10.20378/irb-55777

11 The integration migrant couples in Germany: The role of gender and the migration motive

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ABSTRACT

This book chapter highlights the effect of gender and the migration position on the labour market and socio-cultural integration of migrant spouses in Germany. Using a representative survey of the migrant population in Germany, I find that a considerably larger share of females are tied movers, even though they tend to have higher education. This indicates that the family migration decision process is possibly not gender neutral. When looking at post-migration outcomes, I find that tied movers are less likely to be economic and socio-culturally integrated. Hence, being tied mover seems to create an additional hurdle when it comes to integration. While female migrants are less likely to be economically integrated, they are not very different from males when it comes to socio-cultural integration. The negative effect of gender on labour market integration, while holding the migration position and education constant, possibly reflects the role of traditional gender norms. In light of these findings, I conjecture that gender has both a direct and indirect effect on economic integration. Where the indirect effect comes through its effect on the migration position.

INTRODUCTION

This book chapter highlights the relative importance of the family migration position in relation to the labour market outcomes and socio-cultural integration of migrant spouses in Germany. Single individuals choose to migrate if the individual returns to migration outweigh the costs. Couples migrate if either both spouses gain from migration individually (equal movers) or if the gains from one spouse (lead mover) allow compensating the losses of the other spouse, who if single would not have chosen to migrate (tied mover)[2].

There is a clear distinction in the migration driver between tied and lead or equal movers. Tied movers migrate to follow their partner rather than being motivated by their own educational or professional goals. On the other hand, lead or equal movers expect to have positive individual economic gains from migration. Due to their intrinsically different migration driver, I hypothesise that lead movers have higher levels of both labour market and socio-cultural integration than tied movers.

A potential reason for a lower economic integration among tied movers is

[2] The terms tied and lead mover were initially coined by Mincer (1978)

that this group is less likely to be selected on labour market skills that are relevant in the host country (Luthra et al., 2018). By definition, tied movers are spouses who if single would not have chosen to migrate (e.g., have negative individual gains from migration). Hence, we can expect that tied movers have a disadvantage in the host country's labour market when compared to lead or equal movers. Another potential reason is that tied movers have different preferences towards work.

Since tied movers migrated to follow their partner, their predisposition towards settling in the host country is likely to be different from that of lead movers. Furthermore, given the different expected labour market gains between tied movers and lead or equal movers, we can also expect that these two groups will have different incentives to invest in the host country's culture. Namely, lead or equal movers have a higher incentive to invest in the host country's culture because they expect to have higher economic gains.

To empirically access the role of the migration position on economic and socio- cultural integration I rely on a unique representative survey of the migrant population in Germany (IAB-SOEP migration sample). The survey allows me to identify the family migration position (e.g., tied, lead or equal movers) of each migrant spouse and contains a series of pre-and post-migration information which is suited for the analysis.

I start by classifying family migrants according to their migration position and demonstrate how pre-migration characteristics of these types differ. In line with the gender role theories, I find that gender is a main determinant of who is a tied mover. Secondly, using regression analysis I show how the migration position is associated with different economic and socio-cultural integration in Germany and with different time allocations in home tasks. Economic integration ismeasured by the employment status and hours worked. Socio-cultural integration is proxied by ethnic self-identity, German speaking skills and return intentions. As hypothesised, I find that tied movers are less likely to be economic and socio-culturally integrated.

This book chapter heavily relies on the work of Freitas Monteiro (2021a, b), which separately analyses the effect of being a tied mover on labour market integration and household sharing of resources (Freitas Monteiro, 2021b) and on ethnic identity (Freitas Monteiro, 2021a) in Germany. While these papers use instrumental variables to estimate the causal effect of being a tied mover on the outcomes of interests, the methods used in this book chapter are directed towards a broader audience and hence will be simpler, albeit conveying interesting insights. Even though the detailed premigration information contained in the IAB-SOEP migration data enables me to control for several potential confounding factors, the results should be interpreted as associations rather than causal paths. This

book chapter adds to previous work by providing a bigger picture of the overall integration pattern of tied movers and their time allocation in Germany.

Most literature in economics has focused on the socio-cultural adaptation of migrants who come from distinct countries of origin or have different citizenship rights (e.g., Battu & Zenou, 2010; Casey & Dustmann, 2010; Constant et al., 2009; Constant & Zimmermann, 2008; Drydakis, 2013; Dustmann, 1996; Georgiadis & Manning, 2011; Manning & Roy, 2010). However, the effect of migrating for economic reasons or family reasons on the socio-cultural adjustment of migrants has been little explored.

The empirical research on tied movers has mostly focused on internal migration (Juerges, 2006; Nivalainen, 2004; Rabe, 2011; Shauman, 2010) and there is little research on international family joint migration, mostly due to data constraints. The few studies looking at international family joint migration find that tied movers have poorer labour market outcomes than lead movers (Adsera & Chiswick, 2007; Krieger, 2019; Le, 2006; Munk et al., 2017) and some suggest that international family joint migration is not fully gender-neutral (Junge et al., 2014; Krieger, 2019; Munk et al., 2017).

In this book chapter, I contribute to the literature by connecting three previous research branches on economic integration, socio-cultural integration and family migration. Unlike many international migration studies, by using the IAB-SOEP migration sample, I can distinguish between tied movers and lead movers. This allows me to exploit how different migration drivers affect not only labour market outcomes but also socio-cultural outcomes. While some of the studies mentioned above have explored how migrating for economic versus family reasons differently affects labour market integration (Krieger, 2019; Le, 2006), there is little evidence on how differently affects socio-cultural integration.

IAB-SOEP MIGRATION DATA AND DEFINITIONS

The data used in this book chapter comes from two samples of the German Socio-Economic Panel (GSOEP). The GSOEP is a representative survey of private households in Germany and has a longitudinal structure. The baseline GSOEP contains a series of self-reported information such as education, employment status, occupation, earnings, health, satisfaction, and attitudes, among others. In 2013 and 2015, two samples of immigrants were introduced, which are jointly named the IAB-SOEP Migration Sample Survey[3]. The two samples target

[3] This study uses the anonymous data of the IAB-SOEP Migration Sample Survey Data. The survey is a joint project of the Institute for Employment Research (IAB) and the Socio-Economic Panel (SOEP) at DIW Berlin. Data access was provided via a Scientific Use File supplied by the Research Data Centre (FDZ) of the German Federal Employment Agency (BA) at the IAB. DOI: 10.5684/soep.iab-soep-mig.2015. For data documentation, see Brücker et al. (2014)

individuals who migrated to Germany between 1995 and 2010 from the EU-New Member States and Southern European Countries. The first seven survey waves were carried out between 2013 and 2019, with between 3,000-5,000 persons taking part in each of them. The IAB- SOEP questionnaire includes all core questions of the regular GSOEP in addition to questions that address specific aspects of respondents 'pre-migration history and post-migration aspects. Namely, it allows identifying if a couple was together before migration and which spouse was the lead or tied mover. The questionnaire also allows to distinguish between home and host country education and work experience and it contains information on pre-migration labour force status. The set of (post) migrant-specific questions include variables such as language proficiency, return intentions, German identity, and connection to the home country among others.

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Defining and identifying tied movers

In the seminal paper on family migration, Mincer (1978) noted that even if the family gains in economic terms from migration, at an individual level

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some family members might lose from moving. Mincer (1978) coined the term 'tied mover', which refers to a family migrant who, if single, would not have chosen to migrate.

To identify tied movers, I rely on three questions of the IAB-SOEP migration sample regarding the relationship status before and after migration.

1. Were you in a serious relationship before moving to Germany?	Yes / No
2. Did this relationship continue after you movedto Germany?	Yes / No
3. What played the decisive role in your decision to move here - who was the driving force in that decision?	I was / My partner / Both to an equal extent

Table 16: *Determining who is a tied mover*

Using the first two questions I classify individuals who migrated as a couple as those who replied "Yes" on both questions. Combining these questions with the third question, I then classify each individual who migrated as a couple as a lead mover ("I was"), equal mover ("Both to an equal extent") or tied mover ("My partner")[5].

For the empirical analysis, I group lead and equal movers. The main reason to do so is that both lead and equal movers wanted to move and expected to gain individually from migration. There are also a few cases of equal movers.

Measures of economic and socio-cultural integration

To measure the economic integration of tied and lead or equal movers I use the information on individual employment status and hours worked. For accessing socio-cultural integration I rely on measures of ethnic self-identification, German language skills and return intentions (Constant & Zimmermann, 2008; Constant et al., 2009; Drydakis, 2013; Georgiadis & Manning, 2011). Ethnic self-identification is proxied by two questions. The first one asks respondents how connected they feel to their country of origin and the second asks to what extent the respondent feel German (Campbell, 2019; Casey & Dustmann, 2010; Dustmann, 1996; Georgiadis & Manning, 2011; Manning & Roy, 2010). Both questions allow respondents to choose an answer from a five-point scale, which ranges from 1 "Not at all" to 5 "Very Strongly". For the German language skills, I rely on a question which asks respondents "How well do you know German" and use the speaking scale which ranges from 1 "Not at all" to 5 "Very Well". To measure return

[5] Because this question was not asked in 2013, a proxy was used for individuals without information. The proxy combines 1) a reply from the spouse if available in later waves and 2) information regarding the migration motive. If the individual replied that migrated due to family or partnership (economic or political) reasons and the spouse said that was the lead or equal (tied) mover, then this individual was considered tied (lead/equal) mover

intentions, I create a variable that takes a value of one if the respondent stated that he or she wished to remain permanently in Germany or for more than 15 years.

Additionally, to better understand tied movers' time allocation I use information on hours allocated to homework and childcare.

Working sample

As in Freitas Monteiro (2021a, b) the working sample in this study is based on a repeated cross-section. One reason to do so is that the questions measuring socio-cultural integration are not asked in all waves and there is little variation between the waves in which they are asked. Secondly, the main explanatory variable of interest is having migrated as a tied mover, which is a time constant variable and hence it would be absorbed if using fixed effect estimation.

To obtain the repeated cross-sectional sample, I give priority to the time an individual answers the socio-cultural integration questions. I exclude individuals who migrated when they were 18 years old or younger and those who migrated at 64 years or older since these are unlikely to work.

For the majority of couples, I can observe both spouses, however, in cases, there is information on only one spouse. The final sample, for which all dependent and independent variables are available, is comprised of 1,409 individuals of which 780 are females and 629 are males.

CHARACTERISTICS OF TIED AND LEAD MOVERS

A tied mover refers to a family migrant who, if single, would not have chosen to migrate. This is a tied mover is an individual for whom the individual returns to migration do not outweigh individual costs. However, the family returns to migration, which encompasses the individual returns of each spouse, do outweigh family migration costs.

Returns to migration can be roughly seen as the difference in earnings between home and host country. Hence, individual characteristics affecting labour market earnings will determine their returns to migration. The traditional model in economics predicted that the spouse with lower human capital was more likely to be a tied mover (Mincer, 1978; Polachek & Horvath, 1977; Sandell, 1977). At the time (1970's), it was argued that women were more likely to be tied movers because they tended to have a more discontinuous labour force participation and less market earning power (e.g. motherhood, non-market activities), therefore contributingless to total family earnings.

In this section, I look at couples who have already decided to migrate to Germany and analyse the characteristics of spouses who took the role of a tied

mover or a lead/equal mover. Table 16 bellow shows the most relevant premigration characteristics. We see that around 71 per cent of tied movers are female and that about 68 per cent of tied movers were employed in the year before migration. Tied movers seem to be slightly more likely than lead movers to have a university degree from their home country. This hints that the status of lead versus tied mover might be a reflection of intrinsically different preferences towards work.

The high share of females among tied movers, with higher education and who were employed before migration, suggests that migration is not fully gendered neutral [6]. While it is not possible to causally infer on the mechanisms behind this pattern, a potential reason is the role of traditional gender norms. Gender role theories argue that women do not have the same decision power as men within the family because they are socially taught to put family interests first and personal goals second (Bielby & Bielby, 1992; Cooke, 2008). According to the traditional gender norms, husbands take the role of the head of the household and the family breadwinner, while wives are expected to perform the majority of household tasks and take a subordinate position. This would imply that (migration) decision-making within the household is asymmetric with respect to the spouses' gender and that the characteristics of the female spouse are poor predictors of family migration.

This argument departs from the traditional human capital model of Mincer (1978) which is gender-neutral in the sense that it considers how much each spouse contributes to the total family earnings, independently of the gender of the spouse. Indeed, in the late twentieth century, the sociologists Shihadeh (1991) and Bielby & Bielby (1992) argued that women were more likely to be tied movers not because of their lower human capital but because of their prescribed role within societies.

[6] This is in line with the international family joint migration literature which finds that migration is not fully gender neutral (Junge et al., 2014; Munk et al., 2017; Krieger, 2019)

	Lead & Equal Mover	Tied Mover	Total	
	%	%	%	N
Age at immigration	32.54	31.99	32.35	1,409
Gender				
Male	52.45	29.09	44.64	629
Female	47.55	70.91	55.36	780
Region of origin				
EU15+2	12.15	11.04	11.78	166
EU 2004 enlargement	20.79	17.20	19.59	276
EU 2007 & 2013 enlargement	17.91	19.75	18.52	261
Russia & other former Soviet Union	18.23	18.47	18.31	258
Turkey & Arab countries	6.08	9.98	7.38	104
Central Asia	13.65	9.77	12.35	174
Other countries	11.19	13.80	12.07	170
Religion				
No denomination	22.81	24.42	23.35	329
Islamic religion	10.77	13.38	11.64	164
Christian religion	63.86	59.02	62.24	877
Another religious comm.	2.13	1.70	1.99	28
No religious information	0.43	1.49	0.78	11
Employed 1 year BFM				
Not employed BFM	23.99	32.27	26.76	377
Employed 1 year BFM	76.01	67.73	73.24	1,032
Home country education				
No further education	36.14	34.82	35.70	503
Vocational t., apprent. & others	34.54	31.63	33.57	473
Technical or prof. college	9.59	9.77	9.65	136
University	19.72	23.78	21.08	297

Table 16: *Pre-migration characteristics*
Notes: BFM refers to before migration; EU15+2 to an EU15 country plus Switzerland and Norway; Vocational t. to vocational training; apprent. to apprenticeship and prof. college to professional college

Table 17 documents post-migration characteristics by the migration position. Very few migrants, both tied and lead or equal, seem to acquire education in Germany. Given that most spouses migrate with more than 30 years old, it is unsurprising that very few acquired further education in Germany. The number of children present in the household among migrant couples seems to be low, at about 1.2 children per household. Only 19 per cent of couples have a child in preschool and 39 per cent in school. On average, spouses have been in Germany for 9.5 years.

	Lead & Equal Mover	Tied Mover	Total	
	%	%	%	N
Years since migration	9.47	9.54	9.54	1,409
Host country education				
No Vocational t. or uni. GER	98.72	99.15	98.86	1,393
Vocational t. or uni. GER	1.28	0.85	1.14	16
Number of children	1.14	1.16	1.15	1,409
At least 1 child in school				
No child in school	63.22	61.36	62.60	882
A child in school	36.78	38.64	37.40	527
At least 1 child in pre-school				
No child in pre-school	80.81	80.89	80.84	1,139
A child in pre-school	19.19	19.11	19.16	270

Table 17: *Post-migration characteristics*
Notes: Vocational t. refers to vocational training and uni. refers to university

EMPIRICAL MODEL

To look at the effect of gender and migration position on the integration outcomes I estimate the following model:

$$Y_{i,o,t} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 TiedM_i + \beta_2 Ysm_i + \beta_3 YsmSq_i + \eta^j X_i + \\ + \lambda^j Religion_i + \varsigma^j HO_i + \pi HG_i + \tau^j HH_i + \gamma_t + \delta_o + \varepsilon_{1i}, \quad (1)$$

Where $Y_{i,o,t}$ is the outcome of interest, as described in the previous section, for individual i from the region of origin o at survey year t. $TiedM_i$ denotes the migration position, it takes the value of one if spouse i is a tied mover and zero if is lead or both movers. X_i is a vector of individual characteristics such as gender, age and age squared. Ysm_i refers to years since migration and $YsmSq_i$ to its square. $Religion_i$ equals zero if an individual is an atheist, one if follows Islamic religion, two if Christian and three if other religion.

HO_i includes variables related to the human capital acquired in the country of origin by individual i. This includes a dummy variable for the employment status one year before migration and a categorical variable referring to home country education. HG_i is a dummy variable for observed human capital acquired in Germany and equals one if individual i acquired vocational training or university after migration. HH_i is a vector of observed household information after migration which includes the number of children, if there is a child in kindergarten and if there is a child in school. γ_t are survey year fixed effects and δ_o region of origin fixed effects. Standard errors are clustered at the household level.

RESULTS

Table 17 shows the results for the two measures of economic integration and the four proxies of socio-cultural integration using the regression model as described in (1). The reference individual is a male, lead or equal mover, from an EU-15 country or Switzerland or Norway, at the survey year 2013, not employed in the home country 1 year before migration, with no further education beyond the compulsory in the home country, without vocational training or university in Germany, without a child in pre-school or school.

Looking at the results we can see that tied movers are less likely to be employed, to feel German, to have a good command of German and to wish to remain in Germany for 15 years or more, when compared to lead or equal movers. On the other hand, tied movers are more likely to work fewer hours and to feel connected to their country of origin when compared to lead or equal movers. Hence, being a tied mover seems to create a hurdle when it comes to integration.

To make sense of these results we should recall that, by definition, a tied mover is a spouse who if single would not have chosen to migrate. Therefore, it is expected that tied movers have lower earnings potentials in Germany when compared to lead movers. This can be a consequence of a worse skill match or a lack of network in the field of expertise, for instance. Another plausible explanation is that tied movers have intrinsically different preferences toward work.

The different migration motive and expected labour market gains between tied movers and lead or equal movers also means that these two groups will have different predispositions and incentives to invest in the host country's culture. Moreover, the lower employment rates among tied movers mean that, in the long run, this group is less likely to be exposed to people from the host country. Hence, it is expected that tied movers feel less German and have worse German skills when compared to lead or equal movers.

While female migrants are less likely to be economically integrated, they are not very different from males when it comes to socio-cultural integration. Females are more likely to have a good command of German when compared to males. The negative effect of gender on labour market integration, while holding the migration position and education constant, possibly reflects the role of traditional gender norms. While gender seems to have a direct effect on economic integration, it is also likely to have an indirect effect through its effect on the migration position.

As expected, years since migration is an important determinant of integration. Having a university degree from the home country is strongly associated with better labour market integration. Given that very few individuals acquired further education in Germany, this indicator is not a strong predictor of integration.

	Economic		Socio-cultural			
	Hours Worked (1)	Employment (2)	Feel German (3)	Connected Origin (4)	Oral German (5)	Remain Germany (6)
Migration motive (ref: lead or equal mover)						
Tied mover	-3.31***	-0.07**	-0.21***	0.25***	-0.22***	-0.03*
	(1.06)	(0.03)	(0.06)	(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.02)
Years since migration	0.50*	0.01**	0.08***	-0.03**	0.06***	-0.00
	(0.25)	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.00)
Years since migration squared	-0.01	-0.00*	-0.00***	0.00	-0.00***	0.00
	(0.01)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)
Age at migration	0.67	0.02*	-0.02	-0.00	-0.05**	-0.00
	(0.44)	(0.01)	(0.03)	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.01)
Age at migration squared	-0.01**	-0.00**	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
	(0.01)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)
Gender (ref: male)						
Female	-16.33***	-0.28***	0.02	0.09*	0.13***	0.02
	(1.03)	(0.02)	(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.02)
Religion (ref: atheist)						
Islamic religion	-6.23***	-0.13**	-0.08	0.49***	-0.21*	0.07**
	(2.34)	(0.06)	(0.15)	(0.14)	(0.13)	(0.04)
Christian religion	-0.60	-0.00	0.07	0.06	-0.03	0.04
	(1.25)	(0.03)	(0.08)	(0.07)	(0.06)	(0.02)
Another religious comm.	-6.68**	-0.15**	0.07	0.53**	-0.62***	-0.08
	(2.66)	(0.07)	(0.21)	(0.23)	(0.21)	(0.10)
No religious information	-0.80	-0.01	0.21	-0.15	0.34	0.14***
	(6.12)	(0.15)	(0.38)	(0.27)	(0.30)	(0.04)
Employment BFM						
(ref: not employed)	1.76	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.14**	0.00
Employed 1 year BFM	(1.21)	(0.03)	(0.07)	(0.07)	(0.06)	(0.02)
Home country education						
(ref: no further educ.)	0.88	0.04	0.01	-0.05	0.03	0.01
Vocational t., apprent. & others	(1.28)	(0.03)	(0.08)	(0.07)	(0.06)	(0.02)
Technical or prof. college	1.91	0.04	-0.19*	0.12	0.20**	0.00
	(1.97)	(0.05)	(0.11)	(0.09)	(0.09)	(0.03)
University	3.52***	0.08**	-0.16*	0.07	0.45***	-0.07**
	(1.34)	(0.03)	(0.09)	(0.08)	(0.07)	(0.03)
Host country education						
(ref: no voc. t. or Uni.)	0.88	0.09	0.45*	0.58**	0.48***	0.01
Vocational t. or university in Germany	(4.80)	(0.11)	(0.26)	(0.23)	(0.18)	(0.08)
Children in school						
(ref: no child in school)	0.92	0.04	0.04	0.01	-0.03	0.04*
Child in school	(1.41)	(0.03)	(0.09)	(0.08)	(0.07)	(0.03)
Children in school (ref: no child in pre-school)	-0.93	-0.04	0.14	-0.02	0.05	0.02
Child in pre-school	(1.41)	(0.04)	(0.09)	(0.08)	(0.07)	(0.03)
Number children	-2.62***	-0.06***	-0.02	0.01	-0.02	-0.00
	(0.65)	(0.02)	(0.04)	(0.04)	(0.03)	(0.01)
Constant	29.35***	0.55***	2.28***	4.02***	4.39***	0.72***
	(7.77)	(0.19)	(0.47)	(0.43)	(0.39)	(0.13)
Survey year fixed effects	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

Region of origin fixed effects	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Observations	1409	1409	1409	1409	1409	1409
R^2	0.244	0.163	0.094	0.140	0.201	0.095

Table 18: *Integration outcomes*
Standard errors in parentheses; * $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$
Notes: vocational t. and voc. t. refer to vocational training and apprent. to apprenticeship, prof. refers to professional and unni. to university

To better understand the potential role of gender norms, I estimate equation (1) on hours of housework per weekday and hours of childcare per weekday. Table 19 shows a self-contained version of the results focusing on the migration position and gender. Tied movers are more likely to spend more hours doing housework and childcare than lead or equal movers, although the latter category is only significant at 11 per cent level. Everything else equal, females spend one more hour doing housework per weekday and another one hour per weekday with childcare when compared to males. Combined with the results from Table 18 these findings point towards the direction of migrant couples following a more traditional male-breadwinner model after migration.

	Hours housework, weekday (1)	Hours childcare, weekday (2)
Tied mover	0.17**	0.22
	(0.08)	(0.14)
Female	1.05***	0.97***
	(0.06)	(0.12)
Survey year fixed effects	Yes	Yes
Region of origin fixed effects	Yes	Yes
Individual Controls	Yes	Yes
Observations	1409	1409
R^2	0.258	0.219

Table 19: *Home-work*
Standard errors in parentheses
* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

CONCLUSION

This book chapter highlighted the effect of gender and the migration position on the labour market and the socio-cultural integration of migrant spouses in Germany. Using a representative survey of the migrant population in Germany, I find that a considerably larger share of females are tied movers, even though they tend to have higher education. This indicates that the family migration decision process is possibly not gender neutral.

As hypothesized in the introduction, I find that tied movers are less likely to be economic and socio-culturally integrated. Hence, being a tied mover seems to create an additional hurdle when it comes to integration.

While female migrants are less likely to be economically integrated, they

are not very different from males when it comes to socio-cultural integration. The negative effect of gender on labour market integration, while holding the migration position and education constant, possibly reflects the role of traditional gender norms. In light of these findings, I conjecture that gender has both a direct and indirect effect on economic integration. Where the indirect effect comes through its effect on the migration position.

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