



ISSN: 2582-8169

“REVIEW: BREAKING THROUGH BARRIERS TO EDUCATION AND SOCIAL INCLUSION FOR MUSLIM WOMEN”

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Received: 25st January, 2023;

Revised: 19th February, 2023

Accepted: 24th May 2023

Abstract: The article "Breaking through Barriers to Education and Social Inclusion for Muslim Women" is the subject of this review, which assesses the challenges experienced by Muslim women in obtaining an education and social inclusion. The study points out a number of institutional, cultural, and religious impediments to education and social inclusion, including patriarchal societal norms, shoddy school systems, and restricted access to high-quality education. It emphasises the need of creating policies and initiatives especially created to meet the requirements of Muslim women, thereby allowing their engagement in education and society. The document goes on to say that these policies should be aimed at removing structural obstacles to social participation and education, as well as allowing Muslim women to develop their own agency and voice. The study comes to the conclusion that this article offers an insightful look at the difficulties Muslim women have in gaining access to education and social participation, as well as possible ways to remove these obstacles. This evaluation comes to the conclusion that the article offers a thorough summary of the difficulties Muslim women have while trying to attain education and social participation. It underlines the necessity for specialised policies and initiatives that concentrate on removing structural obstacles and enabling women to find their own agency and voice. As a result, it makes a significant contribution to the body of knowledge about Muslim women's

Keywords: *education, Muslim women, refugees, cultural norms*

I. INTRODUCTION

The year 2020 has been marked by significant upheaval, particularly in light of the Covid-19 pandemic and the swift transition to remote education. The COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in a disproportionate impact on

on specific vulnerable populations, including Muslim women. Muslim women have historically encountered obstacles such as restricted access to education and social marginalisation (Bozkurt et al., 2020). The COVID-19 pandemic has further compounded these challenges, rendering it more arduous for them to avail themselves of educational and social prospects. The present paper initiates by

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examining the ways in which cultural and religious limitations imposed on Muslim women can serve as a hindrance to their educational opportunities. The statement highlights that limitations imposed on Muslim women are frequently founded on misunderstandings and flawed depictions of the Islamic religion. Such constraints may result in Muslim women feeling marginalised, particularly in academic environments. The article proceeds to delineate the diverse manifestations of bias and marginalisation that Muslim women encounter within academic establishments and in the broader community. This encompasses instances of prejudice and bias that stem from factors such as an individual's gender, religious convictions, and limited availability of essential resources. The present study investigates the diverse approaches employed by Muslim women in order to surmount the hindrances to education and societal integration (Ruiz-Eugenio, Soler-Gallart, Racionero-Plaza, & Padrós, 2023). The implementation of community-based initiatives, such as mentorship programmes and support networks, is utilised to offer education and skills training. The study also examines the impact of technology in enabling educational accessibility and fostering greater social integration. The manuscript subsequently examines the imperative of contesting preconceived notions and erroneous beliefs surrounding Muslim women, and promoting enhanced comprehension and inclusivity of the

Islamic religion. It is observed that the aforementioned objective can be achieved by means of utilising media, education, and advocacy initiatives. This paper investigates the extent to which governments provide assistance and resources to Muslim women, as well as their efforts to foster greater inclusivity and equity in education. The paper emphasises the significance of enabling Muslim women to assume proactive roles in effecting change within their respective communities. This entails motivating individuals to assert their entitlements, voice their opposition to inequity, and contest prevailing norms. The article underscores the significance of establishing secure and all-encompassing environments for Muslim women, in both academic and communal contexts (Hoffmann, Meckl, Skaptadóttir, Höller, & Bjarnason, 2022).

METHOD

Search strategy

The Cochrane methodology served as a reference for the search strategy employed in this study, and the results are given in accordance with the PRISMA statement's reporting standards (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analysis; Moher, Liberati, Tetzlaff, & Altman, 2009). Five databases were used for the searches in April 2020: PsycINFO, Medline, Web of Science, Scopus, and ERIC. Articles covering three distinct concepts—refugee, acculturation, and education—were found using search keywords. In order to find relevant

records, these phrases and associated synonyms were utilised to search through titles and abstracts already included in the databases. Our home institution did not need us to acquire approval for this procedure from our local human research ethics committee since this work is only an amalgamation of previously published data.

CRITERIA

Records were first screened based on any mention of immigrant groups in their titles and abstracts, as well as any mention of education or study, and acculturation (including acculturation-related terms like adaptation, integration, assimilation, separation, and marginalisation). The searches had no time constraint, and they only looked at English-language titles and abstracts. Studies were accepted based on the following criteria in the second fulltext screening phase: (a) population group (non-refugee/asylum seeker); (b) application of Berry's cultural model; (c) relationship between acculturation and formal education; and (d) empirical articles. For the extraction stage, empirical articles and dissertations were included. The exclusion criteria were duplicates, book chapters, conference papers, and non-English articles. Excluded studies were those that made reference to English language community courses or other acculturation approaches.

DATA COLLECTION

The following descriptive information was taken from each chosen article: sample

characteristics (e.g., cultural background or identity, gender, age, and educational level), study details (e.g., location, restrictions, publication year), and research design (e.g., quantitative, qualitative, mixed-methods, cross-sectional, longitudinal). A comprehensive extraction table has distinct entries for each of them (available at <https://osf.io/27cg6/>).

RESULTS

19 articles were chosen for evaluation out of 3213 results from the first search (for the results of the search method, see Fig. 1 for further information). Ten unpublished dissertations and nine articles that were published. The results of these investigations are reported in Table 1 and include five mixed method studies, seven qualitative studies, and seven quantitative studies.

FEATURES OF THE RESEARCH

The preponderance of the literature, comprising 14 articles, was produced in the United States. The research conducted beyond the borders of the United States comprised of two studies carried out in Australia, one in Finland, one in the United Kingdom, and one in New Zealand. The acculturation of refugees from various countries was examined in a total of 7 studies. Specifically, six studies focused on Vietnamese refugees, three on Cambodian refugees, two on Sudanese refugees, and eight on refugees from mixed samples originating from Russia, Unified Pre-war Yugoslavia, Iraq, Bosnia, Cuba, Uzbekistan, and Somalia. The studies under consideration were cross-sectional in

nature and spanned from 2010 to early 2017. Both male and female participants were recruited in all studies, except for one that exclusively recruited male participants. Longitudinal studies were not conducted.

The researchers refrained from imposing any a priori limitations on the operationalization of education as an inclusion criterion, except for the condition that it must be formal education. Consequently, they permitted diverse conceptualizations of education to surface during the process of data extraction. The process of extraction involved the qualitative coding of the studies into education-related outcomes, namely educational level, school adaption, school attachment, academic achievement, and social/school support. The results of this comprehensive analysis have been compiled and organised according to these categorizations. array of variables under investigation. The majority of qualitative research focused on examining the impact of educational attainment, while quantitative research explored a broader range of factors.

The primary outcome of the study indicated that a positive correlation existed between the adoption of the cultural adaptation approach of integration and improved educational outcomes. It is noteworthy that certain studies have established a direct correlation, while others have explored the role of education as a moderator and/or mediator in the relationship between acculturation and other cultural integration-relevant factors, such as the

acquisition of the host culture's language. Several studies have reported a positive correlation between formal education and assimilation. The review's evidence consistently indicates that enhancing identification with the host culture, which is essential for both integration and assimilation, is associated with educational advancements across various educational domains.

FINDINGS OF THE REVIEW

The primary outcome of the study indicated that a positive correlation existed between the adoption of the cultural adaptation approach of integration and improved educational outcomes. It is noteworthy that certain studies have established a direct correlation, while others have explored the role of education as a moderator and/or mediator in the relationship between acculturation and other cultural integration-relevant factors, such as the acquisition of the host culture's language. Several studies have reported a positive correlation between formal education and assimilation. The review's evidence consistently indicates that enhancing identification with the host culture, which is essential for both integration and assimilation, is associated with educational advancements across various educational domains.

Author	Aim	Study Design	Sample Description	Educational level	Main Findings
(Bang, 2017)	The aim of this study is to analyse the risk and protective factors that impact Iraqi refugee students, as well as the correlation between demographic factors, risk factors, and protective factors. The objective is to analyse the degree to which these variables are indicative of favourable adaptation in an academic setting.	quantitative	A group of one hundred Chaldean Iraqi refugee students, with a mean age of 16.23 years and a female representation of 44%, were enrolled in different high schools located in the Detroit metropolitan region.	The sample population consisted of 100 students, of which 39 were classified as freshmen, 18 as sophomores, 28 as juniors, and 15 as seniors at the high school level.	There was a positive correlation between school adjustment and the processes of integration and assimilation. The process of assimilation was found to have a positive correlation with successful adaptation to school. There exists a negative correlation between educational gaps and integration, while a positive correlation exists between educational gaps and marginalisation. The data indicates that the sample exhibited elevated levels of integration and assimilation, while demonstrating moderate levels of separation.
(Dinh, Weinstein, Tein, & Roosa, 2013)	The objective of this study is to analyse the impact of social and interpersonal mediators on the correlation between acculturation and enculturation, and internalising and	quantitative	A sample of 191 high school students of Cambodian American descent, with a mean age of 15.98 years and whose parents were first generation refugees, were included in the study. Of the sample, 73% were born in the United States. The gender distribution of the sample population was	The data indicates that 29% of the participants belonged to the 9th grade, while 27% were from the 10th grade. Additionally, 26% of the participants were in the 11th grade, and 18% were in the 12th grade.	A positive correlation was observed between acculturation and school attachment. There was a positive correlation between enculturation and school attachment. The study found that school attachment played a crucial

	externalising problem behaviour in Cambodian American students.		43% male and 57% female. Half of the parents surveyed reported owning a home, while the other half reported not owning a home.		role in mediating the relationship between acculturation and enculturation, and internalising problem behaviour, specifically depression.
(Oliva, 2015)	The objective of this study is to investigate the correlation between school support and the acculturation preferences of secondary refugee and immigrant students, and to determine whether this correlation is linked to emotional wellbeing.	mixed	A group of 75 students, with a mean age of 16.92 years, arrived in the United States at an average age of 14.73 years. The gender distribution of the sample population was 43% male and 57% female. The student body comprised individuals hailing from 21 distinct countries, who communicated in 15 unique languages, and associated themselves with 5 different religious affiliations. The diaspora can be categorised into four main groups based on their geographic origin: 34% of individuals are of African descent, 18% are of Asian descent, 37% are of Middle Eastern descent, and 11% are of Latin American descent.	N/A	The process of integration was found to be the most favoured among the student population. Empirical data indicated a correlation between the process of assimilation and the level of support provided by educational institutions. The findings indicate that certain forms of school support may promote assimilation rather than integration.
(Vasquez, 2012)	The proposed research aims to conduct a qualitative investigation into the acculturation	Qualitative	12 refugees originating from South Sudan, with a median age of 45 years, who were displaced during the second civil war that occurred between 1983 and 2005.	Historically, there existed a gender disparity in education, with men being more educated than women.	There appears to be a lack of a definitive correlation between formal education and the process of

	experiences of Southern-Sudanese refugees who are currently residing in the United States. The study will utilise both focus groups and individual interviews as the primary data collection methods.		The composition of the focus group is comprised of 58% male and 42% female participants. In the conducted individual interviews, the gender distribution was found to be 83% male and 17% female.	Men were encouraged to pursue education while women were expected to focus on domestic responsibilities.	acculturation. Young men were compelled to adopt assimilation strategies as a result of societal pressures and governing laws in the United States. Initially, the participants underwent a sense of detachment from the cultural and customary practises of the United States.
(Ross, 2013)	The aim of this study is to examine the impact of postsecondary education received during resettlement on the acculturation of resettled refugees in the Tampa Bay region of Florida.	Qualitative	7 refugees who were resettled in the United States from Cuba, Bosnia, and Iraq, all of whom arrived in the country after reaching the age of 15. The gender distribution of the sample population was 43% male and 57% female.	Tertiary education encompasses a range of academic programmes, including undergraduate and graduate studies up to the level of a master's degree.	The pursuit of higher education facilitates the process of acculturation by fostering the growth of social and cultural capital.
(Morozov, 2010)	The objective of this study is to investigate the concept of acculturation as it pertains to peer relationships among adolescent Russian refugees.	Qualitative	The study sample comprises twelve adolescent refugees of Russian origin who self-identify with different ethnicities, including nine Meskhetian Turks and three ethnic Russians. All participants were born in Russia. Of the total population, 58% identify	N/A	The refugees expressed a strong inclination towards achieving a significant degree of sociocultural assimilation into American society, with the aim of facilitating their participation in educational pursuits. The concept of assimilation was found to have a correlation with one's involvement in the educational system.

			as male. Additionally, 41% of individuals fall within the age range of 15 to 18 years.		
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DISCUSSION

The research review's main goal was to thoroughly examine and summarise the prior work that examined the connection between formal education and acculturation techniques for refugee students. Based on Berry's acculturation paradigm (e.g., 1997), we operationalized acculturation as two orthogonal dimensions of psychological affiliation with the home and host cultures. Worldwide, forced migration and displacement are presently occurring at record-high rates, making it necessary to do more study to identify strategies that might make relocation easier with limited option for desired location, refugees are compelled to relocate in new locations where they are instantly exposed to other, and perhaps clashing, cultures. These populations' acclimation may be influenced or aided by a number of factors, including educational opportunities and education-related results.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Several limitations were identified in the course of conducting this systematic review, which require further examination and discussion.⁶ The scholarly discourse pertaining to this field employs acculturation models in a non-uniform manner, leading to diverse approaches in gauging acculturation. The present literature review has restricted its inquiry to acculturation, as defined by Berry's acculturation model (1997), given its established prominence in the field. Nevertheless, certain articles were disregarded due to their failure to utilise the aforementioned acculturation model. In addition, certain research investigations employed qualitative methodologies, whereas others utilised diverse forms of acculturation scales that were frequently adapted by the authors, potentially weakening their psychometric characteristics. Additionally, some researchers created their own scales, which were not validated a priori. The search strategy yielded a disproportionate quantity of research based on dissertations, resulting in some articles being unpublished and inaccessible. This was due to the fact that the thesis research was conducted at a host institute that did not encourage or mandate electronic dissertation archiving. The studies referenced in this literature review evaluated culture solely based on nationality, without considering the potential presence of diverse ethnicities within countries. Consequently, the identification with one's home country was

generalised to include ethnicity and religious disparities.

One issue encountered in this study pertains to the challenge of amalgamating the results based on the age of the participants. The distribution of age groups, such as adolescent refugees, adult refugees, etc., was not uniform across the spectrum of educational outcomes examined in the literature. Furthermore, a set of four studies failed to provide information regarding the age of their respective samples. The present review has neglected to investigate the potential influence of the age group of the sample on the acculturation-education relationship, despite acknowledging that this factor is likely to impact the results.

This review primarily aimed to investigate the significance of formal education, while disregarding the factor of host language proficiency, particularly in English. This approach may have resulted in the exclusion of a considerable portion of research that explored the concept of education in terms of informal learning, such as community classes and language groups.

The escalating political turmoil in the region has led to an increasing prevalence of Syrian refugees. However, there exists a notable dearth of research on this population. The majority of research has been carried out in the United States, focusing on Vietnamese refugees as the primary population. Despite the significance of this work, it fails to acknowledge numerous other host cultures, particularly those that are

accommodating the highest percentage of refugees, such as Turkey, Pakistan, and Lebanon (UNHCR, 2016b). It is suggested that forthcoming studies should explore the experiences of refugees originating from the Middle Eastern region and resettling in countries other than the United States. Longitudinal studies are necessary to comprehend the evolution of acculturation strategies and their influence on education over time. This aspect was notably absent from the literature examined in the present review.

CONCLUSION

The present study conducted a systematic literature review to investigate the correlation between acculturation and education among individuals who have been forcibly displaced, specifically refugees and asylum seekers. The findings of the meta-synthesis indicate the existence of certain evidence supporting a reciprocal association between acculturation and education. In the process of data extraction, the educational domain was classified into six distinct outcomes, namely education level, school and social support, educational disparities, school attachment, school adaptation, and academic attainment. The preponderance of evidence yielded by the search methodology indicates that the acculturation integration strategy is frequently linked with favourable educational results, while the assimilation strategy is occasionally correlated with similar outcomes. The utilisation of marginalisation and separation

strategies exhibited a negative correlation with a majority of educational outcomes, with the exception of educational gaps. The available evidence strongly indicates that the process of acculturation can have a mutually beneficial relationship with education, leading to a range of advantageous outcomes for this susceptible group.

The review's findings give rise to several implications. The aforementioned results ought to be utilised to apprise regulatory entities regarding the significance of furnishing a diverse array of amenities that can enable varied involvement in scholastic and non-scholastic pursuits for displaced persons. Educational institutions ought to be cognizant of the diverse advantages that education can provide for this susceptible demographic, and should be motivated to provide reasonably priced educational opportunities to refugees and asylum-seeking pupils.

The aforementioned results ought to be utilised by service providers who cater to recently arrived young refugees and asylum seekers, in order to encourage the advantages of participating in education within their newly adopted nations.

The results of this analysis also highlight the deficiencies in the existing body of literature. Further investigation is necessary to encompass a broader spectrum of host cultures that receive refugees, in addition to a wider range of home cultures from which refugees seek asylum. The lack of research pertaining to Syrian refugees in

this area is notably conspicuous, especially in light of the present global climate. Furthermore, a scarcity of longitudinal studies exists, which would offer causal and directional evidence regarding the correlation between education and acculturation. The mechanisms that underlie this relationship and the moderating factors that enable the positive outcomes identified in this review remain incompletely understood.

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