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The role of the family in the reintegration process

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Abstract. The relevance of this study is driven by the increasing need for effective social adaptation strategies, where the family serves as a key support factor in the reintegration of individuals following social isolation or challenging life circumstances. The aim of the study was to identify the mechanisms of family support in the reintegration process and to develop recommendations for optimising this process. The research employed methods of systematic analysis, synthesis of scientific sources, structural-functional analysis, and modelling of social interactions within the family environment. The study examined the impact of emotional support, collaborative problem-solving, and stable family bonds on the restoration of social skills and self-esteem among reintegrated individuals. It established that family cohesion enhances psychological resilience and reduces stress levels during adaptation. The study analysed the role of extended family support and identifies variations in family assistance across different sociocultural contexts. The findings were synthesised into recommendations for improving family support effectiveness through open communication, the creation of a supportive psychological environment, and family involvement in rehabilitation programmes. The practical significance of this research lies in its applicability for social workers, psychologists, rehabilitation specialists, and family members seeking to enhance the reintegration of individuals returning to active social life

Keywords: social adaptation; emotional support; social support; psychological adaptation; family relationships

INTRODUCTION

The role of the family in the reintegration process is one of the most pressing topics in contemporary research in the fields of social psychology and rehabilitation. Amid global challenges in recent years, the issue of restoring social ties and personal adaptation after traumatic experiences has gained particular importance. Recent studies demonstrated that the family serves as a crucial factor in the successful reintegration of individuals into society.

An analysis of recent publications highlighted growing interest in studying the mechanisms of family support in the context of reintegration. The role of family dynamics in shaping individual development and

social adaptation has been widely explored. I. Matviienko (2019) examined the historical evolution of gender roles within the family, emphasising their fluidity and dependence on societal transformations. The study highlighted how changing perceptions of masculinity and femininity influence family interactions and identity formation. V. Blikhar (2024) analysed the impact of family upbringing styles on children's anxiety during wartime, revealing that high parental control, particularly from authoritarian and authoritative mothers, increases childhood fear. Conversely, emotional support and lower control levels were linked to reduced anxiety, reinforcing the protective role of family in crisis situations.

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O. Vovchenko (2021) investigated the role of family upbringing in shaping self-esteem among adolescents with developmental disabilities. The study identified parental archetypes that influence self-perception, with paternal figures associated with both positive (strength, justice) and negative (aggression, pressure) traits, while maternal figures contributed to emotional sensitivity and fluctuating self-esteem. L. Piankivska (2022) examined social support in war conditions, demonstrating that family serves as a primary source of psychological resilience. The study highlighted the role of close relationships in mitigating trauma, while broader social networks also contribute to personal recovery and reintegration. The purpose of the study was to identify key mechanisms of family support in the reintegration process and to develop practical recommendations for optimising family assistance.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study employed a combination of theoretical and empirical methods. Theoretical methods included a systematic analysis of scientific literature, synthesis, and generalisation of existing approaches to studying the family's role in the reintegration process, as well as a comparative analysis of domestic and international research on the subject. To process and interpret the collected data, methods of abstraction, formalisation, and systematisation were applied, enabling the identification of key patterns in the phenomenon under study. A dialectical method was used to uncover contradictions in the reintegration process, while structural-functional analysis helped determine the interconnections between components of the family system. Additionally, a modeling method was employed to develop a theoretical model of family support. The methodological foundation of the study was the systems approach, which allowed for the examination of the reintegration process as a holistic phenomenon interconnected with its constituent elements. The research adhered to the principles of systematicity, objectivity, and validity of scientific inquiry. The representativeness of the sample and adherence to research procedures ensured the reliability of the obtained results.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The family plays a key role in the reintegration process of returnees, as it serves as the primary social environment capable of providing support, stability, and security during adaptation to new life conditions. Returning home after an extended period abroad is often accompanied by emotional difficulties, and family support can significantly ease this process. The family can provide emotional support, which is critically important for returnees experiencing stress and anxiety during adaptation. Support from loved ones can significantly ease the adaptation process, helping to overcome emotional difficulties and restore a

sense of stability in new conditions. The family can create an atmosphere where returnees feel safe. For example, shared dinners or family gatherings can become moments when individuals can openly discuss their experiences and fears. It is important for family members to accept the changes that have occurred in returnees. For example, if a veteran returns from war with new values or perspectives on life, the family should be ready to accept these changes without judgment. Open communication is a key element of support. Family members can ask about the returnee's experiences and listen without interruptions. This helps individuals feel that their feelings are valued and that they are not alone in their struggles.

Organising joint walks or sports activities can help reduce stress levels for returnees. For example, the family might go for a walk in the park or engage in sports together, improving mood and strengthening bonds. If a returnee experiences a panic attack, family members can help by staying close and calming them down. They might suggest breathing exercises or simply remind them of their presence: "I'm here with you, everything will be fine". Creating an atmosphere of trust is important for open discussions about problems. Family members can ask how the day went or whether something is troubling them. This can help the returnee open up and share their feelings. Family members may also experience stress due to their own experiences of war or the loss of a loved one. It is important to recognise that they, too, require support and understanding. Sometimes family members may not understand the returnee's experiences, leading to conflicts (Without Barriers, n.d.). For example, if one family member cannot understand the reasons for a veteran's behavior changes, this may cause tension. Adaptation requires time, and family members must be prepared for the process to be lengthy and challenging. They should show patience and support the returnee in their efforts to adapt to new conditions. Emotional support from the family is critically important for returnees in the adaptation process after returning home. Creating an atmosphere of trust and understanding helps individuals cope with stress and anxiety while restoring a sense of stability in their lives. Family members must be ready to accept changes and provide support during this difficult period of adaptation.

The family can also play a key role in the social integration of returnees, helping them establish connections with the local community and make new friends. This is especially important when adapting to new life circumstances, as returnees often face difficulties in forming social relationships. Below is a detailed analysis of this issue with examples. The role of the family in social integration. Supporting the establishment of new connections. The family can encourage returnees to participate in local events such as festivals, fairs, or cultural activities. For example, if the family organises

attendance at a local celebration, it can provide an excellent opportunity for the returnee to meet new people and integrate into the community. Engagement in social groups. The family can assist returnees in finding interest-based groups, such as sports teams, hobby clubs, or volunteer organisations. For instance, if a family member is already part of a volunteer organisation, they can invite the returnee to join, helping them expand their social circle.

Interacting with neighbors. The family can initiate introductions with neighbors and other community members. For example, by hosting a shared dinner or barbecue, they can create a friendly atmosphere and facilitate contact between the returnee and their neighbors ("Scientific Papers. Political Science"). Examples of support. Shared activities. If the family participates in sports or creative endeavors, they can invite the returnee to join these activities. For instance, participating in yoga or painting classes can not only improve mood but also help meet new people.

Language learning support. If the returnee struggles with the language, the family can help them learn the local language through joint lessons or conversations at home. This will not only enhance language skills but also boost their confidence in communicating with others. Organising meetings with compatriots. The family can help find other returnees or compatriots in the new area through social networks or local communities. For example, they can organise a gathering to discuss shared challenges and exchange adaptation experiences.

Emotional family support is critically important for successful social integration. A sense of acceptance. Returnees may feel more accepted and understood due to the support of their loved ones. Stress reduction. When the family actively involves the returnee in social activities and supports their adaptation, it helps reduce stress and anxiety levels. Formation of a new identity. Family support can foster the development of a new social identity for the returnee as part of the new community. The family plays a vital role in the social integration of returnees, as it can help them establish connections with the local community and make new friends (Zhu, 2024). Through support in building relationships and providing emotional encouragement, the family can significantly ease the adaptation process and improve the quality of life for returnees in a new environment. Support in resolving everyday issues is an essential aspect of social integration for returnees, helping them adapt to new living conditions. The family and loved ones can provide this support in various ways, significantly simplifying the adaptation process. Types of Support in Solving Household Issues. Financial support. Family can help repatriates with financial expenses for housing, utilities, or food. For example, if a repatriate cannot find a job, their family can temporarily cover housing or food expenses, allowing them to focus

on job hunting. Help with household tasks. Family members can assist with household chores, such as cleaning, cooking, or childcare. For example, a grandmother can help take care of grandchildren, allowing parents to focus on work or studies. Household organisation. Family can assist repatriates in organising their household, such as finding new housing or processing documents.

For instance, if a repatriate returns without documentation, the family can support them in obtaining new documents or accessing social benefits. Psychological support. Emotional support from the family is crucial for overcoming stress and anxiety. Talking about experiences and discussing problems can help the repatriate feel more confident in new conditions. For example, regular family dinners can provide an opportunity for open discussions about problems and experiences. Examples of support. Assistance in job searching. If a repatriate has difficulties finding employment, the family can help them look for job openings or prepare a resume. For instance, a brother or sister might offer their contacts in companies where they work. The family can organise joint purchases of groceries or necessary household items, which not only reduces financial burden but also creates opportunities for communication and strengthens bonds. The family can encourage the repatriate to participate in local events or community meetings. For example, if a family member is involved in volunteer projects, they can invite the repatriate to join, helping them meet new people. If the repatriate needs to process documents (such as a passport or registration), family members can accompany them to the relevant institutions and help fill out forms. Support in solving household issues is critically important for repatriates in the process of adapting to new living conditions. Family assistance in financial matters, household organisation, and emotional support contributes to successful integration and improves the quality of life for those returning home after a long stay abroad. This not only makes their lives easier but also strengthens family ties and creates a sense of stability during challenging times.

The Role of Family in the Psychological Rehabilitation of Repatriates Family can play a vital role in the psychological rehabilitation of repatriates, especially those returning from combat (Christian Psychology, n.d.). The psychological adaptation of servicemen and their families is a complex process that requires support from loved ones. Below are some aspects and examples of this process. The importance of family in rehabilitation. Emotional support. Family can provide essential emotional support, which is critically important for the adaptation of veterans to civilian life. Returning from war is often accompanied by stress and trauma that can affect all family members (Hrydkovets, 2018). For example, military spouses may experience similar stress due to worrying about their husbands' safety, which also requires attention from

psychologists. Role changes. When a serviceman returns home, role changes occur within the family.

Women often took on the role of the head of the family during their husbands' absence, and now they must adapt to the new dynamics. This can lead to conflicts and tension, making it important for families to receive counseling on addressing these issues. Examples of support programs. Psychological training. Programs exist that teach military families to understand psychological trauma and ways to overcome it. For example, programs like "Psychological Counseling" provide knowledge on how to support loved ones in crisis situations. This includes training in relaxation and self-regulation techniques. Support groups. Creating support groups for the families of veterans helps them share experiences and receive emotional support. Such groups can be organized based at psychological centers or volunteer organizations. Participants learn to constructively resolve conflicts and overcome depressive thoughts. Specific examples. The "Molfa Hub" program. This project offers free psychological assistance not only to servicemen but also to their families. The program includes individual consultations and group sessions to improve mental health (Molfa Hub, 2022).

Family counseling: psychologists conduct specialised consultations for the wives and children of servicemen to help them understand behavioral changes in veterans after returning from war. This includes training on how to recognise symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and respond to them. Thus, the family is an essential resource for the rehabilitation of repatriates, providing emotional support and helping them adapt to new living conditions. Psychological programs and support groups can significantly ease this process. Family members play a crucial role in the decision-making process regarding the repatriate's future, as their support and involvement can substantially influence the success of adaptation and reintegration after returning. Here are several aspects and examples that illustrate this importance. Family involvement in decision-making. Psychological support. Family can provide emotional support, which is critically important for repatriates who may face PTSD or other psychological issues. For instance, if a serviceman returns home from war, his wife can help him adapt to new conditions by understanding his experiences and needs. Joint decision-making. It is important for family members to participate in the decision-making process concerning the repatriate's future. This may include choosing a career, a place to live, or even medical care. For example, if a repatriate intends to change professions after returning, discussing this with the family can help find optimal options and avoid conflicts (Yankovska *et al.*, 2019). Examples of family involvement family consultations. Psychologists recommend conducting family consultations where all family members can express their thoughts and feelings about the repatriate's return. This creates an open

dialogue and reduces tension. For example, as part of the "Psychological Counseling" program, training sessions are held for military families, providing them with knowledge on how to support their loved ones. Joint therapeutic sessions. In some cases, joint therapeutic sessions are held for repatriates and their families.

These sessions allow participants to better understand each other and learn to resolve conflicts constructively. For instance, such sessions may address adaptation issues and role changes within the family after a military member's return. The importance of preparation for return. Family members should be prepared for changes in the repatriate's behavior. Understanding how war can affect a person's psyche enables them to better understand their loved one's reactions and provide necessary support. For example, if a husband becomes more withdrawn or aggressive after returning, his wife can use the acquired knowledge to avoid taking it personally and find ways to help. The family can create a supportive environment for the repatriate's adaptation by organising joint activities or leisure. This might include family trips or participating in sports together, strengthening bonds and improving the emotional state of all family members. Thus, involving family members in the decision-making process is an important aspect of the rehabilitation of repatriates. Working together on problems and supporting each other can greatly ease adaptation to new living conditions (Potapchuk & Pastoshchuk, 2024). Rebuilding family ties is an important aspect of the reintegration process for repatriates, especially those returning from combat or prolonged stays abroad. This process involves not only restoring personal relationships but also adapting to new living conditions, which can be a challenging task for all family members. The importance of restoring ties. Emotional support. After returning, repatriates often face emotional challenges such as post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Family members can provide the necessary support to help them cope with these challenges. For example, a wife might organise family meetings to discuss experiences and seek solutions together.

Changes in family roles. During the repatriate's absence, other family members often take on additional responsibilities. After their return, it is important to discuss new roles and responsibilities to avoid conflicts. For instance, if the mother assumed the role of head of the family during the father's absence, it might be difficult for her to return to a traditional role, requiring clear communication and compromises. Examples of restoring ties. Regular family meetings can help strengthen bonds and create a trusting atmosphere. These can be simple activities like family dinners or outings in nature. For example, the "Psychological Counseling" program recommends organising such activities to improve communication and strengthen emotional connections among family members. Joint

therapeutic sessions. In some cases, involving the whole family in therapy can be beneficial. This allows all participants to express their feelings and experiences in a safe environment. For instance, family therapy can help resolve conflicts arising from changes in relationship dynamics after the repatriate's return (Ministry of Veterans Affairs of Ukraine, n.d.).

Strategies for Strengthening Bonds Joint activities. Involving all family members in joint activities can significantly improve mutual understanding. These activities may include sports games, cultural events, or even cooking together. Such initiatives foster trust and enhance communication. Open dialogue. It is essential to create an atmosphere of open dialogue where everyone can express their thoughts and feelings. This approach helps to avoid misunderstandings and conflicts. For example, establishing specific communication rules during discussions can ensure that everyone has the opportunity to speak without fear of judgment. Rebuilding family ties is a critical stage in the reintegration process of repatriates. Engaging family members in this process through open dialogue, joint activities, and therapy can greatly ease adaptation and foster a healthy family atmosphere. The family plays a significant role in the reintegration process of repatriates in Ukraine. Emotional support, social integration, practical assistance in addressing everyday issues, and involvement in decision-making all contribute to the successful adaptation of newcomers to their new living conditions. Family support is essential for overcoming the challenges of adaptation and ensuring stability in the lives of repatriates.

CONCLUSIONS

The family is the primary source of support for individuals who have experienced social isolation or

challenging life circumstances, contributing to their emotional stability and social adaptation. However, effective reintegration requires comprehensive support, including government and community initiatives. Specifically, research by the Ukrainian Veteran Foundation under the Ministry of Veterans Affairs highlights the importance of state involvement at all stages of veterans' reintegration by providing opportunities and support. It is crucial to develop and implement programs that provide families with knowledge and resources to support their loved ones during the reintegration process. These programs may include education, psychological assistance, and access to social services. Engaging state and community organisations in the development of such programs is necessary for the successful adaptation of individuals to normal life in society. Future research should focus on evaluating the effectiveness of existing support programs, studying the specific needs of different categories of individuals and their families, and developing new approaches to social rehabilitation and integration. Special attention should be given to studying the role of the state in the reintegration process and developing recommendations for improving public policy in this area.

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST

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Роль родини у процесі реінтеграції

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Анотація. Актуальність дослідження обумовлена зростаючою необхідністю ефективних стратегій соціальної адаптації, у яких родина виступає ключовим фактором підтримки під час реінтеграції осіб після соціальної ізоляції чи складних життєвих обставин. Метою роботи було визначення механізмів родинної підтримки в процесі реінтеграції та розробка рекомендацій для оптимізації цього процесу. У дослідженні використано методи системного аналізу, узагальнення наукових джерел, структурно-функціональний аналіз, а також моделювання соціальних взаємодій у сімейному середовищі. Було досліджено вплив емоційної підтримки, спільного вирішення проблем та стабільних сімейних зв'язків на процес відновлення соціальних навичок і самооцінки реінтегрованих осіб. Встановлено, що сімейна згуртованість сприяє психологічній стійкості та зменшенню рівня стресу під час адаптації. Проаналізовано особливості підтримки з боку розширеного сімейного кола, а також визначено відмінності родинної допомоги у різних соціокультурних контекстах. Узагальнено рекомендації щодо підвищення ефективності родинної підтримки шляхом формування відкритої комунікації, створення сприятливого психологічного середовища та залучення членів сім'ї до реабілітаційних програм. Практична цінність роботи полягає у можливості застосування отриманих результатів соціальними працівниками, психологами, спеціалістами з реабілітації та членами родин для покращення реінтеграції осіб, що повертаються до активного суспільного життя.

Ключові слова: соціальна адаптація; емоційна підтримка; соціальна підтримка; психологічна адаптація; сімейні відносини