Higher Education Admission Process for Immigrant and Refugee Students: A Systematic Review

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Abstract

This paper is a literature review and develops a framework for theoretical understanding of transnational migratory phenomena related to the growth of global displacement and opportunities for entry into higher education by systematizing the literature available in 15 articles. We used PRISMA Scopus Review, a tool specialized in this type of scientific production, and Ryyan, the free information processing program, which is widely used in the production of systematic reviews. This is a critical analysis of how the principles of equity operate in institutional admission activities. This paper makes use of the theoretical contributions provided by Scott's (2004) institutional theory, considering the relationship between academic integration materialized in institutional provisions, with an impact on the lives of students in the context of forced mobility, by implying social, cultural and political determinations that influence the way discourses are conceptualized and constructed (Scott, 2004). It is argued that these equity constructs have an impact on the materialization of policies related to social justice organized by states. The article discusses how standardized institutional policies and practices to evaluate the construction of applications and standards of access and equity end up creating new exclusions for migrants. Institutional arrangements used to meet the educational needs of asylum seekers are critically analysed, highlighting the participation of non-state organizations, in an attempt to generate debate that could lead to more structural changes.

Keywords

refugee students, immigrant students, university, affirmative action policies, higher education

Processo de Ingresso no Ensino Superior de Estudantes Imigrantes e Refugiados: Uma Revisão Sistemática

Resumo

O presente trabalho é uma revisão da literatura e desenvolve um quadro de compreensão teórica sobre os fenômenos migratórios transnacionais relacionados ao crescimento dos

deslocamentos globais e às oportunidades de ingresso no ensino superior por meio da siste-matização da literatura disponível em 15 artigos. Foram usados o PRISMA Scopus Review, ferra-menta especializada nesse tipo de produção científica, e o programa de processamento da in-formação de uso livre Ryyan, que é um software amplamente difundido na produção de revisões sistemáticas. É construída uma análise crítica sobre como operam os princípios da equidade nas atividades de admissão institucional. Este trabalho instrumentaliza os aportes teóricos forneci-dos pela teoria institucional de Scott (2004), considerando a relação existente entre a integração académica materializada em disposições institucionais, com um impacto na vida dos estudantes em contexto de mobilidade forçada, ao implicarem determinações sociais, culturais e políticas que influenciam a forma como os discursos são conceptualizados e construídos (Scott, 2004). Argumenta-se que estes constructos de equidade têm impacto na materialização de políticas re-lacionadas com a justiça social organizadas politicamente pelos estados. O artigo discute como as políticas e práticas institucionais, padronizadas para a construção de aplicações e normas de acesso e equidade, acabam criando novas exclusões para migrantes. Realiza-se uma análise críti-ca dos arranjos institucionais que são utilizados para atender às necessidades educacionais das pessoas em busca de asilo, destacando a participação de organizações não estatais, buscando gerar debates que possam levar a mudanças mais estruturais.

Palavras-chave

estudantes refugiados, estudantes imigrantes, universidade, políticas de ação afirmativa, ensino superior

1. Introduction

Building a quality pedagogy system that promotes meaningful learning among citi-zens as an opportunity for individual and collective self-improvement, is a current de-bate and one of the goals to be achieved by the United Nations, which since 2015 has set sustainable development goals, respecting the access of people in refugee contexts to the university system and higher education (Finatto et al., 2022; Webb et al., 2019). The global migration crisis represents a complex challenge for the state structures of destination societies, as it implies the need to socio-economically absorb a large number of people in different conditions of mobility, including forced mobility due to violence, political crises and social or natural events (Abamosa, 2020; Agência da ONU para os Refugiados, 2023; Lacomba, 2021). According to the Agência da ONU para Refugiados (2023), forced mobility is a subcategory of migration, which occurs in specific contexts of crisis and human rights violations. "Mobility" is a broader concept that includes all forms of human movement, whether voluntary or forced. Migration encompasses both voluntary and forced mobility and can occur at both internal and international levels. Forced mobility, on the other hand, is driven by specific crises and often requires humani-tarian interventions.

In general, displaced populations in host societies have fewer opportunities to ac-cess the higher education system (Agência da ONU para os Refugiados, 2023; Berg, 2022; Kislev, 2016; Pherali & Abu Moghli, 2019). Rigid migration regularization policies often systematically exclude students in forced mobility from participating in economic incentives (Lacomba, 2021). In many cases, a current concern for applicants in the con-text of forced mobility is that they must wait for their status as refugees to be recognized

(Lacomba, 2021; Pherali & Abu Moghli, 2019). In territories such as the United Kingdom and Australia, it is common sight, according to the review proposed by Webb et al. (2019), that public funds allocated to post-secondary education are withdrawn shortly before young people reach the age at which they finish compulsory education. Even in Germany, the Netherlands or Norway, where numerous states and higher education institutions welcome refugees with scholarships and preparatory programs, access to higher education is slow for asylum seekers (Abamosa, 2020; Berg, 2022; Kislev, 2016; Lacomba, 2021).

The study explores the difficulties that migrants face in accessing the possibility of educating themselves and building meaningful learning that allows them to continue self-improvement, which does not lie solely in the hands of educational centres or the social structures of the destination societies (Abamosa, 2020). In other words, the principles of equity in the administrative structures of educational centres, and their difficulties in materializing satisfactorily, may not reflect that transnational migration exacerbates social inequalities (Webb et al., 2019). In general, for candidates, the difficulties of entering the university system mean a challenge of considerable sacrifice. This is the case for most of the candidates, who are young people of the typical age for entering the university system. For international applicants from contexts of forced mobility, this implies a significantly greater challenge: the process of admission as a refugee student is crossed by political, social and economic conditions and the process of social integration into the prevailing society and culture. These are subtle and complex processes that students go through during their participation in student communities (Lacomba, 2021). It is therefore important to build a research approach that addresses the particular needs and challenges of this sector of the population, which can justifiably be considered "vulnerable".

In our opinion, it is important to promote debates, from a decolonial approach, about the admission criteria for higher education centres. This positioning is due to the fact that university admission circuits reproduce a racialized class system in the face of neoliberal logic, which in turn calls into question the value of higher education institutions as a public good and as a fundamental social institution for promoting social justice (Webb et al., 2019).

Currently, research on the promotion of educational policies that influence the possibilities of access to higher education centres, as well as new opportunities for academic training and the construction of meaningful learning by students in conditions of forced mobility, are approached from a sociological perspective that focuses on the admission processes of the university system (Scott, 1975). This study opts for a research model relating to the activities of higher education organizations, identifying the important role played by these non-state actors. Institutional theory in the field of organizational studies focuses on how institutions, understood as systems of socially shared rules, norms and beliefs, influence the behaviour of organizations and the social structures. This theory examines how institutions impact on organizational stability and change, as well as the legitimacy and adoption of practices by organizations (Scott, 2005). The relationship between refugees and organizational theory can be explored

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through the analysis of how organizations, both governmental and non-governmental, approach the management of the refugee crisis, the labour market integration of refugees and the adaptation of organizational structures to meet the specific needs of this vulnerable population. Organizational theory provides conceptual frameworks for understanding and improving institutional responses to the problem of refugees, as well as for promoting the inclusion and well-being of this population in different organizational contexts (Scott, 2005).

The article draws on institutional/organizational theory to explore and discuss university practices in admitting these students, identifying tensions at different levels of the organization between institutional equity policies and their implementation. By highlighting the contexts in which these tensions arise, we use a critical sociological analysis of the activities of educational institutions that is framed as an argumentative elaboration of changes in these institutional policies and how we are rethinking the equity frameworks aimed at strengthening the inclusion of asylum seekers.

Rethinking equity in the development of meaningful learning in this period of increasing global mobility has become a major challenge (Webb et al., 2019). The world is experiencing the largest displacement of people since the Second World War. Europe is currently home to around 3.7 million migrants who have moved to the European Union (EU) for reasons of asylum, education or work (Parlamento Europeu, 2024). In addition, 385,000 people entered the EU irregularly in 2023 (Parlamento Europeu, 2024). Migration remains a significant challenge and seeking asylum is another reason why people come to Europe, with more than 1 million applications across the EU in 2023, due to growing global crises (Parlamento Europeu, 2024) The United States, the United Kingdom, Australia, Canada, Germany and South Africa, countries with significant economic development, are considered global destination societies and record the highest number of migrants, while Middle Eastern countries such as Syria, Turkey and Lebanon record the highest numbers of negative and positive net migration (Agência da ONU para os Refugiados, 2023).

According to Finatto et al. (2022) when reflecting on data from the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), that there are around 79,500,000 people in conditions of mobility, which represents 1% of the world's population. The access of migrant students to the higher education system reaches approximately 4% of the total population up to the second generation in the corresponding cases, in contrast 37% is the rate of "university age" students who do not suffer forced displacement and who manage to enter a higher education course according to UNHCR data in 2020 (Finatto et al., 2022).

Students from contexts of forced mobility often have high educational aspirations, and it is also recognized that higher education is important for well-being, resettlement and socioeconomic integration and inclusion (Peres et al., 2022). It is therefore argued that increasing access to higher education for those in forced mobility, refugees and asylum seekers is essential to support resettlement and the development of people's capacities to contribute to post-conflict reconstruction (Finatto et al., 2022). In this sense, it is not surprising that human rights organizations are insisting that universities and

governments comply with the United Nations declaration, agreed in 2016, to invest in the education of thousands of young people whose educational process has been interrupted in order to rebuild human and intellectual capital, thus supporting access to higher education for people in refugee camps, in post-conflict regions and in host countries in general (Agência da ONU para Refugiados, 2023; Finatto et al., 2022).

In economically developed host countries, a global movement is emerging in which universities recognize their responsibilities (Lacomba, 2021). Examples of these processes can be seen in the United Kingdom and Ireland, with the "Sanctuary Universities" movement. The term "sanctuary" is used as an umbrella term to encompass initiatives focused on providing sanctuary and/or reception to people seeking asylum (Murray & Baker, 2024). According to Murray and Baker (2024), embracing the unique needs and challenges of refugee students challenges the existing administrative structures of higher education institutions. The authors explore the implications of existing institutional hospitality, despite the lack of defined educational policies in the face of the living conditions of this population group (Murray & Baker, 2024).

In Germany, language programs and personal counselling, as well as new approaches to internationalization, are supported by the German government and higher education institutions (Berg, 2022); and in Canada, the Ontario Council of Universities is working with several institutions in the province to support students from refugee backgrounds (Berg, 2022). Similarly, in Australia, Webb et al. (2019) point out there is a growing movement among some universities to provide scholarships that cover tuition fees and/or living costs for students with refugee and asylum seeker backgrounds. Kislev (2016), in a study carried out with students coming from contexts of forced mobility, was able to relate how the lack of public policies reduces the opportunities for access for refugee students. The lack of public policies and institutional structures has an impact on institutional dynamics and the treatment of these students' educational needs; during admissions processes, it is the higher education institutions themselves that generate administrative opportunities for these students' access to the university system and higher education. In many cases, successful admissions do not happen through the practical exercise of public policies or institutional policies, but on their own initiative, sometimes from local initiatives that have no legal recourse to structure changes in decisions regarding access policies to higher education (Kislev, 2016). This raises the question of the extent to which the entrance system can be equitable for all applicants to higher education institutions.

In the United States, young people and adults belonging to the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program[1], who participated in a study carried out by Lacomba (2021), emphasize that state educational policies that do not take into account their particular needs have an impact on their sense of belonging to these higher education institutions. This study also shows that in the United States, states base their immigration laws and

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[1] The Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program was created by former President Barack Obama on June 15, 2012, to provide deportation relief and work authorization to undocumented immigrants who met specific criteria. DACA beneficiaries had to have entered the United States before the age of 16, be under the age of 31 on June 15, 2012, have resided continuously in the country since 2007, be enrolled in school or have graduated, or be an honourably discharged veteran, and have no felony convictions.

policies on perceptions of belonging and value that include or exclude undocumented students.

In a summary reflection, this article aims to contribute to a broader global understanding of why changes in this area have often been reactive, with strong involvement of non-state actors, and reflecting bottom-up changes rather than political changes at the system level (bottom-down). Next, based on the systematization of 15 articles from different cultural and geographical contexts, including Brazil, the United States, Norway, Germany, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, Australia, Haiti, Israel and Syria, we will detail the methodological processes, results and discussion, based on the PRISMA model.

2. Methodology

2.1. Research Procedures and Strategy

A literature review was carried out, following the checklist proposed in the "PRISMA Extension for Scoping Reviews" (Tricco et al., 2018). The search for articles was carried out by three independent researchers (HAGL, LVF and MOP)[2] in July 2023. The search keywords were developed by EXAC, HAGL, LVF, MOP and AAG, based on previous highly cited studies in the field of higher education; as far as we know, there is no systematic review that has evaluated immigrant programs in universities. The search strategies used in previous systematic reviews in the field of education and integration were also consulted.

Studies on refugees seven years old or less published in indexed, peer-reviewed journals in English and Portuguese were considered. The review focused solely on peer-reviewed journal articles for two reasons: first, to ensure comparability, and secondly, to privilege databases and academic productions that did not fall into the category of grey literature (any document that is generally not formally or commercially published, which makes its retrieval, reproduction or citation a difficult job) because the other non-peer-reviewed works and books were limited by the resources available. It covered publications between 2019 and 2023, a time span that includes periods when forced migration was high on the public agenda in European and North American countries, and periods when interest in the topic was less pronounced. The article follows the methodological format suggested by the systematization of scientific articles around research problems. The methodological steps suggested by the PRISMA Scopus Review include six phases which are detailed below: (a) identification the research problem or research questions; (b) development a research strategy that emphasizes the appropriate combination of the theoretical constructs involved; (c) deepening knowledge with the resources extracted and available; (d) PRISMA diagram for the selection of relevant

[2] The acronyms include the reviewers who initially filtered the articles in the free Rayyan software; a second moment can be distinguished after the work of choosing the articles with theoretical constructs more related to the research centres around the conditions of access of refugee students to the higher education system; a more detailed analysis by the researchers responsible came after the processing of the previously pre-selected academic works.

research projects, which includes a number of articles considered relevant and admissible for subsequent inclusion; (e) theoretical proposals and contributions to knowledge; and (f) construction of schemes of results and conclusions.

Using publication processing software (such as Rayyan) on the search engines BvS-Psi, PubMed, PsycInfo, Scopus and Embase, it was possible to debug the number of publications to review, duplicate content and articles not related to the research objectives.

The following sequence of keywords was used in all the databases investigated: (immigrants OR foreigners OR refugees) AND (university OR "higher education") AND (inclusion OR accessibility) AND (program OR "quota system" OR integration OR internationalization OR "forced migration"). The searches were carried out in five databases: BvS-Psi, PubMed, PsycInfo, Scopus and Embase. The "type of document" filter (that is, article or journal article or conference paper) was used in all databases. It should be noted that the English and Portuguese languages were entered into the search engines of the academic platforms mentioned, and most of the articles found were written in English.

2.2. Data Selection and Eligibility

The articles located in the databases (Figure 1) were imported into the free Rayyan software program, where the selection stages were carried out. This tool is free and helps researchers carry out systematic or scoping reviews, automatically identifying duplicate publications and a "blind mode" (similar to the peer review process) that reduces the risk of selection bias (Right et al., 2007). After excluding duplicate articles, the remaining studies were reviewed by three independent researchers (HAGL, LVF and MOP). Then, after the title and abstract selection process, the site allows you to remove the blind mode, showing the decisions made by each researcher. A new tab called "conflicts" then appears, showing all the articles with different decisions regarding inclusion/exclusion in this review. Any discrepancies between the judges were resolved by three senior researchers (EXAC, AAG and EV).

The inclusion criteria used during the selection of articles were: (a) they were in an academic environment; (b) they presented university access programs; (c) existing programs; and (d) studies aimed at the migrant/refugee population. The exclusion criteria were: (a) duplicate articles; (b) studies that idealized programs that did not yet exist; (c) studies that focused only on a niche audience; and (d) studies published before 2015. In addition, in order to cover as much of the literature on university access programs for immigrants as possible, we did not set restrictions on the sociodemographic characteristics of the participants or the language of the studies.

2.3. Data Extraction

The following data was extracted from the included studies: (a) identification of the study (that is, name of the authors, abstract of the article, year of publication); (b) country of application; (c) journal of publication; and (d) DOI. Data extraction was carried out by HAGL and reviewed by AAG (see Appendix, Table A1).

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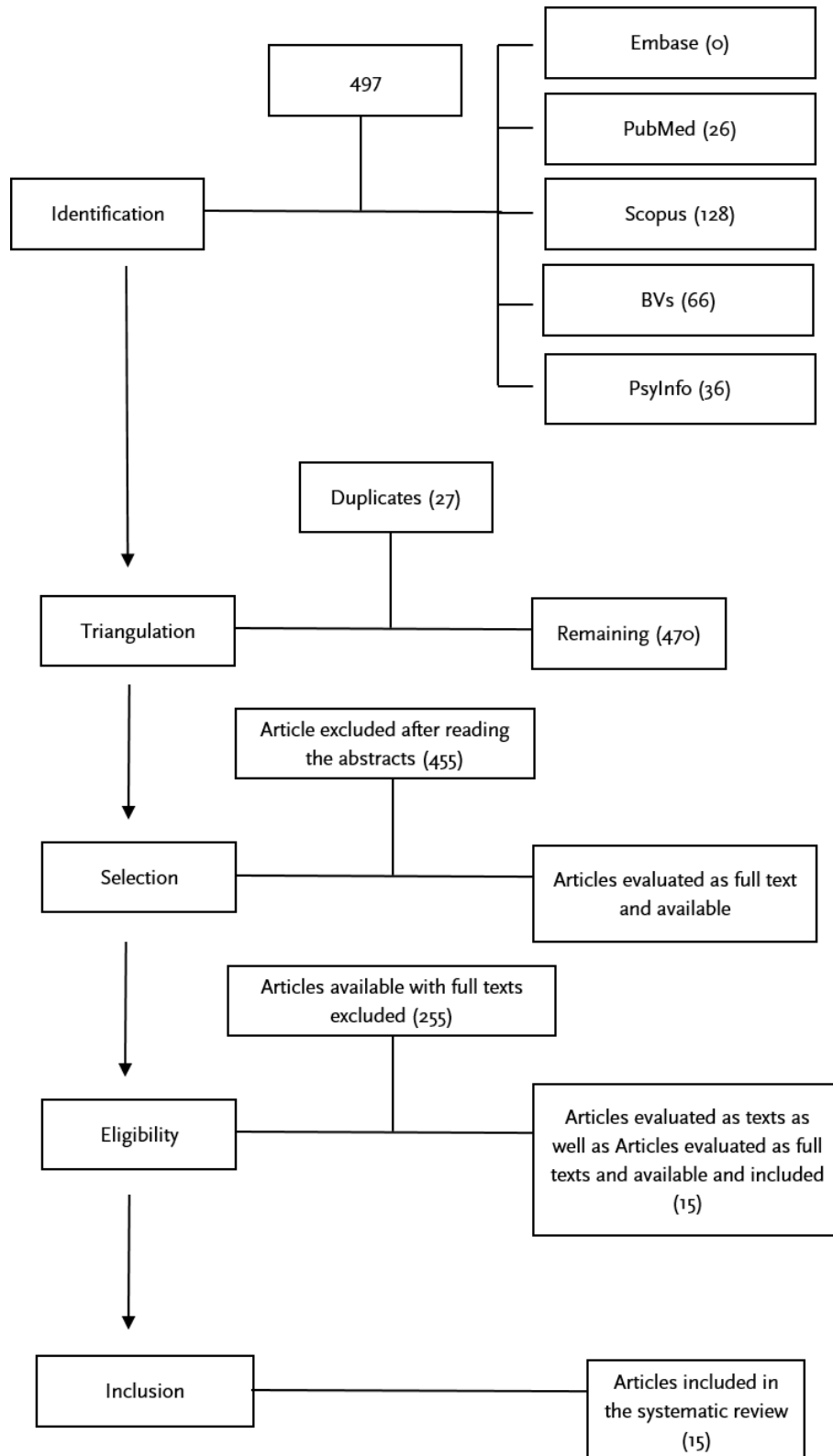
Figure 1. *Selection of articles for review*

2.4. Summary of Data

The systematic review was carried out using content analysis and a deductive approach. In terms of nature, this research aims to understand a given phenomenon/event and generate knowledge to solve specific problems (Prodanov & Freitas, 2009). To this end, the strategy chosen for this work involved a qualitative, exploratory and cross-sectional study. According to Sampiere et al. (2006), qualitative research consists of an in-depth study of social phenomena, allowing understanding in their natural environments, with a view to constructing or reconstructing reality as it is perceived by its actors. It is therefore suitable for environments with little information about the phenomenon being studied, as it allows information to be collected and interpreted according to the reality found. From the point of view of the nature of the objectives, the research will be exploratory. According to Piovesan and Temporini (1995), the exploratory study starts from a situation of little or no knowledge of the universe of response and reaches the condition of qualitative knowledge of that same universe. Such research, according to Pinsonneault and Kraemer (1993), aims to familiarize people with topics or identify initial concepts about the topic, as well as discovering new dimensions and possibilities. Finally, in terms of the time frame, the study is cross-sectional, with data collected over a single period.

2.5. Research Questions

The study incorporates a framework of theoretical understanding on the processes of access to higher education that refugee students go through and in the context of forced mobility, as surveyed in the 15 selected articles (Appendix, Table A1). We argue that educational policies, such as academic integration, have an impact on the lives of students in the context of forced mobility by implying social, cultural and political determinations that influence the way social discourses are conceptualized and constructed. These discourses are manifested in the representations of the current social imaginary about the participation of refugee students in higher education centres, which shape the inclusion practices of this population, as well as their relationship with the political power of the state (Abamosa, 2020). The study seeks to position itself as a contribution to approach transnational migrations. The study analyses the institutional practices of non-state actors and, specifically, how the concept of equity is put into practice in these higher education institutions (Gonzales et al., 2018). The political strategies related to building an equitable admissions system include guidelines that determine the criteria for inclusion and exclusion — in this process it is defined who belongs to the higher education system and who is not considered a member.

In this section, we provide a condensed overview of the organizational theory that is fundamental to the development of the following research questions:

1. What are the main difficulties students face when entering the higher education system in the context of forced mobility?

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2. What admission procedures must refugee students follow?

3. What criteria do higher education institutions use to validate the work experience and academic training of students in contexts of forced mobility?

Each subtopic contains a critical reflection on the paradigm implicit in organizational theory. After developing the subtopics corresponding to each research question, each subtopic generates a context conducive to delving into seminal studies and relevant theories. The subtopics are: languages and customs; refugee students and admission processes; refugee students and current educational policies in admission processes; and validation of refugee students' work experience and academic career.

2.5.1. Language and Customs

Language difficulties can seriously hinder students' overall learning experiences (Bilic & Thai, 2023). Several of the articles analysed found that students in shelter settings are afraid that other students won't understand what they're saying and what they're dealing with. This, in turn, undermines their confidence in asking for help, in generating social bonds, affecting their sense of belonging to the educational community, difficulties in preparing written assignments, making oral presentations or speaking in class (Bilic & Thai, 2023; Kislev, 2016; Webb et al., 2019). Facing adversity in academic performance is part of the integration process and the acquisition of sufficient language skills alone does not guarantee success in the social and economic integration process (van Dijk, 2021). Education actively encourages participation in social structures, helps people establish friendships and integrate into the new geographical terrain (Watkins et al., 2012). Good language skills are beneficial for developing self-confidence. Several studies cited by the articles analysed highlight that belonging to an ethnic minority is accompanied by high unemployment rates, lower wages and worse promotion opportunities in the workplace (Bilic & Thai, 2023; Kislev, 2016; Webb et al., 2019).

Language skills are important for the adaptation process, both in the educational field (academic community) and in socializing in general. The admission processes for international students usually include institutional regulations that encourage students whose mother tongue is not that of the destination country to acquire, in most cases, mandatory certifications sufficient for participation in certain university courses (Bilic & Thai, 2023; Kislev, 2016; Webb et al., 2019).

This study found that universities that have language teaching programs for international students do not have institutional policies that are developed taking into account the specific needs of students in the context of refuge and forced mobility. Acquiring the language of the destination society influences academic performance. For example, a study carried out in Germany by Kislev (2016) indicates that among migrant families, members of the first generation (the first group of people in a family system who migrated to the host societies, for example Turkish people who migrated alone or with their families from Turkey to Germany) do not perform as well in the assessments

carried out by the Program for International Student Assessment[3]. As is the case with students who are second generation (children of the first generations of immigrants, for example, children of Turkish immigrants in Berlin that were born in Germany or left Turkey as kids) or third generation migrants. The process of adaptation in academic work can lead to serious difficulties, including negative performance, the need for extra work and may require institutional interventions aimed at improving academic performance and increasing the manoeuvrability of research skills, as well as improving the quality of life of people who find themselves in this situation of vulnerability as a result of the vicissitudes experienced by forced mobility (Bilic & Thai, 2023). On the other hand, certain measures and institutional policies of higher education centres can have the opposite effect to that expected, because the special benefits that migrants, specifically students in a context of forced mobility, receive can trigger tensions in the relationships of universities perceived as "ethnodiverse communities". To this extent, the services provided by policies designed for the migrant population or in search of scholarships and benefits from the university quota system can make these people feel even more excluded, and they may suffer an increased level of discrimination if they are prioritized by this institutional policy (Bilic & Thai, 2023).

2.5.2. Refugee Students and the Admission Process

The institutional guidelines for admitting migrant students vary according to the cultural, social and economic reality of the destination societies. The administrative structures of each higher education institution impose specific admission requirements and processes. To begin with, the conceptual development of refugee students represents a significant difficulty in itself. In general, according to Berg's (2022) criteria, the construction of institutional discourses about the reality of students in a context of forced mobility focuses on disabilities, unmet needs and little competition in the job market.

In an analysis of the achievements for sustainable development by Finatto et al. (2022), regarding the academic inclusion of the migrant population, stands out the important role they play in the process of economic, social and cultural inclusion of refugees and those seeking asylum. The inclusion of refugees in higher education is at the centre of the debate on fairness in the university admissions system around the world. Refugees are those people who have experienced war, violence, social conflicts and persecution, for which reason they have had to forcibly leave their countries of origin in transnational mobilities. A relevant difference, then, is that a migrant who is not facing the consequences of violence from armed conflicts or terrorism is more likely to make a decision to migrate based on the impulse to improve their living conditions, and not so much for survival; therefore, the voluntary nature is recognized. While a person seeking

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[3] Integrating refugee students into a country's education system can be challenging, especially when it comes to international standardized assessments. PISA, or the Program for International Student Assessment, is an assessment carried out by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, which aims to measure the performance of 15-year-old students in three main areas: reading, mathematics and science. The assessment is carried out every three years and covers a wide range of countries around the world.

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asylum as a refugee in a destination society has specific connotations in the constitution and legislative system that vary according to each country (Berg, 2022).

The terminology of refugees, "international students" coming from social systems affected by serious conflicts that threaten the lives of civilian citizens, carries a bias of exclusion that can trigger processes of stigmatization of this migrant population in the destination societies (Berg, 2022). The admission processes for this student population are characterized by the specificities corresponding to the educational legislation of each higher education centre. Abamosa (2020) points out that proof of this is the changing way in which students in conditions of forced mobility are conceptualized and how models for their participation in the educational community and the labour market are constructed.

2.5.3. Refugee Students and Current Educational Policies in Admissions Processes

From the point of view of Webb et al. (2019), the higher education centres with the participation of students from contexts of forced mobility should implement strategies that take into account the situation of these students both in their broad spectrum of experiences and in the specific needs and particular challenges they face. In a study by Abamosa (2020), the author calls for reflection on the small number of studies that delve into the educational reality of students in conditions of forced mobility, in particular on the integration of these students in technical and higher education centres.

The term "refugee" is generally avoided in institutional discourses because it is intertwined with other terms related to the global migration phenomenon, including violent conflicts and forced migration (Abamosa, 2020). According to Juar Abamosa's (2020) review, in contemporary academic production, it is common to find an ambivalent position regarding the use of the term "refugee"/"refugee student" in relation to a nation and society affected by violence, such as in cases of war or serious political and social crises. Instead, ambiguous and not directly related terms are used, such as "non-traditional students". Since they are not numerically significant compared to the number of students of local origin or majority, they can also be included in the generalization of international students. Equating students in contexts of forced mobilization with other international students to avoid using the term "refugee" ignores the particular identification of this vulnerable population group, making the vicissitudes invisible in their process of integration into educational communities and disregards the particular demands and challenges they face in the destination societies, both in the cultural context and in adapting to the economic system (Abamosa, 2020; van Dijk, 2021). Streitwieser (2004, as cited in Webb et al., 2019) distinguishes between three types of international students: international students themselves, who voluntarily undertake a migration project in search of enriching their cultural training and professional experience; students belonging to affirmative action programs or student quotas defined by institutional policies, who take advantage of international networks to pursue studies in nations that offer educational options to which they would probably not have access due

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to the intersection of exclusion factors related to the socioeconomic system, to ethnic and racial origin, to conflicts over ideological or territorial affiliation or even because they are dealing with educational services not offered in their societies of origin; and refugee students, who belong to the group of displaced people who migrate in order to survive, where mobility is directly related to their safety. The students need to move in order to obtain asylum and an opportunity to establish themselves in the destination society.

In general, the terms used, for example, in the official documents of the study centres found in the destination societies tend to be vague, with the result that the specific needs and particular challenges of students in conditions of forced mobility are being poorly represented or under-represented precisely because of the lack of a direct approach, listening to the people. For Scott (1975), institutional operating systems require constant adjustments, materializing in institutional arrangements that provide an observable structure, an institutional operating system with a certain social and personal dynamic. When considered as a research variable, Scott (1975) proposes the notion of "institutional environments". In this regard, Webb et al. (2019) suggest that educational institutions, including higher education centres, do little to understand the broad spectrum of experiences related to the precariousness suffered by the refugee and migrant population. These experiences include difficulties in generating support networks, cultural capital and competitiveness in the job market.

2.5.4. Validating the Professional Experience and Academic Background of Refugee Students

Much of the development of decolonial thinking, as well as the social theories involved in feminist movements, racial and indigenous studies, is concerned with reconstructing and understanding how existing social, economic and cultural structures ultimately contribute to sustaining a system of oppression. This system especially affects under-represented sectors of society, which, unlike the majority, may be in a situation of vulnerability, such as social sectors exposed to structural inequalities which, citing Gonzales et al. (2018), can be racialized persons, women, non-binary people, queer people or even the ordinary working class. The articles under analysis identify the significant power held by social institutions in general, whether state or even legal in nature, such as the courts, as well as the education system and the privilege that exists in the power imbalance present in contemporary labour markets, where male privilege can be identified, as well as a clear trend towards Westernization (Gonzales et al., 2018).

In the case of higher education, organizational studies, such as work on institutional environments, can neglect the cumulative weight of socio-historical processes (Abamosa, 2020). They can also underestimate how certain factors of oppression and institutional violence influence the way the relationship between the higher education system and non-traditional international student communities is constructed. One example is the fact that, in many cases, higher education institutions are, in practice, inherited facilities or may be related to old colonization systems and exploitation structures. Examples of institutional resources include the infrastructure of institutions in terms

of location and real estate, access to basic natural resources such as water and others, as well as access to strategic natural sources such as drainage basin or mining companies, and other types of production such as cultural capital or technological industries (Abamosa, 2020; Gonzales et al., 2018; van Dijk, 2021, Webb et al., 2019).

Most universities around the world fail to recognize the specific needs and particular challenges of forcibly displaced students. Instead, it is observed that refugee students are referred by higher education institutions like any other group of international students, which makes it practically impossible for universities, for example, in admissions processes, to institutionally recognize the particular needs of this population, although this is not generalizable in all the articles analysed (Kalnisky, 2013; Pherali & Abu Moghli, 2019). According to Berg (2022), there is a significant increase in concern to ensure that higher education institutions can be more involved in building inclusion policies that correspond to the current reality of these underrepresented sectors of society. The author recognizes the insufficiency of the literature and that it is a real challenge for educational institutions, in a practical sense, to process the needs of refugee students, since they have to deal with different types of difficulties at the same time, which requires, in hypothetical terms, a pressing need to adapt to the profound and rapid social, cultural, political and economic transformations with which they are closely linked. Berg's work (2022), for example, reconstructs how these institutional discourses are linked to previous social structures, such as the economic system to which the higher education institution belongs, as well as the legal discourses relevant to the admission processes of these sectors of the population (Berg, 2022; Lacomba, 2021). Juar Abamosa et al. (2020) argue that, given the scarcity of available literature on the processes of admission and recognition of the professional validity and academic record of refugee students, it is necessary to propose a method of discursive analysis, so they have developed a framework of theoretical understanding (critical discourse analysis) that aims to build an answer on how social inclusion in higher education institutions is conceptualized. From Abamosa's perspective (2020), the very fact of recognizing that the system needs to be more equitable is to recognize that it is already iniquitous or unequal. In other words, the need for a more inclusive system is an affirmation that the system is not inclusive and is therefore exclusionary. Hence the need for theoretical frameworks of understanding that can achieve a broader and deeper understanding of social inclusion processes. The capitalist and neoliberal system already tends to annul and censor key concepts for the development of these displaced populations, such as higher education institutions, to the extent that, according to Abamosa (2020), this system tends to hold individuals responsible for their failures in the logic of operation. The validation of professional experience is subject to a set of regulations in line with the current economic system. In the case of neoliberalism, higher education institutions play an important role in industrialization by being involved in the specialization of workers, which has an important consequence on the labour markets. The orientation of education policies, as well as social inclusion policies, under the logic of neoliberalism, leaves aside the principles of social justice

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that are based on human potential (Abamosa, 2020). Social justice is marginalized in its relevance and participation in the organization of the State; for example, social justice related to the particular needs and challenges of vulnerable populations, which has an effect on the real opportunities for refugee students to access higher education.

3. Conclusions and Final Considerations

The need to recognize and address the specific needs of refugee and forced migrant students in higher education institutions highlights the importance of more inclusive and equitable policies that value the professional and academic experience of these students, taking into account the influences of existing social, economic and cultural structures. It is essential to invest in the education of young people in situations of forced mobility in order to rebuild human and intellectual capital, promoting integration and socio-economic inclusion. Institutional/organizational theory is seen as an essential tool for analysing and overcoming the tensions between equity policies and their implementation in universities. It is important to question the social value of higher education institutions as useful assets for societies when competitiveness and continuous specialisation return to universities, helping to reproduce hegemonic and unequal forms of scientific production. Existing social, economic and cultural structures play a significant role in shaping the academic and professional experiences of refugee and migrant students. These structures can contribute to the maintenance of systems of oppression and inequality, especially for marginalized groups that face structural disparities.

Power dynamics within social institutions, including educational systems, legal entities and labour markets, often reflect privilege and power imbalances, impacting the opportunities and challenges faced by refugee students and, in general, all asylum seekers. In addition, historical and socio-cultural factors can influence how these students are perceived and treated in academic and professional environments, potentially leading to discrimination and social exclusion. The study highlights the importance of actions undertaken by non-state actors when investigating the conditions under which refugee students are admitted to university and higher education institutions in the host societies in which they find themselves. It echoes the need to generate nuclei of thought, debate and criticism about the possibilities for students in forced mobility to enter the university system. The emerging literature on admission processes for students in vulnerable conditions makes academic and research efforts relevant to generate knowledge that can stimulate changes in democratic guidelines, so that higher education can truly be within the reach of all.

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Annexes

Table A1. *Systematisation table of selected articles*

Authors	Year of publica- tion	Year of the study	Country and lan- guage of the text	Research objective	Sample size	Methodol- ogy used	Main theme	Results	Main findings
"Integrating and Welcoming: Access for Haitian Refugees and Immigrants to Universities"									
L. Bitten- court and S. Ailton	2022	2021	Brazil, written in English.	Integration experiences of Haitian stu- dents belong- ing to the Pró Haiti program in 2017. In- stitutional agreements in the Sérgio de Vieira Mello university council.	31 stu- dents partici- pated, the Federal University of Santa Catarina (15), the Federal University of Paraná (8) and the Feder- al Univer- sity of Rio Grande do Sul (1).	A study with a qualitative approach. It proposes a systematiza- tion of semi- structured interviews (22). The technique highlighted is the Del- phi inter- view, which includes peer review.	Organi- zational dis- courses on refugee stu- dents in federal higher educa- tion institu- tions in south- ern Brazil.	Charac- terization of the particular reality ex- perienced by the 22 students belong- ing to the Pró Haiti program in the context of the 2017 earth- quake. Analysis of institu- tional ap- proaches and edu- cational approach- es in the policies of the Sérgio Vieira de Mello Chair and the federal universi- ties in the sample.	The process of integration and adaptation to the training processes at the different federal university institutions. It de- limits the limited scope achieved by the institu- tions involved to provide sufficient resources so that students can obtain funds for maintenance, learning languag- es and customs, recreation and job placement.

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"'One Day I Will Make It to University': Students From Refugee Backgrounds in University Pathway Programs"							
S. Bilic and T. Thais	2023	2023	Australia, written in English.	To identify the concerns and problems faced by humanitarian visa students at UniSA College, as well as to address their academic engagement and learning integration needs.	16 students took part in the research: an informal focus group with 10 students. A total of 59 students with humanitarian visas, all from Arab and Muslim countries.	The combined study, specified as a pilot study combining a quantitative approach through a survey of 59 humanitarian visa students at UniSA College, included an informal focus group and individual interviews with student support staff.	Culturally responsive practices in supporting refugee students in higher education. Specific initiatives and resources developed at UniSA College to support these students are discussed, such as student support officers, peer support programs and staff training.	The results of the study showed that humanitarian visa students at UniSA College face challenges related to English language proficiency, academic literacy, participation in group activities, navigating the university environment and lack of knowledge of the services available.	The importance of adopting culturally responsive approaches and peer-led support systems in educational institutions in Australia to support the success of refugee students in higher education. These students face challenges in areas such as English language skills, academic literacy, navigating university culture and balancing work, study and family responsibilities. They need support in areas such as workshops on academic literacy skills, research skills, essay writing and developing conversational English.

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"Social Inclusion of Refugees Into Higher Education in Norway. A Critical Analysis of Norwegian Higher Institutions and Integration Policies"							
J. Abamosa	2020	2019	Norway, written in English.	Analyse educational policy documents in Norway to determine how they influence education and integration policies, highlighting the neoliberal orientation towards economic competitiveness and the importance of producing qualified professionals for the knowledge society.	Education policy documents related to higher education for refugees in Norway.	Critical discourse analysis of educational policy documents related to higher education for refugees in Norway. A detailed textual analysis approach was used to identify the discourses, genres and grammatical-lexical elements present in the documents. Thematic analyses were carried out to categorize words, phrases, sentences and even paragraphs, and were related to the dimensions of social inclusion mentioned.	Conceptualization of the social inclusion of refugees in higher education in Norway through educational policy documents, highlighting the influence of the discourses and principles underlying these documents on the social inclusion of refugees in higher education.	Education policy documents in Norway emphasize the importance of economic competitiveness and the production of qualified professionals for the knowledge society. The presence of academic genres, neoliberal and social justice discourses was identified in the documents analysed. Prevalence of commercial and business discourses in higher education policies (corporate language), indicating a focus on commercialization and innovation.	The presence of neoliberal and social justice discourses in educational policy documents in Norway, highlighting the importance of economic competitiveness and the production of qualified professionals for the knowledge society. It was noted that the government plays a crucial role in the integration of refugees, prioritizing the need for a qualified workforce for the labour market and the welfare state.

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"The Effect of Education Policies on the Attainment of Immigrants in Western Europe. A Cross Classified Multilevel Analysis"								
E. Kislev	2016	2016	Western Europe, written in English.	The effect of intercultural and support policies aimed at immigrants on their educational success in Western European countries.	Not considered.	Multilevel analysis with cross-classification to investigate the effect of intercultural and support policies on the educational success of immigrants in Western European countries. Analysing the contrast in results between countries and determining whether higher levels of one component lead to greater educational success for immigrants than the other component.	The effect of intercultural and support policies on the educational success of immigrants in Western European countries.	Intercultural policies have a positive and significant effect on the educational success of immigrants in Western European countries, while specific support policies have a negligible effect on the educational progress of immigrants.	The effect of intercultural policies on the educational performance of immigrants: the role of parental education and language skills.

Differences between immigrant groups: studies show that there are significant differences between different immigrant groups in demographic, social and economic aspects.

Effectiveness of intercultural and specific support policies: they have a more positive impact on immigrants' educational results than specific support policies. |

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"Working Towards Aspiration: How Higher Education Learning-Working Trajectories for Refugees in the Netherlands Support Work-Related Capacities"								
D. van Dijk	2021	2021	The Netherlands, written in English.	To analyse how refugees' work skills are strengthened through the dual higher education program in the Netherlands.	20 students enrolled at the Rotterdam University of Applied Sciences took part.	Qualitative study, development of semi-structured interviews with 20 refugees who have settled in the Netherlands since 2015 and were enrolled in the RUAS dual higher education program.	How a dual program for highly qualified refugees in the Netherlands supports their professional skills.	Difficulties in finding employment related to valuing foreign work experience, financial barriers and age limitations in accessing social assistance or study funding in the Netherlands. Refugees with foreign work experience face challenges in being valued in the Dutch labour market, especially in areas such as civil engineering. Age restrictions and the need to support the family make it difficult to access social assistance or educational funding.	Vocational skills are a crucial aspect of refugees' integration into the labour market, enabling them to adapt to a new working environment and improve their career prospects; the importance of language skills and work-related skills; the contribution of the program to the development of vocational skills; refugee students' aspiration for income security, professional development and independence from social assistance; the need for support in other areas of life for refugees' sustainable integration into the labour market; the need to recognize prior learning for refugees' labour integration and their sense of inclusion in society.

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"Unsettling Equity Frames in Australian Universities to Embrace People Seeking Asylum"							
S. Webb, K. Dunwoodie and J. Wilkinson	2019	2019	Australia, written in English.	Study on access to higher education for asylum seekers in Australia. Access to higher education for asylum seekers is based on an organizational and neo-institutional theoretical framework to explore the barriers and practices related to the inclusion of this group in the higher education system.	The sample included asylum seekers, prospective students and university staff, not determined numerically.	A case study examining the experiences and challenges faced by refugees and asylum seekers in accessing higher education in Australia. The study focuses on one particular university and examines the institutional practices, policies and tensions related to the inclusion of these students in the higher education system.	Access to higher education for asylum seekers is equity in access to higher education.	Tensions have been identified in the implementation of equity policies in higher education for this group. It was found that asylum seekers face access difficulties due to the lack of recognition of their specific needs and the inadequacy of existing policies. Tension in the concept of "equity" due to discrepancies between the government's regulatory policies that exclude asylum seekers from public education funding, the university's institutional narrative as equitable and inclusive, and the practices implemented to resolve these tensions.	Refugees and asylum seekers face significant challenges in accessing higher education in Australia and there are tensions between institutional policies and practices that impact on their inclusion. The need for organizational change to support the inclusion of these students, despite regulatory limitations, is highlighted, and the importance of recognizing and addressing the specific needs of this group within the university system is emphasized.

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"International or Refugee Students? Shifting Organizational Discourses on Refugee Students at German Higher Education Organizations"							
J. Berg	2022	2022	Germany, written in English.	Analyse the organizational discourses on refugee students in higher education institutions focusing on how these discourses have evolved and influenced organizational structures in response to the mass arrival of refugees in 2015 and 2016.	Interviews with the first 10 refugee contacts and eight heads of international offices at four public universities and four universities of applied sciences in Germany.	Systemic analysis of organizational semantics, using interviews with experts in central positions in the planning and implementation of support programs for refugee students in German higher education institutions.	Analysis of organizational discourses on refugee students in German higher education institutions, with a focus on how these discourses have evolved and influenced organizational structures.	Refugee students were formally and discursively differentiated from other international students at German higher education institutions. However, during the later phases of the support programs, this differentiation blurred and the discourse around refugee students began to re-frame them as international students, which was also reflected in the development of additional support programs.	There has been a shift in the organizational discourses about refugee students in German higher education institutions, from initially differentiating these students as a distinct group to later integrating them into the broader category of international students. The evolution of organizational discourses has influenced the development of additional support programs for refugee students at German higher education institutions. It highlights the importance of analysing organizational representations and responses to urgent social developments, as well as the relationship between structural development and discursive representations in the field of higher education.

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"Higher Education in Context of Mass Displacement Towards Sustainable Solutions"							
T. Pherali and M. Maghli	2015	2015	Syria, written in English	Analyse the challenges and opportunities related to access to higher education for refugees and internally displaced persons - analysis focused specifically on the case of Syrian refugees in Lebanon.	A total of 65 articles were included on the inclusion of refugees in higher education.	Qualitative literature review covering the existing literature on the challenges of higher education for refugees: 65 articles, including reports from conferences and non-governmental organizations, as well as peer-reviewed articles, were identified using specific keywords.	Access to higher education for refugees, with a specific focus on Syrian refugees in Lebanon. It addresses the challenges and opportunities related to higher education, including barriers to access, available initiatives and the importance of higher education in rebuilding lives and promoting peace in humanitarian crisis contexts.	Design of a program or information centre to facilitate access to higher education for Syrian refugees and internally displaced persons. In addition, challenges and opportunities related to higher education for this displaced population were identified, highlighting the importance of addressing the higher education crisis among young refugees through multidimensional approaches.	Access to higher education for refugees and internally displaced persons, with a special focus on Syrian refugees in Lebanon. It stresses the need for innovative approaches and partnerships to support refugees in accessing higher education, recognizing the crucial role that higher education plays in promoting peace, democracy and development in conflict-affected countries.

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"Adjustment Experiences of Syrians Immigrant University Students in Turkey"							
Z. B. Schwartz, S. J. Jarvis and V. Tyne	2019	2019	Turkey, written in English.	To explore the life experiences of Syrian immigrant university students in Turkey; to investigate the opinions of Syrian immigrant university students about their experiences at their respective universities.	14 Syrian students took part (seven women and seven men).	Qualitative research design using a phenomenological approach to explore the adjustment experiences of Syrian immigrant university students in Turkey.	It uses a qualitative research approach with the participation of Syrian immigrant university students who have witnessed the war in Syria at different times and geographical locations in order to obtain maximum diversity and richness of data.	Systematization of experiences and challenges of adaptation of Syrian immigrant university students in Turkey, especially in university environments. The influence of risk and protective factors on their adaptation process is highlighted, as well as the importance of resilience, social support, mental health services and educational and professional planning in their successful integration.	Identification of risk and protective factors in the adaptation process of Syrian immigrant university students in Turkey, the importance of psychological support for these students and the need for mental health services in university environments.

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"The Educational Incorporation of DACA Recipients in Multilayered Immigration Context"							
C. Lacomba	2020	2021	United States, written in English.	Examine how state and local policies affect the educational experience of DACA recipients in higher education, focusing on how these policies impact DACA students' inclusion, academic success and sense of belonging in the university context. The acronym DACA stands for "Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals". The study was carried out in states such as California, Illinois, New York, Arizona, Georgia and South Carolina.	194 in-depth interviews were conducted with DACA beneficiaries attending public higher education institutions in 2015.	Qualitative study includes analysis of 194 in-depth interviews with DACA beneficiaries. Qualitative analysis of the process in which state and local policies have a significant impact on the educational experience of DACA beneficiaries. Political contexts, especially immigration laws at the federal and state level, can influence DACA students' sense of belonging, inclusion and academic success.	Influence of state and local policies on the educational experience of DACA recipients, more specifically how these policies affect DACA students' sense of belonging, inclusion and academic success in the university context.	The lack of a sense of belonging among DACA recipients at the college may be influenced by the institutional climate. The racial-ethnic environment and the diversity of the campus community are factors that can shape these students' sense of belonging. If students don't feel included or supported in the university community, this can contribute to a feeling of not belonging and exclusion. Campus social environments shape these students' feelings of belonging as they continue their studies.	Whether DACA recipients develop a sense of belonging or exclusion in college depends in part on the multifaceted political context in which they live, especially the way national and state laws interact at the local level. Description of the impact of multifaceted political contexts on the educational experiences of DACA beneficiaries in higher education.

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"The Role of Universities in the Inclusion of Refugees in Higher Education and in Society From the Perspective of SDGS"								
C. Finatto, N. A. Nunes and J. Salgueirinho	2021	2022	Brazil, written in English.	To analyse the role of universities in promoting the inclusion of refugees in higher education and society, with a focus on initiatives and programs in Brazil.	We analysed 19 articles that dealt with practices of inclusion of refugees in higher education.	Exploratory research with a qualitative approach, based on documentary analysis. The data was collected in three stages: general bibliographical research, literature review and documentary analysis of the two universities involved (Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina and Universidade do Sul de Santa Catarina).	Promote the inclusion of refugees in higher education and society through the strategies of higher education institutions in Brazil.	Academic participation in research and extension programs provides refugees with an education that goes beyond qualification and technical training, contributing socially to the mitigation of local and global problems.	Universities play a crucial role in promoting the inclusion of refugees in higher education and society, contributing to social development and reducing historical inequalities.

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"Increasing Access to Higher Education and Employment, Ethiopian Immigrants in Israel"								
E. Kalnisky	2013	2013	Israel, written in English.	Examine access to higher education and employment for Ethiopian immigrants in Israel and identify areas of dissatisfaction in order to improve the situation of Ethiopian graduates.	Sample of Ethiopian graduates (40) in Israel (30% men and 70% women), who had completed their studies between 2005 and 2009.	Mixed methods approach, adopting an integrated approach. Conventional statistical and content analyses were carried out on the qualitative data collected. The questionnaire was validated through a preliminary exploratory study with a small group of eight students.	Intercultural education.	Ethiopian graduates in Israel face significant challenges in accessing higher education and employment, particularly in the teaching profession. The study underlines the importance of tackling these challenges and supporting graduates in their job search.	It was found that many graduates successfully integrated into a variety of educational contexts, but continued to face difficulties in finding employment, some of which they attributed to discrimination based on skin colour. The teacher training program, designed specifically for Ethiopian students, has had a positive impact on their personal and professional development, contributing to their self-confidence and improved social status. The program's areas of contribution, such as pedagogy classes, practical training and extracurricular activities, were identified and valued by the participants

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"Reimagining Organizational Theory for Critical Studies in Higher Education"							
L. D. Gonzales, D. Kanhai and K. Hall	2016	2018	United States, written in English	Reframe organizational theory for the critical study of higher education, incorporating ideas from the critical paradigm.	It involved a total of 505 universities as participants. The participants in this study were administrators, teachers and higher education staff.	Reimagining organizational theories through a critical lens, incorporating insights and commitments from the critical paradigm. From various bodies of work and theories, including critical management, intersectionality, applied critical leadership, decolonial thinking, collective leadership, critical feminism and post-structuralism. The object of this investigation was to reimagine organizational theory for critical studies in higher education, incorporating insights and commitments from the critical paradigm.	Critical management studies and organizational theory, focusing particularly on reimagining organizational theories through a critical lens.	Reimagining organizational theory for the critical study of higher education, incorporating insights and commitments from the critical paradigm. The authors stress the importance of addressing historical deficiencies and persistent issues in US higher education, such as stratification, exploitation of contingent faculty, lack of representation and inclusion of marginalized groups, and the need for intersectional justice, restorative justice and epistemic justice in academia. The study aims to provide a powerful framework for addressing these issues and inspiring transformative practice and research in higher education administration.	The need to reimagine organizational theories through a critical lens to address persistent issues in higher education, such as stratification, exploitation of contingent faculty, lack of representation and inclusion of marginalized groups, and the need for intersectional justice, restorative justice and epistemic justice in academia.

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"'I'm Telling You… The Language Barrier Is the Most, the Biggest Challenge': Barriers to Education Among Karen Refugee Women in Australia"								
P. Watkins, H. Razee and J. Richters	2012	2012	Australia, written in English.	To explore and understand the barriers to education faced by refugee women in Australia, with a particular focus on English language proficiency. The research aimed to highlight the gender, cultural and socio-political factors that act as obstacles to these women's education.	67 people took part, 55 women and 12 men. Of these, 59 were refugees from Burma, 51 women and 8 men. Participants included Karen refugee women, community leaders, refugee settlement service providers, health service providers and Australian citizens working with Burmese refugees.	The study used a qualitative research methodology, specifically grounded theory, to analyse the data. The process involved an inductive analysis guided by grounded theory techniques.	The thematic focus of the study was to explore the barriers to education faced by Karen refugee women in Australia, particularly in relation to English language proficiency. The study aimed to highlight the gender, cultural and socio-political factors that act as obstacles to these women's education.	The results of the study highlighted the gender, cultural and socio-political barriers faced by Karen refugee women in Australia in relation to education and English language proficiency. The study underlined the importance of cultural sensitivity, gender awareness and educational programs adapted to refugee communities in order to overcome these barriers. Recommendations were also made for the provision of services and policies based on the results of the research.	The study revealed that Karen refugee women in Australia face barriers to education due to gender, cultural and socio-political factors, particularly in relation to English language proficiency. These barriers are influenced by experiences of persecution, racism, abuse and trauma, as well as limited opportunities for interaction beyond the home environment. The results also underlined the importance of tailored educational programs, cultural sensitivity and gender awareness in addressing these barriers.

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"Educational Needs and Barriers for Refugee Students in the United States: Challenges and Recommendations"							
L. Mc-Brien	2005	2005	United States, written in English.	The educational needs and barriers faced by refugee students in the United States, focusing on issues related to acculturation, language acquisition and cultural identity. It highlights the challenges refugee students face in adapting to a new culture and language, the importance of providing support for their academic success and the gaps in research on legal defence and the specific needs of refugee populations.	Participants included 182 Vietnamese junior and senior high school students, 591 children from La Playa Elementary School, including 77 Hmong students, Latino, Bosnian, Somali and Sudanese students, Hmong parents living in Minnesota and Wisconsin, Southeast Asian students, more than 5,200 young people enrolled in the Children of Immigrants Longitudinal Study and 15 teenage Muslim refugee girls from Bosnia.	Qualitative methods, ethnography and a graphic study to examine the participants' experiences.	The central theme of this study was the educational needs and barriers faced by refugee students in the United States. The study focused on understanding the challenges these students face in adapting to a new culture, language acquisition, cultural adjustment, psychosocial well-being, academic success and overall integration into the education system. It stresses the importance of providing support, cultural training for teachers, bilingual education and interventions to help refugee students overcome obstacles and succeed academically.	The importance of measuring acculturation as a complex and multidimensional process. The study highlighted the need for practical methods to help refugee students overcome cultural obstacles in education. The research shed light on the complexity of the adaptation process for refugee students and the importance of recognizing and respecting cultural differences. Highlighting the importance of understanding students in community contexts and the role of cultural beliefs and expectations in academic performance and psychosocial well-being, the study also underlines the need for interventions to help refugee students overcome cultural obstacles in education.	The importance of recognizing and respecting cultural differences in education, the need for practical methods to help refugee students overcome cultural obstacles, the significance of understanding students in community contexts and the role of cultural beliefs in academic performance, and the importance of interventions to support refugee students in overcoming obstacles and succeeding academically.

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