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# Investigating Migration through the Phenomenon of School Integration: Anaya's Experience of Resettlement in Canada

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## Abstract

Using a social justice framework, this arts-based engagement ethnography (ABEE) investigated the phenomenon of school integration among newcomer youth who migrated to Canada. Defined broadly, this phenomenon captures the adjustment of newcomer youth across all aspects of student life – both inside and outside the school context, including English Language Learning (ELL), academic performance, classroom behaviour, social networking, emotional and familial well-being, involvement in school life, and understanding of the educational system. Specifically, two research questions were investigated: 1) *How do newcomer youth experience school?* and 2) *How do these experiences influence their positive integration into the school system?* Results from one participant – Anaya, a 19-year-old cisgender female who migrated to Canada from India with her family at the age of 12 – are presented to illustrate the manner in which the phenomenon of school integration can be used as a point of entry to study migration. These result included the following five themes: 1) The Struggle to Fit In / *"I regard myself as a social outsider"*, 2) Managing Parental Expectations / *"Our values started to clash"*, 3) Implications of Self-Exploration / *"I was kind of in the middle"*; 4) Finding a Passion and Getting Involved / *"I became a lot more friendly"*, and 4) Embracing a Multicultural Identity / *"I am reembracing my heritage."*

## Keywords

Social justice framework, arts-based engagement ethnography, school integration, newcomer youth, migration.

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The 21st century has been identified as the age of migration (Castles, de Hass, & Miller, 2013) with a marked increase in immigrants, refugees, and asylum seekers across the globe (Arthur, 2013). For example, over a quarter of a million newcomers with permanent residency status currently live in Canada, with the cities of Toronto, Montreal, Vancouver, and Calgary receiving

the largest numbers (Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2015). As a large segment of the population, young newcomers play a vital role in the social fabric and future success of Canadian society (Areepattamannil & Freeman, 2008; Rossiter & Rossiter, 2009). Their integration is highly dependent on their educational, occupational, and civic opportunities as well as their engagement as they integrate into the host country (Banks, Suárez-Orozco, & Ben-Peretz, 2016).

For most newcomer youth, entrance into a school system is their first introduction to the host culture within which they reside (Stermac, Clarke, & Brown, 2013; Suárez-Orozco et al., 2010; Suárez-Orozco & Suárez-Orozco, 2001). Newcomer students themselves have identified schools as the main arena in which their social, emotional, and academic transition takes place (Li, 2010; Stodolska, 2008). Moreover, research has shown how critical the high school experience can be in ensuring a successful transitioning to post-secondary education (Gallucci & Kassan, 2019). Consequently, school life has been positioned as a vital and predictive component of newcomer youth's future careers and civic contributions. However, studies have found that problems adjusting into the school system in Canada can begin as early as the first day of class (Banks et al., 2016; Naraghi & Kassan, 2015).

Research on Canadian migration dates back to the early 1970s (Sinacore, Kassan, & Lerner, 2015). While extremely informative, many of these studies have been segregated in nature (only focusing on a small set of factors that impact newcomer youth) and have employed quantitative methodologies. Further, this research has rarely taken into account the voices and experiences of newcomer youth themselves. A number of migration frameworks have also been proposed – for example, acculturation (see Berry, Phinney, Sam, & Vedder, 2006), identity formation (see Phinney & Ong, 2007), cultural transition (see Sinacore, Mikhail, Kassan, & Lerner, 2009) – establishing a critical foundation for scholarship with newcomer populations. However, situated within a global migration context, these efforts do not sufficiently capture the nuanced experiences of newcomer youth.

To address these limitations, we adopted a social justice framework (Stewart, 2014) to investigate the experiences of *school integration* among newcomer youth across Canada. This phenomenon captures the adjustment of newcomer youth across all aspects of student life – both inside and outside the school context (e.g. English Language Learning [ELL], academic performance, classroom behaviour, social networking, emotional and familial well-being, involvement in school life, and understanding of the educational system) (Gallucci & Kassan, 2019). To obtain a rich description of this phenomenon, we employed an arts-based engagement ethnography (ABEE; Goopy & Kassan, 2019; Kassan et al., 2018) to investigate the experiences of newcomer youth integrating into a new school system in Canada following migration.

In this paper, we aim to demonstrate how the phenomenon of school integration can be used as a point of entry to investigate the experiences of migration among newcomer youth in Canada. To this end, we present findings from one participant, Anaya (pseudonym), to highlight the richness, depth, and engagement that emerged from this study on school integration. To begin, we provide a brief review of the literature on youth and migration as well as a description of the social justice framework (Stewart, 2014) and ABEE methodology (Goopy & Kassan, 2019; Kassan et al., 2018) employed in this study. Subsequently, we provide an overview of Anaya's experience of school integration along with implications for practice, training, research, and

policy.

## Youth and Migration

For newcomer youth, the process of school integration is often extremely daunting (Gallucci & Kassan, 2019). Inadequate preparation and a lack of proper orientation leave many newcomers at a disadvantage when trying to navigate North American school practices and norms. Insufficient support during the initial phase of adjustment can also prove detrimental to students who have had limited formal education and can result in a lack of motivation and classroom engagement (Stermac, Elgie, Clarke, & Dunlap, 2012). Disengagement is further fueled by inappropriate grade placements, which commonly occurs when students transition from very different educational systems. This shift can result in students feeling over-challenged or under-challenged. Research has pointed to a decline in academic motivation as a result of feeling bored and disappointed with the Canadian curriculum. For example, newcomer youth often have to repeat material they have already covered in their home country, while also learning a new language (Anisef, Brown, Phythia, Sweet, & Walters, 2010; Naraghi & Kassan, 2015).

Even students who do not find the Canadian curricula intellectually challenging may find that linguistic barriers have a negative impact on their performance within the classroom. For students with limited English knowledge upon arrival, the establishment of a level of proficiency necessary for academic success can take up to seven years (Rossiter & Rossiter, 2009; Suárez-Orozco et al., 2010). The development of these language skills is not only critical to succeed academically but socially as well (Suárez-Orozco et al., 2010). Despite the availability of ELL services, many studies have established that newcomer students find these classes ineffective, or lack motivation to excel, as ELL classes do not translate into course credit toward graduation (Li, 2010; Stodolska, 2008).

Among the challenges entailed in linguistic transition, the inability to freely express oneself to others has been highlighted as a roadblock to social integration. From a developmental perspective, the significance of positive peer connections increases during adolescence as greater amounts of time are spent with friends. However, research has demonstrated that newcomer youth across Canada are facing social barriers including discrimination, bullying, and social exclusion (Naraghi & Kassan, 2015; Stermac et al., 2012). A study that examined the involvement of immigrant and refugee youth in criminal and gang activity across Alberta discovered that social isolation and bullying at school are primary risk factors for criminal involvement (Rossiter & Rossiter, 2009). Research has also shown a strong correlation between perceived discrimination and rates of depression, which in turn has been linked to a decline in academic performance (Fawzi, 2009). Thus, many newcomer youth are at greater risk of dropping out of high school (Anief et al., 2010).

Integration in a new school is also shaped by factors that occur off-campus (e.g. pre-migration experiences and home life influences). For those seeking refuge in Canada, pre-migration exposure to trauma may result in post-traumatic stress disorder, bereavement, and anxiety (Stermac et al., 2012). Family life for newcomer youth can also adversely affect school integration (Li, 2010). For many, pursuing education in Canada is the fulfillment of their family's motivation behind migrating to a new country. Pressure to succeed academically is often compounded by the

desire to make parents proud, recognizing their sacrifices throughout the migration process. Yet school systems in Canada are foreign to most newcomer parents and their capacity to offer their children academic support is often compromised. Facing their own barriers to social integration, parents do not necessarily have the time or energy to be closely involved in their children's lives (Anisef et al., 2010; Sinacore et al., 2009). Additionally, financial strain and family poverty mean that some parents must work additional hours while their children help contribute to the household by finding part-time employment outside of school. Parent-child relationships are further complicated by discrepancies between school and home culture as well as prolonged periods of family separation due to staggered migration (Rossiter & Rossiter, 2009). The potential challenges found within the homes of newcomer youth can be disruptive to the stability necessary for them to focus on academics and highlight the need for additional support systems in schools (Suárez-Orozco et al., 2010).

### *School Integration*

The phenomenon of school integration represents an important point of entry to investigate the experiences of newcomer youth in Canada. According to Gallucci and Kassan (2019), school integration captures the adjustment of newcomer youth across all aspects of student life – both inside and outside the school context, including ELL, academic performance, classroom behaviour, social networking, emotional and familial well-being, involvement in school life, and understanding of the educational system. Results of a qualitative study centering on the phenomenon of school integration demonstrated that newcomer youth themselves identify numerous factors as critical in their process of integration into the school system, including a) elements within the high school setting (i.e. the school culture and support of teachers), b) variables that straddle between the school and the community (i.e. language transition and peer groups development), and c) experiences in the home environment (i.e. the role of family) (see Gallucci & Kassan, 2019; Kassan, Tkachuk, & Gallucci, n.d.).

To further investigate this phenomenon in ways that are culturally sensitive and meaningful to newcomer youth, we employed a social justice framework (Stewart, 2014) and ABEE methodology (Goopy & Kassan, 2019; Kassan et al., 2018) to address the following research questions: a) *How do newcomer youth experience school?* and b) *How do these experiences influence their positive integration into the school system?* In this paper, we present findings from one participant (Anaya) to demonstrate the manner in which the phenomenon of school integration was used to capture experiences of migration in Canada. The data presented in this paper is part of a larger arts-based ethnographic research project investigating the experiences of newcomer youth integrating into the school system at the high school and post-secondary levels in Canada following migration.

## **Method**

### *Theoretical Framework*

To guide this study, we employed a social justice framework. According to Stewart (2014), social justice must be taken up as a process and a goal. The process centers on understanding and dismantling inequities related to age, race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, (dis)ability,

religion, nationality, status in a country, and accessibility. The goal focuses on full and equal engagement of all groups within society. Implementing a social justice framework requires critical, ongoing, interdisciplinary research, which addresses issues of inequity, power, and oppression, with the aim of challenging unjust policies and systems. In the context of this study, foregrounding the phenomenon of school integration provides a holistic approach to investigate the factors that impact newcomer youth, inside and outside of the educational setting.

### *Research Design*

To capture the experiences of school integration among newcomer youth, we implemented an innovative research design – ABEE (Goopy & Kassan, 2019; Kassan et al., 2018), Ethnographic research aims to understand the social and cultural meanings of a phenomenon in order to gain a deeper understanding of the lived experiences of individuals within a specific group (Creswell, 2013). In this case, the central phenomenon is *school integration* and the specific group is *newcomer youth* in Canada. As a methodology, ABEE has been employed to elicit rich, multi-layered data in a relatively short time, as lengthened periods of field observation represent a challenge with this phenomenon and group. Researchers across the fields of design research as well as, education, health, and business have employed similar approaches to study complex processes and experiences (see Gaver, Dunne, & Pacenti 1999; Wherton et al., 2012).

### *Data Collection*

Cultural probes are bespoke and purposefully chosen items that are given to participants (e.g. maps, postcards, diaries, cameras) to assist them in recording specific events, feelings, or interactions in their everyday environment (Goopy & Kassan, 2019; Kassan et al., 2018). They were first used in an EU-funded project as a deliberate strategy to allow participants to use and engage with the probes to track, record, and tell the researcher what they felt was important (Gaver et al., 1999). Cultural probes are carefully chosen by researchers to both match and stimulate the interests of the research participants. They are distributed to participants to use as they see fit. The artifacts that they create with these allow the researchers to capture a glimpse of participants' everyday experiences – what they do, what they feel, etc. Through these artifacts the research come to have a deeper, thicker understanding of who the participants are and what issues are important to them.

The cultural probes used in this study included a personalized box containing a diary, stationery, post cards, maps, and a camera. Participants were asked to use these items to document and represent their experiences of school integration in Canada. They enabled participants, who might have varied facility and comfort with relying entirely on verbal or textual means of communication in English, to express themselves through alternative forms (e.g. drawn, photographic, video). Participants then had an opportunity to share their resultant artifacts through individual semi-structured interviews.

**Participants.** To be eligible to take part in this study, individual had to be a) newcomers to Canada (i.e. immigrants, refugees, asylum seekers), b) between the ages of 14 and 17 (group 1) or 18 and 24 (group 2), c) currently attending high school (group 1) or successfully transitioned into post-secondary education (group 2) in Canada, and d) minimally proficient in English so as

to engage in a qualitative interview. To date, a total of 15 participants have taken part in the study. The participant we have chosen to highlight in this paper, Anaya (group 2), is a 19-year-old cisgender female who migrated to Canada from India with her family at the age of 12. She completed all of her junior high and high school schooling in Canada and is currently enrolled in her first-year of post-secondary education at university. Anaya was selected as her participation in the study showcases the manner in which the phenomenon of school integration can be used to elicit experiences of migration. Moreover, while she was able to migrate to Canada due to certain privileges (e.g. her parents' status in India and their ability to demonstrate certain financial means), she disclosed struggling a great deal as she integrated into a new school system. In that sense, her experiences of school integration, which will be described in greater depth below, are typical of that of many newcomer students.

**Procedures.** Following ethics approval, participants were recruited through criterion sampling (Fassinger & Morrow, 2013) via information sessions and flyer advertisements across two educational settings (i.e. high school and university). Participants were given information about the goals of the study, parameters of participation, and a consent form to complete. Each participant had an individual appointment where they met with a graduate research assistant, who distributed the cultural probes and offered instructions on how use them. These instructions were given as ideas for use and it was made clear to participants that there are many ways that the cultural probes might be employed and there is no one right or wrong way to use them. Participants were asked to use the cultural probes to document, record, and express their experiences of school integration in Canada. After a two-week period, each participant shared their completed cultural probes (which now became their artifacts) with the graduate research assistant who logged them in preparation for the individual qualitative interview. This process allowed the researchers to review all of the participants' materials (i.e., photographs, journal entries, maps, etc.), organize them according to similar themes, and prepare the semi-structured qualitative interview protocol. In this way, each interview was unique to the participant. Approximately one week later, once the artifacts had been logged, the graduate research assistant and participant met to complete the interview that centered on the artifacts created and the things that the cultural probes had uncovered. These interviews were approximately 90 minutes and were audio-recorded and later transcribed for data analysis. Please see Figure 1 for an overview of the data collection procedures.

### *Data Analysis*

A professional transcriptionist transcribed the individual interviews and removed all identifying information. The artifacts, which included text (e.g., diary) and visual material (e.g., photographs), were sorted, de-identified, and ultimately grouped with their corresponding individual interviews. Individual transcripts and artifacts were then analyzed using a number of systematic steps outlined for ethnographic research (Creswell, 2013; Saldaña, 2014). First, each transcript was read from start to finish to obtain a general sense of each participant's experience. Here, margin notes and initial codes may be created. Second, each transcript was re-read for meaningful themes and patterned regularities, and meaning units (sentences or paragraphs from the transcripts) were recorded. Third, a cross-case analysis will be performed whereby meaningful themes and patterned regularities will be compared and contrasted across all participants in the study. Fourth, assertions and interpretations are made about the central phenomenon, describing how the culture

works among the group.

## **Results: Anaya's Experience of School Integration**

Results from the analysis of Anaya's artifacts and qualitative interview yielded five main themes pertaining to school integration in Canada, including 1) The Struggle to Fit In / "*I regard myself as a social outsider*", 2) Managing Parental Expectations / "*Our values started to clash*", 3) Implications of Self-Exploration / "*I was kind of in the middle*", 4) Finding a Passion and Getting Involved / "*I became a lot more friendly*", and 5) Embracing a Multicultural Identity / "*I am reembracing my heritage.*"

### **The Struggle to Fit In / "*I regard myself as a social outsider.*"**

Anaya, a first-year university student from India, illustrated that one of the primary concerns facing newcomer youth as they enter school in Canada is the "struggle to fit in." Contrary to her previous school experiences, Anaya was shocked by the limited diversity within her junior high school and became "strikingly aware of [her] presence in this country as a visible minority." She found that Canadian students were less willing to engage with her because she was a newcomer – leaving her unsure how to act around them. Anything that went against the dominant culture of the school (i.e., having a thick accent, different attire or hair style, not having a car), left Anaya and her newcomer peers at a social disadvantage. Fearing what was different, she recalled that the Canadian students simply stuck to their "elite groups." Anaya felt that the Canadian born students in her school were very "sheltered" from understanding the obstacles she faced as a newcomer. She recalled, "there were so many obstacles preventing me from doing the things that I wanted, and they didn't have those obstacles for them." This dissonance in experiences left her feeling very isolated and alone during her initial integration into the school system in Canada. Although she does not think her peers were trying to be overtly discriminatory, she noted that:

The culture shock I experienced upon arriving at this school was nonetheless unpleasant, to say the least. Socially, incidents like these have formed my experience in Canada in a way that makes me regard myself as a social outsider, constantly checking myself to see if I fit in.

### **Managing Parental Expectations / "*Our values started to clash.*"**

Anaya described her parents' strict conservative views as being "a huge obstacle" to her school integration. For the first time, she was exposed to Western norms such as going for a sleepover and dating. However, her parents did not want her being involved with the "dangerous Western culture." In her journal, she wrote, "My parents always feared that our living in Canada would make their children lose their Indian values and knowledge of Indian customs and traditions, so they did everything in their power to prevent that from occurring." She described that similar to other newcomer students, her parents wanted her to get a good education in Canada, but did not want her to get involved with anything that did not fit within their cultural values. They prevented her from participating in any activities that would distract her from school (i.e., social media, going to parties) – causing their values to come into conflict as she tried to manage the expectations of her parents while attempting to make friends. In the qualitative interview, when asked about an



entry in her journal, she explained:

What I mean by that, is typically, people think that's just like you're not allowed to have alcohol when you hang out. But is also, I just didn't really get to hang out with a lot of people. I just wasn't allowed. No one else's parents were that conservative and none of them had the thing where you're not allowed to hang out with other people or have sleepovers and stuff. And once I was like, "Well. I don't want to not have any friends, I'd prefer to have friends." The more they said no, the more I was like, "Why not?" And then that's when my value started to change ... Whenever I talked to my parents about it, it ended in fighting about it and stuff. So that's when our values started to clash a lot.

### Implications of Self-Exploration / *"I was kind of in the middle."*

In high school, Anaya was faced with deciding if she should follow her parent's rules or begin experiencing "normal North American experiences." Wanting to feel less isolated and have more friends, Anaya "rebelled" in high school as she became more liberal with her values. However, the more she tried to negotiate with her parents, the stricter they became. She felt conflicted between embracing the values of her Indo-Canadian friends who "knew their heritage, but they still knew that they were a Canadian" and her friends that were "hardcore Indians that just wanted to stay and remain Indian and maintain their culture and identity." Wanting to please her parents, but not wanting to isolate herself further, she felt "stuck in the middle." She tried to maintain her grades while "starting to have fun in [her] life." However, developing an "alternate life" outside of her parents' values had some negative implications on her self-worth, as she described in the following:

[My success] didn't really matter at that point. It stopped mattering because since you were a child, what your parents think of you is very important to how you perceive yourself. I think what you find is even if you don't get good grades, to them, obeying your parents is a high indication of your self-worth too. So they just didn't think very highly of me as a person... I do feel like I was a bit of a disappointment to my parents in my high school years.

During this time of conflict, she also found that her teachers could not understand her situation and wished there was more support for students trying to find their place between the two cultures within the school system. Ultimately, she believes teachers need to have a greater understanding of the newcomer students' situation, but also become more empathetic to the values held by newcomer parents. She stressed:

Maybe if there was something to bridge the gap between the students that are having these conflicting values and their parents, and the atmosphere around them. Like the teachers and the other peers at their school. And what I mean by that is . . . [if there was] a counselor who could talk to my parents and be like, "See, this is the situation your child is in right now. Regardless of what you want to do, this is the situation your child is in and this is how they are feeling." Something should be done in order to let parents know that they're not being threatened just because people want to talk to them about how their child is feeling at school. Because it almost feels as though there's a fight going on in school between... It's like it's always going to be opposing between the liberal values of Canadian people and the strict

conservative values of wherever you're from.

### Finding a Passion and Getting Involved / *"I became a lot more friendly."*

Anaya described that getting involved in school activities "greatly improved [her] quality of life." Being integrated into social activities increased her comfort level and ultimately her self-confidence. Having real life experiences in high school exposed her to a diverse group of peers who she felt were genuinely interested in learning about her culture. Once she began to open up to her peers, she discovered that:

I think the reason I became friends with everyone else in my grade is because I just realized that I'm not as much of an outsider as I think I am. And if I reach out to them that they'll be, like, cool as well.

Now in university, engaging in social activities she is truly passionate about has provided Anaya with an outlet to express her opinions freely – "finally feeling truly welcomed and appreciated." At times, she has found that her passions come into conflict with that of her parents. However, joining social activities that do not "out right defy" her parents enables her to feel more confident and social. In her journal, she wrote:

My interests, in dance and other aspects of my life, often came into conflict with traditional Indian values, which left me in a state of limbo. On the one hand, I loved and belonged to India, my homeland, but many aspects of Canadian multiculturalism appeal to me... [Dance] is one of the ways that I get to explore these interests without openly defying my parents, so I thoroughly enjoy it.

### Becoming More Multicultural / *"Reembracing my heritage"*

The culmination of negative social experiences and her parents' strict values throughout the process of school integration left Anaya "resenting India a lot" when she was growing up. Although she continues to feel extremely self-conscious in large crowds, having a diverse multicultural peer group has aided her in "reembracing [her] heritage." Learning more about Indian history and culture, she has become more comfortable in her bicultural identity as an Indo-Canadian woman. "India is really beautiful and it has a really rich culture. I've re-embraced my Indian heritage, wearing a 'bindi' on the middle of my forehead around campus to signify my commitment to preserving the beauty of Indian culture." Through her integration experience in school, Anaya has come to embrace her multicultural identity, realizing that:

The two don't have to be conflicting. That, yeah, my parents are conservative, but I think that they're strict not because they're Indian but because they're just strict. Like I think it's possible to be Indian and be cool and be popular or have friends at least without ... Yeah, I kind of realized that those two don't have to conflict.

## Discussion

As discussed above, in this paper, we aimed to showcase how we used the phenomenon of school

integration as a point of entry to investigate the experiences of migration among newcomer youth in Canada. To this end, we presented findings from Anaya's experiences of school integration after migrating to Canada. Snapshots from her journal along with excerpts from her qualitative interview highlight the ways in which her experiences in various school systems (i.e., junior high, high school, and university) represented a parallel to her integration into Canadian society. For Anaya, like many other newcomer youth, the school context into which they integrate after migrating to a new country is their main point of contact with the host country (Gallucci & Kassan, 2019; Kassan et al., n.d.; Li, 2010; Naraghi & Kassan, 2015). However, given that school systems are typically entrenched in Western ideologies and teaching practices, they often leave newcomers like Anaya feeling isolated and conflicted.

Many of the experiences that Anaya shared in the context of this study have previously been documented in the migration literature (e.g. Banks et al., 2016; Stermac et al., 2013; Suárez-Orozco et al., 2010). However, through the process of school integration, broader experiences can be captured and hence a fuller understanding of a young newcomer's process can be documented. When we provide the time and space for newcomer youth to discuss their experiences of school integration, academics are not the primary concern. Rather, like in the case of Anaya, the primary focus is often on social integration, which is influenced by school environment as well as the values promoted in the home and community. Within this context, the importance of support staff such as teachers and counsellors is critical, but not solely for academic reasons.

We would be remiss not to discuss the manner in which the social justice framework (Stewart, 2014) and ABEE methodology (Goopy & Kassan, 2019; Kassan et al., 2018) contributed to the youth-centered, rich description of school integration that we were able to obtain in this study. When we prioritize the voices of newcomer youth and ask them to document their experiences for an extended period of time, we obtained a richer, fuller understanding of migration process. In this case, it appears that giving Anaya time with the cultural probes and later unpacking her experiences in a qualitative interview revealed a great deal of information about her process of identity negotiation following migration to Canada. Such information would not necessarily have emerged through a single qualitative interview. The unique nature of this study allowed for traditional ways of knowing to be challenged in that Anaya was given space to address what was most salient to her in terms of her school integration. Her experiences demonstrate the complexity of the phenomenon as a process that may have been missed if she was not given the time to reflect on her experiences prior to the qualitative interview.

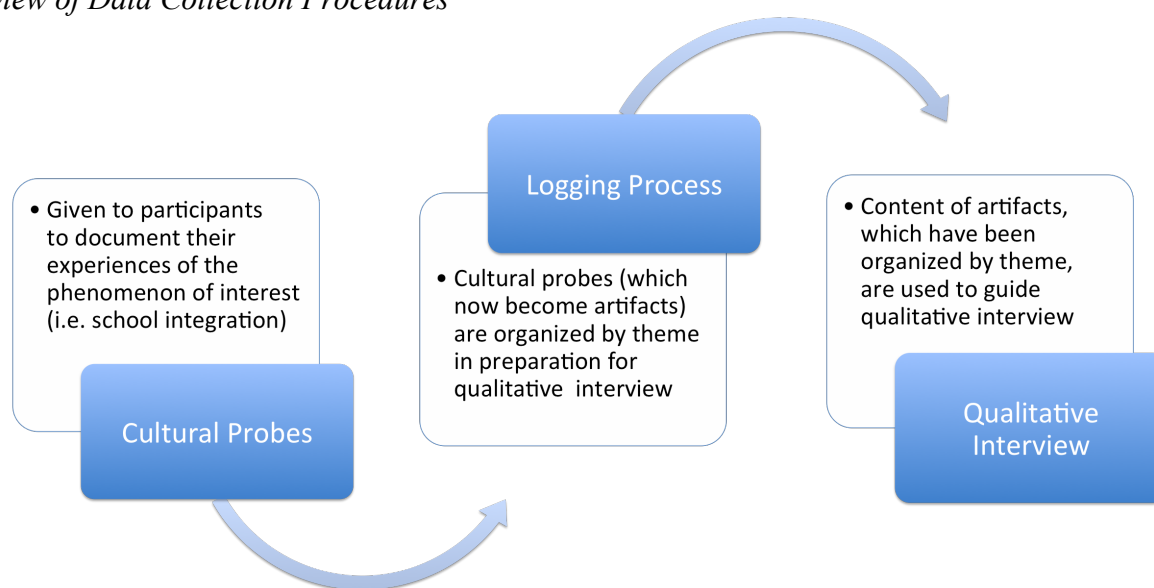
## **Implications**

Canada is internationally renowned for its multicultural philosophy and active migration program (Kelley & Trebilcock, 2010; Sinaocre et al., 2015). However, the everyday reality of newcomers, particularly youth, can be extremely challenging, and this group has been said to underuse support services, particularly in their school setting (Yeh & Kwan, 2010). Educational systems have a cultural and social responsibility to create welcoming and engaging spaces for newcomer youth in order to maximize their academic success and civic potential. For example, in the case of Anaya, more direct engagement on the part of support staff and/or other students in the school would have been helpful, as she felt completely isolated and uncomfortable reaching out for assistance. Results of this study highlight the everyday experiences of a young newcomer, Anaya, who

integrated into several school systems in Calgary, Alberta. Her voice and experience can inform the scholarly literature in areas such as migration, educational psychology, and teaching and learning. Centering on the phenomenon of school integration represents a new point of entry for research with newcomer youth, and can add new understandings to how service providers can work with this group across different modalities (e.g. teaching, advising, counselling). From a psychological perspective, results illuminate the needs of newcomer youth as they integrate into Canadian society, thereby increasing understanding about how to nurture their well-being and sense of belonging in the country. Finally, on a policy level, this research can inform migration and education policies across different systems, including school boards, settlement services, and provincial and federal government.

Figure 1

*Overview of Data Collection Procedures*



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