

Trauma and the Reconfiguration of Developmental Trajectories

Interrupted yet Ongoing Markers of Adolescence Among Young West Asian Women in Quebec

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Introduction

- In Quebec, migration has increased in recent years, with West Asia as an important region of origin[1].
- Migrant populations show significant representation of youth[2].
- Regardless of legal status, exposure to potentially traumatic events amongst migrants is common[3].
- Yet evidence on what these events look like, how they are lived, and their effects beyond mental health diagnoses among young West Asian women remains limited[4].

Objectives

- To explore how trauma is experienced and lived among young West Asian women in Quebec within the context of migration.

Theoretical Framework

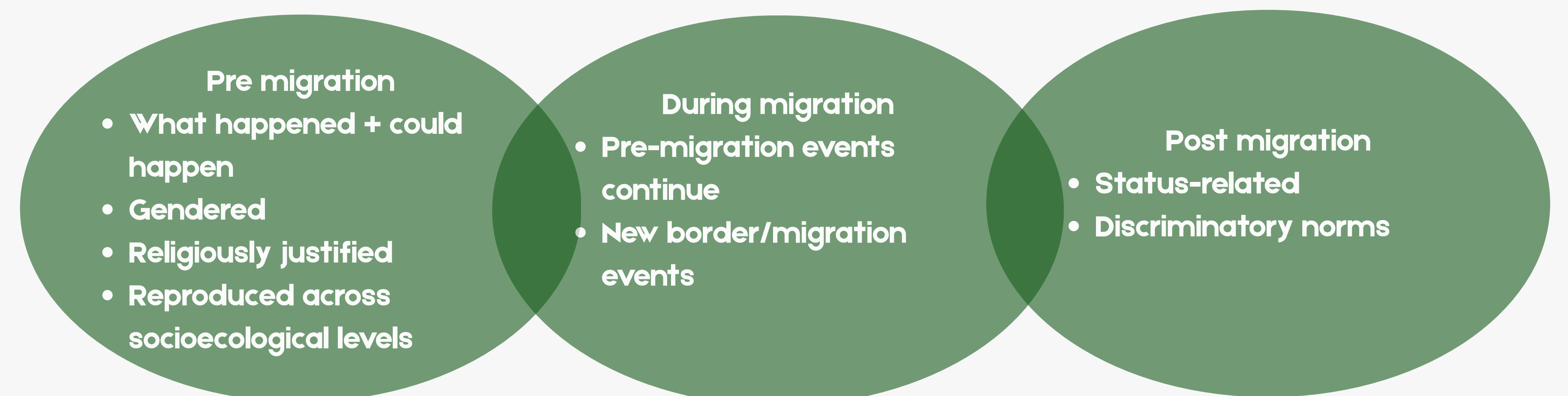
- This research draws on SAMHSA's "three Es" definition of trauma—Events, Experiences, and Effects—and an intersectional lens to explore how intersecting social positions shape trauma experiences.

Methodology & Methods

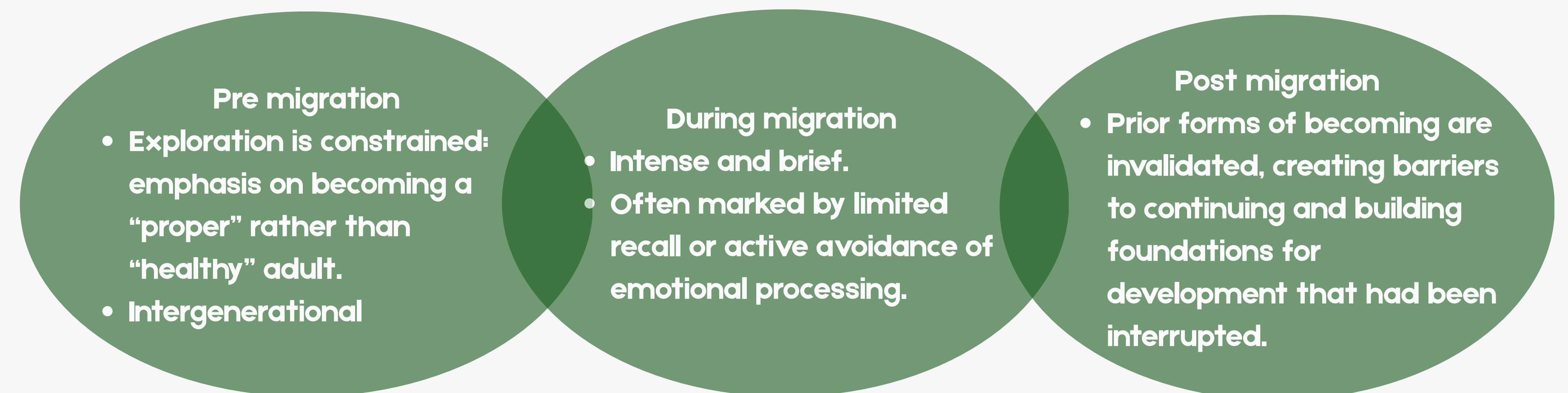
- Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis (IPA).
- Purposive and snowball sampling, from February to July 2025.
- 12 participants, aged 18–28, had migrated to Quebec 2–9 years earlier from Iran, Iraq, Turkey, and Syria.
- Online and in-person interviews in Persian, English, and French.
- Reflexive journaling and independent coding, complemented by member checking.

Findings

Events and Circumstances: Systemic and chronic, rooted in sociopolitical contexts.



Experiences: Constrained and Interrupted Adolescence and Transition to Adulthood.



Effects: Living with the expectations of adulthood while experiencing the developmental markers of adolescence or "another teenage years."

Discussion

- Adolescence was shaped by survival rather than exploration.
- Stories reflected an intergenerational pattern, with parents often described as "confused" or "immature" about this stage.
- After migration, exploration became more possible, but earlier ways of becoming were often invalidated or no longer usable.
- Many experienced a "teenage" phase of "unlearning", "relearning", and self-discovery while already positioned as adults.
- As a result, adulthood often felt heavy, as something one "has to" or "tries to" do rather than a grounded phase.

Bibliography

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