GENDERED EXPERIENCES OF REFUGEE EDUCATION IN EUROPE:
A SCOPING REVIEW PROTOCOL

HERE
HUB FOR EDUCATION
FOR REFUGEES IN EUROPE

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ABSTRACT

This scoping review aims to explore the role of gender in refugees' education access, experiences, and outcomes in Europe since 2015. Gender can act as a significant barrier to education, and gender stereotypes and bias can affect learning opportunities and outcomes. As a response, a scoping review is conducted to explore the role of gender in refugees' education access, experiences, and outcomes in Europe since 2015. This review follows a systematic process of reviewing and synthesising texts compiled in the Hub for Education for Refugees in Europe (HERE) knowledge base to fill the gaps in knowledge about the gender-related post-migration experiences of refugees and displaced individuals who arrived in Europe. The review includes studies that focus on educational services for refugees in Europe and uses a meta-ethnographic synthesis approach for data analysis and synthesis.

ABBREVIATIONS

HERE   Hub for Education for Refugees in Europe

EU   European Union

PRISMA-ScR   Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic reviews and Meta-Analyses

                extension for Scoping Reviews

UNESCO   United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation

UNGA   United Nations General Assembly

UNHCR   United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

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INTRODUCTION

Europe is currently experiencing the highest number of refugees since the Second World War (UNHCR, 2022). However, the role of gender in this context has often been overlooked. Gender can act as a significant barrier to accessing education, with girls and women facing unique challenges such as cultural norms and early marriage. Gender can also affect the nature of educational experiences and outcomes, with gender stereotypes and bias potentially affecting learning opportunities. An intersectional understanding of gender in the context of refugee education is therefore needed to inform more targeted and effective policies and interventions that address the unique needs and experiences of individuals who experience intersecting forms of marginalisation. The HERE team conducted a scoping review is conducted to explore the role of gender in refugees' education access, experiences, and outcomes in Europe since 2015. The objective of this review is to address gaps in knowledge and focus on the right to inclusive and equitable quality education without gender-related barriers.

Rationale

The issue of refugees' educational access, experiences, and outcomes has gained increasing attention from policymakers, researchers, and the public in recent years (Aleghfeli & Hunt, 2022; McIntyre & Abrams, 2021). However, the role of gender in this context has often been overlooked. Understanding how gender intersects with refugees' educational access, experiences, and outcomes is critical for several reasons. Across contexts, gender can act as a significant barrier to accessing education, with girls and women often facing unique challenges such as cultural norms, safety concerns, and early marriage (Akua-Sakyiwah, 2015; Hunt, 2021). Gender can also shape the nature of

refugees' educational experiences and outcomes, with gender stereotypes and bias potentially affecting learning opportunities and outcomes (Bajwa, 2018; El Jack, 2010). With all that in mind, an intersectional understanding of gender in the context of refugee education can inform more targeted and effective policies and interventions that address the unique needs and experiences of girls and boys, women and men, and individuals who experience intersecting forms of marginalisation.

Objectives

The scoping review is the result of an ongoing, systematic process of searching for, reviewing and compiling texts in the Hub for Education for Refugees in Europe (HERE) knowledge base (www.hubhere.org). The scoping review attempts to answer the question "*What have we learnt from empirical studies about the role of gender in refugees' educational access, experiences and outcomes in Europe since 2015?*". Ultimately, the scoping review aims to plug the gaps in knowledge about the gender-related post-migration experiences of refugees and forced migrants who arrived in Europe since 2015, with a focus on their right to inclusive and equitable quality education without gender-related discrimination (UNGA, 1951, 1967, 1979; UNESCO, 1960).

METHODS

The scoping review follows the methodology outlined by Arksey and O'Malley (2005) and Peter et al. (2020) and guidelines set by PRISMA-ScR (Tricco et al., 2018). A systematic search of relevant databases outlined below is conducted using keywords and subject headings related to refugee education. Studies are only included if they focus on educational services for refugees in Europe. Data is extracted from the eligible studies for further analysis using a thematic synthesis approach.

Inclusion criteria

The HERE knowledge base includes any quantitative, qualitative or mixed-methods study on refugee education in Europe. Included studies must be:

1. Journal articles, books, book chapters, conference papers, master-level dissertations, doctorate-level dissertations or policy reports;

2. Occurs in educational settings (formal, informal, and non-formal);

3. Written in English or any other language, provided that an adequate translation was provided;

4. Set in at least one European country, as defined by the EU (2023);

5. Refers to the educational trajectories of refugee and forced migrant arrivals to Europe between 2011 and 2022; and,

6. Published from the year 2015 to 2022, so as to contextualise the review around more recent patterns of migration into Europe (UNHCR, 2022).

For non-English studies obtained through the systematic search, only studies that include an English abstract are included.

Information sources

The following electronic bibliographic databases and websites are searched to identify journal articles, books, book chapters, conference papers, master-level dissertations, doctorate-level dissertations, and policy reports. Selection of these databases was made after consultation with a steering group of high-level academics and NGOs working in refugee education in Europe:

1. EBSCOhost (Anthropology Plus, British Education Index, Child Development & Adolescent Studies, Cumulative Index to Nursing and Allied Health Literature,

EBSCOhost OpenDissertations, Education Abstracts, Education Administration Abstracts, Family & Society Studies Worldwide, Teacher Reference Center);

2. Elsevier SCOPUS;

3. ProQuest (Applied Social Sciences Index & Abstracts, Criminal Justice Database, Education Database, Education Resources Information Center, International Bibliography of the Social Sciences, National Criminal Justice Reference Service, Social Science Database, Sociological Abstracts, Sociology Database, ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global); and,

4. Web of Science (Arts & Humanities Citation Index, Book Citation Index, Conference Proceedings Citation Index, Emerging Sources Citation Index, Science Citation Index Expanded, Social Sciences Citation Index).

Search Strategy

The search strategy includes keywords and subject headings related to educational services and refugees in Europe. After an initial piloting where several search term combinations are trialed, the following search terms and associated Boolean search operator combinations have been identified to search databases for records:

("Refugee*" OR "Asylum-seek*" OR "Asylum seek*" OR "Forced migrant*" OR "Displaced person*" OR "Displaced people*" OR "Unaccompanied" OR "Stateless*" OR "Undocumented*")

AND

("Educat*" OR "Learn*" OR "Teach*" OR "School*" OR "Student*" OR "Pupil*" OR "Classroom*" OR "Universit*" OR "College*")

AND

("[*COUNTRY*]")

After piloting, the review finds that the current combination of search terms is optimum for maximising the sensitivity of search. The same search term combination is used across all databases for consistency. Results lists are then filtered to include only those resources which were published since 2015 and are among the study types in the inclusion criteria (when that filtering functionality was available). Moreover, to ensure literature saturation, members of the HERE network and visitors to the HERE website are invited to suggest resources that, providing they meet the inclusion criteria, are included in the knowledge base.

Source of evidence selection

Studies identified through the search strategy are downloaded as RIS files then uploaded to Zotero, a free and open-source reference management software for a first round of deduplication, then onto Rayyan, a free and open-source systematic review management software, for a second round of deduplication. Studies identified through the deduplication process undergo a screening of their title, abstract and author keyword on Rayyan. Upon passing this stage, the final studies are downloaded from Rayyan and collated into one excel worksheet.

Each eligible study in the final excel worksheet is then systematically tagged based on a data codebook that labelled each study with the following code categories:

- Theme: code indicating the thematic focus of the eligible study as it relates to refugee education research.

- Education level: code indicating the level of education at which the eligible study is conducted.

- Method: code indicating methodological and analytical approach pursued by the eligible study.

- Publication format: code indicating the publication format in which the eligible study is published.

- Education type: code indicating which educational subject the eligible study is focusing on.

- County: code indicating the country, or countries, where the eligible study is set.

- Years of publication: code indicating in which year the eligible study was published.

- Publication access: code indicating whether the eligible study is open access or not.

One of the codes under the *Theme* code category was *Gender*. Studies were tagged with the code 'Gender' if they referred to gender. All resources in the HERE knowledge base which were tagged with the topic code 'gender' were extracted from the knowledge base.

Data extraction

Data extraction is conducted using a standardised form based on the PRISMA-ScR guidelines (Tricco et al., 2018). The form includes information on the study design, characteristics of the study population, types of educational services identified (including interventions that address the educational needs of refugees and forced migrants), and summary of key findings. Two internal reviewers identify this specific data in the included studies and copy it onto the standardised forms.

Data items

The data extraction form is used to extract the following data items: 1) Study information (Title, Author(s), Study type, Study URL, Country, Aim, Methods, Access

Type); 2) Participant information (Sample data/Source, Age, Nationality, Legal status, Context, Recruitment); 3) Types of educational services; (Education level, Education type); and, 4) Study Summary (Findings, Limitations).

Reliability Checks

Inter-coder reliability checks were conducted as part of the development of the HERE knowledge base to check for reliability. Of the total number of articles, 10% was randomly selected and given to three of our team members who were asked to determine whether a study should be included onto the knowledge base or excluded. From this check, all three coders collectively agreed 90% of the time, which represented high inter-coder agreement according to Miles and Huberman (1994).

Synthesis of Results

This scoping review pursues meta-ethnographic synthesis, characterised by line-of-argument synthesis and third order interpretation (Noblit & Hare, 1988; Nye et al., 2016). First, the extracted data goes through a line-of-argument synthesis, with the purpose of making an inference of challenges and supports defining gendered experiences in refugee education. Second, third-order interpretations are inferred from the extracted data, which are themes based on the researchers' interpretation of the reported analysis in each of the studies (second order) of the gendered experiences of refugees (first order).

Protocol registration and future amendments

This protocol is deposited on the Nottingham Research Data Management Repository (https://rdmc.nottingham.ac.uk/). Any amendments made to the protocol will be reported on the Nottingham Research Data Management Repository as an

amendment, along with the reason for the amendment. The latest version of the protocol will also be hosted on the HERE website (https://hubhere.org/).

Availability of data

The data that support this scoping review have been made openly available on the HERE website (https://hubhere.org/).

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Conflicts of interest

The authors declare that they have no conflicts of interest.

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