

Abstract

TITLE: Inclusive Practice in Education of Refugee Children

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Research in refugee education is currently almost non-existent in the Czech Republic, even though internationally, it represents a topic much researched and debated. Its importance lies within the high vulnerability of persons fleeing their homes due to persecution as well as within the area of human rights enshrined in many international conventions together with the current educational trends, such as the inclusive education. Moreover, international research shows that refugee children provide us with an utmost unique view on the education system. Listening to their voices, therefore, has the potential to help us find new answers for the ever-increasing diversity in school population.

The presented doctoral project aims to support the discussion in the area of educational experiences of refugee children in the Czech Republic and simultaneously, to reflect the practice of countries with long experience with international migration. The thesis builds on a case study of a group of resettled Burmese refugees in the Czech Republic and poses the question whether these children and their families have the possibility to fully enjoy the right to education embedded in many international conventions on human rights as well as the Czech legislation.

The theoretical framework of the research derives from the concepts of the right to education, quality education and inclusive education. They are harnessed to define five requisites for full participation of refugee children in education in the Czech Republic, which form the basic structure of the empirical research. It identifies six major barriers which the research participants face within the education process. They include lack of information, insufficient teachers' qualification, financial obstacles, inadequate support provision, lack of school-home cooperation and inadequate grade placement.

The analytical process together with the subsequent discussion attempt to find the causal relationships between the identified categories and suggests that the lack of information and inaccessible counselling and assessment services may be co-responsible for the remaining barriers. The thesis also turns to the future directions and maps the options how the

fulfilment of the right to (inclusive) education for refugee children in the Czech Republic may be promoted using the research propositions, literature and international examples of good practice. The effective information transfer among all stakeholders is at its core. The elaborated logic model, which follows, represents the peak of the thesis and summarises the discussed variables and their influence on the current situation in education of the resettled group of refugees.

The thesis concludes that the Czech education system does not secure the possibility of the full participation in education for the participating group of refugee students, even though it also indicates a few examples of good practice where teachers were making real progress in implementing successful efforts without any additional support. Consequently, the refugee children's future and integration into their new home is in jeopardy. At the same time, the research calls for further research in this area and wishes to inspire also other researchers to listen to the voices of those who have not yet been heard.

Keywords: refugee children, inclusive education, right to education, support provision