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# Comparative and International Education / Éducation Comparée et Internationale

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## Book Review of *Higher Education in the Era of Migration, Displacement and Internationalization*

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## **Book Review**

### **Higher Education in the Era of Migration, Displacement and Internationalization**

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Reviewed by Linyuan Guo-Brennan, *University of Prince Edward Island*

#### **Introduction**

This book is a timely publication addressing social justice issues unique to migrant and refugee learners, a vulnerable yet underserved population in global education systems. It examines how global higher education institutions can increase the access, participation, and success of displaced people globally. It fills a gap in the current literature on international higher education. This book summarizes the existing body of knowledge on international migration, students' voices and experiences from different nations and continents, and higher education policy, leadership, programs, and services for displaced students. The book presents cutting-edge scholarship on diversity, equity, and inclusion in global higher education. It exemplifies critical scholarship and innovative practices in improving atypical students' access to higher education in the global context.

The book's authors—Arar, Kondakci, Streitwieser, and Saiti—have engaged in refugee and migrant studies from different geographic, academic, and personal perspectives. With Palestinian roots, Khalid Arar is a highly regarded scholar with a refugee research footprint in several countries in the Middle East, Europe, and North America. As a scholar with Turkish roots, Yasar Kondakci uncovers the sociological and political dimensions of Syrian refugees' educational needs and lived experiences. Bernhard Streitwieser, a dual citizen of Germany and the United States, demonstrates the most profound respect for refugees' resilience and has examined global issues affecting refugees by collaborating with researchers from Europe and North America. Anna Saiti, a Greek scholar, has observed and investigated the problems unique to the forcibly displaced students, such as accreditation, documentation, mental health issues, academic preparation, etc. This book is the fruit of the authors' synergetic scholarly efforts to improve displaced people's access to and inclusion in higher education.

The intended audience of this book includes scholars, policymakers, and practitioners in higher education, governments, and international and community organizations that support global immigration, particularly refugee students.

#### **Social Justice Issues Related to Refugee Higher Education**

The book contains seven chapters and starts with an overview of the similarities and differences between international and displaced students in global higher education. It discusses the role of higher education concerning refugees, one of the critical stakeholders of international higher education. The first chapter offers a dynamic analysis of the human, sociocultural, geopolitical, and institutional aspects of refugee students' experiences in higher education. This analysis expands the existing knowledge and understanding on this topic and has important implications for higher education policy, leadership, and praxis.

The book chapters reveal the complex factors affecting refugees' access to and participation in higher education. By situating the theme in the broader context of migration and internationalization, the book provides in-depth insight into initiatives at the state and institutional levels and refugees' and educators' lived experiences. It offers crucial academic food for thought and outlines clear imperatives for policymakers and higher education leadership.

### **Relevant Issues not Addressed in the Book**

Refugees result from the humanitarian crisis and a lack of global leadership in the international arena. At the core, it is an issue of global justice and human rights. Solving this issue requires global competency, leadership, solidarity, partnership, and commitment to peace, equity and inclusion at local, regional, and global levels (Guo-Brennan & Guo-Brennan, 2022). Refugees' rights are protected by international laws, such as the UN Refugee Convention, UN Convention on Human Rights, and UN Convention on the child's rights. These three conventions are the most ratified but not globally enforced international treaties by UN member states. Collaborative and responsible global leadership is urgently needed to reduce the humanitarian crisis and enhance refugees' access to higher education.

Within the receiving countries, accepting and integrating refugees are handled mainly by governments at regional and local levels. Policies and initiatives at local levels are not necessarily aligned with international laws. For instance, access to higher education might be protected by human rights law in some countries, but it is not a protected human right in most countries. National laws or funding mechanisms enforce it. The complexity and systemic issues related to displaced students and the implications of such cases on higher education institutions, funding sources, communities, and policies have not been widely understood and appreciated. Higher education is both the means and stakeholder of these issues. But higher education system itself is not sufficient to address this issue. What type of collaboration, coordination, and partnerships are needed can be a future direction for scholarly inquiries.

To take meaningful actions to enhance equity and inclusion of refugee students in higher education, policymakers, decision-makers, and all stakeholders of higher education need knowledge, competencies, attributes, and commitment to promoting global justice through global citizenship & global leadership (Guo-Brennan & Guo-Brennan, 2021). However, discourses and conversations on providing this type of education are primarily absent in mainstream higher education policymaking and practices, even in high-income and democratic societies. Global competence education needs to be mainstreamed in higher education to encounter the social justice issues related to diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Supporting and enabling refugees to survive, integrate, and contribute to the host communities and countries is a process of empowerment. Access to education and employment can restore refugees' autonomy, dignity, and integration into new societies. Higher education as a learning system and cultural centre can provide displaced people with the knowledge, skills, and attributes to be productive in a knowledge economy. Most importantly, higher education offers a comparatively safe space for them to be exposed to and explore different worldviews, value systems, perspectives, experiences, languages, cultures, democracy, governance, rights and responsibilities, and civic engagement. These exposures are significant for refugees' well-being, settlement, and integration in different political systems and sociocultural environments.

## Contributions of the Book

Refugee access to higher education was considered an important issue in international public discourse, but the issue mostly focused on authority and governance within national contexts (Viczkó et al., 2021). The book examines the issue from a global perspective. It is a critical contribution to the scholarship on policy, changes, and global solidarity required to improve displaced people's social, economic, health, and well-being. It provides a fusion of horizons about the situations and issues of forcibly displaced people and students. This fusion of horizons is essential for developing contextualized policies and approaches toward refugee students' well-being. Equity and inclusion are crucial to sustainability in higher education. The policies, strategies, and cases introduced in this book have exemplified the scholarly efforts in addressing social justice issues unique to migrants and refugees' learners, a vulnerable yet underserved population in global higher education systems.

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