkages have on the identities of migrants. Unlike the structural or NELM approaches, transnationalism does not see return migration as the end of the migration cycle. Rather, “return migration is part and parcel of a circular system of social and economic relationships and exchanges facilitating the reintegration of migrants while conveying knowledge, information, and membership” (Cassarino, 2004: 262). In fact, return migrants actively prepare for reintegration by maintaining the linkages with the origin country. This can be seen in return visits, sending remittances, maintaining the culture in the destination country, and ‘checking in’ with relatives abroad. Consequently, new transnational identities may be created with elements of the home and destination culture, customs, and values embedded within the migrant.

3.3.1 Transnationalism

These new transnational identities recognize the importance of adaptation (rather than ‘adjusting’ as seen from a structuralist approach) to different environments. For second-generation returnees (those born abroad but return to the country of their parents) they may have strong emotional connections to their country of birth (destination country), yet, have a deep affinity for their ancestral country of origin. Transnationalists see, then, that a migrant’s subjective perception of their ‘homeland’ or ‘home’ country and their own perceived self-identification exert a strong influence over the decision to return and reintegrate back to their country of origin (Cassarino, 2004). Additionally, Al-Ali and Koser (2002) shed light on the continuity and strength of such transnational identities. They show how these new identities allow for sustained economic, political, and social networks which span across multiple societies. Membership into these networks often involves a shared common country of origin, common ethnicity, origin story, familial links, culture, language, and so on. These appear to be the strongest indicators which facilitates transnational activities and define transnational identities. Migrants “feel linked to one another by their common place-of-origin and their shared religious and social ties” (Levitt, 1998: 4). However, despite the significant insights transnationalism provides, it still struggles to determine how the maintenance of such linkages helps return migrants manage the traditional vested interests, social pressures, and structural constraints of the origin country. Furthermore, in terms of the transnational identities, “the transnational

approach to return migration seems to encapsulate their initiatives and projects at home in a fundamental set of mutual obligations, opportunities, and expectations stemming from common ethnicity (i.e., the diaspora) and kinship (i.e., the family, the household)” (Cassarino, 2004: 265).

3.3.2 Social Network Theory

Social network theory develops upon the transnational view that return migrants prepare for their eventual return to the country of origin by utilizing their transnational links. This is done by mobilizing crucial resources which are based on the commonality of their origin, ethnicity, identity, or other salient ties. Social network theory, however, expounds further that return migrants are actors who gather the necessary resources needed to secure and prepare their return by mobilizing resources based on commonality of interests and their availability at the level of social and economic cross-border networks. Social network theory views return migrants as maintaining strong linkages which reflect their experiences of migration and offer assistance to the returnee’s ambitions in the country of origin. Resources which secure successful return stem from the patterns of interpersonal relationships which develop from the returnee’s past migration experiences (Cassarino, 2004).

One may also assume that because social network linkages are not based on more visceral ties, like ethnicity or family, that social network memberships are not as durable. This is not the case. In fact, because such social networks are selectively organized, membership requires a voluntary act by the actor; it requires the consent of other members; and it requires a degree of guarantee that the flows of resources, as well as the effectiveness and maintenance of cross-border linkages, will continue (Church et al., 2002). Laumann et al. (1983: 21) state that cross-border social and economic networks create a “social entity [that] exists as a collectively shared subjective awareness.” These linkages often require a long-standing rapport, along with the regular exchange of mutually valuable items between members (Cassarino, 2004). They are supported by patterns of exchange inherent in the networks themselves. For example, a Facebook group for returnees offers a new, more accessible social network whereby information is shared to assist and build links between members. These technological means of communication

have facilitated the flows of information, which have allowed for the flourishing of cross-border ties between origin and destination countries, and it has allowed return migrants to better prepare for their return. The composition of these networks—often consisting of an array of different social structures like telecommunications, hometown associations, churches/mosques—shapes the structure of cross-border linkages and allowing them to persist fruitfully (Eccles and Nohria, 1992).

3.3.3 Social Capital

Another important element complimentary to social network theory is the concept of *social capital*. Social capital, as presented by Coleman (1988), is explained by its function. Although it consists of a variety of different entities, they all involve some element of a social structure which facilitates its acquisition and exchange. Social capital is also productive allowing holders of social capital to help achieve their goals. Furthermore, unlike other capitals, social capital only exists within the structure of relations between and among actors (Coleman, 1988). Social capital may broadly be defined as the “values that people hold and the resources that they can access, which both result in and are the result of collective and socially negotiated ties and relationships” (Edwards et al., 2003: 2). For example, return migrants in the destination country may rely on their social networks in the origin country for return preparedness. Utilizing social capital may allow the return migrant assistance from the airport, free lodging until settled, and/or finding employment. Thus, social capital relates to the resources from which the returnees may benefit rooted within their social networks.

Cassarino (2004) explains that the cross-border social and economic networks differ significantly from the transnational relationships based more on ethnic groups including their organizational patterns, goals, and configurations. However, despite their differences, these ‘network’ theories illustrate the theoretical development and growth from the rudimentary push/pull, supply/demand, macro-oriented neoclassical and NELM theories. Thanks to the contributions of transnationalism and social network theory, return migration is not seen as an end nor a failure of the migration experience. Instead, return migration is merely one part of the entire migration cycle which constitutes not only mobilizing sufficient finances, but also a whole range of other, non-economic motivations

as well. Namely, the micro and macro factors that motivate and shape return migration: conditions in the origin and destination countries, ethno-national and familial cross-border links, social and/or economic cross-border networks, experiences, knowledge, and social capital are fresh insights which are brought into the overall theoretical and conceptual understanding of return migration.

3.4 Return Preparedness and Migration Cycles

Given the heterogeneity of return migrants and return migration, returnees differ substantially in terms of their return motivations and reasons for return, and yet, they also tend to overlap as well (Rogers, 1984). Furthermore, the growing diversity of international migration flows (Stalker, 2003); the fluctuating political, institutional, and social conditions in origin and destination countries in the era of globalization; cross-border mobility and cheaper transport costs; and new, improved, and cheaper information and communications technology have placed an impetus for a new conceptual approach to return migration.

Return preparedness proposed by Cassarino (2004; 2008a; 2014) addresses the heterogeneity and variegation of return migrants with regards to their migration experiences, length of stay abroad, patterns of resource mobilization, legal status, motivations, and ambitions. Through the examination of previous theoretical and conceptual frameworks, Cassarino incorporated essential factors while expounding upon important, yet overlooked, elements shaping return migration and their reintegration into their country of origin. These previous theoretical models have helped illustrate the importance of three interrelated elements essential to understanding return migration: the context in the country of origin; the duration and type of migration experience lived abroad; and the factors or conditions (whether favorable or not) in the destination and origin countries which motivated return (Cassarino, 2014: 159). By considering place, time, and pre- post-conditions, Cassarino further adds the notion of return preparedness which “intimately connects any person who returns home from abroad, regardless of the place of origin, social background, motivations, prospects, skills, and occupational status...” (Cassarino, 2014: 159). Return preparedness refers to a process which takes place in a person’s life, extends through time, and is shaped by broad changing

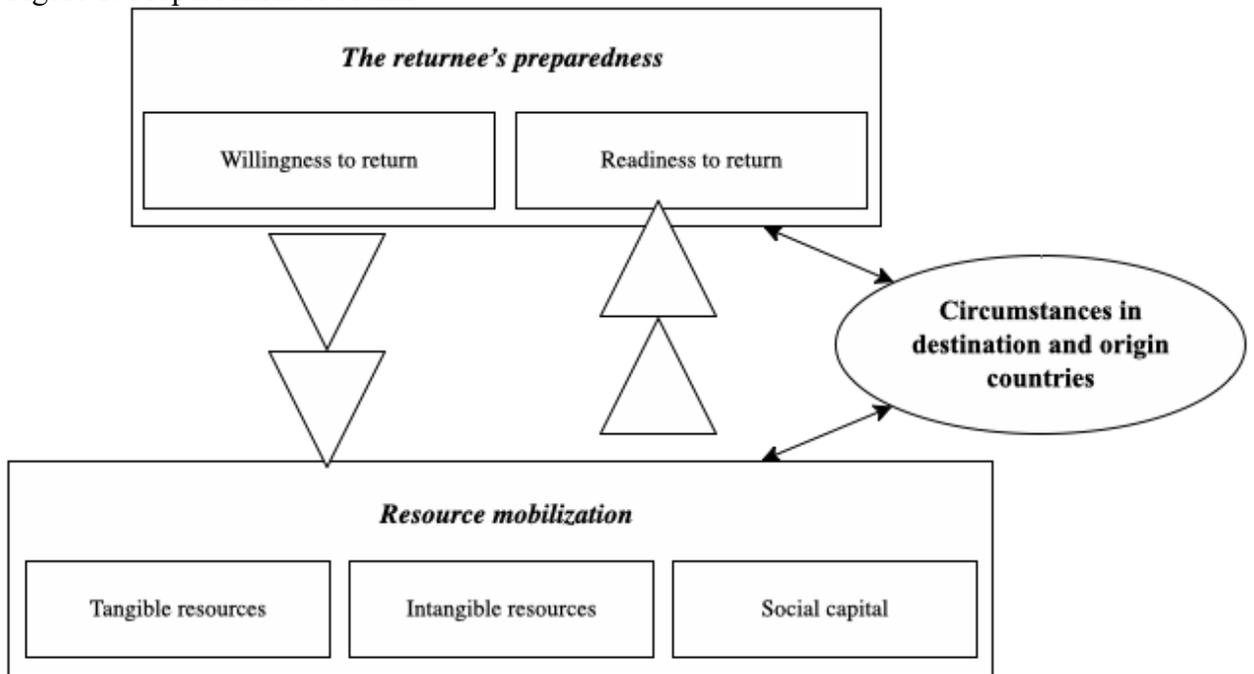
circumstances (i.e., personal experiences, contextual factors in destination and origin countries). It is also about the ability to gather the tangible resources—cash, property, assets, etc.—and intangible resources—social capital, social networks, skills, education, transnational identity, etc.—needed to secure one’s return. Therefore, return preparedness posits that some returnees have higher preparedness than others which positively shape their migration cycle trajectories.

3.4.1 Willingness and Readiness

The two primary elements which compose a migrant’s return preparedness are the *willingness* and *readiness* (Cassarino, 2014). “Willingness pertains to the act of deciding or choosing, on one’s own initiative, to return and without any pressure whatsoever. It refers to the subjective power to choose to return at a certain time, because it is part of a person’s migration cycle” (Cassarino, 2014: 159). It is the returnee’s voluntary choice of whether it is best to emigrate from their destination country based on the sufficient tangible and intangible resources and social capital he/she feels are sufficient (readiness). Importantly, deciding or choosing to return should not be confused with the concept of “voluntary” return. Voluntary return, according to the International Organization for Migration (IOM), refers to the “assisted or independent departure to the country of origin, transit, or third country based on the will of the returnee” (IOM, 2019)³. However, chosen return is mainly based on the returnee’s own decision to return without the assistance or suggestion by any national or public entity (Cassarino, 2008b). Furthermore, return preparedness not only incorporates the willingness (or free choice) of the migrant, but also the readiness (the extent to which migrants have mobilized the tangible/intangible resources needed) for return.

³ The dichotomy of ‘forced’ versus ‘voluntary’ return is pervasive within public policy or discourse on migration, however, the extent to which it reflects composite return flows or returnee’s experiences are debateable (Cassarino, 2014).

Figure 1: Preparedness to return



(Cassarino, 2004: 271)

“Readiness to return reflects the extent to which migrants have been in a position to mobilize the adequate tangible (i.e., financial capital) and intangible resources (i.e., contacts, relationships, skills, networks) needed to secure their return” (Cassarino, 2014: 160). Importantly, readiness for return is an ongoing process of such mobilization and is thus impacted by time, resources, experience, and conditions in the origin and destination countries. As Figure 1 outlines, the willingness to return prompts resource mobilization which supports the perceived readiness of migrants’ return, in turn, further emboldening the subjective willingness to return. This interchange, of course, is also impacted by the economic, social, political, structural, and cultural conditions of the origin and destination countries.

3.4.2 Degrees of Preparedness

The importance of determining return preparedness, specifically the willingness and readiness of the participants, is to yield analytic benefits from its application. Return preparedness argues that return is not only a voluntary act, but it is also an ongoing process of resource mobilization which requires time. Therefore, return migrants will differ from one another with regards to their willingness and readiness. Cassarino (2004; 2008a; 2014) proposes three degrees of return preparedness—*high level*, *low level*, and *non-existent*

preparedness—which allow for a structural categorization of the participants in this study and to derive further analysis.

High degree of preparedness refers to returnees who chose and organized their return autonomously while also having enough time to mobilize sufficient resources. The returnee feels they have gathered enough tangible and intangible resources to successfully return and, thus, complete their migration cycle (Cassarino, 2014). They have acquired enough financial capital to live and/or invest in their lives in the origin country, and they have acquired enough valuable contacts, relations, social connections, skills, knowledge, and experience to facilitate and achieve their return. This allows the returnee to decide—after carefully weighing the costs and benefits of return—by their own volition. Moreover, returnees will have had sufficient time to weigh such costs and benefits while also considering the conditions—at the institutional, economic, and political level—of the origin and destination countries (Cassarino, 2004; 2008a; 2014). Those with a high degree of preparedness will often maintain property and assets, have legal status, strong cultural ties, and strong social networks/transnational links in the origin and destination countries.

Low degree of preparedness refers to return migrants whose intended length of stay abroad was too short to allow the necessary tangible and intangible resources to be mobilized. Oftentimes, the result of major events (i.e., loss of job, economic crisis, racism) have abruptly interrupted their migration experience. Thus, external forces have obligated them to consider that the costs of remaining are higher than those of returning home, regardless if insufficient resources were mobilized. For these returnees, their migration cycle is deemed incomplete, and they will tend to rely on the availability of resources in their country of origin to reintegrate (Cassarino, 2004; 2008a; 2014).

Non-existent preparedness relates to return migrants that had little or no time to prepare for their return to the country of origin. Therefore, their migration cycle was abruptly interrupted. Furthermore, due to sudden negative circumstances (i.e., political unrest, economic collapse, repatriation, rejected asylum, war) they were entirely compelled to return with no opportunity to weigh the pros and cons nor mobilize any significant resources for return. Given the often-difficult conditions in the country of

origin due to little or no tangible/intangible resources mobilized for proper reintegration, many return migrants will often seek to re-emigrate (Cassarino, 2004; 2008a; 2014).

3.4.3 Migration Cycles

Cassarino (2016) outlines the significance of the migration cycle as comprising three distinct stages: emigration (or pre-departure conditions); immigration (conditions while abroad); and return (conditions after return). Joining these three particular stages into a cycle—inferring that a migrant may complete multiple cycles of migration in their lifetime—allows for the identification of the three specific typologies of migration cycles.

The first cycle is the *complete* migration cycle. Migrants take the time to deliberate the costs and benefits of return, and they feel that the factors and conditions of return, which are subjectively understood, are favorable/positive to their future. They further feel they have acquired the necessary resources, tangible or intangible, to ensure a smooth return and (re)integration into their country of origin (high level of preparedness). Furthermore, they have taken the time to consider the institutional, economic, social, and political contexts of the country of origin. Oftentimes, such migrants maintain the destination country's citizenship or residential status to facilitate and secure increased cross-border mobility.

The second migration cycle is *incomplete*. This occurs when unexpected factors and conditions have provoked the migrants' return, particularly when the migrants intended to stay abroad longer (low level preparedness). The time and preparation to mobilize the tangible and intangible resources needed for return is likewise cut short. The decision to return is based on unfavorable or negative reasons, as compared to the cost/benefit analysis afforded by the complete migration cycle. For migrants in an incomplete migration cycle, rather than weighing the benefits, they have considered that the costs of remaining are higher than returning regardless if they may lack the willingness and/or readiness to return. Migrants are often left relying on the resources that are available in the country of origin to reintegrate (Cassarino, 2016).

The third is the *interrupted* migration cycle. This migration cycle occurs when “disruptive events compel them to return” (Cassarino, 2016: 218). Although they had the intention to stay longer, events like an economic crisis, repatriation, political instability,

or war have eliminated the possibility of weighing the costs and benefits of return (non-existent preparedness). Importantly, it is the external factors, beyond the migrants' control or volition, which have compelled them to return.

Table 1: Levels of preparedness and migration cycles

Level of return preparedness	Migration cycle	Return motivations
High	Complete	Decided owing to favorable conditions
Low	Incomplete	Decided owing to adverse conditions
None	Interrupted	Compelled/forced

(Cassarino, 2014: 163)

This chapter summarizes the theoretical frameworks offering insight and analytical understanding of the return migration phenomenon. The models outlined also demonstrate the evolution and development these theoretical models have underwent over the years. However, when layers of complexity are added to the phenomenon of return migration, the current models fare less well in accounting for the added nuance, intricacy, and heterogeneity. Thus, new models are introduced to account for the second-generation element of the return migration phenomenon.

Chapter Four

Revisiting the Theoretical Models of Return Migration within the Second-Generation Context

As surprises will no doubt arise during data collection and research, the prevalence of second-generation return migrants within the sample has obliged the direction of this research to enter new areas of analysis. 100% of respondents from the online survey were all born in Venezuela to at least one Lebanese parent. With the inclusion of second-generation migrants within the overall return migration phenomenon, novel issues with the new cohort present themselves. Chiefly, second-generation refers to the children of emigrants, that are born in the destination country. Their parents are regarded as first-generation and their children as third-generation. At once, the dynamic of second-generation migrants ‘returning home’ is problematic insofar as it is oxymoronic since they are often born and raised in the destination country. Strictly speaking, they are not technically ‘return’ migrants, but in fact first-time emigrants to the country of their parental relatives’ origin. Also, there are certain issues pertaining to the precise definition of who exactly is considered second-generation (King and Christou, 2008). For example, does having one emigrant (first-generation) parent make one a second-generation child? And what if the child emigrated with the parents as an infant with no time for acculturation? This chapter is meant to clearly define who exactly are second-generation (and subsequent generation) migrants for the purpose of this research, and how they may fit into the pre-existing theories of return migration.

4.1 Defining Second- and Subsequent-Generations

As a second-generation migrant myself, I was pleased to come across this twist to my original research idea which was examining return migration generally. By having my research sample consisting entirely of second-generation return migrants, it allowed me to delve deeper into this important, yet often overlooked, aspect of return migration. King

and Christou (2008) have commented on the increasing saliency of examining the second-generation citing the increasing volatility of concepts like ‘identity’ and ‘belonging’ in destination countries. Unfortunately, commonplace understandings of the second-generation have produced shallow depths of analysis especially within mainstream media. In the United Kingdom, for example, where the concept of second-generation is often overshadowed by more overarching frameworks of minority and ethnic communities, events like the 7/7 London bombing in 2005⁴ appear to shed more light on the need to better appreciate this unique cohort of people. Currently, their connections to their ancestral country of origin are complex, ambiguous, and poorly understood.

The term ‘second-generation’ has been a challenge for researchers both descriptively and analytically. There has been highly variegated usages of the term connotating many different meanings. According to King and Christou (2008), the strict or ‘classic’ definition of second-generation constitutes the children born in the destination country to two immigrant (first-generation) parents. However, the specificity of this definition neglects to incorporate children of one immigrant parent, infants brought to the destination country, and other nuances. Alternatively, other researchers have opted for a graduated approach to defining second-generation. The ‘true’ second-generation is the native destination-country born of two immigrant parents. Then there are 1.75, 1.5, and 1.25 generations which demarcate their generational category based on the age foreign-born children emigrate to the destination country and/or the ethnic ‘fidelity’ based on one or two parents originating from the country of origin. Rumbaut (1997) offers the ages of before 6, after 6, 12, and up to 17 years old as demarcations of generation. However, other researchers have applied various age delimitations to justify their generational categories (Child, 1943; Louis, 2006; Ellis and Goodwin-White, 2006; Wilpert, 1998; Modood, 1997; Crul and Vermuelen, 2003; Andall, 2002); while others too have put forth other less numerically based definitions like ‘post-immigrant’ generation or ‘post-migrant’ generation (Rumbaut, 2002; Wessendorf, 2007).

⁴ The BBC (2014) published an article which claims that second- or third- generation immigrants, experiencing a ‘cultural estrangement’ and ‘ex-pat mentality’, were prone to join extremist religious organizations.

Given the terminological murkiness of the second-generation, this research combines significant aspects of various definitions—namely, Portes and Zhou (1993) and Wessendorf (2013)—to provide a clear rationale and analytical delimitation for examining the second-generation population. Thus, specific to this research, second-generation refers to the native-born children of the destination country with at least one foreign-born parent; or children abroad who came to the destination country before the age of five. Accordingly, third- (or subsequent) generations are born of at least one second-generation parent in the country of origin; or the third-generation must have resided in the destination country until the age of five for enough time for acculturation of the destination country. This definition is left open-ended intentionally as what constitutes ‘enough time’ is still up for debate. Nevertheless, these particular definitions are selected to capture the specific attributes this research seeks to uncover. Specifically, the age—in this case, I opt for five years old—is the separation between first-generation and second-generation emigrants who were born in the country of origin. This age is relevant as it is the common age children begin school and, therefore, leave the hegemonic influence of their parents. They will experience independence from their relatives as they attend school and begin to acquire and develop their own social networks, skills, knowledge, language, identity, and sense of ‘home’. Secondly, the decision to include the possibility of having at least one emigrant parent from the country of origin (rather than two) is important as this research seeks to avoid limited definitions which could hinder the understanding of rich ontological elements within the second-generation return phenomenon. If, for example, a second-generation migrant is compelled to emigrate abroad, the social and familial networks, along with possible cultural and linguistic fluency, may be enough for the migrant to (re)integrate satisfactorily in their country of ancestral origin. Finally, it is important to bear in mind the *directionality* of second-generation migrants. Since many may have never visited nor seen their ‘home’ country, they are not ‘returning home’, but in fact emigrating for the first time. When discussing second-generation return mobilities, where they perceive ‘home’ and ‘abroad’ and whether they are ‘returning’ or ‘emigrating’ ought not to be taken for granted. The directionality of their migration experience is based on their own agency, subjective socio-emotional realities, and affective historical connections and attachments to the country of their ancestral parents. Although this research refers to

second-generation *returnees*, it is merely used as a moniker to allow descriptive simplicity into this particular mobility to an ‘ancestral’ origin country. However, I caution that the term should not imply that ‘return’ is how a migrant may perceive their relocation experience. How they perceive their own directionality of migration is based on their own personal, subjective narrative about their decision to migrate.

Largely, this research seeks to capture the nuanced and multifaceted notions of ‘return’; the impact of how collective memories of the ‘homeland’ may be inherited and embodied within the second-generation’s identity and sense of belonging; the persistence and obligations of familial, social, and transnational links across time and space; and how such relations with the country of origin or ‘home’ are reconstructed within second-generation return narratives. For the purpose of the study, second- and subsequent-generations of returnees will be referred to as second-generation unless the distinction becomes analytically relevant.

4.2 Revisiting the Theoretical Building Blocks within the Second-Generation Context

This section will revisit the theoretical models first proposed in Chapter 3 while taking into consideration the complexity and dynamics of the second-generation context. For economic theoretical models, the second-generation appear to diverge from patterns of the first-generation, namely, remittance sending. Structural approaches have also stressed the importance of varying orientations to the ‘homeland’, destination country and how they may impact the reintegration of a returnee. Such orientations have added importance in the second-generation as conceptions of ‘homeland’ are problematized.

4.2.1 Second-Generation Economic Theories

Recalling the neoclassic and new economics of return, neoclassic economics states that international migration is a consequence of income or wage differentials between origin and destination countries, and migrants, depicted as perfectly rational, decide to emigrate to mitigate such real income differentials. Return migrant is seen as a failed return labor migrant who failed to calculate the cost/benefit ratio properly (Cassarino, 2004). NELM broadens the context by incorporating the individual within their family

unit and minimizing risk while maximizing benefit in economic analysis. NELM, in contrast, leaves room for return migration as a successful achievement of a migrant's goals or targets. Remittances are a chief component of NELM as a strategy for income and resource diversification and to minimize unforeseen risks (Cassarino, 2004).

However, as King and Christou (2008) point out, the second-generation hardly figures into these parochial and economically driven conceptual frameworks. Firstly, the economic cost/benefit analysis may change over time. During the course of a generation (or more) economic circumstances may change in the destination and origin country. As in the case of Venezuela, once considered a prosperous country with significant oil reserves and wealth. Today, hyperinflation and economic instability has shifted the circumstances to make Venezuela, once a receiving country, now the second largest sending country of displaced persons with approximately 3.7 million displaced Venezuelans worldwide (behind Syria with 6.6 million and ahead of Afghanistan with 2.7 million displaced persons or refugees) (UNHCR, 2020). Also, the NELM approach could potentially become relevant to the second-generation on the contingency that the family or household maintains and upholds economic linkages which may connect the destination and origin country. However, data on financial remittances sent by the second-generation to the country of origin is sparse. Rumbout (2002) found in his quantitative study of adult children of immigrants (second-generation) living in San Diego that 72.3 percent of total participants said they 'never' send remittances. Also, Wessendorf's (2013) qualitative study of second-generation Italians in Switzerland found no remittances sent by her sample, and Kasinitz et al. (2002) found that remittance activity among the second-generation was much lower than it was among their first-generation emigrant parents. Nevertheless, instances of parents retiring or dying may obligate the second-generation to take up the financial responsibility of relatives still in the origin country. And, they may also not take up the mantle of remittance sending like their parents with some researchers positing the "second-generation decline" hypothesis for explaining the deteriorating transnational ties and decreased remittances (Perlmann & Waldinger, 1997; Gans, 1992).

As described earlier, such economic approaches to return migration neglect *how* such economic factors are used as part of a migrant's overall migration strategy. Furthermore, these theoretical approaches do not tackle important aspects of return

migration like origin and destination country structural conditions, personal experiences, and social networks/capital. More often, economic approaches to migration detach migrants from the socio-cultural, historical, political, and emotional contexts of their return mobilities.

4.2.2 Structural Approach Revisited

Returning to Cerase's model of first-generation return, social and economic structures are examined which relate to the typologies of a migrant's integration process. Although heavily critiqued based on its 'linearist' and often binary conception of integration, the heuristic value Cerase has brought to the understanding of return migration—as seen in his four return typologies: return failure, conservatism, retirement, and innovation—has allowed for fresh insight into the reintegration pathways, the challenges faced by the returnee, and the potential impact returnees have on the economic, social, and cultural environment of the origin country (King & Christou, 2008; Cassarino, 2004),

Although Cerase's typologies lack empirical support for his assertions, various aspects of the second-generation may be applicable to a certain extent. The relationship between integration and identification with the destination country—where the second-generation have spent the vast entirety of their lives—and their relationship to the 'homeland' was nascently introduced with Cerase's (1974) structural approach. For example, second-generation individuals who do not feel fully integrated in the destination country—perhaps due to marginalization—will consider the 'homeland' for relocating; or it may also be the case that a successful and well-integrated comfortability in the destination country by the second-generation, in relation to their first-generation parents, may provide them with the luxury to think about, discover, and express the different linkages with destination and origin country societies. Thus, such linkages and identifications are not positioned in a zero-sum game of one or the other, but a new and burgeoning chronotope of second-generation return migration in the relatively new era of globalization (Christou & King, 2008; Itzigsohn & Giorguli-Saucedo, 2005).

4.2.3 Distinctions and Refinements of Transnationalism and Social Network Theory

Theoretical models or approaches pertaining to second-generation transnational linkages and activities are still relatively nascent. Consider that it was in 1999 when Portes, Guarnizo, and Landolt first proposed transnational practices—and refined by Levitt and Waters (2002: 8)—“as the economic, political, and socio-cultural occupations and activities that require regular long-term contacts across border for their success”. Furthermore, Vertovec (2001) raised the question regarding the exclusivity of transnationalism in first-generations only. Transnational analysis on the second-generation is only beginning to gain significant traction particularly after the publication of Levitt and Waters’ (2002) seminal volumes on the transnational lives of the second-generation in the United States. Additional research on second-generational return mobilities by King, Christou, and Levitt (2014), Kılınç & King (2017), Wessendorf (2013), Reynolds (2008), Tsuda and Song (2019a) and many others have all made their own significant contributions to the field.

Transnationalism and the Second-Generation

There are particular distinctions that must be made when examining the second-generation, as opposed to the first-generation, and their transnational linkages and activities. Perlmann (2002) argues that particular second-generation transnational orientations may be reflected by the first-generation arrangements. In other words, the historical relevance of cultural practices, adolescent identities, economic patterns, and social or familial linkages of the first-generation will undoubtedly impact the second-generation’s transnational experience. Thus, distinctions regarding differences between economic and socio-cultural transnational practices and links require more specificity as relations to the country of origin will transform over time. Secondly, Perlmann (2002) questions what impact, if any, conditions in the origin country play for the second-generation. Do the historical and present conditions of the country of origin *really* impact the second-generation beyond the ethnic, cultural, or identity milieu? And, as stated earlier, are we seeing a ‘second-generation decline’ to account for dropping economic transnational activity cursorily found among the second-generation (Perlmann & Walding, 1997)? However, King and Christou (2008) explain that changes in both the

conditions of the origin and destination countries over the course of time and through generations will shape the experiences of second-generation. Conditions will change, favorably or unfavorably, in their origin and destination countries which could strengthen or weaken the transnational linkages the second-generation maintain. Finally, the various possible receptions in the destination country may shape the transnational orientations of the second-generation and alter the ‘transnational embeddedness’ of the second-generation. Although Perlmann (2002) outlines anti-immigration policies or xenophobic movements; economic, social, or political crisis may compel many second-generation to re-examine and perhaps rekindle their transnational identities, cultural orientations, and linkages between their destination and origin countries.

Social Networks, Social Capital, and the Second-Generation

Social network theory and its related social capital will also require some revisiting given the context of the second-generation. Often, scholarly literature has paid more attention to the transnational and/or diasporic links to the country of origin, yet little notice has been given to the second-generation within a social network theoretical framework. Cassarino (2004) explains that the cross-border social and economic networks differ significantly from the transnational relationships based more on ethnic group identity, including their organizational patterns, goals, and configurations. Second-generation members may acquire well-developed social links and networks from the parents without the admixture of affective, cultural, and symbolic ties based upon ‘homeland’ conceptions. For instance, members of the second-generation may not speak the language, know the history, or have ever visited their ancestral country of origin, yet they take agency in the struggle between internally formed constructions of ‘home’ based on their own negotiated cultural and familial connections to the country of origin.

Social networks, too, are based on strong, selective networks which reflect the experiences of the second-generation cohort rather than ethno-national affiliation. For instance, inheriting established business connections in the country of origin, managing familial property or assets, involvement in hometown associations, and religious communities are examples of how the second-generation may maintain and develop certain social networks with the origin country. Importantly, social networks may be

essential if second-generation return migration is part of a ‘survival strategy’, and they may be essential when destination country conditions are in crisis (Reynolds, 2008). Strong social networks based on trust, values, and reciprocal relationships facilitated by social capital may assist a returning migrant’s preparation with vital social support systems, employment contacts, and the possibility for social capital to be converted into cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1986). Helpful information, education, knowledge, language fluency, and local know-how all comprise of intangible cultural resources or cultural capital which may assist in their return preparation. It can also ease the process of (re)settlement and (re)integration in the country of origin, mitigating the cultural shocks and social isolation returnees with less resources may experience. Such social networks and social capital accumulation based upon reciprocal relationships of trust and values—whether through family, community, or societal linkages—may persist and continue over space, through time, and across generations (Reynolds, 2008).

Chapter Five

Framing the Second-Generation Return Migration Chronotopes within the Return Preparedness Framework

In reviewing the previous theoretical models within the second-generation context, and elaborating on the necessary distinctions and refinements, this research seeks to reconstruct and contribute to the current conceptual approaches which have, so far, not directly tackled the specific second-generation dynamic. Cassarino's return preparedness and migration cycles have been fruitful theoretical frameworks in accounting for and embodying the variegated micro and macro factors of the origin and destination countries, ethno-national and familial cross-border links, social and/or economic networks, the importance of tangible and intangible resources, history, time, and agency in return migration. Yet, they have not been adequately structured to tackle the evolving nuances of return migration within a second-generation context.

This chapter seeks, firstly, to summarize the existing literature on specifically second-generation return migration. Five prominent chronotopes will be presented and described bearing in mind the salient features which help describe the return preparedness of second-generation return mobilities. These five chronotopes are *counter diasporic return*, *lifestyle return*, *ethnic return*, *roots migration*, and *reverse transnationalism*. Secondly, this research will present a *diaspora–transnationalism spectrum* to address the directionality of the second-generation migrant. In other words, are they 'looking back' to their ancestral 'homeland' (diasporic) or 'moving on' (transnationalistic) and emigrating a first time to their country of parental origin? Finally, the conceptual framework of migration cycles will be revised as *generational migration cycles* to capture the array of return mobilities which persist through generations. The generational migration cycle goes beyond the original conceptions of migration cycles by including an additional stage

within the cycle and bidirectional *arrows of directionality* to capture the importance of a second-generation migrant's agency in describing the narrative of their return.

5.1 Counter Diasporic Return Migration

King and Christou (2010: 115) attempt to explain and illustrate how second-generation 'return' migration is a performative act "during which the migrant, through the story of the self, is (re)located in the story of the familial, the ancestral, the national, and ultimately within the transnational diaspora." Thus, *counter diaspora* represents the return of second- and subsequent-generations to the diasporic 'homeland'⁵ (King & Christou, 2008; 2010). Safran (1991) describes diasporas as existing in a triangular socio-cultural relationship with the destination country and homeland. Therefore, notions of 'home' and 'belonging' for the second-generation are likely to be ambiguous and multilayered (King & Christou, 2010). The search for 'home' may be a powerful experience which involves a component of discovering family or cultural heritage across time and space (King & Christou, 2010). The authors reveal that second-generation return is linked with finding one's identity (or rather a form of self-actualization)—"a kind of identification closure, which results from the achievement of a well thought-out, organized yet personal 'plan of action'..." (Christou, 2006a: 68; King & Christou, 2010). They further argue that globalization, with increased mobility and cultural hybridization, has blurred the lines between the relationship of ethnic culture and 'home,' in particular, for the second-generation (King & Christou, 2008; 2010). Such conceptions of 'home' can be illusionary insofar as reflecting the reconstructions and 'memories' of their parental ancestors; often nostalgic reminiscences, frozen in time, and harking back to idealized 'ol' country' narratives. Consequently, the 'social realism,' as King and Christou (2010) put it, may shift the dream of returning into a nightmare as real-world challenges (i.e., finding work, having social support, frustration from unforeseen conditions) impact the returnee's ability to reintegrate in the country of origin.

⁵ Brubaker (2005: 5) explains that diasporas are expatriate minority communities with three fundamental features: There was a 'scattering' from an earlier 'homeland' territory provoked by a tragic event (i.e., war, famine); there is a sense of boundedness which preserves the group's distinct ethnic identity while dispersed; there is a strong salience of the 'homeland' often expressed as a desire to return or restore the 'homeland.'

Second-generation returnees may exhibit a multiplicity and fluidity of the concept of ‘home’ and hybrid modes of cultural identity which makes them particularly adept at navigating and negotiating transnational activities, links, and spaces. For instance, visits ‘home’ by the young second-generation motivated by vacation, tourism, visiting parents (if returned), family and friends, and (re)discovering ancestral elements of the origin country culture can facilitate a high degree of preparedness with the significant social and cultural intangible resources and rich social capital created and sustained from these trips (King & Christou, 2008; 2010). Or, it may be more disruptive events which compels them to return like providing hands-on care or support for ill family members. Furthermore, the topic of return mobilities in children has only recently become a focus of attention. Children taken back on return visits or for the purposes of resettlement rarely have any significant contribution to the decision of return (King and Christou, 2011). This calls into question the actual willingness and agency children have in resettling in the origin country. Lee’s (2016) examination on the perceptions of agency by second-generation Tongan returnees who are sent by their parents to their homeland found that “[second-generation young adolescent returnees’] embodied and affective responses to the cultural and physical environment they encounter are significantly shaped by their perceptions of agency” (2016: 2586). Moreover, those that seemed to fare better in terms of achieving their migration goals—in this case, ‘straightening out’—were the returnees who viewed their migration as within their control and influence, their responsibility, and in line with their own wishes for migration (Lee, 2016). In Cassarino’s terms, many second-generation return migrants who are still under parental authority may have been compelled to return, *yet* still maintain some degree of preparedness given stock of how important familial and social ties are in this given circumstance. King and Christou (2011) also caution that we should not ignore the degree, if any, of agency that exists in child return mobilities, especially as many parents may decide to migrate or send their children ‘back’ based on altruistic motives and concerns about the wellbeing, safety, and quality of life for their child(ren) (Dustmann, 2003).

However, these sojourns of various magnitudes, along with their subjective cultural identity affiliation, will no doubt contribute to the diasporic/transnational links, social networks, and rich social capital second-generation migrants may acquire. They

may have tangible resources ready for their more permanent return like property or financial inheritances; they will also have intangible resources like strong transnational and social links maintained through frequent and varied forms of communication, highly convertible social capital, a fluid sense of ‘home’; and hybrid modes of cultural identity and fluency. They may also see themselves as ‘agents of change’ and hope to contribute to their homeland economically and socially. Still, disillusionment and rupture can make the return experience ‘unsettling’ for second-generation return migrants if the conception of ‘homeland’ is blurred in a mythologized imaginative construction (King & Christou, 2008). Unrealistic expectations based on sentimental reflections from older generations may leave second-generation returnees ill-equipped to handle the harsh realities of the ‘homeland,’ and, consequently, they may experience anger, frustration, discouragement, ambivalence, marginalization, othering, or an unexpected culture shock. Overall, second-generation counter-diasporic return, as proposed by King and Christou (2008; 2010), suggests that they are, in general, highly prepared for their return; they are often highly educated, bilingual, well-connected, and have extensive experience and know-how about their ‘homeland’.

5.2 Lifestyle Return Migration

Kılınç and King (2017) further build upon the concept of counter diasporic return, which constrains the ‘return’ of the second-generation within traditional conceptualizations of ‘home’ and bounded definitions of identity (King & Christou, 2008; 2010). Kılınç and King (2017) observed different dynamics from the second-generation’s return to their ancestral ‘home,’ namely, that ‘home’ is a mobile and overarching concept beyond the borders of physical locality and may also be shaped by parental influence. Thus, the authors refer to *lifestyle* return migration as similar to counter diaspora as it involves a searching or discovering of one’s own true self or identity (Kılınç & King, 2017). However, lifestyle return diverges in the specificity of the origin country which is described as “a touristic region, offering a more open and flexible lifestyle in an environmentally and culturally attractive setting” (Kılınç & King, 2017: 1493). In this case, the country of origin will be an attractive destination with significant pull factors geared towards aspects of quality of life and belonging, rather than familial-historical ties and ‘home’ narratives based on kinship affiliation. Specifically, lifestyle return migration

is a project, rather than an act, which encompasses diverse destinations and aspirations. The aspirations, which Kılınç & King (2017) reveal, are derived from the pursuit of one's 'self' or 'belonging,' renegotiating the work–life balance, improving the quality of their life, or escaping from familial or social constraints/traumas in the destination country.

Kılınç & King (2017) build upon the original first-generation lifestyle migration mobilities proposed by Benson and O'Reilly (2009a; 2009b). Specifically, *residential tourism* where lifestyle migrants turn touristic experiences into a permanent lifestyle—or 'holiday for life' as the authors suggest. Second is the *rural idyll* return. This typology seeks to 'step back in time' and live the 'good' or 'simple' life, getting back to the 'land' (in a more spatial-cultural sense like the landscape or 'holy land'), and experience the 'traditional' and 'authentic' values of their home or rural community (Benson & O'Reilly, 2009a; 2009b). The final typology the authors propose is the *'alternative' lifestyles* return. This is characterized by migrants who are bourgeois bohemians and may return for particular spiritual, artistic, or creative impulses (Benson & O'Reilly, 2009; 2009b). However, these typologies of lifestyle return are criticized for their socioeconomic selectivity which focus on affluent middle-class returnees. Yet, Kılınç and King (2017) support the claim about second-generation returnees that they tend to be highly educated, adventurous, ambitious, and have significant economic, social, or cultural capital influence.

Although numerous aspects of Benson and O'Reilly's (2009a; 2009b) typologies were found among the second-generation, Kılınç and King (2017) found that it is a 'search for self' which touches back on the notion of counter diaspora (King & Christou, 2008; 2010). Returnees seek to (re)construct their 'return-to-homeland' project as an exploration of 'self' and 'belonging'. However, the motivations for return may also be based on 'escaping' difficult personal, familial, social, or economic situations or 'trigger events' (i.e., divorce, health-issues, or economic crisis). They generally maintain a high degree of return preparedness given the educational qualifications, language skills, life experiences, and ambitious entrepreneurial attitudes. They seek to invest or set up jobs in hotels, restaurants, and other tourist activities to better balance work with a flexible, easy-going, and "relaxed attitude to life in [...] a 'paradise' of natural beauty and social open-mindedness" (Kılınç & King, 2017: 1491). Still, such investments can be a gamble as, for

some, the reality was different from what they imagined, and striving for a work-life balance in the country of origin has left them disillusioned from social or ideological disagreements or being ‘ripped off’ in business and investments. Finally, the ‘affluence’ of the second-generation lifestyle returnee is found not only in economic capital or tangible resources, but also social and cultural capital as well—intangible resources (Bourdieu, 1986). Although King and Kılınç (2014) found, in general, that familial and social networks were essential for second-generation return, many, in fact, opt to settle in touristic coastal cities away from relatives. Thus, a second-generation lifestyle returnee may reason that, to achieve their specific lifestyle migration goals, opting to utilize their variegated capitals in a new, touristic location may be better than relocating to where familial networks are more establish, and consequently, also more overbearing.

5.3 Ethnic Return Migration

Tsuda and Song’s (2019a) examination of *ethnic return* with diasporic communities around the world postulates that return migrants (or descendants of immigrant parents) are ‘returning’ to their ethnic ‘homeland’ and country of ancestral origin. Surprisingly, Tsuda and Song (2019b: 24) found that, among second-generation migrants, ‘returning’ to the country of origin was “not primarily driven by primordial attachments and an inherent sense of ethnic affinity to and longing for countries of origin.” Instead, it is often caused by more instrumental and practical motives, such as economic push factors in destination countries and pull factors in more developed origin countries. The authors have found that the second-generation, rather than returning to reconnect with their ‘roots,’ are often migrating from less developed countries in search of economic opportunities (Tsuda & Song, 2019b). Oftentimes, and despite presumed ethnic affinities with their ancestral origin country, they experience ethnic exclusion and socioeconomic marginalization as ‘cultural foreigners’ in their ‘homeland’. In his research on second-generation Caribbean returnees, Potter (2005) also found that many returnees experienced strong feelings of being outsiders, culture shock, being ‘mad’, too Americanized, and other attributes of resentment. Tsuda (2000) found similar experiences with Japanese–Brazilian returnees who developed a ‘counter-identity’ as a new immigrant minority against the hegemonic cultural assimilationist expectations of the origin country. Although the reconnection with ethnic roots was found to be only a secondary factor for

returnees of lower socioeconomic backgrounds, many were tending to stay longer-term and permanently in their country of origin with some even naturalizing (Kim, 2019).

5.3.1 ‘Historical’ and ‘Immigrant’ Generations

Tsuda (2019) also elaborates on important differences found within specific ethnic return migrant groups. In fact, conceptions of *generations* may be understood not only in an ‘immigrant’ perspective (i.e., first-, second-, and third-generations), but also within ‘historical’ perspectives as well. Generations can also refer to a particular age group that is a product of certain historical periods. One example is the ‘millennial generation’⁶ who came of age in the era of globalization with mass information and communication technologies freely available (Tsuda, 2019). Tsuda’s (Ibid) study of four distinct Japanese American generations living in the US—with comparisons of ‘immigrant’ and ‘historical’ generational perspectives—found varying experiences of social immersion during holiday visits; engagement with their ‘ethnic homeland’; attachment to their cultural heritage; and transnational links, activity, and mobilities.

Tsuda (2019) found that, generally, second- (and subsequent) generation ethnic returnees from the more affluent Global North countries sought to return because of their cultural connectedness to their ancestral homeland or because they wished to recover their ethnic heritage which may be perceived as having deteriorated over the generations. Fourth-generation immigrants (the great-grandchildren of the first-generation), despite having experienced higher assimilation to the destination country, were also the most transnationally engaged in the ethnic return migration due to concerns about their *overassimilation* in the destination country (Ibid). The ‘millennial’ generation, according to Tsuda, were the most involved with their ethnic return, had the longest and most immersive experiences in the ‘homeland,’ and had concerns about the importance of ethnic heritage and ‘homeland’ in a multicultural and globalized world. However, for ‘older’ second-generations in historical terms, Tsuda (2019) found many instances of limited and short, superficial visits which had no bearing on their attachment to heritage, familial ties, transnational links, nor ethnic consciousness. They were, in a sense,

⁶ The ‘Millennial Generation’ (as is often referred to by western researchers and popular media) starts around the early 1980s up until the mid-1990s to early 2000s. The name ‘Millennial’ was coined by Howe and Strauss (2000) as it refers this cohort coming of age in the third millennium A.D.

foreigners in their ‘homeland’. He argues that particular historical factors—in Tsuda’s case, US–Japanese post-war or pre-war second-generation⁷—can shape or alter the directionality and level of interest or concern one has for their ethnic ‘homeland’.

5.4 Roots Migration

Wessendorf (2013)—in her research of second-generation Italians living in Switzerland—points out that existing literature on the second-generation migration to their country of origin often describes this form of mobility as ‘return’ or, in terms of directionality, ‘looking back’. However, Wessendorf (2013) found that her participants rarely used the term ‘return’ emphasizing they cannot ‘go back’ to a place they never lived. Therefore, the author seeks to emphasize the various forms of transnational relations, experiences, practices, and mobilities in her research, thereby diverging from, but not discounting, the diasporic theorists. Transnational experiences and practices and the sense of nostalgia for the ‘homeland’ or ‘homing desire’ are both integral at understanding the full return migration picture. In fact, Wessendorf (2013) concurs with Christou (2006b) in that roots migrants’ connectedness and relations to ‘home’ may change when nostalgic longing for identification and belonging is abruptly burst by structural realities of the origin country, especially if conditions are insecure and the economic situation difficult.

Roots migration, as proposed by Wessendorf (2013), seeks to explain how the second-generation—as they move back-and-forth among origin and destination countries and existing within strong familial and co-ethnic social networks as children—once adults, may continue to share their parents’ transnational ties to the country of origin and maintain social networks with co-ethnics. She also explains that second-generation roots migration can be understood as a reaction to extensive and immersive transnational activity as childhoods and adolescents. “The term ‘roots’ not only reflects the migrants’ own interpretations of where they come from, but also their aspirations to settle in just one place and to cease to lead lives characterized by mobility or ‘routes’” (Wessendorf, 2013: 113; Clifford, 1997). Also, the parents’ dream of returning to the country of origin may

⁷ Tsuda’s (2019) research sample consists of two separate ‘historical’ generations but of the same ‘immigrant’ second-generation. There are pre-war *nisei* whose parents arrived in the U.S. prior to 1924, and *shin nisei* whose parents arrived primarily after 1965.

be a factor leading to roots migration, or in other words, the ‘myth of return’ is inherited by the second-generation as a motivation for ‘return’ to the origin country (Wessendorf, 2013; Zetter, 1999). Reynolds (2008) found that the ‘myth of return’ was a central component to second-generation Caribbean youth as they would often grow up hearing stories of ‘home,’ and recount their parents’ nostalgia and yearning for ‘home’ as a powerful early childhood memory.

“The nature and intensity of ties with relatives [...] and the degree to which members of the second-generation felt they were integrated into a wider network of relatives play a crucial role in the decision to migrate” (Wessendorf, 2013: 114). Roots return migrants often relate the importance of ‘being together’ or ‘being united’ often in relation to the family unit. For those that migrated with children, they also relayed the notion of providing a strong, family-oriented environment. The choice of a marriage partner also plays a significant role in roots migration. As roots migrants are characterized as have strong familial and social networks, marriage patterns may also reflect similar ethnic and generational backgrounds, and return may be a strategic life decision for both partners. Many roots migrants also exercise a sense of ‘multiple cultural competencies’—either appreciating or rejecting certain aspects of destination or origin country cultural values. They may also struggle to find friends outside of the family when living in the origin country. As creeping awareness of their ‘destination country mentality’ becomes apparent, especially when juxtaposed against perceived socio-cultural differences of their local community, continuous or long-term adaptation and settlement in the origin country may be more difficult (Wessendorf, 2013).

The mobilization of tangible and intangible resources also plays an important role in a roots migrant’s experience. Older roots migrants often return to establish more economic transnational links whereby younger roots migrants will hold less realistic views about establishing themselves in the origin country. Structural conditions in the origin country are also managed differently by older roots migrants as they are more cognizant of what to expect (i.e., corruption, chaotic bureaucracy, economic insecurity). Yet, for younger roots migrants, their dreams may have been grandiose or naïve, they may end up working in marginalized positions, and rely more heavily on the familial and social networks to sustain them. Other strong incentives for relocation were property and assets

in the origin country. Wessendorf (2013) explains how roots migrants may purchase a ‘holiday house’ and eventually make it their permanent residence. In many instances, second-generation will have the citizenship of the destination country—as the majority are born there—but, depending on the origin country’s laws on nationality⁸, roots migrants may be excluded from important aspects of the socio-political reality when they relocate. Finally, the concept of social remittances proposed by Levitt (2001) show the importance of cultural and social differences as a form of social capital, however, it was found to be limited with Wessendorf’s (2013) sample. As explained by one of her participants, the strong desire to ‘return’ “weakens social remittances because of the tendency to sustain the cultural practices and values experienced in the homeland prior to emigration” (2013: 135).

5.5 Reverse Transnationalism

As King and Christou (2011) suggest and Wessendorf (2013) confirms, the directionality of the second-generation migrant is important to establish whether the returnee is ‘looking back’ or ‘moving on’; emigrating to their country of origin or returning to their ancestral ‘homeland.’ Once a second-generation migrant ‘returns’ to their country of origin, the roles may be reversed, and the returnee becomes a first-generation immigrant in their ‘homeland’. Still, it is often more likely that second-generation returnees will forge and develop new transnational links between their destination and origin country and where the concept of ‘homeland’ takes on new meanings. This specific directionality of second-generation migrants ‘looking back’ to their destination/birth country after emigrating to the country of parental origin and the transnational links, activity, and realities they manoeuvre is what King and Christou (2011) call *reverse transnationalism*. Although Reynolds herself does not use the term, her research sheds light on how second-generation return migrants utilize their social capital and networks from the destination country to help facilitate and manage their return experience.

⁸ *Jus soli* means ‘law of the soil’ and refers citizenship rights based on place of birth; *jus sanguinis* means ‘law of blood’ and refers to citizenship rights based on a heritage which is transmitted to decedents.

Reynolds (2011) in her study on ‘left-behind kin’ of the second-generation migrating to the Caribbean has found that more than the cultural or spiritual attachment to the homeland of the parents, the decision to relocate was based more on practical concerns often based on intimate or personal relationships formed with local destination country residents and improving their overall economic and employment prospects. As second-generation returnees may often be perceived as ‘outsiders’ within their country of origin, many of these migrants utilize their social capital—specifically the different bonding and bridging social capital⁹—with familial relatives in both origin and destination countries to act as a source of social support and to ease their return settlement (Reynolds, 2011). Such backward or ‘reverse transnationalistic’ links with relatives in the destination country are important for second-generation migrants as it offers them with an invaluable source of social capital which they may draw upon for emotional or financial support, security, and protection.

Nevertheless, complex meanings of ‘home’ and ‘homeland’ do play an important role in the migration experience of second-generation returnees. The ‘overwhelming majority’ of Reynolds’ (2011) participants often chose their parents’ country of origin based on a strong spiritual and cultural attachment to the parental homeland. Evidence also suggests that their first-generation parents may have helped foster such attachments. Family reminiscences, trips ‘home’, narratives, and idealizations of ‘home’ by the first-generation parents may have helped cultivate such sentiments in their second-generation children. Reynolds (2011) describes these actions as forms of ‘social investments’ by the first-generation emigrant parents to ensure such links between the destination and origin country are passed down to their children. Along with social investments, economic investments like purchasing houses, property, businesses, or other assets further strengthen the transnational links, and it can provide an important source of tangible resources for when the second-generation decide to return. Also, familial relatives left behind in the destination country can also operate as a form of ‘social insurance’ if the

⁹ Robert Putnam (2000) posits that social capital is differentiated according to its capacity for ‘bridging’: outward-looking and involving relationships between *different* groups and communities, and it often influences decisions to migrate; and ‘bonding’: inward-looking and involves reinforcing the bonds and connections *within* groups. This is importance for maintaining established bonds and strengthening nascent familial, community, or peer formations.

second-generation's migration experience in the origin country does not work out, or if they have decided to re-emigrate 'back' to their birth/destination country (Reynolds, 2011). Additionally, globalization and ever-advancing information and communication technologies have facilitated such transnational links and mobilities across borders. Importantly, it has also eased the possibility for second-generation migrants to keep in closer contact with their familial kin still in the destination country and the accumulation, conversion, and utilization of social capital embedded within such familial or social networks.

Reynolds (2008; 2011) found that the demographic profile of second-generation returnees often suggests that they have considerable social and economic resources which can be mobilized for their return. Many have university degrees, professional qualifications, financial savings, and extensive experiences in the origin country through return visits. Importantly, intimate, personal relationships were often a deciding factor for return as many met their partners during their sojourns or in the destination country and subsequently decided to return to their parents' country of origin. Furthermore, Reynolds (2011) explains that the 'outsider' status, moreoften for men, did not pose any difficulties in cultural adjustments, establishing local peer groups, or social networks and, in fact, may be an asset as seen in postcolonial discourse whereby an 'English accent' may yield wider economic or social opportunities. However, for women, they exhibited less preparedness given the difficulties adjusting to the cultural differences, gender norms and practices, and the loss of solidarity and social support that had existed previously in the destination country. Although many women expressed feelings of isolation and alienation from the difficulties of building solid peer groups in the origin country, many of her participants emphasized their emotional preparedness to endure the sacrifices that were required of them. This was especially apparent if it meant that their children (if mothers) would have a better quality of life (Reynolds 2011).

Finally, it must be added that familial and transnational links may also pose potential risks. Such emotional ties can produce feelings of anxiety, hurt, frustration, distrust, neglect, and disregard, in particular, if positions in society are marginal, families operate with unequal power relations, or if support comes with contingencies (i.e., strings attached) (Smart, 2007; Charles et al., 2008; Zontini, 2004; 2010). Part of maintaining

social capital—especially since time and space may alter and fray familial relations—is about doing ‘kin work’ vis-à-vis reciprocating care and support among geographically dispersed families (Goulbourne et al., 2010; Zontini & Reynolds, 2007). Thus, second-generation returnees devote significant time and energy to maintaining their commitments and responsibilities to their families. Such activities include organizing regular family get-togethers, return ‘home’ (destination country) visits, accommodating destination country family, or managing care for sick or aging relatives. They may also include other ‘caring tasks’ like small favors, loaning money, calling and ‘checking-in’, advice, support, and so on. Nevertheless, such familial obligations may generate negative feelings of tension and resentment among relatives. In some instances, second-generation returnees may have returned to the origin country to free themselves from familial pressure, marginalization, or other responsibilities; while others may distance themselves or, in extreme cases, sever the relationships with family in the destination country (Reynolds, 2011). Thus, Reynolds (2011: 549) cautions us to not lose sight “of the relational and relativizing aspects of family relationships, which maintain, negotiate, and curtail kinship ties.”

Chapter Six

Introducing the Diaspora–Transnational Spectrum and the Generational Migration Cycles

This chapter will firstly discuss the conceptual overlap and distinctions between diaspora and transnationalism and reframe the two conceptual approaches on a spectrum of more-or-less diasporic–transnationalistic activity and orientation. This is proposed in order to determine the directionality of the second-generation returnees’ orientation: ‘looking back’ to the country of ancestral origin or ‘moving forward’ and emigrating for the first time. The second-generation return chronotopes outlined in Chapter 5 are reintroduced within the theoretical framework of return preparedness and along the diaspora–transnational spectrum to illustrate aspects which are relevant to the overall theoretical approach of this research and where significant gaps in literature exist. Finally, this research will introduce *generational migration cycles* to incorporate the analytical richness of Cassarino’s theories while also accounting for more dynamic processes and nuances found within second-generation return mobilities.

6.1 Introducing the Diaspora–Transnationalism Spectrum

Both diaspora and transnationalism are important concepts not only in policy debates but also academic research. Diaspora, being quite the timeworn concept, and transnationalism, being relatively new, have been regularly used by academics and researchers interchangeably, as the terms’ definitional boundaries can be quite fuzzy and often overlap with each other. Faist (2010) argues that they are, in fact, overlapping but distinct concepts; “awkward dance partners” as he calls it. Moreover, a migrant may be diasporic without being transnational or vice versa; they may also be both or neither as well (King & Christou, 2011). Such blurriness is further exacerbated by the fact that diasporic and transnationalistic definitions have significantly expanded over the years; so much so that Brubaker (2005) questions the very usefulness of such terms. Levitt and

Waters (2002) also concurs by stating that transnationalism has become a ‘catch-all’ term that is used to describe more than it should. This research does not offer any new insights into the diaspora–transnationalism debate, however, it does seek to reframe the two overlapping concepts as on a spectrum to emphasize the directionality of a second-generation migrant’s return. Importantly, this *diaspora–transnationalism spectrum* reformulation is specific to the purpose of this study and may not be relevant outside of this particular context.

6.1.1 Similarities and Differences of Diaspora and Transnationalism

Faist (2010) outlines several similarities and differences between the perspectives of diaspora and transnationalism. In terms of similarities, both are elastic terms which deal with the sustained cross-border links between the destination and origin countries, and how they are maintained over time. However, they are distinct insofar as diasporic approaches tend to focus more on the socio-emotional relationship with ‘homelands’, and it often emphasizes the cultural distinctiveness and identity of diasporic groups. Conversely, transnationalism literature focuses more on the practices and acts of maintaining such links over time and distance, and how they are incorporated into everyday realities of migrants. Furthermore, the scope of diasporic and transnationalistic groups differs; diasporic formations tend to coalesce around common religious, political, ethnic, and national groups and communities. Transnationalistic groups, on the other hand, encompasses a much broader range of cross-border familial links and social networks. Thus, “transnational communities encompass diasporas, but not all transnational communities are diasporas” (Faist, 2010: 21). Diasporic approaches also tend to focus on aspects of collective identity and how the (re)production of particular identities may vary in intensities towards origin and/or destination countries. Issues of identity are important for the transnational perspective as well, however, it focuses more on how these identities—also embedded in other flows of ideas and goods—may change over time as cross-border mobility ensues and social networks are (re)negotiated (Ibid). Finally, the emphasis on how diasporic and transnationalistic approaches tackle the dimension of time is also salient. Recall Tsuda’s (2019) expansion on the notion of ‘historical’ generations as compared to ‘immigrant’ generations. Scholars utilizing a diasporic approach may refer to more ‘historical’ multigenerational patterns and formations of ethnic identity and senses

of belonging. Transnationalism, in comparison, often deals with more recent migrant flows and may maintain a more ‘immigrant’ generational perspective with regards to dimensions of time. Still, there is considerable overlap in notions of generations as these concepts are comparatively intertwined. The literature on the diaspora–transnationalism ‘rumba’ is extensive and ever-growing; and in the field of second-generation return mobilities, the interconnectedness these two approaches share is increasingly relevant.

6.2 Reframing Second-Generation Return Chronotopes within Return Preparedness and the Diaspora–Transnationalism Spectrum

Given the various overlaps and distinctions diasporic and transnationalistic approaches present, this research seeks to amalgamate these concepts on a spectrum of more-or-less diasporic–transnationalistic activity. King and Christou’s (2011) elaborations on the concept of directionality is presented as a spectrum to understand the nuances and gradations of diasporic–transnationalistic links in relation to different chronotopes of return migration.

It is important to note that in most other fields of migration scholarship diasporas and transnationalism are generally not presented, nor operate, on a spectrum. Therefore, it is important that the utilization of a diaspora–transnationalism spectrum is specific to second-generation return migration to the extent this research is concerned and should not be used in other domains without careful consideration. The five major chronotopes of second-generation return migration have been reconstructed along the diasporic–transnational spectrum and within the return preparedness theoretical framework. Table 2a and Table 2b illustrate the various motivations which help decide or compel second-generation return, the specific tangible and intangible resources most salient given the particular chronotope of return, and their specific attributes, which may facilitate or hinder the mobilization of such resources. The diasporic–transnationalism spectrum is included to not only help illustrate the directionality each chronotope may lean towards, but also their position in relation to other chronotopes. Furthermore, to avoid essentializing the dichotomy between diasporic and transnationalistic approaches, it is important to understand that second-generation return migrants do not exist tightly into one perspective, but rather embody certain aspects of one chronotope while, perhaps,

exhibiting behaviours or strategies of another. Thus, this research seeks to incorporate all the important elements prior research has contributed to the field in order to build upon the existing chronotopes and present fresh analysis to the second-generation return migration phenomenon.

Table 2a: Second-generation return migration chronotopes and willingness to return

		Diasporic			Transnationalistic	
		<i>Counter-diasporic & 'ancestral' return (King & Christou, 2008; 2010)</i>	<i>Lifestyle return (Kilinc & King 2017)</i>	<i>Ethnic return (Tsuda & Song, 2019a; Tsuda, 2000; 2019)</i>	<i>Roots return migration (Wessendorf, 2007; 2013)</i>	<i>Reverse transnationalism (Reynolds, 2008; 2011)</i>
Willingness	Motivations based on favorable conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Searching for self-identity, belonging, or sense of 'home' • Transnational lifestyle (moving back & forth) • To become 'agents of change' 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Searching for self-identity, belonging, or sense of 'home' • Seek to balance work & leisure—improve quality of life 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural connectedness to ancestral homeland • Recover 'ethnic' heritage • Generational ambitions • Acquire education and/or employment in country of origin 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aspiration to settle in one place & cease living transnational/mobile lives. • Fulfilling parents 'myth of return' • Reuniting with family or following spouse 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong spiritual and/or cultural attachment to parental origin country • Improving socio-economic status & quality of life for themselves and children • Re-uniting with spouse or partner or deciding together to return to origin country
	Motivations based on unfavorable or negative conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marginalization or 'othering' • Family pressures or expectations (i.e., marriage) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Escaping difficult personal, familial, social, or economic situations or 'trigger events' 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong economic push/pull factors in destination & origin country in lower socioeconomic status returnees 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Following spouse 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leaving from familial pressure, marginalization or 'caring tasks' or responsibilities
	Disruptive events compel return	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Return compelled for children & adolescents under parental control • Familial compellence (i.e., terminal illness of parent) 				

Table 2b: Second-generation return migration chronotopes and readiness to return (tangible/intangible resources)

		Diasporic			Transnationalistic	
		<i>Counter-diasporic & 'ancestral' return (King & Christou, 2008; 2010)</i>	<i>Lifestyle return (Kılınç & King, 2017)</i>	<i>Ethnic return (Tsuda & Song, 2019a; Tsuda, 2000; 2019)</i>	<i>Roots return migration (Wessendorf, 2007; 2013)</i>	<i>Reverse transnationalism (Reynolds, 2008; 2011)</i>
Readiness (resource mobilization)	Tangible resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Financial or property inheritance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Savings from living in affluent destination country. Being 'ripped off' in business or investments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Low socioeconomic status (little savings) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Savings from living in affluent destination country Investing (or inheriting) property or small business 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Savings from living in affluent destination country Economic investments by first-generation parents
	Intangible resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social & familial networks. Social capital Fluid conceptions of 'home' and 'belonging' Hybrid modes of cultural identity Bilingualism High education Poor information based on 'unrealistic' expectations Rupture and/or disillusionment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social & familial networks. Social capital Dynamic patterns of cultural syncretism. Fluid conceptions of 'home' and 'belonging' Extensive vacations to 'touristic' regions Poor information based on expectations of an 'idyllic paradise' Preference to live in 'touristic' setting away from established familial and social networks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social & familial networks. Social capital Transnational ethnic consciousness & attachments Cultural & linguistic fluency Perceived as 'cultural foreigners' Ethnic resistance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Multiple cultural competences Strong familial networks Social capital Older roots migrants maintain stronger transnational links Social remittances Minority social position with weak peer groups Younger roots migrants' 'unrealistic' expectations Socio-political exclusion (i.e., citizenship) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 'Bridging' and 'bonding' social capital 'Social investments' by first-generation parents 'Social insurance' from relatives in destination country Extensive visits/vacations to origin country Cultural/linguistic fluency Loss of social capital due to cultural differences, gender norms, and 'outsider' status (particularly for women) 'Kin work' Distancing or severing familial networks perceived to be painful and negative

Since there has been little scholarly research done on the second-generation return preparedness or migration cycles, the gaps in the literature are presented visually in Table 2a specifically as to highlight the room for scholarly growth and understanding in the field. Notably, little attention has been paid to return motivations based on the forced or compelled return of second-generation migrants. The case of second-generation Lebanese–Venezuelans ‘retuning’ to Lebanon given the socio-political and economic crisis occurring in Venezuela (and subsequently similar crises occurring in Lebanon) provides an opportunity to address the gaps in the present literature. It also uncovers new typologies embedded within the unique circumstance of a crisis-to-crisis return migration including migrants’ patterns of (re)integration in their country of origin and the decision-making factors that may lead to re-emigration. The context for (re)integration in the origin country, the duration and type of experiences in the destination country, and the factors or conditions in the destination and origin countries which motivated return—specifically, the place, time (and *timing*), and pre-/post-return conditions for Lebanese–Venezuelan returnees—will be outlined in further detail in Chapter 8.

Return migrants are a heterogenous group, and with the relative recency of scholarly focus on second-generation return mobilities, including the nascent stage of many theoretical approaches applied in the field, theoretical frameworks like return preparedness and migration cycles may be open to contributions. Reiterating Cassarino (2014: 159), return preparedness “intimately connects any person who returns home from abroad, regardless of the place of origin, social background, motivations, prospects, skills, and occupational status...” including *generation*.

6.3 Generational Migration Cycles: A Revised Approach to Return Preparedness and Migration Cycles

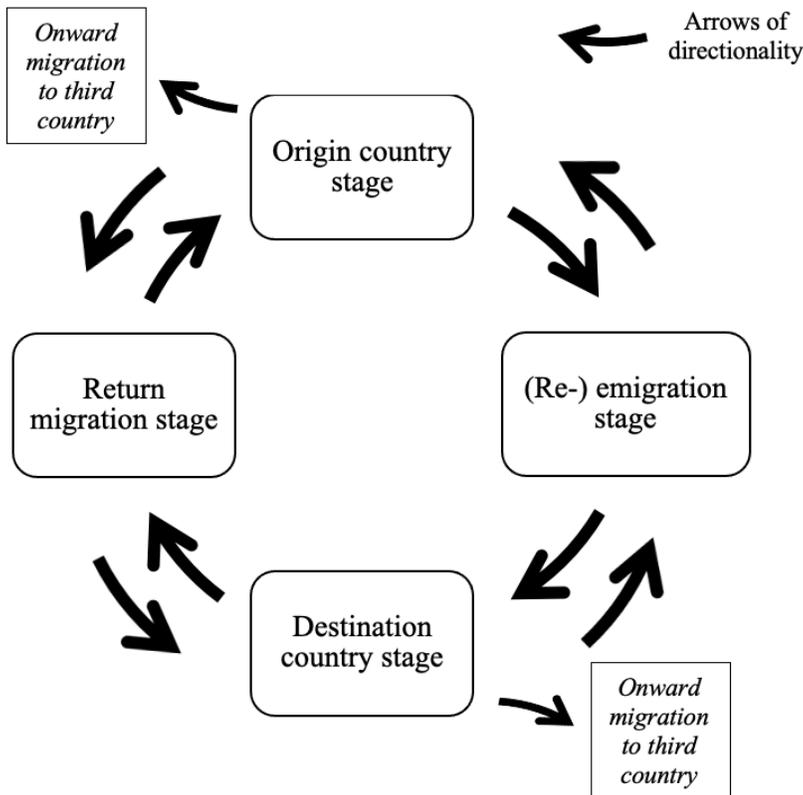
Cassarino (2016) has provided ample empirical data to support the notions that the more complete the migration cycle, the higher return preparedness a migrant had for their return migration; and the completeness of their migration cycle intimately shapes their capacity to (re)integrate into their country of origin (recall Table 1). Plenty of research has been conducted on the context in the country of origin; the duration and type of migration experienced abroad; the factors or conditions in the destination and origin countries which

motivate return (Cassarino, 2008a; 2008b; 2016; Kuschminder, 2013). These considerations are important in understanding why returnees' patterns of (re)integration differ from one another. Furthermore, Cassarino (2016: 218) addresses the issue of heterogeneity among return migrants stating that "regardless of the heterogeneity characterizing return migrants' experiences and profiles, migrants' autonomous decision and readiness to return impact on their likelihood to reintegrate". However, referring to Constant's (2020: 5) definition and this research's elaboration on return migration, it is "the relocation of first or *higher* generations from a country..." (my emphasis). As is too often the case, when examining second-generation returnees, they are often tossed into the exclusion criteria bin when researchers are constructing their sample parameters (Kuschminder, 2013). Thus, examining the concept of migration cycles and its relation to return preparedness specifically with the lens of the second-generation has not been undertaken yet.

6.3.1 Generational Migration Cycles

To reiterate, according to Cassarino (2016), a migration cycle comprises three distinct stages: the emigration stage or pre-departure conditions; the immigration stage or conditions whilst abroad; and return stage or conditions after return. Linking these three stages refers to a single migration cycle and is a prerequisite to identify the three types of migration cycles (i.e., complete, incomplete, interrupted). Yet, the particular stages migration cycle researchers posit do not specifically address the issues of directionality with regards to second-generation returnees. Therefore, I submit a new conceptual framework (seen in Figure 2) which may account for first-, second-, and subsequent-generation return mobilities based upon the original migration cycle framework while incorporating the importance of directionality within the theoretical model.

Figure 2: Generational migration cycle



The *generational return migration cycle* captures Cassarino’s (2016) original stages of emigration, immigration, and return, however, given the directionality of second-generation return migrants, the generational return migration cycle does not make assertions about where ‘home’ or ‘abroad’ are, and whether they are emigrating or returning to their country of ancestral origin. In Kuschminder’s (2013) illustration, the directional arrows signifying mobility are unidirectional, conversely, in Figure 2, the arrows are bidirectional to address the problematization of directionality. This is to be determined by where along the diaspora–transnationalism spectrum the return mobility falls, and consequently, whether migrants are ‘looking back’ or ‘moving forward’.

Therefore, this research proposed four distinct stages as part of the generational migration cycle: the *origin country stage*—this stage represents the actual conditions in the origin country where a first-generation migrant may (re-)emigrate from or return to depending on the migrant’s previous stage. For second-generations, they have either ‘returned’ or ‘emigrated’ from their destination country. This is determined by where along the diaspora–transnationalism spectrum the returnee’s mobility is perceived, thus

determining the directionality as seen in the model's conceptual arrows. The origin country stage presents the push factors which may instigate (re-) emigration or the pull factors which may entice a migrant's return. This stage also maintains the post-return conditions for returnees which may shape their (re)settlement, (re)integration, and decision to (re-)emigrate.

The *(re-)emigration stage*—this stage constitutes the migrant's return preparedness for their (re-)emigration. Depending on the arrows of directionality, a first-generation may emigrate abroad for their first time, or they may maintain strong transnational connections between the origin and destination country; thus, their re-emigration stage constitutes one of many 'back-and-forth' migration cycles already completed. The second-generation, after returning to their origin country may re-emigrate 'back' to their destination country. Furthermore, a second-generation migrant in the destination country may perceive their relocation to the origin country not as a 'return', but as a first-time emigration to their country of ancestral origin.

The *destination country stage* constitutes the conditions in the destination country where a first-generation migrant resides or where a second-generation migrant was born (or immigrated before the age of five). The conditions in the destination country stage include the pull factors and post-emigration/return conditions for those immigrating to the destination country. This stage also contains the push factors and pre-return/emigration conditions which may spur relocation to the country of origin/ancestral 'homeland'.

The *return migration stage* is the returnee's return preparedness. For first-generation migrants, this constitutes the end of their migration cycle and a return to their origin/home country. For second-generation returnees, they also perceive their migration as retuning to their 'homeland', however, it may be unclear whether the origin or destination/birth country (or even both) constitutes as 'home' for the second-generation returnee. The arrows of directionality address this ambiguity by including how the returnee subjectively perceives their relocation. Are they 'looking back' and returning either to their ancestral 'homeland' or, if they are already in the origin country stage, returning to the country of their birth?

Additionally, as the arrows of directionality reflect the subjective perspective of the migrant, they may also, at either the origin or destination country stage, shift course and move in the opposite direction. This may occur when, for example, a second-generation migrant returns to their origin country with non-existent preparedness. Although the returnee perceived they were ‘returning’ to their ancestral ‘homeland’, poor information regarding post-return conditions, unreliable sources of information, compelled willingness, and high expectations based on idyllic and nostalgic notions of the ‘homeland’ may lead to what King and Christou (2010) refer to as ‘rupture and disillusionment’. This can lead to a severing of their sense of ‘home’ and identity towards the origin country. Thus, although they may have ‘returned’ to their country of origin, they may also *re-return* ‘home’ to their birth/destination country. Lastly, migrants progress through stages is based on their willingness—once they decided or were compelled to return—to relocate. Once the willingness has been established, migrants either advance to the (re-)emigration stage or return stage. The physical relocation of the migrant marks entry into the origin or destination country stages.

Finally, at either the origin or destination country stage, migrants may decide to break-off from their migration cycle and migrate *onwards* thus establishing an entirely new cycle (Bovenkerk, 1974; Gmelch, 1980). Importantly, migrants rarely cut ties completely with either their origin or destination countries. More likely, their hypermobility; hybrid and fluid conceptions of ‘home’ and ‘self’; and ease and experience with creating, maintaining, utilizing, and integrating their transnational and social networks allow migrants to transcend earlier limitations of space and time. Globalization—with its ease of international mobility, movement of information, finances, goods/services, and proliferation of information and communications technologies—has allowed migrants to establish and maintain multiple, intricate, and multi-layered migration cycles which may persist over generations. These cycles are maintained by the emotional attachments and diasporic orientations migrants feel and pass on to their children about the country of origin. They may also possess a diverse composition of transnational links, social networks, familial connections, financial investments, and social capital in any number of destination and ‘home’ countries. One may imagine, then, an elite-class of hypermobile migrants with multiple migration cycles

interconnecting simultaneously between numerous conceptions of home and destination countries. These Borromean-like chain links of migration cycles are interlaced with networks of transnational connections that intersect and connect at multiple points within and between multiple destination and origin country stages—all existing among the multitude of generational migration cycles migrants may inhabit.

In order to verify the credibility of this novel conceptual model for examining return preparedness and migration cycles within the context of multiple generations, this research employs a mixed-methods approach to, first, quantitatively uncover the trends and patterns of Lebanese–Venezuelan return migrants to Lebanon and their intentions of re-emigration, and second, qualitatively uncover the nuances and complexities of their return preparedness, (re)settlement, (re)integration, and the decision-making factors that impact their decision to re-emigrate (or migrate onwards) given the ongoing socioeconomic crises in both origin and destination countries.

Chapter Seven

Research Methodology: Mixed-Methods Approach

The main purpose of this research is to examine the specific phenomenon of second-generation Lebanese-Venezuelan return migration. More specifically, this research utilizes the theoretical frameworks of return preparedness and generational migration cycles as chief independent variables to examine a range of dependent variables. This research has, first, outlined the theoretical background and development of return migration and re-emigration. Secondly, this research presented the phenomenon of return migration encapsulated within the second-generation context. Previous theoretical models are revisited and new chronotopes of second-generation return migration are presented. Thirdly, Cassarino's theoretical models are applied to the existing literature on second-generation return mobilities (see Table 2a and 2b). This is done to identify the gaps in existing literature about second-generation return migration. Lastly, this research revises Cassarino's original migration cycle model to include the generational aspect of return in second- and subsequent-generation returnees. This research introduces the generational migration cycle (Figure 2) to account for the problematization of concepts like 'home' and 'return' posed by second-generation dynamics. This is accomplished by incorporating components from other theoretical concepts into the framework of migration cycles; namely, the idea of directionality proposed by King and Christou (2011). By first establishing the return preparedness and generational migration cycles of the participants, this research aims to answer the following question: *What is the impact of return preparedness and generational migration cycles on the (re)settlement and (re)integration of second-generation Lebanese–Venezuelan return migrants?* Furthermore, this research also addresses the question of re-emigration: *How do returnees' return preparedness and generational migration cycles shape and influence the decision-making factors returnees weigh after return when considering the option of re-emigration in times of concurrent socioeconomic crises?*

The primary methodological design for this research will be based on the mixed-methods approach. Otherwise known as a ‘multi-strategy’ approach, mixed-methods combine facets of both qualitative and quantitative research. This approach was selected to hopefully offset some of the inherent weaknesses the research maintains (i.e., limited sample size, unknown population size, snowball sampling). Furthermore, mixed-methods approach offer a more complete picture of the return phenomenon. The quantitative component offers a macro-perspective with general trends while the qualitative provides a more inductive analysis to understand the nuances and complexities of this return phenomenon. Bryman (2016: 634) describes this as providing more context and illustration to the quantitative data—or ‘meat on the bones’. Creswell and Tashakkori (2007: 108), editors of the *Journal of Mixed Methods Research*, state that good mixed-methods research must contribute, in some way, to the mixed-methods approach. The next section will outline this research’s own strategy of implementing mixed-methods and hopefully fulfil the challenge posed by Creswell and Tashakkori.

7.1 Study Procedure

The quantitative component of this study took place via an online survey constructed by the researcher (see Appendix A) and distributed using information and communications technologies like Facebooks groups, WhatsApp chats, and other online platforms. Given the Covid-19 pandemic, no face-to-face contact occurred between the researcher and participants. This limited the impact of snowball sampling as rapport had to be established via internet communications, and response rates for online surveys on internet platforms is often lower than in person. 41 participants consented and completed the online survey. The data was downloaded from the internet, password encrypted, and analyzed with the usage of SPSS statistical software. No identifying information was collected in the survey; however, participants were provided the option to opt-into the qualitative component of this study. If the participant chose to opt-in, either their telephone number or email address was provided by them. This data was deleted after further contact was made with selected participants.

Six participants from the survey sample opted-in for qualitative semi-structured interviews. Before commencing interviews, participants were informed of their right to

refuse answering any questions and/or terminate the interview at any time with no repercussions whatsoever. Their permission was acquired to record the interview with their anonymity and privacy held at utmost importance. This was assured by scrubbing any identifying information from the interviews when transcribing, deleting original interview files, and assigning aliases for qualitative analysis. Interviews were also conducted via online platforms like Skype or Zoom to avoid any face-to-face contact. Qualitative analysis was done using the Nvivo data analysis software. A narrative analysis approach was applied to the return preparedness, post-return conditions, and intentions of re-emigration. Providing a temporal sequence in a life-story format allows for details about events in a returnee's life, their perception of such events, and how changes over time may have impacted the returnee's subjective perceptions and interpretations regarding various topics (Bryman, 2016). The decision-making factors will be analyzed using a thematic analysis approach. Since the decision-making factors are organized along five major themes derived from an extensive literature review and the researcher's own fieldwork, thematic analysis focusing on specific factors within the themes allows the researcher to extrapolate the nuances and rationale for the selected themes.

Since surveys were implemented before the interviews, the strategy of this research's mixed-methods approach utilized the information from the interviewee's survey to, firstly, tailor interview questions specific to the interviewee's experiences as reported in the survey. Secondly, the researcher can raise questions which focus on specific topics, inconsistencies in answers, changes in opinion, elaborations, context, and so on. Oftentimes, mixed-methods research utilizes the qualitative component to generate specific and closed-ended questions for their quantitative stage (Bryman, 2016). In comparison, this research uses the quantitative component to facilitate richer data inductively during the qualitative component by pre-establishing the fundamental or rudimentary details of the participants' return migration. Thus, more time can be dedicated to diving deeper into certain topics of the phenomenon, especially when the general understanding of their return migration has already been established.

7.2 Ethical Issues

There were no known overt risks or benefits to the participants of this research. Given the risk of Covid-19, all data was collected electronically. However, since the study examines return migration in times of crises, it was assumed that feelings, memories, or emotions may arise in the participants. Therefore, special emphasis was given (i.e., bold, underlined font) to their freedom to withdraw, and contact information of the researcher was provided in case participants needed further clarifications. Furthermore, interviewees from qualitative interviews were given an explanation about the scope, aim, and purpose of this research as part of obtaining their consent. Given that the Lebanese–Venezuelan returnees represent a relatively tight-knit and connected community, I was fully aware that many members of this community accepted and opened their social networks to assist this research. Thus, to maintain the strength and durability of the social networks provided I have made efforts to ensure the interviewees know that the lines of communication are always open. Too often the researcher–participant relationship is based on exploitative, data-gathering motivations and connections are severed after the researcher has acquired the data they sought. Rather, researchers must be keenly aware that their obligations go beyond the orthodoxy of only security and anonymity of the participant, but also realize they now exist as unique node within larger social networks with their own obligations and expectations.

Part II

Quantitative Analysis of Return Preparedness, Generational Migration Cycles, Decision-Making Factors, and Re- Emigration within the Historical Lebanese– Venezuelan Context

Chapter Eight

Historical Contexts, Pre- and Post-Return Conditions, and Migratory Links between Lebanon and Venezuela

Part II seeks to explain the important elements which shape return mobilities, namely, to describe the pre-return and post-return conditions including a historical account of the migration between Venezuela and Lebanon; outline the research and data on Lebanese–Venezuelan return migration flows; and present this research’s own data on the sample’s generational migration cycles. Specifically, the quantitative analysis presented will examine the return preparedness of returnees (including a new typology know as compelled-youth and their respective *interrupted-youth generational migration cycle*), their perceived push/pull factors for return, and the salience of decision-making factors which returnees weigh when considering to either remain, re-emigrate, or migrate onwards.

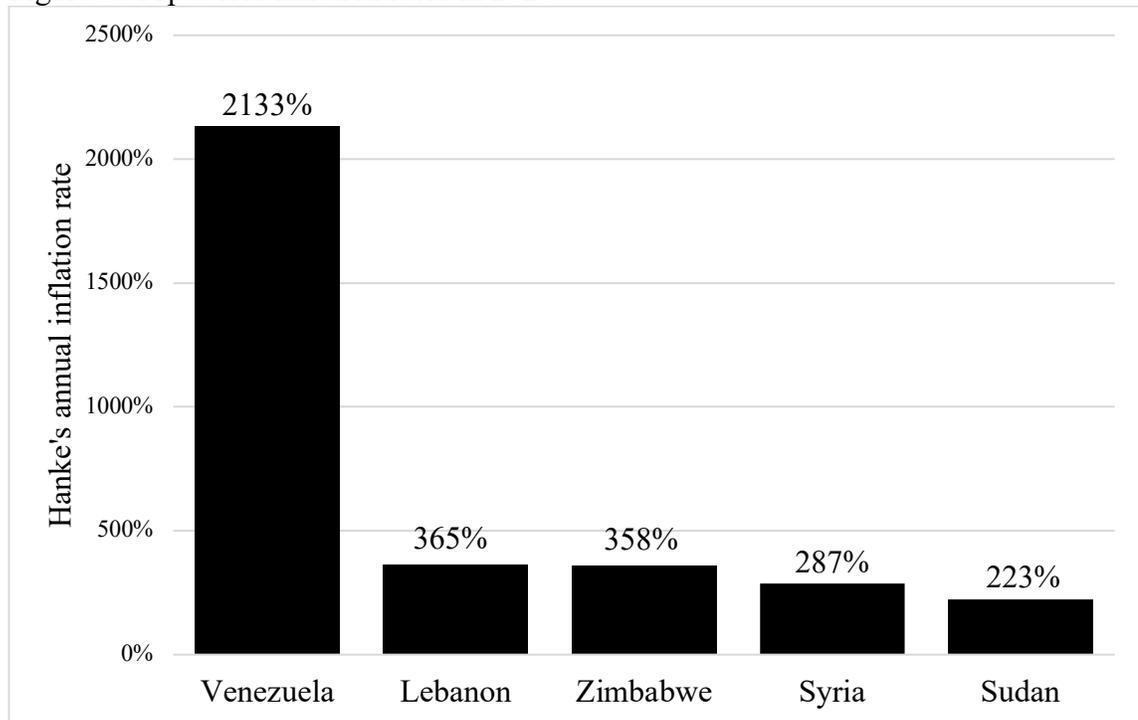
Important to note, time, in Cassarino’s (2014) understanding, depends on the duration and type of migration experience lived abroad. Given this sample’s research focus is on second-generation, the duration and type of migration experience abroad was likely the entirety of their lives and deeply immersive. For this research, ‘time’—in the sense of amount—will be considered different and within the historical context of the pre- and post-return conditions. In other words, given, over time, the fluctuating pre- and post-return conditions and magnitude of disruption socioeconomic crisis like hyperinflation may have, *timing* pertains to the specific moment-in-time of migration and the particular conditions at that moment. For example, if a returnee left Venezuela in 2000 versus 2019, their agency and resource mobilization process will be much different. Thus, a detailed outline of the historical conditions and migration flows is presented to have an overarching understanding of the various contexts, over time, which processes like return preparedness and re-emigration may occur.

8.1 Lebanese History of Emigration and Post-Return Conditions

For over 150 years, Lebanon has experienced waves of emigration resulting from lopsided economic development, undemocratic communal politics, and national/international conflict. Although still consider the greater-Syria region, the first wave of emigration occurred in the mid to late 19th century with a small number of mainly Christians being sent to Rome to return and serve as clergy (Tabar, 2015). Also, with increasing integration of British and French capitalist markets, many Lebanese Christians emigrated to the main centres of trade between Europe and the Near East, including Egypt, Livorno, Marseille, and Manchester. The second wave is marked by rapid population growth with an increasing number of educated and skilled persons. By World War I, a third of the population (mostly Christian) had left the country to seek better economic opportunities mainly in North and South America (Venezuela), Australia, West Africa, Europe, and New Zealand. The third wave of emigration occurred between 1945 and 1975 due to increasing political instability and economic deterioration from the Arab–Israeli war in 1967 and labour demands from the Gulf States. The fourth wave is marked by the onset of the Lebanese Civil War (1975-1989) with approximately 990,000 people leaving the country. This accounted for approximately 40% of the local population at the time. This fourth wave of emigration led many Lebanese to flee primarily to Canada, Australia, the United States, France, Germany, and the Gulf States (Idib). Since the 1990s, Lebanon has seen increased confrontations with Israel, which resulted in the 2006 Israeli war, political instability, assassinations, and civil strife—including the impacts of the Syrian civil war which began in 2011. More recently, Lebanon has been under barrage by numerous socio-economic and political crises. Calls for revolution and mass uprisings in October of 2019 which caused disruptions for months; the Beirut port explosion in August of 2020—amid the global Covid-19 pandemic—that caused 220 fatalities and over 6,500 injuries including 4.6 billion USD worth of damage to homes, schools, hospitals, and other important facilities (Cheaito & Al-Hajj, 2020). And now, Lebanon is facing worsening hyperinflation and skyrocketing prices. The crisis is attributed, in large part, to the corruption, government mismanagement, and deliberate banking negligence by the political elite (World Bank, 2021a). “Lebanon, the only country besides Venezuela currently experiencing hyperinflation, had an annual inflation rate of 302 percent per year

at the end of October [2020]. So, Venezuela and Lebanon are members of the rogues' gallery of hyperinflation episodes, of which there have only been 62 in recorded history" (Hanke, 2020, para. 2).

Figure 3: Top world inflation rates in 2020



Data collected on 11/19/2020. (Hanke, 2020).

8.2 Venezuelan History of Immigration-to-Emigration and Pre-Return Conditions

Throughout most of Venezuela's modern history, the country has been tethered to the price of oil and consequently the volatility of oil markets. In the 1920s, with the passing of the first hydrocarbon law in Venezuela, the demographic conditions of the country changed significantly. Historically, Venezuelan exports consisted of 92% cocoa, coffee and livestock products, and the country suffered from similar conditions found in Latin America, namely, high unemployment, poor education, high child mortality, poor sanitation, etc. (Álvarez de Flores, 2007). Furthermore, during the dictatorship of Juan Vicente Gómez from 1908–1935, Venezuela was experiencing a net outflow of emigrants leaving often for political reasons. It is estimated that approximately 50 thousand people, out of 3 million at the time, emigrated primarily to the US, Cuba, and Mexico (Jeifets &

Jeifets, 2012). It would not be until the second world war and the limiting of transatlantic migration that the oil industry and revenues in Venezuela would witness a great boom. According to Khalitov (2007), Venezuela provided more than half of the oil consumed by the anti-Hilter coalition which resulted in an influx of labor migrants into the country. Venezuelan demographer of Chinese descent Chi-Yi Chen (1968) documented Venezuela's shift from a sending country to a receiving one; in 1941 there were an estimated 55,600 immigrants up to over half a million by 1961. This wave reflected Venezuela's need for skilled workers and specialists, and during the Jiménez government from 1952–1958, an 'open door' policy of immigration was adopted. The 'open door' immigration policy, along with the nationalizing of the oil industry in 1976 and audacious infrastructure projects, created a burgeoning middle-class, a rising standard of living, and democratic reforms in the country. By 1977, approximately 1.2 million people had emigrated to Venezuela now with a population of approximately 13 million (Álvarez de Flores and Ruíz Uzcátegui, 2008). However, this influx of workers would soon stagnate and reverse as global oil prices in the mid 1980s would crash. After unpopular austerity reforms by the Pérez government, along with rampant corruption, coup attempts, and government mismanagement, the poverty level in Venezuela reached 55.6% in 1997 (World Bank, 2021b).

It was in 1999 that Venezuela began to transform once again. Not only was Hugo Chávez elected president of Venezuela, but global oil prices were also on the rise in the 2000s. Large-scale infrastructure projects were being proposed once more, tax revenues were increasing due to taxation on foreign companies and capital, and the mega-profits collected by the state were being doled out to more social services and welfare projects/programs for poorer Venezuelans. Thus, by 2011 poverty had decreased to 30%, the availability of healthcare increased, illiteracy was virtually eliminated, and Venezuela, once again, became an attractive destination country offering prospects of good jobs and high-quality social security. (Kudeyarova & Rozental, 2020). Simultaneously, there were critical political divisions and opposition to the reforms and directions of the new government. Many skilled professionals, businesspersons, and specialists were among the first people to leave or were even forced out by authorities themselves. From 1999 to 2013

alone, 170,000 out of the estimated 617,000 private companies operating in Venezuela went bankrupt (Moiseev, 2012).

2002 and 2003 were critical years for Venezuela and Chávez's government as critical fractures were emerging in the state-owned oil company *Petróleos de Venezuela, S. A. (PDVSA)*, and many in top management were increasingly becoming distrustful of Chávez. In response to Chávez stacking PDVSA management with loyalists, Venezuela's largest business federation of labor unions called for a general strike in April of 2002 in support of the oil company's autonomy. However, much of the military and population were still supportive of Chávez, and he was able to stage an effective countercoup and return to office (Millard, et al., 2019). On December 2, 2002, a general strike began to demand the resignation of Chávez. The 'oil strike', as it is known, sparked a wave of emigration of primarily skilled and educated professionals. Moreover, almost 20,000 employees of PDVSA were sacked and/or blacklisted from working in the country for their participation in the oil strike. Many, in fact, had moved to neighboring Columbia, which helped increase their own fuel production and exports¹⁰ later on. The oil strike eventually ended in February of 2003 with oil production never fully recovering from its peak production of 3.3 million barrels per day. Concurrently, Chávez was also using revenues from high oil prices to patch budgetary holes, compensate for poor economic policies, and fund audacious programs to alleviate the hardships of poverty¹¹ (Kudeyarova & Rozental, 2020).

The state of Venezuela gradually deteriorated throughout the years and up until the death of Hugo Chávez in 2013. Leading up to his death, accusations of crackdowns on oppositional media organizations, nationalizing over 1,000 companies, the global financial crisis which disrupted global oil prices, rolling power blackouts throughout the country, and political repression were becoming mainstay (Millard, et al., 2019). Nicolas Maduro, Chávez's chosen successor, won the presidential election in 2013 by a slim

¹⁰ In 2012, eight of the eleven managers of Pacific Rubiales Energy (Columbia) were former PDVSA employees, and top managers at *Ventra Energia* (Columbia) also included six ex-PDVSA employees (LeVine, 2012; Kudeyarova & Rozental, 2020).

¹¹ 'Plan Bolívar 2000' was launched in 1999 and involved 40,000 military soldiers going door-to-door providing anti-poverty services like vaccines, food distribution, and even helicoptering ill Venezuelans to seek medical care. That plan was abandoned in 2002 after several scandals of corruption plagued the project (Ellsworth & Armas, 2019).

margin. He inherited a precarious socio-economic situation as oil prices drastically fell again in 2014, and the inefficiency of the existing political *modus operandi*—i.e., the use of command-administrative methods and widespread practice of nationalization—led to a crippled domestic production and heavy reliance on imports (Kudeyarova & Rozental, 2020; Millard, et al., 2019). Moreover, oil production in Venezuela, which in 2001 was 3.3 million barrels per day, had decreased to approximately 920,000–965,000 barrels in 2019 (US Energy Information Administration, 2019; Slav, 2019). This was attributed to the technological lagging of PDVSA, US economic sanctions (since 2017), the lack and loss of qualified specialists in the field, and reported sabotage by sacked staff (Kudeyarova & Rozental, 2020; Jones, 2008). The result of these processes was a rapid drop in the standard of living for many Venezuelans with poverty levels reaching upwards to 87% in 2017; shortages of essential items and goods, and a proliferation of crime, murder, and kidnappings ensued (ENCOVI, 2018). Thus, according to one study done in 2017, half of the participants aged 18–24 years and 55% of the upper middle class expressed their intentions to leave the country (Feline Freier & Parent, 2018). The emigration of Venezuelans fleeing crime, hyperinflation, poverty, and food and medicine shortages reached its zenith in 2018 in what became the world’s largest migration crisis in recent years (ENCOVI, 2018; UNHCR, 2020). In fact, according to IMF (2020) data on Venezuelan inflation rates, hyperinflation rose 65,374% from the previous year in 2018. The mass flight of Venezuelan migrants; the informality, haste, and unpreparedness of the emigration; and the political struggle in merely acknowledging the migration crisis have made it hard to accurately quantify the scale and scope of the exodus. However, the UNHCR (2020) has estimated that up until 2020, approximately 3.7 million Venezuelans were displaced abroad (primarily in neighbouring Latin American countries like Colombia, Peru, Chile, Ecuador, and Brazil).

Image 1: A toilet paper roll next to 2,600,000 Bolivars which is equivalent to 0.40 USD



(Rawlins, 2018)

The impacts of the 2018 Venezuelan migration crisis have been devastating on many aspects of Venezuelan life. First, there has been the ease of transnational criminal gang activity moving seamlessly across the Venezuelan border. This has given organized crime networks a haven to conduct illicit business and commit violent crime with impunity, as Venezuelan law enforcement agencies lack significant resources to tackle the soaring crime (Ellis, 2017). Secondly, the impact of the scale and scope of Venezuela's 'brain drain', although reflected in its crippled oil output, is difficult to quantify in terms of magnitude. Only years later will experts be able to assess the long-term impacts and damage the migration crisis has had on the country's society. Finally, it is also important to note that emigration has arguably become a stabilizing factor for the Maduro government. Oftentimes, those leaving the country hold anti-government views thus easing political tension and pressure domestically. The massive outflow of the population, the Guardian published, may likely be seen by the government as a means to undermine the opposition's social base, co-opt supporters, and continue a pattern of patronage with loyalists often offering them the jobs of those who left the country (Phillips, 2018).

8.3 Historical Transnational Ties between Lebanon and Venezuela

Venezuela, including the neighboring Latin American–Caribbean coastal countries of Colombia and Curaçao, have been a historically consistent destination location for many Lebanese emigrants. It was from the Ottoman era around the turn of the 20th century and Syro-Lebanese¹² migration which shaped the moniker by which Arabs from the greater-Syria region came to be called throughout Latin America—*turkos* (Bruckmayr, 2010). These new *turkos* mostly settled in prominent port and trading cities and began in small-scale peddling. They quickly rose the social classes through their good sense of business and ability to make fortunes often in wholesale import–export businesses or as fabric and plantation landowners (Bruckmayr, 2010). Furthermore, research on the impact of Syro-Lebanese immigrants on the coastal regions have credited them for the spread of commerce and industrialization throughout the region (Fawcett de Posada & Posada Carbó 1998; Posada Carbó 1998: 323-328). This nascent wave of Syro-Lebanese migrants also experienced their own challenges integrating into the Latin American culture including their own second-generation kin. Bruckmayr (2010) explains that Syro-Lebanese migrants were often torn between keeping their ‘Arab’ identity or shedding their undesirable *turko* label, which motivated many to adopt the dominant language and culture. However, the author notes, when reviewing the names of many prominent Arab shopkeepers and businessmen at the time, it appears that many Syro-Lebanese emigrants took on Spanish first and/or surnames, or perhaps they were given to them by immigration authorities (Bruckmayr, 2010). In fact, Nobel prize author Gabriel García Márquez (1981: 29-30) observes the loss of the Arabic culture throughout the generations of Syro-Lebanese migrants as he recounts:

“The Arabs comprised a community of peaceful immigrants who had settled at the beginning of the century in Caribbean towns, even in the poorest and most remote, and there they remained, selling colored cloth and bazaar trinkets. They were clannish, hardworking, and Catholic. They married among themselves, imported their wheat, raised lambs in their yards, and grew oregano and eggplants, and

¹² Bruckmayr (2010) refers to emigrants formerly from the greater Syria region as Syro-Lebanese as it constituted a single province during the Ottoman Empire. After the empire’s disintegration in 1922, Lebanon (as well as Syria) was under the French mandate until Lebanon’s independence in 1943.

playing cards was their only driving passion. The older ones continued speaking the rustic Arabic they had brought from their homeland, and they maintained it intact in the family down to the second-generation, but those of the third [...] listened to their parents in Arabic and answered them in Spanish. So it was inconceivable that they would suddenly abandon their pastoral spirit to avenge a death for which we all could have been to blame.”

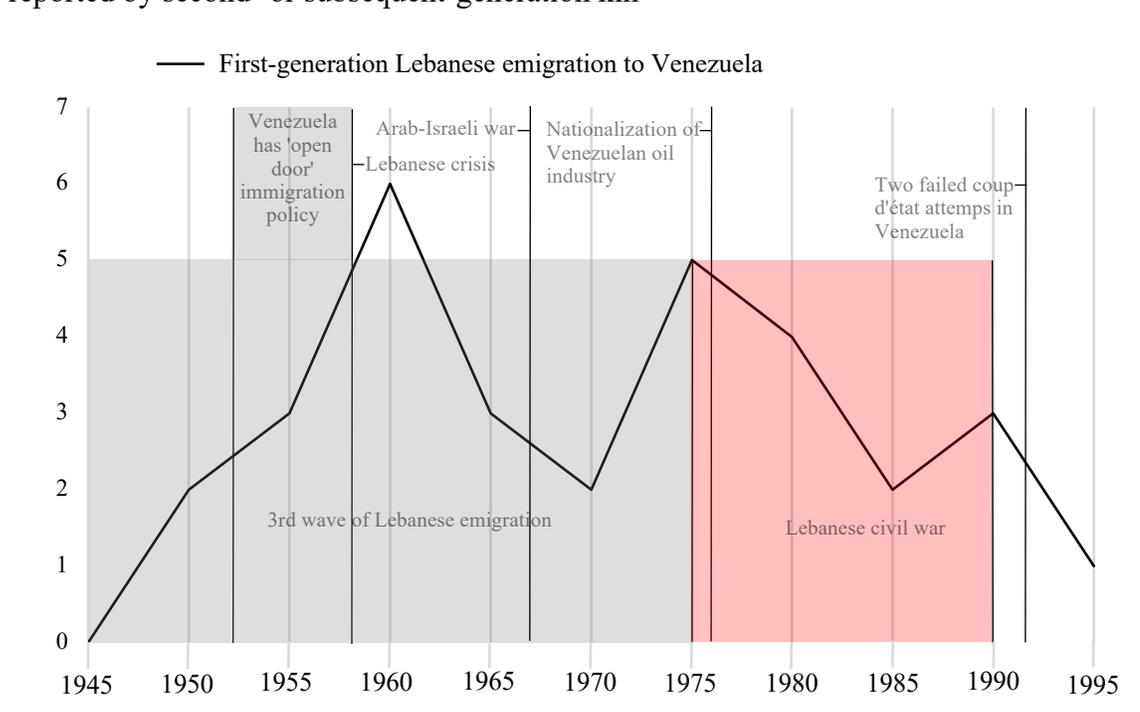
The gradual loss of the Arabic language and distinct religious identities for these pioneering emigrants did not necessarily mean the loss of the culture and distinctiveness felt by those of Syro-Lebanese descent. In fact, many restaurants found in larger Colombian and Venezuela cities would serve the renowned *comida árabe* or Arabic food. Importantly, several notable Syro-Lebanese writers of the Arabic language sojourned in Venezuela for extended periods of time enriching the local communities with Arabic culture. For instance, Damascus-born Jurj Sayda resided in Venezuela from 1927–1947 while prominent Lebanese writer Jibran Khalil Jibran lived in Caracas for several years (Sayda, 1956; Nweihad, 1997). Nevertheless, the lack of particular religious congregations or organizations coupled with the desire to preserve and maintain the distinct identity, while still integrating into the destination country’s culture, was, in a way, compensated with the founding of secular community organizations throughout the region. Syro-Lebanese centers or associations sprang up throughout communities in Colombia and Venezuela during the late 1920s with the first ‘Libano-Sirio club’ founded in 1931 in Caracas (Bruckmayr, 2010; Fawcett de Posada & Posada Carbó, 1992; Escher, 1997).

8.3.1 Lebanese First-Generation Emigration and Integration in Venezuela

Among the destination countries of Latin America and the Caribbean, Venezuela experienced an important wave of immigration from Lebanon which occurred after World War II and up until the 1970s before the outbreak of the Lebanese civil war (1975). As described earlier, Venezuela, with an ‘open door’ immigration policy, was actively seeking a skilled labor force to meet the demands of its burgeoning oil industry. Bruckmayr (2010) notes that although immigration to Venezuela reached a peak in the mid-1950s to mid-1960s, most migrants originated from western Syria. Why Lebanese

migrants are not featured prominently in reports about Arab immigration to Venezuela may be because there was little Lebanese emigration between 1945–1960 due to internal economic growth and increasing migration routes to Arab oil-producing countries as well (Labaki, 1992). However, Venezuela was a notable destination country for Lebanese migrants after the 1958 Lebanese crisis¹³ and prior to the outbreak of the Lebanese civil war in 1975 (Safa, 1960; Bruckmayr, 2010). Figure 4 illustrates the immigration trends of the parental relatives of the second- or subsequent generations in this research’s sample. As shown, two major peaks of immigration occur within the five-year period of the 1958 Lebanese crisis and prior to the civil war in 1975.

Figure 4: Parental (first-generation) relatives’ year of immigration to Venezuela as reported by second- or subsequent-generation kin



Compared to the earlier Syro-Lebanese migrants who emigrated around the turn of the 20th century, later flows of Lebanese emigrants exhibited different patterns of integration in Venezuela; in particular, retaining the Arabic language, cultural features, and sectarian identities. This linguistic and cultural retention was also facilitated by the development of globalizing processes which allowed rapid exchange of information,

¹³ The Lebanese crisis in 1958 was a political emergency caused by political/religious domestic tensions domestically, global cold war dynamics regionally, and a failed US military intervention in Lebanon. The crisis lasted for three months (Agwani, 1963).

strengthening long-distance ties, and more frequent, cheaper return visits. According to Escher's (1997) estimations, out of 400,000 persons of Arab descent living in Venezuela, almost half spoke Arabic. The author further observed that secular clubs or organizations founded by earlier emigrants were now splitting into smaller segments which reflected more the socio-cultural reality of the origin country. For instance, Christian and Druze maintained separate organizations, marriages within parochial groups would align along specific sectarian identities, be arranged between families, and even originating from the same local region or village in the origin country (Escher, 1997; 2000).

Religious identity, along with the cultural identity, was also important for newer migrants as migration trends from Lebanon increasingly reflected the religious demography of the country. This could be seen by the founding of various religious and cultural centers like the Shiite Centro Islamico Venezolano Imam al-Hadi (Venezuelan Islamic Center Imam al-Hadi) in Caracas; a Shiite center in Maicao; a Maronite church in Ciudad Bolivar; a monastery of the Lebanese Maronite order; and a Syriac Catholic church. Furthermore, several Lebanese communities were also responsible for the foundation of officially accredited private/religious schools with the purpose of preserving the Arab language and cultural values and providing outreach into local society (Delval, 1992). These schools maintained a good reputation for providing high-quality education in Spanish, Arabic, and English. The city of Maicao's Dar al-Arkam and the Colegio Venezolano Islamico (Venezuelan Islamic College) enrolled not only Arab descendants but also local Venezuelans. Generally, Muslim communities in Venezuela (a predominately Catholic country) appeared to integrate well while retaining their religious identity. However, this may not be said for earlier Muslim emigrants who likely converted to Christianity over the years (Bruckmayr, 2010). Although Islamophobia and marginalization is present in Venezuela, many Muslim Lebanese-Venezuelans have often emphasized messages of peaceful coexistence and collaboration among the various Abrahamic religions. Yet, there was an example of local push-back against the Venezuelan-Muslim community when the giant Sheikh Ibrahim Mosque—planned and financed through a Saudi Arabian foundation—was constructed in Caracas (Al-Ahari, 1999).

Later waves of Lebanese emigration to Venezuela have made significant efforts to retain their distinctive ethnic and religious identity while integrating into the plurality of Venezuelan society. Earlier waves of Syro-Lebanese migration, although assimilated more with the local culture and society, may have helped pave the way for subsequent immigrants to maintain more cultural hybridity, and globalization processes have facilitated the transnational links and activities between the origin and destination country. With an over 130-year-old history of emigration to Venezuela, first-generation, and especially their second- or subsequent-generation kin, are quick to include their attachments to the destination and origin country into their multi-layered transnational identities (Bruckmayr, 2010). However, as described above, economic, social and political crises in Venezuela have shifted the country's migration trends from once a destination country to a now sending country, and the ancestors of Lebanese migrants are now 'looking back'—or onwards—to Lebanon as a country of (re)settlement. However, Lebanon has been confronting serious socio-economic and political crises of its own. Thus, by taking into consideration important factors like the pre- and post-return conditions of both countries, along with variable return preparedness and migration cycles within the contexts of place and 'timing', Part II seeks to uncover certain aspects of second-generation Lebanese–Venezuelan return migration to Lebanon: the various push and pull factors that motivated or compelled return; the unique intangible resources, if any, acquired from living through Venezuela's hyperinflated economy, which may have been utilized during Lebanon's hyperinflation; and the salient decision-making factors that return migrants weigh in the decision to remain in the origin country, re-emigrate, or migrate onwards given the current conditions of both countries.

8.4 Challenges Studying Lebanese Return Migration and Academic Literature

The challenges when attempting to study migration are compounded in the context of return. As Huggins (2014) points out, although there have been numerous publications on return migration, there exists few accurate statistics on return migration trends. There are several reasons for this lack of reliable data, starting with the fact that governmental agencies, in either destination or origin countries, do not accurately track returnees

resettling in the country of origin. Furthermore, as explained by Conway, Porter, and Bernard (2008), returnees do not always fully return to the general public, but in fact, they create networks within themselves which construct an ‘invisible sub-population.’ These issues are further compounded when examining Lebanon’s emigration trends. Accurate figures on the number of Lebanese emigrants and their characteristics are in large part fragmented and/or uncertain. Due mainly to historical controversies and political concerns over the true size of the Lebanese diasporic population (and descendants of Lebanese), figures have differed drastically depending on how quantitative data was gathered, who collected the data, and whether emigrants’ children and grandchildren were considered (MPC, 2013). Such concerns are rooted in Lebanon’s fragile sectarian confessional system of government, whereby the numbers of Lebanese, in Lebanon or abroad, become laden with major political implications that could disrupt sect-based power-sharing arrangements¹⁴ (Tabar & Denison, 2020).

8.4.1 Academic Literature on Lebanese Return Migration and Re-Emigration

The lack of reliable data on return migration, the absence of reliable figures to infer a population size and acquire a representative sample, the lack of literature on Lebanese returnees, and the difficulty of locating those returnees specifically from Venezuela will hinder the access to a true representative sample (Hourani & Menhem, 2019). In Hourani and Menhem’s (2019) book, *Homecomings: Re-Integration of Return Migrants in Lebanon*, the research collected a sample of 200 returnees. This is certainly one of the most extensive analysis examining return migration trends in Lebanon in recent times. Their research sought to understand the factors motivating return mobility, the impact of their experiences living abroad, the pre- and post-return conditions, and push/pull factors, as well as elaborating on the participants’ perspectives on re-emigration.

Malhamé (2006) also qualitatively investigated Lebanese return migration by attempting to understand why return migration to Lebanon occurred, how migrants (re)adapt to the country, and why do some return experiences lead to re-emigration (or emigrating ‘back’ to the original destination/birth country). Unfortunately, many

¹⁴ Consequently, Lebanon has not had an official government census since 1932. This is attributed primarily to the sensitivity of demographic figures in politics.

participants in Malhamé's (2006) thesis went undistinguished as second-generation returnees in her analysis, and it was not clear whether any participants had returned from Venezuela specifically. Nevertheless, her findings illustrate that for most returnees in her sample, their return migration experience was more indicative of Wessendorf's (2007; 2013) roots return migration chronotope. However, she also found a minority of participants who expressed a more counter-diasporic return (King & Christou, 2008; 2010) and ethnic return (Tsuda, 2000; 2019; Tsuda & Song, 2019a) by, for instance, emphasizing a nostalgia for the 'homeland' and the importance of preserving the Lebanese heritage by contributing to the literature of Lebanese history. Malhamé (2006) also found instances of compelled-youth returnees who were forced to leave the destination country by their parents. Unfortunately, Malhamé's (2006) thesis was published before many of the return migration chronotopes were first proposed, and in her thesis, she comments on the theoretical boundaries and insufficiencies which limited her research analysis (2006: 32, 66).

Few other researchers have also sought to contribute to the dearth of academic work on Lebanese return migration. Bellack (2011) examined high-skilled Lebanese returnees and their impact on development and social change in Lebanon, concluding that they may only provide a limited contribution in terms of development. More recently, El Hakim (2019) examined the post-return experiences of Lebanese returnees from Tripoli Lebanon, specifically, experiences of reverse-culture shock, self-identity and belonging. Her findings support the importance of migration cycles and the re-integration success of Lebanese returnees; retired Lebanese returnees maintain high preparedness but do not often act as agents of change; and Lebanese return often reflects more roots and/or lifestyle return migration. El Hakim (2019) also problematized the expectations of 'successful' return migration from the local Lebanese and returnees themselves. However, scholarly literature on Lebanese return migration has remained broad and unrefined. By examining one specific segment of this return migratory flow through a generational and country-specific lens (i.e., second-generation Lebanese-Venezuelan), we may reduce the magnitude of heterogeneity often afflicting return migration academic research and uncover new trends and patterns in mobilities.

8.5 Lebanese–Venezuelan Return Migration

As outlined before, gaps in governmental data have hindered the examination of Lebanese return migration, particularly regarding accurate figures on Lebanese–Venezuelan returnees. However, Hourani and Menhem (2019), in their effort to examine first-generation return migration flows to Lebanon, have found that 3.5% of their total sample (n=200) originated from Venezuela. Also, some reports have stated that approximately 11,000-12,000 Venezuelan nationals resided in Lebanon as of 2019 according to the Venezuelan Embassy (Holtmeier, 2019; Ali Ahmad, 2019). However, the actual number is likely much higher.

Lebanese media, namely *The961* (an online magazine examining Lebanese culture), have published pieces spotlighting the lives of Lebanese–Venezuelan returnees and the activities they are engaged in. One article shares the story of a returnee who left Venezuela due to the economic crisis and rampant violent crime. In the article, he expressed feelings of security and appreciation upon returning to Lebanon and even opened his own Latin American restaurant in Beirut (Mezher, 2019).

Another article recounts stories of Lebanese–Venezuelan returnees seeking safety from the economic and political crisis in Venezuela. It highlighted the positive impact of Latin American and fusion cuisine on the country’s culinary repertoire— “repats are adding a Latino touch to Lebanon!” (Hovsepian, 2017). Importantly, it also discussed different Venezuelan communities operating in Lebanon; how these communities organize events to raise awareness about the crisis in Venezuela¹⁵; and how they are creating spaces where Lebanese–Venezuelans can interact and feel like ‘home’, speak Spanish, and partake in Venezuelan cultural classes with their Lebanese peers.

Finally, one article written by Ali Ahmad (2019) for *Arab News* illustrates the complicated position Lebanese–Venezuelan returnees find themselves in, as they return to similarly difficult conditions in Lebanon. According to one geopolitical analyst, Amir Richani, returnees do not care if there is no government in Lebanon—they are looking for

¹⁵ One such community organization is *Venevent*. They have organized events where Lebanese–Venezuelans can meet up, and they held a 5km marathon in Lebanon to raise awareness about the crises in Venezuela.

work. The article argues that Lebanon is still considered stable when compared with the extraordinary level of hyperinflation and violent crime in Venezuela, noting that many Lebanese–Venezuelans are still attached to their Lebanese roots and consider Lebanon as a ‘second home’. Returnees, for instance, are not only attending Lebanese protests, but also organizing and holding their own protests against the Maduro government in Lebanon and ‘get-togethers’ to discuss Venezuelan politics¹⁶. Ali Ahmad’s (2019) article outlines the complex reintegration challenges of Lebanese–Venezuelan returnees and how they are acting as agents of change upon return.

This chapter sought to outline these contextual factors for Lebanese–Venezuelan second-generation return migrants returning to their ancestral country of origin. The emigration/immigration histories of Lebanon and Venezuela and how they are intertwined were outlined along with a review of broader Lebanese return migration trends. Scholarly literature on Lebanese return migration—in particular, for generation-specific and/or country-specific contexts—has often been underscored or overlooked including a dearth of accurate data on Lebanese migration trends in general. This research seeks to offer a critical examination of a specific return mobility, namely, Lebanese–Venezuelan second-generation return migrants, and how this migration phenomenon fits within the conceptual framework of generational migration cycles.

¹⁶ Jeber Barreto, a representative of the Venezuelan political party *Voluntad Population* (Will of the People) has been speaking about Venezuela since moving to Jounieh in 2015. He was also a member of a delegation at the Venezuelan embassy in Lebanon which attempted to have the ambassador renounce Maduro (Yan, 2019).

Chapter Nine

Quantitative Analysis: Return Preparedness Determinations, Demographic Information, and Generational Migration Cycles

This chapter will first present the challenges with determining return preparedness within the post-return context. A return preparedness determination matrix is presented to illustrate the various components which interact with one another throughout the process. The demographics of this research's sample will be presented along with data on the return preparedness and generational migration cycles. This chapter will also introduce a new category of the interrupted migration cycle known as compelled-youth returnees, and their migration cycle—known as the interrupted-youth migration cycle. This new sub-group of compelled-youth returnees will be elaborated on and included in the data analysis as a distinct group for investigation.

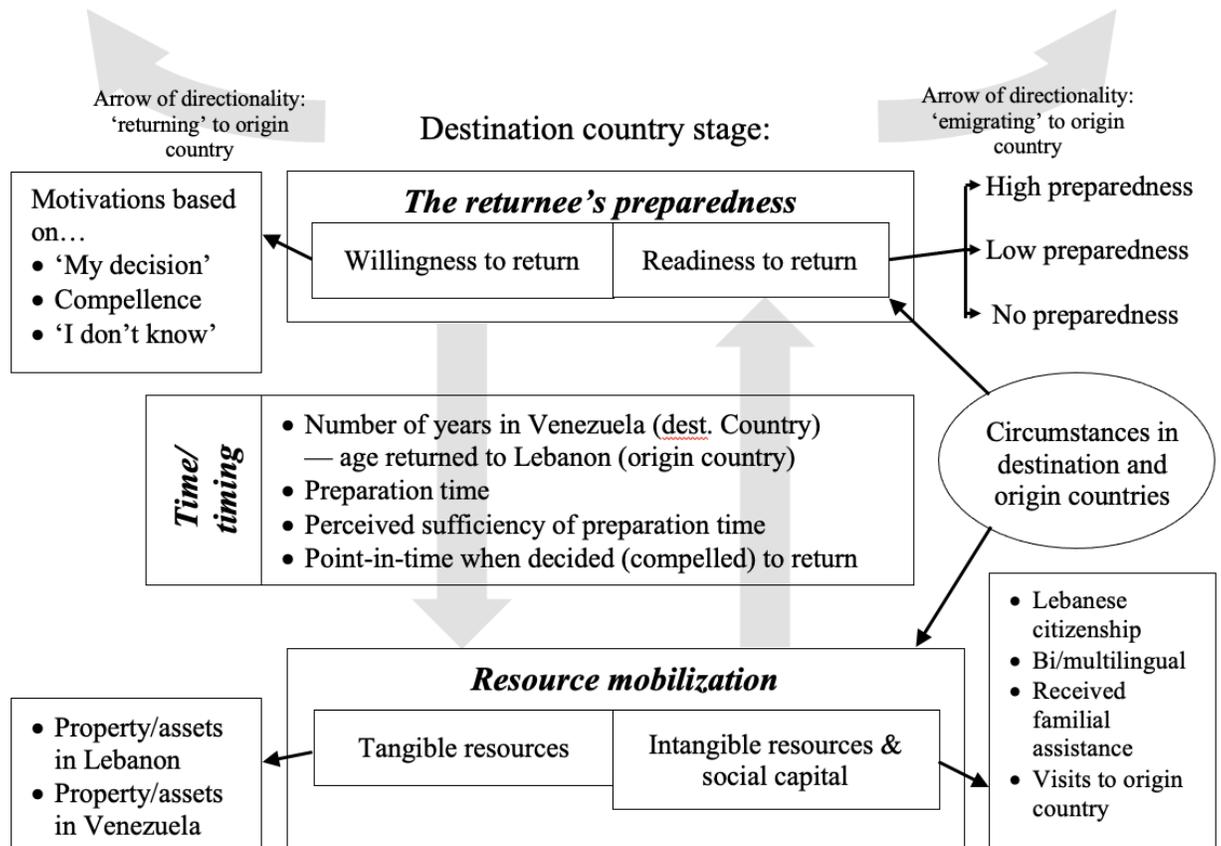
9.1 Challenges with Return Preparedness Determinations Post-Return

A primary challenge for making determinations on the return preparedness of the second-generation is that there are no theoretical delimitations to categorically quantify who has high preparedness, low, or none, and more specifically why. Furthermore, Cassarino's (2008b) research on return migrant preparedness was able to collect data from multiple points in time (multi-staged) within the migration cycle (i.e., pre-departure, post-return). The investigative point-in-time of this study is *after* returning from the destination country to the country of origin. Thus, assessing a returnee's degree of preparedness ex post facto and at any number of years after return poses challenges for preparedness determination. For instance, a return migrant, at the time of this data's collection, may have resided in Lebanon for over five, ten, or even fifteen years. Consequently, recollections pertaining to their return motivations, sense of agency, readiness, and actual conditions in the destination country may have changed over time since they are based on

memory. This is not to underscore nor revise what the participant may feel about their return experience. Agency is subjectively determined, and therefore must be analyzed within the interpretations of the participant. However, this research hedges the weight often given to this variable in previous return preparedness determinations. Cassarino (2014) used *willingness* ('my decision', 'compelled') as a defining variable in his multi-staged approach with (first-generation) return migrants from the Maghreb with informative results. However, as time passes, return migrant recollections may change, perhaps they were quite young, the event was quite traumatic, or pressures to integrate have made them alter their narrative to fit socio-cultural expectations. Therefore, the sense of agency with regards to the decision to return will be regarded as only one—albeit very important—variable among a system of other variables, relations, and processes which prepare the returnee.

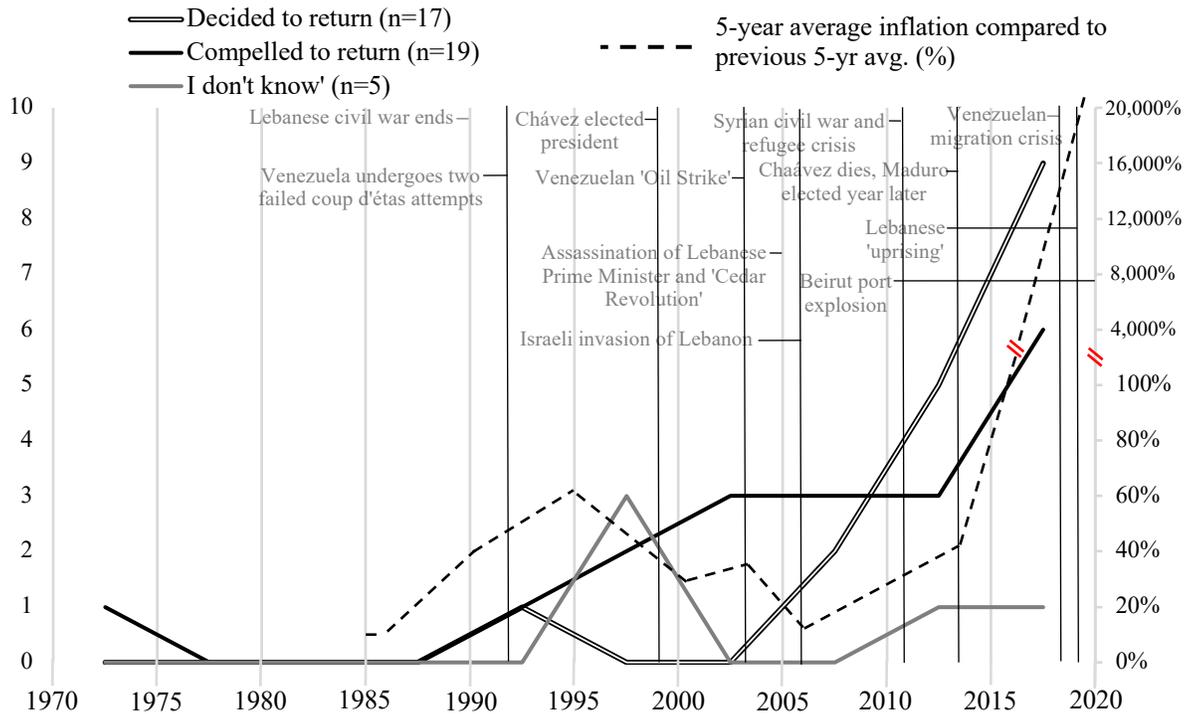
The context of Lebanese-Venezuelan second-generation return migrants allows shoots of analysis to go in many different directions. However, to address the specific challenges of return preparedness determination outlined above, this research seeks to first establish a relative framework to determine the degree of preparedness and, subsequently, the nature of the participants' migration cycle. With the inclusion of place, historical ties, pre- post-conditions, and timing (Chapter 8), this research examines the willingness and readiness through an integrated matrix (shown in Figure 5), which includes the motivations to return; the directionality of the returnee ('returning home' or 'emigrating abroad'); their resource mobilization; their perceived sufficiency of preparation time, timing, and age upon return; and how these factors interrelate over time. Thus, each participant is individually examined not by one or two independent variables, but by all aggregate factors and how they interact at a given time. By having the return preparedness as an anchoring independent variable, this research seeks to identify important similarities, dissimilarities, trends, and patterns within second-generation return mobilities.

Figure 5: Return preparedness determination matrix for post-return returnees



Lastly, Figure 6 illustrates the importance of timing and how rising second-generation Lebanese–Venezuelan emigration trends have corresponded to the onset of hyperinflation and numerous other crises. Also, there appears to be a steady flow of compelled returnees throughout the Chávez and Maduro governments suggesting the impetus of not only the economic aspect, but the political one as well.

Figure 6: Year of 'decided' or 'compelled' return to Lebanon including Venezuela's inflation rate



9.2 Demographics and Return Preparedness of Lebanese–Venezuelan Returnees

Table 3 outlines the demographic features of the participants in this study. These demographic figures illustrate the high heterogeneity of the second-generation returnee population, however, there are a few trends that need highlighting. Firstly, this research's sample consisted of almost three quarters women. It is unknown if second-generation females are more prevalent in returning or were more open to doing an online survey. The high prevalence of the millennial generation may also be explained by the online format used for the survey as they may possess more ease with information and communication technologies. Furthermore, most returnees appear to be highly educated with over 68% maintaining post-secondary education. Single parents were also identified within the sample; however, it is not determined whether they divorced before or after return. Part III examines in closer details the narratives of two single mothers and their return experiences.

Table 3: Demographic data of second-generation Lebanese–Venezuelan returnees

		Level of return preparedness:	None (n=14)	Low (n=24)	High (n=3)	Total (n=41)
Demographic information	Gender (n=41)	Male	12%	14.5%	2.5%	29%
		Female	22%	44%	5%	71%
	'Historic generation' (n=41)	Baby boomer born 1943–1960	0%	2.5%	0%	2.5%
		Generation X born 1961–1980	9.5%	22%	5%	36.5%
		Millennial (Gen Y) born 1981–2004	24.5%	34%	2.5%	61%
	'Immigrant' generation (n=36)	Second-generation	25%	44.5%	5.5%	75%
		Third- or subsequent generations	11%	11%	3%	25%
	Marital status (n=39)	Single	20.5%	15.5%	0%	36%
		Married	15.5%	36%	5%	56.5%
		Separated/divorced/widowed	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%	7.5%
	Children (n=39)	Married with children	15.5%	33.5%	5%	54%
		Single parents	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%	7.5%
		Without children	20.5%	18%	0%	38.5%
	Education (n=41)	Incomplete secondary/high school	0%	5%	0%	5%
Completed secondary/high school		14.5%	12%	0%	26.5%	
Undergraduate or graduate degree		19.5%	41.5%	7.5%	68.5%	
Total			34%	58.5%	7.5%	100%

Table 4 displays the willingness, readiness, time, and directionality of the second-generation Lebanese–Venezuelan returnees. Initially, the motivations to return diverge from Cassarino’s findings (2014)—recall Table 1: Levels of preparedness and migration cycles—in that those who ‘decide’ to return are either high or low preparedness, and those who are compelled to return are classified as non-existent or no preparedness. Yet, in this sample, there is one participant who was classified under no preparedness yet still reported their return was ‘decided’. The justification is this: although they had decided to return to Lebanon, their readiness (i.e., tangible and intangible resource mobilization) does not reflect a high preparedness. For instance, this participant reported having less than three months to prepare to ‘emigrate’ (as their directionality suggests more transnationalistic rather than diasporic attachment to Lebanon); he possesses no property nor assets in Lebanon nor Venezuela; his experience visiting Lebanon and acquiring the local knowledge was limited; he emigrated from Venezuela in 2020 at the height of the migration crisis which saw inflation rates rise 65,000% in 2018 and close to 20,000% in 2019. Chapter 13 in Part III will examine more deeply with qualitative analysis the interplay between the recollected agency of return, their resource mobilization, and how they *actually* fared with their (re)integration.

Table 4: Willingness, readiness, and preparation time of second-generation Lebanese–Venezuelan returnees

		Level of return preparedness:	None (n=14)	Low (n=24)	High (n=3)	Total (n=41)
Willingness & directionality	Motivations were based on... (n=41)	My decision	2.5%	31.5%	7.5%	41.5%
		Compellence	29%	17%	0%	46%
		‘I don’t know’	2.5%	10%	0%	12.5%
	‘Home’ directionality (n=41)	Lebanon (origin country)	2.5%	10%	0%	12.5%
		Venezuela (dest. country)	19.5%	19.5%	0%	39%
Bi-directional		9.5%	26.5%	7.5%	43.5%	
	Neither/none	2.5%	2.5%	0%	5%	
Time ↑ ↓	Average time (years) in Venezuela (dest. country) — age returned to Lebanon (dest. country)		26 years	26 years	31 years	28 yrs (avg.)
	Preparation time (n=33)	Less than 3 months	18%	27.5%	3%	48.5%
		3 months – 1 year	18%	21.5%	3%	42.5%
		Over 1 year	0%	9%	0%	9%
	Perceived sufficiency of prep. time (n= 41)	Sufficient	12%	31.5%	2.5%	46%
Not sufficient		17%	17%	0%	34%	
	‘I don’t know’	5%	10%	5%	20%	
	Timing (average year of return)		2016	2007	2004	2010 (avg.)
Tangible resources	Property/assets	In Lebanon (n=39)	23%	41%	5%	69%*
		In Venezuela (n=39)	25.5%	38.5%	2.5%	66.5%*
Intangible resources & social capital	With Lebanese citizenship (n=41)		27%	44%	7.5%	78.5%*
	Bi-lingual	Arabic (n=41)	31.5%	53.5%	7.5%	92.5%*
		Other (i.e., English) n=41)	19.5%	41.5%	5%	66%*
	Received familial assistance for return (n=40)		17.5%	30%	5%	52.5%*
	Visits to origin country (n=41)	Rarely/never	19.5%	34%	2.5%	56%
Regular/occasional		14.5%	24.5%	5%	44%	
Total			34%	58.5%	7.5%	100%

* These values will not add up to 100%.

Secondly, there is a high number of low preparedness returnees that state their motivations were based on compellence. As this research’s destination country (Venezuela) has undergone significant turmoil, most participants have low or no preparedness (only three participants fall under high preparedness). Thus, this research will introduce a more nuanced analysis in examining return mobilities within adverse conditions both in the destination and origin countries. Surprisingly, over one-quarter of Lebanese–Venezuela second-generation returnees were under the age of 19 at the time of return and thus did not exercise any agency in deciding to return. They were either sent back by their parents or forced to return with them. Therefore, they were compelled to return but were also highly prepared since they were still under the responsibility of their

parents or guardians thus utilizing all their parental tangible and intangible resources. These second-generation youth returnees will be elaborated on later.

Lastly, in terms of time, the average age of returnees is contrary to many theorists' assumptions that the younger a returnee is the more idealistic, less realistic, and less informed they are as compared to older returnees (King & Christou, 2008; 2010; Kılınç & King, 2017; Wessendorf, 2007; 2013). This can be explained by the number of children classified as low preparedness given their high degree of readiness but absent willingness. Thus, their young age brings down the average. However, comparing non-existent preparedness and high preparedness, we may see confirmation that older ages may exhibit a higher preparedness. Furthermore, timing was also a salient factor as returnees with non-existent preparedness left, on average, nine year later than their low-prepared counterparts.

9.3 Generational Migration Cycles and Compelled-Youth Return

Referring again to Table 1, a complete migration cycle will constitute high preparedness; an incomplete cycle, low preparedness; and interrupted, non-existent preparedness. For the first-generation return migrants of Cassarino's samples, these categorical delimitations fit squarely together. However, as this research introduced a revised *generational migration cycle* to allow for multi-generational factors impacting a returnee's migration cycle, a novel migration cycle of second-generation return emerged amidst challenging push factors occurring in Venezuela. As first alluded to in section 8.2, the *interrupted-youth migration cycle* (as shown in Table 5) lies outside of the theoretical framework of the original migration cycles. For the purposes of studying this group of Lebanese–Venezuelan second-generation returnees, they will be regarded as a distinct group for analysis and will be referred to as second-generation *compelled-youth returnees*. This category returned before the age of 19 and perceived to have little to no agency regarding the decision to return. They may have been sent 'home' by their parental authorities, or they were forced to follow the relocation of their parents—as King and Christou (2011) call 'trailing travellers' or Chiswick's (2000) 'tied movers'.

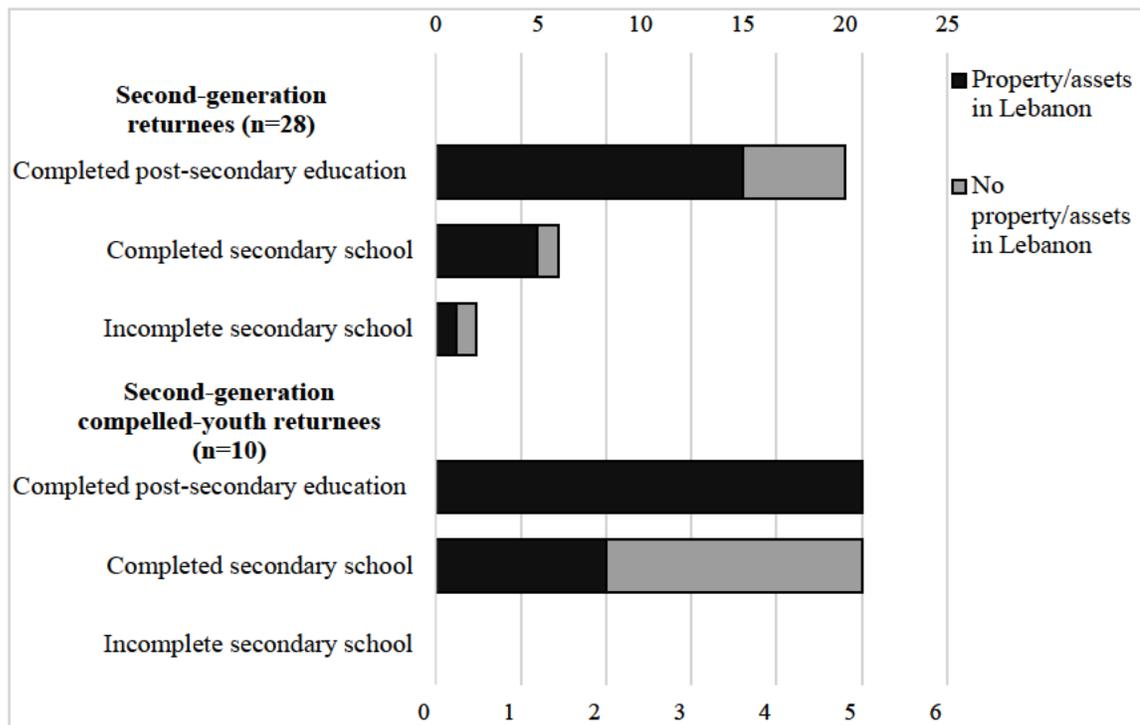
Table 5: Level of return preparedness and generational migration cycles

		Return preparation			<i>n – %</i>
		None	Low	High	Total
Generational migration cycles	Interrupted-youth	3 – 7.5%	8 – 19.25%	0 – 0%	11 – 26.75%
	Interrupted	11 – 26.75%	0 – 0%	0 – 0%	11 – 26.75%
	Incomplete	0 – 0%	16 – 39%	0 – 0%	16 – 39%
	Complete	0 – 0%	0 – 0%	3 – 7.5%	3 – 7.5%
Total		14 – 34.5%	24 – 58.5%	3 – 7.5%	41 – 100%

9.3.1 Compelled-Youth Returnees

Taking a closer look at the second-generation compelled-youth returnees, the mean age is 14.5, the median age is 16 years old, and the gender differences reflect that of the larger sample’s disparity (female 73% and male 27%). Furthermore, Figure 7 illustrates a disparity in the post-return conditions of compelled-youth as compared to those that returned as an adult. Given the high costs of private and post-secondary education in Lebanon, compelled-youth with post-secondary education all maintain assets or property which help facilitate their (re)integration success in Lebanon. This contrasts with compelled-youth returnees without higher education with just over half also possessing no property or assets in Lebanon. Moreover, all compelled-youth returnees maintained origin country language fluency with many also fluent in English and French. The strong emphasis and immersion of languages in Lebanese education is an important asset for many parents, especially for those who may lead transnational lives and understand the value of language fluency as an intangible resource in the globalized world. Lastly, the return visits for compelled-youth do not yield as much importance, as they would not reap the full benefits of building transnational links and connections at such a young age. Rather, they will rely on the familial and social networks and capital of their parents. Moreover, return (vacation) visits to Lebanon when young may in fact hinder the overall return preparedness. This is because return visits—often as ‘fun’ vacations—can leave migrants with poor information based on their experiences and expectations from vacations. Kılınç and King (2017) describe this notion as return to an ‘idyllic paradise’.

Figure 7: Education attainment and property/assets owned in Lebanon between second-generation and compelled-youth returnees



In terms of their motivations for return, all except one participant stated they were ‘compelled’ to leave. The one participant responded, ‘I don’t know’ regarding their agency to return indicating some ambiguity rather than none at all. It is pertinent to note here the historical time frame of return. Expectedly, the compelled second-generation X¹⁷ youth mainly emigrated prior to Hugo Chávez’s election in 1999, while almost all second- and subsequent generation ‘millennials’ emigrated after his election. The one participant exhibiting some ambiguity towards their agency returned in 1996 and was from the ‘generation X’ cohort. Since compelled-youth report exercising no agency in their return, the decision, then, is taken by the parents. As outlined in Chapter 8, it may be any number of difficulties (i.e., general strikes, food shortages, coup d’états, hyperinflation, violent crime) or a combination which may mark an acute juncture in any parent’s life, and when they must decide the best course of action for their children under unfavorable or even critical conditions.

¹⁷ The millennial generation were persons born between 1981–2004. Generation X were born between 1961–1980 and baby boomers between 1943–1960.

Insufficiency of Return Preparedness in Compelled-Youth Returnees

Nearly all compelled-youth returnees indicated they were compelled to relocate to the country of origin and have been classified as having an interrupted migration cycle. However, there also exists variation between the degrees of preparedness of compelled-youth returnees. Firstly, the compelled-youth participants with insufficient preparedness follow generally the same attributes found in non-existent preparedness returnees. They may doubly perceive themselves as having no agency in their return since the decision most likely came from their parents, and the disruptive economic and social events occurring in Venezuela. Furthermore, they tended to be older youths and may harbor feelings of anger, bitterness, unhappiness, and are more adversely affected than younger returnees particularly if they perceive a lack of agency (Lee, 2016). The three compelled-youth returnees with an interrupted return cycle and non-existent preparedness all returned within three years of 2018—the height of the Venezuelan migration crisis (see Figure 6).

Secondly, two of the three compelled-youth returnees with insufficient preparedness do not hold any assets nor property in Lebanon, however, two hold property/assets in Venezuela which may indicate the lack of time to sell off assets or, more likely, they have lost significant value due to the extremely devalued currency. The one participant with no assets or property in both Lebanon and Venezuela may in fact be slightly more prepared because they emigrated in 2015—earlier than the others. Thus, they (or more specifically their family) were able to sell off any assets before emigrating before the economic crash assuming, however, they even maintained such assets in the first place. This assumption is supported by the participant reporting their intention to settle in Lebanon as permanent. Thirdly, for those with insufficient preparedness, citizenship can become a significant challenge. Two of the three participants did not hold Lebanese citizenship. This may be due to restrictive access to citizenship based on selective *sanguinis* citizenship law,¹⁸ which may hinder them from obtaining the citizenship. This can have serious implications on their ability to obtain employment, receive social protection, or even fear expulsion from their ‘homeland’.

¹⁸ Selective *jus sanguinis* in the case of Lebanon refers to citizenship acquired paternally, therefore the mother may not pass on her Lebanese citizenship if the father is not Lebanese.

It is important to note that although it is unknown whether the participant was sent or returned with their parents, we may imagine the difficult decision it must have been for the parents themselves to make. And although Lee (2016) explains the importance of providing young migrants with the agency and sense of control to best prepare them for the challenges of (re)integration into their new ‘home’, it is also important to bear in mind the luxury of being able to prepare your child properly as opposed to compelling them to leave because of unbearable push factors. This is further compounded by news of similar circumstances occurring in the origin country for those returning to Lebanon after 2018. Lee (2016) explains that parents would justify their lack of consultation with their children as being in the ‘best interest’ of the child. King and Christou (2011) also explicate the notion that parents often decide to migrate or send their children ‘back’ based on altruistic motives and concerns about the wellbeing, safety, and quality of life for their children. In times of economic and socio-political crises and rampant violent crime, not to mention similar crises concurrently occurring in Lebanon, the decision to relocate their children must surely have weighed heavy.

Sufficiency of Return Preparedness in Compelled-Youth Returnees

Second-generation compelled-youth returnees with low preparedness—as opposed to those with non-existent/insufficient preparedness—consist of approximately 73% of those with an interrupted-youth migration cycle. They, too, did not exercise any agency with regards to the decision to migrate as youth, however, they differ insofar as they maintained more readiness for their return. Their readiness, as they are still under the yoke of parental authority, is contingent then on the resource mobilization of their parents and/or relatives. They also tended to be young (mean age of 14 compared to 17 years-old for those with insufficient preparedness) and may be less affected by the compulsion to migrate. Additionally, the one participant with ambiguous agency regarding their return also maintained a similar degree of readiness as to those with high preparedness. For interrupted-youth returnees with sufficient return preparedness, they maintained both Lebanese and Venezuelan citizenship; they also received higher education with three quarters of participants obtaining post-secondary education. Their higher degree of preparedness may also be explained by this group returning at an earlier year—better timing—than those with insufficient preparedness. The mean year of return is 1997 as

compared to 2017 for compelled-youth returnees insufficiently prepared. In terms of the tangible resources like property and/or assets, those who can afford the high costs of post-secondary education in Lebanon are probably more likely to also possess property and assets in the country. This is confirmed in Figure 7 as it illustrates that all compelled-youth returnees with post-secondary education also have property or assets in Lebanon. Furthermore, not having any assets in Venezuela may be seen as a sign of higher preparedness, granted they expected to settle in Lebanon permanently. This notion is supported by 80% of participants with no property nor assets in Venezuela also reporting sufficient time for return and that their return to Lebanon was intended to be permanent. Furthermore, compelled-youth returnees with sufficient preparedness also had more access to familial and social networks as did those with insufficient preparedness with 63% utilizing their social networks and capital as compared to around one third of those with no preparedness. Summarily, the compelled-youth returnees with sufficient preparedness seem to be better equipped with the tangible and intangible resources as compared to those with non-existent or insufficient preparedness. Firstly, Venezuelan push factors may not have been as dire which allowed for more parental preparation for their children and more opportunity to mobilize resources. However, even a traumatic event like a kidnapping may act as a ‘crisis event’ and set into motion the decision to return with or send their children abroad. Table 6 summarizes the differences between the sufficiency of return preparedness among compelled-youth returnees with an interrupted-youth migration cycle. These findings are summarized from both quantitative and qualitative data from this research.

Table 6: Differences within the interrupted-youth generational migration cycle and insufficient/sufficient degrees of return preparedness

Interrupted-youth generational migration cycle and sufficiency of return preparedness		
	<i>Insufficient or no return preparedness</i>	<i>Sufficient return preparedness</i>
Willingness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No perceived agency in return decision • External events have compelled parents to relocate with children or ‘send back’ without their agency. • Tend to be older adolescents and more frustrated by lack of agency. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No or ambiguously perceived agency in return decision • Tend to be younger and more adaptable to lack of agency in relocation • ‘Trailing travellers’
Time/ Timing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Insufficient preparation time due to external events which cut time short. • Precarious external events (i.e., economic crisis, hyperinflation) disrupted parental resource mobilization • Started return preparation after socioeconomic crisis conditions began 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sufficient preparation time for parental resource mobilization. • Started return preparation before socioeconomic crisis
Tangible resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No assets or property in origin country • Unsold property or assets remaining in destination country if return is intended to be permanent. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assets and property in origin country • Ability to sell property and/or move financial assets before return if intended to be permanent.
Intangible resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low or non-existent parental preparedness • No citizenship due to no or restrictive <i>jus sanguinis</i> citizenship policy (limited access to employment, social services, etc.) • Weak inherited familial and social networks/connections and social capital • Feel ‘uprooted’ from their country of birth. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High parental preparedness • Destination country citizen • Post-secondary education • Inherited strong familial and social networks/connections and social capital • Enthusiastic and open to new future.

9.3.2 Interrupted-Youth Migration Cycle

For second-generation Lebanese–Venezuelan returnees, they are a highly heterogenous group with countless facets and idiosyncrasies. However, after careful consideration of the interplay and processes involved in the willingness and readiness of return, determinations regarding the degree of preparedness participants maintained when they returned to Lebanon supports Cassarino’s (2004; 2008a; 2014) theoretical models of return preparedness and migration cycles. The application of the revised, generational migration cycles has opened the door for more specific return mobilities to emerge. Namely, youths who are compelled to return to the ancestral homeland of their parental relatives. Given the unprecedented socioeconomic conditions of Venezuela and the utilization of generational migration cycles, childhood youth mobilities have emerged as a significant and analytically nascent category which emerged from this research. This

may hopefully spur a renewed engagement in childhood or youth mobilities. King and Christou (2011: 459) also referred to this particular mobility type as a ‘neglected topic’ noting “children’s experiences of migration, mobility, and transnational living have recently become the focus of considerable attention (Lee, 2016; Barker et al., 2009; Knorr, 2005; Ní Laiore et al., 2010).

The second-generation youth mobilities found in this research also shed light on the more compelled end of the willingness spectrum and their lack of agency in their return. Thus, compelled-youth return refers to a migrant, under the age of 19 or still under parental responsibility, being compelled by such parental authorities—either sent ‘back’ or taken with them—to return to the origin country with little or no agency in their relocation. Thus, compelled-youth returnees may be sufficiently prepared: high parental preparedness, strong familial and social links maintained by parents, and a pre-adolescent flexibility to their identity and integration. Or they may be insufficiently prepared: parental preparedness is low or non-existent; there is estrangement from origin country family; the migrant is a young adolescent and prone to the negative effects of being ‘uprooted’; and acute external pre-return circumstances or conditions force parents to make critical decisions on behalf of their children’s future. This new interrupted-youth migration cycle will be included as a variable of analysis to provide fresh, albeit limited, analysis in the field of second-generation return mobilities.

Chapter Ten

Quantitative Analysis: Perceived Push/Pull and Decision-Making Factors

The quantitative component of this research will examine and compare the push and pull factors as recollected by participants during the destination country stage of the generational migration cycle. However, given that the push/pull factors represent the conditions at the time returnees were still in Venezuela, this research will also delve into the decision-making factors during the post-return period. More specifically, these factors will be divided into five themes: economic, family and lifestyle, political, social protection/services, and culture. The purpose is to understand, beyond merely economic or financial benefits, the Lebanese–Venezuelan second-generation’s rationale when deciding to remain in Lebanon, re-emigrate back to Venezuela (despite concurrent crises in both countries), or migrate onwards to a third country. Examining the decision-making rationale after return also allows for the discovery of novel intangible resources which only exist under these particular circumstances.

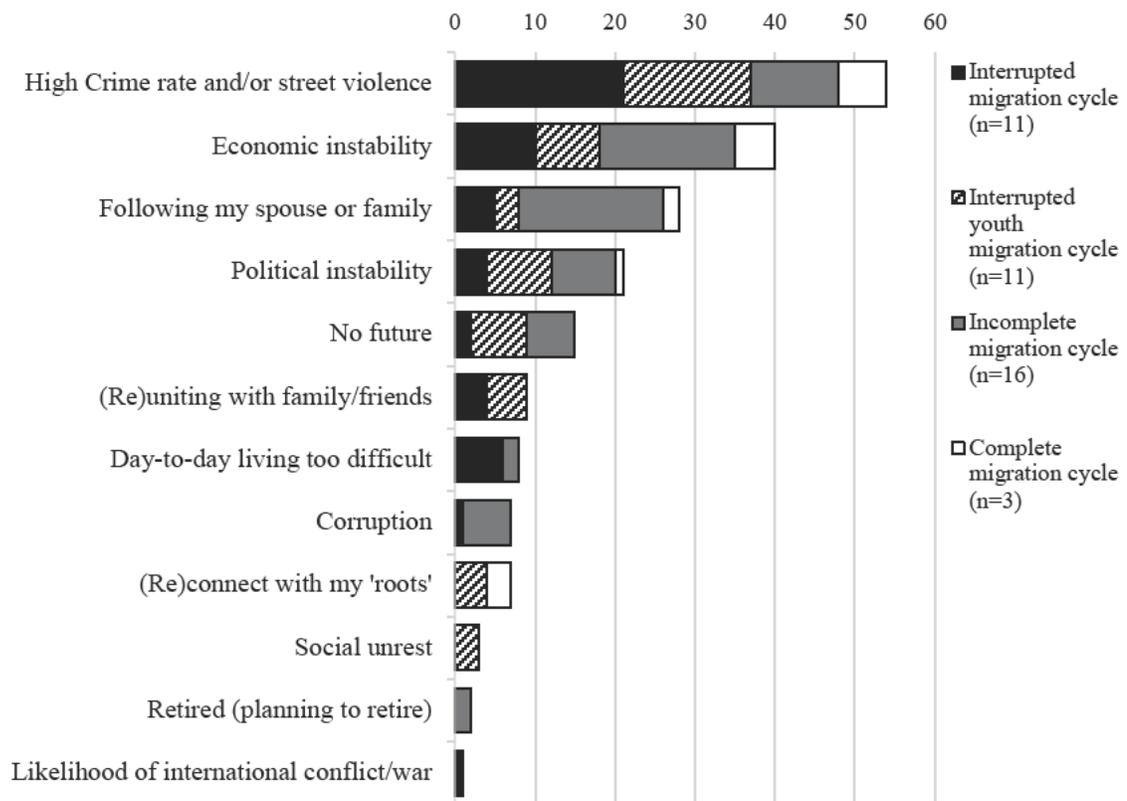
10.1 Push and Pull Factors in the Destination Country Stage (Venezuela)

Upon examining Hourani and Menhem’s (2019) field survey results of (first-generation) Lebanese return migration, they found that the primary push factors were mainly based on dissatisfaction with the destination country. A poor social life, economic challenges, financial crisis/instability, no job/low income, and racism were cited among the top reasons for return. In terms of pull factors or reasons for returning to Lebanon, Hourani and Menhem (2019) reported that the primary reason overwhelmingly was for the family life, reuniting with family, and/or taking care of parents. Other reasons also include investing in or establishing a business in Lebanon, job opportunities, and the better lifestyle and weather Lebanon has to offer (Hourani & Menhem, 2019: 46). Nevertheless,

their sample consisted of returnees from over ten different countries with a vast array of pre-return conditions in their respective destination countries.

For the purposes of this research, determining the push and pull factors of the destination and origin countries is also salient. This research seeks to aggregate the saliency of such factors and compare them across generational migration cycles. In other words, the saliency perceived by the participants will be quantified—i.e., most important is three points; second, two points; and third, one point—in order to obtain a ‘saliency score’. Figure 8 and Figure 9 demonstrate the aggregated score across migration cycles for reported push and pull factors.

Figure 8: Aggregated saliency of push factors in the destination country (Venezuela) and migration cycles



Results from the analysis shed light on the main push factors facing many returnees and their respective migration cycle (Figure 8). Firstly, the primary driver of return is the violent crime plaguing Venezuela (and not the economic or financial stability researchers often propose, although it did come a close second). This was an important push factor across all migration cycles yet most prevalent with interrupted (and

interrupted-youth) migration cycles. Secondly, those with incomplete migration cycles cite more chronic push factors like economic and political instability, corruption, or familial pressure signifying the more generalized negative circumstances of Venezuela rather than one crisis event. Hence, the cost of staying, for these returnees, would be higher than the cost of emigrating. Thirdly, it is sensible that participants with a complete migration cycle would seek to (re)connect with their Lebanese ‘roots’ since they were motivated to return based on favorable circumstances. Yet, roots were also salient for some interrupted-youth migration cycle participants as well indicating a conceptual overlap between complete migration cycles and interrupted-youth migration cycles with sufficient return preparedness.

Figure 9: Aggregated saliency of pull factors in origin country (Lebanon) and migration cycles

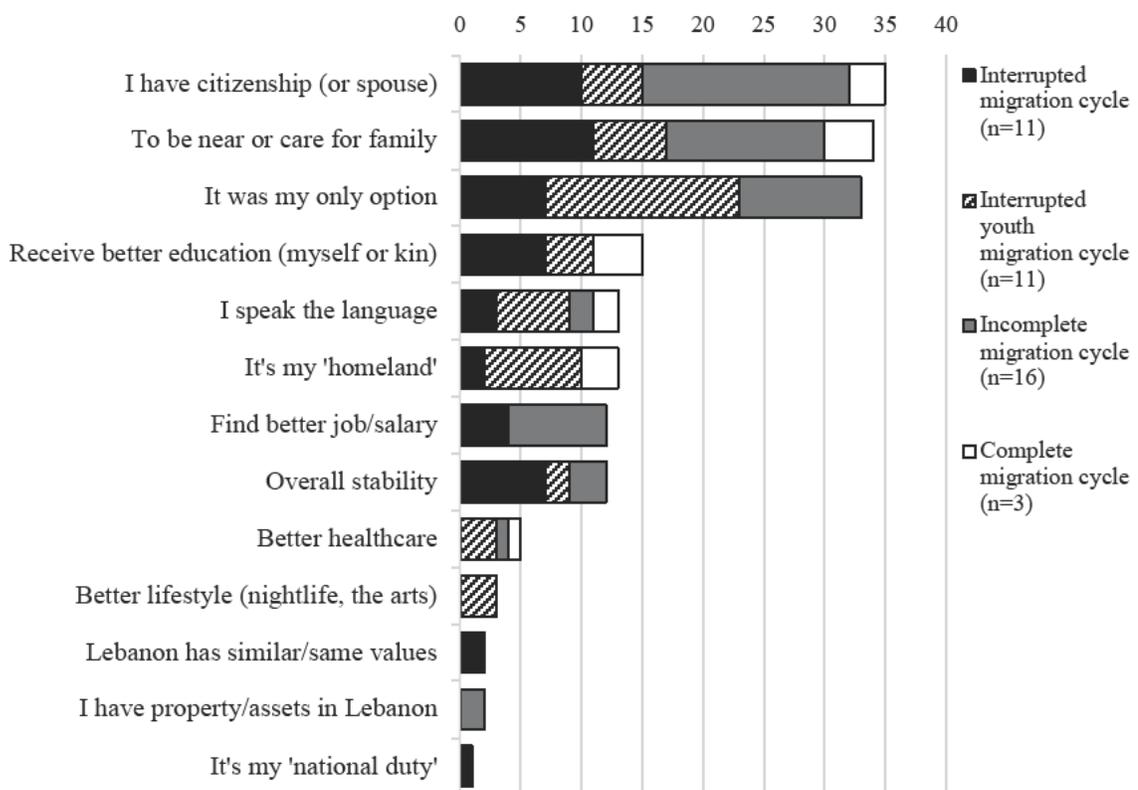


Figure 9 presents the perceived pull factors for Lebanese–Venezuelan second-generation returnees. It is important to note that the response rate for pull factors was approximately 36% lower than that for push factors. This may be due to the vividness and urgency of leaving Venezuela given any number of crisis events which may have occurred

(i.e., kidnapping, robbery). Thus, ‘deciding’ on Lebanon may have been based on more ambiguous reasons than merely having citizenship. This assumption is confirmed by the fact that ‘having citizenship’ and Lebanon being the ‘only option’ are the most salient reasons for return. Those with interrupted-youth migration cycles also perceived Lebanon as their only option, however, they did not overwhelmingly cite familial pressure as a push factor. This may suggest that as returnees mature, they likely will understand and accept the reasons why they were compelled to return (see Chapter 13). More important, across the migration cycle board, and in accordance with Hourani and Menhem’s (2019) findings, being near or caring for family in Lebanon were among the most important reasons for Lebanese return.

For interrupted and incomplete migration cycles, Lebanon was often perceived as providing better work opportunities or salary, and returnees appreciated the overall stability compared to Venezuela. Also, those with a completed cycle and those with an interrupted-youth migration cycle overlap again in terms of pull factors. Many emphasized the positive attributes pertaining to their sense of cultural and linguistic connectedness and roots to Lebanon. Both groups emphasized the saliency of Lebanon as their ‘homeland’ and that they speak the Lebanese language. This suggests young returnees, and especially those of the millennial generation, maintain a similar affinity for Lebanon as a ‘homeland’ and share the importance of preserving language and culture similar to returnees with high preparedness and a completed migration cycle. Also, both groups saw benefits in Lebanon beyond economic stability. Many participants with completed and interrupted-youth migration cycles reported better education and healthcare as important reasons—one compelled-youth returnee even cited the salience of Lebanon’s exceptional art scene and nightlife as well.

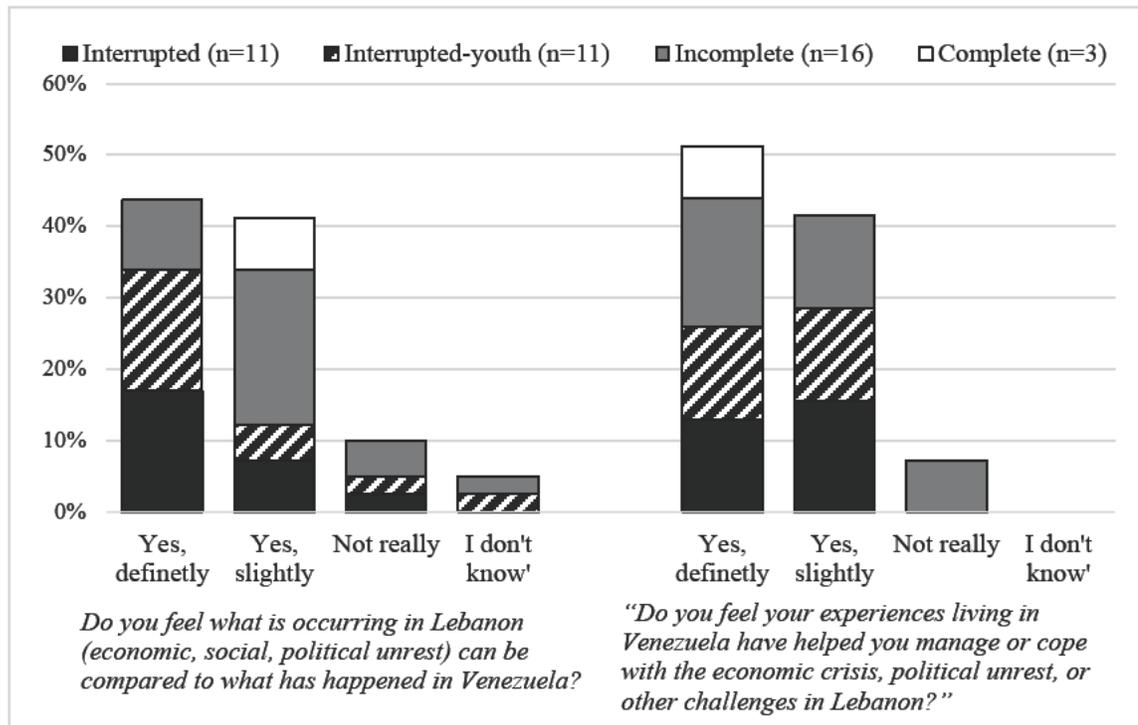
It is important to note that the push and pull factors reported by participants pertain to their recollection of the period when they were residing in Venezuela. Thus, for the perceived pull factors of the origin country, perceptions and expectations of post-return conditions may have shifted considerably upon return given the unexpected socioeconomic crises and hyperinflation in Lebanon. Decision-making factors examine the returnee’s current perception—after their return and reintegration in Lebanon—and

ascertain what are the most salient aspects if/when considering re-emigration or onward migration at times in concurrent socioeconomic crises.

10.2 Concurrent Crises: Perceived Similarities and Intangible Resources

Presently, conditions in the post-return, origin country has been described as a *déjà vu* of destination country conditions. Figure 10 illustrates, first, that second-generation Lebanese–Venezuelan returnees, regardless of migration cycle, overwhelmingly feel that the challenging socioeconomic conditions in Lebanon are similar to Venezuela’s. And secondly, respondents overwhelmingly stated that their experiences of the crises in Venezuela have assisted them in coping with or managing the political and socioeconomic crises in Lebanon. This lends further support and salience to the existence of intangible resources tailored specifically to mitigate the challenges of socioeconomic, political, and social crises. Interestingly, migrants with interrupted (and interrupted-youth) migration cycles perceived the two countries as ‘highly’ similar as compared to incomplete or complete cycles which see it ‘slightly’ similar. However, in inquiring about the helpfulness of such experiences (or intangible resources), those with incomplete and complete cycles were more certain of the usefulness of such intangible resources. This might seem counter-intuitive given that returnees with interrupted cycles ought to have more experience with the Venezuelan crisis as many emigrated closer to 2018. However, it may also suggest the maximizing qualities of those with higher preparedness at utilizing their resources—getting the most, so to speak, out of their intangible resources.

Figure 10: Perceived similarities of conditions between Venezuela and Lebanon across migration cycles and whether experiences in Venezuela assisted with Lebanese socioeconomic crisis.



Recalling the conditions of Lebanon after 2019 presented in Chapter 8, including calls for revolution, social unrest, and hyperinflation, this research will take a closer look at the saliency certain decision-making factors play in terms of resettlement and reintegration. Hourani and Menhem (2019) found that first-generation returnees cited 'lifestyle' as a primary reason for return; this is indicative of motivations which correspond with more complete migration cycles. However, as Bastia (2011: 587) notes: "Return, in a context of economic or political crisis, is clearly quite exceptional." Therefore, given the exceptionality of return in the context of concurrent economic, social, and political crises, taking a closer look at the salience returnees attribute to certain decision-making factors and their respective migration cycles offers a unique context for exploration.

A list of decision-making factors was compiled with participants weighing in each factor. This particular list was divided into five dimensions or themes (economic, family/lifestyle, political, social protection/services, culture) based on a comprehensive literature review and the researcher's own fieldwork (Cassarino, 2004; 2008a; 2008b;

2014; 2016; Hourani & Menhem, 2019; Huggins, 2014; Hirshman, 1970; Gmelch, 1980; Bovenkerk, 1974; Catalano, 2015; Bastia, 2011; van Houte & de Koning, 2008; Ródenas, Martí, & León, 2017; Jiménez & Rodríguez, 2005; Hornstein Tomić, 2018; Timotijevic & Breakwell, 2000).

10.3 Decision-Making Factors in the Origin Country Stage (Lebanon)

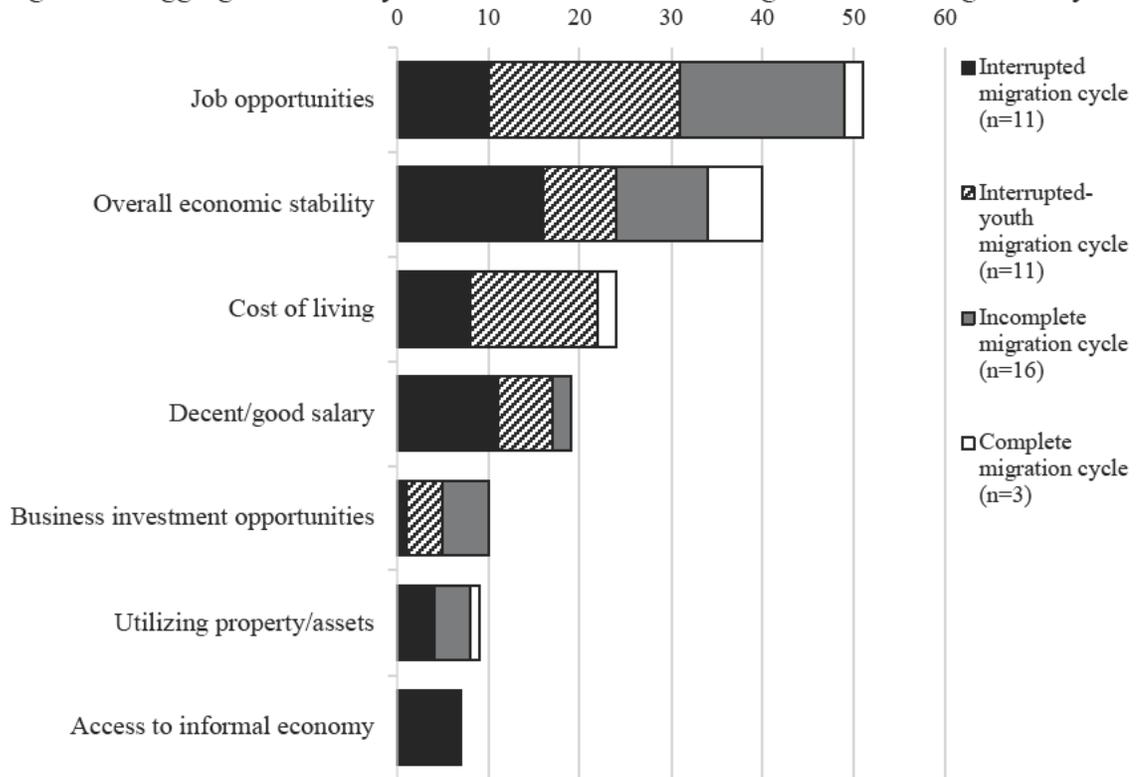
The exceptionality of Lebanese–Venezuelan second-generation return migration has offered a unique opportunity to examine this return migration phenomenon within the framework of generational migration cycles, especially those with interrupted, interrupted-youth, or incomplete migration cycles. Normally, and especially for origin-to-destination country emigration, spatial wage differentials and other economic outcomes may often maintain more saliency in the decision to emigrate. Yet, when a migrant contemplates returning, they also seem to value other non-economic or non-monetary aspects (Constant, 2020). Furthermore, the context of emigration from a destination country undergoing economic, political, and social disruption—and returning to a country of origin only to undergo relatively comparable circumstances—presents a distinct setting for study.

10.3.1 Economic Decision-Making Factors

Given the presently grim economic conditions of both Lebanon and Venezuela, job opportunities and overall economic stability were rated as the most salient economic factors (Figure 11). Specifically, incomplete-cycle participants were more concerned with finding work as compared to interrupted-cycle participants who express more concern over the ‘overall’ economic stability. Furthermore, participants with interrupted-youth migration cycles were also concerned with finding work opportunities and the cost of living. As Figure 16 will illustrate below, returnees with youth-interrupted cycles are the most ambiguous when it comes to their economic preference between destination and origin countries. However, returnees with incomplete migration cycles feel that Venezuela is an economically preferential country now. In fact, many Lebanese–Venezuelan returnees have opted to re-emigrate ‘back’ to Venezuela as the economic conditions

have—according to some interviewees’ accounts—improved slightly¹⁹. However, it is important to note that the economic theme, contrary to the conventional understandings of forced return migration, is *not* the most salient factor thus supporting the notion that conceptions of migration need to go beyond economic dimensions and examine more the underlying processes of migrants’ decision to emigrate.

Figure 11: Aggregated saliency of economic decision-making factors and migration cycles



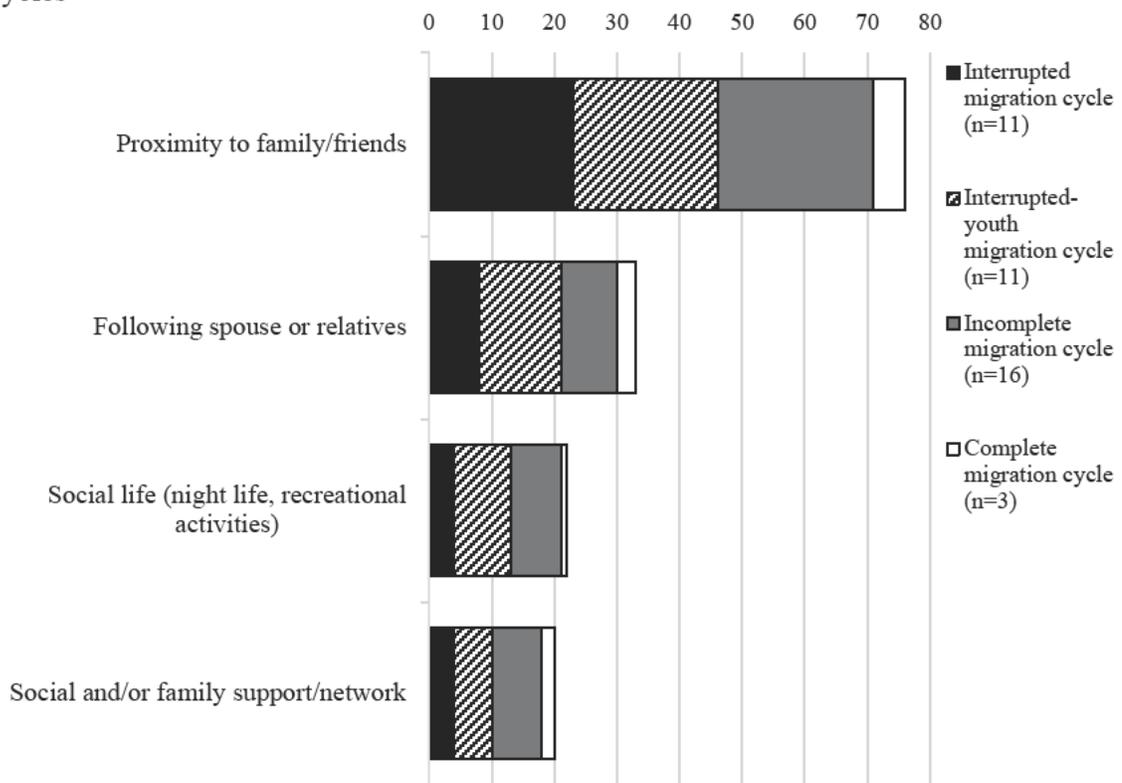
10.3.2 Family and Lifestyle Decision-Making Factors

Family and lifestyle decision-making factors, specifically proximity to family/friends, obtained the highest average reported saliency compared to all decision-making factors (Figure 12). This also corresponds to Hourani and Menhem’s (2019) findings that the family life plays a major role in Lebanese returnees’ decision to return. Following a spouse or relative was also a salient factor for incomplete and interrupted-youth migration cycles. It is understandable why many compelled-youth would select this factor; yet, for incomplete migration cycles, qualitative interviews shed light on dynamics

¹⁹ This research found that 78% of respondents personally knew Lebanese–Venezuelan returnees who have re-emigrated back to Venezuela.

of family pressure and suggests that many women may have followed the wishes of their husband or father. Furthermore, the second-generation are often assumed to be ‘in between’ transnational attachments to their (birth) destination country and their country of origin, and they maintain fluid and/or hybrid conceptions of ‘home’ and belonging. Therefore, second-generation Lebanese—Venezuelan returnees also expressed uncertainty with regards to whether Lebanon or Venezuela is preferential for family and lifestyle (Figure 16).

Figure 12: Aggregated saliency of family/lifestyle decision-making factors and migration cycles

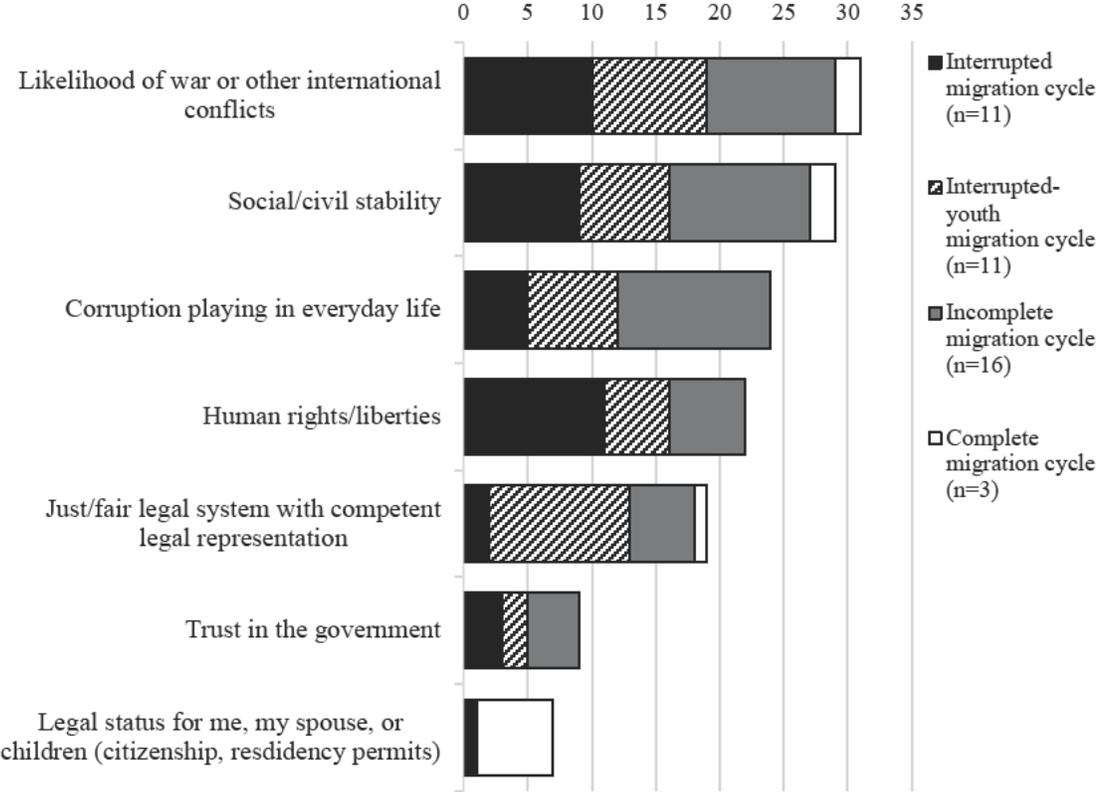


10.3.3 Political Decision-Making Factors

In terms of political decision-making factors, second-generation returnees reported the highest level of ambiguity towards their country preference (Figure 16). Furthermore, as ‘likelihood for international conflict or war’ was the least salient push factor for leaving Venezuela, its importance in Figure 13 suggests returnees have adopted more origin-country specific concerns in their decision-making process. Moreover, given the high ambiguity and even slight preference for Lebanon (as seen in Figure 16), the notion that

second-generation returnees may have had poor information and unrealistic expectations hampering their (re)integration is indicative of the more diasporic directionality of their return. This notion is supported by the qualitative interviews in Part III, where some interviewees expressed surprise at the political backsliding they encountered when they returned to Lebanon. Thus, the clarity about their decision to return to Lebanon may have been muddled about the *actual* reality of the post-return, origin-country conditions. Incomplete-cycle returnees cited the endemic corruption and social/civil stability as salient political factors, while interrupted-cycle returnees felt human rights/liberties and social/civil stability were important. Returnees with an interrupted-youth cycle also felt a fair legal system and representation was salient, while complete-cycle returnees prioritized legal status and citizenship. This suggests that maintaining dual citizenship for oneself and family members—thus ensuring adequate social, political and economic reintegration into the origin country—is a primary concern for highly prepared returnees to mitigate the sociopolitical challenges of the post-return conditions and allows more ease and access to transnational mobility if emigration is needed.

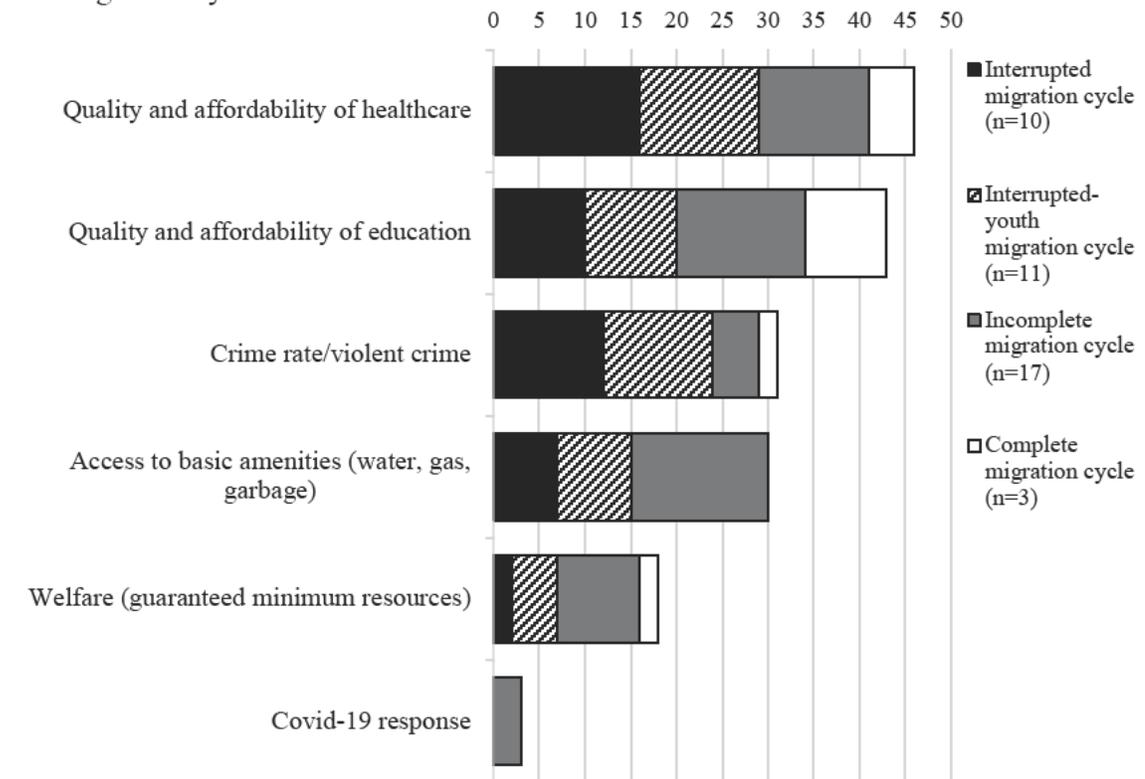
Figure 13: Aggregated saliency of political decision-making factors and migration cycles



10.3.4 Social Protection and Services Decision-Making Factors

The aggregated salience found in Figure 16 illustrates the relative importance social protection/service factors play in the overall decision-making process. It was considered the second most salient factor—behind family yet ahead of economic factors. This finding might seem counterintuitive as researchers often overemphasize the saliency of economic factors especially given the concurrent socioeconomic crises in the countries. Figure 14 demonstrates that quality of healthcare and education warrant similar salience to factors like job opportunities and overall economic stability. Lebanon was significantly preferred over Venezuela for this theme even though Lebanon does not have a universal social protection scheme; health insurance, medical, and education costs are often high; and such health insurance policies do not include foreigners, which would be the case for returnees who do not have citizenship (Tabar, Denison, Alkhomassy, 2020). Also, the violent crime rate, rampant in Venezuela, is considered significantly better in Lebanon; yet both countries struggle to provide adequate water, sanitation, and power for their citizens (Hernández Blanco, 2018; Hatoum, 2020).

Figure 14: Aggregated saliency of social protection and services decision-making factors and migration cycles

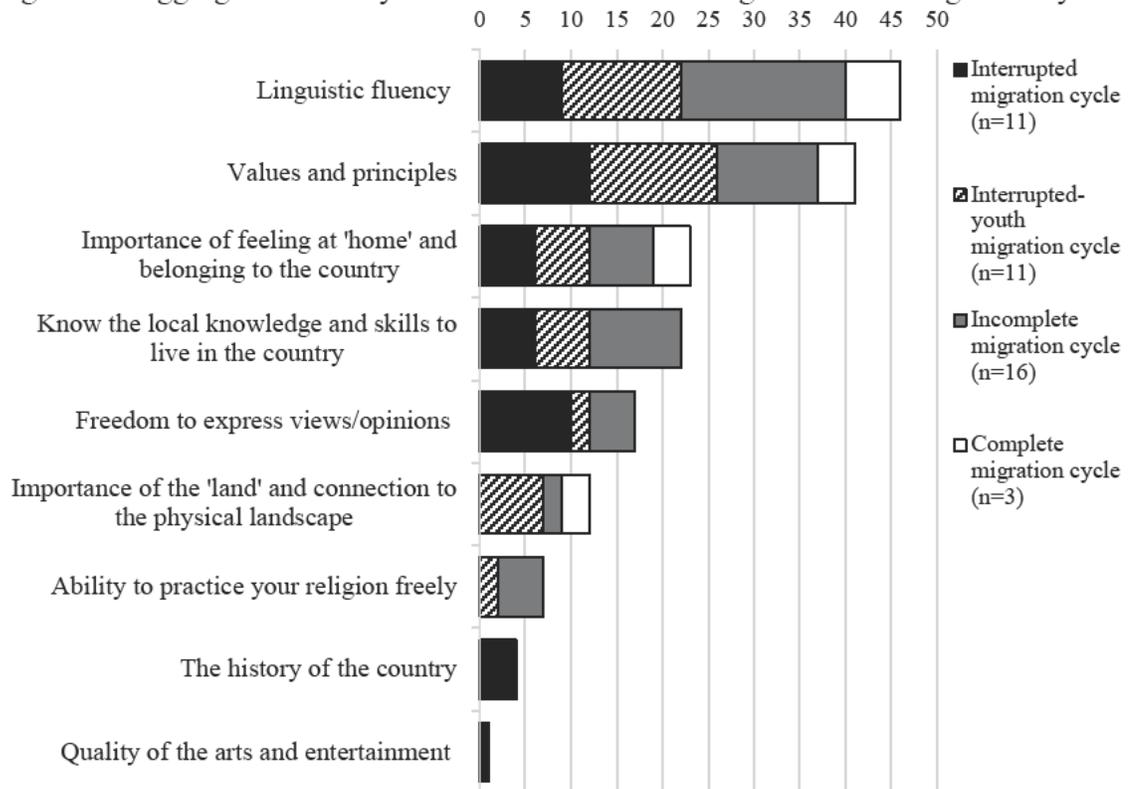


10.3.5 Cultural Decision-Making Factors

Although cultural factors scored the least importance compared to the other themes, returnees nonetheless selected Lebanon as culturally preferential. Across all migration cycles, maintaining the Arabic language was pragmatically seen as the most salient choice (Figure 15). This was followed closely by the values and principles which Lebanon is perceived to embody better. The importance of ‘home’ and belonging were also consistent throughout all cycles yet with varying degrees. Finally, participants with complete migration or interrupted-youth cycles found particular saliency in the physical landscape—or ‘holy land’ as described by numerous interviewees in Chapter 14—lending credence to the more diasporic directionality of their return and/or the fluidity to (re)integrate and adapt to the origin country culture. On the other hand, returnees with an incomplete or interrupted migration cycle felt the local knowledge and skills—the idiosyncrasies of a country that only local residents would know—and freedom of expression were salient. Given that over 80% of all participants maintain the perception that events in Lebanon are comparable to events in Venezuela (Figure 10), Chapter 16

will also shed light on how the local knowledge and the experiences of Venezuela’s conditions have acted as unforeseen intangible resources assisting return migrants’ (re)integration in Lebanon. The experiences living in Venezuela are also confirmed (88%) to have assisted returnees in managing or coping with the challenging post-return conditions in Lebanon (Figure 10).

Figure 15: Aggregated saliency of cultural decision-making factors and migration cycles

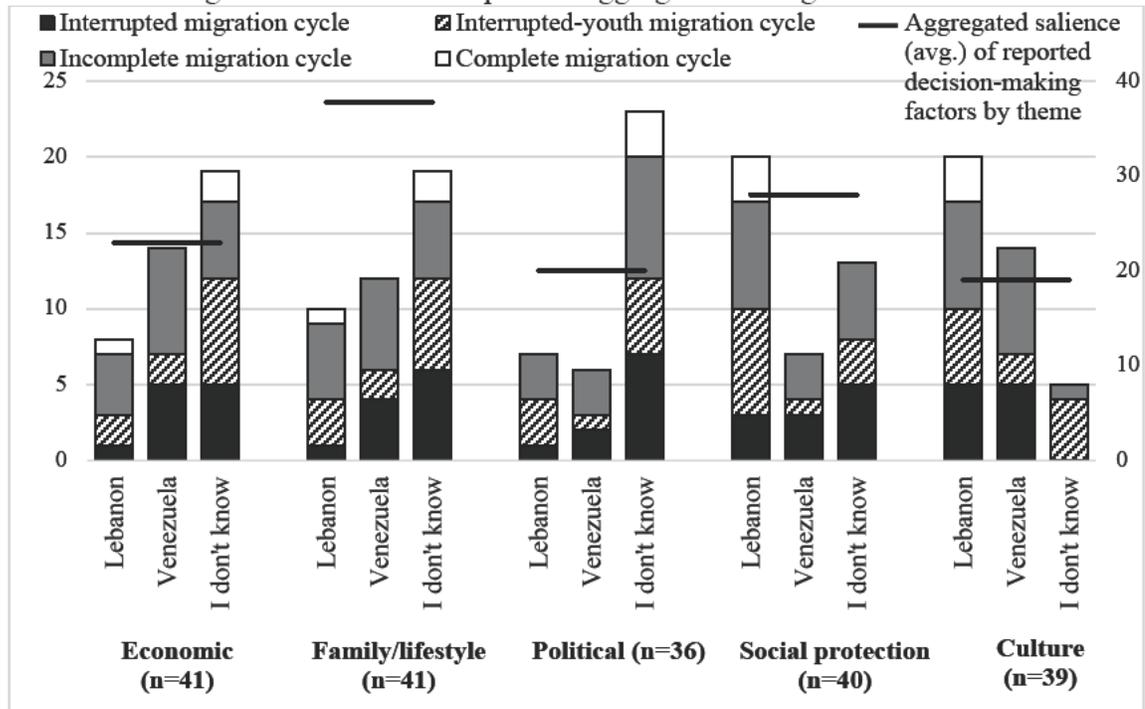


10.3.6 Analyzing Decision-Making Factors across Themes

Figure 16 demonstrates the origin or destination country preference maintained by second-generation Lebanese–Venezuelan returnees, and the relative salience different decision-making themes hold in their decision. Given the concurrent socioeconomic crises both countries face, it is no wonder why choosing a country was dubious for the majority. However, for economic and family/lifestyle factors, Venezuela slightly outperformed Lebanon, and Lebanon was slightly preferential politically. Yet overall, the decision was difficult to make. For social protection and culture, Lebanon was strongly preferred over Venezuela. Furthermore, among the few returnees with a completed migration cycle, Venezuela was never selected as a preferential choice indicating that their completed

migration cycle and high preparedness left them with no regrets. Additionally, interrupted-youth migration cycles' participants—as shown within themes—follow similar decision-making logic as those with completed cycles. For instance, Figure 16 illustrates that where the majority of completed cycle returnees' preference lies, so will many of the interrupted-youth migration cycles be found.

Figure 16: Destination (Venezuela) and origin (Lebanon) country preference among decision-making themes and their respective aggregated averages.



Borjas and Bratsberg (1996) explains that return migrants, particularly in contexts of strong familial and transnational links, will not follow the same similar decision-making logic as economic migrants. This research's findings have strongly supported the notion that return migration is based on numerous non-economic decision-making variables that shape, in complex ways, the migration cycles of returnees. Moreover, Figure 10 also confirms the perception by second-generation Lebanese–Venezuelan returnees that conditions are also analogous. Thus, given this unique situation of comparable pre- and post- return conditions, this research will also delve into the intentions and aspirations of re-emigration based on important factors like intended permanency of resettlement; intentions, if any, to re-emigrate; the generational migration cycles; and the perceived improvements in financial and living conditions since return.

Chapter Eleven

Quantitative Analysis: Factors Impacting the Intentions of Re-Emigration and Generational Migration Cycles

This chapter seeks to examine a number of variables which may offer more understanding into the phenomenon of re-emigration (and onwards migration). A quick summary of the limited re-emigration scholarly literature will be presented along with analysis regarding the intended permanency of return by the research sample. Returnees' intended return permanency, along with their intentions regarding future re-emigration, will be examined including a comparison of Hourani and Menhem's (2019) first-generation sample. Finally, intentions of re-emigration are also analysed along the sample's generational migration cycles including perceptions regarding any financial and living condition improvements since return.

As previously stated, re-emigration expounds upon the definition of return migration and refers to return migrants who, after settling in the country of origin for over a year, relocated 'back' to the destination/birth country from which they originally came. This differs from 'onward migration' (or 'migration onwards') whereby emigration occurs to a third country thus establishing a new migration cycle which may proceed for generations (refer to Figure 2 in Chapter 6). Furthermore, arrows of directionality may change course at a given stage of the generational migration cycle. In the case of one participant, Jad (in Part III), his interrupted migration cycle caused a rupture and disillusionment upon his return to Lebanon, and his sense of 'Lebaneseness' was severed. Thus, Jad feels his re-emigration 'back' to Venezuela would be a *re-return* to the destination country since his directionality shifted in the origin country stage.

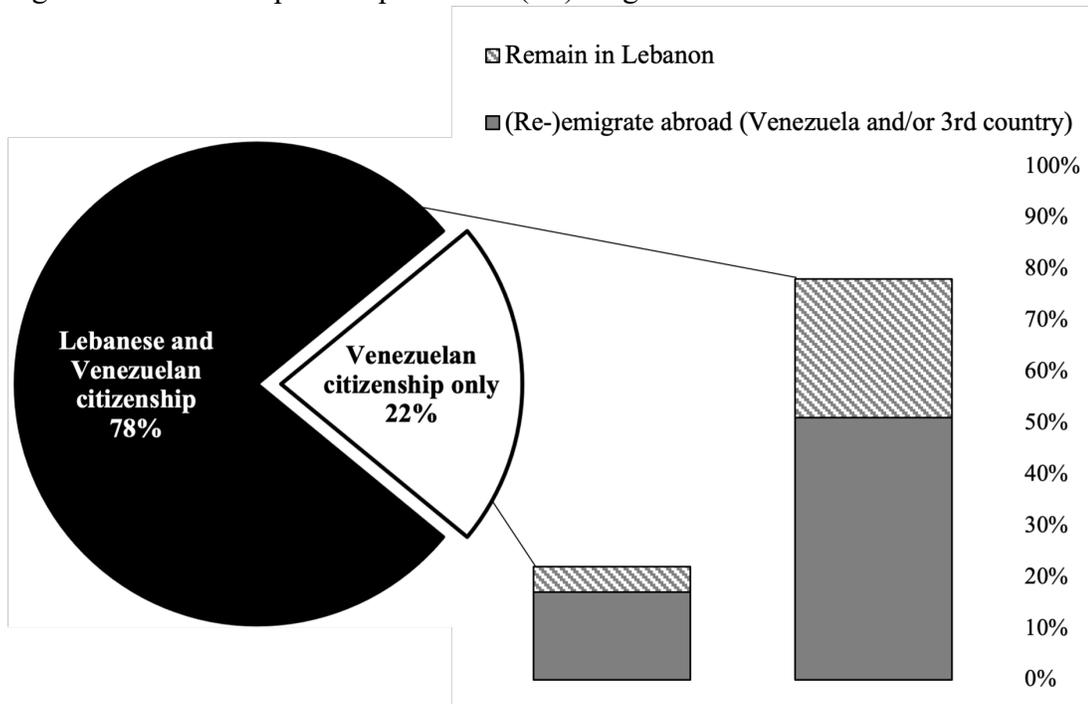
Cassarino (2004; 2008a; 2014) has concluded that difficult conditions in the country of origin and little or no tangible/intangible resources mobilized for proper

reintegration are primary drivers for re-emigration. Lietaert (2016) also found re-emigration to be linked to a lack of reintegration in the origin country. However, Constant's (2020) summarization of numerous studies on re-emigration patterns raises an important issue regarding the sheer magnitude of re-emigration and the significant lack of research in the field. For instance, re-emigration mobility rates were over 60% among guestworkers between Germany and origin countries (Constant & Zimmerman, 2012); over 50% of Pakistani immigrants in Norway were re-emigrants and approximately one quarter of Vietnamese migrants had onward migration rates of 66% (Bratsberg, et al., 2007); immigrants in Sweden also had high onward migration rates (20–28%) (Nekby, 2006; Monti, 2019); and in Canada, 37% of immigrants moved onward to the U.S. (King & Newbold, 2007).

11.1 Citizenship and Legal Status

Marieke van Houte has done extensive research on the concept of sustainable return and posits that a common measurement of sustainable return is seeing whether re-emigration has taken place (van Houte & de Koning, 2008). One important finding in her research on Afghanistan return migration—sharing the element of unstable post-return conditions found in this research—is the importance of permanent legal status in the destination country (van Houte et al. 2016). However, as this research is based on second-generation returnees, legal status in the country of origin is more problematic. Given the protections of having legal status, specifically the guarantee of re-entry into the country, returnees felt a sense of security and comfort which left open options to re-emigrate if post-return conditions become untenable. Those without legal status or citizenship may be less inclined to re-emigrate given the hurdles of obtaining visas, collecting documents, long wait times, or even denial of re-entry (van Houte, 2014; van Houte et al. 2016; Carling, 2002; Blitz et al., 2005; Jones, 2011). However, given the concurrent socioeconomic crises in Venezuela and Lebanon, most participants with no Lebanese citizenship either wished to re-emigrate to Venezuela or onward to a third country (Figure 17). It appears, for second-generation, a lack of legal status in the origin country of residence acts more of a push factor—diverging from van Houte's (2014) findings on Afghani returnees—given its added precarity in Lebanon and relative ease of re-entry into the country.

Figure 17: Citizenship and aspiration to (re-)emigrate abroad



11.2 Post-Return Challenges: Immigration Traps, Emotional Attachments, and Intended Permanency of Return to the Origin Country

Ródenas, Martí, and León (2017) also shed light on the concept of ‘immigration traps’: economic variables relating to poverty during economic crisis that leads to situations in which migrants are trapped and unable to re-emigrate. Lietaert (2016) explains it as a ‘wish to emigrate’ but without the means to do so. This study found that approximately 70% of all participants expressed an aspiration or intention to either re-emigrate ‘back’ to Venezuela, emigrate onwards to a third country, or both (as seen in solid grey in Figure 17). Of the participants who aspire to leave Lebanon, one-third reported that they did not possess the resources to emigrate now thus lending support to the concept of immigration traps.

With little written on re-emigration for first-generation returnees, the literature on second-generation re-emigration is consequently sparse as well. Yet, King and Christou (2010) explain that for second-generation return migrants, ‘return’ may have invoked

feelings of rupture and disillusionment. Markowitz and Stefansson (2004) also explain that homecomings can be ‘unsettling paths of return’. This disillusionment, which instigates re-emigration plans ‘back’ to the destination/birth country or onwards, may also be indicative of the emotional ease at which second-generation mobility may move back and forth. Transnational links and social networks are not severed if return or re-emigration occur. Rather, they often constitute viable sources of transnational support or ‘social insurance’ if plans do not work out, if conditions change in the destination/origin countries, or if the returnee wishes to migrate onwards (Reynolds, 2011).

Malhamé (2006) further examined Lebanese return mobilities and perceptions on re-emigration from a qualitative perspective. Her research also incorporated the importance of Lebanon’s precarious and often unstable conditions by citing, at the time, the recently assassinated Lebanese Prime Minister Rafik Hariri and the mass demonstrations that followed known as the 2005 Cedar Revolution. She explains that many saw the mass demonstrations—similar to events of the 2019 October Uprising—as seeds of positive change, ‘history in the making’, and a means to reinforce feelings of empowerment. Still, although Lebanon’s historical and enduring crises may stimulate national loyalties and reinforce feelings towards the ‘homeland’ and belonging, the persistent crises may also fatigue and disillusion many, especially older returnees who may carry vivid memories of the civil war. Furthermore, feelings of disillusionment may also deteriorate any national sentiment felt by returnees. They may feel deceived by the lack of human rights and dignity in their origin country and have no qualms about re-emigration.

11.2.1 Emotional Attachments and the Transnational Consciousness

In understanding Lebanese returnees’ perceptions towards re-emigration, Malhamé (2006) also found that emotional attachment to Lebanon correlated with re-emigration intentions; older returnees tended to feel more emotionally attached to Lebanon whereas younger, ‘millennial’ returnees did not feel as emotionally attached. Older generation migrants point to their advanced age and the desire to settle down rather than being ‘up-rooted’ once again. Conversely, younger returnees maintained more concrete plans of re-emigration regardless of their emotional attachment; migration was

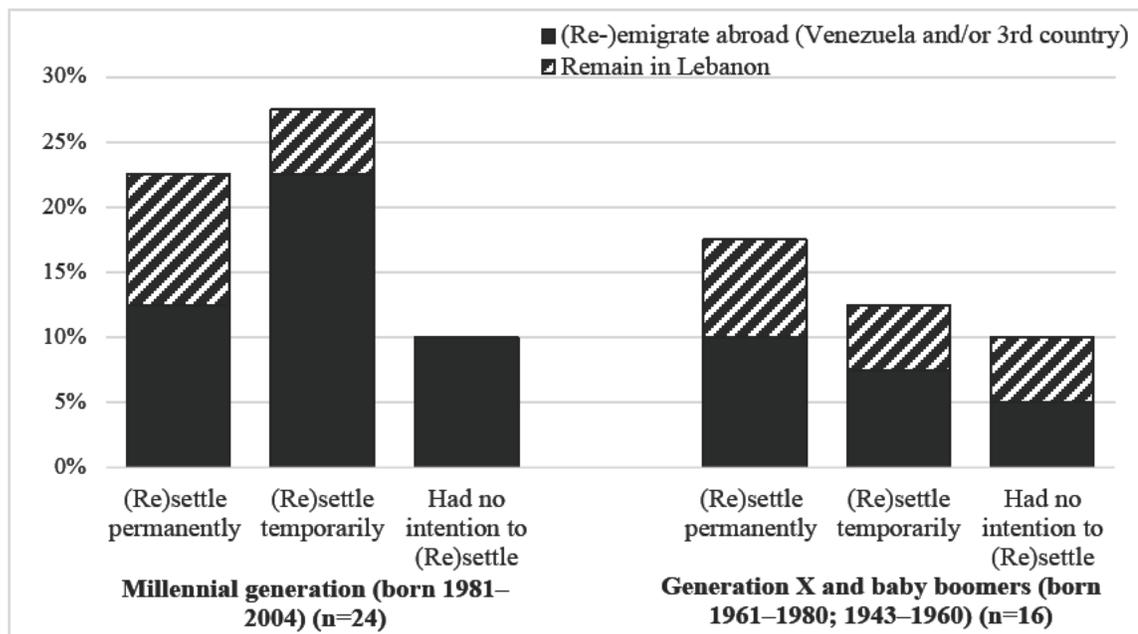
found to be a normal, and even essential, part of their lives. Malhamé (2006: 62) describes these returnees as “replenishing their batteries” with re-emigration. This description is illuminating as it frames re-emigration not as a failure, but rather as existing within a privileged state-of-being based on: the fluidity of the returnees’ conceptions of ‘home’ and identity; a broader perspective which moves away from unquestioned attachment to one fixed national territory regardless of citizenship; and the embodiment of a globalized *transnational consciousness* which facilitates mobility on multiple levels and across nation-state borders. This transnational consciousness, prevalent among second-generation returnees, is marked by its capacity to maintain multiple identities and senses of belong spanning across national borders. It is often grounded, not only in the complex emotional and imaginary lives of transnationals, but also in the physical ones as well. For example, migrants, who are constantly moving across national borders, may acquire certain tangible resources like financial assistance from their transnational networks. They may also embody intangible resources like ‘multiple cultural competencies’ which allows for returnees to tailor aspects of their identity and sense self by retaining components of one culture while rejecting others from another culture.

11.2.2 Intended Permanency of Return (Re)Settlement and Intentions for Re-Emigration

This research has shown that compelled-youth returnees are more resilient than often thought. As they mature, especially for younger compelled-youth returnees of the millennial generation, they often appear to understand the reasons why they were compelled to return, and they try and make the best of their situation. This notion is supported by the findings on overlapping salience of the decision-making factors indicative of a complete migration cycle and the qualitative data from interviews with compelled-youth returnees in Part III. Thus, Figure 18 is provided to demonstrate the differences between ‘historical’ generations (first presented in section 5.3.1), their intended permanency of (re)settlement in Lebanon, and their aspiration to (re-) emigrate. Firstly, older generations, although they had the intention of (re)settling permanently, now aspire to (re-)emigrate. This is similar for the millennial generation and is most likely attributed to the serious socioeconomic crises in Lebanon. However, differences emerge between generations when returnees had no intention of (re)settling upon return. Of the

older generation who had no intention to (re)settle in Lebanon, half now expect to remain in Lebanon. This supports Malhamé’s (2006) statement, and broader assumptions about return migration in general that older migrants may feel weary after many years of hypermobility. Also, it further lends supports to the concept of ‘immigration traps’ (Ródenas, Martí, and León, 2017). Hyperinflation, banking ‘haircuts’, governmental mismanagement, and manifest, deep-seated corruption have left Lebanese financial saving either diminished massively or virtually depleted. Thus, many do not have the necessary tangible resources to re-emigrate (World Bank, 2021a).

Figure 18: Intended permanency of (re)settlement in Lebanon and the aspirations/intentions to (re-)emigrate based on historical generation



Conversely, the millennial generation did not show signs of being ‘stuck’ in Lebanon according to Figure 18. Those who had no intention of (re)settling permanently were all actively preparing to (re-)emigrate abroad. However, 75% of millennials with no intention of staying did not have the Lebanese citizenship and half reported being in a situation similar to an immigration trap. Still, the high number of millennial returnees who intended to stay only temporarily may be indicative of the hypermobility and hybridity characterizing young second-generation migrants.

Associating this research’s quantitative data with that of Hourani and Menhem’s (2019) allowed for a comparative glimpse into the differences among Lebanese first- and

second-generation returnees. Table 7 outlines the comparisons between Hourani and Menhem’s Lebanese first-generation return and this research’s Lebanese–Venezuelan second-generation return. Firstly, it illustrates a significant difference in (re)settlement intentions whereby 40% of second-generation Lebanese returnees expected to settle only temporarily, as compared to only 15% of Hourani and Menhem’s first-generation sample; 60% of first-generation returnees expected to settle permanently. This supports the notion that second-generation—more often millennials in this sample—are highly mobile and prefer to leave open the option for re-emigration or onward migration given their fluid conceptions of ‘home, legal ease of cross-border mobility with multiple citizenships, their ambitiousness, and ease operating within a transnational and globalized world.

Table 7: Comparison of Hourani and Menhem’s (2019: 55) (Lebanese) first-generation and this research’s (Lebanese–Venezuelan) second-generation findings of (re)settlement intentions and intentions to (re-)emigrate

(Re)settlement intentions	Permanent (re)settlement	Temporary (re)settlement	No (re)settlement/’I don’t know’	
First-generation	60%	15%	25%	100%
Second-generation	40%	40%	20%	100%
(Re-)emigration intentions	(Re-)emigration intended	’Not now’/’maybe’/’I don’t know’	Remain in Lebanon	
First-generation	13.6%	59.3%	27.1%	100%
Second-generation	45%	10%	45%	100%

Secondly, first-generation returnees were highly ambiguous towards their intentions to re-emigrate. This was also touched upon by Malhamé (2006) as she explained that many returnees were following carefully critical events in Lebanon and would consider re-emigrating if ‘the situation gets worse’. Hourani and Menhem’s first-generation returnees may also be ambiguous to re-emigration as the emotional attachments and sense of Lebanese identity and belonging are stronger than the second-generation; or they may have developed a tolerance or normalization to the difficult Lebanese conditions, coupled with exhausting emigration experiences, which account for their re-emigration hesitancy. However, this research’s second-generation sample are, in general, more cut-and-dry about their intentions to either stay or leave, and younger, returnees may more readily account for their higher degree of mobility. However, given

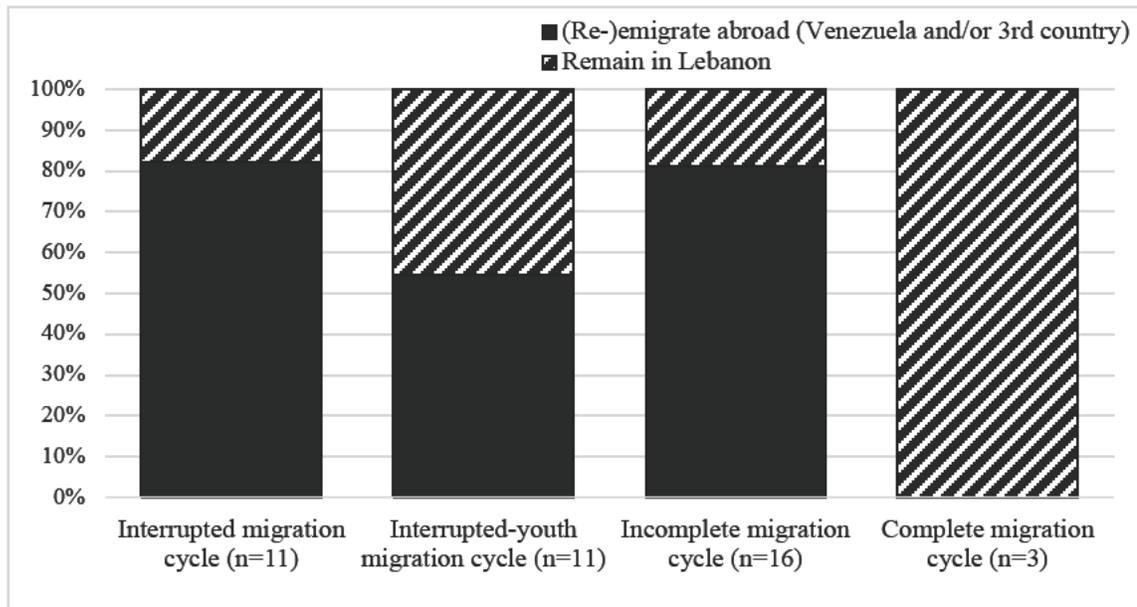
the different points-of-time this data was collected, first-generation attitudes may have shifted dramatically given the acute crises occurring in Lebanon presently.

Re-emigration migration patterns and/or intentions to re-emigrate are still nascent in scholarly research especially within both Venezuelan and Lebanese contexts. Hourani and Menhem (2019), however, have identified some factors behind returnees' willingness to re-emigrate. They found that political instability, lack of job opportunities, children's education, and inflation/cost of living were major reasons to consider re-emigration. Given the severity of crises in the country and lack of social protection services (Tabar, Denison, Alkhomassy, 2020), the impetus to (re-)emigrate, regardless of their readiness and willingness to do so, is undoubtedly high.

11.3 Intentions of Re-Emigration and/or Onwards Migration among Generational Migration Cycles

At first glance, the intention to re-emigrate or migrate onwards supports Cassarino's (2004; 2008a; 2014) conceptual frameworks of return preparedness and migration cycles. The inadequacy of preparation for Lebanese–Venezuelan second-generation migrants has left them with insufficient tangible and intangible resources for proper (re)integration. Thus, their incomplete or interrupted migration cycle acts as a primary driver for re-emigration or onward migration especially given the concurrent and ongoing crises in both Venezuela and Lebanon (Figure 19). However, upon further inspection, other processes may be at play which shape re-emigration intentions in cases of concurrent socioeconomic crises.

Figure 19: Intentions to (re-)emigrate or remain in Lebanon based on generational migration cycle



First, compelled-youth, when being sent ‘back home’ with little determinative input or agency in the decision to relocate, will maintain an interrupted migration cycle. However, recall from section 9.3.1 the variation of return preparedness within the interrupted-youth migration cycle (sufficient or insufficient preparedness). Youth migrants, because they are still under the authority of parental relatives, also inherit the tangible and intangible resources to ensure their relocation is safe and secure. Table 6 illustrates how interrupted-youth migration cycles differs depending on the sufficiency of the young migrant, or his/her parents’, resource mobilization. Thus, given that over 70% maintained a sufficient readiness for their return, but with no willingness, many exhibited an openness and intention to remain in Lebanon unlike their interrupted cycle counterparts and more akin to those with a completed migration cycle.

11.3.1 Changes in Financial and Living Conditions Post-Return

Interestingly, one participant with an interrupted migration cycle decided to remain in Lebanon. She is a third-generation X returnee, married with children, and maintains some assets in Lebanon and Venezuela. Furthermore, she orients towards Venezuela as ‘home’ (although she maintains Lebanese citizenship) and perceives Venezuela as better in terms of economy, family, and culture—what then is keeping her

in Lebanon? Based on survey data, this participant found Lebanon to be superior in terms of social protection and named the high rate of violent crime as the most salient Venezuelan push factor. Venezuela—and many Latin American countries at large—maintain some of the highest violent death rates in the world (OSAC, 2020). Not to minimize the abhorrent socioeconomic and political conditions in Lebanon; Venezuela, however, has witnessed the fraying of its social fabric, as violent crime decimates any sense of security or normalcy in the country²⁰. This likely explains why many second- and subsequent-generations of Lebanese–Venezuelan returnees opt to remain in Lebanon. As the participant highlighted earlier reveals: although her financial situation since returning to Lebanon has become ‘much worse’, she reported that her living conditions have, in fact, ‘slightly improved’ (Figure 20).

Figure 20: Changes in living conditions and financial conditions since returning to Lebanon and migration cycles

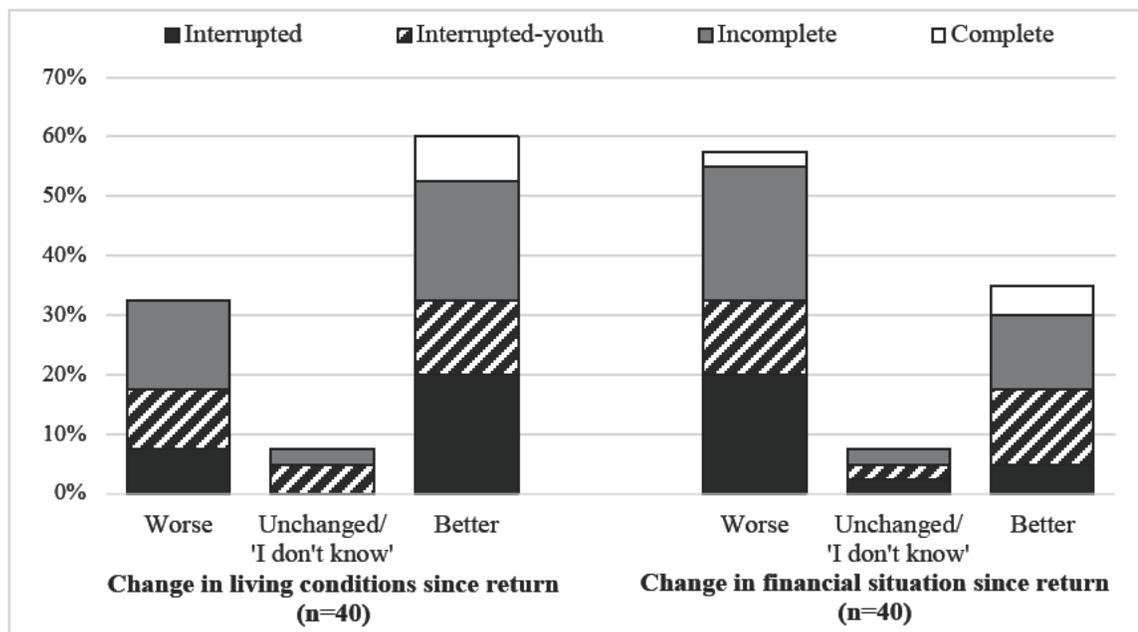


Figure 20 outlines the changes in living conditions and financial conditions since returning to Lebanon. It is understandable that close to 60% of participants stated that their financial conditions have become worse with almost a quarter of all participants saying it

²⁰ According to OSAC (2020), Venezuela had a homicide rate of 60.3 violent deaths per 100,000 inhabitants including a proliferation of robberies by heavily armed criminals, kidnappings and ransom, extortions, corruption, and bribery. Lebanon reported 2.5 intentional homicides per 100,000 inhabitants in 2018 (World Bank, 2021c).

became ‘much worse’. Hyperinflation, along with a severe lack in foreign currencies and people locked out of their USD savings, have compelled many to withdraw their savings in Lebanese Lira (LL) at an depreciated rate²¹, which depleted their savings significantly. Transnational relocation, including airfare, paperwork, ‘bribes’, may also have depleted savings. Furthermore, wages in Lebanon have not adjusted to the hyperinflation, and as the purchasing power of the Lebanese Lira plummets, more than half the population is likely to sink below the poverty line (World Bank, 2021a). However, almost 60% of participants—across all migration cycles—have stated that their return to Lebanon has improved their living conditions. These improved living conditions, despite all odds, may be salient enough—as seen in the earlier participant example—to reason that staying would be preferential. This further lends support to what previous theorists have cautioned (Constant, 2020; King & Christou, 2008): assuming return migrants and their re-emigration fall entirely under parochial and economically minded cost/benefit rationale unfortunately narrows the scope of understanding and detaches the inherent value of other non-economic aspects like the socio-cultural, historical, political, and emotional characteristics of return and re-emigration.

11.4 Summary and Shifting to Qualitative Analysis

Part II provided the historical contexts and pre- post-return conditions of Venezuela and Lebanon. An examination of the historical ties, transnational links, and migration between the two countries was outlined. Quantitative analysis of this research’s sample was also presented to ascertain the demographics, return preparedness, and migration cycles of the participants. A new typology of childhood return mobilities was introduced as compelled-youth returnees and their differing sufficiency of preparedness was described. The application of generational migration cycles also presented a migration cycle category known as interrupted-youth migration cycle. Furthermore, by structuring the analysis to reflect the generational migration cycles as the independent variable for study, similarities, differences, patterns, and trends are examined with regards to the push/pull factors of the respective countries and decision-making factors salient for

²¹ At the time of writing, Lebanese may withdraw Lebanese Lira at the rate of 3900LL–1USD from their USD savings. Currently, the black-market rate for USD–Lebanese Lira bounces around 20,000 LL–1 USD

considering re-emigration (or onwards migration). Finally, this research examines several factors which may impact a returnee's intentions for re-emigrating including their migration cycles and changes in their financial or living conditions.

Part III, as part of the mixed-methods approach, will include a 'thick description' technique to provide extensive details about the pre-return conditions, return preparedness, (re)integration in the post-return conditions, push/pull and decision-making factors, and intentions for re-emigration (or onwards migration) from second-generation Lebanese–Venezuelan return migrants. Furthermore, the qualitative component of this research is meant to offset the inherent weaknesses of the research and provide more inductive analysis to understand the nuances and complexities of this return phenomenon.

Part III

Qualitative Analysis of Return Preparedness, Generational Migration Cycles, Decision-Making Factors, and Re-Emigration within the Lebanese–Venezuelan Context

Chapter Twelve

Qualitative Analysis: Pre-Return Conditions and Push/Pull Factors

Part III will address in descriptive and narrative details the specific demography and background information about the interviewees; their individual pre-return conditions representing different points in time; the various push and pull factors that motivated their return; and their process of preparedness including their resource mobilization, post-return conditions, (re)integration, and expectations of re-emigration (or onwards migration). Furthermore, given the exceptionality of second-generation Lebanese–Venezuelan in 2021, this research will also investigate the economic, political, familial, social protection/security, and cultural decision-making factors which are weighed and taken into consideration by migrants. Given that, now, economy, politics, social stability, and security have undergone dramatic sliding, returnees maintain a unique perspective and rationale to examine differently the importance and risks return migration brings and new ways to mitigate unforeseen challenges.

12.1 Introduction and Demographic Information of Interviewees

Table 8 provides an outline of the demographic information of the interviewees. Firstly, Jad (born in 1988), an engineer in Venezuela, is the only male and unmarried interviewee from the sample. He left in 2015 to reunite with his mother in Lebanon who had come for vacation. But, given the unfolding crisis in Venezuela, he instructed his mother to stay in Lebanon while he prepared to return as well. Susana (born in 1982) was compelled to return to Lebanon with her parents at the age of 11. She, however, re-emigrated back to Venezuela with her husband in 2006 and they were leading transnational lives between Lebanon and Venezuela. While on vacation in Lebanon, her husband fell ill, and they decided to remain in Lebanon for the better quality medical services and the deteriorating conditions in Venezuela. Nina (born in 1981) returned alone

in 2004 at the age of 23 and, by the strong suggestion of her father who still resides in Venezuela, reunited and married her partner in Lebanon. Shortly thereafter, Nina and her husband moved to Dubai to work and save money. They spent five years moving between Lebanon and Dubai. They returned permanently again to Lebanon in 2009. She is now widowed with two children living in Lebanon. Farah (born in 1958), seeing the rising insecurity, corruption, and instability in Venezuela—particularly after Chávez came to power—returned with her daughters to Lebanon in 1999. However, her son and his family remained in Venezuela along with Farah’s mother and brothers. Since returning, she made regular trips to Venezuela to visit her ‘left-behind kin’. Dana (born in 1986) had a challenging adjustment when she returned to Lebanon in 2004 at the age of 18. Originally, her plan was to visit Lebanon for vacation, however, conditions in Venezuela were not stable in 2004, and she felt compelled to remain in Lebanon at her father’s wishes; he would soon re-unite with her in Lebanon soon thereafter. Although she experienced a difficult ‘uprootedness’ at a crucial age and retained an ‘outsider’ status in Lebanon, she states she has fallen in love with Lebanon and her unique identity as a Lebanese–Venezuelan. Finally, Lara (born in 1988) presents one of the most challenging relocations as she returned to Lebanon in 2018—at the height of the Venezuela crisis—and as a single mother. She had a successful life in Venezuela working at a prestigious university and completing her master’s studies. However, by 2018, all Lara’s family had emigrated from Venezuela, and she was unable to complete her dissertation due to the crisis. Interestingly, she is the only interviewee that reports her return as her ‘decision’. She explains that although nothing serious or threatening occurred, she chose Lebanon, among other countries, for the sake of her son and an opportunity to learn about her heritage and religion. “I had everything” as Lara describes her pre-return conditions, “but I don’t think I would go to a country by parachute again”.

Table 8: Qualitative interviewees’ demographic information

	Alias of interviewees					
	<i>Jad</i>	<i>Susana</i>	<i>Nina</i>	<i>Farah</i>	<i>Dana</i>	<i>Lara</i>
Marital Status	Single	Married	Widowed	Married	Married	Pre-return: divorced Post-return: married
Children	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
‘Immigration’ generation	Third- generation	Third- generation	Second- generation	Second- generation	Third- generation	Second- generation
‘Historical’ generation	Millennial	Millennial	Generation X	Baby- boomer	Millennial	Millennial
Visits to Lebanon	Regular/ Occasional	Rarely/ never— Regular/ Occasional	Regular/ Occasional	Regular/ Occasional	Regular/ Occasional	Rarely/ never
Year of return— age of return	2015—27	1993—11 2011—29	2004—23	1999—41	2004—18	2018—30

12.2 Pre-Return Conditions of Interviewees in Venezuela

In this research’s qualitative sample, the year of return ranges from 1993 to 2018, and the age of return is between 11 to 41. However, as seen with Lara leaving in 2018, the pre-return conditions and one’s perceived agency to such conditions are highly individual.

12.2.1 Jad’s Pre-Return Conditions

Jad’s grandparents emigrated to Venezuela around 1950 (third-generation Lebanese), they raised a family, and never returned. Jad’s father, born in Venezuela, returned to Lebanon to marry his mother and re-emigrated back to Venezuela. Jad was born and raised in Venezuela, studied engineering, and worked for *Petróleos de Venezuela*. He often visited friends, went to the pool, the beach, parties, gym, and “all these kind of things”. Although Jad did not get the opportunity to hear stories of the ‘homeland’ from his grandparents, he did maintain a hybrid Lebanese–Venezuelan identity and was very proud of his heritage. He developed his Lebanese identity with return vacations, eating Lebanese food, listening to Arabic music, connecting with relatives through internet communications, and learning the Arabic language:

“Actually, I was in love with Lebanon because of my mother, and I came for vacations, and I liked it a lot. But when you live here it’s completely different... Before I came, I was happy and very excited. For example, in my personal situation, I say, ‘No, I am half-Lebanese half-Venezuelan’ and this kind of thing. You feel the patriotism. But now, no.”

As Jad was preparing to return, he was optimistic and eager to rekindle his Lebanese roots, and he recounts the difficult pre-return conditions that compelled him to leave:

“In Venezuela, the political, economic, and social situation was horrible—and now it’s more horrible! Basically, for the political situation, there has been 22 years of one government—socialist, communist... They have censored many things... many people have died from the protests... The social side is also influenced because poverty brings people to rob, and now we see that in Lebanon. We never saw somebody go to the pharmacy or to the supermarket and steal something, and now you can see that. It is because the people are poor; they don’t have anything to eat... The economic is also awful because we have the black market... And also, for the insecurity—more than the economic situation—was the reason I left Venezuela. More than everything is the security.”

Jad was compelled to leave in 2015 mainly due to a serious incident he experienced:

“Basically, I feel it’s [compelled] because the situation there. I needed to leave... I was robbed. They tied our hands and left us in a deserted area—there was no one. It’s very hard to live like that. So, it was the ‘drop that overflowed the glass’.”

Jad prepared quickly for his return and reunion with his mother. However, given his poor preparedness and interrupted migration cycle, his reintegration in Lebanon left him with feelings of rupture and disillusionment towards Lebanon.

12.2.2 Susana’s Pre-Return Conditions

Susana is a third-generation Lebanese; her grandfather, like many Lebanese at the time, left Lebanon in 1960 to escape the difficult socioeconomic situation. By boat, Susana’s grandfather arrived in Venezuela and started a family. On both sides of Susana’s

family, there are Lebanese relatives, and they sought to preserve the Lebanese heritage while living in Venezuela. Susana remembers fondly her childhood in Venezuela:

“I was living in Venezuela much better than now. Like, of course [chuckles], a lot different... Compared to the situation today, in '93, Venezuela was a paradise.”

She also recounts stories about going to church and visiting various Lebanese clubs in Venezuela:

“We go to church; we go to a club. There was a Lebanese club in Caracas—Club Libano Venezolano. It had a swimming pool, courts, a Lebanese restaurant, etcetera... There wasn't a more beautiful atmosphere than the Lebanese atmosphere.”

At such a young age, Susana recalls that she lived very well socially and economically. The country was developing, and she also remembers the numerous infrastructure projects underway:

“It wasn't a scary life; it wasn't bad. There was good construction, good streets, good schools. There were values, good people—when I was young.”

However, Susana was compelled to return to Lebanon with her family at age 11, in 1993, to spend her formative teenage years surrounded by the Lebanese customs and values. She reached adulthood in Lebanon and re-emigrated back to Venezuela with her husband who happened to also be Lebanese–Venezuelan and from the same ancestral village in Lebanon. Susana describes her happy surprise upon her re-emigration to Venezuela in 2006:

“When I came back in 2006, I was surprised because I didn't know many villages, or towns, or cities there, and I got surprised because it was very, very nice and very good. It's a beautiful place, a beautiful country.”

Susana also recounts the negative changes she witnessed after living in Venezuela again over the years:

“The life changed. Everything changed. It got... the streets were no longer the same. People are no longer the same.”

She also struggled to find better work opportunities in Venezuela and did not see the economic prospects people often boasted about. In 2009, after arriving in Lebanon for vacation, Susana and her husband decided to remain in Lebanon to receive better medical treatment and avoid the crises which were unfolding in Venezuela. She explains they had to leave all their extended family behind, but she was grateful for the family she also had in Lebanon. Susana maintains many positive memories of her childhood in Venezuela which were steeped in Lebanese traditions, customs, and atmosphere. She recalls memories of speaking with her grandparents who had returned to Lebanon years before, and she also recounts how her grandmother invested heavily in cultivating a love for Lebanon with stories about ‘homeland’:

“My [grandmother] always said, ‘I’m going to take you to Lebanon to get to know Lebanon. To live there, so you can see what life in the countryside is like. The animals that run around, the houses. It is a life of freedom’ ... She always made my brothers and I love Lebanon.”

12.2.3 Nina’s Pre-Return Conditions

Nina’s father emigrated to Venezuela in 1978 fleeing the Lebanese civil war and married her mother there. Nina’s mother was also Lebanese as her parents emigrated before the civil war via boat. Born and raised in Venezuela, Nina remembers the good life she lived in the country:

“I have my family, I have the university, friends. We do a lot of hiking there because the nature is very nice... We also have nightlife. There are discos, there are cafes, restaurants at night.”

Nina also describes the familial living conditions in Venezuela. Her large house sat on top of the family business where her father and uncles worked. Two families also lived in the house above and was partitioned as two dwellings to allow for some degree of privacy but also more familial integration of households in their everyday living. At home, Nina also was immersed in Lebanese culture, food, stories, and language, and she was also visiting Lebanon for vacation almost every summer from 1995. Yet, Nina found herself in conflict with her dual identity. On the one hand, her parents pushed (perhaps too hard) the importance of preserving the Lebanese identity:

“The problem is that my father was always telling me when I was young there, ‘this is not your country, we are Lebanese. The people, they will look at you always like you are Arabic. Don’t think the people will love you like you are Venezuelan. You are not Venezuelan.’ Like, they are putting this in our minds, but I feel Venezuela is my country.”

On the other hand, Nina also acknowledges the ‘outsider’ status she maintains as a Lebanese–Venezuelan:

“There, in Venezuela, it’s more difficult because really, really for [Venezuelan nationals], I am not Venezuelan. I am always Lebanese. Turka, they say you are turka.”

However, as the security situation in Venezuela deteriorated in the late 1990s and early 2000s, Nina was required to have a full-time guard when she left her house. The deteriorating security also pushed her father to persuade Nina to return and marry her long-time love in Lebanon. Nina, although excited about returning and marrying her partner, did not feel ready to leave her ‘home’ country and emigrate to Lebanon. She felt, due to the strong familial pressure and deteriorating conditions, compelled to return:

“I am the oldest one at home. If they will [kidnap] someone, they will not take the young one, they take the older. So, [my father] was afraid of that, and I was the only one at the university at the time. So, my younger siblings were at school and more controlled. Me, I want to go to the mall, I want to go to my friends, I want to go to university. So, of course, I am sure that—and also the situation in Venezuela—helped my father [send me back].”

A further challenge for Nina is her family left behind; her mother, father, and brothers still live in Venezuela. With her compelled return and her family still in Venezuela, Nina never fully integrated into Lebanon despite the length of her stay and having raised a family there. She still feels that her only ‘home’ is Venezuela.

12.2.4 Farah’s Pre-Return Conditions

Farah, the only baby-boomer (1943–1960), also felt compelled to leave Venezuela in 1999, after living 41 years in Venezuela and raising a family there. She is second-

generation; her mother and father had married in Beirut and travelled to Venezuela in 1953 to “try out their luck”. Farah maintains many vivid and fond memories of Venezuela in its ‘golden’ days:

“Venezuela is a very beautiful country, very beautiful, and very rich. We have a lot of wealth: oil, land, aluminium, bauxite, gold, diamonds, gas... Before I came, I worked as a volunteer in a hospital. I quite liked the beach a lot, and I lived in a city on the coast.”

Over time, Farah saw how the country was changing and felt a sense of loss with the election of Hugo Chávez and the adoption of his *Chavismo* ideology. She sensed early on a foreshadowing of the impending crises Venezuela would soon encounter. She shares a story her husband told her:

“I remember that my husband was once in a restaurant and met a Cuban military man from Chávez’s escorts. The man said, ‘you are going to be like Cuba’, and my husband told him, ‘No, we are Venezuelan, we are a rich country, we are different’. He said, ‘No, you are going to queue to buy rice and sugar and all these things’. And honestly, now, Venezuela came to that.”

One reason Farah holds a strong sense of ‘home’ for both Lebanon and Venezuela is because her mother instilled a strong sense of Lebanese tradition in her. In fact, Farah returned with her parents and lived in Lebanon for four years when she was seven years old. However, her parents re-emigrated to Venezuela in 1977 due to the Lebanese civil war. Still, Farah speaks of her strong attachment to Venezuela:

“Do not forget that I studied all my life in a school in Venezuela. So, I was very attached, and until now, when there is some music from Venezuela, or something Venezuelan, it’s something that I really like.”

Farah also shares the difficulty of remembering her left-behind kin still in Venezuela including her mother, siblings, and her son and grandchildren; and the difficulty of leaving for which she felt she had little agency over:

“It was difficult for [my family], but that was the decision. Well, we had to take it, and now it’s done.”

12.2.5 Dana's Pre-Return Conditions

Dana's grandfather emigrated to Venezuela in the 1950s—making her a third-generation—via an Italian ship. She explains her grandfather's aspirations for his travels:

“It was his dream. Every Lebanese that travelled to Venezuela had a dream—to save money and build a nice house for his children when they grow up. They have this nice house.”

Dana's grandfather worked hard and started from the bottom—up for ten years before any of his family ever heard word of him. This also included his wife and three daughters, and over time, many letters began arriving from Venezuela. Soon after, Dana's mother, followed shortly by her grandmother, and other family soon reunited in Venezuela:

“[My mother] went to Venezuela and started to work with him as a seamstress. She started with him. They were growing, growing, growing, then she sent for my grandmother and my two aunts... And then my uncles travelled”

Her mother married her father in Venezuela; a Lebanese emigrant she fell in love with before emigrating to Venezuela. They raised their three daughters and one son in Venezuela. Dana lived 18 years in Venezuela before returning to Lebanon in 2004. Her family also invested in their children's 'homeland' attachment to Lebanon, and after Dana was 13, her father maintained regular family visits to Lebanon. Dana's parents would also ensure their children experienced the Lebanese culture when in Venezuela:

“My mother didn't forget her culture. She always cooked Lebanese food, Venezuelan food. Sometimes I speak Arabic with my father, so we learned. I used to understand Lebanese because they didn't forget their customs.”

Yet, with all these emotional and diasporic investments, Dana was not involved much with Lebanese people nor her roots to the ancestral 'homeland':

“I was more into Venezuela. I didn't have any Lebanese friends. I know my origin was Lebanese, but I didn't have that passion about Lebanon until I came here, and I lived [in Lebanon].”

While vacationing in Lebanon in 2004 after her high school graduation, her father, like Farah, feared the Chávez government was responsible for the difficult conditions and

insecurity in Venezuela. Although Dana describes the discussion she had with her father, she felt the decision to remain in Lebanon was compelled as it was part of a larger plan of familial return. Her parents reunited with her in Lebanon two years later with more family also following shortly thereafter. Dana now only has an uncle and a cousin still in Venezuela. As an adult with her own child, she comprehends more clearly how difficult the situation was, and the difficult decision that her father took was the right one.

12.2.6 Lara's Pre-Return Conditions

Lara's father emigrated to Venezuela in 1987—near the end of the Lebanese civil war—and worked in the commerce industry mainly in textiles and clothing. He married a Venezuelan woman of Paraguayan roots, raised his family, and returned to Lebanon in the 1990s alone to open his own business. Lara attended school, university, and had a decent job working at a university. She had a passion for her work and loved what she was also studying. Lara describes her situation as comfortable in Venezuela, “I had a car, and I lived in a good area, and my son was going to a good school.” However, Lara's “luck” was changing as “Chávez came to the government, and the situation was getting hard.” Because Lara was the last of the interviewees to leave Venezuela in 2018, she has the most vivid account of the deteriorating conditions of Venezuela:

“I was there for a longer time and came later because, well, there were already many problems—insecurity (mostly because of insecurity), robbers, kidnappings, all these things. Venezuela had already gotten very insecure apart from the hunting of food and all that... There were shortages, and protests began. They closed the university for semesters, and arrests and all that... All the time water was leaving, or the basic things, or the problems of gasoline, or the fear of going out, and that they are going to rob you if you leave work very late. You have to be aware if someone follows you. So, all these little things created a lot of stress. And, apart from going to the supermarket, having to queue to enter the supermarket to buy a bag of milk. If there was rice, only two kilograms of rice. If, for example, there was bath soap in the pharmacy, you only can get two bars.”

And the impact of hyperinflation on her salary:

“I had a good job, but it was not the best salary: it was three dollars a month when I changed it in the black market in Venezuela. It was three dollars a month...”

Lara was fortunate to have family abroad that could assist her with US dollar remittances if things became precarious, ironically however, she was also one of the only remaining family members still in Venezuela. Even most of her friends—which consisted mainly of Venezuelans but also a few Lebanese and Syrian friends—had emigrated abroad to Argentina, Spain, England, or their origin countries especially if they had a university degree.

Lara’s conceptions of ‘home’ are also intertwined with her religious and spiritual identity. Lara’s mother was Catholic, and Lara attended an all-girls Catholic school in Venezuela:

“I always had a great feeling for religion, for God, all that. And then, I started investigating more, to read more, what was Islam? What was this? All this came to my idea of saying, ‘No [Catholicism] is not going to be me.’ And well, so to speak, I returned to the religion of my paternal family.”

Lara’s father was Muslim, and she felt a strong affinity to learn, study, and understand her Islamic culture and religion including her ancestral Lebanese roots. She was also studying the Arabic language on her own time and expressed concern that she could not provide her son with a proper religious education as mosques in Venezuela were often few and far between. Lara also remarked on the difficulty of wearing her religious veil in Venezuela:

“In Venezuela, I did not use the veil... if they saw them in Venezuela—apart from being dangerous—they would be highly judged. It’s dangerous because if they see you with the veil, they think that you’re an Arab. And if you are an Arab in Venezuela, you have money. Not because we are Muslim, but because they see it as you are an ‘Arab’, and then you must have money. Then it is dangerous.”

Thus, for Lara, although the push factors of the pre-return conditions were critical, she made a deliberate and concerted decision to return to Lebanon and take opportunity of the pull factors. The next section will outline the interviewees’ individual push/pull factors and their rationale.

12.3 Push and Pull Factors for Interviewees in Venezuela

Figure 8 and Figure 9 in Chapter 10 outlines the saliency of push and pull factors from the quantitative section of this study. Specifically, high crime rate, economic instability and following family or spouse were the three primary push factors. Citizenship, being near family, or ‘only option’ were the top three pull factors. Table 9 presents the push/pulls reported by interviewees.

Table 9: Qualitative interviewees’ selections of push/pull factors and importance

	Push factors			Pull factors		
	First reason	Second reason	Third reason	First reason	Second reason	Third reason
<i>Susana</i>	Political instability	(Re)uniting with family/friends	High crime rate/street violence	Better lifestyle	Better healthcare	Better education
<i>Farah</i>	Corruption	Political instability	—	I have the citizenship	To be near family	—
<i>Dana</i>	Political instability	—	—	‘It was my only option’	—	—
<i>Nina</i>	Following spouse/family	Political instability	Likelihood of international conflict	Overall stability	It’s my ‘homeland’	‘National duty’
<i>Jad</i>	High crime rate/street violence	Economic instability	Corruption	To be near family	Find better job/salary	Overall stability
<i>Lara</i>	High crime rate/street violence	(Re)uniting with family/friends	Economic instability	To be near family	Similar or same values	—

12.3.1 Push Factors

The political instability in Venezuela was an important push factor for Susana, Farah, Nina, and Dana especially since most returned before there were serious economic problems. As explained in Chapter 8, many migrants who left Venezuela may have held anti-Chávez sentiments and blame him for much of the country’s troubles. Susana remembers the sentiment when Chávez won election:

“There was voting, and it seems that Chávez was going to win, or something happened. And, from there, not us, but all the foreigners who are in Venezuela said, ‘If Chávez wins, Venezuela will lose.’ And well, it happened.”

Nina also felt there was a change after Chávez was elected, and Dana too was not happy with the election of Chávez and his ideology:

“In ’99, a lot of people believed in [Chavismo]. I have members of my family that believed in that. But after, no. He came with this ideology that they will help the poor, poverty, and that we are all together. And you know the communism ideology. They named it communism—it’s not.”

Along with the political instability, there came more frequent and disturbing forms of corruption and violent crime. The infiltration and proliferation of criminal gangs or *cartels* that were heavily militarized and often engaged in bloody turf wars, bribes, smuggling, trafficking, and so on. Lara also comments on the endemic corruption in everyday life.

“The police are corrupt... If they want something from you, if they want money, they can put drugs in your car and say that you have drugs...”

For those interviewees that left later on, they also experienced the horrors of the violent crime rate in the country. Previously, Jad recalled a difficult event where he was robbed, and Susana recounts her experience regarding the “trend” or “fashion” of kidnapping that was occurring when she was young:

“In our school, there were many kids that were kidnapped... My brother was already in the first year of high school, and they kidnapped some children at the school. I was 10 years old, my brother was 12 years old... And, you know, at a certain age the kids get... the children are lost, and they are traumatized.”

Dana also recounts another episode:

“Every night I use to hear people screaming [outside]... [Another time] a guy took a pistol and entered the store of my brother and robbed him. My sister worked in a pharmacy, and she was robbed with a pistol three times. It was hard! But, when you live in that situation, you get used to it. I was used to it.”

Day-to-day living conditions also becoming unbearable due to food, water, electricity shortages and a failing, hyperinflated economy. Given the bleak future many felt for Venezuela, countless parents took initiative to make sure their children were protected from the insecure conditions. Nina, Dana, Susana all expressed family as a push factor in

some way or another. For Nina, she was heavily pressured by her father to return for her safety. Dana also recounts how her father pressured her to remain in Lebanon after going for vacation. Susana, on the other hand, was taken back with her parents so their children would be raised with “good manners and good values.” However, for Lara, she was almost alone in Venezuela and sought to reunite with her family in Lebanon for their familial support. As she was the only interviewee who reported agency in her return, she also saw many potential benefits of returning to Lebanon.

12.3.2 Pull Factors

Figure 9 also outlines the salient pull factors that appealed to returnees. Namely, citizenship, nearness to family and friends, and ‘only option’ were among the top three reported pull factors. Important to note, pull factors pertain to their time in Venezuela, thus pull factors may not have been accurate upon their return as expectations may interchange with the actual reality of the post-return conditions. Nevertheless, Susana strongly felt the familial community ties and social networks in Lebanon were reassuring:

“You find someone next to you, helping you, caring about you. If, for example, if someone died in my village, you would see all the village with you, consoling you at your side. They want to help you.”

Farah, also returned for the familial networks and the properties that they acquired in Lebanon, and Lara relied on the family support networks not only for refuge from the crises in Venezuela, but also for assistance with childcare:

“[Lebanon] feels the same because it is the warmth of home, family—the same thing that Venezuela had. Also, I have a baby too. I was married in Venezuela to a Venezuelan. I got divorced, and I have a baby... Therefore, travelling alone to work in another country with a baby is a bit difficult. I did not want him all the time in a nursery, and if he would get sick there, it would be a bit complicated. So, I said, ‘I have to travel to a place where my family is, so someone can help.’”

For Jad, he returned to reunite with and help support his mother, and for Nina, although she was pressured by her father and held her own reservations about return, she was excited to finally be reunited with her long-time boyfriend and marry. Nina and Jad also selected the importance of overall security as pull factors. Jad explains:

“OK, security for me, when you ask a Lebanese, they say, ‘No, we don’t have security here.’ But for me it’s very secure; Lebanon, nothing happens...”

Furthermore, the importance of ‘homeland’ and a ‘national duty’ to return was pushed on Nina by her father when she was young, and it appears that she holds no sentimental attachment to Lebanon. However, her selection of pull factors suggests the influence of her parents’ affective investments in their daughter’s diasporic ties seemed to have made an impact. Although Nina does not feel that Lebanon is ‘home’, she does still carry a sense of ‘duty’ to the ‘homeland’. Susana, especially given that she has children and encountered a medical emergency in the family, feels the superior healthcare and education are salient pull factors:

“I always thought, since I was little till now, that in Lebanon we always have good doctors, good schools, three languages... There are values, there are still values. There is education, there is good healthcare. It’s the same.”

Susana was also drawn to the strong values Lebanon embodies and the importance of heritage and roots:

“If I want to raise my child, I prefer to raise him in Lebanon... It’s important for me to return to our heritage or our roots. That’s important for me because we, Lebanese people in Venezuela, will raise our children like they were in Lebanon.”

Lara also concurs about the strong principles and values in Lebanon, yet she does also admit that families can, at times, be too conservative. As mentioned previously, Lara also had a longing to delve into her new faith, and her ‘return’ also had religious/spiritual significance:

“It was something very beautiful for my heart because my son was learning about [his religion], and I was too because I lived all my life in Venezuela, and my religious information there was very basic.”

The push and pull factors reflect not only the challenges but also the opportunities perceived by return migrants prior to their return. However, expectations do not always match with the reality of post-return conditions. Thus, a poor return preparedness can lead to feelings of rupture or disillusionment, isolation, anger and frustration, culture shock,

immigration traps, and many more unforeseeable circumstances. The next chapter seeks to elaborate on the accounts of interviewees return preparedness, their post-return experiences (re)integrating, and their thoughts and plans to re-emigrate.

Chapter Thirteen

Qualitative Analysis: Return Preparedness, (Re)Integration in the Post-Return Conditions, and Re- Emigration

This chapter will present the individual experiences of return preparedness by the interviewees, including their perceptions on post-return conditions, and their rationale for either remaining in Lebanon, re-emigrating, or migrating onwards. Table 10 provides the interviewees quantitative survey results of their return preparedness and generation migration cycle.

Table 10: Return preparedness and generational migration cycle of interviewees

		<i>Jad</i>	<i>Susana</i>	<i>Nina</i>	<i>Farah</i>	<i>Dana</i>	<i>Lara</i>
Willingness / directionality	Motivations were based on...	Compelled	Compelled	Compelled	'I don't know'	Compelled	My decision
	'Home' directionality	Venezuela	Lebanon	Venezuela	Both	Both	Both
Time	Years lived in Venezuela/ Lebanon	27/6	11/25	24/12	37/26	18/17	30/3
	Preparation time	3–6 months	Less than 3 months	3–6 months	1–2 years	N/A	3–6 months
	Preparation time sufficient?	Yes	Yes	Yes	'I don't know'	No	Yes
	Year of return	2015	1993	2004	1999	2004	2018
Tangible resources	Property or assets in Lebanon/ Venezuela	Lebanon: no Venezuela: yes	Lebanon: yes Venezuela: no	Lebanon: yes Venezuela: no	Lebanon: yes Venezuela: yes	Lebanon: yes Venezuela: yes	—
Intangible resources & social capital	Lebanese citizenship	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
	Languages	Spanish/ Arabic/ English	Spanish/ Arabic/ English/ French	Spanish/ Arabic/ English	Spanish/ Arabic/ English	Spanish/ Arabic/ English	Spanish/ Arabic/ English
	Received familial assistance	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
	Visits to origin country	Regular/ occasional	Rarely/ never	Regular/ occasional	Regular/ occasional	Regular/ occasional	Rarely/ never
Return preparedness		None	Low	None	Low	Low	Low
Migration cycle		Interrupted	Interrupted–youth	Interrupted	Incomplete	Interrupted–youth	Incomplete

13.1 Jad's Return Preparedness, (Re)Integration, and Intentions to Re-Emigrate

Jad had felt compelled to leave Venezuela especially after his traumatic experience. Prior to 'returning' to Lebanon, Jad had felt a hybridity—or half-half—towards his Lebanese–Venezuelan identity and sense of 'home'. However, upon his return, Jad discovered that he held unrealistic expectations of Lebanon which led to a rupture and disillusionment of his Lebanese identity:

“At the beginning when I came to Lebanon, I came with the promise that I will find a job quickly... But you know, the Lebanese people they talk a lot, and they promise a lot and at the end nothing happens... When you see the reality, when you know how the people are, you say, ‘No, I will never think like this or like that.’”

This explains the ‘home’ orientation to Venezuela after returning, but during his return preparedness he perceived his emigration as a ‘return’ to his ‘homeland’. Jad was also returning for vacation often on a yearly basis, however, these vacations may have contributed to poor information based more on ‘idyllic’ expectations rather than the actual reality:

“When I came to Lebanon, I came for vacations, and I had a lot of expectations. But it is completely different when you come for vacations than coming to live. You see the reality of the country and, honestly, you see all the divisions in the country, and how people are divided. And that was very shocking for me. Before, I didn't see that because I came for vacation. I only enjoy and go out.”

Jad’s many visits to Lebanon also helped him acquire the Lebanese Arabic language. Still, these vacations were not useful in providing Jad with realistic expectations about the post-return conditions:

“I know Lebanon had many problems before, but I thought that, c'mon, it is a country who is growing up and getting better. But when you come here, you start to see all the problems with the other countries and how other countries try to manage Lebanon. You see, again, the division from religion and, inside the religion, from the politics part. I thought that this doesn't happen here.”

The time and ‘timing’ of Jad’s preparation were also not ideal. As he intended to return to Lebanon permanently, he was unable to sell off his entire assets in Venezuela, and the legalizing of documents required more bribes. Nevertheless, his 3–6 months of preparation were perceived to have been sufficient:

“Actually, the preparation wasn't so ‘whoa’. I just left my job three months before and legalized my documents and degrees and these kinds of things... Basically, some things are really difficult. Now more! But when I came it was a bit difficult, like, to legalize. But you know the phrase ‘money talks’? So, you pay, and they do your things very fast.”

Jad also determinedly return migrated without taking assistance from family or relatives—even declining any assistance from a *wasta*²². The excerpt also sheds light on the idealism Jad holds important and which may have hindered reintegration:

“Thank God I never asked for money. They tried to help me with wasta, and I didn’t accept because I don’t trust in that. We don’t need wasta to find a job. If I am good, I am good. If not, OK, they can take another. It’s as easy as that—like a normal country.”

Jad also explains that he entered Lebanon without citizenship and obtained it while in the country. Moreover, Jad expresses a point-of-view that represents a more transnational consciousness. He questions the emotional affiliation migrants ascribes to their citizenship and to their ancestral heritage as well:

“We don’t have something like ‘less or more’. I am Lebanese because my passport says that, and because my grandparents are from [Lebanon]. But, yes, as a feeling, I feel that I am the kind of person who believes that ‘you are not from where your passport says.’ You are from where you feel better. Maybe I will go to another country, and I will feel better. I will change who I am and say, ‘No, this part hurts, so I am going to be from there.’”

Jad also made efforts to legalize his degree in engineering, however, he felt deceived upon discovering that the job market for engineers is very limited. Rather, Jad capitalized on his Spanish language skills as another intangible resource for obtaining employment and is now working as a Spanish teacher.

13.1.1 Jad’s Post-Return Conditions and (Re)Integration Experiences

“When I came to Lebanon, I thought that it’s more open-minded.”

Jad’s post-return experience may be summarized as an experience of rupture and disillusionment (King and Christou, 2010). He felt shocked by discriminatory Lebanese citizenship laws when he was completing legal documents and the thriving sectarian and political divisions still present in the country:

²² A *wasta* refers to the system of connections in Lebanon which helps facilitate the exchange of goods or services based on ‘who you know’ or through one’s ‘connections’.

“Here it’s very sectarian. You hear things like, ‘c’mon, this is not [our area], not [your area]. These kinds of things were shocking. So actually, for foreign people, they think, ‘No, all the religions are living together, and I don’t know what...’ It’s a lie! It’s a complete lie. You can see that from a family and also from the government and security forces. If something happens, everyone will go for their religions. This was very shocking for me.”

Nevertheless, Jad is certain that Lebanon, despite its sectarian fractiousness, is much safer in terms of security. However, after living in Lebanon for six years, he has had enough of its restrictive and discriminatory laws and regulations.

“It was very shocking to me—the mother, the person that gives you birth, the person who carries you nine months—she doesn’t have [jus sanguinis] right. And that happens only in Arab countries. So, I have a really bad impression from, not only Lebanon, but Arab countries as well.”

Jad felt ambivalence towards the Lebanese uprising in October of 2019. He did not participate in the protests because he felt “the revolution started like a party”, and he “knew that they will not get anything.” He also did not participate in any clean-up efforts or volunteerism after the Beirut port explosion in August of 2020. This was primarily due to serious injuries he sustained in the blast, significant damage to his apartment, and a chief focus to just work and save money:

“I went to the hospital; the hospital in the mountain because in Beirut it was really difficult to get into a hospital... After that I came to my house and started cleaning and fixing [things]. Honestly, I did not participate in [volunteerism/activism]. I was focused on work, work, work to get money, get money.”

However, he did show determination towards voting for civil society organizations for political office rather than the conventional sectarian parties. Levitt (1998) describes these reconstructed ideas, behaviors, or other social capital brought back with the returnee as social remittances. His views on *wasta* and his political views could be such examples of social remittances.

The “shocking” post-return conditions and experiences led Jad towards a difficult realization that he was not Lebanese anymore thus renouncing a previously, and dearly,

held diasporic orientation towards the origin country. One fracture of his hybrid identity came with the difference in mentalities, and he felt that the Lebanese mentality was not compatible with his own anymore:

“I was talking with my family, and they said, ‘No, you are from here!’ But I don’t believe that. I consider my home country is Venezuela... My mentality and the way that I am is basically from there... When I came to Lebanon, I felt I wanted to be here. But honestly now, the way the people think here is completely different, especially when it’s not in Beirut.”

Furthermore, Jad’s transnational consciousness appears to be rooted in his interpretation of the importance of life and the finality of death. This perspective allows him to readjust and reorient his subjective perception of ‘home’ as it pertains to the opportunity and success of his life now. He holds a pragmatic view towards his national–emotional orientation which offers him an ease of mobility and ‘unrootedness’. Jad’s interrupted migration cycle and poor preparedness resulted in a rupture and disillusionment upon return. This provoked a severing of his Lebanese roots based, firstly, on his physical and emotional wellbeing and, secondly, on his economic survival. Still, Jad was born and raised in Venezuela and sometimes lets his fealty slip:

“So yes, I am the kind of person who believes in [changing who you are]. ‘Where are your origins?’ ‘You are from there?’ So, when you die, they need to put you in this place—why? I am not from this place. I also don’t like this place... ‘No, because this is your origin’ ... No! C’mon, when I die, take all my organs out, bring it to the people who need it, burn it up, and throw me in the ocean. Maybe I will reach the Venezuelan beach.”

13.1.2 Jad’s Intentions to Re-Emigrate

Despite Jad’s interrupted migration cycle and the difficult post-return conditions, he was able to find employment, save money, buy a car, and rent an apartment for his mother and himself. However, he has detached his roots with Lebanon and is actively preparing to emigrate once again. He is also undecided whether to ‘return’ to Venezuela or migrate onwards to a third country. According to the generational migration cycle model in Chapter 6 (Figure 2) Jad is now in the origin country stage, however, given his

rupture and disillusionment, he has reversed the directionality of his cycle to reflect a ‘return’ to Venezuela although his migration to Lebanon was also a ‘return’.

When Jad returned to Lebanon, his primary focus was to sustain himself economically, however, his living conditions also declined from the long work hours:

“My economic situation improved a lot. But basically, I work from eight in the morning to eight at night. So, yes, I really work hard, but now, it’s very frustrating because all my money is in the bank. I cannot take it.”

Jad is referring to the banking limits and ‘haircuts’ which force clients to withdraw their USD in Lebanese Lira at a devalued exchange rate. The banking crisis was another ‘drop in the glass’ which negatively affected his reintegration. Thus, Jad is actively mobilizing his resources once again for migration onwards to perhaps Spain, Canada, or even the United States. He also expressed his desire to ‘return’ to Venezuela as well, however, it would be contingent on improved conditions in the country:

“Now, if Venezuela comes back like it was ten years ago, tomorrow I will go to Venezuela.”

Jad has made the decision to emigrate again, and he is in the active process of mobilizing his resources. He has rationalized that it is in his best interest to emigrate rather than remain. Furthermore, because of the economic crisis and banking restrictions, Jad has found himself in what Ródenas, Martí, and León (2017) call an immigration trap. Despite the wish to emigrate, Jad is unable to do so presently and must mobilize more resources to be adequately prepared:

“Now, it’s a bit difficult [to emigrate] because my money is in the bank... To go to Canada, I will need, like, 8000 dollars to do all the documents, to do the medical things, to pay the person who is working on that, to pay the government, to rent a place. Plus, I need like 15,000 dollars to stay there so I can afford all my expenses for six months until I find a job.”

Moreover, Jad feels strongly that the events which are occurring in Lebanon are comparable to Venezuela. Thus, his experiences living in an economy in crisis offers

particular intangible resources that may assist in Jad's future (re)integration back to Venezuela or onwards:

“The bad situation in Venezuela helped me to manage the bad situation here.... I think the most ‘survival strategy’ is save the dollar. In my case, I try to get a student from another country who can pay in dollar.”

In times of economic crisis, Jad utilizes his transnational links in order to acquire work that is outside of Lebanon and is paid in US dollars to mitigate the loss of the devaluing Lira.

For Jad, someone who maintains strong transnational links and consciousness, re-emigration or migration onwards is not necessarily a failure of reintegration, although his return preparedness was non-existent. Re-emigration can be, in fact, a viable alternative when post-return conditions are untenable. Furthermore, these findings address the bias often held in scholarly literature regarding the failure of reintegration and re-emigration (Lietaert, 2016; Cassarino, 2004; Black et al., 2004; Koser & Kuschminder, 2015; van Houte & de Koning, 2008). True, Jad's interrupted migration cycle did contribute to his rupture and disillusionment in Lebanon, however, historical instances of economic crisis and hyperinflation are rare—although increasing in frequency. Thus, the importance of mobility and ease at which a migrant may re-emigrate may be an essential intangible resource in of itself when conditions are in crises. Furthermore, the idealism and expectations Jad holds for what he perceives as the basic necessities and dignities a country ought to provide its citizens may also be an asset. The convenience and relative ease with which Jad severs his emotional attachment and roots prevents him from being tied down when emigration is required.

13.2 Susana's Return Preparedness, (Re)Integration, and Intentions to Re-Emigrate

Susana was compelled to return to Lebanon with her family when she was 11 years old. Since her parents engaged in numerous activities celebrating Lebanese culture in Venezuela, it had been a dream of theirs to finally return and provide a 'proper' Lebanese

upbringing for their children. Susana explains the difficulty in preparing to emigrate at such a young age and with little perceived agency in the decision:

“I remember this was very difficult... It was very difficult because I had many friends at school. I already had a life made there. And getting to Lebanon was not easy—where they speak three languages that you do not know—and start over from new, start from zero. In school, to begin again from zero. It was very, very difficult, but I think that if you don’t think about things a lot and just do them... God helps.”

Although Susana exercised no agency in the decision to return, she was sufficiently prepared given her reliance on the preparedness of her parents. She also recalls the process of preparation being sufficient as her father’s assets in Venezuela were mostly rented, and the documents and paperwork expedient as Susana’s family had dual citizenship.

Growing up, Susana was immersed in the Lebanese culture, atmosphere, and language. She frequented many Lebanese clubs and would listen to nostalgic stories about the ‘homeland’ from her grandparents when they would visit from Lebanon:

“[My grandparents] stayed about six months to spend the winter in Venezuela. The most contact I made, maximum, was on the phone because it was not like right now—now, you have everything to communicate.”

Susana’s mother also taught her to speak, read, and write in Arabic when living in Venezuela. Her mother also had a strong affinity for the heritage of Lebanon which she passed down to her children. So, when time came for Susana and her family’s return, she was feeling optimistic despite having to say goodbye to her old life:

“I was excited because I heard so much about Lebanon, about the weather, about the living, and the village. I love my village by the way. It’s the entrance to the ‘Holy Valley’.”

Unlike Jad, Susana, given her young age and flexibility, was not overly disappointed when the expectations did not match the reality—not to mention Susana never visited Lebanon

before her relocation. In fact, Susana's original return occurred in 1993, just after the civil war and during reconstruction:

“When we arrived in Lebanon, there was a shock... So, when we got to the airport, it was like... there was destruction in the airport, and there was the Syrian military in Lebanon. It was all bombed, and the airport was very destroyed, broken.”

Still, shock did not shake her Lebanese identity, in fact, she now sees Lebanon as her exclusive 'home'. Susana also re-emigrated to Venezuela as an adult in 2006. She was married to a Lebanese–Venezuelan and maintained a transnational lifestyle, and, up until 2009, she was circulating between Lebanon and Venezuela. Susana explains her enjoyment at rekindling her Venezuelan roots and her transnational lifestyle:

“When I came back in 2006, I was surprised because many villages or towns there, cities there, I got to know new cities and new places. I got surprised because it was very, very nice and very good. It's a beautiful place, Venezuela, a beautiful country... We came to Lebanon for almost one year, then we left here, and we went back to Venezuela for the wedding of his brothers.”

Susana noticed the deteriorating situation in Venezuela, and when she and her husband were in Lebanon for a vacation, they decided under unfavorable circumstances to remain in Lebanon.

“At the beginning in Lebanon, we began from zero here because we left Venezuela not planning to live in Lebanon. We were planning to come here, relax for some months, and then we leave here and go back to Venezuela. But, because of the sickness of my husband, we obligated ourselves to stay here because of the healthcare here... We work, we pay our basic services, school, food, and that's it. No future. No, we don't have a future. We can't save money. We can't have a future here, but we are happy here.”

Susana, given the abrupt health emergency of her husband, experienced an interrupted migration cycle upon her second return to Lebanon. However, Susana's strong community support, faith in God, and strong character have turned many of the negative experiences and knowledge of her interrupted cycle into intangible resources specific to crises conditions.

13.2.1 Susana's Post-Return Conditions and (Re)Integration Experiences

When Susana arrived in Lebanon as an eleven-year-old child, the reality of actual post-return conditions did not align with her expectations of an 'idyllic paradise' from her grandparents' stories. She recounts her first impression of Lebanon when she arrived in 1993:

"So, we left the airport and got into two taxis to take us to the village... The streets, the downtown of Beirut was destroyed... I told my father, 'Why are we here? And there is destruction; that's not the Lebanon my grandfather spoke about.' So, he said, 'No, no relax. This is Beirut. It is destroyed, but the village is fine.' Me and my siblings were very scared because the destruction looked really bad... But when we arrived at the village—we were here in May, you know, springtime; I love springtime—and to see the flowers, the trees, and everything was what I expected. Apart from Beirut, Beirut was not what I expected."

However, Susana did not fall in love with Lebanon immediately:

"Venezuela and Lebanon, they are both my home, but I left Venezuela when I was eleven years old. I came to Lebanon. Earlier, I did not like it. I was not accustomed. I did not get use to the life here. But later, when I grew up more, and when I got married and left Lebanon again, I went to Venezuela, and came back to Lebanon... I felt like there is no country like Lebanon."

It appears it took more than one 'return' for Susana to fully adopt the emotional attachment to Lebanon. For Susana, what made Lebanon special was the strong feeling of 'home' and community among neighbors. This was particularly impactful for Susana when her husband fell ill:

"Here, you feel more at home because you find someone next to you, helping you, caring about you... If, for example, someone died in my village, you will see all the village with you, consoling you at your side, and that they want to help you... I told you when my husband was sick, I found the village all in the hospital. You cannot see that in Venezuela."

Susana often juxtaposed her experiences in Lebanon against those of Venezuela. She also does not deny the good memories and nostalgia of Venezuela but reminds herself why she left and did not look back:

“I felt like, ‘Oh my God, I missed [Venezuela]. I miss this land.’ But, as the days went by, I became afraid of the things that were happening—the insecurity, the politics. So, I was saying, ‘No, no, no’ all the time. I was telling my husband, ‘Lebanon is better than this’ all the time.”

Thus, when she returned to Lebanon for the second time, the powerful support her community provided solidified her Lebanese identity over her disillusioned and ruptured Venezuelan identity. It provided her the peace of mind that whatever insecurity may come, she will always have her community to support her. Finally, because Susana lives outside of Beirut, she was not directly impacted by the explosion at the port of Beirut. Still, she began organizing community donations for the Red Cross and other church organizations, and she also started her own Facebook group called *Just Donate*²³ to facilitate the exchange of donated items. Her strong sense of community and Lebanese values motivated her to act as an agent of change thus reifying her sense of ‘Lebaneseness’ in the face of national calamities.

13.2.2 Susana’s Intentions to Re-Emigrate

Susana’s migration history is marked with significant transnational mobility, yet because conditions in both Venezuela and Lebanon are similarly difficult, Susana has opted to remain in Lebanon. However, she also maintains a ‘wait and see’ attitude towards the crises in Lebanon and would be willing to migrate onwards to a third country. Susana is also able to utilize her transnational and familial links to assist with emigration to the United States since Susana’s mother-in-law lives in Miami:

“We are saying, ‘OK, my husband has a job. Let’s be a little patient. We have our house, our job, our car. Let’s go a little calmly and see if things get very, very bad. Yes, there is emigration. If it’s not America, if it’s not Canada, it is Venezuela again. What are we going to do?’”

²³ <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1153076171510125/?ref=share>

Recalling the importance of having legalized immigration documents in order, Susana is currently registering her children to ensure they have dual citizenship, if only as a precaution. To accomplish this, Susana is also utilizing her familial links still in Venezuela for assistance. However, she is adamant that Lebanon is a permanent component to her identity and would not cut ties so easily if she needed to re-emigrate:

“If we were to leave Lebanon, no, I would not sell my house or my car. One prefers to go there, to see if something can be done. If we will get accustomed, again, to living there; if we see that there is a future; if we see that we can live there. Some stay for a few months seeing what can be done, and later we decide if we will go back to Lebanon, or we all stay in Venezuela.”

Susana’s openness to mobility is indicative of a transnational consciousness, however, she does consider Lebanon as the ‘home base’. If re-emigration becomes the ‘only option’ once again, she reasons that maintaining her assets in Lebanon may be used as ‘emigration insurance’ in case conditions in the destination country do not work out. In the meantime, Susana feels that her financial and living conditions have improved since returning to Lebanon despite the concurrent crises happening in the country. Given the abrupt health emergency of her husband, she discovered, on a visceral level, the importance of familial values and appreciation for her community who rallied by her side.

Susana’s hypermobile transnational lifestyle and familial links in Venezuela during the crises provided her with several intangible resources which have also assisted in her reintegration and decision to remain in Lebanon. She acquired these resources from her experiences living in Venezuela and by gathering information about the conditions through communication with family. These intangible resources acquired while living in Venezuela may have been crucial in her decision to stay during Lebanon’s own crises:

“I grasped more experience when talking to my family in Venezuela. They told me that the dollar lost value, that everything is becoming very expensive, that life is very difficult. So, I already had the ‘chip’ in my head... It’s an expression we say in Spanish when you have gotten use to something; ‘I got the chip in my head, my mind’”

This ‘chip’ may be understood as an acute or sharpened awareness of the patterns or trends that appear similar to prior catastrophic events. Therefore, Susana remarks on the foresight she had when Lebanon was undergoing similar circumstances:

“When things started in Lebanon, I always explained to people [the similarities between Venezuela and Lebanon]. Many people told me, ‘No, we are not like Venezuela.’ So, I answer them—I told them, ‘We, in Venezuela, were saying that we are not Cuba’, but we became worse than Cuba!”

Recalling her own experiences with hyperinflation while living in Venezuela, Susana also had skills and an understanding of the economics of hyperinflation:

“When we were there, the dollar was sometimes 3050, sometimes 4000, 5000 [Bolivar]. So, yeah, I got the experience like here to calculate the dollar, to know how or where we can buy them, when we can buy the products... We already knew how to move, where to buy, how to calculate the dollar, and to teach people what to do.”

Finally, if re-emigration or onwards migration becomes the ‘only option’ for Susana, her multiple relocations and prior preparations are intangible resources of experience and knowledge from the lessons and mistakes of past migrations:

“I learned, for example in Venezuela, that I would be more prepared. I would go with an idea to teach Arabic in Venezuela or French, maybe English. I would employ my experience in these past years. If I am going to Venezuela, not like before thinking, ‘Oh, what am I going to do?’ No, I am contacting the church of Saint Charbel, and I will start giving Arabic course, French courses. I also learned to make food because, as time went by, I was able to do a lot of things. I will no longer make the error of before, waiting for what the family is going to do for work. I will go with my husband prepared to do those things; to put my son in the best schools, to live in a better area—one is more prepared.”

Susana proposed many important ideas to better prepare herself, which she learned throughout her years (re-)emigrating and (re)integrating. For instance, she suggested using her intangible resources—like multiple language fluencies and Arabic cooking—to seek employment opportunities, utilizing her social networks and capital via religious

organizations, and a strong determination for integration while understanding its difficulty and challenges better. Finally, Susana has cultivated a sense of trust and devotion to her religion and community. This has provided her with a peace of mind and a ‘letting go’ of the numerous stressors socioeconomic crises present and which are ultimately beyond her control:

“I am going to speak religiously, OK? We are at the end. It’s the end of humanity. We should live as simply as possible. Think that... there is no tomorrow. Live now. If you live in Venezuela, try to live well. Get away from stress and live as you can. The same in Lebanon. Do not think if the dollar went up, the dollar went down. ‘I want a future for my son’, or ‘I want a better life’. No, it’s OK. We have to live what is happening right now and be very calm because what is coming is... difficult... We are living in the moment—‘Final Destination’.”

13.3 Nina’s Return Preparedness, (Re)Integration, and Intentions to Re-Emigrate

Nina’s return in 2004 came as a compulsion, and although only 24 years old when she returned, she maintained similar attributes of compelled youth returnees. Namely, she was forced, beyond her volition, to return to Lebanon based on familial pressures yet also receiving strong familial support for her return including assets and property:

“I didn’t want to come in that time. I wanted to stay [in Venezuela]. I wanted [my husband] to come, but he could not. So, I came here. Because of that, I felt [compelled]. Also, I didn’t want to get married in that time. I wanted to finish my university and live my life. Still, we had a long-term relationship, so my father said [enough], it’s enough for now, for you both. You have to get married’. And you know how the Arabic people think... My father was afraid that I would marry a Venezuelan guy...”

Nina’s sense of ‘home’ was and remained oriented towards Venezuela despite her outsider ‘turka’ status: the strong suggestion of her father and compulsion of being ‘sent away’ to get married, and the lack of relatives in Lebanon (she only had her in-laws) prevented Nina from adopting a sense of belonging in her origin country. In fact, like Jad, Nina had

unrealistic expectations of Lebanon from her vacations. Thus, not only was her return preparedness nonchalant, but her intangible resources were also inadequate given the little information she relied on for her emigration:

“At the time, I didn’t have work there. So, I was preparing myself, my things, gifts to bring here. I was travelling to have fun here. I know I was travelling to come get married, but when we came [for vacation], we always came happy... Before, I came to Lebanon, I didn’t have any information. I knew at the time downtown was still under construction. I know that [Lebanese Prime Minister] Hariri is building the downtown, and the people love Hariri because Hariri had money.”

Unfortunately, the assassination of Rafik Hariri would occur only a year later after her return. Although Nina’s intangible resource mobilization was not optimal, she did rely on familial assistance and assets from both her and her husband’s families.

“My family, they have the house, the old house from my grandfather. This is the only house they have.”

Nina also has business property she shares with her in-laws and utilizes the property to operate her own small business:

“You have to have properties. Like, now, we changed our shop to ‘our’ shop. Like, we are not paying rent... Without family assistance, you don’t come back. No, we couldn’t! Here is an expensive country.”

Nevertheless, the diasporic investments by Nina’s parents and grandparents did not instill an emotional attachment to Lebanon:

“My father taught me like [‘love your country’], but I don’t feel it like that. I don’t feel this is ‘home’.”

Nina’s unrealistic expectations upon her immigration and very little individual preparedness left the newlywed couple with limited economic options:

“Of course, his family helped us, but we could not [live] with \$300 [salary]. It was only \$300 rent at the time. Because of that, we went to Dubai.”

Therefore, Nina's interrupted cycle left her ill-prepared and heavily reliant on familial resource in the origin country. She feels a sense of regret having been 'sent away' to marry her husband in Lebanon without any close relatives of her own living in Lebanon. Nina was also shocked by the political insecurity and high cost of living which she did not expect and had little social support for. Her vacations did not offer useful intangible resource as her expectations were quite unrealistic. Remaining only one year in Lebanon, Nina and her husband decided to migrate onwards to improve their economic situation.

13.3.1 Nina's Post-Return Conditions and (Re)Integration Experiences

Nina's poor preparedness and interrupted migration cycle left her ill prepared to start a new life in Lebanon with her husband. Within her first year of living in Lebanon, the prime minister was assassinated:

"I stayed here alone, [my family] left. Then, it was the explosion of Rafik Hariri. I was here alone and my first time I lived something like this. In Venezuela, even if the situation was not good, you never saw it like this..."

Nina also had cultural disagreements when living in Lebanon. She disliked the cool response she received from greeting strangers:

"Inside the elevator, I say [hello], and then my husband or my auntie would say, 'why do you say [hello]? You don't know them'... In Venezuela, even if you are walking in the street and you see somebody, you will say 'hi'... Not, 'what's your religion?'"

Previously, Susana remarked on the importance of maintaining simplicity in these difficult times. Nina, too, sees the simplicity in the Venezuelan culture as a rift between her and the complex Lebanese culture:

"In Venezuela, we are simpler. Here in Lebanon, it's complicated—all to show off to people. 'I will show you my house', 'I will show you my car'... They have the tradition that people will come to your house, and your house must be 'like this, and like that'... And when I am living here for five years in this house, and still, I don't have a chandelier... This is the difference—the mentality of the people."

Nina and Jad share similar grievances about the ‘mentality’ of Lebanese people; they both also experienced an interrupted migration cycle and perceive Venezuela as their only ‘home’. The lack of belonging Nina feels in Lebanon is also represented in the close friends she chooses to have, and how she prefers the cosmopolitanism and vibrant social life of Dubai:

“I am here 15 years! And I never had Lebanese friends—like close, close friends. From Venezuela, yes. When I went to Dubai, I had friends from Italy, friends from the Philippines, from Morocco, friends from any country. But here, no Lebanese. You cannot have friends like close friends [with them].”

The poor integration into Lebanese society and culture, along with a lack of information about post-return conditions, unrealistic expectations, and high cost of living prompted Nina and her husband to migrate onwards to the United Arab Emirates. Between 2005–2009 Nina and her husband worked and saved money in Dubai and eventually returned to start a family. During those years, Nina maintained multiple circular migration patterns and often spent short sojourns in both Venezuela and Lebanon:

“We went to Dubai in 2005; in between we go and come back so we have work, finish paperwork, make contacts, and everything. And then, we came back in 2009 to Lebanon.”

Interestingly, Nina uses the term ‘came back’ to refer to her ‘return’ to Lebanon, and, even after living in Lebanon for many years, she rejects any emotional attachment or affiliation to Lebanon:

“No, no, no. Never. And I don’t like [being Lebanese]. I even don’t like to say I am Lebanese.”

Furthermore, Nina expressed a more developed ‘come back’ plan to Lebanon as compared to her first migration from Venezuela. Earlier, when Nina ‘emigrated’ to Lebanon in 2004, she had no intention of staying, yet when she arrived in 2009, she remained in Lebanon until now with no immediate intention of leaving again. Like Susana, Nina has maintained better return preparedness after multiple experiences. This indicates that, like Susana, she acquired and utilized her intangible resources and social capital more effectively over time along with more experience and better preparedness.

When Nina looks back on her original ‘emigration’ to Lebanon, she would have chosen to remain in Venezuela. Although Nina rejects any notion of her ‘Lebaneseness’, she takes into consideration the sense of belonging and ‘home’ her children feel for Lebanon:

“My children are different. For me, Venezuela is home. For my kids, of course, Lebanon is home. For me, Venezuela is home where you were living all your life, where you were born, where your family is. This helps a lot.”

Though Nina does not feel any emotional attachment to Lebanon, she does hold the importance of the ‘homeland’ and ‘myth of return’ which her father espoused. Still, she recognizes the irony in her father’s words and his actions as most of her family still live in Venezuela:

“Maybe if my family was here, maybe I would feel [home]. All my friends from all my life are [in Venezuela]. Now, [my father] he comes only for vacation. 3–4 months and finishes. He can’t stay more time here. He wants to go to Venezuela.”

While not having a strong emotional attachment to Lebanon, as seen also with Jad, Nina did not participate in the October 2019 uprising. She did, however, help organize donations from her community for the victims of the Beirut port explosion. This lends support to Nina’s sense of ‘duty’ to her ‘homeland’ as Lebanon is the country of her children and parents, yet she does not have the deep sense of ‘home’ and belonging to act as an agent of change. Although Nina holds some frustrations with the Lebanese culture, her sense of ‘home’ and belonging appears to be rooted more where the family is, rather than an incompatibility with the values and mentality. Important to note, Nina’s husband passed away leaving her a widowed and single mother in Lebanon; this, too, may have hampered her emotional ties to Lebanon. Still, she does not plan to return to Venezuela nor migrate onwards. For Nina, the decision-making factors in choosing which country to reside in go beyond mere economic push/pull factors or a sense of belonging, but rather what is best for her children (King & Christou, 2011).

13.3.2 Nina’s Intentions to Re-Emigrate

“Look, now, I can’t think about me only because I have my kids. So, I think, for my kids, it is better here now.”

Previously, Nina arrived in Lebanon with little preparedness for the difficulty of relocating to another country. Nina and her husband migrated onwards for better economic opportunity and ‘returned’ to Lebanon better prepared the second time; this was also like Susana’s experience where her preparedness and reintegration into Lebanon required more than one migration cycle:

“With this [saved money], we can buy a house, we can buy a shop, we made a business. So, we made everything of what we have now. And now we are working. So, the situation, of course, is better now.”

Although far from ‘home’, Nina feels her living conditions since moving to Lebanon have improved. Certainly, she explains, conditions were much better than when she emigrated to Lebanon in 2004, however, even compared to her life in Venezuela, Nina also feels it is better to remain living in Lebanon:

“In 2004, no. In Venezuela I was living better. Big house, good economic situation. I came here, I married, and the 300 USD per month was nothing for us. So, of course, if it’s now, yes! Now, it’s better than before in Lebanon and before in Venezuela.”

The economic and banking crises in Lebanon has, across the board, negatively impacted the financial conditions of everyone in Lebanon, and Nina also has been affected. However, the tangible resources she either inherited from both her and her husband’s family and the savings and investments from Dubai helped Nina weather the economic crisis which has already uprooted so many others. Moreover, although Nina’s family primarily reside in Venezuela, she also acknowledges the importance of her in-laws and the familial bond they share:

“Now it is better here. Next to the family-in-law—they are like family, [my children’s] father’s family. Second, because of the business, because this is a family business; the brother of my husband and me. So, we can’t leave everything like this and go.”

Since the passing of Nina’s husband, she has cooperated with her in-laws to provide a secure and strong family environment for her children, and she is able to financially support her children from the family business ventures. Although these in-law familial

ties lack the sense of ‘home’ and belonging that Nina longs for in Venezuela, they are a robust and important social network and source of social capital that she relies on for her livelihood and reintegration.

Nina has also acquired intangible resources from her prior experiences emigrating and lessons from the crises in Venezuela. She does not intend to emigrate soon, but she does maintain, like many other Lebanese, a ‘wait-and-see’ attitude towards the future especially when considering the willingness, agency, and best course of action for her children:

“In Venezuela, if the situation gets better; and my kids, they become big; and they are going to the university; and they want to go there— yes, of course I will go. But I prefer somewhere in Europe, in Canada. I prefer USA.”

Nina has also ensured her children maintain dual nationality. She, like the interviewees before, also exercises cautiousness regarding when and how she shops; she, too, has the “chip” that Susana described earlier:

“I learned how to deal, or to buy, or what to buy at the supermarket... In Venezuela, we have 21 years already with this [hyperinflation]. In Lebanon it took two or three months, and we are like where Venezuela is now. So, here things are going more quickly.”

Nina utilizes the advice she receives from her family still in Venezuela to anticipate upcoming shortages in Lebanon. She strongly feels that what is happening in Lebanon is similar to what happened in Venezuela. Thus, she takes into consideration conditions relayed to her from family in Venezuela to foresee what may soon happen in Lebanon:

“[I learned] how to buy and the pharmacy, of course. My brother was telling me, like one month ago, buy everything from the pharmacy you need. Buy food like oil or sugar or flour. Big quantities because you don’t know what will happen... So, I am telling him that we can still find everything. He says, ‘No, you can still find now, but if the situation will come like Venezuela, you will go to the supermarket and you will not find bread, you will not find what you want. So, when you find, you have to buy’... From the medicine, one month ago, he was telling me about

the medicine. And now, it happened that the pharmacies don't want to give us medicine because they are changing the prices.”

Despite Nina's first 'emigration' to Lebanon as a young adult with little preparedness, she and her husband sought economic opportunities in Dubai and returned to Lebanon to start a family properly. They utilized their family's property and assets and invested in their own as well. This has helped Nina weather the economic crisis so far despite the loss of her husband. Although her in-law family in Lebanon have been a source of love and support, she still holds a sense of detachment in Lebanon and longing for Venezuela—where most of her family still reside. Nevertheless, Nina chooses to remain in Lebanon primarily for the sake of her children. The support and good lifestyle they have in Lebanon is enough for Nina to put her emotional attachments and nostalgia aside for the best opportunities for her children. Finally, she also leaves open the chance to return to Venezuela or migrate onwards when her children are older and able to offer more agency and willingness towards the decision—something Nina feels she did not have when she was compelled to emigrate.

13.4 Farah's Return Preparedness, (Re)Integration, and Intentions to Re-Emigrate

Farah returned to Lebanon in 1999 after being born, raised, and married to a first-generation Lebanese and raising her family in Venezuela. Before returning, Farah sensed that the country was changing and began early her return preparedness. Although she had ample time (over one year) to prepare, and her timing for return was early on, she feels ambiguity towards the agency of her return and the sufficiency of her preparation time. In fact, the foreshadowing she sensed and the nagging concern that her preparedness was not sufficient lends support to a maturity, wisdom, and depth of understanding regarding the undertaking of such a momentous task. Farah, along with Lara, were the oldest returnees of the sample and exhibited higher return preparedness as compared to those who were younger. Furthermore, Susana and Nina also re-returned to Lebanon when they were older and more experienced which is exemplified in their higher preparedness later. For Farah, the strong sense of 'home' instilled by her mother's Lebanese traditions—including

Farah's four-year sojourn in Lebanon when she was seven—made 'returning' and maintaining a sense of 'home' and belonging in Lebanon simple:

"[I felt] normal. I went to my house, nothing more. I think I'm going to go home."

Farah's return strategy also illustrated a well-thought-out plan. Firstly, Farah used her and her husband's property and assets in Lebanon including their social and familial networks. Secondly, Farah recognized the importance of using their transnational connections to secure income in foreign currency; a 'tangible-generating' resource, these transnational links can be essential for securing a consistent foreign income through business ventures abroad when the local currency is plunging. Finally, Farah and her unmarried children returned to Lebanon with a 'test the waters' strategy for one year (similar to what Susana intends to do if she emigrates again). This was an effective tactic as it provided Farah and her family a re-evaluation of their decision to return after the 'honeymoon' phase ended and the reality of the post-conditions would set in:

"In the first year, we came to live here in Lebanon... Test if we can live here. It was difficult when you have been in a country where 12 months of the year is tropical. Here passes the four seasons... We lived very well because they were new. Everything was new. The snow was new. The people were new. But, in the second year, no. I already wanted to go to Venezuela again... I already told my husband, 'I want to get out of here.' My daughters and I decided that neither wanted it."

Farah, despite her strong emotional connection to Lebanon, encountered many challenges trying to reintegrate into Lebanese society. For starters, neither Farah nor her daughters spoke Arabic fluently, and they also did not have strong English/French language skills as well—languages commonly used in many Lebanese schools and universities. Furthermore, Farah's house in the mountains may have been exciting at first, but they quickly missed the urban lifestyle. After relocating to Beirut, Farah and her daughters felt their lives drastically improved:

"We bought an apartment close to Beirut, and it was already different because it was a city. My daughters found it easy to enter university. Everything was much closer. Everything looked a bit like Venezuela because here, in the mountains,

there is no mall, there is no theater for the people. So, [these things] had made my opinion [about Lebanon] a little bit lower.”

After Farah’s ‘test the waters’ period ended, she and her family discussed and weighed the pros and cons together about the future of their family:

“Me and my daughters decided that neither want [to stay in Lebanon]. Well, later, we sat down, we studied [the situation] well—that going back was a little bit difficult... My daughters had already been going to a university in Venezuela, but there was already a lot of unemployment. There were a lot of problems at the university [in Venezuela], and we decided that we live now in Lebanon.”

The excerpt also illustrates the ambiguity of Farah’s return willingness. Although she was not compelled, she did not feel it was her decision entirely due to the necessity of weighing the pros and cons under unfavorable circumstances. Moreover, Farah considered the difficulty of leaving her married daughter, mother, and other family in Venezuela; thankfully, her daughter and grandchildren have reunited with her in Lebanon. Over time, Farah and her family adopted Lebanon as their new ‘home’ thanks in part to the many warm and sentimental memories Farah has of her mother and the nostalgic sentiments she instilled in Farah:

“My mother is a person that has a lot of good memories—a very good memory. I remembered many songs and many stories, and always my mother gathered them and told very beautiful things from the past. Because before there was a lot of family tradition. And well, in Venezuela they don’t believe in this family tradition.”

In fact, Farah enjoyed celebrating her Lebanese roots and heritage when she lived in Venezuela:

“There was an ‘Arabic Libano Club’, so we went up there. They made very good Arabic food, and I made typical parties where there is dancing. And the carnivals, we did an Arabic float; all the Arabic holidays we did Arabic dance in the streets with the floats in the carnivals. Yes, we did ‘dabke’.”

Finally, whereas Jad and Nina’s vacations to Lebanon were about having fun, Farah had returned and lived in Lebanon during the civil war in 1977. She had to flee Lebanon via

the Venezuelan embassy because conditions were so severe at the time. Therefore, Farah likely did not have the unrealistic expectations that Jad and Nina had from their ‘fun’ vacations, but rather she had sober expectations based on information from her husband’s family living in Lebanon, and her own experiences.

13.4.1 Farah’s Post-Return Conditions and (Re)Integration Experiences

After deciding to settle in Lebanon permanently, Farah and her family would visit Venezuela for vacation, however, she was shocked at the deteriorating security in Venezuela as she recounts what happened on one of her vacations:

“The year we went to visit Venezuela, they killed my brother-in-law—a 45-year-old young man who was going home to his wife was killed to steal his car. That affected [my daughter] a lot and my family. We decided then that it was a bit difficult to return to live with so much insecurity”.

If Farah and her family were uncertain about returning to Lebanon before, this tragic incident solidified the decision to remain in Lebanon given such insecurity in Venezuela. Like Jad and Susana, Farah felt a strong emotional attachment to Lebanon when living in Venezuela, however, she also felt there were incompatible aspects of the Lebanese mentality.

“All the Latin American countries are people who speak what they think. Here, in Lebanon, they think a lot, a lot to be able to speak what is inside. We speak directly.”

This touches on the complexity–simplicity differences explained from previous interviewees. Many expressed exhaustion and frustration over the amount of fuss and pageantry the Lebanese place on even the simplest encounters. Farah, however, has internalized a self-assured, hybrid identity whereby she adopts aspects, like family values, that she cherishes about the Lebanese mentality, and she discards those that she does not agree with:

“[In Lebanon], if you go to a dinner, you have to go to the hairdresser. You have to go do your make-up or to put on the finest clothes. [In Venezuela], the people are more straightforward, more [chuckles], simpler... Of course, now, all my

friends know me. All my friends know that I speak what I feel, and they are even use to it. I don't disguise the things. I say it directly."

Her frankness and comfortability with her hybrid Lebanese–Venezuelan identity is likely why Farah has many friends from many different backgrounds:

"I have friends who were born in Palestine but nationalized as Lebanese. I have Lebanese friends. I know very friendly people. A lot of friends from Venezuela who also came to live here, and I knew them over there in Venezuela. Well, I even have friends that lived in the US, and now, they live here in Lebanon."

This contrasts sharply with Nina and Jad's friendships and social networks in Lebanon, as they were unable to create meaningful relationships with Lebanese locals. Although Farah has many friends and strong social networks in Lebanon, she still struggles with the fact that her mother and many relatives still reside in Venezuela. Similar to Nina, Farah recalls many stories and reminiscences about Lebanon from her parents, ironically however, their parents preferred to remain in Venezuela rather than return to Lebanon—even when conditions in the destination country were deteriorating. For many second-generation returnees, later in life, when they have settled and reintegrated into the origin country, they often uncover a hidden duplicity in the nostalgia of their parents' stories about the 'homeland' and the myth of return versus their actual intention to return to their origin country:

"My mother came because my father died. But she wanted to go back after two months because she was used to living [in Venezuela]—it's her house, her people in Venezuela... But my mother did not want to stay. 'No, no' she saw everything complicated. She saw everything different."

It may be the case that, although first-generation emigrants speak in glowing terms to their kin about the 'homeland', many may harbor feelings of frustration and resentment that had prompted them to emigrate in the first place. Also, for older migrants, regardless of generation, returning and reintegrating in the ancestral origin county may be too exhausting an endeavour:

“[My mother] doesn’t like to come. She thinks the life is simpler [in Venezuela]. She’s accustomed to neighbors coming to her house, to socialize. Here it is more difficult. For my mother, here she is a foreigner, [Venezuela] is her country.”

Farah, unlike her mother, has reintegrated well into her origin country. Although she is not politically active, her family volunteered together to organize and donate food, medicine, and other supplies for victims of the Beirut port explosion. Furthermore, her hybrid Lebanese–Venezuelan identity also impacts the family dynamic. Farah, often reiterating the importance of family values, still retains many of the same dynamics and ‘homeyness’ of her Venezuelan home:

“I think I am still very Venezuelan inside. In my house, we are still the same as when I lived in Venezuela. The same model of house, the same treatment with my children. The television shows... We meet the family every Saturday, if you cannot on Saturday, Sunday. Just like what we did there in Venezuela. I think everything is the same.”

This sense of ‘home’ is revealing of the importance family has on belonging and identity. Farah and her family have been able to successfully relocate the essence of ‘home’ from Venezuela to Lebanon by, firstly, a careful, calm, and rational preparation with a healthy dose of skepticism; and, secondly, a mature and self-assured hybrid identity which permits the tailoring of attributes from both origin and destination cultures which Farah integrated into her own sense of self. This allows her to develop and deepen relationships and social connections with Lebanese, Venezuelan, Lebanese–Venezuelan, or people from other cultures as well. Finally, Farah’s property/assets in Lebanon, and her familial and transnational links have been crucial in weathering the socioeconomic storm in Lebanon. Thus, Farah now looks to retire her mobile life and has no intention of re-emigrating or migrating onwards:

“When one is young, one can take many risks, and you can think about changing quickly from country to country. But when you reach adulthood, you have to think a lot to change. If we were young, much younger, maybe now my husband and I would try our luck in another country. But there is age—not anymore.”

13.4.2 Farah's Intentions to Re-Emigrate

"I like to go to Venezuela but not to live anymore. Vacations, yes. Vacations to see my son, my grandchildren—to see my mother, my brother. But, to live, I think... I don't know. I think about it a lot. Now, if it changes, maybe. If the government changes, but to change, it will take many years for Venezuela to return as before. Many years, many years."

Farah appears realistic about Venezuela and thus has no intention to re-emigrate, yet she still harbors the desire. Moreover, she is fully aware of the challenges that relocation presents, and she feels a sense exhaustion about relocating again. She also feels a sense of 'fulfilling her duty' to her children and grandchildren. She made the difficult choice of returning to Lebanon to hopefully improve the quality of life and opportunities for her children. Now, she is focused on her resettlement in Lebanon and continuing to support her family:

"These are the things [property/assets] I leave to my children, my grandson. But when one is already old, no. How much left is there? I don't know how much is left in me, but it's not my age. We are trying to assimilate what we see and try to live the best we can."

Farah explains that her living conditions, as compared to her fond memories of Venezuela, have not improved since returning neither did her financial situation. However, the socioeconomic crisis in Lebanon has been generally disruptive for everyone and the diminution of the overall quality of life is primarily attributed to that. Still, Farah simply adores Venezuela and has many vivid memories of her life there. Farah, like her mother before her, is making her own diasporic investments in the minds of her grandchildren—later they may 'return' or (re-)emigrate as second-generation Venezuelans to their country of origin:

"I lived very, very, very well in Venezuela. You know, very well, I lived super well in Venezuela. In Venezuela you can do a lot, a lot of internal tourism—and very beautiful, very beautiful. You can go up to the snow, you can go down to the foothills, you can go to the plains, you can go to the beach... Also, because of my husband's work, maybe, it gave him some more privileges than here [chuckles]."

It was clear through the conversation with her that Farah feels her socioeconomic status has dropped since returning to Lebanon. However, given Farah's higher social class in Venezuela, she may have had access to more reliable economic transnational networks to mitigate the crises. Nevertheless, Farah's wisdom and depth of understanding surrounding the difficulty of relocation and reintegration is best summarized in the context of her distinct, hybrid Lebanese–Venezuela identity:

“My experience is, in the beginning, it is always difficult, but then you adapt... This repeats. One learns to love people and learn to make people love you, and you stay.”

13.5 Dana's Return Preparedness, (Re)Integration, and Intentions to Re-Emigrate

Dana, like Susana, was a compelled-youth returnee, however, Dana differs insofar as she did not have the parental return preparedness Susana had when she returned with her family. Dana was also older, 18, and had more independence as she was visiting Lebanon alone in 2004. However, while Dana was on vacation, she felt 'compelled' to remain in Lebanon at the strong suggestion of her father. In fact, Dana was insufficiently prepared to return permanently especially since she had left for Lebanon for vacation and not resettlement:

“I didn't plan to come here. I planned it as a summer vacation, and then I stayed. So, this was difficult. [I didn't have] a lot of [things with me]. Somehow, at first, yes, [I felt compelled], somehow.”

This is why Dana felt her 'return' was compelled. However, over time and as Dana matured, she understood better Venezuela's circumstances, and the agency she did in fact exercise:

“[Back] then, it was my choice. Sometimes [my father] said, ‘[if only!] I hope you could stay in Venezuela; you could travel to another country with more opportunities because in Lebanon opportunities are getting harder and harder’ ... At first, I felt so bad because I didn't say ‘bye’ to my loved ones, to my things, to

my house, to my country. It took me years to accept, but then I say, 'No, it was right.'"

Despite Dana having insufficient return preparedness, she did have tangible and intangible resources that helped her reintegrate into the origin country. Firstly, she was able to live in the family house in Lebanon with her sister during the initial period. She was not the first child to return, and so there were already established social and familial networks and access to social capital. Her family is well-known and well-respected within the community as well. Also, Dana's father was sending remittances from Venezuela that helped with the cost of living and post-secondary education in Lebanon. Secondly, she embodies a sense of 'home' for Lebanon which has only grown deeper over the years. Before, Dana did not have an active interest in the nostalgic stories of the idyllic 'homeland', yet she does remember fond memories of 'Lebaneseness' in the household:

"[Lebanon] is the origin of my parents, and I cannot refuse that. I cannot forget that I live here, half, and I live in Venezuela half... My mother did not forget her culture always cooking Lebanese food, Venezuelan food. Sometimes I speak Arabic with my father, so I learned. I understand the Lebanese because they didn't forget their customs."

Dana's sense of identity differs from the hybridity seen in Farah and Susana. Dana feels a half-half Lebanese-Venezuelan split in her emotional attachment. She attributes this to a temporal division, whereby she has lived half her life in Venezuela and the other half in Lebanon.

Dana's millennial generation may have also provided advantages for her return preparedness. Like Jad and Nina, she enjoyed the return vacations with her family in Lebanon, still she was also wary of inaccurate and/or embellished information older generations often share. Jad, on the other hand, relied more implicitly on his vacation experiences and stories from relatives. As Dana explains:

"I met a Lebanon [my parents] do not know. It is another generation, no? I am in a more open... you know, they were in a town in Lebanon. They weren't from Beirut. It's different."

Dana sets herself apart from the ‘old’, rural conceptualizations of Lebanon from the earlier generations, and her strong Venezuelan character helped against the significant disruption she experienced from unexpectedly resettling in Lebanon.

“I always see the positives over the negatives. That’s what people always tell me... It’s very important... [Venezuelans] are very humble. So, in whatever place you are in, we will adapt. Be it the rich life, be it average. We are adapting. Most of us, we have a humble past.”

Dana seems to be in the process of adapting and integrating the two ‘halves’ into a cohesive, singular identity. Aspects of Venezuela’s ‘simplistic’ culture is a desirable trait, which Dana finds valuable and is actively incorporating into who she is. As compared to Farah’s more developed hybrid identity, Dana appears to be in the process of synthesizing—and grappling with—a new Lebanese–Venezuelan identity:

“I have two homes. My heart is divided in two. Like, for seven to eight years, it was hard, really hard. And now, till now, I feel like there is something... I am missing something, something not complete. There is another half... It’s not bad! But, there is another half... pending. You feel like you are not stable in one place.”

The difficulty between the two ‘halves’ was, and still is, a challenge for Dana. Yet, as she remarked herself, it is “not bad”, but rather an essential aspect of identity synthesis which comprises multiple emotional, cultural, and moral reference points becoming integrated into a new, unique hybridity. For Dana, her identity is tethered to notions of building a transnational community and durable social networks based on the values of support and care for one another:

“You always feel the need to help the Venezuelan people and the Lebanese people. If you are in Lebanon, you feel the need to help the Venezuelans in Lebanon. If you are in Venezuela, you have the need to help the Lebanese in Venezuela. So, it’s a bit... weird.”

13.5.1 Dana's Post-Return Conditions and (Re)Integration Experiences

Dana decided to remain in Lebanon in 2004, the same year as Nina, and like her, she did not have a strong emotional attachment to Lebanon. Nina, however, rejected the Lebanese aspect of her identity while Dana did not:

“I started to have passion about Lebanon because I didn't know the people well. It was totally different—your Christian, your Druze, your Muslim... I hated that. But after that, I fell in love with Lebanon—the love of Lebanon.”

At the beginning, it was also difficult for Dana to reintegrate, however, after time and effort, she found her own niche of Lebanese and non-Lebanese friends that also shared her mentality:

“Later, when I met the real Lebanese—the ones that don't know about religion, or the educated people, then I started to have a passion for Lebanon... I began to see the origin of Lebanon, the religious divisions, and all that. But in time, I started to see it with another perspective... I began to fall in love with Lebanon a lot; the culture, the tradition, the food, the people, the music, everything.”

Although quite young, and considered ‘rebellious’ by more conservative Lebanese, Dana feels her identity and sense of belonging has improved over the years. Firstly, her family has reunited with Dana in Lebanon. Secondly, Dana has made real friends and a strong community network of Lebanese and non-Lebanese friends. In fact, Dana has been an agent of change throughout the many calamities in both Lebanon and Venezuela. She participated in the Lebanese uprising in 2019, and she also helped stage protests in Lebanon for the Venezuelan cause. Dana also started a ‘community group’ called *Venevent*²⁴: a global community of Venezuelans living abroad and organized around helping and raising awareness about Venezuelan issues. They also collect donations not only for Lebanese–Venezuelans in Lebanon but also for Venezuelans at home, and victims of the Beirut port explosion. Venevent is also an example of online information and communication technologies facilitating transnational networks and creating communities across borders tackling transnational causes.

²⁴ <https://www.facebook.com/VENEVENT/>

This transnational community seems to be constructed through Dana's process of synthesizing her own hybrid identity and sense of belonging. She takes stock of the heterogeneity of what it means to be Lebanese, Venezuelan, or Lebanese–Venezuelan, and as a consequence, she seeks to create a community where such diverse hybrid conceptualizations may work together and support one another.

“In the North [of Lebanon], there are a lot of Venezuelans. In the Bekaa, there are a lot of Venezuelans. In the South, there are. In Mt. Lebanon, there are a lot of Venezuelans... I have Lebanese friends, I have Venezuelan friends, Mexicans, everywhere... [My identity] didn't change. No, I didn't change. Maybe I am more mature now with age, but nothing changed. I don't forget... I don't know. I feel Venezuelan and Lebanese at one time.”

As Dana explained, over time and with age and maturity, the displaced ‘halves’ of Dana's identity are slowly amalgamating into one, cohesive, and integrated sense of self. Furthermore, the transnational consciousness and emotional ease of emigration for Dana has left open options for onward migration. She anticipates she will soon become, like her father, the parent making difficult and life-changing decisions for the benefit of their child.

13.5.2 Dana's Intentions to Re-Emigrate

When Dana first realized she would be remaining in Lebanon and beginning a new life at the age of 18, she expected she would leave again at some point. Yet, as time went on, Dana fell more in love with Lebanon and even started her own family. However, as Lebanon's socioeconomic conditions have significantly deteriorated, Dana is now beginning to think about migrating onwards:

“If I find a good job opportunity, yes, I will leave. But I will not forget [Lebanon]. I will come and go, but it will be hard. But I need that. If Lebanon stays like this... I give it one more year. I can survive one more year, but after that, I have to make a... Now! I have to make a decision for myself.”

Dana appears on the precipice of deciding—based on unfavorable circumstances—to emigrate again thus kicking into gear resource mobilization for her readiness and preparedness. In fact, she has already consulted with her young son about emigrating

abroad, and she has even taken the preliminary steps to ensure her child has dual citizenship:

“My son doesn’t have a problem. He is young. He said he would like to go because after the explosion, he was in shock, and he told me he wanted to go as well. And he is my reason. Maybe at 18 years old, I did not have the strength. It’s different now; I have my son. I [would emigrate abroad] for his sake; I’d go for him.”

Dana’s determination to be optimally prepared for her next emigration is attributed to the strength she receives from her son. Furthermore, Dana feels that the socioeconomic crisis in Venezuela is very similar to that of Lebanon. Therefore, she has used her knowledge and experiences to anticipate what may come for Lebanon:

“Now the situation in Lebanon, what is happening now, is very similar to Venezuela. So, now everyone... it’s like we have immunity to this, you know? So, now it’s happening [in Lebanon], and we are like, ‘really!?’—Déjà vu’.”

Dana is more set on migrating onwards rather than re-emigrating back to Venezuela. Although she realizes she forgoes many tangible and intangible resources like property/assets, local familial support, she knows there is no future in Venezuela for the time being. However, given her hybrid Lebanese–Venezuelan identity, it is important for Dana to teach her son about his Venezuelan roots:

“[My son] has Venezuelan nationality, but he doesn’t know Venezuela. My dream is to take him there. He knows Venezuela through me because I always show him videos, movies. When my friends come, we speak Spanish a lot. The food, of course, he eats Venezuelan food. He speaks a little bit of Spanish.”

Dana also cited the complications of Covid-19 and the interruption to global mobility. She is now waiting for restrictions to subside so she can re-evaluate her options. She feels the “calmness” and “patience” are important intangible resources acquired from her experiences in Venezuela and reintegration in Lebanon, along with her strong character:

“It was hard! But when you live in that situation, you get used to it. I was used to it. I used to walk a long way outside; I am used to taking care of myself. So, we

are strong for everyone... We are so relaxed and cool about this, but at the same time, no. There are people in a really bad situation."

Dana also sees her humble past and the 'simplicity' of the Venezuelan culture as important intangible resources for adapting and integrating in new environments.

It is likely that Dana will decide to emigrate again. Since her interview, post-return conditions in Lebanon are becoming more analogous with Venezuela. Therefore, like Jad, Dana may exercise her transnational consciousness to quickly relocate and find job opportunities abroad. She might not have the transnational connections Farah has which offer economic support, however, she feels her maturity, experiences, and motivation have left her stronger and more determined:

"It would be a bit more difficult, in a tough way. You don't think more than when you are 18 years old, instead of 34 years. It is different... What I am going to say is very difficult. But this time, I am going to focus only on work. When you focus only on work, then you don't think of anything else."

The experiences of both Susana and Farah demonstrate that a migrant, especially if emigrating young, sometimes needs to try again. Over time and with more transnational experiences, one may grow and develop into a more holistic 'self', and more versatile under our current globalized and hypermobile world. She holds a gratefulness to her 'homes' for opening their doors to different immigrants, and she holds this gratitude and love for Lebanon and Venezuela simultaneously. As she soon prepares to embark on a new and challenging stage abroad, her history, ancestry, and experiences from multiple locations have created a durable, yet malleable, identity and sense of self enabling Dana to migrate confidently onwards:

"I think there are people who travel to various countries; for example, there are people who came to Lebanon and forgot about Venezuela completely. And there are people who traveled and only think about Venezuela. I think you cannot forget; you have to be grateful for the two countries—the one you lost and the land you were provided"

13.6 Lara's Return Preparedness, (Re)Integration, and Intentions to Re-Emigrate

Lara was one of the sample's last returnees to leave Venezuela in 2018. Although her return to Lebanon was by "parachute"—meaning little time for preparation—she asserts that the decision to return was entirely hers. The 'timing' of her departure left her with little alternatives, and Lebanon appeared to be the only viable option. Nevertheless, her decision to return—especially given the absence of any traumatic experiences—was not compelled, and took six months of thinking, planning, processing, and mobilizing her resources:

"It was my decision because... it was for a better future for my son. Nothing bad ever happened to me with, for example, a thief or kidnapping or something like that, thank God. Nothing bad ever happened like it did to other people I know, and that's why they left—out of fear."

Having felt six months sufficient for her preparation (legalizing documents, visas, selling and donating possessions), she still lacked many important resources that would later facilitate her reintegration into Lebanon. First, she does not maintain Lebanese citizenship although her father is Lebanese. Second, Lara's post-return timing was also unfortunate as Lebanon began to destabilize soon after Lara arrived. She was, however, acutely aware of the instability in Lebanon from her previous visits during tumultuous times and was not returning with overly unrealistic and nostalgic expectations:

"Of course, when I arrived, I arrived before the problems, before the economic crisis that we are experiencing right now. So, I knew, more or less, that almost certainly these problems would come. Well, I did not imagine that what is happening now was going to happen."

Given that she was one of the last members of her family to leave Venezuela, and being a single mother, Lara relied on her familial networks for her return migration.

"My family and my father told me, 'Don't worry, you can stay with us for a year, two years without working. If there's no work, you will have work when you leave your job.' I didn't have fear because when, for example, you are an immigrant and

you arrive in a country, they might say you can't work and then you will not eat. You are not going to pay the rent... This was not my case. I travelled here calmly. I have a house, and I have a family. I don't have those needs or maybe that stress that other immigrants live with."

Lara also has brothers and sisters in the United States. She is often in communication with her siblings abroad and regularly receives advice, solutions, and support from them. Also, these transnational and familial connections may offer financial support through foreign-currency remittances if the economic conditions worsen further.

Only recently, through discovering the religion of her father, Lara discovered new conduits for connecting to her 'homeland'. Her reorientation from her Paraguayan–Catholic upbringing to her Lebanese–Muslim side has rekindled an interest and eagerness to rediscover her 'roots' and returning to Lebanon was seen as an opportunity to do just that. Furthermore, most of her paternal family have already returned, like her father, or live abroad. Since Lara was alone in Venezuela, emigrating to Lebanon was seen as a return 'home':

"That's why I say that both feel like home because the family is there, and I believe that where the family is... Well, I already know that I've flown home... It's the family which carries the warmth and the culture for arriving prepared."

13.6.1 Lara's Post-Return Conditions and (Re)Integration Experiences

"I was happy, of course, a little excited or anxious for the new. I was very happy because I will not be alone. I know that my family is there, and I don't have to think about how I am going to work or what I am going to do there."

Lara, especially since she had return visit experiences in the past, was not shocked nor surprised when she returned. At age 30, she was aware of the pitfalls of having high expectations, and she sensed the difference between returns for vacation versus resettlement:

"Always expectations are very high, but I believe that they never reflect the reality. And, of course, it is not the same when one traveled on vacation and when you travel to live for need... And then, when you come to live, all those things disappear

because everything is day-to-day, everyone is working for their life, you are no longer a visitor, you live here now.”

Still, Lara maintained high hopes regarding the religious culture and practices of Lebanon. Since she also tethered her identity and sense of ‘home’ to her religious ancestry, she still had high expectations there would be more piety and accordance of religious practices in society:

“I had expectation of the religion, that it would be perfect for me here. That I am going to learn the religion of the street, following the people... Well, I have not done that [chuckles]. Likewise, sometimes you think that here is a warm family, and everything is perfect and good. But that’s not true either because if you think that there aren’t limits or boundaries, it can cross in the Lebanese family.”

Lara is describing the reality of her high expectations—idealizations of concepts like religion and family—which are too often expected to be perfect or problem-free. Other realities also set in as well, namely, the difficulty of finding work without Lebanese citizenship. Like Jad, she entered Lebanon with a visitor visa and is currently working to obtain Lebanese citizenship for herself and her son; and although she does not speak fluent Lebanese, she relies on her English to communicate with family. The Covid-19 pandemic has caused Lara to tighten her social circle to the family she lives with, and she does not maintain an active social life outside the household. Quarantine restrictions, social distancing measures, and underlying medical conditions were also cited by Lara for why she was not more active in volunteering her efforts during national calamities.

Lara embodies a stable and self-assured hybrid identity and sense of ‘home’ and belonging. Family is often at the root of her sense of ‘home’. Because Lara’s mother is not Lebanese, she has most likely grappled before with feelings of ‘in betweenness’. Lara’s religious conversion also played a major role in the durability, yet malleability, of her identity. Her hybrid identity can be seen in her child-rearing practices:

“My son is six years old; he is still small. So yes, he knows the [Venezuelan] anthem, his flag, where he came from. I always repeat, for example, when he is at school, and if they say where he is from; ‘you love Venezuela. That your father is from Venezuela; that you have your roots; that you don’t have to feel sorry for it

either,' because he is not from here... 'You have to feel proud that you are from there'."

Lara's transnational consciousness, and that of her family as well, has mitigated any concerns regarding her 'outsider' status. In fact, her family, given that they are dispersed globally, have established their own familial transnational consciousness with different identity 'roles' they playfully interchange amongst each other. This may be why Lara's reintegration, like Farah's, was relatively smooth despite her lack of experience or knowledge about Lebanon, and the similarities, rather than differences, she perceives between her dual 'homes':

"My older sister is here right now in Lebanon, but before, she lived in the United States. She would tell me that I am the Venezuelan sister, and she is the Lebanese sister because she was here, and I am not. I feel that we are a lot alike—Venezuelans and Lebanese."

Finally, the return preparedness Lara quickly organized was also a painful 'good-bye' to her home. The very process, as Lara describes, of 'closing' one's life in Venezuela was enough for her to find re-emigration difficult emotionally:

"28 years in Venezuela, 28 years with things in Venezuela—clothes, books, souvenirs. And well, having to leave everything behind because of the situation in Venezuela, I will find it very difficult to come back again."

13.6.2 Lara's Intentions to Re-Emigrate

Although Lara has no intention of 'returning' to Venezuela, she is open to migrate onwards given the dire socioeconomic forecasts for Lebanon:

"It all depends on the opportunity, the opportunities that I know... At least have something like a job interview or something like that."

Lara is pessimistic about Venezuela's recovery but recognizes that her tangible and intangible resources would be useful if she would ever re-emigrate. Nevertheless, Lara would have to see "exponential" improvement to consider returning to Venezuela. Her first options for emigration are the United States, Canada, or Europe for the economic stability they offer and because of her familial and transnational networks there, her higher

education level, and English language fluency. One major concern for Lara is the difficulty of obtaining legal documentation or visas for emigration. Compared to entering Lebanon or Venezuela, it would be a time-consuming and expensive endeavour. Interestingly, Lara is learning about the Lebanese ‘culture of emigration’ and how it has been utilized—especially by young, educated youth—to manage with the consecutive crises:

I began to notice [the ‘culture of emigration’] because a lot of cousins or many friends who are studying at university, or studying in another country, or going to work in another country... for the same things that happened more or less in recent years in Venezuela. And, here in Lebanon, its nothing new. It’s something that has been going on for many years.”

Lara felt a sense of reassurance that it is commonplace to see Lebanese preparing to emigrate abroad. The ‘culture of immigration’, the likes Venezuela has not known, is a form of intangible resource which may offer access, information, social networks, social capital, and transnational connections. The collective experience and knowledge within the Lebanese society regarding emigration provides Lara with a peace of mind that future emigration can be feasible.

In the meantime, Lara is content with remaining in Lebanon for the time being. Her experiences living in Venezuela along with her family’s love and support have given her a sense of peacefulness and calm. In fact, she feels the conditions in Lebanon and Venezuela are not comparable. This is because, in part, she feels the Lebanese society has more experience or competence dealing with socioeconomic challenges than the Venezuelans. She hopes to finalize her legal documentation, acquire the Lebanese citizenship, and see if she can find employment before considering emigration. Lara also considers the impact another relocation would have on her son:

“I prefer that my son grows up a little more; and that he is prepared and a little more independent... I came to Lebanon because of the family. [I remain in Lebanon] so that my son can get educated a little more here. For example, he learns well with his Arabic at school. He learns to write and read as well. A few more years at least, but yeah, I am calm here for now, but no one ever closes the

possibility to travel to another country who is looking for one—for the future of my son and, well, for me too.”

Lara, like most participants in this analysis, challenges the longstanding bias found in return migration literature that re-emigration and/or onward migration is a failure of reintegration. Lara offers excellent explanations that emigration is, in fact, an additive and positive life-changing experience that provides migrants with knowledge, perspective, and wisdom.

“To leave your country and go to other countries is to widen your mind—to see different cultures, to learn things that before you did not see or did not realize. For example, the political situation here has made me understand that we must analyze things better and not believe up-front what people are saying. Well, it already happened to me in Venezuela, that I had to be sure when I give my opinion, that I must investigate a little more. You have to analyze the situation a little more. And I think it helps us in travelling, in immigration, or in our professional work. It is important to see things from both points of view, or three points, or four, five, or six.”

Her esteem for the Lebanese ‘culture of emigration’ is seen in the optimism she holds for migration as broadening one’s perspectives, developing their human resources, and offering the opportunity for social remittances when they return. Lara does lament about the impact of brain drain on a country and the unfortunate reality which obligates young people to emigrate. However, she sees emigration as an opportunity for young people to develop personally and make real change in their origin country. This, Lara felt, was shown in the October 2019 uprising:

“They will have the human resources; they will have new minds, young minds with new ideas, more ways of seeing the new changes. So, yes, the human resources if they are not in the minds of young people, it’s very difficult for the country to change... I have hope for Lebanon because I saw in the revolution that there are many Lebanese, many young people who want their country to change. If it does change, it must come from [young people] to stay here, to work for that dream, and to see a better country in Lebanon.”

As Lara appreciates the advantages social remittances can bring when the younger generation return to Lebanon, she, too, brings her own unique modus operandi to her origin country. Her experiences, travels, and personal development have given her a framework or guiding philosophy in living one's life to instigate change:

“Everything starts from oneself, from things that you don't have... You don't feel bad about seeing changes—things changing from home, and the values of home. Yes, there are values that you must improve, or you have to develop them. Change things around the house. Help your neighbor too, and if they need something, help them—you never know. So, little by little, right? It begins in your house, it begins with your neighbor, it begins with your town, and things change little by little. Don't expect things to change from the government... [Change] will keep expanding until it reaches the presidency. From there, it takes time. It does not happen overnight, and it takes endurance and perseverance.”

13.7 Addressing the Re-Emigration Bias in Existing Literature

These narratives shed light on the diversity of return preparedness and migration cycles and how they may impact the (re)integration of returnees. More importantly, this analysis addresses the bias existing literature holds about re-emigration and reintegration failure (Lietaert, 2016; Cassarino, 2004; Black et al., 2004; Koser & Kuschminder, 2015; van Houte & de Koning, 2008). Especially in the case of millennial, second-generation return migration, re-emigration, onward migration, or even 're-return' migration are not necessarily failures of (re)integration. They are in fact a new reality and state of consciousness that has come of age in the era of globalization. Return and re-emigration may be strategies of acquiring life-changing experiences, developing one's sense of self and identity, improving one's own tangible and intangible resources, establishing and maintaining social and transnational networks, and mitigating the hardships from unexpected and ever-increasing socioeconomic crises. Migrants, and people in general, are in a continual process of evaluating and re-evaluating the circumstances of their environment and adjusting the 'game-plan' accordingly. For a select few, (re-)emigration is merely one tactic in an overall strategy of confronting the uncertainty and chaos too many countries face. Hence, given that this research has problematized the nexus between

(re)integration failure and (re-)emigration, the analysis will also look closer at the decision-making factors and process.

Chapter Fourteen

Qualitative Analysis: Decision-Making Factors of Interviewees in Lebanon

Decision-making themes are analyzed using thematic analysis to ascertain how particular factors are rationalized from the viewpoint of the interviewees. The exceptionality of return in a context of economic or political crisis is compounded by this research's context given the concurrent crises in both origin and destination countries, Lebanon and Venezuela (Bastia, 2011); perhaps described by the expression 'being in between a rock and a hard place.' Chapter 10 in Part II has provided quantitative analysis with regards to the decision-making themes proposed. However, this chapter seeks more insight into why such decision-making factors are salient and how they compare between Lebanon and Venezuela. Table 11 provides a summary of the five decision-making themes, the factors selected by interviewees and their salience, and which country is more preferential under the given theme.

Table 11: Qualitative interviewees' decision-making factors and country preference

	Alias of interviewees					
	<i>Jad</i>	<i>Susana</i>	<i>Nina</i>	<i>Farah</i>	<i>Dana</i>	<i>Lara</i>
Economic (Country of preference)	'I don't know'	Venezuela	Venezuela	'I don't know'	'I don't know'	Lebanon
<i>First reason</i>	Job opportunities	Cost of living	Decent/good salary	Utilizing property/assets	Overall economic stability	Job opportunities
<i>Second reason</i>	Overall economic stability	Overall economic stability	Access to the informal economy	—	—	Cost of living
<i>Third reason</i>	Decent/ good salary	Job opportunities	Utilizing property/assets	—	—	Overall economic stability
Family/lifestyle	'I don't know'	Venezuela	Venezuela	'I don't know'	'I don't know'	Lebanon
<i>First reason</i>	Proximity to family/ friends	Proximity to family/ friends	Following spouse's preference	Proximity to family/ friends	Proximity to family/ friends	Proximity to family/ friends
<i>Second reason</i>	Social life	Following spouse's preference	Proximity to family/ friends	—	—	Social/ familial support/ networks
<i>Third reason</i>	Social/ familial support/ networks	Social/ familial support/ networks	Social life	—	—	—
Political	'I don't know'	Lebanon	'I don't know'	'I don't know'	'I don't know'	'I don't know'
<i>First reason</i>	Human right/ liberties	Likelihood of war/conflict	Likelihood of war/conflict	Social/civil stability	Likelihood of war/conflict	—
<i>Second reason</i>	Social/civil stability	Corruption in everyday life	Corruption in everyday life	—	Social/civil stability	—
<i>Third reason</i>	Likelihood of war/conflict	Just/fair legal system	Human right/ liberties	—	—	—
Social services/ security	Venezuela	Lebanon	'I don't know'	Lebanon	Lebanon	Lebanon
<i>First reason</i>	Quality/ affordability of healthcare	Quality/ affordability of healthcare	Crime rate/ street violence	Quality/ affordability of education	Crime rate/ street violence	Welfare, social assistance
<i>Second reason</i>	Crime rate/ street violence	Quality/ affordability of education	Quality/ affordability of education	—	—	Basic amenities
<i>Third reason</i>	Welfare, social assistance	Crime rate/ street violence	Quality/ affordability of healthcare	—	—	Crime rate/ street violence
Cultural	Venezuela	Lebanon	Lebanon	—	'I don't know'	Lebanon
<i>First reason</i>	Freedom to express views	Importance of 'land' & physical landscape	Values & principles	Local knowledge and skills	Values & principles	Freedom to practice religion
<i>Second reason</i>	Values & principles	Language fluency	Freedom to express views	—	—	Values & principles
<i>Third reason</i>	Feeling 'home' & belonging	Freedom to practice religion	Language fluency	—	—	Feeling 'home' & belonging

14.1 Economic Decision-Making Factors

Most interviewees did not know which country is preferred in terms of economic factors, however, a few pointed to Venezuela as being better economically. Jad is undecided because, to him, both local currencies are virtually worthless, and the economies are more dollarized now. He also sees both Venezuela and Lebanon as export-reliant countries with little domestic production. The proliferation of the black-market and increasing crime rate are all indicators that Lebanon is heading, quickly, down the same road as Venezuela. Both Dana and Jad feel what is occurring is a *déjà vu* and see both countries in a race to the economic bottom through manipulation and corruption. Farah—who is also unsure which country is economically better—is thankful for the property and assets she maintains in Lebanon. However, she also has similar resources in Venezuela which have lost most of their value.

Susana and Nina feel that Venezuela is preferred economically. Lara, however, chose Lebanon. Nina feels that Venezuela has seen its darkest days and cites more dollars entering the economy, while Susana fears the worst is still yet to come for Lebanon. One difference Nina also noted was that, in Venezuela, there were no banking restrictions and ‘haircuts’ on deposits limiting access to foreign currency. Both Susana and Lara also commented on Lebanon’s high cost of living. Cellular phone, internet service, water, healthcare, power, etc. are all significantly higher in Lebanon than in other countries, however, Lara balances these higher costs with the quality of services in other sectors:

“In Venezuela, you have a salary but, yes, the electricity is cheap, water is very cheap, gas too. But there are other things that are more expensive. For example, private school education because the public schools in Venezuela are not good. They are not like here in Lebanon.”

Susana also recalls the ‘golden years’ of Venezuela when opportunities were many. Now, both countries have limited economic prospects, and she is aware of Lebanon’s tumultuous history. Still, she considers Venezuela’s larger and more youthful population as an economic advantage to Lebanon’s older, smaller population. Nevertheless, Susana is content with remaining in Lebanon for the time being. “It’s enough for me, like *el pan de cada día*”—her ‘daily bread’. Nina is also concerned about the speed at which Lebanon

has deteriorated and feels Venezuela is better economically because its hyperinflation rates happened more gradually. Still, Nina was not in Venezuela in 2018 when hyperinflation skyrocketed in one year:

“Venezuela took 20 years to be [in economic crisis]. In Lebanon, it’s faster. In Lebanon, two months or three months now, and we are like that.”

Therefore, for Nina, access to the informal economy is an important asset during economic crisis. She recounts how her brother, a medical doctor in Venezuela, has several side businesses like medical supplies wholesaler and mechanic. In Lebanon, her cousin is also utilizing the informal economy aside from his professional work as an architect. Yet, Lara, who considers Lebanon as economically preferential, feel the country has more economic stability. She predicts the black market will not exceed 10,000, 12,000, or 15,000 LL to the US dollar. Unfortunately, four months after her interview, to date, the black-market rate of the Lira stands at nearly 20,000 LL and is expected to only increase further.

14.2 Family and Lifestyle Decision-Making Factors

Jad, Farah, and Dana are unsure regarding which country is preferential for family and lifestyle. More often, the country with stronger familial networks is preferential, thus, Jad cannot decide because his father’s side is abroad, and his mother’s side is in Lebanon. This is also true for Farah and Dana as well. Nina also sees this connection between ‘home’, family/friends, and where she was born and raised. Thus, she sees Venezuela as preferential. Lara, on the other hand, has little family and friends remaining in Venezuela, and she recognizes that Venezuela does not have the family values and culture as Lebanon:

“In the villages [of Lebanon], the families, they move together. If there is no family, you go out and your neighbour is your uncle, or he is your cousin. So, where I live, all my family are married together... All the children play with all the cousins. So, that part, for example, I did not have in Venezuela.”

This ‘quality time’ that is spent with family is also an important factor for Farah, and she sees large familial gatherings on weekends, playing cards, or other games as an important component to family. Because she herself brings that sense of family and ‘home’ wherever she may settle, she cannot decide which country would be preferential. Susana’s hybrid

identity also allows her to reconstruct essential elements of ‘home’ which may transcend national borders:

“We Lebanese have the same customs in Venezuela and in Lebanon. We have the same lifestyle because we, the Lebanese, like to gather...”

Nina also sees the importance of quality time and has since adjusted her position from Venezuela as being preferential to appreciating Lebanon more for its quality of family time:

“You know, here it’s better because of the family, because here we can see each other. If I am in Venezuela, I cannot see [my family] every day. [In Lebanon], you can see everybody every day if you want. I feel here the people have nothing to do. I feel here all the women always have time to go and have coffee, to go and see their friends... In Venezuela, they start at 7:00 in the morning until five or six o’clock. Everything is closed—the mall, the shopping, the restaurants... Everyone is going home and [it’s enough] sleep. Nothing to do—watching TV only. Here, it’s more like, there is more social life.”

The strong Lebanese family values and structure may also have its downsides as well. For Nina, because the familial support system is from her in-laws, she often feels uncomfortable or judged for her ‘outsider’ status. Furthermore, Lara, although she feels “special” because she does not have such familial pressures, recognizes the “heavy load people here live with”. The conservatism of many families, the unrealistic expectations, and gossip between relatives are some aspects she sees as negative about the Lebanese family.

14.3 Political Decision-Making Factors

Understandably, most interviewees did not perceive any preference between Lebanon and Venezuela in terms of the politics. To Nina, they are “both the same”. Dana, too, feels that both countries’ politicians are “all criminals” but feels Lebanon has not undergone the same social descent because of its “values”. The corruption is also perceived as endemic in both countries. However, Susana does feel the higher education and ideals of Lebanese people are assets to fight against social injustices:

“The Lebanese people are known for always fighting for freedom and for justice. In Venezuela, the people are poor people, and they are just fighting to live—to eat.”

Lara also sees the importance of thinking and mentality to instigate change. She feels change begins from the individual and grows from the bottom–up. Nevertheless, for Nina, she sees no human rights—neither in Lebanon nor Venezuela. Still, Susana and Lara hold that Lebanon does maintain more human rights. Perhaps because Susana and Lara experienced Venezuela at an advanced time, they feel there is no comparison, as Lara explains:

“Here, the values are still hooked. [In Venezuela], they kill us. There they kill. For example, in the protests, when the Venezuelan [uprising] was going on, many students were killed.”

Many Venezuelans emigrated for political reasons after Chávez, and subsequently Maduro, were elected president. Both Jad and Dana were optimistic at first, but quickly became disillusioned as the country moved to a more Chavismo ideology. However, when asked about Juan Guaidó—a U.S.–supported Venezuela politician challenging Maduro’s presidential legitimacy—Jad explains:

“It’s another paid man to give hope to the Venezuelan people. But that’s it... It’s like in Lebanon, all the conflicts are in front of the people, but underneath the table, they toast their glasses.”

Additionally, for Susana and Farah, the politics of Lebanon are much more complicated than that of Venezuela. Susana explains that because Lebanese politics and religion are intertwined, the diversity of sects act to complicate and fracture the political landscape. In Venezuela, on the other hand, you are either with Chávez/Maduro or you are against. Jad also criticizes Lebanese political norms and its confessional system especially the close-mindedness of voting based on religious sect rather than civil competence. Farah is also perplexed by Lebanese politics. Although she does not enjoy speaking about politics, she did recount a story about an encounter with a Lebanese politician, and how it juxtaposed against her interactions with Venezuela politicians:

“I remember when I arrived here to Lebanon. I was in the car with my daughters and two [Range Rovers] passed by me, and so I was getting closer because I was going to pass, and they took out a [Kalashnikov] from the window. A rifle! For me to take off so that the politician could pass. This is not how it is in Venezuela. The politician is a person like you. You are the decider; you have the rights—demand them!”

For many interviewees, the likelihood of war or international conflict represents more political concerns from the perspective of Lebanon. Susana, although she feels Lebanon is preferential politically, comments on the delicate position Lebanon maintains internationally:

“If something happens in China, you are expecting a war in Lebanon. As we say in Arabic, ‘they get pregnant outside, and they deliver in Lebanon’ [chuckles].”

Lara also sees the repetitiousness—and slight humor—of sabre-rattling and scare-mongering popular in Lebanese discourse and politics. However, all-out war, to her, seems “very illogical”:

“It’s like, something is going to happen, watch out! A war is going to happen. But nothing happens. So, I came to Lebanon with these rumors, and I also believed the rumors. It’s like, [war] is normal, that it happens all the time, it happens every month, it happens every year. I also thought that it was kind of seasonal. Like, if it’s in the holiday season, it happens a little more...”

This research also examined whether interviewees attended the October 2019 uprising which, during the early period, was attended by all segments of the population. For Jad, he did not attend any protests and held skeptical views about the effectiveness of the movement. The uprisings were another layer of fatigue and disillusionment he felt about the uncertain post-return conditions. Dana, on the other hand, was the only interviewee to actively participate in any protests or marches during the October uprising. Although Susana supports the protesters’ cause, she did not take part in the events, however, she has participated in other political activities for Venezuela in Lebanon. Farah also strongly supports the protesters efforts to dismantle Lebanon’s political system of patronage and dynastic rule; “kings”, as Jad calls them. Finally, interviewees responded

to inquiries about their participation in the 2018 Lebanese parliamentary election. Nina, Susana, and Dana all voted in the last election. However, Lara and Jad were unable to vote because they did not have citizenship at the time, but both stated they would have done so. Jad emphasizes that he would *not* vote for a religious political party, but rather a non-sectarian movement from the civil society. Also, Jad and Lara remarked on the generational aspect and the differences between the younger and older generations towards real political change. Jad feels strongly that older generations are hindering such change:

“In Lebanon, we need, like, three generations more until all the old people die and we have a new generation.”

And Lara feels change cannot come until the younger generation takes responsibility and agency for their political futures:

“There is something that holds you back, that doesn’t let you rise up. It doesn’t let you develop. But, anyways, the young people have opened their eyes, and they must fight for their rights. But until then, I don’t believe that the system can really change.”

14.4 Social Protection and Social Services Decision-Making Factors

All but Jad and Nina stated they feel Lebanon is preferential in terms of social protection and social services; crime rate/street violence was the most frequent reason. For overall general security, Lebanon was a unanimous choice. The prevalence and degree of violence, corruption, and impunity in Venezuela is certainly more extreme. Susana remarks of kidnappings in the schools; Nina explains everyone is at home after dark because of the street violence; Jad recalled his own horrific experiences; and Lara and Farah shared stories of family members being robbed or murdered. Secondly, the quality and access of education in Lebanon makes it highly preferential as compared to Venezuela. For mothers with younger children like Susana, Nina, and Lara, the quality of even public education is far superior to that of Venezuela, especially as Lebanon teaches three different languages in schools. Farah, who has older children, also lauds the quality of education in Lebanon in general. However, she does recall when the education system in Venezuela was better. She explains that, because of her hard work and good grades, she

was able to receive a high-quality post-secondary education for free. She also comments on the high costs of private higher education in Lebanon:

“Still, [Venezuela] is much cheaper than here in Lebanon. Lebanon is very expensive. Very expensive! My grandson graduated from LAU—poor father...”

Thirdly, quality healthcare was also an important decision-making factor, and Lebanon is seen to have a superior system by the interviewees. Lack of medicine and medical equipment was cited as one reason Venezuela’s healthcare system is less preferential. Nevertheless, Jad and Nina criticize the high costs of medical care in Lebanon. Although there is a lack of supplies, Jad prefers the socialized system of medicine over the private version in Lebanon. He explains cynically the social connections required to get any medical assistance:

“Maybe if you have wasta, you can go to the hospital, and they will take care of you. But if not, you die in the door of the hospital, and we all saw that: a woman who gave birth in front of the hospital—that is not possible. Where are the ethics?”

Both Lebanon and Venezuela maintain two distinct systems of social protection. Venezuela, the more socialized and Lebanon, more privatized. Although most participants expressed preference for the cheaper, socialized system of social protection in Venezuela, the drop in quality of public services and resources have forced many to find private and more expensive alternatives. Furthermore, in Venezuela free education can often come with governmental work obligations for one or two years as reported by Nina. Yet, she also explains that the education required to even become a doctor in Venezuela is much cheaper:

“[In Lebanon], if you want to study to become a doctor, you have to sell a house to pay for it.”

The access to basic amenities was also cited as an important factor, and Susana feels that such amenities like electricity, gas, and water are better and cheaper in Venezuela. However, since it was Lara who experienced the brunt of gas, power, and water shortages, she believes Lebanon’s experiences with such shortages makes the country more resilient when such essential services are disrupted.

14.5 Cultural Decision-Making Factors

The majority of interviewees responded that Lebanon was a preferential country culturally. Jad, who felt more Lebanese when in Venezuela, experienced a sense of rupture and disillusionment when he returned and was also shocked by the thriving sectarianism in the country:

“In Venezuela, nobody asks you about religion. Nobody gets all your information from your family name... In Venezuela, I have friends from every place. We have Syrian, Egyptian, and nobody thinks about the divisions there.”

Important for Jad is also his freedom to express his views whether they are sensitive or not, and he dislikes the cultural pressure stifling his point of view towards topics of religion or social justice:

“You can express your point of view because [in Venezuela] you can say that, for example, you are homosexual, and nobody will say something. Here you cannot do that. Here you have many homosexual people, and they are ‘in the closet’ because it’s something really bad in this country...”

Nina perceives this issue slightly differently and attributes the “heaviness” of the language as part of the overall values of Lebanese culture, whereas Venezuelan culture is more ‘liberal’:

“It’s a natural thing for us [Venezuelans] because that’s how we are in Latin America. Excuse me; but I am to everyone ‘your mother’s ass!’ Here, you cannot say this word. This word, [in Lebanon], you feel it’s a very big word.”

Farah also agrees that Venezuela is more liberal in many regards, though she does not see it as an asset like Jad:

“In Venezuela, things are freer. The man can have many women. The woman can have many men. Yes, this is normal. The girls can go home to live with another man without being married. Here in Lebanon, it is very difficult because one is taught principles... There are not as many family principles as here [in Lebanon]. Here, morality and principles are taught more.”

Still, Farah appreciates her openness and straightforwardness as unique attributes of her Lebanese–Venezuelan identity. Susana also feels the culture is different from Venezuela. She feels Lebanon, thanks to its culture of quality education, feels the citizens are more educated, cultured, and with better values. However, she also recognizes the pressure parents have in ensuring their children get ‘the best’ education in such a competitive labour market, as Susana explains, “parents kill themselves just to have their children taught at the best schools and have a good education.” Also, she does not like how the Lebanese can be ‘show-offs’ and appreciates more the simplicity of Venezuela people:

“In Lebanon there is a lot of that. ‘I want to be better than most!’ No, this is very ugly. In Venezuela, they don’t think about excess.”

In fact, most interviewees agree that the Lebanese culture can, at times, be vain, materialistic, judgemental, and close-minded. Still, Lebanon is regarded as more preferential because of its strong sense of community and family. This was particularly impactful for Susana when her husband fell very ill:

“Here, you feel more at home because you feel that when you turn around, you will find someone next to you, helping you, caring about you... Venezuelan people, they are lovely people, caring people, but they don’t have that custom or habit of running behind you to help. The beauty of Lebanon is that they run after you. They want to help you!... [Remember] the dabké dance—they grab your hands—this means, ‘we are with you, we are supporting you’.”

Lara also explains the ‘culture of emigration’ in Lebanon and its potential benefits as an intangible resource for later migration. She also comments on the ‘social trust’ among Lebanese citizens. Oftentimes, Lebanese are more willing to help return a lost item, however, in Venezuela, “if you drop your phone, you will never see your phone again.” Lara attributes this ‘social trust’ to the shame and taboo placed on stealing and towards the family.

The strong sense of community is only one of many values interviewees have been commenting on throughout their interviews. For Nina, these Lebanese values are seen in the honor and respect paid to parents and relatives—one is expected to speak with deference to their elders. For Dana returning at a rebellious age, she had to adapt to the

challenges of her age and generation, however, she relied on family as an anchor to weather her young turbulent years. Farah also describes the hybridity of home she has created in Lebanon with the principles of Lebanon and the freedoms of Venezuela:

“In Lebanon, there are many principles. They should be done, and one should teach them to the child from when they are little. I have to respect the family; they have to respect the husband, respect the wife, the parents... I teach my children as my mother taught me—with the principles of Lebanon. Sure, in my house, there is a lot of freedom, and I had all the freedom in the world but with a lot of respect for morals and principles.”

Susana further explains the Lebanese values they pass on to their children:

“We give them Lebanese values: how to treat people, how to pray, how to ask about the family, about the grandparents. If someone is sick or needs help, we Lebanese like to run to help them.”

Therefore, returning to one’s heritage and roots is crucial to retain these values. For many, Lebanon is even considered the ‘holy land’; this differs from Venezuela’s own national mythology, as Farah explains:

“The land in Venezuela is a land of many heroes, many heroes. We have a lot of history, a lot of history, a beautiful history... But here is holy.”

Dana further explains the “vibration” she feels from living in the ‘holy land’:

“[The land of Lebanon] is very special. First, for the history. All the prophets passed through Lebanon. Jesus passed through Lebanon. And this ‘land’ is very special. That’s what attracts me also, it is the vibration. This Earth vibrates, and with all its stupid problems of religion and politics, there are still some places on this Earth that have been vibrating from many years ago.”

And for Susana, living in the ‘holy land’ and being closer to God provides her with a sense of protection, strength, and a deep inner peace:

“It is a holy land. In my thoughts and my faith, I believe that Lebanon is protected by God, our God—by Jesus, by the Virgin Mary, by our God, and all the Saints.”

So, here I feel more closer to God... In Venezuela I felt father away from God. It takes you to another level; it takes you to another kind of life.”

Finally, for Lara’s return and personal discovery of her Islamic religious history, she had high expectations of the spirituality of the Lebanese. She soon realized that the “people are common; they’re like... They’re normal, or they’re human.” Rather, she saw this as an opportunity to personalize her spirituality and gear it towards an individual relationship with God rather than informed by society:

“So, overtime, I realized that, on the one hand, it was good for my son to learn many things; but neither will he have the example of people directly. In other words, it forms an individuality since spirituality is very individual... You have to have very clear values of what you want, whether in religion, in any religion.”

14.6 Summary and Shifting to Discussion

Part III utilized a ‘thick description’ technique to extensively analyze the qualitative data from this research. Six participants were introduced and information on their demographic information, pre-return conditions, and push/pull factors was presented. Next, the experiences and challenges of their return preparedness, post-return conditions, (re)integration, and intentions to re-emigration are presented by their respective generational migration cycles. This is done to extrapolate the differences, similarities, and patterns that exist across migration cycles and infer what the impact of return preparedness may play in their (re)integration process. Finally, the decision-making factors—presented across five themes—and their saliency are discussed among the interviewees. Given the concurrent political and socioeconomic crises that are afflicting both countries, this research sought to obtain an in-depth account of what factors are salient when considering re-emigration, onwards migration, or remaining in the origin country and why. Part IV will include the discussion and conclusion of this research. The discussion chapters will address this research’s main questions by presenting both the quantitative and qualitative findings together in one cohesive analysis.

Part IV

Discussion of Quantitative and Qualitative Analysis and Conclusion

Chapter Fifteen

Discussion: Second-Generation Lebanese–Venezuelan Migration Cycles, Return Preparedness, and (Re)Integration in the Origin Country

This chapter seeks to address the first part of this research’s question. Specifically, what is the impact of return preparedness and generational migration cycles on the (re)integration of second-generation Lebanese–Venezuelan return migrants? This discussion will pull both quantitative and qualitative findings—including information from second-generation return migration chronotopes (see Chapter 5)—to draw conclusions regarding their patterns of (re)integration into Lebanon based on the impact of their generational migration cycle.

15.1 Interrupted Migration Cycle: Non-Existent Preparedness and (Re)integration in the Origin Country

This section will, firstly, examine the willingness, time/timing, and resource mobilization of interrupted-cycle returnees. Secondly, it will illustrate the (re-)integrating experiences of returnees with an interrupted migration cycle into Lebanon.

15.1.1 Willingness of Interrupted Migration Cycles

Second-generation Lebanese–Venezuelans who had non-existent return preparedness perceive no agency towards their return migration primarily due to the high violent crime, economic instability, and difficulty living day-to-day in Venezuela. In Tsuda and Song’s (2019b) research on ethnic return, return was not primarily driven by primordial attachments but rather from more practical socioeconomic factors. Returnees with non-existent preparedness may perceive their destination/birth country as ‘home’, yet they may not have had any interest in their Lebanese heritage while living in Venezuela. They may also recognize their ‘outsider’ status in the destination country

despite being born there (or emigrated before the age of 5). Furthermore, if parents have emphasized too hard the Lebanese identity over the Venezuelan, returnees may have rejected their origin country identity especially if it meant subtracting from their Venezuelan identity. Such parents may also pressure or ‘send away’ their children to marry a suitable partner in the origin country and within the same ethnic community. On the other hand, other returnees may have developed a hybrid sense of identity and ‘home’ while in the destination country especially if parental relatives have made considerable diasporic investments. However, these conceptions may be illusionary, nostalgic reminiscences, frozen in time, and reflecting notions of an idyllic paradise. Return may become a nightmare scenario if the ‘social realism’ of post-return conditions impact the returnee’s ability to (re)integrate in the origin country (King & Christou, 2010).

15.1.2 Time/Timing of Interrupted Migration Cycles

Returnees with non-existent preparedness often return at a younger age than returnees with more preparedness. This confirms many theorists’ assumptions that younger returnees are more idealistic, less realistic, and less informed compared to older returnees (King & Christou, 2008; 2010; Kılınç & King, 2017; Wessendorf, 2007; 2013). Moreover, the timing of return with no preparedness often occurred later in the crisis. They return migrated on average nine years later than the low preparedness group, approximately half of returnees had under three months to prepare for their return, and they felt it was insufficient time. A short preparation time also limits the time to acquire origin country citizenship or other legal documents as paperwork can also take time, and not having citizenship can hinder a returnee’s ability to find employment and participate socio-politically upon return.

15.1.3 Return Readiness of Interrupted Migration Cycles

Returnees with non-existent preparedness who possess assets/properties in Venezuela (75%) may wish to retain their tangible assets in case they wish to re-emigrate back to Venezuela. Reynolds (2011) also refers to family left behind in the destination country as ‘social insurance’ in case a migrant wishes to re-emigrate. However, given the protracted stage of the socioeconomic crisis in Venezuela and many returnees intention of settling permanently in Lebanon, many were unable to sell off their property and assets as

they have lost most of their value. For the 68% of returnees who also maintain property/assets in Lebanon, these resources have been important for buttressing against the instability of Lebanon's own socioeconomic crisis. Also, many returnees may not possess the Lebanese citizenship if their parents did not already do so, and their short preparation time did not allow for enough time to process these documents. Moreover, return visits are generally utilized as intangible resources, however, return visits, when seen as 'fun' vacations, may act to distort and hinder return preparedness as it reinforces idealized notions of the 'homeland' and prevents the returnee from assessing the actual post-return conditions in a clear and realistic manner. Returnees with non-existent preparedness may also trust too implicitly inaccurate information regarding the post-return conditions without verifying its reliability and further distorting their expectations of the actual post-return realities. Poor information based on inaccurate sources and their own return vacations may have given returnees a false sense of readiness when, in fact, they were ill-prepared. This leaves many with a sense of culture shock when confronted with the reality of the post-return conditions.

Still, return visits help reinforce local language fluency, strengthen social connections, and develop transnational links, and these may assist in utilizing other intangible resources for the returnee to achieve their goals. Most often, poorly prepared returnees rely on familial assistance in the origin country, yet returnees with non-existent preparedness may struggle to fully utilize these intangible resources. For instance, many Lebanese family homes are in rural areas and differences in mentality in such areas may not be compatible with the more urban and cosmopolitan lifestyle the returnee was accustomed to. They may opt to settle in urban areas away from the familial pressures and/or support located in rural environments. Also, returnees may not have any family in the origin country as they may have been 'sent back'. Without any durable familial connections, returnees with non-existent preparedness must rely on alternative, less primordial social networks like in-laws or friends. Finally, as younger return migrants tend to be more idealistic, some may forego taking any assistance at all if it conflicts with their strongly held principles, ideals, or beliefs.

15.1.4 (Re)Integration of Returnees with Interrupted Migration Cycles in the Origin Country

The (re)integration of returnees with interrupted migration cycles shares many similarities with ethnic return mobilities. Firstly, rather than ‘reconnecting with roots’, returnees are more focused on finding employment and supporting their families (Tsuda & Song, 2019b). Despite their ethnic affinities, returnees may experience exclusion and socioeconomic—and sociopolitical if without citizenship—marginalization and exclusion as ‘cultural foreigners’. Potter (2005) also found that many returnees experienced strong feelings of being outsiders, experiencing culture shock, and other attributes of resentment. Qualitative analysis of interrupted-cycle returnees found support for rupture and disillusionment especially if their ethnic Lebanese identities were blurred with mythologized imaginative constructions and shock of the post-return conditions (King & Christou, 2008). Returnees whose directionality was ‘moving forward’ and emigrating, despite many years of settlement and raising a family in the origin country, will unlikely adopt and integrate a hybrid Lebanese–Venezuelan identity. This is further unlikely if they have been ‘uprooted’ from their ‘home’, are far from family, and experienced shock at the post-return conditions.

In the context of Lebanese post-return conditions, interrupted-cycle returnees expressed shock by the ongoing political insecurity, sectarianism, high cost of living, lack of social support, discriminatory laws/regulations, and the ‘mentalities’ of the local population. Upon return, interrupted-cycle returnees found their own mentalities were incompatible with those of the origin country and were unable to adjust nor adapt to the new environment. Wessendorf (2013) explains how the ‘destination country mentality’ becomes much more apparent when juxtaposed against the perceived socio-cultural difference of the origin country. The complexity of the Lebanese socio-cultural norms—often seen as conservative, religiously fractured, and concerned with exhibiting wealth—along with poor resource mobilization, high and idealized expectations, difficult post-return conditions, and weak social support networks may lead returnees with hybrid identities to sever their origin country orientation and/or reject it altogether. This also impacts their ability to develop and maintain social connections in the origin country as well. They may have feelings of social isolation as their friendships with locals are limited;

and now, with Covid-19, they can be ‘stuck’ at home in a stifling familial environment. Feelings of social isolation can be exacerbated if there is difficulty in adjusting to cultural differences, gender norms and practices, especially if the returnee is female (Reynolds, 2011). Also, interrupted-cycle returnees will more likely be exacerbated by social unrest rather than inspired, and they will rarely act as agents of change in the origin country.

If returnees fail to quickly integrate economically (given the high cost of living in Lebanon), many may also re-emigrate or migrate onwards in search of better economic opportunities. Importantly, re-emigration (or onwards migration) may be an important opportunity to ‘try again’; resource mobilization as a skill may be an intangible resource in of itself. Practice and experience with gathering the necessary resources, reifying the social connections and transnational links, and effectively researching and gathering accurate information on the post-return conditions can dramatically improve over multiple migration cycles. Thus, after multiple cycles of migration, returnees will have developed their capacity to relocate with higher degrees of preparedness and forge deeper levels of reintegration in their country of residence. Also, if conditions in the origin country become too unbearable, the experiences of hypermobility may ensure a better prepared emigration if a migrant is compelled to flee. Overall, almost thrice as many interrupted-cycle returnees stated their living conditions have improved, rather than worsened, despite similar numbers also reporting their financial situation worsening since returning to Lebanon (Figure 20).

15.2 Incomplete Migration Cycle: Low Preparedness and (Re)Integration in the Origin Country

Since this research examines the return mobilities of second-generation Lebanese–Venezuelans returning for a destination country in political and socioeconomic crisis, incomplete-cycle returnees constitutes the group with the highest return preparedness to be analyzed. Although there were several participants with a complete migration cycle, the number of participants was too small to study. Thus, when examining the return preparedness and (re)integration of incomplete-cycle returnees, they constitute some of the best prepared returnees given the unprecedented circumstances in the destination, and now origin, country.

15.2.1 Willingness of Incomplete Migration Cycles

Second-generation Lebanese–Venezuelan returnees with low preparedness reported their decision to return was based on unfavorable circumstances in the destination country. They stated their return was primarily due to following their spouse or family members’ return, the economic instability, the high crime rate, and political instability/corruption in Venezuela. They also returned on average much earlier (2007) than returnees with non-existent preparedness. Thus, they were not compelled to flee due to a crisis event, but rather they are worn down by the generalized negative circumstances of the destination country. Still, 17% of low-prepared returnees were ambiguous regarding their agency to return. The family they ‘left behind’ was one cited example for the uncertainty of their agency. The importance of ‘being together’ or ‘being united’ with family is also an important component for second-generation roots return (Wessendorf, 2013). Moreover, many maintain a bi-directional ‘home’ orientation (38%), yet half still feel Venezuela as their only ‘home’. For many low-prepared returnees, warm, sentimental memories and stories of the ‘homeland’ from parental relatives (or diasporic investments), including an engagement of their origin country culture and identity in the destination country, temporary visits that involve a degree of resettlement (rather than vacations), and strong familial ties and social networks allowed for a durable, yet malleable, hybrid identity to emerge—or as Wessendorf (2013) describes, a sense of ‘multiple cultural competencies’. These cultural competencies may help mitigate against unforeseen post-return circumstances, absorb the disruption from culture shocks, and deepen, rather than rupture, the complexity of their hybrid identity and sense of ‘home’. “The nature and intensity of ties with relatives [...] and the degree to which members of the second-generation felt they were integrated into a wider network of relatives play a crucial role in the decision to migrate” (Wessendorf, 2013: 114). For returnees leaving later in the crisis, strong familial networks facilitated higher preparedness, and they may also be crucial at preventing rupture or disillusionment upon return given Lebanon’s rapidly deteriorating conditions. Additionally, exercising agency to return may be based on a more spiritual or cultural attachment to the origin country (Reynolds, 2011). This is relevant given Lebanon’s religious and cultural diversity and its moniker as a ‘holy land’. Moving beyond conventional markers of affiliation like ethnicity or citizenship, second-generation

returnees with fluid, hybrid identities and conceptions of ‘home’ may decide, on their own terms, the relations, affiliations, and attachments to the origin and destination countries.

15.2.2 Time/Timing of Incomplete Migration Cycles

Approximately half of low-prepared returnees had less than three months to prepare, while 15% had more than one year. Their longer preparation time also coincides with higher perceptions of time sufficiency with over half reporting so. Low-prepared returnees may have sensed early on the changes that were happening—taking cues from the socio-political turmoil and their ease of considering emigration as a viable option. Longer preparation times also allow for returnees to formulate strategic return plans as well. For those low-prepared returnees whose timing was later in the Venezuelan crisis, they may have had poor resource mobilization and limited time, however, strong familial connections and a culturally competent hybrid identities compensated for the shortfalls. Low-prepared returnees were also, on average, older than returnees with non-existent preparedness. They were oftentimes less idealistic and more realistic in terms of their expectations and aspirations for return.

15.2.3 Return Readiness of Incomplete Migration Cycles

Second-generation returnees with low preparedness also maintain less property and assets in Venezuela (66%) but slightly more in Lebanon (70%) compared with returnees with non-existent preparedness. Many may have purchased (or inherited) a ‘holiday house’ in the origin country and used it as their permanent residence (Wessendorf, 2013). Furthermore, three-quarters of low-prepared returnees also possess the Lebanese citizenship. More often, parents, or the returnees themselves, acquired the citizenship given their strong emotional attachment to the origin country, and they also incorporate in their ‘plan’ of return sufficient time to acquire the necessary legal documents. Moreover, the ‘multiple cultural competencies’ allows for better information gathering regarding the *actual* post-return conditions rather than fond memories from vacation. They may have temporarily resided in the origin country or, as in the case of Lebanon’s multiple crisis events, returned at a critical time. Their strong familial connections, family assistance, transnational links, and social capital are also utilized more effectively. Indicative of Wessendorf’s (2013) roots migration, family plays a major part

in a returnee's readiness offering financial support, social capital, lodging, and accurate (rather than inaccurate) information and know-how regarding the post-return conditions. Transnational links may also be essential in securing income in a foreign currency—especially important during hyperinflation—or they may receive remittances if family is also dispersed abroad.

Finally, multiple emigration experiences and hypermobility are also important as resource mobilization competency can also be an intangible resource in of itself. Circular migration patterns, multiple migration cycles, strong transnational links, and hybrid identities all facilitate the acquisition and accumulation of experience and knowledge more effectively. Thus, return migration strategies become more elaborate and often with contingency plans in case things go wrong. One method described by interviewees was the 'test the waters' strategy whereby after a short stint in the origin country a re-evaluation of the return decision is discussed amongst the family. Hypermobility—coupled with a mature transnational consciousness—can be an essential asset when political and socioeconomic conditions are in crisis. Yet, as migrants become older, they may aspire to 'root' themselves in one place and cease living lives characterized by such mobility (Wessendorf, 2013).

15.2.4 (Re)Integration of Returnees with Incomplete Migration Cycles in the Origin Country

The (re)integration of returnees with incomplete migration cycles share many parallels with Wessendorf's (2013) roots migration mobilities including some aspects of reverse transnationalism and lifestyle return. The decision to return, based on unfavorable circumstances, is often taken within the context of the family unit, and they maintain a strong family-oriented environment in the origin country. As family and the sense of 'home' is often interlinked, returnees can transpose the essence of 'home' to multiple locations with relative ease. This is particularly so if they have a house and close relatives in the origin country; and/or the returnee and their family maintain transnational consciousness and fluid conceptions of 'home' and belonging. For other returnees, their return may be an opportunity for searching or discovering one's own self and identity (Kılınç & King, 2017). This may be expressed when 'home' conceptions are intertwined

with a returnee's religious and/or spiritual identity. Because this research adopts the definition of second-generation to include returnees with one parent of origin country ancestry, return can be an opportunity to learn, discover, and develop the competency of multiple cultures and their own complex identity—to broaden one's own experiences, and deepen their knowledge.

Returnees with incomplete migration cycles also experienced less culture shock towards the post-return conditions upon arrival. Being often older, returnees are aware of the pitfalls of high expectations, and they are adept at disseminating accurate information from their many reliable sources. One commonly cited grievance with (re)integrating in Lebanon is the stark contrast between Lebanese and Venezuelan mentalities—often pitted as the 'complex' Lebanese culture versus the 'simplistic' Venezuelan culture. Incomplete-cycle returnees' multiple cultural competencies and versatile hybrid identities allows for a more complete, internalized, stable, fluid, and self-assured sense of identity to develop which adopts favorable aspects of various cultures and rejects aspects that are not compatible with their subjective sense of self. Unlike the interrupted cycle, these returnees engage with the local community in an authentic, understandable, and empathetic manner. They may understand the similarities and contrasts of their unique hybrid identity and thus can express to their compatriots what values they hold, what they do not hold, and why. Consequently, incomplete-cycle returnees have durable friendships and strong social networks with both locals and expatriates in Lebanon, Venezuela, and abroad.

When the post-return conditions are marked with unexpected socioeconomic crises and turmoil, family again may buttress against these severe disruptions. Covid-19 has renewed the importance of the family unit as more families are socially isolating and spending more time together. Maintaining strong and *healthy* family bonds helps to alleviate the feelings of social isolation, and combining resources helps support against rising poverty. Not only a source of foreign currency, their transnational links also allow for flows of information to transmit seamlessly. For instance, information about the destination country conditions may help to anticipate future events if crises are similar as in the Lebanese–Venezuelan case, or they may offer options and opportunities about future migration abroad.

Incomplete-cycle returnees who have decided to re-emigrate to Venezuela—either for vacation or as part of their transnational lifestyle—may experience a ‘reverse culture shock’ and, consequently, a sense of rupture and/or disillusionment with their destination/birth country identity. Finally, the low preparedness, incomplete migration cycle, and post-return conditions in crisis have left many returnees feeling their financial situation after return has become worse. In fact, their return to Lebanon likely resulted in a significant decrease in their socioeconomic status and many expressed dismay at having to ‘start over’. Yet, living conditions—like interrupted-cycle returnees—improved but to a lesser extent. Analysis regarding familial decision-making factors has shown that not only nearness of family is important, but also the quality of time spent with one another and the level of support among each other is especially important for improving living conditions in Lebanon.

15.3 Interrupted-Youth Migration Cycle: (In)Sufficient Preparedness and (Re)Integration in the Origin Country

Although this research did not obtain an adequate sample to make inferences about the complete migration cycle, it did, however, uncover a novel migration cycle known as the interrupted-youth migration cycles. This section will outline the return preparedness of this unique class of youth migration cycles and examine their (re)integration experiences in their origin country.

15.3.1 Willingness of Interrupted-Youth Migration Cycles

Returnees with low preparedness are associated with the incomplete migration cycle. This is because they decided based on their own volition that return migration would be more advantageous than remaining in Venezuela. However, Table 5 reveals that nearly one-third of returnees with low preparedness were compelled to return as youth (under 19)—including three participants who had non-existent (i.e., insufficient) preparedness. Furthermore, given the political and socioeconomic crises in Venezuela, many parents may have been compelled—based on the safety, wellbeing, and quality of life for their children (Dustman, 2003)—to forego the agency of their child. Still, compelled-youth returnees rely on the sufficiency of the parental resource mobilization to ensure their (re)integration is safe and supported. For compelled-youth returnees with

sufficient preparedness, their return maintains several similarities with King and Christou's (2008; 2010) counter diaspora chronotope of second-generation return migration. Given the impressionability of children and youths, the diasporic investments of family may be vigorously embodied. Furthermore, return migration may be a performative act whereby compelled-youth returnees renegotiate the story of their self and (re)locate the story of the familial, the ancestral, and the national within the transnational diaspora (King and Christou, 2010). The powerful experiences of searching for new conceptualizations of 'home' and 'self' through family or cultural heritage and across space and time is further problematized in the era of globalization. Increased mobility and cultural hybridization, especially for second-generation millennials, may blur the lines between the relationship with their ethnic culture and 'home' thus creating a transnational consciousness that operates and interacts across national borders (King & Christou, 2008; 2010). 55% of compelled-youth have bi-directional 'home' orientation, 36% perceive Lebanon as their only 'home', and 9% still maintain Venezuela.

15.3.2 Time/Timing of Interrupted-Youth Migration Cycles

Compelled-youth returnees on average returned in 2002, five years before low-prepared returnees, and even two years before high-prepared returnees. Furthermore, they returned around 13 years of age. Interestingly, those younger than the age of 15, on average, returned to Lebanon around 1994; those 16 and older returned around 2006. Thus, older compelled-youth returnees will likely have been disrupted—perhaps 'sent back'—because of difficult pre-return conditions; while younger compelled-youth returnees—more often 'trailing travelers' or 'tied-movers'—are following their parents' decision based on more favorable reasons like acculturation of the origin country values and culture—or a 'proper' upbringing. The young age of these compelled returnees also challenges the notion that the younger the returnee, the more disruptive their (re)integration into the origin country will likely be. This research found that the younger the age of compelled-youth, the more adaptable they are to the post-return conditions, especially if their immediate family is present. Older youth may struggle more with the uprootedness since they are at a life-stage of making friends and constructing their own identity. In fact, they may never fully integrate—or reject altogether—their origin country identity and never fully belong in their ancestral 'homeland'. However, this research

discovered that in the case of political and socioeconomic crises, as older compelled-youth age mature and even have children of their own, they often come to realize the difficulties of being a parent and the responsibilities they have for their children and family. Therefore, compelled-youth returnees acknowledge the fortune they have by having multiple ‘homes’ they can belong to.

15.3.3 Return Readiness of Interrupted-Youth Migration Cycles

Table 6 outlines the different reasons for the compelled willingness, time/timing, and the resource mobilization of compelled-youth returnees with sufficient and insufficient readiness. Because parental authorities have taken the decision on behalf of their children, the sufficiency of resource mobilization is incumbent on the competency of the parents to safeguard their children’s readiness. Lee (2016) argues that ensuring children understand and exercise agency regarding their return migration is a crucial component to the success of (re)integration into the origin country. However, during crises times, properly devoting the time to ensure children exercise their full agency may not be feasible. Still, sufficiently prepared compelled-youth returnees will likely have higher socioeconomic status parents; they will own property and assets (vacation houses) in Lebanon, and they can also afford the high costs (and quality) of education in Lebanon (see Figure 7). This supports King and Christou (2008; 2010) chronotope of counter diasporic return as returnees are often highly educated, multilingual, and have extensive social networks and transnational links thanks to high parental resource mobilization.

In fact, this research found significant overlap between sufficiently prepared compelled-youth returnees and returnees with high preparedness including a nostalgic desire to (re)connect with their ‘roots’. Diasporic investments are highly impressionable given their young age, and, upon return, the shock of unfulfilled high expectations may be mitigated by the love and support of the family. For the older compelled-youth returnees, their teenage years may entail establishing an individual identity that is distinct from their parents. They point to differences in the realities of Lebanese post-return conditions between generations, which can mitigate the negative impact of high expectations and embellished information. Given the high number of compelled-youth returnees with bi-directionality, many adapt and integrate their unique origin country

identity with their destination country identity into new, hybrid conceptions of ‘home’ and belonging along with their transnational consciousness. This is especially so if memories of the destination country were fond and integrated both destination and origin country cultures in an inclusive and warm-hearted manner.

15.3.4 (Re)Integration of Returnees with Interrupted-Youth Migration Cycles in the Origin Country

Compelled-youth returnees are classified as having an interrupted-youth migration cycle. Primarily, interrupted-youth returnees returned because it was their ‘only option’. However, they also reported returning to the ‘homeland’, speaking the language, and nearness of family—similar to complete migration cycles—as important pull factors as well. Since their return to Lebanon was compelled in some fashion by parental authority figures, interrupted-youth returnees will still often exhibit multiple and fluid conceptions of ‘home’ and hybrid modes of cultural identity which allows them to navigate and negotiate with more ease transnational activities, links, and spaces. In the case of counter diasporic return of interrupted-youth returnees, return may be linked with a self-actualizing of one’s identity—or as Christou (2006a: 68) explains, “a kind of identification closure, which results from the achievement of a well thought-out, organized yet personal ‘plan of action’”. However, given the *interrupted* aspect of the interrupted-youth cycle, no such plan was feasible. Rather, the performative act of renegotiating the narratives of family, nation, ancestry, ‘home’, belonging, and most importantly, self may be illustrated as a forging process that occurs over time, through their experiences and interactions in their multiple ‘homes’, and with the support of family, community, and a faith in God. In a form of transnational alchemy, a young returnee—in the process of forging their identity and sense of self drawn from multiple locations—amalgamates separate identities into one cohesive alloy. By integrating aspects of the origin and destination country culture, while disregarding those that are not compatible, young returnees may soon espouse an identity that is uniquely theirs, durable, malleable, and enduring within the new, globalized transnational reality.

These performative acts of forging a new, hybrid identity may manifest in returnees becoming agents of change. Aiding and connecting Venezuelans in Lebanon

and Lebanese in Venezuela via internet communications technologies and platforms was one example of an interrupted-youth returnee's engagement with their environment. Moreover, the perpetual string of crises and calamities in both origin and destination country—although can fatigue and rupture those with interrupted migration cycles—may inspire and mobilize strong national sentiments for both countries. The impetus to act as an agent of change may be higher, as they are younger, ambitious, idealistic, and optimistic that change may occur. Furthermore, their technological fluency allows for more options and opportunities to act as agents of change, and they can build dynamic social networks with more creative ways to utilize their social capital and transnational links. These renegotiations and performative acts of self-discovery may lead many interrupted-youth returnees to re-emigrate and rekindle the destination country component of their identity. The likelihood that they will espouse a developed transnational consciousness is marked by their hypermobility, ease of resettling and reintegrating, and the multiple locations of 'home' and belonging they perceive. If interrupted-youth returnees have left at a later age, forging a new, hybrid identity will be a major component of their reintegration process. However, for those that may have left earlier in age, they may have a curiosity and eagerness to rekindle their destination country roots, which they have only vague memories of.

This reverse transnationalism, or 'looking back' to the lost home may motivate interrupted-youth to 're-return' to their country of birth, or they may be inclined to make diasporic investments of the destination country in their own children. This can reify old transnational links, invigorate dormant social networks, and develop more cultural competence. However, if the post 're-return' conditions are marked with political and socioeconomic crises as is in the case of Venezuela, 're-returnees' may experience a rupture and disillusionment similar to the circumstances of interrupted-cycle return to Lebanon. Being compelled to leave the destination country once again may be enough for the migrant to sever their emotional attachment to their birth country and fully adopt their ancestral origin country as their only 'home'. Lastly, Figure 20 shows that half of the interrupted-youth returnees feel both their living conditions have become better, while the other half say they have gotten worse. Nevertheless, their strong family values and sense of community in Lebanon, along with many friends and social networks at home and

abroad, have only increased in importance as Lebanon undergoes similar socioeconomic crises as seen in Venezuela—“déjà vu” conditions. For better or worse, its more often the family bond, the community spirit, and trust in God that has given many second-generation Lebanese–Venezuelan returnees a sense of peace, calm, a touch of dark humor, and equanimity in the face of what would otherwise be catastrophe-after-catastrophe.

Chapter Sixteen

Discussion: Second-Generation Lebanese–Venezuelan Returnees, Generational Migration Cycles, and Decision-Making Factors for Re-Emigration (Onwards)

This chapter will address the second part of this research’s objectives. Particularly, how decision-making factors—economic, family/lifestyle, political, social services and protection, and culture—are weighed by second-generation Lebanese–Venezuelan returnees when they consider their decision to re-emigrate, migrate onwards, or remain in Lebanon. These factors are examined across the generational migration cycles to illustrate how similarities and differences are reasoned when considering their intentions to re-emigrate (onwards) or not. Family and lifestyle were the most salient, followed by social services and protection, then economic factors.

16.1 Interrupted Migration Cycle, Decision-Making Factors, and Re-Emigration (Onwards)

This section examines the decision-making factors and intentions of interrupted-cycle returnees to either re-emigrate (onwards) or remain in Lebanon.

16.1.1 Decision-Making Factors for Returnees with Interrupted Migration Cycles

Interrupted-cycle returnees are more often ambiguous (‘I don’t know’) towards their country of preference in terms of the decision-making themes, and they have a slight preference for Venezuelan in economic, familial, and political factors for Venezuela.

Economic Decision-Making Factors

Interrupted-cycle returnees prioritize the economic stability, finding decent, good-paying work, and job opportunities. The high cost of living in Lebanon is also an important

factor they consider as well. In terms of economic factors, interrupted-youth returnees strongly feel that the conditions in Lebanon are a déjà vu of Venezuela. However, they may perceive Lebanon as in the nascent stages of decent while Venezuela has already seen its darkest days. Furthermore, the banking ‘haircuts’ and speed at which Lebanon’s economic situation has deteriorated have caused alarm among interrupted-cycle returnees resulting in many being stuck in immigration traps.

Family and Lifestyle Decision-Making Factors

Interrupted-cycle returnees may have a lot of ‘left behind kin’ in Venezuela including their parents, siblings, and friends. As family has been often intertwined with ‘home’, the country with stronger familial networks is the more preferred. They are also unable to recreate the durability and support of the social networks in the origin country as many returnees see an incompatibility in the values and mentality of the local population. Yet, the quality of family time (i.e., social events, gatherings, get-togethers) is significantly better in Lebanon, as it is often an integral part of the Lebanese family unit. However, if the returnee is not near their immediate family, their ‘outsider’ status in the origin country may become more apparent and pronounced.

Political Decision-Making Factors

Interrupted-cycle returnees also maintain a high degree of ambiguity towards their political preference. They often see both countries as dismal in terms of their human rights, social stability, and deep-seated corruption. Returnees often criticize the fractured and highly sectarian political reality of Lebanon. Fatigued by the constant infighting and impotency of the Lebanese government, returnees will likely feel cynical and apathetic towards any real ‘change’ occurring. They also hold this cynicism towards politics in Venezuela as well, and they may see the presidential contestations—between Maduro and Guido—as just political theater.

Social Protection and Social Services Decision-Making Factors

The preference for Lebanon in terms of social protection and social services appears to be high in the general sample, but for interrupted-cycle returnees, they are more ambiguous. Firstly, the violent crime rate is much lower in Lebanon, and returnees, in general, feel more physical safety than in Venezuela. However, the affordability of

healthcare and education plays a major role in their rationale. Lebanon is considered to have higher-quality education and medical facilities, while Venezuela has seen significant deterioration in their public services along with medication shortages; something Lebanon, too, is now experiencing. However, the costs of higher education in Lebanon are simply too expensive for many interrupted-cycle returnees. Additionally, the ethicality of Lebanon's privatized medical system causes concerns for interrupted-cycle returnees as treatment can be denied if patients cannot pay the high medical fees.

Cultural Decision-Making Factors

Interrupted-cycle returnees are split between Lebanon and Venezuela in terms of cultural preference (not ambiguous). The values and principles along with freedom of expressing oneself were highly-rated factors among interrupted-cycle returnees. Cultural preference also seems to fall in between the more socially conservative Lebanon and the more-liberal Venezuela. While some returnees enjoy the openness, individualism, simplicity, and straightforwardness of the Venezuelan people, others attribute the cultural "heaviness", complexity, sense of community, and familial honor as important Lebanese values. Finally, interrupted-cycle returnees were the only group that did not remark on the religious significance of the Lebanese 'land', nor did they speak in any religious terms about their return migration—indicative of Reynolds' (2011) reverse transnationalism. As shown with incomplete and interrupted-youth migration cycles, a belief or trust in God, especially when one calls a particular 'holy land' 'home', may be an invaluable intangible resource when the external environment is in a state of chaos.

16.1.2 Interrupted-Migration Cycle Returnees' Intentions of Re-Emigration, Onwards Migration, and Remaining in the Origin Country

Given the salience of the economic motive for interrupted-cycle returnees, the vast majority (82%) aspire or intend to re-emigrate (onwards) in the future (see Figure 19). Second-generation Lebanese–Venezuela returnees with interrupted migration cycles appear to follow similar logic to previous theorizations about re-emigration—that it is an indicator of poor preparedness, difficult post-return conditions, and a lack of (economic) reintegration (Lietaert, 2016; Cassarino, 2004; Black et al., 2004; Koser & Kuschminder, 2015; van Houte & de Koning, 2008). True, if return migration was originally intended to

be permanent, one may consider the decision to re-emigrate as a ‘reintegration failure’. However, taking stock of the pre- and post-return conditions of second-generation Lebanese–Venezuelan returnees, their hypermobility, and ease of transnational migration; re-emigration (onwards) may be a viable option and invaluable asset to have when conditions again become untenable. Throughout this research, there were numerous examples illustrating that return preparedness can be a skill that migrants may improve upon. Their experiences from previous relocations teach them the importance of exercising agency, utilizing tangible and intangible resources effectively, and ensuring post-return expectations are hedged. Furthermore, given that interrupted-cycle returnees are often younger, millennial adults, the likelihood they embody a transnational consciousness—which was also observed by Malhamé (2006)—may ease and facilitate mobility on multiple levels and across nation-state borders. Moreover, if information and expectations about post-return conditions are inaccurate, it could lead to a severing of the interrupted-cycle returnees’ ‘roots’ to their origin country and migration onwards, especially if they perceive their return as regrettable and only added to their overall precarity. Finally, the majority of interrupted-cycle returnees who do not intend to remain in Lebanon seek to migrate onwards rather than re-emigrate back to Venezuela, however, the socioeconomic crises in Lebanon may have blocked access or wiped out interrupted-cycle returnees’ savings. Over one quarter of interrupted-cycle returnees who intend to re-emigrate (onwards) do not have the necessary financial resources and therefore are in an immigration trap.

Less than a fifth of interrupted-cycle returnees have stated they prefer to remain in Lebanon. One important variable to consider is the interrupted-cycle returnees’ migration history. If multiple migration cycles have been completed with higher degrees of preparedness, they likely will have economically reintegrated (i.e., property and assets rather than bank savings) into the origin country much better than their original return. They may also rely on access to the informal labor market for extra income as well. The transnational links are also important given that workspaces are now moving more to digital spaces especially during pandemic times. These links can ensure a stable income in foreign currencies. For many interrupted-cycle returnees, they may have abandoned or rejected entirely their ‘Lebaneseness’. These lack of roots within the origin country makes

them highly susceptible re-emigrate (onwards), and many, in fact, maintain a wait-and-see attitude towards the conditions in Lebanon. Still, if they have young children, born and being raised in Lebanon, they may decide—based on the wellbeing of their children and their own experiences of being ‘uprooted’—that remaining is preferential. Familial assistance with childcare, if family is present, may also be vital if the returnee is a single mother. Finally, familial and transnational links with left behind kin in Venezuela may provide valuable information and insights (intangible resource) regarding the future conditions in Lebanon since the country is follows similar parallels. Anticipating future disruptions and making necessary preparations can help buttress against various economic shocks like shortages and rising prices—or as one interviewee put it, having a ‘chip’ in their brain to recognize and respond to troubling patterns or trends of socioeconomic deterioration.

16.2 Incomplete Migration Cycle, Decision-Making Factors, and Re-Emigration (Onwards)

This section examined the decision-making factors and intentions of incomplete-cycle returnees to either re-emigrate (onwards) or remain in Lebanon.

16.2.1 Decision-Making Factors for Returnees with Incomplete Migration Cycles

Returnees with incomplete migration cycles did maintain a Venezuelan preference for economic factors but chose Lebanon for social protection. They were also highly ambiguous towards political factors and were split between Lebanon and Venezuela in terms of family and lifestyle and culture.

Economic Decision-Making Factors

Since incomplete-cycle returnees are more likely to hold property and/or assets in Lebanon, they may feel a sense of relief and gratefulness from the economic support such tangible assets bring (housing, business property). However, job opportunities and overall economic stability are the most salient economic factors. The high cost of living, especially for those whose timing was later, is a major challenge for living in Lebanon. Although Venezuela has a cheaper cost of living, this may be offset by the rising costs in other areas like education and basic amenities.

Family and Lifestyle Decision-Making Factors

Within the family and lifestyle theme, incomplete-cycle returnees are equally split and ambiguous towards their country preference. As being near family is the most salient factor overall, many returnees may be divided as they have close relatives in both Lebanon and Venezuela (or abroad). Moreover, the family values that Lebanon espouses, including the quality of time spent together, provides many assurances when times are in crises. And although family can, especially during pandemic times, be overbearing and a “heavy load people [in Lebanon] live with”, incomplete-cycle returnees’ familial unit is often strong, supportive, and reflects the hybrid identities of its Lebanese–Venezuelan family members.

Political Decision-Making Factors

Like the interrupted-cycle returnees, returnees with incomplete migration cycles also feel highly ambiguous towards political decision-making factors and their country of preference. Likelihood of war (or international conflict), social and civil stability, and corruption were the most salient factors. They did not, however, place as much salience on human rights and/or liberties as did interrupted-cycle returnees. This may be because they left, on average, earlier than interrupted-cycle returnees, and thus they did not witness the extent of violent protest and police crackdowns in Venezuela. Many incomplete-cycle returnees also struggle to understand the complexity of Lebanese politics, especially since they are intertwined with Lebanon’s many religious sects. This may cause a sense of political disillusionment and disengagement towards any political activity (i.e., voting) in the future. Incomplete-cycle returnees are also much less cynical about real change for the Lebanese political system—for Venezuela, they are much more pessimistic. Their optimism comes from the enthusiasm, determination, and experiences of the younger generation. The younger generation’s openness and experiences towards emigrating—broadening their perspectives and mentalities—along with their transnational consciousnesses in the age of globalization may help Lebanon, from the bottom-up, change for the better.

Social Protection and Social Services Decision-Making Factors

Incomplete-cycle returnees were twice as likely to prefer Lebanon over Venezuela in terms of social protection and social services. Quality and affordability of education,

healthcare, and basic amenities (water, gas, electricity) were the most salient factors. The lower violent crime rate in Lebanon was also cited with nearly all qualitative interviewees' sharing some horrific story about the endemic violence in Venezuela. Since incomplete-cycle returnees are more (re)integrated economically into the origin country, the high-quality education—Lebanon teaches three native languages in public schools—and healthcare are perceived as superior to Venezuela's. Still, some older returnees may remember when Venezuela's social systems were better, and they compare Venezuela's cheaper, socialized education system with the high costs of post-secondary education in Lebanon. Lastly, returnees also recall the cheap costs of food, gas, water, and other amenities in Venezuela. However, for incomplete-cycle returnees that left later in the Venezuelan crisis, they can also remember the skyrocketing prices and shortages of the basic amenities. Thus, they feel that because Lebanon has struggled for many years to provide its citizens with such basic amenities, its more decentralized system (diesel generators, water trucks) of service provision is more resilient to disruptions in times of crises.

Cultural Decision-Making Factors

Incomplete-cycle returnees are also split between Lebanon and Venezuela in terms of cultural decision-making factors. Linguistic fluency and local knowledge/know-how were cited as salient factors. Incomplete-cycle returnees were similar with their interrupted-cycle counterparts, which also viewed freedom of expression as salient, however, they differed as incomplete-cycle returnees also valued the importance of the 'holy land' and their ability to practice their religion freely. Also, the values and principle, more often attributed to Lebanon, are highly salient for incomplete-cycle returnees. The emphasis on family, community, respect, honor, and decency is also imbued with many Venezuelan values—like openness, simplicity, and straightforwardness—to create a new, hybrid reconstruction of 'home' and belonging. Lebanon's culture of emigration—particularly in times of crises—may provide returnees with a sense of reassurance that they will not be stuck, and the social trust (i.e., returning a lost cell phone) among Lebanese citizens is not commonly found in Venezuela. Finally, return migration may have been a rediscovery of one's heritage or roots for many incomplete-cycle returnees, and they seem to have maintained their own personalized 'myth of return' which connects

them more closely with their spiritual or religious reverse transnational links (Reynolds, 2011).

16.2.2 Incomplete-Migration Cycle Returnees' Intentions of Re-Emigration, Onwards Migration, and Remaining in the Origin Country

Similar to interrupted-cycle returnees, incomplete-cycle returnees report their financial situation worsening, but their living conditions improving (but to a lesser extent). They also have similar intentions to re-emigrate or migrate onwards—many selecting both—with over 80% stating so. Still, they are highly susceptible to immigration traps especially if their tangible resources were saved in Lebanese banks. Over 30% incomplete-cycle returnees reported being in an immigration trap—higher than interrupted-cycle. Additionally, if they lack the needed documents to re-migrate (onwards)—i.e., citizenship for themselves or their children—they may find themselves in a ‘bureaucracy trap’ given the high degree of corruption in both countries. Nevertheless, strong familial support networks in the origin country and abroad, including their transnational links, multiple cultural competencies, higher education, and fluency in multiple languages all ease and facilitate the likelihood a returnee will re-emigrate (onwards). The ‘culture of emigration’ that Lebanon is often attributed may also provide returnees with access to information, assistance, and advice through their transnational links and social capital as well. Re-emigration and onwards migration may be conceived as a viable option to wait out the crises and prepare for a more reintegrated return to their origin country. The experiences, knowledge, perspectives acquired abroad may be brought back as social remittances to act as agents of change.

Still, for younger-adult incomplete-cycle returnees—especially if they left Venezuela near 2018—may hold a wait-and-see attitude towards re-emigration (onwards). Moreover, if their return involved a form of self-discovery or reinvigorating of their roots, the success of their journey of reintegration may not have been determined yet. They may also have brought their young child with them and, if a single mother, strong familial networks in the origin country are crucial. For older incomplete-cycle returnees, a history of uprootedness and mobility have left many feeling exhausted about the idea of re-emigrating (onwards) once more. They are now more focused on their resettlement,

reintegration, and retaining their roots in their origin country. Moreover, their transnational links and business connections, strengthened through multiple migration experiences, may also provide them with the economic security to weather the crises. Incomplete-cycle returnees may also feel they have ‘fulfilled their duty’ to their children. As decisions are based on unfavorable circumstances and best interests of their children, the decision of emigration now rests on their children—who may now be adults. In the meantime, incomplete-cycle returnees may be grandparents themselves, and they can share with their grandchildren their own fond memories, reminiscences, and nostalgic stories of the idyllic Venezuelan ‘homeland’. Moreover, returnees—when making their nostalgic investments—may include essences of their hybrid sense of self and identity from the multiple locations they belong to and call ‘home’. This may be invaluable wisdom as many young Lebanese venture forth and emigrate to escape the suffocating political and socioeconomic conditions in Lebanon.

16.3 Interrupted-Youth Migration Cycle, Decision-Making Factors, and Re-Emigration (Onwards)

This section examined the decision-making factors and intentions of interrupted-youth cycle returnees to either re-emigrate (onwards) or remain in Lebanon.

16.3.1 Decision-Making Factors for Returnees with Interrupted-Youth Migration Cycles

Returnees with an interrupted-youth migration cycle follow many parallels with this study’s limited sample of complete migration cycle returnees. They share an overall ambiguity towards their country of preference with economic, family/lifestyle, and political decision-making factors; and they prefer Lebanon for social protection and cultural factors.

Economic Decision-Making Factors

Economically, interrupted-youth returnees are primarily concerned with finding work and the cost of living. Although their return to Lebanon was generally marked with higher preparedness from parental preparation and early timing of return, they are now adults, often with children, and struggling to cope with the socioeconomic crises in

Lebanon. In fact, many interrupted-youth returnees may have led transnational lives between Lebanon and Venezuela, and they have fond memories of Venezuela in its economic ‘golden years’. Still, the unfortunate reality of concurrent crises in both countries has caused many interrupted-youth returnees to appreciate and be thankful for what they have now: *el pan de cada dia*.

Family and Lifestyle Decision-Making Factors

Family and lifestyle decision-making factors were also highly ambiguous among returnees with an interrupted-youth migration cycle. Like many returnees, ‘home’ is where the family is, and many may have close relatives in both countries. They are also able to create and maintain durable social networks with friends and acquaintances—from Lebanese locals, to expatriates in both origin and destination countries. Moreover, their ease of hypermobility and strong transnational links may be part-and-parcel of their transnational consciousness and lifestyle living in the globalized world.

Political Decision-Making Factors

Country preference was also highly ambiguous towards political decision-making factors. Like many others, interrupted-youth returnees felt war (or international conflict), social/civil stability, and corruption were important political factors to consider. Furthermore, many also stated that a just legal system and competent legal representation are particularly salient. Although most returnees see the political conditions in both countries as poor, several interrupted-youth returnees point to Lebanon’s educated population, social/community values, and strong will to demand their rights as political assets. However, the politically vulnerable position Lebanon holds within international politics, and the complex, fractured confessional system of government, causes concern. Finally, returnees with interrupted-youth migration cycles were more likely to act as agents of social change especially as numerous national calamities have hit Lebanon. They often used information and communications technologies to help rally support, organize events, and provide assistance and donations to fellow Lebanese–Venezuelans, Lebanese, and Venezuelans alike.

Social Protection and Social Services Decision-Making Factors

Interrupted-youth returnees strongly favored Lebanon in terms of social protection, and they felt the quality of healthcare/education and low violent crime were salient. Given that almost three-quarters of interrupted-youth returnees were sufficiently prepared despite their compelled return, many were economically well-off when they arrived in Lebanon and received post-secondary education. Furthermore, as many interrupted-youth returnees now have young children of their own, Lebanese (public) schools are also highly regarded for their quality of education. Lastly, as the costs of basic amenities rises in Lebanon, many returnees who left young (or re-emigrated) recall Venezuela's cheap prices for gas, water, electricity etc. However, those who may have re-emigrated to Venezuela later in the crisis can remember the skyrocketing prices, queues for food and gas, and rolling blackouts in Venezuela.

Cultural Decision-Making Factors

Most returnees with interrupted-youth migration cycles preferred Lebanon and Venezuela equally, or they felt ambiguous towards selecting a preferred country. This ambiguity may be explained by their hybrid identities and multiple locations of 'home' and belonging. They may have fond memories of their time in Venezuela and, thus, cannot choose between the two. Numerous returnees also reported Lebanon's complex and, at times, materialistic culture as aspects they do not wish to retain as part of renegotiating their hybrid identities. Rather, they often prefer to emphasize the simplicity and straightforwardness of the Venezuelan culture especially during times of socioeconomic crises. Most importantly, it is often the Lebanese principles and values that are most often cited when deciding preferences between Lebanon and Venezuela. Like returnees with incomplete migration cycles, values like respect, honor, and decency are highly regarded in Lebanon, and special emphasis is placed on the importance of the familial unit and community at large. The Lebanese culture is lauded by numerous returnees from all generational migration cycles for its emphasis on reinforcing and strengthening those familial and community social networks, which can be so vital during times of political and socioeconomic crises. And during difficult times, interrupted-youth returnees report a deep, inner peace and sense of calm while living in the 'holy land' and being 'closer to God'. Their religious faith—an arguably treasured intangible resource in times of crises—and strong community culture provides returnees with a sense of protection, strength,

steadfastness, and determination in the face of what would otherwise be historically unprecedented socioeconomic circumstances—twice.

16.3.2 Interrupted-Youth Migration Cycle Returnees' Intentions of Re-Emigration, Onwards Migration, and Remaining in the Origin Country

Returnees with interrupted-youth migration cycles are mainly split between improvement in the financial and living conditions—half reported both being better, while half reported worse. Just over half the returnees also reported having the intention either to re-emigrate or migrate onwards—comparatively lower than the over 80% found among returnees with incomplete or interrupted cycles. As many compelled-youth returnees are rediscovering their roots, rekindling their attachment, and beginning their own life in Lebanon, many may feel a degree of compulsion to leave Lebanon given its current challenges. However, given their own experiences with adjusting and adapting to new environments, their hypermobility, hybrid identities, and strong social networks/transnational links, they express a determination to optimize their preparedness by learning from past mistakes. Interrupted-youth also espouse a transnational consciousness and relocating 'home' can be easier. Yet, they have stated the importance of maintaining their property/assets in Lebanon as an 'emigration insurance' or keeping a 'home base'. Although immigration traps were not overly reported with interrupted-youth returnees, concerns about Covid-19 and disruption in international migration has caused some returnees to take an unwanted wait-and-see attitude.

If interrupted-youth returnees do decide to take a wait-and-see approach, they will still exercise some degree of preparation in the meantime, especially if they have a history of migration and relocation. Ensuring their children have up-to-date documentation, 'keeping in touch' with family and friends at home and abroad, and reifying transnational links may be part-and-parcel of their responsibilities to ensure a degree of preparedness is always on hand. The multiple migration cycles and cultural competencies indicative of interrupted-youth returnees may also assist in their reintegration into the origin country and stave off uprootedness. As described earlier, experiences living in Venezuela has given returnees with an acute awareness of the declining circumstances due to hyperinflation and the know-how to take steps to mitigate its disruption. This may be an

early understanding regarding the economics of hyperinflation—even just by living through such conditions. They may also anticipate the sequence of events which have already occurred in Venezuela; for instance, black markets, soaring prices, medicine shortages, gas shortages, rolling blackouts, water cuts, social unrest, violent crackdowns, and so on. Nevertheless, as nearly half of returnees with interrupted-youth cycles intend to remain in Lebanon, it is clear many are not ready to uproot themselves so easily. As interrupted-youth returnees have come to *learn* to love Lebanon on their own terms—accepting some aspects of the culture while rejecting others—they may embody a unique hybrid individuality that integrates the most salient aspects of both Lebanese and Venezuelan cultures. The calmness, patience, determinedness, and equanimity shown by so many second-generation Lebanese–Venezuelan returnees is only testament to their strength of character, veneration of the familial unit and sense of community, their austere sensibilities, and trust in their faith and God.

Chapter Seventeen

Conclusion

Second-generation Lebanese–Venezuelan return migration in times of concurrent political and socioeconomic crises presents an exceptional situation to examine and develop upon the existing academic literature and theoretical models available. This research has provided an outline on the theoretical development of return migration. The theoretical frameworks of return preparedness and migration cycles have been tremendous at addressing the heterogeneity of return migrants; shedding light on the experiences and agency involved in return; illustrating the importance of resource mobilization; and furthering our understanding of the return migration phenomenon in general. Yet, the world is changing quickly, and, for many, conditions have become more difficult with increasing numbers of domestic and international crises emerging throughout the world (Institute of Economics and Peace, 2021). Unfortunately, global forecasts for peacefulness and social/civil stability do not look promising, and we may find the uniqueness of return migration in times of concurrent crises more mainstream in the future. Yet, as this research outlines, we may also find new types of return mobilities, which seek to mitigate the negative effects of increasing global social and civil instability and even strive for better conditions for the future.

Specifically, this research examined return mobilities within the scope of ‘immigrant’ generations, namely, second- and subsequent-generations. Hence, this research proposes and leverages the theoretical framework of generational migration cycles—built upon Cassarino’s (2016) original migration cycles—to capture the nuances and complexities of second-generation return migration. More precisely, this theoretical framework tackles the problematization of directionality of the second-generation—‘looking back or ‘moving forward’—by introducing the diaspora–transnationalism spectrum. Thus, an important addition to the generational migration cycles is the notion of bi-directional arrows to illustrate where along the diaspora–transnationalism spectrum

the return mobility is positioned. The subjective perceptions and conceptualizations of ‘home’, identity, and belonging become important variables in the return outcomes of second-generation returnees. Furthermore, given the addition of migration cycles persisting over generations, the mantle of migration cycles may be picked up by the children of first-generation emigrants. Intangible resources may also be passed down to second-generations thus manifesting an elite-class of hypermobile migrants with multiple migration cycles interconnecting simultaneously between numerous conceptions of home and destination countries. We may imagine then the multiple migration cycles of second-generation migrants as chain links that are interlaced with networks of transnational connections that intersect and connect at multiple points in location and time.

In fact, this research found that unique and hybrid identities of the second-generation—with multiple cultural competencies, and fluid conceptualizations of ‘home’ and self—help buttress against the disruptive crises conditions. Second-generation Lebanese–Venezuelan returnees strongly utilize their familial and community networks to support one another, allay personal crises, provide child support, soften culture shocks, relay vital information and opportunities, and keep one another’s spirits up during difficult times. Importantly, they also maintain these strong social networks in multiple locations, and if re-emigration is chosen, they can rely on a transnational network of family, friends, and connections for their re-emigration (onwards). Many young millennial second-generation returnees, raised in an interconnected, hypermobile, and globalized world, may also hold transnational consciousnesses, which facilitates and eases their transnational mobility.

This research also contributed to the dearth of scholarly literature in childhood return mobilities. This research found that compelled-youth—either sent away or returned with parents as trailing travellers—were often highly prepared given their parental resource mobilization; they had reintegration patterns resembling those of high preparedness; and they may likely become agents of change in their own capacity. Scholarly literature has cautioned that the younger a returnee is, the more idealistic, less realistic, and less informed they are as compared to older returnees (King & Christou, 2008; 2010; Kılınç & King, 2017; Wessendorf, 2007; 2013), and this is true to a certain extent. However, the compulsion of return does not seem to significantly disrupt the

youth's process of identity syncretization, especially if returnees comprehend the rationale of their parents as they mature. Rather, compelled-youth returnees, as they grow older, maintain unique hybrid identities and transnational consciousness. As many were born and raised in a complex and interconnected 'in betweenness' with Lebanon and Venezuela, youth returnees—often inspired and invigorated by social and civil mobilization for systemic change—are exercising agency when rewriting their own narratives. These new narratives are not viewed simply through the lens of modern nation-state affiliations, but rather through a new transnational paradigm, which embodies the admixture of countries, regions, communities, ethnicities, religious affiliations, and social networks; and they may further be reified and refined through multiple migration cycles and multiple cultural competencies.

The bias that is often found in the scholarly literature on re-emigration—often considered a metric or indicator of a lack of reintegration in the country of origin—is also tackled in this research (Lietaert, 2016; Cassarino, 2004; Black et al., 2004; Koser & Kushminder, 2015; van Houte & de Koning, 2008). However, this research reframes the conception of re-emigration from a reintegration failure (although it may indeed be so), to an intangible resource in of itself. The hypermobility marked by the second-generation (millennial) returnees may present them with opportunities to gather experiences abroad, reify and strengthen transnational links, gather accurate information, develop their cultural competencies, and synthesize a durable, yet malleable, sense of self and identity. If a returnee decides to re-emigrate (onwards), their previous migration cycles can be a source of intangible resources as returnees likely have honed their resource mobilization skills and understand the importance of exhibiting agency and gumption in their future migration cycles.

For older returnees or those that still maintain a wait-and-see attitude, remaining in Lebanon may, at the moment, be a preferable choice. Their experiences living in Venezuela have provided many returnees with a unique set of intangible resources, which help strengthen their reintegration and/or roots against turbulent post-return conditions. For instance, understanding the economics of hyperinflation; anticipating socioeconomic fallout; relying on the strength and support of family; and finding a calm and peace-of-mind through community support and religion have been crucial for returnees' morale.

Furthermore, mature and experienced returnees may feel fatigued by a life marked by significant transnational mobility, and they may look to plant their roots in one location. When weighing the decision-making factors in deciding where to call ‘home’, returnees overwhelmingly reported the safety and security as the most important factor. However, over any economic and political factors, the entrenched familial values, community support, and social trust among the Lebanese has been an important asset. Many also appreciate the ‘culture of emigration’ Lebanon espouses if they do wish to re-emigrate in the future. Still, for those stuck in an immigration trap—thus ‘compelled to remain’—the benefits Lebanon brings may not be entirely recognized. Given Lebanon’s persistent crises, fractured government, and deep-seated corruption, some second-generation Lebanese–Venezuelan returnees will have no qualms about cutting their ties with Lebanon and moving on.

The world is facing unprecedented challenges in 2021 including global pandemics, climate-related disasters, rising authoritarianism, economic collapse, increasing civil and social instability, and widening fractures in global cooperation. This thesis does not wish to normalize nor acquiesce to the notion that the future is bleak and rife with catastrophes. Rather, it seeks to exemplify the importance of international migration in the globalized world beyond merely economic incentives/failure or state government repression. Hypermobility, culturally competent, and transnationally conscious migrants who are young and ambitious may mark a new generation of international migrants in the age of rising instability and international calamities. These new migrants—acquiring experiences abroad, developing and challenging their conceptions of self and ‘home’, sharing and mixing their principles and values; and strengthening their transnational links and familial/social networks—may soon look to plant their roots in one location. Lebanon, despite its many shortcomings, is often recognized as a unique place for its strong familial values; unwavering community support; sense of honor, decency, and dignity; and rich religious history. These reasons, beyond any socioeconomic or political factors, may be reason enough to call Lebanon home once again.

“Does this mean I don’t miss my mountains? Of course I do—as God is my witness

—Amin Maalouf, French–Lebanese writer

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Appendix A: Quantitative Survey

Consent to participate in a Survey/Questionnaire

“Lebanese-Venezuelan Returnees”

I would like to invite you to participate in a research project by completing the following survey. (I am a student at the Lebanese American University, and I am completing this research project as part of my master’s dissertation. The purpose of this survey aims to understand the decision-making process of remaining in Lebanon or re-emigrating to Venezuela

There are no known risks, harms or discomforts associated with this study beyond those encountered in normal daily life. The information you provide will be used to understand the decision-making factors and process of remigration and re-emigration between Lebanon and Venezuela. You will not directly benefit from participation in this study. Completing the survey will take ten to fifteen minutes of your time.

By continuing with the survey, you agree with the following statements:

1. I have been given sufficient information about this research project.
2. I understand that my answers will not be released to anyone and my identity will remain anonymous. My name will not be written on the questionnaire nor be kept in any other records.
3. **When the results of the study are reported, I will not be identified by name or any other information that could be used to infer my identity.** Only researchers will have access to view any data collected during this research however data cannot be linked to me.
4. I understand that I may withdraw from this research any time I wish and that I have the right to skip any question I don’t want to answer.
5. I understand that my refusal to participate will not result in any penalty or loss of benefits to which I otherwise am entitled to.
6. I have been informed that the research abides by all commonly acknowledged ethical codes and that the research project has been reviewed and approved by the Institutional Review Board at the Lebanese American University
7. I understand that if I have any additional questions, I can ask the researcher listed below.
8. I have read and understood all statements on this form.
9. I voluntarily agree to take part in this research project by completing the following survey.

If you have any questions, you may contact:

Name	Phone number	Email address
Andrew Denison	+96171794230	andrew.denison@lau.edu

If you have any questions about your rights as a participant in this study, or you want to talk to someone outside the research, please contact the:

Institutional Review Board Office,
Lebanese American University
3rd Floor, Dorm A, Byblos Campus
Tel: 00 961 1 786456 ext. (2546)
irb@lau.edu.lb

Demographic Questions:

What is your gender?

-Male -Female -Prefer not to say

What is your year of birth?

What is your marital status?

-Single -Married/common law -Separated/divorced/widowed -Prefer not to say

How many dependent children do you care for? _____

In what countries do you hold citizenship?

Which country were you born in?

- Lebanon - Venezuela - Other: _____

What languages do you speak?

-Arabic English Spanish French

What is your highest level of education?

No education (only kindergarten) Undergraduate (or equivalent)

Primary/Elementary school Master's degree

Secondary education (high school) Doctoral degree

Other _____ - Prefer not to say

Re-Migration to Lebanon Questions (Return to Lebanon)

What year did you immigrate to Venezuela? (Skip if born in Venezuela)

What year did you return to Lebanon?

On average, how often did you visit Lebanon while living in Venezuela?

Once a month (or more) Only on specific occasions (wedding, funeral...)

Once every three to six months

Once a year Never

Once every two years Other (please specify): _____

Once every five or more years

Do you hold property/assets in:

-Venezuela: yes no prefer not to say -Lebanon: yes no prefer not to say

Which country do you feel is your 'home' country?

-Lebanon -Venezuela -Both -Neither -Other (please specify):

How long before departure to Lebanon did you have time to prepare?

_____ years _____ months -I don't know -Prefer not to say

Around which date (month and year) did you begin preparing to return?

Do you feel it was enough time to prepare?

-Yes -No -I don't know -Prefer not say -Other (please specify): _____

Did you receive any assistance (e.g. family, friends) to help you move to Lebanon?

-Yes -No -I don't know -Prefer not to say -Other (please specify): _____

Do you feel your return to Lebanon was your decision or were you compelled?

-My decision -I felt compelled -I don't know -Prefer not to say -other (please specify): _____

When you returned to Lebanon, did you have any intention of staying?

-Yes, permanently -Yes, but only temporarily -No -I don't know

Do you feel your experiences living in Venezuela has helped you manage or cope with the economic crisis and/or political unrest in Lebanon?

- Yes, definitely - Yes, slightly - No - I don't know - Prefer not to say

What were the main reasons for leaving Venezuela? (Please rate with 1 being the highest priority. If you can, please select at least 3).

<input type="checkbox"/> Economic instability	<input type="checkbox"/> Corruption
<input type="checkbox"/> Return to my 'roots'	<input type="checkbox"/> No future
<input type="checkbox"/> Following my spouse or family	<input type="checkbox"/> Reuniting with family/friends
<input type="checkbox"/> Likelihood of international conflict (war)	<input type="checkbox"/> Day-to-day living too difficult
<input type="checkbox"/> Political instability	<input type="checkbox"/> Retired (planning on retiring)
<input type="checkbox"/> Social unrest (protests, uprisings)	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (Please specify): _____

What were the main reasons for choosing Lebanon? (Please rate with 1 being the highest priority. Please select at least 3).

<input type="checkbox"/> I have citizenship (either me or my spouse)	<input type="checkbox"/> It was my only option
<input type="checkbox"/> Social connections/networks	<input type="checkbox"/> The physical landscape/location
<input type="checkbox"/> Good environment to invest/start business	<input type="checkbox"/> I speak the language
<input type="checkbox"/> I have a good 'Wasta'	<input type="checkbox"/> Similar/same values
<input type="checkbox"/> Better education	<input type="checkbox"/> Find a better job or better salary
<input type="checkbox"/> Better healthcare	<input type="checkbox"/> I have property/assets in Lebanon
<input type="checkbox"/> Better lifestyle (nightlife, the arts)	<input type="checkbox"/> National duty
<input type="checkbox"/> To be close to family/take care of parents	<input type="checkbox"/> It's my 'homeland'
	<input type="checkbox"/> Overall stability
	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (Please specify): _____

Re-Emigration

These questions assume that when the pandemic crisis is over, air-travel would resume as normal.

Which country would you prefer to reside in presently?

-Lebanon -Venezuela -I don't know -Prefer not to say

Do you have any plans to return to Venezuela?

-Yes -No -I don't know -Prefer not say -

Are you (or were you prior to COVID19) preparing to leave Lebanon now??

-Yes -Yes, but I do not have the resources now -No -I don't know -Prefer not say -Other (please specify): _____

Do you intend to leave Lebanon again to another country?

-Yes, - no -Maybe -Not now -Never -I don't know

Decision-Making Factors

In deciding which country, (Lebanon or Venezuela) to reside in, which factors do you give more importance to? (Please rate with 1 being the highest priority. Please select at least 3)

Economic:

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Job opportunities | <input type="checkbox"/> Cost of living |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Decent/good salary | <input type="checkbox"/> Ability to live off of pension/retirement |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Access to the informal economy | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify): |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Utilizing property/assets | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Business/investment opportunities | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Overall economic stability | |

Which country do you feel is a better choice to live in “economically?”

-Lebanon -Venezuela -I don't know

Family/Lifestyle:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Proximity to family/friends | <input type="checkbox"/> Social and/or family support/network |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Social life (nightlife, recreational activities) | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify): |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Following spouse/child(ren)'s preference | _____ |

Which country do you feel is a better choice to live in for “family/lifestyle?”

-Lebanon -Venezuela -I don't know

Political:

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Just/fair legal system with good legal representation | <input type="checkbox"/> Legal status for you or your spouse/children (citizenship, residency permits) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Social/civil stability | <input type="checkbox"/> Corruption playing in everyday life. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Human rights/liberties | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify): |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Likelihood of war or other international conflict | _____ |

Which country do you feel is a better choice to live in “politically?”

-Lebanon -Venezuela -I don't know

Social Services/Protection:

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Quality and affordability of healthcare | <input type="checkbox"/> Basic Amenities (water, gas, garbage) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Quality and affordability of education | <input type="checkbox"/> Welfare (guaranteed minimum resources) |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> COVID19 response |

___ Other (please specify):

Which country do you feel is a better choice to live in for “social services/protection?”
-Lebanon -Venezuela -I don’t know

Cultural:

___ Know the local knowledge and skills to live in the country and socialize with locals.

___ Ability to speak the language

___ Ability to practice your religion freely

___ The history of the country

___ Freedom to express your views freely

___ Importance of land and the connection to the physical landscape

___ Values and principles

___ Importance of feeling at ‘home’ and belonging to the country

___ Quality of the arts and entertainment

___ Other (please specify):

Which country do you feel is a better choice to live in “culturally?”

-Lebanon -Venezuela -I don’t know

Other Final questions:

Have your living conditions improved since returning to Lebanon?

-Very much -Unchanged -A little worse -Much worse -I don’t know
-Prefer not to say

Has your financial situation improved in Lebanon since returning?

-Much better -Better -Unchanged -Worsened -Prefer not to say

Do you feel what is occurring in Lebanon (economic, social, political unrest) can be compared to what has happened in Venezuela?

- Yes, definitely - Yes, slightly -Not really -No, not at all - I don’t know
- Prefer not to say

Do you personally know anyone in Lebanon who has returned to Venezuela?

-No -Yes

If yes, how many? _____

Which country do you feel is a better choice to live in “culturally?”

-Lebanon -Venezuela -I don’t know

Other Final questions:

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