

The Lebanese expatriation: Between return and connection

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Abstract: Migration flows, particularly those involving skilled labor and capital, have profound effects on both the countries of origin and destination. Lebanon, a developing economy plagued by persistent security and financial crises, has experienced significant migration waves in recent decades. These large-scale emigrations have led to various positive and negative economic and social transformations. While most previous studies have focused on the adverse effects of Lebanon's brain drain and capital outflow, this study emphasizes the crucial role of Lebanese expatriates in supporting their families and revitalizing certain economic sectors. Through a mixed-methods approach, this study examines the factors that prevent Lebanese expatriates from returning to their homeland by analyzing data from 225 participants. Using quantitative methods, including regression and Chi-Square analysis on the SPSS platform, the findings reveal that despite their relatively limited impact, Lebanese expatriates contribute positively to the local economy and provide financial support to their families. The study also highlights that unemployment is a primary driver of emigration, with government reforms, job opportunities, and political stability identified as key factors influencing the decision to return.

Keywords: *Corruption, Diaspora, Economic reforms, Immigration, Lebanon.*

1. Introduction

The pace of migration between developing and developed countries is steadily rising in light of globalization. The reasons behind this increase emerged from free trade economies, facilities of brain and capital transactions, high technological developments, and proportional authorized freedom of movement across countries [1]. Despite the different forms, methods, and effects of the dimensions of legal and illegal migration, several scholars agree to attribute it to two main reasons: either necessity or choice [2, 3]. Recent economic crises and security strikes have caused Lebanon, which has been recognized as a developing country, to be marked with the highest migration rates in the Middle East and North Africa [4]. Among many other consequences, Lebanon's total domestic debt has reached 102.47 trillion dollars [5]. Accordingly, the net immigration rate scored -20.4 migrants/1000 with remittances of 6.6 billion in 2023 along with the massive Lebanese immigration movements since 2019 that sought more stable and safer countries [6]. The majority of research and articles have highlighted the tragic consequences of Lebanese immigration. For example, Zreik [7] explored the macroeconomics effects of forced migration in Lebanon, revealing a multifaceted challenge that encompasses labor market dynamics, public services, fiscal implications, and social integration. Similarly, Ali [8] concluded that a recapitalization of the Lebanese economy with serious reforms in governmental policies is a must. However, the aim of this study is to shed light on the positive and negative repercussions of immigration from a microeconomic perspective.

The Lebanese emigrants have played an important role in assisting their families financially to survive the constant economic inflation in critical moments. Statistics showed that remittances sent from the Lebanese diaspora constitute over 30% (30.7%) of the Lebanese Gross Domestic Production

GDP [9]. This financial support from the diaspora has been also used to support different sectors and important operations in Lebanon [10]. On another note, it has also covered the inability of the government to restructure the country in the aftermath of the crisis [11]. As a result, and since most of the research done regarding Lebanese emigration is general and does not take into consideration the effect of this emigration on the Lebanese economy [12] it is important to fill in this gap and explore the extent to which the Lebanese emigrants contribute to the Lebanese economy and how can Lebanon deal with and benefit from Lebanese emigrants returning back to their home country.

This paper explores the advantages and disadvantages of Lebanese emigration by investigating the degree of contributions of the Lebanese emigrants on the financial level. On the other hand, it aims to propose country reforms that would attract international investments and minimize Lebanese emigration after exploring the various reasons for emigration, diaspora remittances, and its impact on the home country economies.

To do so, the study will answer the following research questions:

- What is the role of Lebanese emigrants in the Lebanese economy?
- To what extent is the Lebanese diaspora's decision regarding returning to their home country affected by the economic and political situation?

2. Literature Review

2.1. Emigration Overview

Emigration is defined as moving from the country of origin and settling in another country that becomes the place of usual residence [13]. According to the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA) [14] the number of emigrants increased from 84 million in 1970 to almost 270 million in 2019. This has played a significant role in the countries' economic and social aspects due to the major role of the contribution that emigrants provide for their country of origin.

Undoubtedly, the emigration of Lebanese citizens, which is described as either brain drain or capital drain, has had a variant effect on the economic side, financial status, and seasonable currency exchange rate fluctuations. On the other hand, returning emigrants have also assisted in developing several economic sectors. Lados [15] explained that returning emigrants is one of the essential phenomena that plays an important role in the developmental process of the homeland due to the contributions that returning emigrants offer to their countries. Krogstad (2016) highlighted that returning immigrants contribute to the economy of the motherland through their savings and knowledge from abroad. In addition, Choudhury [16] has also emphasized the role they play in transferring this knowledge. Moreover, Bahar, et al. [17] focused on the innovative ideas these returning emigrants bring back to their country through investing their knowledge and skills in-country projects; for instance, the returning students who gained knowledge from studying abroad could implement that knowledge in their country of origin. Hanson and McIntosh [18] also believed in the role of these migrants in improving the employment level of the country of origin because the decrease in the remittances that they used to provide can be offset through an effective framework to take full advantage of the human capital. Moreover, studies have shown that returning migrants are more inclined to open new businesses in their home country which provides new employment opportunities. In Lebanon, returning emigrants have contributed to the Lebanese economic and political development after one-third of pre-World War I when Lebanese emigrants returned to Lebanon [19]. These emigrants have contributed to the formation of middle-class households, which helped in the development of several sectors especially those of tourism and construction.

Despite all that has been presented, it is necessary to realize the fact that there is a desire among a large sample of Lebanese residing in Lebanon to emigrate due to the dire security and economic situation in the country. According to the Arab Barometer, which monitors emigration rates from Arab countries according to official reports from the Ministries of Immigration and Foreign Relations and according to the General Security statements of various countries with comprehensive public opinion

polls, 38% of Lebanese expressed a desire to leave Lebanon in 2024. This percentage is similar to the percentages observed in 2022 and 2012 although it is 12% higher than the 26% recorded in 2018. Despite this increase, it is less than the 51% that the Arab Barometer monitored in its first survey of Lebanon in 2007, which is still considered the highest percentage of desire to emigrate [20].

The wave of migration that Lebanon has been witnessing since the outbreak of the revolution on October 17, 2019, which worsened after the Beirut Port explosion on August 4, 2020, is not new and is classified as the third wave. This wave came after two major waves of migration: the first wave that extended to the period of World War I (1865-1916), and it is estimated that 330,000 people migrated from Mount Lebanon at that time, and the second major wave that happened during the Lebanese Civil War (1975-1990). The study estimated that the number of migrants in the second wave was about 990,000 people. However, the third wave is the most dangerous because about 77 percent of the Lebanese are thinking of migrating or seeking opportunities to migrate, according to a study by the Crisis Observatory of the American University. This percentage exceeds any other percentage among the Arab youth category, specifically in countries witnessing armed conflicts. This is due to the Lebanese mentality and the history of its people, which has been marked by migration since World War I. Moreover, the high rate of emigration of specialists working in the medical, education, and engineering sectors along with the latest wave of emigration of lawyers and judges leaves Lebanon in scarcity [21].

2.2. Lebanese Diaspora

The term diaspora is given to a population who emigrated from their country of origin but have upheld a connection with their motherland [22]. However, this definition changes depending on several aspects like birthplace, length of stay outside the home country, and nationality [23]. In this study, the Lebanese diaspora is defined as those who emigrated from Lebanon and are living abroad along with their youngsters.

In 2018, the estimated number of Lebanese emigrants was 9 to 10 million emigrants [24]. Although the emigrants of the first and second waves were uneducated, the current diaspora is highly educated [25] and they are known as “entrepreneurs” or “conflict migrants” [26]. According to the World Bank [27] 50% of the Lebanese emigrants have secondary education. These Lebanese mainly emigrated in order to find new economic opportunities and to escape the instability of Lebanon due to the war and the political conflicts. No matter what the reasons were, it is evident that the remittances sent from these diasporas constitute over 30% (30.7%) of the Lebanese Gross National Product [9] while their financial support assisted the household in surviving within the constant economic inflation via providing liquidity in critical moments [10].

The bulk of these remittances were from the Gulf countries and Africa, and according to a study conducted by Byblos Bank [28] the number of remittances received from the Lebanese expatriates in 2018 ranked Lebanon as 24th globally and 18th among developing countries as it became the third largest recipient among Arab countries, after Egypt and Morocco [27]. As a matter of fact, the Lebanese diaspora have financially contributed by more than 11 USD billion to the Lebanese economy per year, and as a result, Lebanon’s balance of payments would have been negative had the diaspora not contributed to their country of origin via remittances and bank savings. Furthermore, according to the IMF, World Bank World Development Indicators and staff estimates (2017), the Lebanese diaspora spent 5 USD billion on the tourism sector, 72 USD billion on remittances and real estate investments, and 22 USD billion in deposits in the Lebanese banks. In addition, these remittances have been increasing over the years despite the unstable economic and political situation in Lebanon. This increase is basically linked to the emotional motive that Lebanese diaspora have towards helping their families in Lebanon [29]. Thus, by helping their families, the Lebanese diaspora have contributed to the development of the Lebanese economy [29].

2.3. Road Map for the Lebanese Engaging Diaspora

In light of the above, it is economically essential and beneficial to work on engaging the diaspora more in the development of their homeland. Accordingly, Agunias and Newland [22] suggested that policymakers should consider four fundamental steps in order to guarantee diaspora engagements. These steps constitute plans to identify the capacities and goals of the diaspora, get to know their profiles, build trust between them and their country of origin, and establish effective engagement in the development strategy.

A study, funded by the Lebanese Ministry of Economy and Trade in 2017 entitled “Lebanon’s Economic Vision”, indicated that the government is working on a proactive emigration plan that results in engaging the diaspora who can contribute to the economic and social development. The economic vision stated that the government’s vision is to design a proactive emigration policy by 2025 that would result in a highly engaged diaspora with their contribution targeted towards productive segments. In fact, reviving the connection between the diaspora and their home country is very important for the economies. Without such connections, the country will probably lose the remittances and trade stimuli as there are no ties between the country and the emigrant [30]. The most efficient way to reach those targets is to first prepare a tracking system to organize and control emigration. Secondly, raise a generation that is ready for the world economy by coordinating between job demand and supply. Third, use diaspora networking in creating government-to-government agreements (G2G). The government should also work on strengthening the Lebanese ties and reviving the sense of belonging with the second and third diaspora generation. Finally, push the diaspora to interact with their home country via investing in productive sectors and towards development projects. Even though the study has set the steps needed to engage the diaspora and benefit from their capacities, there are no follow-up reports on the implementation of the study, and it is most probable that steps have not been undertaken; otherwise, a report would have been already published.

Lebanon is a small country that witnessed emigration waves over the years [31]. Lebanon is the destination for many emigrants and at the same time is the origin country for many emigrants spread worldwide; thus, there is a constant socio-political instability. The Lebanese government did not put any strategies to maintain a connection with the Lebanese diaspora. There is no comprehensive policy to channel the Lebanese diaspora’s capabilities to become developmental partners. Given the importance of the diaspora’s financial and non-financial support, the Lebanese government should design and implement policies and procedures that encourage the diaspora to contribute to their home country. The challenges that currently face the Lebanese government with respect to emigration and diaspora relationship is the absence of an official emigration policy and tracking system, weak relationship between diaspora descendants (second and third generation), and lack of planning to push the diaspora to contribute to productive sectors. This results in an unorganized labor force immigration, and non-productive diaspora inflows. Although political parties before every parliament election and municipality election included diaspora inclusion strategies in their election campaign, nothing came to real laws and implications during their ruling periods.

On another note, due to the Lebanese revolution in October 2019, diaspora remittances have decreased because of the changes in exchange rates and the lack of trust in the Lebanese banking system. However, it is expected that the diaspora’s financial support will flow following this critical situation primarily for personal reasons i.e., to support their families and relatives and to contribute to their communities and societies. Accordingly, to properly channel the Lebanese diaspora capabilities, Lebanon should set a comprehensive political engagement strategy with its diaspora. This could be done by following Agunias and Newland [22] roadmap for diaspora engagement by first setting clear objectives for the country, setting the expectations from the Lebanese diaspora, exploring their capacities, and building a trusting relationship to finally reach an effective engagement with Lebanon.

In the context of the relationship with the Lebanese diaspora, the Lebanese diaspora today play a significant role in shaping and influencing the Lebanese public opinion. In 2024, a study prepared by El-

Zakka and Tabar [32] examined the relationship between the homeland and the Lebanese diaspora and its contribution to the dynamics of the political system in Lebanon. A close relationship was discovered between the public opinion of the Lebanese abroad and the public opinion of the Lebanese inside Lebanon. In the context of October 17 uprising 2019, which was a major popular event of the uprising against the corrupt political system in Lebanon, the Lebanese diaspora and the Lebanese citizens agreed on the right and priority of changing the political system that has brought Lebanon to economic collapse. The authors claim that this relationship is a reciprocal one, where both domestic and diaspora actors contribute to the potential transformation process sparked by October 17, 2019 uprising [32].

2.4. Research Hypothesis

The increasing trend of sending remittances is largely related to the emotional motive that diasporas have towards helping their families in a collective culture. Accordingly, the study hypothesis suggests that the emigrants' return to Lebanon is affected by governmental reforms in a down economy.

3. Methodology

As the positivist research philosophy focuses strictly on scientific empiricist method design to yield pure data and facts uninfluenced by human interpretation or bias [33], this study is based on positivism philosophy by observing the social reality of immigration implications on the financial contribution to the Lebanese economy. In light of what has been given and collected regarding financial, social, intellectual, and other effective engagements for the Lebanese diaspora, it has been realized that such contributions emerged from highly collaborative bonds among locals as well as immigrants in the absence of recovery strategies. Such observations could be interpreted in a way that leads to generalizing the fact that local residents rely heavily on diaspora contributions in times of economic crisis.

Since this is an understudied area that needs to be explored, the study will be using the mixed-method approach to better understand these phenomena. The recent economic crisis, currency devaluation, and chemical explosion in Lebanon have pushed the Lebanese diaspora to send monetary support to their families. However, according to Macrotrends [34] emigration is expected to increase significantly. It is important to understand what exactly pushed the Lebanese to emigrate if they are willing to return once the situation calms down. To do so, a questionnaire was administered to the Lebanese emigrants to understand the reason(s) for leaving their country and their intent to return in the near future. Another questionnaire targeted return emigrants to explore the factors that affected their decision in returning to their home country and if the current situation will push them to emigrate again.

The qualitative approach was based on the analysis of 24 interviews with Lebanese immigrants. This is to gain deeper insight and expand knowledge regarding migration factors and expectations. As for relying on the quantitative approach, it was through studying 200 questionnaires distributed to Lebanese immigrants across the globe- a reliable sample size as it provides sufficient data for accurate statistical analysis, ensuring a reasonable confidence level and low margin of error. The data has been collected and analyzed to conclude the regression among the relationship between immigrants' intention to return to Lebanon and the reported factors that affect this decision, including governmental policies, political stability, corruption, public education, security, job opportunities, intent, and satisfaction. The survey included close-ended questions partitioned into three main sections: intent to return, suggestions for reduction of Lebanese emigration, and types of reforms.

The data was collected in a cross-sectional study during the year 2022, at the height of the Lebanese financial collapse by examining a random sample of 200 Lebanese expatriates. The following table summarizes the variables considered in the analysis:

Table 1.
Independent and dependent variables of the study.

Type of variable	Variable
Dependent variable	Intent to return (IR)
Independent variables	Satisfied with home country government (CG)
	Government reforms (GR)
	Corruption (CORR)
	Public education (PE)
	Job market/opportunities (J)
	Security (S)
	Political stability (PS)

The increased level of emigration nowadays puts huge pressure on the Lebanese government to work on programs that attract the Lebanese to stay in Lebanon and prevent the brain drain. According to Arab News [35] more than 380,000 Lebanese are in the process of emigrating as a consequence of the political and economic instability. Everyone is considering leaving, and this is facilitated due to the spread of the Lebanese diaspora worldwide as every emigrant can benefit from their network to overcome the migration obstacles. The current economic crisis is the worst since the 1975-1990 civil war. According to the World Bank, "Lebanon is suffering from a dangerous depletion of resources, including human capital, with brain drain becoming an increasingly desperate option." This is with respect to the pull factors, the most common responses regarding the reason for moving abroad.

4. Findings

4.1. Qualitative Findings

Based on the responses, unemployment is/was the main reason for considering moving abroad with a total of 57 (56%) responses mentioning it to be the driver to emigration. Table 2 states the elements that can contribute to decreasing Lebanese emigration according to the interviewees. According to the interviewees, having less corruption is one way for the Lebanese government to reduce the brain drain and Lebanese emigration. In addition, the Lebanese government should work on projects that provide job opportunities for the Lebanese people all over Lebanon. Finally, having better access to affordable education through structuring the public university in Lebanon and increasing its capacity can also reduce immigration. Surprisingly, 38% of the interviewees mentioned that the government is unable to do anything to prevent the Lebanese from emigrating. This is because the situation in Lebanon is so unbearable that nothing, in their opinion, can be done to let people stick to their home country.

Table 2.
Elements/Ratios that contribute to reduce Lebanese emigration.

How to reduce Lebanese Emigration?	Number	%
Less Corruption	8	33%
More job opportunities	4	17%
Education/Public universities	3	13%
Cannot reduce	9	38%
Total	24	100%

Based on the above two ideas, the need for government reforms to address corruption and the importance of providing job opportunities to reduce emigration, it is evident that the Lebanese government needs to implement certain reforms to gain the trust of the Lebanese diaspora. The Lebanese government is wasting a lot of benefits from the Lebanese diaspora due to corruption and lack of transparency in its operations. According to interviewees, certain reforms need to be adopted by the government to gain the trust of the diaspora and the Lebanese citizens in general. Saroj Kumar, The World Bank Mashreq Regional Director stated that the "Lack of political consensus on national priorities severely impedes Lebanon's ability to implement long-term and visionary development

policies". Having that said, the Lebanese government and political parties need to set their priorities to understand the huge impact of the brain drain on the economy and to implement actions that reduce it. This could be done by setting a reform agenda covering the macro and micro levels within the country. The agenda must include clear and transparent governance strategies that implement reforms on several levels followed by continuous follow-up and evaluation methods. It has been shown that 42% of the interviewees' responses stated the importance of having reforms at all levels. Governmental reforms should be made at all levels: political, educational, governmental, etc... 42% of the responses also highlighted the importance of having an ethical system in practice and not only on paper. Thirty-three percent of the responses highlighted the importance of having a public sector reform. It is worth noting that in Lebanon, the public sector is mainly the governmental sector. Thus, the public sector reforms are simply governmental agency reforms. According to the interviewees, corruption is highly noticed within the departments in governmental agencies where one will be paying double the stated fees to finish the required paperwork. In addition to the listed reforms, 8% of the responses clearly stated political reform, and 21% stated educational reform, as examples of the reforms that could be on the government agenda and benefit society. One of the surprising responses is that 25% of the respondents believed that the government cannot implement any type of reform due to its corruption. They agreed that a new promising government is the only solution to confront the old one, investigate the causes behind corrupted procedures and ask for honest judgments. They also mentioned that any other promise is only words without deeds. These views are strongly linked with the recent protests in Lebanon demanding new government that can design and implement the reforms.

Table 3.

Types of reforms.

Types of reforms	Number	%
All levels	10	42%
Political reforms	2	8%
Educational Reforms	5	21%
Ethical system	10	42%
Public sector reform	8	33%
Government cannot implement reform	6	25%

4.2. Quantitative Findings

4.2.1. Correlation and Regression Analysis

Emigrants and potential returnees were asked about their intent to return to Lebanon, and they were questioned about the factors that might have affected their decisions. Most of the respondents stated that their intent to return to Lebanon is affected by the current Lebanese economic and social situation. The correlation analysis results are presented in Table 4.

Table 4.
Correlation matrix- intent to return.

R	Satisfied with home country government	Government reforms	Corruption	Public education	Job market/opportunities	Security	Political Stability	Intent
Satisfied with home country government	1							
Government reforms	-	1						
Corruption	0.78689	0	1					
Public education	0.41174	0.30934	0.2954	1				
Job market/opportunities	0.30988	-	0.25191	0.62457	1			
Security	0.44083	0.29988	0.43375	0.52221	0.21349	1		
Political Stability	-0.11063	-0.62062	-0.15966	-0.25499	-0.10934	-0.46934	1	
Intent	0.08371	0.2357	0.0337	-0.29165	-0.60361	-0.2272	0.14106	1

Source: Primary data collected by the author through R² program.

An ordinal logistic regression analysis was also performed to explore the factors that are linked to the diaspora's intent to return to Lebanon. This type of regression is convenient for the 5-point Likert scale when the dependent and independent variables are with 'ordered' multiple categories. Table 5 presents the results of the regression analysis.

Dependent variable= intent to return "IR"

Independent variable: economic factors, governmental corruption, reforms.

$$\blacktriangleright IR = a + b_1 CG + b_2 GR + b_3 CORR + b_4 PE + b_5 J + b_6 S + b_7 PS$$

Where:

CG = "Satisfied with home country government", GR = "Government Reform", CORR = "Corruption", PE = "Public Education", J = "Job Opportunities", S = "Security", PS = "Political Stability"

Table 5.
Regression Analysis (intent to return).

	Coefficients	Std. error.	t Stat	p-value
Satisfied with CG	1.7715**	0.7578	2.34	0.0194
Corruption	0.8811	0.6597	1.34	0.1817
Government reform	0.7973*	0.4106	1.94	0.0521
Public education	0.2537	0.5483	0.46	0.6435
Job market/opportunities	2.9947**	0.9160	3.27	0.0110
Security	1.2487*	0.6164	-2.03	0.0728
Political stability	1.0967*	0.5875	1.87	0.0619

Note: *significant at 10%, ** at 5%, *** at 1%.

Based on the regression results (Table 5), three main factors that affect the diaspora's intent to return to Lebanon are the Lebanese government, the existence of government reforms, and the establishment of new job opportunities at a 5% significance level. These results do not eliminate the importance of the remaining factors; however, these three factors directly contribute to the emigrants and potential returnees in their decision to return to their home country. Based on the data collected, it is noticeable that some reforms need to be inaugurated by the government to gain the trust of the diaspora and increase their contribution to Lebanon. The lack of trust between the government and the diaspora presents a huge obstacle for the diaspora's engagement. Due to the increased level of corruption, the Lebanese diaspora have lost trust and connection with the Lebanese government and its promises. This lack of trust demotivates the Lebanese diaspora and limits their contribution to Lebanon. The instability in Lebanon is mainly linked to corruption and lack of governmental reforms. In addition, the regression analysis shows that the governmental reforms highly affect the emigrants and potential returnees' intent to return to Lebanon. The diaspora, as per the questionnaires, are not satisfied with the Lebanese government's acts and governmental reforms. The lack of governmental reforms affects the emigrants' decision to return to Lebanon. In addition to the abovementioned causes, the current crisis in Lebanon on all levels (economic, social, education, etc...) is another major push factor for potential emigrants and a major factor in affecting the decision of the emigrants to return to Lebanon. Accordingly, the lack of stability in Lebanon impacts emigrants' decision to return to Lebanon.

5. Discussion

As per the regression results, political instability is also considered as a main factor affecting the diaspora's intent to return to Lebanon and at the same time affecting potential emigrants in their decision to leave the country. This means that the hypothesis is accepted and that the intent to return to Lebanon has been highly affected by the recent economic and political instability. This is in line with Koinova [26] study that stated that the Lebanese emigrate to escape the political instability.

6. Conclusion

6.1. Summary of Findings

Due to the unstable economic situation in Lebanon, emigration has been increasing over the last three years. The increasing trend towards immigration, especially the drain of brains and the scarcity of the high technical and executive skills, has led to the depletion of the most important intellectual assets in Lebanon. Emphasizing that the high rate of migration was not limited to individuals but rather to international agencies, organizations, and institutions operating in Lebanon, such as financial and banking auditing, quality, and franchising organizations. Based on that, the Lebanese government should start implementing reforms to gain the trust of the Lebanese residents first and the Lebanese diaspora second. Gaining trust and communicating with the Lebanese will contribute to the development of the country and its survival from the economic crisis. Reforms should stress eliminating corruption and creating more job opportunities in the market. In addition, the Lebanese government should set the appropriate communication channels with the diaspora for the latter to contribute to economic change and investment projects. Finally, the Lebanese government should structure a return road map for the diaspora to encourage their return to encourage them invest their skills in the country. Lebanon is facing hard times that could be overcome through proper governmental reforms and collaboration with the diaspora after regaining trust in the Lebanese government.

6.2. Implications and Future Research

This study highlights the critical need for governmental changes in Lebanon especially in addressing corruption, creating job opportunities, and establishing more grounded ties with the diaspora. It also underscores the role of the diaspora in contributing to Lebanon's financial recuperation. Future research ought to investigate the types of reforms required to address corruption and the impact of diaspora communication strategies on their eagerness to return and invest in Lebanon. Further studies could also examine the long-term impact(s) of diaspora's engagement on Lebanon's financial resilience and sustainable improvement with a focus on measuring the success of return programs and job creation activities. Also, research might examine the relationship between political stability and governance changes and their impact on emigration patterns in Lebanon.

Transparency:

The authors confirm that the manuscript is an honest, accurate, and transparent account of the study; that no vital features of the study have been omitted; and that any discrepancies from the study as planned have been explained. This study followed all ethical practices during writing.

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