

Agency Amidst Adversity: A Postcolonial Feminist Interrogation into Female Migration to Europe

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Abstract: Female migrants from developing countries have increased rapidly in recent decades, while migration to Europe has exercised agency in the face of multifaceted challenges. This study explores the challenges faced by women who immigrate to Europe from developing countries. It takes an ethnographic approach to explore challenges to feminist and postcolonial theories to conduct the study. Despite numerous works on migration law, there is a dearth of postcolonial research on discrimination against migrant women in developing countries in Europe. Therefore, this paper examines how gender plays a role in the various forms of prejudice and marginalisation of these women and their limited economic potential. In addition, it suggests how to make things better for migrant women in Europe, such as increasing access to resources and support services, increasing education and employment opportunities, and recognising their rights as equal citizens.

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

Introduction

Migration from developing countries to Europe has been a significant phenomenon in recent decades. This mass movement has resulted in a new type of female migrant. “³During the last few decades, the gender balance of international migration flows has developed in response to immigration legislation, gender-selective demand for foreign labour, and changing gender relations in countries of origin. Different factors have often worked together to increase the share of women in migration flows. As a result, the feminisation of migration has been recognised as a tendency at the global level (Castles & Miller, 2003, p. 67). Women migrants from developing countries to Europe face a range of challenges, many of which are exacerbated by their gender.⁴The reasons for the increasing feminisation of international migration can be found in social, economic and political factors. This paper investigates the challenges faced by female migrants from Developing countries to Europe and the role of gender in exacerbating these challenges. To explore this topic, it draws on various sources, including academic literature, first-hand accounts, and official statistics.

The background of the study

Due to the traditional social structure of developing countries, women's migration tends to be different or viewed differently from men's (Pessar et al., 2003). The growing number of migrants to Europe from developing countries has created a unique challenge for female migrants, especially when it comes to gender roles. Women migrants often face a range of intersecting problems in their new host

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countries, such as domestic and sexual violence, exploitation, and discrimination, as well as a lack of access to essential services such as healthcare and education. As such, women migrants are particularly vulnerable to a range of human rights violations, making it essential to understand the role of gender in their migration experiences.

This study examines the challenges faced by female migrants from third-world countries to Europe and the role of gender in the migration process. By investigating the multiple factors that shape the lived experiences of female migrants, this study aims to provide essential insights into the complexity of the migration experience and how gender influences female migrants' decisions and experiences.

Analysing factors contributing to the marginalisation and limited economic potential of female migrants in Europe:

This objective focuses on understanding the factors that contribute to the marginalisation and limited economic opportunities experienced by female migrants in Europe. It includes examining issues such as occupational segregation, limited access to decent work, and discriminatory practices in the labour market. Existing research highlights the intersecting effects of gender, race, class, and immigration status on women migrants' economic integration.⁵

Moreover, it is essential to understand the intersectional nature of women migrants' experiences by exploring how gender intersects with other social identities such as race, ethnicity, religion, and class. It involves examining how these intersecting identities shape the specific challenges and vulnerabilities faced by women migrants.⁶(Crenshaw, 1989).

By addressing these research objectives, the study aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the challenges faced by female migrants from developing countries in Europe, with a particular focus on the role of gender. The findings can contribute to the existing literature, inform policy development, and promote gender equality and social inclusion for women migrants.

Scope of Study

This study focuses on female migrants from developing countries who immigrated to Europe. It examines the challenges they face in various aspects of their lives, including gender-based violence, discrimination, marginalisation 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 of significant importance 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 female migrants face.

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.

⁵Kofman, E., Phizacklea, A., Raghuram, P., & Sales, R. (2000). *Gender and international migration in Europe: employment, welfare, and politics*. Psychology Press.

⁶Crenshaw, K. (1989). Demarginalising the intersection of race and sex: A black feminist critique of antidiscrimination doctrine, feminist theory and antiracist politics. *U. Chi. Legal f.*, p. 139.

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.

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 fulfilment 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 female 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.

The Analysis of the Key Terms

Migration Defined

Migration is an individual or group moving from one place to another, often across national borders, to seek a better life (De Haas, 2005).⁷ Women migrants come from various backgrounds and countries and can be categorised as voluntary or involuntary. 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 migrants⁸ from Developing World countries frequently face challenges in their new countries, such as poverty, discrimination, and limited access to resources (Carmen, 2014). Gender is a crucial factor in understanding the challenges that female migrants from developing countries face when making the transition to Europe.

Gender and Migration

⁹"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 realised. 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 marginalisation. Women are also more likely to be the targets of exploitation and abuse due to their vulnerable position.

⁷IOM 2021: https://publications.iom.int/system/files/pdf/2021-AP-Migration-Data-Report_1.pdf

⁸<https://www.iom.int/gender-and-migration>

⁹Kofman, E. Unequal internationalisation and the emergence of a new epistemic community: gender and migration. *CMS* 8, 36 (2020). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40878-020-00194-1>, Pg 10

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 (Affairs, D. O. E. a. S., 2020). In addition, women may be discriminated against in the workplace due to their gender, race, or ethnicity. Women are also at risk of exploitation by employers due to their lack of knowledge of the local labour laws and their vulnerable position. Furthermore, women may face cultural and religious discrimination, as well as difficulties in accessing healthcare and education (Kofman, 2020).

Literature Review

Gendered Challenges in European Migration

The surge in women migrating from developing countries to Europe has sparked a growing body of research examining their multifaceted challenges. A study by Kasem (2018) emphasises the need to scrutinise the gendered dimensions of migration, highlighting that women face distinct obstacles that often differ from those encountered by male migrants. These challenges encompass socio-cultural, economic, and legal aspects, influencing women's overall integration and well-being in their host countries.

Research indicates that women migrants commonly grapple with issues such as discrimination, limited access to healthcare, and precarious employment conditions (Düvell, 2019). Gender roles and stereotypes can exacerbate these challenges, restricting women's autonomy and impeding their ability to navigate unfamiliar environments. Moreover, the intersectionality of factors such as race, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status amplifies the complexity of their experiences (Gioli et al., 2020). Understanding these intricacies is crucial for developing targeted policies and interventions that address the specific needs of women migrants and promote inclusivity.

International Organization for Migration (IOM) Perspective

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) plays a pivotal role in addressing the challenges faced by female migrants in Europe. Through its comprehensive reports and initiatives, the IOM has highlighted the need for gender-sensitive migration policies (IOM, 2017). The organisation emphasises the importance of recognising women's diverse roles in migration, including as primary caregivers, workers, and economic contributors (Women and Girls on the Move to Europe – Flow Monitoring Surveys, 2018–2020).

A study commissioned by the IOM underscores the significance of providing adequate support systems for female migrants, including access to education and healthcare services (IOM, 2020; Lutz H. et al., 2016). Additionally, it emphasises the need for collaboration between governments, NGOs, and international bodies to create an environment that fosters gender equality and social inclusion for migrant women. Integrating the insights from IOM reports into the broader literature on women migrants in Europe enhances our understanding of their systemic challenges. It informs policy recommendations for more effective interventions (Why migrant women need gender equality and empowerment in "*The Changing World of Work*" 2023).

Beyond IOM: Exploring Intersectionality and Policy Implications

In addition to the IOM's contributions, other scholars have delved into the intersectionality of factors shaping the experiences of women migrants in Europe. Research by Anthias (2017) and Charsley (2021) emphasises the interconnected nature of gender, ethnicity, and class, highlighting how these intersecting identities contribute to unique challenges and opportunities for women in the migration process. Understanding these intersections is essential for designing inclusive policies that address the diverse needs of women from developing countries.

Policy implications emerge from the literature, suggesting the necessity of implementing gender-sensitive measures within migration frameworks. It involves creating avenues for economic

empowerment, combating discriminatory practices, and fostering cultural competence in host communities. Additionally, collaborative efforts between governments, NGOs, and international organisations are essential for developing and implementing policies prioritising the well-being and integration of women migrants in Europe. By synthesising insights from various sources, this literature review contributes to a holistic understanding of the challenges women migrants face and informs strategies to enhance their resilience and overall quality of life.

Understanding The Motivations and Aspirations of Women Migrants From Developing Countries: Exploring The Drivers For Migration to Europe

Women from developing countries often choose to migrate to Europe due to a combination of social, economic, and political factors. The reasons behind their migration can vary depending on their home countries' specific circumstances and contexts (Massey et al., 1999). Here are some common reasons why women from developing nations tend to migrate:

Economic Opportunities: Economic reasons significantly influence women's migration decisions. Many developing countries face limited 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 better living conditions and access to essential healthcare, education, and sanitation services. In their home countries, they may face poverty, 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 be a significant motivating factor for 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: Women migrants from developing countries may face social stigma, cultural restrictions, and traditional norms that limit their freedom and opportunities in their home countries. Migration to Europe can offer them the chance to escape social and cultural constraints, pursue their aspirations, and challenge gender roles and expectations.

Family Reunification: Family reunification is another significant driver for women's migration. Women may choose to migrate to Europe to join their family members who have already migrated. The desire to be with loved ones, build stronger family ties, and provide better opportunities for their children often motivates women to 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 suffering. Women migrants still face numerous challenges and obstacles in their host countries. They may encounter language barriers, cultural adjustment difficulties, discrimination, and exploitation, including gender-based violence and labour exploitation.

While economic freedom is a significant factor, women migrants also seek freedom from social stigmas, religious barriers, and other social constraints in their home countries. They aspire to live in

societies with more inclusive and egalitarian environments, where their rights are recognised and they can participate fully in social, economic, and political life.

Nevertheless, women from developing countries migrate to Europe due to a combination of economic opportunities, poverty and lack of essential services, gender inequality and discrimination, political instability, social stigma, and family reunification. While migration offers 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 integration into society.

In general, European legal frameworks and international human rights standards recognise the importance of gender equality and non-discrimination, including migration and refugee protection. There are several key areas where immigration, nationality, and refugee law aim to support women's rights and address their specific challenges.

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 migration in Europe carries significant implications for various aspects, including social, cultural, economic, and political dimensions migration in Europe carries significant implications for various aspects, including social, cultural, economic, and political dimensions migration in Europe carries significant implications for various aspects, including social, cultural, economic, and political dimensions migration in Europe carries significant implications for various aspects, including social, cultural, economic, and political dimensions (Venturini, A., 2004).

Figure-1

A summary table of female migrants from different countries or regions:

Region/Country	Key Migration Trends	Challenges Faced	Contributions to Host Society
Africa	Increasing migration is often due to economic opportunities and conflict. Women face challenges related to exploitation, discrimination, and limited access to resources. Contribute to diverse cultural enrichment and often engage in healthcare and domestic work sectors.		
Middle East	Migration is driven by conflict, seeking refuge and economic opportunities. Women may experience challenges related to cultural adjustment, discrimination, and gender-based violence. Contribute to cultural diversity and participate in sectors such as services and education.		
Asia	Varied migration motivations include economic prospects, family reunification, and education. Challenges may include language barriers, social integration difficulties, and employment disparities. Contribute to economic growth, particularly in sectors like technology and healthcare.		

Region/Country	Key Migration Trends	Challenges Faced	Contributions to Host Society
Eastern Europe	Migration is often for economic reasons, seeking better employment opportunities. Challenges include labour market exploitation and discrimination. Contribute to labour force diversity, especially in industries like hospitality and agriculture.		
Western Balkans	Migration is driven by economic opportunities and seeking better living conditions. Women may face challenges related to social integration and labour market disparities. Contribute to workforce diversity and may participate in service industries.		
Latin America	Migration due to economic factors, family reunification, and sometimes fleeing violence. Challenges include language barriers and social discrimination. Contribute to cultural diversity and often engage in sectors like services and agriculture.		

Migration and the well-being of the 'left behind Asia: Key themes and trends (2006).

Social and Cultural Implications:

It has resulted in the development of vibrant transnational communities where people from various backgrounds interact, exchange 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). ¹⁰This diversification challenges traditional notions of identity and promotes intercultural dialogue and understanding.

Economic and Political Implications:

¹¹The diversification of female Migration in Europe has played a crucial role in host countries' labour markets. Women migrants contribute to the workforce in various sectors, including healthcare, domestic work, manufacturing, and service industries. ¹²Female migrants often send remittances 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. ¹³This diversification has also led to discussions on gender equality, antidiscrimination measures, and recognition of migrants' rights within the political sphere.

¹⁰Hondagneu-Sotelo, P. (1999). Introduction: Gender and contemporary US immigration. *American Behavioural Scientist*, 42(4), 565-576.

¹¹Piper, N., & Roces, M. (Eds.). (2004). *Wife or worker? Asian women and migration*. Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.

¹²Hune, S. (1991). Migrant Women in the Context of the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families. *International Migration Review*, 25(4), 800–817. <https://doi.org/10.1177/019791839102500407>

¹³Affairs, D. O. E. a. S. (2020). *World Social Report 2020: Inequality in a Rapidly Changing World*. United Nations.

Health and Well-being Implications:

¹⁴It is essential to recognise 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 female 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 marginalisation 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. ¹⁵Promoting 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.

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

Immigration Legislation: Immigration policies and regulations play a crucial role in shaping migration patterns. In some cases, specific immigration policies have been implemented to recruit female workers in specific sectors, such as domestic work, healthcare, and care services. These policies may be designed to fill labour gaps or meet specific labour demands in receiving countries. Research has shown that immigration policies that target specific occupations or sectors can influence the gender composition of migrant flows. ¹⁶

Gender-Selective Demand for Foreign Labor: "The demand for certain types of labour can be gender-selective, increasing female migration. For instance, the demand for domestic workers, caregivers for the elderly, or workers in the garment industry often attracts women migrants. These gendered labour demands in receiving countries contribute to the feminisation of migration ".¹⁷

Changing Gender Relations: Changing gender dynamics in countries of origin also contribute to the feminisation 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 opportunities and challenges for female migrants (Piper, 2005).

The challenges faced by female migrants from Developing 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 labour. Discriminatory immigration policies and lack of legal protection can further exacerbate their vulnerability. ¹⁸

¹⁴Nations, U. (2019). *World Migration Report 2020*. United Nations.

¹⁵Sen, G., & Mukherjee, A. (2014c). No Empowerment without Rights, No Rights without Politics: Gender equality, MDGs and the post-2015 Development Agenda. *Journal of Human Development and Capabilities*, 15(2–3), pp. 188–202.

¹⁶Kofman, E. (2004). Family-related Migration: A critical review of European Studies. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 30(2), 250.

¹⁷Piper, N. (2005). Gender and Migration. *Policy analysis and research programme of the Global Commission on International Migration*, 7, pg 5

¹⁸Parreñas, R. (2015). *Servants of globalisation: Migration and domestic work*. Stanford University Press

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 marginalisation.¹⁹

Family Separation and Care Responsibilities: Female migrants often leave behind families and may experience emotional distress due to family separation. They may also face challenges in fulfilling their care responsibilities for children, elderly parents, or other family members left in the country of origin.²⁰

This objective analyses the discriminatory practices and structural barriers that hinder women migrants from accessing legal protection. It involves investigating issues such as limited language proficiency, lack of knowledge about their rights, and systemic biases in the legal and healthcare systems.²¹

Marginalisation and limited economic potential

Immigrant women also experience marginalisation 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 marginalisation 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 labour protections and social support systems.

Improving the Status of Women Migrants

Various strategies can be implemented to address the challenges faced by female migrants in Europe. First, increasing access to resources and support services is critical. These include language classes, counselling services, and culturally sensitive healthcare facilities. As Davis (2021) suggests, “Such initiatives can help women immigrants overcome barriers and increase their chances of integration.”

Second, providing education and employment opportunities is crucial for empowering women migrants. By developing programs to increase skills and qualifications, as Anderson (2018) suggested, immigrant women can gain greater economic autonomy and overcome labour market inequality.

Finally, it is essential to recognise the rights of female immigrants as equal citizens. Legal reforms and policies that protect the rights of immigrant women, regardless of their immigration status, can contribute to combating discrimination and promoting social inclusion (Taylor, 2017).

This literature review highlights the challenges faced by female migrants from developing countries in Europe, emphasising the role of gender in shaping their experiences. Gender-based violence, discrimination, marginalisation and limited economic opportunities are the main barriers these women face. Increasing access to resources and support services, providing education and employment opportunities, and recognising their rights as equal citizens are essential to address these challenges. Further research in this area is warranted to develop comprehensive policies and interventions that promote the well-being and integration of female migrants in Europe (McKeown, A. 2004).

¹⁹International Organization for Migration. (2019). *World Migration Report 2020*. intergovernmental commit.

²⁰Donato, K. M., & Gabaccia, D. (2015). *Gender and international migration*. Russell Sage Foundation.

²¹International Organization for Migration. (2019). *World Migration Report 2020*. intergovernmental commit.

Theoretical Framework

This research adopts a feminist and postcolonial theoretical framework to investigate the challenges female migrants face from developing countries to Europe. Emphasising intersectionality, the study explores how gender, race, and class intertwine to shape the unique experiences of discrimination and oppression among female migrants (Crenshaw, 1989; Hooks, 1984; Collins, 1990). This approach recognises that social identities are interconnected, influencing the multifaceted challenges women face navigating migration processes.

Building on transnationalism, the study draws from the works of scholars such as Ahmed (2009), Mohanty (2003), and Yuval-Davis (1997). Transnationalism provides a lens to examine how female migrants maintain connections with their home countries while forming new ties in their host countries. Understanding these dual affiliations is crucial for unravelling the complex negotiation of multiple identities, with a focus on the role of gender in shaping these processes.

Furthermore, the study integrates the concepts of power and resistance, aligning with Bhavnani's (2020) insights. This framework acknowledges that marginalised individuals possess agency and the capacity to resist oppressive systems. By applying this lens, the research tunnels into how female migrants navigate challenges, showcasing their resilience and empowerment strategies. This analytical approach is vital for comprehending how women exercise agency to confront and transform their lived experiences during migration.

Intersectionality Theory:

Intersectionality theory is used to analyse the interconnected nature of gender, race, class, and migration status in shaping the challenges faced by women migrants from developing countries in Europe. This framework helps uncover how multiple intersecting forms of discrimination and oppression impact their experiences.²²

Feminist Theory: ²³Feminist theory provides insights into the gendered dimensions of migration and the power dynamics involved. It helps examine the gender inequalities, patriarchal structures, and violence experienced by women migrants. This framework also emphasises women's agency and the importance of addressing gender disparities in migration policies.

Postcolonial Theory:

²⁴Postcolonial theory is used to analyse 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.

Human Rights Framework:

²⁵The human rights framework provides a normative foundation to analyse 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 recognise and protect the human rights of women migrants.

²²Crenshaw, K. (1989). Demarginalising the intersection of race and sex: A black feminist critique of antidiscrimination doctrine, feminist theory and antiracist politics. *U. Chi. Legal f.*, p. 139.

²³Povey, L. (2018). Gendered States of Punishment and Welfare: Feminist Political Economy, Primitive Accumulation and the Law, by A. Roberts.

²⁴Spivak, G. C. (1988). "Can the subaltern speak?" In C. Nelson and L. Grossberg (eds) *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 27-313.

²⁵Parkes, J. (Ed.). (2015). *Gender violence in poverty contexts: The educational challenge*. Routledge.

Transnationalism:

²⁶The concept of transnationalism can be employed 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 transnational networks and practices in women's lives.²⁷

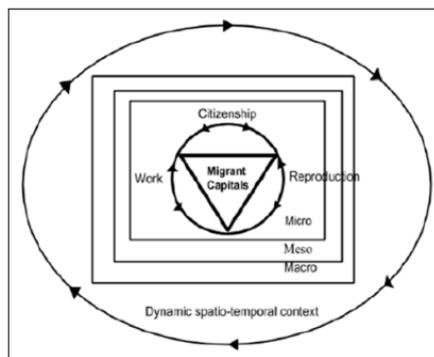
Gender-Based Violence and Discrimination

Gender-based violence represents a significant challenge facing female migrants in Europe. Research by Smith (2019) found that immigrant women are disproportionately affected by various forms of violence, including domestic abuse, sexual assault, and trafficking. These acts of violence are often rooted in gender inequality and power imbalances that exist both in the host society and the women's country of birth.

Discrimination against immigrant women is evident across various dimensions, resulting in disparities in access to crucial services such as health care, education, and legal protection (*Annual Report, 2019–2020, 2021*). Studies and reports from organisations such as the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) consistently highlight the challenges faced by immigrant women, emphasising the need for targeted interventions to address these inequalities (IOM, 2017; UNHCR, 2020). Research conducted by Johnson (2020) found that immigrant women face numerous barriers to accessing healthcare services due to language barriers, cultural sensitivity, and lack of knowledge about available resources. Similarly, Roberts (2018) highlights limited access to legal protection, as immigrant women often face discrimination within the legal system, making it difficult to seek justice and resolve their grievances.

Theorising a Multi-Level Spatio-Temporal Analytical Framework for Understanding the Challenges and Experiences of Women Migrants from Developing Countries in Europe.

By employing this tailored theoretical framework, the research can delve into the gendered challenges faced by women migrants from developing countries in Europe. It provides a nuanced understanding of how intersecting factors such as gender, race, class, migration status, and colonial legacies shape their experiences and help identify strategies to address these challenges effectively.

Figure-2

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

Source: Migrant capitals: Proposing a multi-level spatiotemporal analytical

²⁶Schiller, N. G., Basch, L., & Blanc, C. S. (1995). From immigrant to transmigrant: Theorising Transnational Migration. *Anthropological Quarterly*, 48-63.

²⁷Anthias, F. (2009). Translocational belonging, identity and generation: Questions and problems in migration and ethnic studies. *Finnish Journal of Ethnicity and Migration*, 4(1), 6–15.

The increasing migration of women from developing countries to Europe has led to the need for a comprehensive analytical framework that can capture the multi-dimensional challenges and experiences they face. This paper proposes a multi-level spatiotemporal analytical framework to understand the complexities of women's migration and its impact on their lives. By integrating spatial, temporal, and multi-level perspectives, this framework aims to provide a nuanced understanding of the intersecting factors that shape the challenges and experiences of women migrants from developing countries in Europe.

Figure-3

Conceptual Framework: Theorizing a Multi-Level Spatio-Temporal Analytical Framework	

Central Concept	Women Migrants from Developing Countries in Europe

Spatio-Temporal Dimensions	- Spatial Levels: Origin countries, transit regions, host countries.
	- Temporal Phases: Pre-departure, migration process, post-arrival.

Macro-Level Factors	- Political Context: Immigration policies, diplomatic relations.
	- Economic Context: Global economic trends, labour market conditions.
	- Sociocultural Context: Cultural norms, gender roles.

Meso-Level Factors	- Migration Policies: Laws affecting migrant women, visa regulations.
	- Social Structures: Community networks, social support systems.
	- Employment Landscape: Job opportunities, occupational challenges.

Micro-Level Factors	- Individual Agency: Decision-making, empowerment strategies.
	- Personal Networks: Family and social connections, support systems.
	- Cultural Identity: Adaptation, preservation, and negotiation.

Temporal Dynamics	- Pre-Departure Phase: Decision-making, preparation, expectations.
	- Migration Process: Travel, settlement, integration.
	- Post-Arrival Phase: Adaptation, challenges, long-term integration.

Interconnections	- Arrows indicating interactions and influences between components and levels,
	emphasising the dynamic and interconnected nature of the framework.

This summary table provides a structured overview of the main components and relationships within the theoretical framework.

Spatial Dimension:

²⁸The spatial dimension of the framework recognises the significance of geographic factors in women's migration experiences. It considers the macro-level spatial dynamics, such as migration patterns, routes,

²⁸Massey, D. S. (1999). *Why immigration occurs? A theoretical synthesis* (Massey, 1999, pp. 34–52). na.

and destination choices, which influence the opportunities and constraints women migrants face. Additionally, it considers the meso-level spatial contexts, including the social and cultural characteristics of both the sending and receiving countries, which shape the experiences of women migrants.²⁹

³⁰The spatial dimension of the framework also acknowledges the micro-level spatial dynamics, such as the spatial distribution of resources, services, and social networks within the receiving countries. It explores how spatial inequalities and segregation can impact the opportunities and integration prospects for women migrants.³¹

Temporal Dimension:

³²The temporal dimension of the framework recognises 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 migration's short-term and long-term effects on women's lives, encompassing changes in social roles, family dynamics, and personal aspirations. It recognises 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.³³

Multi-Level Perspective:

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 recognises 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 women migrants face³⁴.

³⁵The multi-level perspective also considers the interplay between structural constraints and individual agency. It recognises that female migrants navigate and negotiate their experiences within broader power structures and social contexts while exercising agency and resilience to overcome challenges and pursue their goals.

By adopting a multi-level spatiotemporal analytical framework, researchers and policymakers can gain a deeper understanding of the challenges and experiences faced by women migrants from developing countries in Europe. This comprehensive approach allows for a nuanced exploration of the spatial, temporal, and multi-level dynamics that shape their migration journey. It provides valuable insights to

²⁹Pessar, Patricia R., 'Engendering Migration Studies: The Case of New Immigrants in the United States', in Pierrette Hondagneu-Sotelo (ed.), *Gender and USUS Immigration: Contemporary Trends* (Oakland, CA, 2003; online edn, California Scholarship Online, March 22 2012), <https://doi.org/10.1525/california/9780520225619.003.0002>, accessed May 28 2023.

³⁰Lama, P., Hamza, M., & Wester, M. (2021). Gendered dimensions of migration about climate change. *Climate and Development*, 13(4), 326-336.

³¹Kofman, E., Phizacklea, A., Raghuram, P., & Sales, R. (2000). *Gender and international migration in Europe: employment, welfare, and politics*. Psychology Press.

³²Madianou, M., & Miller, D. (2013). *Migration and new media: Transnational families and polymedia*. Routledge.

³³Hondagneu-Sotelo, P. (1999). Introduction: Gender and contemporary US immigration. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 42(4), 565-576.

³⁴de Haas, H. (2010). Migration and Development: A Theoretical Perspective. *The International Migration Review*, 44(1), 227-264. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20681751>

³⁵Lutz, H., Vivar, M. T. H., & Supik, L. (Eds.). (2016). *Framing intersectionality: Debates on a multifaceted concept in gender studies*. Routledge.

inform policies, interventions, and support systems that address their unique needs and promote their well-being and empowerment.

Conclusion

In summary, this study has highlighted the many challenges women migrants face from developing countries in Europe, emphasising the crucial role of gender in shaping their migration experiences. Using various theoretical perspectives, including intersectional, feminist, postcolonial, human rights, and transnational frameworks, the paper examined the discrimination, violence, marginalisation, and limited economic opportunities that these women often encounter.

The research findings emphasise the urgent need for inclusive policies that specifically address the unique needs and vulnerabilities of female migrants. Gender-based violence is a prevalent issue, requiring targeted interventions to ensure the safety and protection of women migrants. Barriers to accessing legal and medical protection underscore the need to remove structural obstacles and provide fair access to justice and healthcare services.

The economic challenges faced by female migrants highlight the importance of addressing issues such as occupational segregation, unequal pay, and limited employment opportunities. Strategies should focus on enhancing economic integration, promoting skill development, and challenging gendered and colonial legacies perpetuating inequality.

Recognising the interconnectedness of women migrants' identities and experiences across borders, the concept of transnationalism suggests supporting their networks, fostering cultural exchange, and leveraging their skills and resources for social integration and well-being.

In terms of recommendations, this study advocates for a holistic approach that considers the rights, agency, and empowerment of female migrants. Policy interventions should be grounded in a human rights framework, recognising the fundamental rights of all migrants and promoting gender equality. Efforts should also address the structural inequalities underlying the challenges faced by women migrants, considering factors such as race, class, and migration status.

An inclusive approach by policymakers can create a more supportive and equitable environment for female migrants, enabling them to thrive and contribute to their host societies. Future research should continue exploring the experiences and perspectives of female migrants, amplifying their voices and advocating for policies that recognise and address their unique needs and aspirations.

Ultimately, fostering social inclusion, gender equality, and respect for human rights are essential steps towards creating societies that value the contributions of all individuals, regardless of their gender or migration status.

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