

Chapter 6

Staff Development Programs in the Wake of Migration and Refugee Crisis

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ABSTRACT

The successful provision of education for migrant groups rests on the shoulders of teachers. This is premised on the valid view that a teacher is a crucial mediator between migrant families and the host country or community. The teacher enjoys the greatest contact with migrant learners and can influence progress of these migrant learners directly and indirectly which informs transformation. Indeed, experts believe that teacher training should aim to improve knowledge, understanding and practical implementation of teaching ideas, materials and methods to facilitate effective learning on the part of migrants. This spelt the entry point of this paper, the need to explore areas in which teacher training or staff development should be conceived in order to transform migrant education. This was done in tandem with intriguing characteristics of migrant learners as well as a closer look at expected structural and managerial adjustments in education courtesy of migration and refugee crisis.

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INTRODUCTION

The reality of migration requires no further attention as its definition, causes and major forms have long been explored by a host of researchers. Even more tellingly, the structural adjustments in form of legislation in the aftermath of migrations have also been explored. The last two decades of immigration have significantly, and irreversibly, altered the social, cultural, economic, ethnic, racial and religious characteristics of the population (Gropas, 2007). This explains why western countries had even abolished migration tendencies for their immeasurable and unimaginable effects especially on labour (Yılmaz, 2014).

Crucially, the impact of migration both positive and negative on the social, political, economic, religious and cultural spheres of influence has also received world-wide attention in research. Whatever the reason is, migration has daunting effects on the origin, transit and target country (Yılmaz, 2014). Migration can also contribute to the human development of source countries but literature on the subject has identified two main and several minor channels through which migration may affect development, this can be positively or negatively (Schapiro, 2009). It has also been noted by Yılmaz (2014) that in some cases migrants get themselves embroiled in bad activities such as being arrangers of crime, recruiters, transporters, aiding corrupt officials, informers, guides, crew members, enforcers, collectors, specialists and money launderers. This affects policy related issues in countries where they stay.

Education however, remains the biggest area where the challenges of migration and refugee settings cannot be solved by mere policy or directives, cannot be dealt with once and for all and cannot be projected or subjected to quantitative measures based on statistics. Unlike in the political realm where policies and supervision of implementation may suffice, or the social aspects where accommodation, food and other basic requirements may be computed or even the economic endeavours where financial implications are examined, education offers far more contrasting challenges in the event of migrants and refugees.

This is premised on the view that education is an instrument of social integration and a means through which to construct identity. Access to information and knowledge influences access to employment, socio-economic integration and development. (Gropas, 2007). Education is a powerful and influential force in contemporary societies. As a social institution, education imparts values, beliefs and knowledge considered essential to the social reproduction of individual personalities and entire cultures (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1990). Education therefore grapples with issues of societal stability and social change, reflecting society even as it attempts to shape it (Kendall, 2001)

The effects of migration on education influence the four major areas upon which education is built in the shape of aims and objectives, learning experiences or content,

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