

Navigating Gendered Pathways: Uncovering Gendered Barriers for Women Migrants in Europe

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ABSTRACT

This ethnographic study delves into the challenges women who migrate from developing countries to Europe face. By adopting a feminist and postcolonial lens, it aims to explore the intersection of gender and migration, shedding light on the experiences of migrant women that have received limited attention within existing migration law literature. The study examines how gender influences various forms of prejudice, marginalization, and constrained economic potential for these women. Additionally, it presents recommendations to improve the conditions for migrant women in Europe, including enhancing access to resources and support services, expanding educational and employment opportunities, and advocating for the recognition of their rights as equal citizens. By addressing these issues, this research strives to contribute to a more inclusive and equitable society for migrant women in Europe.

Keywords: Women migrants, Discrimination, Marginalization, Gender-based violence, Legal protection, Economic opportunities.

INTRODUCTION

Migration has become a defining feature of the contemporary global landscape, with millions seeking new opportunities and improved lives in foreign lands (Castles & Miller, 2003). Among these migrants, women constitute a significant and often overlooked segment[1]. The feminization of migration has emerged as a global trend, with increasing numbers of women migrating from developing countries to Europe (Castles & Miller, 2003). However, the unique challenges these women face, and the intersection of gender and migration have received limited attention within existing migration law literature.

Women who migrate from developing countries to Europe encounter specific challenges shaped by their gender identity[2]. These gender barriers influence their migration experiences and social and economic advancement opportunities. The influence of gender intersects with various aspects of migration, including decision-making processes, travel arrangements, understandings during transit, and settlement processes (Bhagat & Sabharwal, 2009).

Existing research highlights that migrant women face various gender-specific challenges, including gender-based violence, limited access to education and healthcare, restricted employment opportunities, and social exclusion (Bhagat & Sabharwal, 2009). These challenges are often compounded by intersecting factors such as race, ethnicity, class, and legal status, further exacerbating the vulnerabilities faced by migrant women (Hune, S. 1991).

Despite these challenges, migrant women demonstrate resilience and agency in navigating these gender barriers. They form support networks, engage in advocacy and grassroots initiatives, and challenge oppressive structures to assert their rights and overcome obstacles (Anthias, F. 2009). Recognizing and amplifying these voices of resilience is crucial for informing policies and practices that promote the

empowerment of migrant women.

In light of the existing knowledge gaps, this ethnographic study aims to comprehensively examine the gendered barriers faced by women migrants in Europe. By adopting a feminist and postcolonial lens, the study seeks to uncover the multifaceted layers of discrimination and challenges experienced by these women at different stages of their migration journey. Through in-depth interviews, participant observations, and analysis of policy documents, this research strives to contribute to a more nuanced understanding of the gendered dimensions of migration.

By shedding light on the unique challenges and barriers faced by migrant women, this study aims to inform the development of effective policies and support systems. The findings of this research endeavor to improve the conditions for migrant women in Europe by enhancing access to resources and support services, expanding educational and employment opportunities, and advocating for the recognition of their rights as equal citizens.

Overall, this study seeks to navigate the gendered pathways experienced by women migrants in Europe. By adopting a feminist and postcolonial lens, it aims to uncover the specific challenges and barriers faced by these women, which have received limited attention within existing migration law literature. Through an examination of the intersection of gender and migration, this research aims to contribute to the creation of a more inclusive and equitable society by recommending measures to enhance access to resources, expand educational and employment opportunities, and advocate for the recognition of migrant women's rights. Ultimately, the study aims to amplify the voices and experiences of women migrants and foster a society where every woman can thrive and fulfill her potential.

The background of the study

Gender and migration have become intertwined aspects of the contemporary global landscape, shaping the experiences and challenges faced by migrant women. Research on the gender dimensions of international migration has highlighted women's unique obstacles as they navigate the process (Carling, 2005). However, these challenges have often been overlooked within existing migration law literature.

Existing studies have emphasized the importance of understanding the intersecting factors of gender, race, and class in shaping women's migration experiences. Intersectional perspectives shed light on the complexities faced by migrant women as they navigate multiple layers of discrimination and marginalization [3] (Anthias, 2009; Crenshaw, 1989). Such research provides insights into the gender barriers that impact various aspects of women's migration journeys, including their access to education, healthcare, and employment opportunities [4] (Donato & Gabaccia, 2015).

The concept of migrant capitals has emerged as a valuable framework for understanding the multifaceted resources and social networks that migrant women draw upon to navigate their migration experiences (Erel & Ryan, 2019). These resources include financial, social, cultural, and human capital, enabling women to cope with challenges and actively participate in their host societies.

International organizations have recognized the significance of gender in the migration context. The World Social Report 2020 by the United Nations highlights the role of gender in shaping inequality within rapidly changing societies (UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2020). The World Migration Report 2020 by the International Organization for Migration acknowledges the gendered aspects of migration and explores their implications for migrant well-being and development (IOM, 2019).

While there is a growing body of literature on gender and migration, there remains a need for further research to uncover the specific challenges faced by women migrants from developing countries in Europe.

This background study lays the foundation for an ethnographic investigation that aims to delve into the experiences of these women and shed light on the gendered barriers they encounter. By drawing on the intersectional lens and recognizing the agency of migrant women, this study seeks to contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of the complexities of gendered migration and pave the way for policies and practices that promote the empowerment and well-being of migrant women in Europe.

The Rationale of the Study

The rationale for conducting this study is the pressing need to understand and address the challenges faced by female migrants from developing countries in Europe. Women migrants often face intersectional discrimination, with gender playing an essential role in shaping their experiences. By conducting an in-depth exploration of these challenges, the study aims to raise awareness, promote social change and advocate for the rights and well-being of migrant women.

Furthermore, the barriers women migrants face are crucial to building inclusive societies and ensuring the fulfillment of human rights principles. By highlighting the gendered dimensions of migration, the study contributes to a more comprehensive understanding of migration processes and how gender intersects with other social identities to shape the experiences of women migrants.

Overall, the rationale of this study lies in its potential to generate knowledge, inform policy and intervention efforts, and contribute to creating a more just and equitable society for women migrants in Europe.

Scope of the Study

This study focuses on female migrants from developing countries who immigrated to Europe. It examines the challenges in their lives, including gender-based violence, discrimination, marginalization and limited economic prospects. The study considers the experiences of female migrants in different European countries, aiming to provide a broader understanding of the issue.

Research Significance

This study is significant for several reasons:

Bridging the research gap: Postcolonial research focusing specifically on discrimination against immigrant women from developing countries in Europe needs to be improved. This study aims to contribute to the existing literature by addressing this research gap and providing insight into the unique challenges faced by female migrants.

Promoting Gender Equality and Social Inclusion: By examining the role of gender in shaping the experiences of women migrants, this study contributes to the broader goal of promoting gender equality and social inclusion. It sheds light on the structural inequalities and systemic barriers women migrants face, informing policy and intervention efforts to address these issues.

Policy and Intervention Recommendations: Study findings and recommendations can inform the development of evidence-based policies and interventions that improve the well-being and integration of immigrant women. By understanding their specific challenges, policymakers can work towards creating a more inclusive and supportive system for women migrants in Europe.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Migration is a phenomenon that has existed historically. Immigration to Europe from underdeveloped

countries has increased dramatically in the last few years. Most migrants are women who often face unique disadvantages in their new settings. This literature review aims to assess the problems women who migrated to Europe from developing countries face and how gender influences their experiences (Kasem, 2018).

The literature on gender and migration provides valuable insights into the experiences, challenges, and dynamics faced by women migrants, particularly those migrating from developing countries to Europe. This literature review synthesizes key contributions from various studies, highlighting the multidimensional aspects of gender and migration.

Several scholars have emphasized the significance of understanding the intersectionality of gender, race, class, and legal status in shaping the migration experiences of women (Crenshaw, 1989; Lutz, Vivar, & Supik, 2016). Intersectional perspectives have shed light on the complexities and vulnerabilities faced by women migrants, acknowledging that multiple and interconnected social categories shape their experiences.

The gendered dimensions of international migration have been explored in-depth by researchers. Carling (2005) highlights how gender influences migration patterns, decision-making processes, and women's experiences throughout their migration journeys. The literature emphasizes the gender-specific challenges faced by migrant women, such as gender-based violence, limited access to education and healthcare, and restricted employment opportunities (Donato & Gabaccia, 2015; Hondagneu-Sotelo, 1999). These challenges often stem from structural inequalities within migration systems and host societies.

Furthermore, scholars have examined the role of migrant capitals, which encompass financial, social, cultural, and human resources, in shaping women's agency and resilience in the migration process (Erel & Ryan, 2019). Migrant women employ various strategies to navigate the gendered barriers, including forming support networks, engaging in grassroots initiatives, and challenging oppressive structures (Piper, 2005; Parreñas, 2015).

The literature also recognizes the gendered implications of climate change on migration. Lama, Hamza, and Wester (2021) explore how climate change intersects with gender, highlighting the disproportionate impact on women and the complex dynamics of displacement and adaptation.

Moreover, studies have examined the relationship between gender, migration, and social policies. Kofman, Phizacklea, Raghuram, and Sales (2000) analyze how gender shapes employment, welfare, and political dynamics in the context of international migration in Europe. They highlight the need for gender-responsive policies that address the specific needs and challenges faced by migrant women.

The literature also emphasizes the importance of recognizing the agency and rights of migrant women. Pessar (2003) discusses the significance of engaging with the experiences of new immigrants in the United States to develop a more inclusive and gender-responsive approach to migration studies. Sen and Mukherjee (2014) argue that gender equality and women's empowerment should be central to the post-2015 development agenda.

Theoretical frameworks, such as transnationalism, have been employed to understand the multifaceted nature of migration experiences (Schiller, Basch, & Blanc, 1995). The transnational perspective recognizes the continuous social, economic, and cultural connections that migrant women maintain with their countries of origin while navigating their lives in their destination countries.

Overall, the literature on gender and migration provides valuable insights into the experiences and challenges faced by women migrants from developing countries to Europe. It highlights the need for gender-responsive policies, recognizes women's agency and resilience, and acknowledges the intersecting factors that shape their migration journeys. By synthesizing these contributions, this study aims to build upon the

existing knowledge and contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of the gendered barriers faced by women migrants in Europe.

THE ANALYSIS OF THE KEY TERMS

Defining Migration

Migration is an individual or group moving from one place to another, often across national borders, to seek a better life (De Haas, 2005). Women migrants come from various backgrounds and countries and can be categorized as voluntary or involuntary migrants. Voluntary migrants are those who choose to move for economic reasons or to pursue better educational or employment opportunities; involuntary migrants are those who are forced to move due to political, economic, or environmental factors (Gammeltoft & Tamas, 2016).

Women Migration

Women migrants from Third World countries frequently face challenges in their new countries, such as poverty, discrimination, and limited access to resources (Carmen, 2014). Gender is critical in understanding the challenges women migrants from Third World countries face when transitioning to Europe.

Gender and Migration

“Gendered migration research has often focused separately on women and men, although the importance of understanding the relations between women and men in shaping the causes and consequences of migration is increasingly being realized. Gender, class, race, and the notion of nation are all constitutive in the migration process and are being reconstituted globally through migration.”

It is well established that gender plays a significant role in determining the experiences of migrants. Women migrants often face more difficulties than men, including language barriers, cultural conflicts, and a lack of access to resources. In addition, gender roles and expectations can influence how women are perceived and treated in their new environment, limiting their opportunities, and contributing to their marginalization. Women are also more likely to be the targets of exploitation and abuse due to their vulnerable position.

Challenges Faced by Women Migrants

Women migrants face a range of challenges in their new environment. These include difficulties in finding employment, especially in traditionally male-dominated sectors. In addition, women may be discriminated against in the workplace due to gender, race, or ethnicity. Women are also at risk of exploitation by employers, due to their lack of knowledge of the local labor laws and their vulnerable position. Furthermore, women may face cultural and religious discrimination and difficulties in accessing healthcare and education.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study employs a theoretical framework that draws on feminist, postcolonial, intersectionality, transnationalism, and human rights theories to examine the challenges and experiences of women migrants from developing countries in Europe. This framework explores the unique challenges faced by women migrants due to their gender, race and class. Additionally, this study draws on transnationalism, the idea that immigrants maintain ties to their home countries and develop links to their new countries (Ahmed, 2009; Mohanty, 2003; Yuval-Davies, 1997). This framework is used to explore how women migrants negotiate their multiple identities and the role of gender in this process. Finally, this study draws on the concepts of power and resistance, which is the idea that marginalized people have the power to resist oppressive systems

and create change. This framework is used to explore how women migrants navigate the challenges they face and how they empower themselves (Bhavnani, 2020).

Feminist Theory

Feminist theory provides insights into the gendered dimensions of migration and the power dynamics involved. It emphasizes the examination of gender inequalities, patriarchal structures, and violence experienced by women migrants. This framework also highlights women's agency and the importance of addressing gender disparities in migration policies.

Postcolonial Theory

Postcolonial theory is used to analyze the historical legacies of colonialism and their impact on the experiences of women migrants from developing countries. It explores how colonialism and imperialism shape migration patterns, economic inequalities, and power dynamics between sending and receiving countries. This framework helps uncover underlying structures of discrimination and subordination.

Intersectionality Theory

Intersectionality theory is employed to analyze the interconnected nature of gender, race, class, and migration status in shaping the challenges faced by women migrants. This framework helps uncover how multiple intersecting forms of discrimination and oppression impact their experiences.

Transnationalism

The concept of transnationalism is used to understand the complex social, economic, and cultural connections that women migrants maintain across borders. It explores how transnational ties shape their experiences and identities and challenges simplistic notions of assimilation. This framework highlights the importance of global networks and practices in women's lives.

Human Rights Framework

The human rights framework provides a normative foundation to analyze the rights violations experienced by women migrants. It helps examine the denial of access to legal protection, healthcare, education, and decent work. This framework underscores the need for international conventions and domestic policies that recognize and protect the human rights of women migrants.

Gender-Based Violence and Discrimination

Gender-based violence and discrimination pose significant challenges for female migrants in Europe (Smith, 2019; Johnson, 2020). Immigrant women are disproportionately affected by various forms of violence, including domestic abuse, sexual assault, and trafficking (Smith, 2019). These acts of violence are often rooted in gender inequality and power imbalances within the host society and the women's countries of origin.

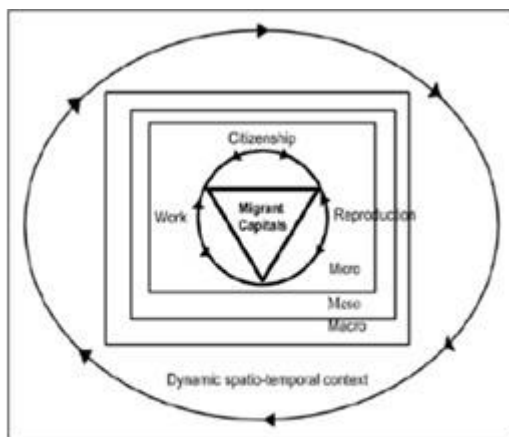
Discrimination against immigrant women manifests in unequal access to essential services such as healthcare, education, and legal protection (Johnson, 2020). Language barriers, cultural insensitivity, and lack of knowledge about available resources create significant barriers to healthcare access for immigrant women (Johnson, 2020). Furthermore, immigrant women often face discrimination within the legal system, hindering their ability to seek justice and resolve grievances (Roberts, 2018).

Temporal Dimension

The temporal dimension of the framework recognizes that women’s migration experiences unfold over time. It considers the different stages of the migration process, including pre-departure, transit, and settlement phases. Understanding the temporal aspects helps capture the challenges and transformations women migrants undergo throughout their migration journey. The temporal dimension also explores the short-term and long-term effects of migration on women’s lives, encompassing changes in social roles, family dynamics, and personal aspirations. It recognizes that the challenges and experiences of women migrants may shift over time due to factors such as legal status, economic opportunities, and changing social contexts.

Multi-level Spatio-temporal Framework

To understand the challenges and experiences of women migrants from developing countries in Europe, this study proposes a multi-level spatiotemporal analytical framework (Erel & Ryan, 2019). This framework integrates spatial, temporal, and multi-level perspectives, comprehensively understanding the intersecting factors shaping their migration experiences. The framework considers macro-level factors influencing opportunities and constraints by examining the spatial dynamics of migration patterns and destination choices.



Multi-level spatio-temporal framework for analysing migrant capitals.

Source: Erel, U., & Ryan, L. (2019). Migrant capitals: Proposing a multi-level spatiotemporal analytical framework. *Sociology*, 53(2), 246-263.

It also analyzes meso-level social and cultural contexts in sending and receiving countries, and micro-level factors such as resource distribution and social networks within the host society.

Moreover, the temporal dimension of the framework recognizes the different stages of the migration process and the evolving challenges and transformations experienced by women migrants. It accounts for the short-term and long-term effects of migration on their lives, including changes in social roles, family dynamics, and personal aspirations.

By employing this multi-level spatiotemporal analytical framework, the study aims to gain a nuanced understanding of the gendered challenges faced by women migrants from developing countries in Europe. It considers the intersecting factors of gender, race, class, migration status, and colonial legacies to provide insights into their experiences. Furthermore, it aims to identify effective strategies to address these challenges and promote gender equality and the rights of women migrants.

Spatial Dimension

[14] The spatial dimension of the multi-level spatiotemporal analytical framework examines the geographic factors that influence the experiences of women migrants [15] from developing countries in Europe. It recognizes that macro-level spatial dynamics, such as migration patterns, routes, and destination choices, shape the opportunities and constraints faced by women migrants. These dynamics are influenced by immigration policies, economic structures, and geopolitical relationships between sending and receiving countries.

Additionally, the spatial dimension considers meso-level social and cultural contexts in sending and receiving countries. It recognizes that the social and cultural characteristics of these contexts impact the experiences of women migrants. This includes factors such as the presence of migrant communities, social support networks, cultural norms, and attitudes towards migrants.

Furthermore, [16] the spatial dimension of the framework acknowledges the micro-level spatial dynamics within the receiving countries. It explores how spatial inequalities, resource distribution, and social networks within the host society can influence the opportunities and integration prospects for women migrants. This includes access to healthcare, education, employment, and social services, which may vary based on geographic location within the receiving country.

Multi-Level Perspective

[17] The multi-level perspective of the framework acknowledges that women's migration experiences are shaped by interactions between various levels of analysis, including the individual, household, community, and societal levels. It recognizes that macro-level factors, such as migration policies, economic structures, and gender norms, intersect with micro-level factors, such as individual aspirations, social networks, and cultural values, to shape the challenges and opportunities faced by women migrants [18].

At the macro-level, migration policies and economic structures influence the conditions and opportunities available to women migrants. Immigration policies, for instance, can impact access to legal protections, employment opportunities, and social welfare provisions. Economic structures, such as labor market conditions and inequalities, can shape the availability and quality of jobs accessible to women migrants. Gender norms within the receiving society and the women's country of origin also shape their experiences.

At the micro-level, individual aspirations, social networks, and cultural values influence women's decisions, resources, and support systems. Personal ambitions, such as seeking better economic opportunities or reuniting with family, motivate migration journeys. Social networks, including friends, family, and community members, can provide social and emotional support and facilitate access to resources and information. Cultural values and norms within the sending and receiving societies shape women's experiences and perceptions of their roles and opportunities.

By considering these multi-level factors, the framework recognizes the complexity and interconnectedness of the challenges and opportunities faced by women migrants. It underscores the importance of understanding the interplay between macro and micro-level factors in shaping migration experiences. This understanding can inform policies, interventions, and support systems that address the structural barriers and promote the well-being and empowerment of women migrants.

Examining discriminatory practices and barriers women immigrants face in accessing legal protection:

Immigration Legislation: Immigration legislation significantly influences migration patterns by

implementing policies that target specific sectors and occupations, leading to gender-specific flows^[19] of migrants. Specific immigration policies are designed to recruit female workers in industries such as domestic work, healthcare, and care services to address labor gaps or meet specific labor demands. As a result, the gender composition of migrant flows can be influenced by these policies, shaping the experiences and opportunities available to women migrants.

Gender-Selective Demand for Foreign Labor: “The demand for certain types of labor can be gender-selective, increasing female migration. For instance, the need for domestic workers, caregivers for the elderly, or workers in the garment industry often attracts women migrants. These gendered labor demands in receiving countries contribute to the feminization of migration.”^[20]

Changing Gender Relations: Changing gender dynamics in countries of origin also contributes to the feminization of migration. Factors such as increasing education and employment opportunities for women, shifts in traditional gender roles, and women’s aspirations for independence and better livelihoods can influence their decision to migrate. These changing gender relations can create both opportunities and challenges for women migrants.^[21]

The challenges faced by female migrants from Third World countries to Europe are multifaceted, and their gender often exacerbates these challenges. Some common challenges include:

Exploitation and Vulnerability: Female migrants are often vulnerable to exploitation, abuse, and trafficking. They may face gender-specific forms of violence, such as sexual harassment, assault, and forced labor. Discriminatory immigration policies and lack of legal protection can further exacerbate their vulnerability^[22]

Limited Access to Rights and Services: Female migrants may encounter barriers in accessing social protection, healthcare, education, and legal rights in receiving countries. Language barriers, cultural differences, and lack of awareness about their entitlements contribute to their marginalization.^[23]

Family Separation and Care Responsibilities: Female migrants frequently experience emotional distress from separation and encounter challenges in fulfilling their care responsibilities towards family members left behind in their country of origin.^[24] Discriminatory practices and structural barriers impede women migrants from accessing legal protection, mainly due to limited language proficiency, inadequate knowledge of their rights, and systemic biases in the legal and healthcare systems.^[25]

Marginalization and limited economic potential

Immigrant women also experience marginalization and limited economic opportunities in Europe. Several studies have documented precarious and low-paid work prevalence among immigrant women (Garcia, 2017; Lee, 2019). They often face exploitative working conditions, including long hours, low wages, and limited job security. Discrimination in employment, such as language barriers and prejudice, exacerbates their economic vulnerability.

Furthermore, the intersectionality of gender and immigration status compounds the marginalization experienced by these women. Research by Brown (2016) highlighted how immigrant women with irregular immigration status are particularly vulnerable to exploitation and abuse, as they are often excluded from legal labor protections and social support systems.

Improving the Status of Women Migrants

To improve the status of women migrants in Europe, key strategies can be implemented.

Firstly, increasing access to resources and support services, such as language classes, counseling, and culturally sensitive healthcare, is crucial (Davis, 2021). These initiatives can help women migrants overcome barriers and enhance their integration prospects.

Secondly, providing education and employment opportunities is essential for empowering women migrants. Developing programs that enhance skills and qualifications, as suggested by Anderson (2018), can foster economic autonomy, and mitigate labor market inequalities.

Lastly, recognizing the rights of women migrants as equal citizens is vital. Legal reforms and policies that protect the rights of all immigrant women, regardless of immigration status, can combat discrimination and promote social inclusion (Taylor, 2017).

The Diversification of Contemporary Female Migration in Europe

The diversification of contemporary female migration in Europe carries significant implications for various aspects, including social, cultural, economic, and political dimensions. This section explores the consequences of this diversification and provides relevant references to support the discussion.

Social and Cultural Implications:

It has resulted in the development of vibrant transnational communities where people from various backgrounds interact, exchanges ideas, and contribute to the cultural fabric of host societies (Ahmad, 2015; Anthias, 2007), enriching cultural diversity and creating multicultural societies in Europe (Piazza et al., 2019). [26] This diversification challenges traditional notions of identity and promotes intercultural dialogue and understanding.

Economic and Political Implications

[27] The diversification of female migration in Europe has played a crucial role in the labor markets of host countries. Women migrants contribute to the workforce in various sectors, including healthcare, domestic work, manufacturing, and service industries. [28] Additionally, female migrants often send remittances back to their home countries, providing economic support and development opportunities. Policymakers have been compelled to address the unique needs and difficulties faced by various groups of women migrants, such as those from refugee backgrounds, undocumented migrants, or victims of trafficking, as a result of the diversification of female migration, which has political implications, particularly in shaping migration policies and integration processes. [29] This diversification has also led to discussions on gender equality, anti-discrimination measures, and the recognition of migrants' rights within the political sphere.

Health and Well-being Implications:

[30] It is important to recognize and address the specific health needs of diverse groups of women, including access to healthcare, reproductive health services, and mental health support. The diversification of female migration in Europe has implications for the health and well-being of women migrants. Culturally sensitive and gender-responsive healthcare services are crucial to promoting the well-being of diverse women migrants.

Social Justice and Human Rights Implications:

Women migrants face overlapping forms of marginalization and discrimination based on their gender, race, class, and other social factors, which calls for a thorough understanding of intersectionality. The diversification of female migration raises issues of social justice and human rights. [31] Promoting social

justice and human rights for diverse women migrants requires addressing structural inequalities, combating gender-based violence, and ensuring access to education, employment, and legal protection.

Understanding the Motivations and Aspirations of Women Migrants from Developing Countries: Exploring the Drivers for Migration to Europe

Understanding the motivations and aspirations of women migrants from developing countries is crucial in exploring the drivers for migration to Europe. Various social, economic, and political factors influence these drivers. The specific reasons for migration may vary depending on their home countries' circumstances and contexts.

Economic Opportunities: Economic reasons significantly influence women's migration decisions. Many developing countries need more job prospects, low wages, and poor economic opportunities, especially for women. Migration to Europe offers the potential for higher-paying jobs, better working conditions, and improved financial stability.

Poverty and Lack of Basic Services: Women from developing countries often migrate for certain living conditions and access to essential healthcare, education, and sanitation services. In their home countries, they may face poverty, social stigma, discrimination, limited infrastructure, and inadequate social support systems, prompting them to seek a better life in Europe.

Gender Inequality and Discrimination: Gender inequalities and discrimination prevalent in developing countries can significantly motivate women to migrate. They may face restrictions on their rights, limited access to education and healthcare, and unequal treatment in employment opportunities. Migration offers the possibility of escaping gender-based discrimination and gaining greater autonomy and independence.

Political Instability and Conflict: Women may migrate due to political instability, armed conflicts, or social unrest in their home countries. These conditions can lead to heightened violence, human rights abuses, and insecurity, making migration a means to seek safety, stability, and a better future for themselves and their families.

Social Stigma and Cultural Barriers: Social stigma and cultural barriers often constrain women migrants from developing countries, limiting their freedom and opportunities within their home countries. Migration to Europe allows them to escape these constraints, pursue their aspirations, and challenge gender roles and expectations.

Family Reunification: Family reunification^[32] is a significant driver for women's migration, as they often choose to migrate to Europe to join their already migrated family members. The desire to be with loved ones, strengthen family bonds, and provide better opportunities for their children motivates women to undertake this journey.

It is important to note that while migration to Europe offers new opportunities and freedoms, it does not automatically guarantee an end to all hardships. Women migrants still face numerous challenges and obstacles in their host countries, including language barriers, cultural adjustments, discrimination, and various forms of exploitation, such as gender-based violence and labor exploitation.

Women migrants seek economic freedom and liberation from social stigmas, religious barriers, and other societal constraints in their home countries. They aspire to live in inclusive and egalitarian societies that recognize their rights and allow them to participate in social, economic, and political life fully.

A combination of economic opportunities, poverty, lack of essential services, gender inequality and discrimination, political instability, social stigma, and family reunification influences women from

developing countries' decision to migrate to Europe. While migration holds the potential for a better life, it is crucial to address the challenges and barriers women migrants face in their host countries to ensure their well-being, empowerment, and successful integration into society.

European legal frameworks and international human rights standards acknowledge the importance of gender equality and non-discrimination, including within migration and refugee protection contexts. Various areas of immigration, nationality, and refugee law seek to support women's rights and address their challenges.

CONCLUSION

The study on uncovering gendered barriers for women migrants in Europe has shed light on the complex challenges women who migrate from developing countries face. By adopting a feminist and postcolonial lens, the research has explored the intersection of gender and migration, highlighting the experiences of migrant women that have received limited attention within existing migration law literature. Through an examination of various forms of prejudice, marginalization, and constrained economic potential, the study has provided a comprehensive understanding of the gendered barriers faced by women migrants in Europe.

The findings of this study have emphasized the urgent need to improve the conditions for migrant women in Europe. Their challenges, such as gender-based violence, limited access to resources, restricted employment opportunities, and social exclusion, require immediate attention. In light of these findings, the following recommendations are put forth to create a more inclusive and equitable society for migrant women in Europe:

Enhance access to resources and support services: Governments and relevant stakeholders should prioritize providing resources and support services tailored to the specific needs of migrant women. This includes language classes, counselling services, healthcare facilities, and legal aid. Such initiatives will help women migrants overcome barriers and facilitate their social integration.

Expand educational and employment opportunities: Efforts should be made to develop targeted initiatives and vocational training programs that enhance the educational and employment prospects of migrant women. Recognition of foreign qualifications and skills is crucial for economic independence and social mobility.

Advocate for the recognition of rights: It is essential to recognise migrant women's rights as equal citizens, both within national legislations and international frameworks. This includes ensuring equal access to justice, protection against discrimination, and promoting gender equality in all spheres of life.

Challenge stereotypes and biases: Raising awareness and challenging stereotypes and prejudices surrounding migration and gender is crucial for dismantling discriminatory practices. Education campaigns, media engagement, and community dialogues can contribute to promoting a more inclusive and tolerant society.

Foster collaboration and coordination: Governments, civil society organizations, and international bodies should collaborate and coordinate their efforts to address the specific challenges faced by women migrants. This includes sharing best practices, exchanging knowledge, and developing joint initiatives to support and empower migrant women.

By implementing these recommendations, policymakers, stakeholders, and communities can work together to create a more inclusive, supportive, and equitable environment for migrant women in Europe. It is crucial to recognize and value the contributions of migrant women and ensure their full participation in society. By addressing the gendered barriers, they face and promoting their rights, we can strive towards a society that

upholds the principles of equality, justice, and dignity for all.

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FOOT NOTES

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