The Processes of Adaptation, Assimilation and Integration in the Country of Migration: A Psychosocial Perspective on Place Identity Changes

Viorica Cristina Cormos

Department of Humanities and Social-Political Sciences, Ștefan cel Mare University, 720229 Suceava, Romania; cristina.cormos@atlas.usv.ro

Abstract: In the process of migration, the migrant goes through certain stages and a series of transformations that leave their mark on their individuality over time. These unavoidable processes, adaptation, assimilation, and eventually integration, as well as numerous other factors, lead to changes in identity. The concept addressed in the paper, which supports the understanding of the process of change, is that of acculturation. Acculturation is the process by which an individual acquires and adapts to a new cultural environment as a result of being placed in a new culture. The theoretical approach led to an objective understanding of the process of identity change in a given context. Symbolic interactionism theory aims to reveal the internal mechanisms of identity formation by overcoming the opposition between the individual and the collective, and ethno-linguistic identity theory posits that when faced with alternative courses of action, individuals will choose the one that will enhance their self-presentation. The aim of this article is to examine identity-level changes in migrants who have undergone the processes of adaptation, assimilation, and integration in the country of migration from a psychosocial perspective. In order to achieve this aim, an interview with 30 Romanians who emigrated abroad was conducted. Based on a conceptual and methodological framework, the present article carried out a thematic analysis in which the most significant changes in mentality, thinking, self-esteem, principles of life, culture, attitude and behavior, identity place/space, etc. were highlighted through concrete quotes from the interviews with the migrants, all of which were explained through the identity-migration theory.

Keywords: international migration; migrant; acculturation; processes; factors; identity change; place identity

1. Introduction

The phenomenon of migration has always existed and has undergone changes over time in terms of content, scope, and forms of manifestation. Migration has mainly been economically motivated, but also a means of withdrawing from threats. Migration has been seen as a demographic problem, with the population or depopulation of certain territories. In other cases, migration is seen as a “balancing instrument”, both economically and demographically. Migration is a complex phenomenon consisting of the movement of people from one territorial area to another, followed by a change in residence and/or employment in the area of arrival. It covers a wide range of population movements, the reasons for this movement and the legal status of migrants, which determines how long they can stay in a host country and under what conditions [1].

International migration plays an important role in contemporary social transformations. It is a result of global change, but also a force for future change, both in sending and receiving countries, at the individual and collective level. The phenomenon of migration constitutes a simultaneous change in physical and socio-cultural space, which involves not only movement from one community to another, but also the destruction of structural
attachments in the area of departure, reorganization of the national system of destination, and cultural assimilation of the receiving environment [2].

International migration is a factor of social change as a result of population movement, integration, and adaptation in the receiving area; through reorientation in the new social environment in terms of work, professional, social, and community relations; and through the redistribution of roles and family relations. Migration affects the whole system of family and group, formal and informal, professional and cultural, ethnic and political relations of mobile people, while structuring new patterns of appreciation and behavior, value orientation, and social participation. Migration is followed by a whole chain of socio-cultural restructuring and reorientation [3].

Migration is also a factor of social change in close correlation with social mobility, which expresses the change in status of an individual or group of individuals under a complex of economic, technological, organizational, social, etc. factors [4]. Changes are felt in social structure and composition, insofar as they are socially mobile and insofar as they involve movements in social space, i.e., shifts from one social position to another. Change occurs at the level of all the elements involved in migration. Whether this change occurs as a result of population movements or in well-established and entrenched systems as a result of individual or group reactions, change occurs as a natural condition and normality of life that characterizes social reality. Every individual or group is marked by social reality, inducing certain changes at distinct levels.

In discussing the changes that occur in the migration process, it is necessary to mention the concept of acculturation, which explains to a large extent the changes that occur in the migrant. Acculturation is the process of cultural and psychological change that follows intercultural contact [5]. Acculturation involves changes in self-identity resulting from the possibility to accommodate an old and a new culture [6]. Cultural changes include alterations in a group’s customs, and in their economic and political life. Psychological changes include alterations in individuals’ attitudes toward the acculturation process, their cultural identities, and their social behaviors in relation to the groups in contact [7]. Thus, acculturation has been defined by cultural change that results from continuous, firsthand contact between two distinct cultural groups, noting that acculturation refers to changes in an individual whose cultural group is collectively experiencing acculturation [8].

2. Conceptual Delimitations: Individual Identity Changes as a Result of Migration

As originally defined, acculturation encompasses all cultural changes, whether such changes occur at the societal or individual level. According to Berry (1990), these changes correspond to modes of acculturation that can be understood as the outcome of two decisions: (1) whether the appreciation of the original cultural identity is valued or not and (2) whether identification with the other cultural group is desired. Assimilation results from the willingness to identify with the other group while relinquishing membership in the first culture. Separation refers to a preference for the first culture and a rejection of the other cultural identity. Integration results from an interest in adopting both identities, whereas marginalization consists of a rejection of both cultures [9].

In a more general context, identity changes are noticeable with the integration in the country of migration, through adaptation to the new social environment, acceptance of reference models from other environments/social groups, integration and assimilation into another professional group or work group, learning another language, new social relationships, acceptance and appropriation of other norms, and rules and principles of life.

The theory of symbolic interactionism explains how these changes occur. This theory identifies a number of concepts that highlight the relationship between the individual and other social and cultural segments [10]. Some of these are social action, interaction, social situations, social roles, symbols, meanings, rules, etc. Social action is at the heart of symbolic interactionism, along with the meanings attributed to the acts undertaken and their outcomes. Social action is the result of transactions or exchanges of meaning, and
from these transactions or exchanges result habitual modes of action, habits, rituals, and standardized routines of rules, i.e., social institutions [11].

People act and interact in the social environment; they take on certain social roles and construct their own symbolic spaces to which they attach certain meanings on the basis of which they relate to the physical environment. Based on these aspects, symbolic interactionism looks at the way in which society shapes the individual through the individual’s acquisition and appropriation of accepted social symbols and meanings. Symbolic interactionism refers to a paradigm, or rather a style of sociological research, that is characterized by an emphasis on the symbolic aspects of social interaction relations [12]. Interactionism involves understanding the relationships between certain socio-cultural structures and the individual who internalizes them and then expresses them through specific identity patterns. As regards symbolic interactionism’s analysis of identity, it argues that identity is developed through a dynamic relationship with other identities, within a context that is psychologically, socially, culturally, and historically determined. Symbolic interactionism aims to reveal the internal mechanisms of identity formation by overcoming the opposition between the individual and the collective.

In a more specific framework, emphasizing ethno-linguistic identity, the acculturation of members of different ethnic groups should follow patterns of identification molded after linguistic changes accruing from such contact. The acculturation should eventually result in patterns of joint or exclusive identification to first and/or second language groups. Ethno-linguistic identity theory posits further that when confronted with alternative courses of action, individuals will choose the one that will enhance his/her self presentation, given the context [13].

2.1. Migrant and Identity Change

This article analyzes the important changes in the migrant as a result of the act of migration, namely, changes at the identity level, from a psycho–social perspective. Such changes are evident on several levels: origins in the past (birth, own history, descent), present situation (name, group position, power), specific value systems and behaviors (traits, motivations, interests, attitudes), and own potentialities (skills, results, activities) [14].

Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann, in “The Social Construction of Reality”, stated that the individual is not born but becomes a member of a society. The social self is constituted in everyday experience that requires typical and self-typical mechanisms. The starting point of his becoming is the internalization of the meanings established by predecessors and of symbolic universes with a legitimizing function. Identity is defined objectively with the installation in another world and can only be appropriated subjectively together with this world [15].

The individual constructs and reconstructs his or her own identity, depending on the environment and the group to which he or she belongs. He can be considered an active member in the construction of social identity. Identity is constituted as a result of the individual’s interaction with society, within an internalized symbolic universe with varying legitimacies from one individual to another. Identity is an active interaction, and it is not possible to conceive of a timeless “identity in waiting” and temporal “continuity” movement; identity dynamics integrate this complexity [16].

A migrant’s personal identity is produced in relation to other individuals, who constitute his or her own universe: Nothing is more collective than personal identity. As a result of this interaction, there is an exchange of information, opinions, views, and beliefs between individuals, all of which influence the migrant’s identity. Identity change occurs with the decision to go abroad and is noticeable throughout the migration flow. In this respect, certain factors are identified, which are detected using statistical, sociological, and demographic methods: the influence on the migrant of the costs of the separation from the place of origin and the life he or she normally leads, the degree of isolation in the destination society and the relations he or she still has with the country of origin, the extent to which migrants are accompanied by family members or close relations, the influence
exerted by the place of origin and the destination, the migrant’s communication with the country of origin and the perception he or she conveys to his or her fellow citizens, and the volume and importance of migration for the receiving and sending countries. Identity is a phenomenon that emerges in the process of dialectics individual/society. On the other hand, identity types are simple social products, relatively stable elements of objective social reality [17].

Thus, through the process of migration, the individual experiences losses and separations: loss of the place of birth, of friends, relatives, of the whole world—animate and inanimate—with which he or she was accustomed; loss, often, of the mother tongue—whose internalization contributed essentially to the construction of his or her explicit memory and the more mature part of the self; and loss of the socio-cultural space, which is decisive for the formation of identity. The emigrant initially loses the sense of natural belonging to the more or less wide circle of his peers [18].

All these losses are compensated for to some extent by the possibilities and opportunities in the country of migration. However, in order to enjoy them, the migrant must go through several stages of adaptation, assimilation, and integration. Thus, how and how long it takes for emigration to be overcome and to become either a stimulus or a brake on development depends on how much inner stability and how many resources are left at the disposal of the individual in the country of migration to be able to cope with the cultural transition with its structural transformations. How the new immigrant is received in the new society is also important. Thus, the interaction, specificity, diversity, and dynamics of migration imply the assumption of multiple identities, subject to various processes and influences, which change in relation to changes in the receiving society. The process of integration is a prerequisite for the multiplication and change of individual identities.

2.2. Integration Process in the Destination Area

Any individual who has experienced migration can undergo identity changes. These changes are noticeable with the integration in the country of migration, through adaptation to the new social environment, acceptance of reference models from other environments/social groups, integration and assimilation into another professional group or work group, learning another language, new social relations, acceptance and assimilation of other norms, and rules and principles of life. The integration option implies some maintenance of the cultural integrity of the group (i.e., some reaction or resistance to change) as well as the move to become an integral part of a larger societal framework. The methods of integration in a particular group depend on its objectives and those of the global society that includes it [19].

There is a sense of social organization and a desire to integrate. Man, because of his desire to integrate, is involved in diversified activities: the integration of the individual means shaping his freedom of action in accordance with the actions, requirements, norms, and values of the integrating collective [20]. Integration implies a dynamic interaction between the integrating system and the integrating system, during which multiple transformations take place. In specific terms, for the immigrant, integration consists of knowledge of the language of the host country, access to the education system and labor market of that country, opportunities for increased professional mobility through higher education and professional qualifications, equality before the law, cultural and religious freedom, and respect for the laws and traditions of the country in which they live. At the same time, for the host society, integration of migrants requires tolerance and openness; agreement to receive migrants; understanding of the advantages and challenges of multicultural societies; provision of unrestricted access to information on the benefits of integration; tolerance and intercultural dialogue; respect for and understanding of the condition, traditions, and culture of migrants; respect for migrants’ rights [21].
2.3. Adaptation and Assimilation to Integration

Adaptation to the new society is the first step towards integration. From the perspective of the migration phenomenon, the adaptation process refers to the ability of the migrant subject to fit into the pre-existing structures of the receiving society (i.e., adapting to the rules and values that exist in the receiving society, as well as learning the mechanisms of his or her new economic, political, social, cultural, and, above all, political–institutional environment). Part of the argument for adaptation in the process of migration is that individuals who decide to migrate evaluate all available options to adapt to hazards and choose the ones that best suit their situation [22].

Adaptation, which has a strong psycho-social component, does not necessarily imply reciprocity between the migrant and the host society, as in most cases it is a one-way process, i.e., the migrant’s own adaptation reaction triggered by changes in the new social environment. The need to change one’s way of life, the change of job, social pressures, changes in professional status, changes in lifestyle, in fact anything that forces us to face the unknown, can trigger the adaptation reaction [23].

The difficulties faced by migrants slow down the integration process. Many more difficulties are felt when the migrant’s background is to a greater extent different from the receiving environment. Migrants leaving their countries of origin to go to the host countries, especially those from rural areas, find it difficult to get used to the activities and way of life in the country of migration, to get used to a new style of eating and dressing, to mix with a fast-paced and often even dangerous civilization, and to get used to the pace of life of a community that is different from that of their country of origin. In this way, migrants break contact with an environment from which they retain certain habits, certain ways of thinking, feeling, and acting, and follow certain steps necessary for integration into the destination environment. The function of integration is intertwined with the function of maintaining cultural patterns (existence and perpetuation of norms and values), the function of adaptation (control of relations in relation to the environment and internal components), and the function of goal attainment (dependence on the internalization of cultural patterns into personality components or disposition-needs) [24].

There is a close interdependence between society and personality. Norms, values, and roles, as components of society, become through internalization disposition-needs or subjective transpositions of their counterparts in society: Cultural models are internalized; they become an integrated part of the personality structure of the agent. These attitudes of value are genuine disposition-needs of the personality. Only by virtue of the internalization of institutionalized values does a genuine motivational integration of behavior into the social structure take place [25].

In the host society, it is accepted that the way in which the individual integrates involves a reciprocal influence determined, on the one hand, by the immigrant’s insertion into the native group and, on the other, by the actions that the immigrant exerts on the community: The emphasis is on maintaining cultural pluralism within a unified social group, a process that for the immigrant means an effort to adapt in order to conform to the norms in certain areas, at the same time as an effort to preserve cultural differences in other areas [26].

An important stage through which the migrant passes once he enters the environment of the country of migration is assimilation, which involves the effective appropriation and cultivation of the relations, norms, and values of the integrating environment. The novelty that assimilation causes is not felt at the level of the group, but at the level of the individual who restructures a large part of his or her previous field of experience [27]. Assimilation can occur through the absorption of a non-dominant group into an established dominant group, or it can be through the merger of several groups to form a new society, as in the “melting pot” concept. Practically, it is a form of integration into a social or national group by losing or transforming one’s own characteristic features [28].

There are different types of assimilation: cultural, which occurs when a group loses its characteristic cultural features and adopts the essential ones of the dominant group—it in-
volves changes at the level of behavior, sometimes of beliefs, values, and attitudes, including those of other minority groups; marital or racial—genetic interbreeding that alters original traits, and involves inter-group bonding and reproduction; and structural—progressive but complete acceptance of members of an ethnic group within the primary and secondary social relations of the minority group. The process of assimilation is marked, in the first phase, by action to meet primary needs (employment, housing) and, in the second phase, by the adoption of social and cultural elements (language, customs, food). Finally, there is the abandonment of original practices and customs in favor of majority norms. To reinforce the mentioned, we recall the model of metaphorical assimilation called “melting pot”. According to this concept, migration occurs selectively [29].

3. Materials, Methods, and Results

International migration is a complex, multi-criteria phenomenon that can have different meanings, but also different scopes and data estimation methods, depending on the knowledge and research objectives pursued. For this reason, the magnitude of the phenomenon has been reported in different sources, ranging from media, to complex research, to national strategies. The National Strategy for Romanians Abroad for the period 2017–2021 provides information on a much broader concept, which includes “Romanians living in diaspora communities as well as those living in historical/traditional communities in countries neighboring Romania. [30].

The present research is a qualitative study that starts from an analysis of the concepts of acculturation and identity and continues with the analysis of the processes of adaptation, assimilation, and integration, following the changes that occur in self-image and self-esteem, mentality, perceptions and principles, lifestyle, and cultural and civilizational elements, and changes in the place/space of identity among Romanian ethnic migrants.

3.1. Research Method

The field research used semi-structured, face-to-face, individual interviews as the main method of data collection. Through the interviews we aimed to obtain, through questions and answers, verbal information from selected migrants in order to verify the working hypothesis. Through this type of interview, pre-established themes were addressed prior to the initiation of the research, and the sequence of questions was random, using the interview guide as a research tool [31]. The analysis of the interviews was based on a thematic analysis, which aimed to break down the singularity of the discourse and to cut across what, from one interview to another, refers to the same theme, in order to maintain thematic coherence throughout the corpus of interviews [32].

This study was applied on a sample of 30 people who emigrated abroad, 6 male and 24 female, aged between 20 and 56 years old, with residence/former residence in Romania, Suceava county (rural and urban environment). The selection of interviewees was random, looking for diversity in terms of country of migration, level of education, and occupation/job. In addition, people between 20 and 56 years old were chosen to see what the impact of migration is on both very young people, who have a much higher degree of adaptability, and those at an older age, for whom adaptation and integration in some cases is more difficult. The choice of subjects remains a serious problem: different cases can generate different conclusions, even if they can be replicated [33].

It was intended to have a balance between female and male interviewees, but as a limitation of the study, we can mention that we had more refusals from male interviewees in carrying out the research; as a result, we chose a larger number of female interviewees. The interviews took place in Romania (Suceava county), with Romanian ethnic migrants in different countries, and the interviews were conducted in Romanian. We made a selection from the interviews conducted, highlighting the most relevant information about individual identity changes. The subjects interviewed can be found in Table 1.
### Table 1. Research sample.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Emigrant</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Country by Migration</th>
<th>Period of Emigration</th>
<th>Education</th>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Rural(R)/Urban(U)</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>A.S.</td>
<td>28 years</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Single</td>
<td>France</td>
<td>6 years</td>
<td>Higher</td>
<td>Human resources</td>
<td>U</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>M.C.</td>
<td>48 years</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Divorced</td>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>8 years</td>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>Housekeeper</td>
<td>U</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>C.I.M.</td>
<td>27 years</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>6 years</td>
<td>Higher</td>
<td>Housekeeper</td>
<td>U</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>F.G.</td>
<td>47 years</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>Greece</td>
<td>11 years</td>
<td>Higher</td>
<td>Culinary field</td>
<td>U</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>B.V.</td>
<td>52 years</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>6 years</td>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>Constructions</td>
<td>U</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>M.I.</td>
<td>54 years</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>Belgium</td>
<td>18 years</td>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>Constructions</td>
<td>U</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>C.E.</td>
<td>52 years</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>3 years</td>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>Caretaker</td>
<td>U</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>L.B.</td>
<td>28 years</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>11 years</td>
<td>8 grades</td>
<td>Housekeeper</td>
<td>R</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>V.N.</td>
<td>33 years</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>4 years</td>
<td>Higher</td>
<td>Parrish supervisor</td>
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<td>F</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>13 years</td>
<td>Higher</td>
<td>Shop assistant</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>C.D.</td>
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<td>F</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>3 years</td>
<td>Higher</td>
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<td>U</td>
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<tr>
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<td>M.R.</td>
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<td>F</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>England</td>
<td>4 years</td>
<td>Secondary</td>
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<td>F</td>
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<td>Italy</td>
<td>4 years</td>
<td>Secondary</td>
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<td>Secondary</td>
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<td>Married</td>
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<td>6 years</td>
<td>Higher</td>
<td>Shop assistant</td>
<td>U</td>
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<td>F</td>
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<td>3 years</td>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>Student</td>
<td>U</td>
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<td>F</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>4 years</td>
<td>Higher</td>
<td>Housekeeper</td>
<td>U</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>39 years</td>
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<td>Divorced</td>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>5 years</td>
<td>Vocational school</td>
<td>Nurse</td>
<td>R</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>G.B.</td>
<td>26 years</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Single</td>
<td>England</td>
<td>3 years</td>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>Constructions</td>
<td>R</td>
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<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>M.I.</td>
<td>49 years</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>10 years</td>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>Excavations</td>
<td>U</td>
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<td>F</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>6 years</td>
<td>Secondary</td>
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<td>U</td>
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<td>F</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>15 years</td>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>Housekeeper</td>
<td>U</td>
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<td>F</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>5 years</td>
<td>Vocational school</td>
<td>Caretaker</td>
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<tr>
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<td>35 years</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>England</td>
<td>7 years</td>
<td>Vocational school</td>
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<td>France</td>
<td>5 years</td>
<td>Higher</td>
<td>Statistical data operator</td>
<td>R</td>
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<td>30 years</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Single</td>
<td>Italy</td>
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<td>Higher</td>
<td>Restaurant employee</td>
<td>U</td>
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<tr>
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<td>A.G.</td>
<td>43 years</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>12 years</td>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>Jeweller</td>
<td>R</td>
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<td>D.B.</td>
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<td>F</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>9 years</td>
<td>Vocational school</td>
<td>Nurse</td>
<td>U</td>
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<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>A.C.</td>
<td>33 years</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>9 years</td>
<td>Vocational school</td>
<td>Housewife(married to an Italian citizen)</td>
<td>R</td>
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<td>30</td>
<td>S.N.</td>
<td>49 years</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>5 years</td>
<td>Vocational school</td>
<td>Nurse</td>
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</table>
The aim of the research is to analyze changes in the identity of migrants who have undergone the processes of adaptation, assimilation, and integration in the country of migration from a psycho-social perspective. Research objectives: O1. Identify changes in self-image and self-esteem; O2. Identify changes in mentality, perceptions, and principles; O3. Identify changes in lifestyle; O4. Identify changes in cultural and civilization elements; O5. Identify changes in place/space of identity.

In this research we started from the following working hypothesis: The migrant, once arrived in the country of migration, goes through a series of processes (adaptation, assimilation, integration) in which identity changes occur. On the basis of this hypothesis, we established the following working questions: (1) What psycho-social changes may occur at the migrant level? (2) How do migrants experience these changes? (3) How do migrants relate to these changes? (4) How are the migrant’s social relations in the country of origin affected? (5) How do they feel about the place/space of the country of migration?

In the present research, pre-established themes were identified in view of conducting the analysis of the interviews. The selection of these themes was based on an analysis grid from a larger study, an interview-based analysis conducted on the same subjects. The aim of this research was to identify changes in the identity of people who have emigrated abroad and the repercussions of these changes on the family and community of origin. The analysis grid should, as far as possible, be ranked into main and secondary themes, so as to break down the information as much as possible, separate factual elements from elements of meaning, and thus minimize uncontrolled interpretations. The analysis of the results can only be done in close correlation with the methods and means used in the action, which implies studying them and retaining the most effective ones [34]. Pre-Established Themes for Cross-Cutting Analysis of Interviews can be found in Table 2.

Table 2. Interviews topics.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pre-Established Themes for Cross-Cutting Analysis of Interviews</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>T2. Changes in mindset, perceptions, and principles;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T3. Changes in lifestyle;</td>
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<tr>
<td>T4. Changes in cultural and civilizational elements;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T5. Changes in identity place/space.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The interviews were recorded with the consent of the interviewees and transcribed for better fidelity and preservation of the information. The pre-established themes were outlined with the interview guide, a tool used to conduct the interviews. The study was approved by the institution represented.

3.2. Results

3.2.1. Explanatory Dimensions of Identity Change through Identity–Migration Theory

Migrants’ identity changes are considered “normal” given that migrants belong to a new social environment with a new culture and civilization, have different social/existential landmarks, have different social relations and a different group of belonging, learn new work strategies, and adopt a new way of relating to society and to their own “self”. The changes in the migrant are triggered when entering the new environment, where migrants go through the processes of adaptation, assimilation, and integration and the stages of identity change. The factors underlying individual changes are material (money earned, possibilities, opportunities), psycho-social (impact with the new social environment when adapting and integrating), socio-human (relationships in the host society), professional (new profession or trade performed and learned), cultural (learning the language, customs, and cultural elements), etc.
Identity–migration theory highlights three types of migrant: “Migrant I” is the migrant who, on entering the country of migration, tends to meet basic physiological, safety, and environmental needs by seeking employment, housing, and new social relations in which to find support (acquaintances, church, etc.). “Migrant II” is the migrant who, through the stages of adaptation, integration, and assimilation, seeks to meet his or her social, knowledge, and self-esteem needs. At this stage the migrant integrates and joins a new social group, learns new cultural elements, and gets involved in the process of getting to know the new environment, culture, and civilization. “Migrant III” is the one who has gone through the process of identity change with a change in mentality, principles of life, perceptions, norms and values, social and national representation, involvement in the new social and professional life, etc.

All these changes are reflected in a series of identity dimensions: Individual identity—by changing mentality, self-esteem, life principles, perceptions and values, lifestyle, self-image and perception, image and perception of family and home community, image and perception of life, or job/profession; social identity—by changing the group of belonging, by moving away from the reference group, by changing the relationship with family and home community, by changing attitudes and behavior in society; national identity—by detachment from the feeling of patriotism and change in attitude and reaction to one’s own nationality and to the country; cultural identity—by changing attitude toward traditions and national culture, by changing some cultural and religious elements (or even religion); family identity—by changing family roles and responsibilities and change of family functionality; and spatial identity—changes are noted with regard to feelings of identity and identity space, for many of them “home” being in the country of migration.

Identity–migration theory emphasizes that identity change is a “filter” for the representation of both the family and community of origin and the migration community. In the absence of identity change, opportunities, possibilities, and material resources function as factors guiding behavior and return migration does not create particular problems. Therefore, if the original identity of the migrant is to be preserved as much as possible, institutions as well as civil society have the role of preserving identity data [35].

Identity shifts are more noticeable in migrants’ decisions when they either decide to stay in the country of migration, decide to return, or are forced by certain situational factors to return, in this case speaking of a “pseudo-return”. It can be argued that these migrants have an “external” identity, as it is marked by the migration experience, and identity changes are more evident upon return to family and community. In this case the need for social reintegration arises, and in the absence of specific reintegration programs, migrants tend to return to the country of migration. For reintegration, a particular role is played by the church and the institutions in charge: On the one hand, the church, which comes with certain opportunities to support and develop spirituality and religion, lived through this creative problem-solving capacity [36], but also other institutions abroad, all of which have the role of limiting identity change, directly influencing identity dimensions; and on the other hand, the church and institutions in the country have an important role in reintegrating migrants into the family and community. In the absence of the involvement of the reference institutions in the lives of migrants, or the non-involvement of migrants in the activities carried out by them, identity changes definitely occur, with consequences at the individual and collective level. The discussed aspects are represented in Figure 1 [37].
3.2.2. Interview Survey: “Individual Identity Changes Due to Migration”

The changes identified in the migrants interviewed were at several levels: mentality, thinking, self-esteem, life principles, perceptions and values, self-image and self-perception, cultural and religious, attitude and behavior, relationships and relations with others, changes in external image, etc. With reference to these, we can note that migrants’ identity orientations are not “fixed data,” because they do not derive solely from status characteristics, but from life experiences and enduring states of mind [38].

- Self-esteem

Self-esteem is closely related to self-image, the relationship being between the self-perceived self—the self-concept—and the ideal (or desired) self, i.e., how a person would like to look in many ways [39]. Migrants may have high self-esteem or low self-esteem. The level of self-esteem strongly affects performance in all activities: Low self-esteem increases the risk of failure, leading to an even more gloomy view of oneself. Migrants’ self-esteem can change depending on their ability to self-motivate and stimulate themselves, but also on the conditions of the social environment in the country of migration: on the work done and its conditions, on employers’ assessments and evaluations, on the evaluations of the social group to which they belong, on the perception and reactions of the locals, etc.

- Mentality

In the new social environment, migrants experience aspects of life that are different from those in the country of origin, they interact with people with different perspectives and ways of thinking, they get to know new places and adopt a different lifestyle, and they have different possibilities and opportunities. All of this has a great influence on the mindset of the migrant, which is a set of beliefs and representations that determine the behavior and attitudes of individuals towards a given situation, a solidified system of reactions and responses to experience [40]. Mentalities have a very complex structure, with numerous and heterogeneous elements comprising a system of accepted ideas about social
reality, an ethical system about relations between people, a set of customs, conventions and rules that are spontaneously observed, and a system of operational criteria that guide judgments in relation to the events and circumstances of social existence. The changing social environment, new social relations, culture, and civilization influence the mentality of migrants. Education, age, and material status also have a major influence. It has been argued that in many cases the change in mentality is not due to the migration experience itself, but to the education, age, or material status of the person who has worked or traveled abroad [41]. The changed mentality of migrants influences their actions and relations with their families, the community of origin, and the community of destination. Through the newly formed mentalities, migrants act to improve particular situations.

- **Migrants’ behavior and attitudes**

  Emigration abroad has a significant and lasting influence on migrants’ behavior and attitudes. Once the adaptation period in the host country is over, migrants’ behavior tends to be closer to that of the natives. In particular, the following features are characteristic:
  - The language of origin is gradually replaced by the language of the country of migration, including in family communities. In addition, almost all immigrants opt to educate their children in the language of the country of migration;
  - The number of mixed marriages is increasing, speeding up the integration process;
  - The birth rate of ethnic foreigners who remain permanently in the country of adoption tends, in the long term, to approach that of the natives;
  - The cultural practices of the country of migration (including gastronomy, consumption patterns, culinary tastes, and even social and protocol practices) are also adopted by immigrants. However, there is also a phenomenon known as acculturation. This is the result of direct and continuous contact between individuals and groups belonging to different cultures [42].

- **Lifestyle**

  Migrants, once they arrive in the country of migration, aim to achieve their desired goal, often linked to the economic situation. Contact with a different social environment over a period of time can lead to a change in lifestyle.

  Individuals’ lifestyles show how they live their daily lives within a society; they show the differences and similarities between the ways in which individuals view reality and relate to others, and how they express their personality and identity. Lifestyle is also related to the individual’s culture. Two of the characteristics of culture are universality and particularity. It also refers to an individual’s lifestyle when he or she has alternatives to choose from and the possibility to do so. Thus, the choice of lifestyle by the migrant is determined by the society in which he or she finds himself or herself, the position he or she occupies in the society, the possibilities and opportunities, and personal choices and expressions. Lifestyles develop and are maintained at the intersection of social and cultural structures and the actions and initiatives of individuals and they are a means of expressing one’s own identities, a method of distinction [43].

- **Place/space of identity**

  Identity place refers to that concrete space shared by social actors, whereby they are recognized as such by those outside the place and have a sense of belonging to that place, being socially recognized by others as belonging to that place. In this way, it is social identity that gives us the comfort of belonging to the community, and at the same time draws boundaries between “us” and “others” or between “ours” and “outsiders” [44].

### 3.2.3. Analysis Structured on Specific Themes

The analysis of the interviews are carried out in a mixed thematic analysis based on specific themes. The analysis of the interviews can be found in Table 3.
Table 3. The analysed interviews.

### T1. Changes in image and self-esteem

**Positive changes:**
- Many of the migrants interviewed had formed a positive self-image and felt an increase in self-esteem due to changes in their personal and professional development. They experienced in the country of migration certain aspects through which they found that they as individuals were appreciated, valued, and motivated in their activities and developed professionally.

Three people from rural areas (working in the fields, without a job and income), specified that in the country of migration, although it was difficult for them to adapt and integrate, they felt a positive change on an individual level. They learned a language, got to know other places and learned many things, had a job, and were appreciated for what they did. In this way they felt a change in their self-image and self-esteem.

Nine of the migrants, as a result of the impact of a different social environment and changing perceptions of life, placed more importance on “themselves”, which made them regain self-confidence, as well as because they interacted with and felt valued by other people from different cultures, different backgrounds, and different concepts. Five people overcame some relational barriers and gained self-confidence, i.e., changed their self-image and self-esteem: “I learned to see people differently and plus I was not coping with conflicts, and now I manage to be more self-controlled in a relationship with someone else” (interview with S.C., emigrant from Italy, 32 years old).

“You always have to be constructive; you have to raise yourself to the highest level” (interview with M.I., migrant Spain, 49 years old).

**Negative changes:**
- Changes as a result of being offended, labeled, marginalized, and exploited through work and inadequate remuneration.

Seven of the emigrants felt devalued in human and professional terms: “a “slave,” “a servant,” “a stranger”: “It’s very hard to work there, it’s not easy, and you are a slave for them, because that’s what they consider you. You work very hard to earn a living, but that’s it, life as an emigrant is not easy” (interview with M.R., emigrant from England, 43 years old).

“Nobody looks at you except as a slave. So you over there...they say you’re in the EU, you’re just a slave: that’s all and nothing more” (interview with B.V., emigrant Italy, 52 years old).

- Changes as a result of personal and professional devaluation.

Six migrants had completed higher education in the country and had social status, and in the country of migration they had accepted jobs for financial reasons that did not offer them the place and value they felt they deserved.

“I already felt marginalized when I arrived there. I went to university and I expected to be somebody and I ended up as a dishwasher so I couldn’t lift my head...Even if they accepted me, any word that bothered me I felt a total rejection from them. Maybe it wasn’t quite like that, but that’s how I felt then” (interview with C.I.M, Italian emigrant, 27 years old).

- Changes in national representation.

Regarding the national representation of Romanians, most of the emigrants were proud to be Romanian, and six people had moments when they were ashamed to reveal their nationality and even denied in various situations that they were Romanian. These aspects of declining self-image and self-esteem can be linked to the identity crisis.
Table 3. Cont.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>T2. Changes in mentality, perceptions, and principles</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Migrants learning and learning about different aspects of life; they encounter a new environment where they learn from the rules of their country of migration, their behavior and thinking.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“You learn all the time from other people, you learn from their way of relating, you learn from their attitude, you learn from everything they say, you learn from what they do, you learn all the time” (interview with E.F., emigrant from France, 26 years old). “Coming here I discovered many cultures, many types, ways of thinking different from mine, I learned to know them, to understand them, to accept them. I learned to accept their way of thinking, maybe before I wouldn’t have imagined or maybe I wouldn’t have accepted certain things, certain ways of thinking. Now I see them as natural” (interview with E.F., migrant from France, 25 years old).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Migrants undergo changes in mentality: Changes were identified in the mentality of migrant women, in the way women relate to the family and society.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seven women in the sample investigated had changed their mentality about how women relate to family and society. They considered that it was normal to be subjected to insults, abuse, and not being able to make a decision for their own good because they were labeled by the community they belonged to. “I was used to keeping quiet and doing, not saying much about what I thought. Here I felt I was encouraged to be me as I really am” (interview with G.T., Italian migrant, 41 years old). “The fact that I changed my mentality and saw things completely differently, that it’s not as I thought, because I had the impression that all women suffer as I do. And with the mentality here, with the shame of what the neighbor says, what my mother says, what my mother-in-law says, I kept quiet and said nothing. And I was under the impression that all women go through this. Now we can be blamed for it, because they say that all women go crazy when they go to Italy. It’s not that, it’s that they open up and see that life is not what they thought it was. I was very sure that all women go through what I go through and accept what I accept, instead I don’t” (interview with R.N., emigrant Italy, 39 years old).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Migrants undergo changes in their perceptions and principles of life and about life: Changes were identified in their perceptions of the family, of marriage between two people of different nationalities, and general changes were identified. They formed a different image of the world, of others, of themselves; they formed a different view of life in general; some became more critical, others more optimistic.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“You see this life differently. I thought that this much I can do, this much can be done, whereas there I saw that you can do differently, you can live differently, can afford a lot more things that you can’t afford here” (interview with V.M., emigrant from England, 35 years old). “I always paid attention to other people’s neuroses, to what other people wanted, to their opinion. Here I understood that it was time to live for myself, until now I lived more for others” (interview with R.N., emigrant from Italy, 39 years old).</td>
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Table 3. Cont.

### T3. Lifestyle changes
Lifestyles are expressions of individuals’ ambitions to create their own personal, cultural, and social identity in the context determined by the social and societal framework of their society, so lifestyle is defined as a structurally, positionally, and individually determined phenomenon [45].

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Positive changes:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- The migrants interviewed correlated lifestyle with income levels and lifestyle. By observing the lifestyle of those abroad, emigrants had taken on board many aspects in this respect and aspired to a much higher standard of living.</td>
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<tr>
<td>- A large proportion of emigrants have taken on patterns of behavior and education and ways of relating and relating to others, and have formed a different lifestyle based on these patterns.</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Four of the migrants realized that the lifestyle they had picked up from abroad was suitable for all family members, and as a result they brought their whole family to settle in the country of migration.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Negative changes:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Seven people experienced lifestyle changes, but in a negative way in that their lives were defined by overwork, some of whom were marginalized, labeled, offended, exploited and subjected to “inhuman” treatment.</td>
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</table>

“Of course you realize a lot. Once you get there, once you’re working and you’re making good money, so you’re getting paid fairly for your work, of course you change. You automatically change. It’s a different life, you can do what you want with that money, have a different freedom of choice and freedom of living, have a different security” (interview with L.B., Italian emigrant, 28 years old). You can live differently, you can manage your life differently with the money you earn abroad and even without proposing it you change your lifestyle: you eat better, you dress better, you travel, you visit all kinds of places etc” (interview with V.M., emigrant from England, 35 years old).

“Now I put more emphasis on quality and naturalness. The shortages make you accept a mediocre lifestyle, but the possibilities and models you meet here make you think and choose what life you want to have” (interview with G.H., Italian migrant, 29 years old). “I’ve learned not to look over the neighbor’s fence to see if the grass is greener. Now I want to say that I respect everyone’s place, but my big demand is also that my place be respected” (interview with M.C., emigrant from Italy, 48 years old).

“It was hard for me at first, but once I got used to it I realized that I would be much better off with my family together. Here nothing works properly and you can’t survive. There, I’m not saying it’s easy, but it’s another life, another world, you’re not afraid to go to a hospital, when you meet people they smile at you, the way of life is different. Once I got used to everything, I would never go back to the country again. There I am a relaxed person, I work, but I work with great pleasure and I get paid, I have my own taboos, we visit, we go on trips, we go to the opera, shows, I have made new friends, I have a different life. I could even say that I’m a different person and I wouldn’t want to go back to the way I was when I didn’t enjoy anything in life” (interview with D.B., emigrant Spain, 46 years old).

“I had a job where I felt like a slave. I was put on chores from morning till evening; I was not allowed to leave the house and yard except once a week, 3 h shopping. I was taking care of a sick 93 year old lady, and the house and yard. I didn’t talk to anyone except the old lady’s children from time to time when they told me what I had to do. When I went out of the house, I was like a savage. I felt like I was getting lost” (interview with D.R., emigrant Germany, 56 years old).

“Romanians are characterized by ‘‘slavery’, a lifestyle—slaves to work” (interview with C.I.M., emigrant Italy, 27 years old).
Table 3. Cont.

T4. Changes in cultural and civilizational elements

- Regarding the culture and civilization of the countries of migration, most migrants mentioned that they had a particular impact on their individuality, taking on certain specific elements.

- Twelve migrants specified that they had picked things up from other cultures, from being in contact with people of other nationalities, which had a major impact on their individuality.

- In terms of the language of the country of migration, 22 migrants specified that they had mastered it to a large extent, five to a small extent, and three specified that they had assimilated it and learned it so well that it was part of their identity.

- As for the culture and traditions of the country of origin, nine immigrants had given up some of them, considering that many of them “are not necessary”.

- Six of the emigrants tried to keep them, and to remember them by getting involved in various activities to preserve traditions and customs through churches and Romanian associations, whereas the others were indifferent to the culture and traditions of the country of origin.

When immigrants take over aspects of the culture of the host country, we can speak of cultural assimilation, which occurs when a group loses its characteristic cultural features and adopts the essential features of the dominant group; it involves changes in behavior, and sometimes in beliefs, values, and attitudes, including towards other minority groups.

“Contact with all these cultures that are present in France made me look at things differently” (interview with E.F., emigrant from France, 26 years old).

“I learned a lot from them, from their culture and tradition. I learnt many culinary recipes that they make all the time; I learnt about their dance, their costumes” (interview with F.G., emigrant from Greece, 47 years old).

“At the beginning it was very difficult for me with the language; I only knew a few words. Now I don’t seem to be able to speak Romanian sometimes. I have friends back home who tell me: what, have you forgotten your language? It’s easier for me to speak Italian” (interview with C.I.M., Italian emigrant, 27 years old).

“I’ve come to think, I practice and now I speak Romanian with you, but I think in Italian” (interview with M.C., emigrant Italy, 48 years old).

“I got used to the culture of the place, I don’t miss the culture and tradition of Romania at all” (interview with G.T., emigrant Italy, 41 years old).

“It is important to keep our culture and tradition, even if we are far from home. Here we have Romanian churches where specific Romanian activities take place, we have meals on holidays with traditional dishes and recipes, have folk dances and dances with Romanians dressed in folk costumes. Basically, this is how we try to preserve our culture and traditions and in this way we show our children our tradition” (interview with S.N., emigrant from Italy, 45 years old).
Table 3. Cont.

T5. Changes in identity place/space
The social space and the social reality in which the migrant finds him/herself reflects his/her identity and the shaping of a new identity. Identity has multiple meanings, because in today’s world we operate in a plurality of different worlds or realities space. [46].

- When asked the question, “Where do you feel ‘at home’?” the majority answered that “home” is abroad. Some of them felt at home in the country of migration, due to the fact that they had settled there alone or with their family, forming an identity space. However, others said that they felt “at home” there because they no longer had a space of their own at home. However, for the most part, although they had a family and perhaps even a house, they felt at home in their country of origin, whereas in the country of migration they ‘felt “at home.”

- The subjective appropriation of the surrounding world starts with the place that we identify with [47]. There were migrants who, having gone abroad for a certain period of time, on returning home realized that they did not find their place and that they had undergone certain changes with regard to their feelings of belonging and identity.

- For some people, “home” was in the country of origin to which they wanted to return; they had become attached to the country of migration and consider it a second home.

- Four of the interviewees specified that “home” is in the country and they very much want to return. The mere fact that they felt like strangers in the country of migration made them feel uneasy. In this way, they appreciated and loved their native places much more.

- The sense of belonging seems to be a crucial stage in the processes of identity formation and reconstruction for migrants. Their desire for roots and stability and belonging challenges traditional constructions of social codes and national boundaries [48].
4. Discussion

Migration is a factor of social change in close correlation with social mobility. Changes are felt in social structure and composition, to the extent that they are socially mobile and to the extent that they involve movements in social space, i.e., shifts from one social position to another. Change occurs in all the elements involved in migration. Whether this change occurs as a result of population movements, or whether it occurs in well-established and entrenched systems as a result of individual or group reactions, it appears as a natural and normal condition of life that characterizes social reality.

In terms of the changes identified in the migrants in the study of the article, both positive and negative self-image changes were identified. Positive changes were identified in migrants who had a positive self-image and felt an increase in self-esteem due to changes in their personal and professional development. In the country of migration they were appreciated, valued, and motivated in their activities and developed professionally. Negative changes were also identified as a result of being offended, labeled, marginalized, and exploited through work and inadequately paid.

Changes in mentality, perceptions and principles were identified through migrants learning and learning about different aspects of life and interacting with a new environment in which they learned from the rules of the country of migration, and their behavior and thinking. Changes were identified in the perception of the family, in relation to marriage between two people of different nationalities. They formed a different image of the world, of others, of themselves; they formed a different view of life in general—some became more critical, others more optimistic.

Changes in lifestyle were identified. Some of the migrants related their lifestyle to their income level and way of living, so they took on many aspects of their lifestyle and aspired to a higher standard of living. Changes in behavior and decisions were observed as a result of better living through the adoption of patterns of behavior and education, ways of relating and relating to others, and family reunification and permanent settlement abroad. Negative changes were also observed in terms of work performed, where some were marginalized, labeled, offended, and even exploited.

Changes in cultural and civilizational elements were identified. Migrants had picked up from other cultures, been in contact with people of other nationalities, and appropriated the language of the country of migration to a greater or lesser extent. Some of them had gotten involved in various activities in relation to other Romanians and representatives of Romanians in order to preserve the culture and traditions of the country of origin.

Changes in identity place/space were identified. The majority of migrants answered that “home” is abroad: some because they settled there alone or with their family, forming a space of identity, others because they felt “at home” there due to the fact that they no longer had a space of their own in the country. Few migrants said that “home” was in their country of origin and that they wanted to return.

All of these changes were discussed through the lens of identity–migration theory, which emphasizes that identity change is a “filter”, both for the representation of the family and community of origin and the migration community. Identity shifts are more evident in migrants’ decisions when they either decide to stay in the country of origin, decide to return, or are forced by certain situational factors to return.

5. Conclusions

In the context of the impact of migration on migrants, the study shows that migrants undergo changes in their identity—changes that are understood and accepted beforehand, but also changes of which they are not fully aware. These changes are beneficial for them as individuals, but also at a family and collective level, but negative changes were also identified that may subsequently lead to personal, relational, family, etc. problems. The exploration of the levels of change (self-image and self-esteem, mentality, perceptions and principles, lifestyle, cultural and civilizational elements, place/identity space) was carried out in a specific framework, on the basis of more in-depth exploration through an interview
(interview guide). The questions were clear and concise, and the interviewees understood the subject matter each time.

The impact of migration on migrants and their families is felt in two ways:

- In a positive sense

  Through individual changes in the country of migration, some of the emigrants had improved their material and financial situation, improved their relationships with family and others, formed new social areas and professional and entrepreneurial interests, and upon their return home, with a new mentality, a new vision, and with the accumulation from the country of migration, they came back with new innovations and developments. On return, migrants brought high professional knowledge, modern practices, and a range of human capital that could support local development [49]. The migrant can be used as a key player, as a leader who can bring ideas, strategies, and plans, which, in agreement with the members of the community, can become real and profitable projects.

  Positive social identity is based to a large extent on favorable comparisons that can be made between the in-group and some relevant out-groups: The in-group must be perceived as positively differentiated or distinct from the relevant out-groups [50].

- In a negative sense

  The changes produced at an individual level as a result of negative experiences that some of the migrants had had in the country of migration (labeling, humiliation, lack of moral and physical support, loneliness, not knowing the language, cultural maladjustments, etc.) can be identified at the level of self-esteem, self-confidence, and in the change in image and perception, both of the events experienced and of the place/space of emigration, and of life in general. Negative changes were also observed in terms of relationships and family. With the emigration of a family member abroad, the expectations and experiences of the partner left behind were often different, which could lead to conflicts and differences on many issues. Some families had broken up as a result of the tensions caused by the migration of a member abroad and the children left behind were deprived of the presence, affection, and full involvement of the parent who had gone abroad.

  When social identity is unsatisfactory, individuals will strive either to leave their existing group and join some more positively distinct group and/or to make their existing group more positively distinct. Membership of a group is a sufficient condition for intergroup discrimination because the social self has a profound impact on individual attitudes, perception, and behavior, even if the behavior is not monitored and deviations are unlikely to be punished. Experiences and knowledge derived from group membership are internalized as part of the individual’s self-concept [51].

Limitations of the study:

More interviews were conducted with female migrants than male migrants, due to repeated refusals by the latter; migrants were randomly identified according to their decision to return for a period or permanently to the country.

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Informed Consent Statement: Not applicable.

Conflicts of Interest: The author declares no conflict of interest.

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