

WAR, MOBILITY, DISPLACEMENT
AND THEIR IMPACT ON HIGHER
EDUCATION

INNOVATIONS IN HIGHER EDUCATION TEACHING AND LEARNING

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WAR, MOBILITY, DISPLACEMENT AND THEIR IMPACT ON HIGHER EDUCATION

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INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

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SERIES EDITORS' INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this series is to publish current research and scholarship on innovative teaching and learning practices in higher education. The series is developed around the premise that teaching and learning are more effective when instructors and students are actively and meaningfully engaged in the teaching–learning process.

The main objectives of this series are to:

- (1) present how innovative teaching and learning practices are being used in higher education institutions around the world across a wide variety of disciplines and countries;
- (2) present the latest models, theories, concepts, paradigms, and frameworks that educators should consider when adopting, implementing, assessing, and evaluating innovative teaching and learning practices; and
- (3) consider the implications of theory and practice on policy, strategy, and leadership.

This series will appeal to anyone in higher education who is involved in the teaching and learning process from any discipline, institutional type, or nationality. The volumes in this series will focus on a variety of authentic case studies and other empirical research that illustrate how educators from around the world are using innovative approaches to create more effective and meaningful learning environments.

Innovation teaching and learning is any approach, strategy, method, practice, or means that has been shown to improve, enhance, or transform the teaching–learning environment. Innovation involves doing things differently or in a novel way in order to improve outcomes. In short, innovation is positive change. With respect to teaching and learning, innovation is the implementation of new or improved educational practices that result in improved educational and learning outcomes. This innovation can be any positive change related to teaching, curriculum, assessment, technology, or other tools, programs, policies, or processes that leads to improved educational and learning outcomes. Innovation can occur in institutional development, program development, professional development, or learning development.

The volumes in this series will not only highlight the benefits and theoretical frameworks of such innovations through authentic case studies and other empirical research but also look at the challenges and contexts associated with implementing and assessing innovative teaching and learning practices. The volumes represent all disciplines from a wide range of national, cultural, and organizational contexts. The volumes in this series will explore a wide variety of teaching

and learning topics such as active learning, integrative learning, transformative learning, inquiry-based learning, problem-based learning, meaningful learning, blended learning, creative learning, experiential learning, lifelong and lifewide learning, global learning, learning assessment and analytics, student research, faculty and student learning communities, as well as other topics.

This series brings together distinguished scholars and educational practitioners from around the world to disseminate the latest knowledge on innovative teaching and learning scholarship and practices. The authors offer a range of disciplinary perspectives from different cultural contexts. This series provides a unique and valuable resource for instructors, administrators, and anyone interested in improving and transforming teaching and learning.

Patrick Blessinger
Founder, Executive Director, and Chief Research Scientist,
International HETL Association

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Independent Researcher & Scholar

PART I

ADAPTING TO CHANGES

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INTRODUCTION TO WAR, MOBILITY, DISPLACEMENT AND THEIR IMPACT ON HIGHER EDUCATION

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ABSTRACT

Many vulnerable children are suffering from man-made war crimes in Afghanistan, Ukraine, Sudan, Syria, Yemen, and other places. Displacement tracking matrix flow's data has never stopped counting the number of people who have left their country due to war, internal conflicts, attacks from other nations, or natural disasters. The children, while suffering from diseases and malnutrition, are left homeless or exiled to another country due to incessant socio-political issues in their homeland. Any emergency in a country is liable to cause major disruption in the entire education system. While humanitarian aid focuses on health, medical aid, shelter, and food supply, education is given the last priority. In most cases, students have left their home country in search of refuge, and months and years pass trying to secure a safe abode. It is only then that they start thinking of education. In countries of chronic conflict, the economy deteriorates, and governments are not able to support education, which then becomes dependent on charitable donations from aid agencies and philanthropists. Security concerns deter students from attending regular schools and in countries like Afghanistan education and its accessibility are segregated based on gender. This book volume highlights some of the pertinent issues of education in emergency and several case studies from around the world have

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been put together to discuss the best practices that have been implemented to continue providing education to children in emergency.

Keywords: Emergency; children; education; conflict; war; government; aid agencies; accessibility

INTRODUCTION

The world is riddled with violent conflict whether it is the Middle East, Africa, Eastern Europe, or some areas in Southeast Asia. These conflicts have led to the destruction of the infrastructure, poor living conditions, failing healthcare, food insecurity, loss of home, and psychological damage to people (INEE, 2011; Milton, 2017; Milton & Barakat, 2016; UNESCO, 2010). One of the most affected areas has been education where schools have merely transferred into a safe house, makeshift hospital, or a place of refuge from bombing. A study was conducted by the Institute for Economics and Peace (IEP), which studied 162 countries, and only 11 countries were conflict-free in 2014 (IEP, 2014). Nearly a decade since the study, the situation has worsened in many folds.

Crisis management and contingency plans to continue education in an emergency were neglected areas in academics (Beggan, 2011). Not much research data has been collected in this field and has merely served the purpose of providing information to the readers and recommending certain actions based on priority and emergency response plans (Hommel et al., 2015). However, with recent crises plaguing the world, there has been some work done in this area that reviewed existing trends of education in emergencies and dealt with topics related to crisis programs (Barakat & Milton, 2016; Hommel et al., 2015).

Available data and literature exist in the form of narratives, chronicles, journals, and documentaries which are devoid of empirical data and fail to enumerate the recovery of the system in conflict or amid conflict (Steinacher & Barmetteler, 2013). The current book provides a multi-dimensional approach to crisis prevention in universities, creating resilience and the challenges faced by the stakeholders in education (Mikhailov, 2009).

CERG (2008) pointed out that during a conflict the nations affected don't think recording the impact of conflict on education is a priority and often without the government's impetus the whole dimension gets neglected. In times of crisis, the most pressing needs are providing shelter, food, medicine, transportation, and clean drinking water (Tebbe, 2009). Education and its impact on individuals are only studied as an aftermath and often when conflict has ended in the country. Hence, most of the available research is only on post-emergency and as a prescriptive measure which is colored by the opinion of the researchers as to what should have been, as an afterthought. Few available resources are mostly directed by the academicians in the United States or the United Kingdom who present a lop-sided version of emergency and its perspectives (Cowan, 2014).

These countries have relatively stable and democratic governments where man-made conflict has been rare and hence the discourses produced on emergency

and education have “cultural and geographical gaps” and are underrepresented by researchers from those countries who have faced acute problems of armed conflicts (CERG, 2008). A large part of the Middle East, Afghanistan, and a few countries in Latin America have been facing a spurt of violence, war, and other unrests in their countries and against this background researching education and its survival becomes relevant and timely.

It is imperative that in an emergency all stakeholders including institutions of higher education should work together to address the problem, the dwindling education system will continue to pose an issue unless addressed collaboratively (Blessinger & Sengupta, 2017). When refugees come to another country, it is the responsibility of the host country to help them resume their education and integrate in a culturally diverse country without prejudice of their own (Sengupta & Blessinger, 2018).

A crisis as defined by Rosenthal and Alexander (1989) is a perceived threat to any organization and its functioning. It is the disruption of the values that are closely held by the institution and its operations. Crisis management starts with the concept of being able to predict the impending crisis and goes on to destroy the impact of the crisis on an individual’s life. Pearson and Clair (1998) argued that with the collaborative effect between stakeholders, the impact of a crisis can be mitigated to an extent. A common understanding of the effect of a crisis can help in solving several issues that have arisen from an emergency.

Linking humanitarian action to education helps ensure that education support is not neglected as a form of relief aid. The approach toward education in emergency is created with an interest in improving the lives of beneficiaries, beyond catering to their basic needs and expanding it further than traditional activities (Sengupta, 2023).

CHAPTER OVERVIEWS

“Translanguaging and Mobility in Higher Education Institutions: Challenges and Strategies” by Jim Bowden, Esra Abdelzاهر, and Bacem A. Essam discuss how immigrants adopt translanguaging practices (i.e., the flexible use of linguistic resources by bilinguals or multilingual to make sense of their worlds inside and outside classrooms) to scaffold learning, clarify concepts, facilitate communication, and promote academic understanding. Even inside the campus, and outside the classroom discourse, translanguaging can be used to navigate bureaucratic systems, such as filling out forms, engaging in social gatherings, or accessing library services, that require proficiency in the language of the host country. Whereas the academic context is not always a positive space for translanguaging practices, everyday communications usually create a positive space for translanguaging. This chapter discusses translanguaging practices in academic and non-academic contexts. The researcher provides an overview of the negative pedagogical attitudes toward translanguaging in higher education institutions, where challenges commonly faced by mobile and immobile non-native English scholars pertain to strict strategies. Reflections on the restrictive publishing policies that constitute a

negative translanguaging space, acceptable and non-acceptable translanguaging practices in academic publications, and the role of translanguaging facilitators, such as AI applications, are also deliberated based on the field experience of a professional copyeditor.

“Strategies of Advocating for Female Afghan Students’ Right to Education on the Twitter Social Media Networking Site after the Taliban’s Takeover of Afghanistan in 2021” by Farah Sabbah explores the concept of education as a basic human right that is included in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. When the Taliban took over Afghanistan in August 2021, much anticipation arose concerning the effect their government would have on the country, particularly women and girls. Though female Afghan students were barred from attending schools, they were initially allowed to attend university, albeit under the conditions that they attend gender-segregated classrooms and adhere to a strict dress code. However, in December 2022, the Taliban announced that women were banned from attending higher education institutions in Afghanistan, which was met with concerns, condemnation, and a call to action. Social media platforms have presented Afghans, people from around the world, governments, institutions, and organizations with a free, public, and relatively safe space to voice their opinions and connect with others to discuss the ramifications of the Taliban education policies. The study conducted a critical discourse analysis of 186 English-language posts published on the Twitter social networking site in September 2021 and December/January 2022 in response to the Taliban’s announced decisions concerning women’s access to higher education to identify the discursive strategies used to advocate for women’s rights to education. Six discursive strategies were identified that use hashtags, negatively represent the Taliban, represent Afghan women as victims, report on acts of advocacy, condemn the Taliban’s restrictions and ban, and call to action to advocate for women’s right to higher education. While the ban has triggered more condemnation and calls for resistance than the restrictions enforced in the previous year, the findings suggest that the response to the restrictions imposed in September 2021 was mostly that of indifference compared to the posts that comment on the education ban in December 2022. Questions are raised concerning the role and effectiveness of the analyzed Twitter posts in mobilizing serious measures to reclaim women’s rights to access quality higher education in Afghanistan within the confines of the English-language Twitter-sphere.

“The Higher Educational Processes in a Context of Migration and Displacement in Ecuador” by Haydeé Ramírez-Lozada is about mobility and displacement that make higher education professionals and students feel distressed, depressed, and discriminated against, from having to leave their homelands to improve their socio-economic conditions, or even escape for living. To overcome their feelings, they do their best to carry out a normal life, concentrating on upgrading, new cultural acquisition linking with the new community, and adjusting to a new context. In the middle of this situation, there is an enrichment of societal relations, literacy processes, inclusion, and interculturality, which are transmitted to new generations. The pedagogy of the inclusive process of refugees and immigrants may become more enriched with the interaction of ontological,

epistemological, cognitive, affective, axiological, and praxeological dimensions, in a new world that seeks for sustainability.

“Dreams Not Crushed, Just a Little Wrinkled: Navigating a Disrupted Education” by Maria Pedavoli is about the recognition of schools facilitating successful settlement outcomes and fostering inclusion for young people with a refugee background is growing. However, schools may lack adequate preparation to identify and tackle the myriad challenges that impact displaced individuals. Navigating unfamiliar educational and social systems while learning a new language poses a substantial hurdle for many refugee students in their quest for educational attainment. A considerable number of these students have experienced minimal or severely interrupted and disrupted formal education before arriving in their new country. Some grapple with literacy issues in their first language, compounded by the enduring effects of trauma associated with forced displacement because of war. Despite the acknowledged importance of an inclusive learning environment, effective interventions in schools remain elusive. This paper delves into the experiences of one school and its students, shedding light on the complexities they face. The capacity to overcome these challenges and reclaim their ambitions and childhood dreams hinges on the flexibility, support, and understanding extended not only by their new school but also by the broader community. While efforts to develop English language skills through Intensive Language Centres and classroom support are crucial, they may fall short in ensuring success for refugee students. Success demands a comprehensive approach that goes beyond academic instruction. Addressing trauma, familial dynamics, socialization, and culturalization becomes imperative for the success of refugee students in adjusting to Australian schools and their subsequent pursuit of higher education. The research underscores the necessity of a holistic approach that not only encompasses academic aspects but also addresses language barriers, cultural disparities, trauma, and resettlement issues. Recognition and thoughtful consideration of these multifaceted layers are vital for creating an environment where refugee students can adapt and thrive in higher education.

“Team Based Learning: An Inclusive Learning Methodology to Increase Engagement and Integration of Diverse Student Groups” by Mark Hewitt, Ben Butler, and Rebecca Butler writes about how creating an engaging, inclusive, and supportive learning environment within higher education is challenging at the best of times. When considering refugees and learners who have been displaced from their home/region country due to war, this is paramount to enable continued learning. Team-based learning (TBL) is an active learning methodology whereby the learners take ownership of their learning and work within peer teams to deepen their learning through the application of knowledge. In the context of the above setting, TBL offers several key advantages over traditional didactic learning approaches to better support diverse student groups and aid learner integration. This chapter will explore these advantages and detail how TBL is not just a method of content delivery, but an approach that can bring about increased peer support (on campus and online), an increased sense of student belongingness and community, employability skills, and so on.

“Investigating International Students’ Contributions to Their HEIs: Local and International Students’ Perspectives in Oman” by Saud Albusaidi and Aslam A. Wadair is about how universities worldwide benefit significantly from the presence of international students although previous research has predominantly focused on their economic impact rather than acknowledging their substantial cultural and academic contributions. This chapter aims to bridge this gap by investigating the dual impact of international students on academics and culture in Gulf Cooperation Council countries, with a specific focus on two universities in Oman. The research employs semi-structured interviews conducted with both local and international students. The findings underscore a mutually beneficial exchange and contribution between local and international students, extending beyond the confines of classrooms into extracurricular activities. While positive interactions and shared learning experiences are evident, the study also sheds light on existing tensions, such as discrimination and negative perceptions of certain cultural elements. Through these insights, this chapter aims to guide both local and international universities in effectively fostering inclusive and diverse activities that promote academic and intercultural competence among students.

“Wartime Education Mobility and Displacement: An Observation of Challenges Faced by Students and Their Future” by Amrita Kohli speaks about the aftermath of conflict where higher education institutions often bear the brunt of depleted financial resources, the loss of faculty and students, and a myriad of other negative impacts. The right to education is one of the first rights to be infringed on in any social structure breakdown, and it is a right that always applies, even in times of conflict and emergency. The recent takeover of Kabul by the Taliban in August 2021 triggered a mass exodus of people from Afghanistan, with a sense of urgency permeating the air. Among those fleeing were numerous students seeking refuge and a chance to continue their education. It was during this critical period that the researcher had the privilege of engaging with these resilient individuals. This chapter offers a glimpse of the difficulties these kids endured and the extent they were willing to go to have a brighter future.

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