

Columbia University  
Graduate School of Arts and Sciences

Human Rights Studies

**Migrant Networks:**

**An Expression of Collective Identity and an Indicator for Integration**

a final paper by  
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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements  
for the degree of  
Master of Arts

May 2017

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## Abstract

One way to conceptualize international migration is to examine the role of networks. These networks or linkages are crucial to the survival of migrants, both while in-transit, and while working to integrate in the receiving community. Migrant identity, decisions to migrate, and migration processes occur in consultation with others and therefore the migrant definition and human rights framework ought to reflect the current reality of migration as a collective identity and process.

The first chapter explores the notion of individual and collective identity and proposes re-defining the term 'migrant' to include a collective identity. Migrants utilize networks not only as a way to access resources, but also to express collective identity when they are unable to establish connections while in-transit or within receiving communities. Migrant networks play a crucial role in the expressions of migrant identity and should be included in the migrant definition as a way to promote and protect the rights of all migrants.

The second chapter builds off the idea of migrant utilization of networks to propose that networks ought to be utilized as an indicator to measure migrant integration. Indicators measure migrant integration and are typically framed and discussed within the parameters of quantitative measurements. This chapter suggests an expansion of the current set of indicators to also include more qualitative indicators, which help measure less tangible or quantifiable changes in a migrant's life such as identity and sense of belonging. Networks bridge understanding in how migrants connect and integrate in their new society and should be considered as an indicator for migrant integration.

## **Introduction and Statement of the Problem**

Migration involves individuals and groups of people moving across one border to another, or as Castle (2002) and other migration scholars say, from the country of origin to a transit country and finally to the country of destination. Migration can occur for a number of reasons; including those who are forcibly displaced due to reasons of persecution, natural disaster, climate change, economic conditions or a combination of these circumstances. The role of individual choice and circumstance, with regard to movement, is important in how a migrant has access to channels of movement; however, this paper will focus on how migrant identity shapes and is shaped by the process of integration.

Migration is traditionally framed and defined by focusing on an individual in a particular circumstance, and/or a legal status that is considered based on the merit of an individual claim. Meaning, the individual must petition for refugee, asylum, or immigrant status, which has been traditionally accepted in domestic, regional or international immigration court systems. This framework of migration ignores the larger context of the political and economic circumstances the individual exists within. Definitions play a crucial role in shaping individual and collective identity as they carry power and influence in the way policy is implemented, and therefore any exclusion can therefore be both harmful and misleading to migrant identity.

Individual identity does not exist without accounting for the impact of relationships developed in concert with others. People are influenced by, but also influence and participate in a collective existence within local, national and global

spheres. Identity is what connects humanity; it is both individual and collective and we all impact one another's identity. Migration occurs within networks, both homogenous and heterogeneous, and migrants build identity within an expression of their networks.

Migrants consult friends, family and support networks to help guide them in the decision-making process of whether or not to migrate. Both migration as a process and migrant identity develops alongside constant communication and consultation from support networks; therefore migration ought to be re-defined as a collective process that reflects this reality. The first chapter proposes to re-define migrant identity as a collective notion so that migration as a process can reflect the utilization of migrant networks throughout the process of integration.

One challenge in defining and measuring migrant integration is that networks, a major indicator for integration, has not been included in migrant integration research. This paper highlights the need not only to define migrants as an individual and collective identity within the human rights framework, but also to build an understanding and awareness of the impact that networks have on the process of migrant integration. This paper also suggests that migrants' integration research ought to include an examination of migrant utilization of networks within the defined indicators of integration as migrant networks both inform and impact the level of migrant integration over time. Migrant networks offer unique insight and exemplify an expression of collective identity that ought to be utilized when measuring integration and in the application of integration policy.

Migrants are people, just like any other, in the sea of humanity; however, they have experienced or witnessed particularly stressful circumstances that may have placed

them in precarious living conditions or fearing for their safety and well-being. The approach of this paper will be humanistic, as opposed to an economic or political approach where quantitative research is focused on the outcomes of movement. This paper will also focus on the impetus for movement and the humanness of decision-making that will help to pinpoint some systemic problems and solutions to remedy issues of defining and measuring integration.

A humanistic approach examines how people behave under given circumstances and allows for a more nuanced way of understanding why people are in dire situations and what they do to survive. In general, people want regularity and normalcy in their lives, they want a sense of belonging and a better life for their family and children; most of all people do not want to feel alone and a humanistic approach will permit an understanding of the complexity of migrants.

Maslow's (1943) Hierarchy of Needs rings especially true for migrants, as they are making tough decisions in taking the leap of faith required in settling into a new country with a new life.

The needs for safety, belonging, love relations and for respect can be satisfied only by other people, i.e., only from outside the person. This means considerable dependence on the environment. A person in this dependent position cannot really be said to be governing himself, or in control of his own fate. He must be beholden to the sources of supply of needed gratifications. Their wishes, their whims, their rules and laws govern him and must be appeased lest he jeopardize his sources of supply. He must be, to an extent, "other-directed," and must be sensitive to other people's approval, affection and good will. This is the same as saying that he must adapt and adjust by being flexible and responsive and by changing himself to fit the external situation. He is the dependent variable; the environment is the fixed, independent variable. (Maslow, 1962, p. 45).

A sense of social embeddedness is innate in us all, we want to feel connected to our surroundings and the people around us (Granovetter, 1985). Social embeddedness needs

to be a fundamental understanding to human nature in order to move forward in our understanding of migrants; we all strive to be understood, feel connected to our surroundings, and most of all; feel that we belong. Therefore, this paper attempts to frame the conversation of migrant identity and integration around an understanding of human nature and behavior, this allows for a more complete picture of motivating factors and survival techniques.

Migrants are in precarious living situations that impact their psychological well-being and the natural instinct can be either to retreat inwardly or to utilize networks for survival. Networks provide migrants with a way to express collective identity as they provide a space for sharing and connecting with others around a shared vision or mission.

Migrants may feel disenfranchised as a result of their circumstance, but networks can provide an outlet for not only access to resources but a tool for expression and a sense of belonging. It is imperative that the migrant definitions include and accounts for collective identity as it better represents how migrants make decisions in a collective approach and form their identity in community with others.

As this discussion begins, it is first important to understand the pitfalls of the current classification of identity as an individualistic notion, and the impact that it has on migrant identity and integration. Then, solutions will be explored in expanding the term migrant to be inclusive of a collective identity and notion. This will help set the framework for understanding the role of networks in a migrant's life so that we can continue in the second chapter to suggest the importance of networks in understanding migrant integration.

### **Statement of Problem: Individualistic notion of migrants' identity**

One major problem in the application of the current framework and definition of migrant is the emphasis on the individual; this results in overlooking the collective nature of migration. Rupp (2016) and others argue the human rights regime perpetuates this individualist understanding of identity as human rights Conventions have been primarily rooted in Western influence and ideals, which have origins dated back to Thomas Paine's *Rights of Man* (1791). The *Rights of Man* not only shaped and influenced the French Constitution but also provided the drafters of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights with influential text to shape how human rights conventions and declarations would provide rights to individuals.

This proves to be problematic as the human rights framework is also the place where many argue that individual identity is being strengthened while collective identity is being downplayed. Within this rights-based framework, Conventions do not give as much weight to group rights as to individual rights. Thus, individual identity is promoted and strongly rooted within a human rights framework and is difficult to reflect a process of migration in a collective notion when the individual is understood as the sole subject of the right.

Rupp (2016) traces back the origins and assumptions of individualism to ask readers to consider rethinking how best to include communities in reframing migration. He discusses Adam Smith's use of 'individual' within the context of Theory of Moral Sentiments (1759) in the wider context of a 'network of social relations.'



Rupp (2016) continues to assert, “The goal of the rethinking (individualism) must be to preserve the indispensable core of respect for individuals and their courageous actions while also affirming the crucial role of communities (including but not limited to families). Further, this integration of individualistic roots with crucial community considerations must be embraced not only in dealing with the consequences of communally based discrimination and conflict but also in identifying and seeking to address its causes” (p. 81). Rupp and Smith affirm an important distinction in the role of community in the framing of individual identity and decision-making, simply that they cannot be divorced from one another.

Returning to the concept of migration, historically migrants have been examined on their individual situations as they relate to legal status, but in reality migrants have a collective identity that should be reflected within a collective framework and process for migration. One such example can be found in the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR), the regional human rights body that issues binding decisions for States parties to the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR).

Human Rights Conventions are centered around an individual claim, just as the human rights framework is also centered on the individual. The ECHR explicitly uses nouns such as ‘no one,’ ‘everyone,’ ‘each person,’ ‘every natural or legal person’. Even though Article 34 of the Convention allows groups of individuals to present claims that have similar violations, it does not grant inherent group rights. Human rights are centered on the individual and assume individuals are capable actors that act independently. However, it will be discussed that migrants make decisions and express identity collectively through networks. This is problematic with regard to migration, as migrants,

as a group, are not receiving adequate protection of human rights. Human rights conventions and framework should provide more protection and rights to groups as individuals do exist within a collective sphere and it has great power and influence over both migrant identity and actions.

Migrants are influenced by their surroundings and make decisions based on what they hear and what they not only want for themselves but for their family and for their future generations. They make decisions not only for the now but also for the future and within in combination of a collective whole. Many societies are collective in nature and share a collective identity that gets passed through their individual migrant identity. The human rights framework ought to also reconsider the role of the 'rights holder' as to allow for both individual and group rights to be respected, protected and fulfilled both for individuals and groups.

## Chapter 1

### Defining Migration as a Collective Identity

Identity is formed and constructed by the subjective and conscious mind of an individual, and exists within the social and political context to which we are all confined. It is both an individual and collective experience that evolves over time as we build individual identity within the community and networks to which we belong. Individual relationships, life experiences and networks are all built and established throughout our lives drastically shape how identity is constructed and re-constructed. As such, identity is not static and allows for individuals to choose, define and express their morals and values; it is a constant dialogue within our community and us. As Taylor (1994) states, “The crucial feature of human life is its’ fundamentally a *dialogical* character...we define our identity in dialogue always with, and sometimes in struggle against others” (p. 32).

Identity is negotiated and maintained at an individual level but cannot exist in isolation, just as people do not exist in isolation. “Identity is constructed on the back of a recognition of some common origin or shared characteristics with another person or group, or with an ideal, and with the natural closure of solidarity and allegiance established on this foundation” (Hall, 2007, p. 16). Humans are social creatures that rely on others for recognition and acceptance, which shapes our behavior and identity.

Individuals construct an experience of identity as an imagined community with others who are distant in time and space (Anderson, 1983) and different constructions of identity may impact the relationship between national identity and ethnocentric bias in

different ways (Mukherjess, 2012). Individuals cannot change collective identity simply according to their will. However, national identity can develop its own power over the individual, influencing action, and it provides a conceptualization towards which individuals develop attitudes and bonds (Berg and Hjerm, 2010). For the purpose of this paper, individual identity will be examined from a collective approach, thus better framing and understanding migrant identity and migration as a collective process. As migrants are frequently changing their surroundings and communities, migrant identity is also in constant fluctuation.

We will begin by examining migrants' use of networks to better comprehend how networks are established and maintained by migrants and to understand their impact on migrant identity. Through this process we will better understand that migrants utilize networks as an expression of collective identity; or more specifically, they can collaborate and express themselves collectively which ultimately shapes and impacts both individual and collective identity and facilitates integration. The final section of the chapter will offer suggestions in how the application of a redefined concept of migrant as a collective identity can be beneficial in appropriately promoting and protecting human rights of migrants.

### **Migrant Networks Express Collective Identity**

Migration is far reaching and directly or indirectly it affects States worldwide. Migration itself is not a new concept; people have been crossing borders and moving around the globe for many centuries. Migration has historically been and continues to be largely a group activity, meaning; individuals consult their families, friends and support

networks as they are sifting through possible migration decisions. Migrants do not make decisions in isolation; their livelihood and successes rely on many others-- both while in-transit and when integrating into their new communities, and even with those traveling the same route.

Social connections and networks are especially important to migrant populations because they often lack the skills or knowledge specific to the receiving community (Massey et al, 1999). Individuals migrate for a multitude of reasons, however, it is understood that they make accommodations to travel with family or petition for family to come at a later time. It is this idea that people travel with networks that migration should be re-framed to consider migration as a collective identity and process.

Sociologists study social structure and its consequences; they start from an individual experience and move toward describing and analyzing the social components. This is an important perspective in understanding how migrants access and utilize networks. Wellman and Berkowitz (1988) claim network analysis is a fundamental intellectual tool to study social structures. Analyzing networks involves beginning from the individual actor and studying how and why they connect to others for mutual benefit.

The network approach focuses on the rational actor who takes in consideration the existence of networks. According to Social Network Theory, as presented by Haythornthwaite (1996), the actor is a subject in different networks, which he or she can use rationally to maximize utility. Thus, existing networks can facilitate the decision whether or not to move. As with all networks, migrant networks operate through the creation and sustaining of social capital.

Migrants are faced with incredibly difficult decisions; Alexander Betts (2013) coined the term ‘survival migrants,’ to signify that individuals have met and overcome adversity in order to integrate into a new society hoping for a new life with better outcomes. The decision to survive means they must rely on others for their own survival; this is how networks are built and established.

Networks of all kinds are built around serving people who share a common mission or values and continue to grow as a need continues to persist. Migrant networks exist as a way to express the collective identity, and are inherently a survival mechanism for migrants as they seek to find safety and establish normalcy in their lives. The key to survival with migrants is to stay connected to their networks and not to make decisions in isolation.

Transnational ties are another term used by migration scholars, such as De Haas (2011), to describe the relationships between migrants and those in their country of origin. For this paper, I use the term networks, which I mean to describe both transnational ties and relationships built while in transit and during the integration process. I distinguish homogenous networks, which includes transnational ties, that contain groups of people from a single ethnicity, as opposite from heterogeneous networks, which are networks comprised of individuals or groups that are composed of a variety of ethnicities.

Migrants must also possess resilience and adaptability as a means of survival. When engaging networks, they may also have to question or compromise their own morality and beliefs as they may end up in situations where they live next to individuals who were

once perceived as the enemy or they may need to hide their identity to protect themselves against further persecution.

The flexibility required by migrant networks does not go without its challenges; they will likely need to reflect and adjust their lifestyle, morals and level of flexibility when interacting with different networks that may help them cross borders or find shelter and employment. During the process of establishing trusted networks, migrants may also find themselves in seemingly worse off situations as they could be subjected to further violence, trafficking, scams and the rumor mill. They are exposed to a wealth of new information from unverified sources and they must sift through what they feel is correct and make the determination of whether someone is a threat or helpful to their survival.

Migrants must also develop skills to assess threats and develop mutually beneficial relationships. Migrants establish a high level of trust in the networks they utilize, but they need also to be aware of potential dangers as to avoid any situations that could not only impact their own safety and well-being, but also potentially future generations.

Migration decisions are incredibly complex, just as humans are, and people rely on many sources for information and trust their individual networks for support in this decision-making process. Migrants are in the unfortunate position where they realize their current system has failed them and they must make decisions of how best to move forward.

When migrants are in the process of making decisions to stay or when to go, the migrant is weighing all the options against those of his/her peers. They are engaging in conversations and keeping updated on the current situation and the outcomes of their

peers who have already migrated. Migrants rely on information shared by their peers to provide them with guidance that could impact their own decisions.

Therefore, networks are exceptionally important throughout migrant decision-making, both while in-transit and when integrating into a new society. They offer crucial information that informs their decisions and contains a wide range of stakeholders such as other individuals in the same situation, host country residents and receiving countries, local NGOs, INGOs that potentially provide greater access to migration channels and resources while in-transit. Networks not only assist in framing identity and assisting with decision-making, but also have a large impact on facilitating integration in receiving communities.

Migrants utilize networks as an expression of collective identity as they may feel more comfortable expressing personal values and opinions with others who share similar values and circumstances. Networks are built and sustained due to a common cause or mission, and networks reflect the shared values and identities of the group. Networks contain the voice and the power of the individual that gets expression in a group environment and should not be overlooked when thinking about and defining migration. Networks provide migrants with an opportunity to share, connect and express identity.

Next we will examine the current definitions used to frame the term ‘migrant,’ which will help us to understand the complexity yet importance of defining migration so that human rights of migrants can best be promoted and protected. It will also help us to more accurately reflect the collective nature and identity of migration. In sum, this next section will offer an expansion on the current definition of migrant to include a collective



identity that allows for a more holistic view of migrants and how they express identity within networks.

### **Legally Define Migration as a Collective Identity**

This section will discuss the nuances in the multiple definitions for ‘migrant’ utilized by a variety of actors, such as International Non-Governmental Organizations (INGOs), Human Rights Conventions, and State Immigration Laws, as they all contribute to providing access and resources to human movement around the globe. An expansion of the legal definition of ‘migrant’ is needed within the human rights framework as a way to better assess who is in need of rights and protections as well as a way to appropriately reflect the collective nature and identity of migration.

International Non-Governmental Organizations define migrants with regard to individuals moving across borders: the United Nations Statistics Division (2014) defines a migrant as someone, “Who moves to a country other than that of his or her usual residence for a period of at least a year, so that the country of destination effectively becomes his or her new country of usual residence,” whereas the International Organization for Migration (IOM) defines migration as “The movement of a person or group of persons from one geographical unit to another across an administrative or political border.” The UN Statistics Division (2014) defines migrants very narrowly, as it is restricted to one person moving to another country rather than groups of people or families, which ultimately excludes people who are also in need of rights and protections.

Although INGOs are tasked with specific mandates, it is important to understand how these mandates are influenced by the way they are defining migrant. The latter will

severely change who receives a right and/or assistance, as a definition can serve to inherently exclude.

In the stage of international rights and protection, this narrow definition can also be found in international human rights conventions, namely, in the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees and the International Convention on the Rights of All Migrants and their Families. Both conventions highlight the need for promoting and protecting the rights of migrants but the difference lies in the 1951 Convention includes only those defined legally in the Convention as ‘refugee.’

The migration definition stated in Article 1.1(a) of the International Convention on the Protection of Rights of All Migrants and their Families states migrants “should be understood as covering all cases where the decision to migrate is taken freely by the individual concerned, for reasons of 'personal convenience' and without intervention of an external compelling factor." Not only does this exclude those forcibly displaced, but the definition also does not account for the complex decision-making processes that migrants must consider; it assumes that migrants have complete freedom and agency over decisions to migrate. The definitions of refugee and migrant within the Conventions and at the INGOs discussed are missing simple considerations of the variety of circumstances and challenges migrants and refugees face and how they make decisions to migrate.

Another challenge in defining migration is that none of the definitions include those who are internally displaced. IDPs very often have the same struggles with regards to rights and access to resources and should be looked at with the same considerations. Rupp (2016) states, “Internally displaced people are almost by definition not individuals who are seeking to start their lives anew on their own initiative. Instead, they are

members of communities who have been attacked because their ethnic or religious identities differ from those who oppose them. Resolving such conflicts therefore requires taking into account social differences rather than simply individual aspirations” (p. 78). IDPs are not crossing borders to seek protection but often in a situation where they do not have the means or lack the support to leave the country, which puts them in a precarious state where they continue to remain oppressed and deprived of fundamental rights. IDPs ought to have the same level of protections and rights as migrants and any other human.

Even though the most expansive and inclusive migrant definition does not include IDPs, it still seeks to expand the level of responsibility and assigns responsibility to the host State than any other Convention. The Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights (Pizarro, 2002) considers migrants as:

- (a) Persons who are outside the territory of the State of which there are nationals or citizens, are not subject to its legal protection and are in the territory of another State;
- (b) Persons who do not enjoy the general legal recognition of rights, which is inherent in the granting by the host State of the status of refugee, naturalized person or of similar status;
- (c) Persons who do not enjoy either general legal protection of their fundamental rights by virtue of diplomatic agreements, visas or other agreements.

This definition is useful in that it delegates a level of responsibility to the host state that goes above and beyond what is currently expected in international human rights conventions and most state immigration policy, as States are not required to grant the same rights to migrants or those with irregular status to nationals.

State immigration policy regulates movement and permits entry/exit within the state territory. In doing so, States assign a status to an individual that can dictate the level of rights based on the assigned status, whereas the proposed definition would provide all

individuals, regardless of legal status, with the same level of rights and protections.

Although this more expanded definition could protect the rights of migrants in a more inclusive manner, it still lacks the consideration of the collective identity, namely that of migrant networks.

Networks are a defining feature for migrants in the expression of their collective identity and are highly influential throughout a migrant's journey and integration process. Canzler, Kaufmann, and Kesselring (2008) would go so far to say that networks act as capable actors. Not only are networks acting as capable actors, but also they represent the thoughts, ideas and circumstances of individual migrants. Tilly (1990) also emphasizes the importance of networks, "It is not people who migrate, but networks" (p.79). Migrant networks are powerful and effective in mobilizing resources for migrants and if we consider them as capable actors, then at the very least networks should be included in the migrant definition as they are used to assist migrants while in-transit and integrating into the receiving community.

One place that should utilize an expanded definition of migrant to include collective identity is in regional human rights courts such as the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR). This regional court, which is charged with examining cases related to the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) and related protocols, has authority to provide legally binding decisions for the 47 member States of the Council of Europe. Although the ECHR does define rights for all individuals, it does not grant specific protections to migrants, beyond what is expressed in Article 4 of Protocol 4.

Article 4 of Protocol 4 includes, "the prohibition of collective expulsion of aliens," which is a protection for individual migrants, as it requires States to interview

each individual on the merits of their own claim. The most recent ruling, which reversed the original decision in *Khlaifia and Others v. Italy*, proves to provide slight clarification from the ECtHR as to their decisions on ‘collective expulsion.’ As Cox and Lagana (2017) articulate, it was not all that successful in protecting migrant rights, “The end result in the Grand Chamber’s ruling in *Khlaifia and Others v. Italy* is that the ECHR watered down its case law and undermined concrete due process rights and protections for migrants being subjected to deportation procedures. The court has therefore provided States more leeway in the treatment they owe to every migrant, at a time when political pressure is growing in Europe for further collective expulsions” (Cox and Lagana, 2017, p. 1).

This case concerned a group of Tunisian migrants traveling by sea to Italy in 2011 and were intercepted by the Italian coastguard and detained at the nearby island of Lampedusa for three days and then taken to Palermo for an additional five to seven days. Several of the migrant claims included a violation of Article 5, which states, “No one shall be deprived of his liberty save...in accordance with a procedure prescribed by law.” The Italian government held that although there was no domestic law with regard to procedures for detention, they did refer to an agreement made with Tunisia. Ultimately the court found, “To detain migrants lawfully, Italy was required to have published a law controlling how this was to be done, to have given each person notification of the reason for detention and an effective means of challenging the decision to detain and the ECtHR had ruled that the Italian government had violated Article 5 of the ECHR” (Cox and Lagana, 2017, p. 1).

Although this particular ruling was not considered a complete victory for migrant rights, it does highlight how migrants who are in similar situations in the eyes of the State are treated with similar violations while at the same time not granted the needed protections under the ECHR (Cox and Lagana, 2017). As jurisprudence continues to evolve in the area of migrant rights in Europe, it will be interesting to see whether the ECtHR will rule in favor of recognizing group claims. One way group rights with regards to migrants have been protected is through the establishment of the family.

The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights is an international human rights treaty that although has weak enforcement mechanisms, does provide protection to families. As stated in Article 10, the family is recognized as, “the natural and fundamental group unit of society.” As the concept of family has dramatically expanded, and continues to evolve, across the globe, international law and conventions ought to reflect and keep up with the shifts. With this concept, can migrant networks be considered family? Should we think of migrant networks as an extension of the family?

The expanded concept of family could be one way to redefine a migrant’s collective identity, but inherent in this lack of definition is the continual cause for confusion and chaos in the migration system. As States further restrict immigration law, with little assistance from regional or international human rights courts, migrants are left to apple pick which State has the most flexible immigration law. Unless the international community can collectively address how to ensure rights and protections are applied equally to all migrant situations, States will continue to compete for resources and further jeopardize the status of those who are most vulnerable and in need of assistance.

### **Conclusion:**

Migration is an important factor in the erosion of traditional boundaries between languages, cultures, ethnic group, and nation-states ([www.unesco.org](http://www.unesco.org), retrieved 04/20/2017). Even those who do not migrate are affected by movements of people in or out of their communities, and by the resulting changes. Migration, in a modern globalized era, is not the simple or single act of crossing a border, but rather a lifelong process that impacts all aspects of the lives of those involved and the surrounding networks.

What must be highlighted in the discussion on what should be included in the definition of migrant is the reality that migrants are not just individuals making individual decisions. Rather, it is individuals who are part of larger collectives or networks that make collective decisions based on shared resources and information and decide in the best interest of the individual and the group. The migrant definition needs to include and acknowledge the power and capability of networks as an entity.

Migrants are both individual agents acting on free rational choice but at the same time they approach the decision-making and integration process from an expression of their collective identity. Therefore defining and framing migration must include the complexities and challenges that migrants face both as they make decisions but also with regard to ample protection. As we think about migration as a collective process we can better represent a migrant's identity, process and facilitate integration.

As discussed, definitions play a crucial role in the structure and framing of migration, which ultimately is translated into law and policy. Although INGOs have separate mandates and responsibilities, as opposed to States and international human rights conventions, they all have a responsibility and impact the well-being of migrants. It

is also essential to accurately represent the agency of migrants within the definition as to best provide the elements for effective immigration and integration policy. Therefore, migration should be framed as a collective process in which migrants transform their identities throughout the process and during integration. Migrant networks are one way to express collective migrant identity and migration should be thought of as a network.

Identity is constructed by the individual in consultation with community and is therefore both an individual and collective process. Migrant identity is largely a collective identity that is in a constant state of influx. Migrants are adjusting their morals, beliefs and attitudes as they move from the country of origin to the country of destination. This adjustment of identity continues to persist and is also experienced throughout the integration process. Mavroudi and Nagel (2016) believe, “Migration is a key element of globalization and can be seen both as a cause and effect of global integration” (p. 45). Throughout a migrant’s journey and during the integration phase, migrants adapt their identity to their changing environments and utilize networks to assist in the integration process. The next chapter will explore the utilization of migrant networks can serve an indicator for migrant integration.



## Chapter 2

### **Migrant Networks as an Indicator of Migrant Integration**

When people are placed in situations where their livelihood is at stake, as seen with most migrants, they rely on their networks for access to resources, information and support. Migrants are in a particularly vulnerable state as they are often in search of permanency and regularity, and therefore need support and guidance in navigating systems while they work to understand a new culture, legal system and even new language. In general, migrants are savvy at building and sustaining networks of support and consult their networks as part of their decision to stay or to leave. Networks, in a migrant's life, are not only used as a means of survival but also throughout their process of integration.

Networks provide migrants with a sense of security and belonging by providing opportunities to resource share in their new community, which creates a bridge to understanding and a feeling of connectedness to the community that fosters integration. Migrants integrate in their new receiving communities by relying on these established networks as a gateway into a new culture and society. Networks are crucial to the survival and integration of migrant populations, and therefore should be utilized and incorporated in the formation of integration policy and implementation within domestic, regional and global spheres.

This chapter suggests there is a link between the type and involvement of migrant networks and the integration process. Networks help to tell a story about a migrant's life, identity, sense of belonging and their level of integration, and networks should be utilized as an indicator for migrant integration. We will begin by framing the context in which migrants exist, which is one of fear and threat of the other, which will help to understand how the term integration has evolved over time. Then we will define and explore the concept of integration, the current instruments used for measurement, and finally discuss how and why networks should be used as an additional indicator for measuring migrant integration.

### **Current Perception of Migrants and Impact on Integration:**

Prior to discussing what integration is or is not, it is important to contextualize how integration has been perceived across the globe, which highlights some of the challenges in merely defining terms as it relates to integration. As integration is a rather new concept in field of migration studies, terms such as assimilation and acculturation were more commonly used. Assimilation and acculturation were meant to assume the migrant was the one trying to mimic the behaviors and attitudes of the native population while masking their own culture, attitudes and beliefs. The field of migration is, however, moving in the direction of understanding the levels of contribution and impact migrants have on receiving communities rather than examining how migrants can blend into their new surroundings, thereby giving up a former identity in exchange for a new one.

Assimilation or acculturation theory was more commonly used to examine the process of assimilating into the receiving community. Throughout the years, discourse

has evolved from assimilation to integration, and now to a discussion of inclusivity. For the purpose of this paper, I will use integration and define it as a term that recognizes individuals having free and rational choice, individual and collective identities, and inherent value and worth to their society. This ideological shift promotes and reflects the participation and free will/choice in the process, whereas assimilation and acculturation assumes a person must lose something in return for something else.

Immigration has been a contentious issue across the globe for many centuries. There has been a focus, specifically a recent shift across the globe, which highlights the fear of the 'Other' and threat to national identity. One example being the current rhetoric of President Donald Trump pushing for a wall to be built between the United States and Mexico as a way to keep Mexican immigrants out of the United States, as they are perceived to threaten national identity and provide competition in the job market. This shift of a fear-based perception towards migrants eventually becomes translated into restrictive immigration policy, as policies ultimately reflect public sentiment in a democratic society.

As a result, migrant integration has been historically, and still continues to be, thought of in terms of assimilation and acculturation. While inclusivity and integration prevail conceptually, restrictive immigration policies are still currently dominating across the globe. Anti-immigrant policies have risen across the globe to promote the former concept of assimilation, as a means to protect national identity or prevent immigration altogether. Another example is the Executive Order 13780 'Protecting the Nation from Foreign Terrorist Entry into the United States,' which was released on March 6<sup>th</sup> 2017 by President Trump. This Executive Order revokes and replaces Executive Order 13769,

restricts admission and halts new visa applications from six predominately Muslim countries for 90 days, and issues a 120-day suspension of the U.S. Refugee Admissions program, as a way of “protecting the nation from foreign terrorist entry into the United States.” This serves as an example of how fear of the ‘Other’ and expectation of assimilation has led to disguising restrictive and discriminatory immigration policy as protecting the country from foreign terrorists.

Societies and countries that employ restrictive immigration policies fail to recognize the benefits of a multi-cultural and multi-ethnic society. As a receiving community becomes more resistant to accepting outsiders or realizing the benefits that migrants can bring, integration cannot fully take shape. Integration is also dependent upon a migrant’s sense of belonging, feelings of mutual respect and understanding, and if a receiving community cannot or will not foster this, integration will be stunted.

Difference in beliefs, ideas and cultures brings richness to any society that will ultimately maximize the skills and abilities of all its members. In order to benefit from multiculturalism, a society must embrace and respect difference by creating a culture of welcome and inclusion. Societies stand to gain when all their members can fully participate, and therefore countries and societies should place focus on efforts of integration rather than how to prevent migrants from crossing the border.

### **What is Migrant Integration and how is it Measured?**

Integration is both challenging to define and measure. Conceptually, integration is difficult to define as there is no agreed upon definition of what it means to be fully integrated nor what successful integration looks like. This paper defines successful

integration as having both the ability to fully participate in the receiving community and also the feeling understood by the receiving community. A migrant will experience many changes while integrating within his/her new community; measureable changes such as employment, housing and education status but also a shift in cultural and national identity, amongst other more qualitative changes and iterations of identity that must be accounted for in order to understand migration and migrant identity as a collective process.

Integration can also be challenging to measure, however, in the context of this paper it will be classified as a process that examines migrants over time by utilizing a set of indicators, both quantitative and qualitative in nature, to determine a level of participation in society. The type and number of indicators used, along with the sample groups may vary based on the study, but integration is understood as a collective process that is examined over time. While some migrant integration researchers choose to compare different foreign-born populations over time, others compare foreign-born populations to native-born populations over time. It is important to understand the benefits and complications for each type of study because they attempt to infer conclusions based upon groups that may not have close enough similarities to draw conclusions from.

Measuring integration as a target comparison poses several problems: it assumes the native-population is 'integrated,' and also makes the assumption that the two populations (foreign-born and native-born) have similar desires for attainment of the outcomes measured. As a result, I would suggest comparing different generations of

foreign-born populations over time, which would help to better address the differences that may exist between foreign-born and native-born populations.

Additionally, some studies on migrant integration, such as a report produced by the Migration Policy Institute in 2016 titled, “Serving Immigrant Families Through Two-Generation Programs: Identifying Family Needs and Responsive Program Approaches,” focus more on the integration indicators that allow for measuring migrant status over time, and can assess integration on whether a migrant achieves a particular status from when they entered their receiving community over a specified time period. Other research, such as a report released by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development and European Commission in 2015 titled, “Indicators of Immigrant Integration,” prefers a more qualitative approach and compares quality of life indicators of migrants to the native population in the understanding that the goal is for migrants to have the same level of opportunity and achieve the same outcomes as those of the receiving community. In both approaches to the study integration, they identify how the measurable indicators are leading to tangible outputs, such as educational attainment or economic stability, but neither assesses the overall outcomes achieved by the receiving community when examining migrant integration.

Alba and Foner (2014) posit that integration is measurable based on the following indicators: residential situation, incorporation into the labor market, second-generation education, ability to gain political office, the role of race and religion, intermarriage patterns, national identity and sense of belonging. They also attempt to answer whether integration is simply mimicking the native, to which they respond, “There is not one overall grand narrative” (p. 265). Integration is complex and measuring integration is

even more challenging as it attempts to categorize people and determine if they are maximizing resources and participating fully in their new society.

As integration has now been defined as having the ability to participate in the receiving community and have a sense of belonging or being understood, measuring migrant participation and feelings of belongingness should be quantified. Integration has often been measured with a variety of commonly used quantitative indicators such as: participation in the workforce, educational attainment, language proficiency, public benefit recipient, income status, median household income, housing status and legal status. These indicators tell us how a migrant has obtained access to resources and are **quantitative** indicators, whereas a sense of belonging and the feeling of being understood is a **qualitative** indicator.

Integration should be measured using a balance of both quantitative and qualitative indicators. This balance of both quantitative and qualitative indicators will be able to tell the story of whether a migrant can successfully obtain what they need to survive but also to move beyond survival to participate fully in their new community by feeling accepted, respected and understood, which are the grounds of inclusivity.

Integration can be examined through the indicators Alba and Foner (2014) propose, as these indicators encompass both quantitative and qualitative measurements. Alba and Foner's (2014) indicators can be divided into quantitative indicators, such as residential situation, incorporation into the job market, and second-generation education, which provide a quantified number or pattern that can demonstrate an output. The other indicators, such as ability to gain political office, the role of race and religion, intermarriage patterns, national identity and sense of belonging, can be classified as

qualitative indicators in that they all provide a more nuanced description of the outcome of integration.

Together, both quantitative outputs and qualitative outcomes are needed to fully understand varying degrees of integration. Examining networks as an indicator for integration I propose will also add a crucial element to measuring integration from both a quantitative and qualitative perspective. The following sections will outline in greater detail how the incorporation of networks can be used as an indicator for integration. Social capital that is produced by networks can be quantified and used as a quantitative measurement in integration, whereas the sense of belonging that is enhanced as an outcome of migrant networks can serve as the qualitative indicator for migrant integration. Migrant networks have tremendous potential to offer insight into the levels of migrant integration, but it is also important to examine other outside factors beyond indicators that influence whether or not a migrant is able to integrate.

Factors such as cultural distance, language, educational attainment, socioeconomic status, values and many others all contribute to how quickly or easily a migrant can integrate in their receiving community. In other words, factors are what *cause* integration whereas indicators are the *measurements* of integration and thus there is a tight relationship between them. It is important to understand that there are many factors that contribute to how and how long it will take a migrant to integrate into a receiving community. As such, integration is naturally dependent upon participation of the individual migrant, migrant networks and the receiving community for the individual migrant to feel a sense of belonging, connectedness and gradual participation and contribution to the receiving community.



Depending on factors that help or hinder integration, the levels of migrant integration even within the same receiving community will vary. For example, migrants that originate from countries with large cultural distance and have little educational attainment may take many generations to see cultural integration, whereas other migrant populations that have a shorter cultural distance and speak multiple languages will more easily integrate in their new society. Integration factors are not created equal amongst migrant populations nor within a single receiving community. Let us examine one factor, such as cultural values, which will better illustrate the complexity but importance of how factors impact integration outcomes and indicators.

Hofstede's (2011) cultural dimensions theory has six dimensions on which cultural values can be analyzed; individualism versus collectivism, uncertainty versus avoidance, power distance or strength of social hierarchy, masculinity versus femininity, long-term versus short-term orientation, and indulgence versus self-restraint. Within these dimensions, a migrant exerts both individual and collective identity in trying to assess their own cultural values against the receiving community that exists within the six dimensions.

For example, if a migrant comes from a country of origin that promotes a collective notion of identity and centers the society around the family unit, then the migrant would easily adapt and integration into a receiving community with similar values. However, a migrant may find it more challenging when the receiving community does not reflect or appreciate the same cultural values. These six dimensions help to clarify cultural distance and how this one factor, with varying dimensions, can strongly determine how easily a migrant will integrate.

These factors can either help or hinder a migrant's ability to integrate and will change depending on what is most valued and accepted in the receiving community. For example, a migrant population that does not have high literacy rates may struggle with educational attainment as language acquisition may take many years, but the migrant population may excel at incorporation into the job market as they have marketable skills and a strong work ethic that is valued by the receiving community.

In conclusion, Hofstede's (2010) dimensions can be used to further understand how a variety of factors should be considered while measuring integration, as factors cause integration. Some migrant populations will struggle less in some areas of integration than others, as some receiving communities are more receptive to the cultural dimensions of the migrant population depending on the nation's own history, identity and cultural dimensions.

Migrants integrate over time across the various indicators discussed by Alba and Foner (2014) and within Hofstede's (2011) cultural dimensions, add a layer of factors that must also be reflected upon when drawing conclusions about migrant integration. As a result and consideration of these studies, I propose an inclusion and examination of networks within the integration indicator framework. The next section will discuss utilization of migrant networks and argue for their inclusion as an integration indicator. It is important to understand the full scope of migrant identity as migrants express collective identity through networks; and it is through networks that migrants are able to pave the way for future generations to have easier access and participation in the receiving community.

## **Migrant Networks Facilitate Integration through Social Capital: a Quantitative Indicator**

Migrants are particularly adept at utilizing networks, and if used properly, they can facilitate integration and understanding. Wellman and Berkowitz (1988) posit, “Structured social relationships are a more powerful factor for explaining social life than are individual attributes” (p. 122). What motivates human behavior is the need for social connection and self-realization; therefore network analysis is a crucial piece to understanding migrant integration.

Networks help bridge the gap between migrants and their receiving community by providing a framework for engaging in dialogue with the new culture and society. This section will describe how migrant networks are used to assist in time-bound integration. Migrant networks can be used to foster connections, migrant independence and create and sustain a sense of belonging within a receiving community. Migrant networks are a crucial element in measuring migrant integration, and the impact of migrant networks on integration can be measured both quantitatively and qualitatively. This section will focus on the quantitative approach by using social capital that is gained from interactions resulted from migrant networks.

Migrants rely heavily on networks not only for information and resources but also for social and cultural support. As integration is a process that unfolds over years, and generations, the pursuit of integration will likely include relying on and supporting others throughout the process. Unlikely connections can be developed, such as assisting or getting assistance from those who were previously considered ‘the enemy.’

Throughout a migrant's journey, a reliance on others is expected and others will return favors and assist others at some point, either through financial means or by assisting other migrants who are in need, but the cycle continues. These transactions are essential and allow for networks to continue to persist and grow over time. Migrant networks also lead to integration outcomes such as increased access to employment opportunities, housing, childcare, food options and a variety of other points of entry into the community. These networks, ties or connects are established over time and provide support and access while integrating.

Migrant–resident ties constructed over time, beyond kin and ethnic ties, are a valuable host-area-specific social resource that may facilitate migrant integration into the destination societies. In the absence of institutional support, the role of social networks in Chinese rural–urban migrants' integration into cities becomes particularly important. Understanding the role of migrant–resident ties in migrant integration may assist in enhancing the integration process. (Yue et al., 2013, p. 1715)

Yue et al (2013) uses the term 'migrant-resident tie,' while De Haas (2011), and others, use the term 'transnational tie' to mean migrants either connecting with residents or with individuals or families in the country of origin. There are a variety of terms used, but for the purpose of this paper I want to distinguish between homogeneous and heterogeneous networks. Homogenous networks are migrant networks that are predominately comprised of kin or ethnicity based, whereas, heterogeneous migrant networks are comprised of individuals both from the same country of origin or ethnic background but also with individuals who are from a different country of origin who come together around a shared vision or mission.

The distinction between these two types of migrant networks is important as the shift from the reliance of homogenous networks to the movement of choice and

participation in heterogeneous networks serves as one indicator for migrant integration. A reliance on homogenous networks implies that a migrant must remain connected to their kin or ethnicity based networks as a means of survival, or for access to resources, perhaps because they have not fully developed the means or necessary connections in the receiving community to access resources on their own. Whereas migrants that have more heterogeneous networks demonstrate that they are able to move beyond networks that are kin or ethnicity-based relationships to more fully interact with those who represent a more diverse part of society.

It can be argued that migrants may choose to surround themselves with homogenous networks and still possess other quantitative indicators of integration such as possession of a job, language and literacy acquisitions and a stable housing situation; however, migrants who only interact with homogenous networks can also be argued as not fully integrated. This is an important point to note that the presence of networks, either homogeneous or heterogeneous, is not enough to indicate whether a migrant is fully integrated. The purpose of this paper is to articulate that networks do provide crucial information about integration both quantitatively and qualitatively, but networks should not be the only indicator present to assess levels of migrant integration.

At some point a migrant's networks will change as they become more integrated, and they will no longer need the same support and resources as they once did. This reliance or tendency to move away from homogenous networks during this integration process is an indicator that should be examined and utilized in the measurement of integration. The transition from a reliance on migrant networks to facilitate integration and a move towards choosing networks based on common interests and values, demonstrates the level

of need based on survival versus networks that are chosen are for stability, support and participation in society.

I would argue this would complement Alba and Foner's (2014) set of indicators for integration but adding an additional layer of network analysis on the reliance factor of networks. In integration research thus far, migrant networks have not been acknowledged as an indicator for migrant integration. Even the Migrant Integration Policy Index (MIPEX), an online research tool that captures integration policy from 38 countries across the globe and measures them against 137 indicators, also does not include networks as an indicator for migrant integration.

Migrant integration researchers seek to quantify how integration can be tangibly measured over time. I would contend that migrant networks do offer both a quantitative and qualitative approach to indicate whether integration is occurring. Networks build social capital, which serves as a quantifiable measurement in that money and goods are exchanged as a result of the network. Migrant networks also serve as a qualitative indicator as they provide an enhanced sense of belonging, which is a qualitative indicator in that participation in the community increases as a result of migrant networks when people feel welcomed and recognized as a positive contribution to the receiving community.

One way to quantitatively measure networks as an indicator of migrant integration is to recognize and examine the social capital they possess, which is a unique attribute to migrants and the connections they hold. "Migrants who are integrated successfully into receiving societies have accumulated capital, specifically social capital, and acquired new knowledge and skills, and are often well-placed to contribute to the development of their

countries of origin” (OECD, 2015). The social capital that is built can be transmitted both in the country of origin and in the receiving community that can be mutually beneficial.

There are several interpretations of what constitutes social capital, but Douglas Massey et al (1998) offer interesting insight into how social capital can translate into capital that can be quantified, “Network connections constitute a form of social capital that people can draw upon to gain access to various kinds of financial capital: foreign employment, high wages, and the possibility of accumulating savings and sending remittances” (p. 56). Migrants have access to resources that many other native born populations do not have that can be used to supplement income and turned into remittances. The wealth and connections earned from and within networks should also remain as another area for further research. Migrant networks build Community-Based Organizations, small businesses, Cooperatives and several other business models that add value and income into receiving communities that should be accounted for in measuring migrant integration.

Migrant networks are hugely influential and a powerful force behind integration that remit social capital that is beneficial both in the integration process for the migrant but can be utilized by the receiving community as a way to spread information and resources in the country of origin and the receiving community. Social capital possessed by migrant networks should also be considered in integration policy development and implementation.

Integration is a concept used by researchers to study groups of people but not necessarily a term that migrants choose to embrace or feel the necessity to act upon, instead there are many relational factors that promote or hinder integration. It is crucial to

understand that despite whether a migrant chooses to integrate or resist, as they may only be a temporary migrant, the choices made will impact migrant populations for generations to come. Therefore, networks are a useful and relational tool that should be included in measuring integration as networks not only serve as a point of access for migrants but constructing networks also circumvents discrimination. The next section will review the current opposition to the idea that networks can be an established indicator of integration.

### **Opposing View:**

One opposing argument to the inclusion of networks as an integration indicator is presented by De Haas (2011); he argues transnational ties, or in my words homogenous networks, do not serve as a good indicator of integration. “The results of the analysis suggest that sociocultural integration has negative effect on return migration intentions, while economic integration and transnational ties have a more ambiguous and sometimes positive effects” (p. 755). His argument is focused on the fact that migrant decisions and motivations are often made in the best interest of the family, as they often send the most educated and therefore most suited member of the family abroad to remit money back home. The plan is for the family member to eventually return when enough capital has been established, and he concludes that networks have little to do with whether the migrant is integrated based on their connection to transnational ties.

Based on the analysis and argument provided by De Haas (2011), the connection to transnational ties, or the use of homogenous networks, would support my claim that the more closely connected migrants are to their homogenous networks, the less integrated



they are in their receiving communities as they are planning to return to the country of origin and do not fully integrate as a result.

Networks are the crux in where integration is either facilitated or hindered. The more integrated a migrant has become in its community, the less reliant they will be on their homogenous networks. If a migrant is very reliant on homogenous networks and/or transnational ties, they are spending less time participating in the receiving community and can provide some indication of their level of integration.

The migrant who has intentions to return is purposefully trying not to engage with their receiving community so that the transnational ties are strengthened and retained as a reminder of what the purpose of migration was. They may have entered the workforce, developed language acquisition, have a suitable housing situation but still not feel understood or connected to the new community as they are expected to not become too established and leave the family permanently.

### **Migrant Networks Enhance Sense of Belonging:**

#### **a Qualitative Indicator**

Migrants, as well as all others, must feel a sense of belonging and recognition in their communities in order to foster maximization of their participation in the community. If migrants are not able to feel a sense of inclusion, then both migrant participation and integration are stunted, and migrant networks can help foster this sense of recognition and belonging.

As discussed in Chapter 1, defining identity is challenging, but one distinguishing feature of identity is the shared values that bind people together. People need to feel they

belong and are recognized as members who contribute to a unified community. The sense of being unified and belongingness are a very powerful force and if they do not exist or if individuals are threatened, they can have a lasting impact. Wood and Waite (2011) define belongingness as an “emotional attachment that relates individuals to the material and social worlds that they inhabit and experience” (p. 201). The scale of belongingness exists at national, transnational, regional, local and bodily levels within everyday life.

Migrant belongingness has been measured and thought of in a number of ways, but most often in terms of belonging to the nation through an exploration of ties to the homeland but also in trying to understand the “multiple transnational and assimilative practices” (Nagel and Staeheli, 2008, pg. 419). The Welsh Assembly Government’s Refugee Inclusion Strategy (2006) stated that belonging and inclusion begins on day one of arrival to the UK and successful inclusion is closely related to the standard of reception procedure and people’s experience (Jackson, 2014).

Feelings of belongingness are a crucial element to a person’s identity, and the level of inclusion will impact whether a person can contribute and express his/herself in their community. When a person feels they have recognition and acceptance in their community, they can more fully maximize their identity and participation in the community. However, if there is a lack of inclusion for an individual or group of individuals, there will be a feeling of non-recognition, which will lead to non-participation, feelings of disenfranchisement and ultimately impact identity. Our environment shapes identity and if our environment does not recognize or accept our innate gifts and talents as useful, then our ability to participate and express our identity becomes stunted.

Therefore, lack of inclusion and recognition is more expressly seen in migrant populations as opposed to native populations since they are working to integrate into a new community. For example, migrants who have identity features that are not culturally accepted tend to end up living in the shadows. Such is the case with undocumented immigrants in the United States, “The undocumented community ...is one that lives in the shadows that plug away silently at daily life hoping not to bring any unnecessary attention to themselves. Couple that with that with a culture which does not easily accept or value an LGBTQ lifestyle...and you find a number of Latinos hiding or suppressing their identity” (Hannan, 2016). Inclusion and recognition are key factors to having sense of belonging and being able to express identity. If migrants are met with resistance and do not feel welcomed by the receiving community, they will be forced to live in the shadows and not fully engage or participate. “There is growing recognition that immigrants today, regardless of their impact on material interests of the native-born, are seen as a pressing threat to the culture that unifies Americans” (Paxton and Mughan, 2006, p. 3). There is identity of the migrants and that of the receiving community, and when the two interact with one another each other’s identity will shift.

There are also both self-imposed and external limitations to belonging, for Bond (2006), they are based on three identity markers: residence, birth and ancestry (p. 611). For the United States, and in many other countries, citizenship has been one of the major markers of inclusion, along with language. Language is one of the major access points in which we communicate.

In the United States, the inability or perceived unwillingness for immigrants to learn English has been an excuse for exclusion or non-citizenship. I would argue that

shared values as expressed in language seem to emanate from these belonging requirements, which ultimately become the requirements for assimilation. If a person cannot meet or assimilate to these standards, they become a threat to the shared values or the national family. This threat is not necessarily contingent on challenges in the economic market, but rather focused on threat to culture. “Just as economic threat is the key concept in understanding material intergroup relations, assimilation is the key concept in understanding cultural intergroup relations” (Paxton and Mughan, 2004, p. 550-1). In this example, language exemplifies the shared values that bind the native population and it becomes the sense of belonging that is required to integrate. Sense of belonging is required for integration, but it is contingent upon shared values that can be mimicked by the migrant.

Integration is stunted in a profound way when the receiving community refuses to participate in integration by having a welcoming attitude towards migrants. Migrants are then left to feel unwanted and not develop a sense of belong for a longer period of time, if ever. This can lead to feeling disenfranchised and a lack of loyalty or even resentment towards the community, which has the potential for an increase in crime, continuing the cycle of poverty, and lower graduation and employment rates if the receiving community has discriminatory views.

A sense of belonging, recognition and ability to self-realize are all crucial elements to successful integration. As Maslow points out, these are all elements humans need to thrive and migrants also must feel these things to be productive members of their new society otherwise they will remain unattached to their new society and not be part of the overall collective national identity and remain as a sub-culture.

### Chapter Conclusion:

Integration is simply the process of being understood by the receiving community and the ability to participate as a full member of society. Migrant networks are particularly adept at facilitating integration because they allow migrants to express collective identity are what migrants use to survive and make decisions. Migrants and their networks should be more fully included in the development and implementation of migration integration policy as networks contain tremendous social capital and can mutually benefit the sending and receiving communities.

This chapter has highlighted that integration is not one grand narrative (Alba and Foner 2016); rather **integration is a pluralistic idea**. Integration happens gradually over time and does not force someone to change identity or culture. Rather, it should be viewed as an opportunity for a variety of individual cultures and ideas to intersect, creating a pluralistic society that is rich with diversity and inclusive of everyone. Migrants add new voices, values, and dimensions to society and therefore receiving communities must work together to determine how best to integrate them all to formulate something new and fosters new understanding.

Networks provide a foundation for migrants to feel a sense of belonging, share and express collective identity and do provide an indicator for how integration can be examined and measured. On a larger scale, integration research needs to go beyond common qualitative indicators such as employment and housing status, language acquisition, and citizenship to think critically about what integration outcomes tell us about how migrants relate to the receiving community. Networks add one additional

indicator that widens the scope of field, but additional areas should be assessed based on how migrants make decisions and relate to their surroundings.

Migration has been and will continue to remain a contentious topic and integration research must combat negatively and dispel myths to demonstrate what is needed to assist in the integration process. Change is inevitable and permeates throughout all aspects of life, but it can be scary and perceived as threatening to those who may see it as challenging their identity and asking them to change as well.

In reality that is what is being asked, for everyone to think and reflect on its own individual and collective identity and be flexible and open to change. At the same time, no culture or identity goes without change or adaptation. If a culture or society prohibits migrants or immigrants from infiltrating into their society, it still does not rid them of social or cultural change. Globalization and technological advancements has already made a mark across the globe so that many societies have had to respond and adjust accordingly to ensure they stay competitive with the rest of the globe.

### **Conclusion:**

Identity is in constant motion; it evolves as we connect to one another and within our environment, as those around us impact our individual identity. If we do not feel a sense of belonging to our communities and societies, then our ability to participate as full members of society is profoundly stunted. Communities are unable to fully benefit from all of its members when there is not room at the table. Meaning, individual levels of participation in society is not only the responsibility of the individual but also within the community-at-large. Communities are responsible for the well-being and participation of all its members, and the human rights framework and regime is responsible for promoting and protecting the rights of all persons.

As migration continues to remain as a controversial and contentious issue around the globe, it is now more important than ever to have an accurate portrayal of the reliance and fortitude that migrants possess and exude throughout the duration of deciding to migrate and within the integration process. Migration has become a collective process that should be defined by the collective nature and migrants utilize networks as an expression of collective identity.

This paper has discussed and proposed the need to expand the definition of ‘migrant’ to be more inclusive and reflective of the reality that migrants have both an individual and collective identity. The definition of ‘migrant’ should be expanded to include the collective identity that is brought forth and expressed by migrant networks. One place to begin would be to look within the human rights frameworks, since this is where rights are granted and acknowledged globally, and necessary revisions would be to include networks as an extension of the family unit. Human rights Conventions, such as

the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, already acknowledges and deems families as ‘the fundamental unit of society.’ The expansion of the family unit to include migrants would allow for a deeper understanding of the realities migrants face in the decision-making process, while in-transit and throughout the integration process and help to clarify the application of laws and policies both within the human rights framework but also to set a standard for states to implement and acknowledge an understanding of how migrants utilize networks.

Human rights conventions and state immigration policy must reflect and acknowledge how instrumental migrant networks are within the process of integration. This understanding is facilitated by a deeper understanding of how migrants access and utilize networks and also how collective identity is expressed. This paper’s conclusion asserts that not only the definition of migrant needs to be expanded but also to consider utilizing migrant networks as an indicator of migrant integration.

Migrant networks provide integration researchers with another indicator that allows for a more nuanced understanding of integration and serves as a way to assess both qualitative and quantitative indicators of integration. Quantitatively, the social capital that is emitted in the form of money, social and financial connections, and business opportunities can be quantified and should be an area of further examination and consideration in the field of migration.

Migrant networks provide real and quantifiable value to the integration process and should be examined as an indicator in itself. Qualitatively, migrant networks also provide migrants with a sense of belonging; this can be measured to tell the story of how migrants relate to their communities over time through the process of integration.



Migrant networks express migrant's thoughts, ideas, and identity and provide researchers and the receiving community with information in how best to provide resources and develop policy that is most suitable to various migrant populations.

Migrants are in constant flux, of not only identity, but also with legal status, employment, housing and a variety of other life changes that are incredibly unstable. As a result, migrants are resourceful by utilizing networks to assist them throughout the decision-making process all the way until integration to the receiving community. Integration requires participation from both the migrant and the receiving community, as the community and the migrant's support networks are crucial to the outcome of integration. Therefore, networks should be examined and used as an indicator for measuring migrant integration.

Inclusion of migrants and migrant integration can foster stronger, healthier, more vibrant communities that reflect diversity and participation by all voices being heard. It is imperative and timely to combat restrictive immigration policy with further research in how to facilitate migrant integration. Migrants are in particularly vulnerable moments of their lives, many not choosing the circumstances they were given, and need human rights promotion and protection. As global citizens, we are all responsible for being careful citizens, researchers, observers and listeners of migrants so that a more thoughtful and nuanced approach can be taken in facilitating and responding to challenges in migrant integration and policy implementation. Integration policy must become a priority and global reality that serves as a next step in ensuring communities are inclusive, promote equality and provide all members with an opportunity to be recognized for their attributes.

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