Challenges of Integration, Obligation and Identity: Exploring the Experiences of Teachers Working to Educate Syrian Refugee Children in Lebanon

Challenges of integration, obligation and identity: Exploring the experiences of teachers working to educate Syrian refugee children in Lebanon

Elizabeth Adelman

Dr. Sarah Dryden-Peterson

Dr. Catherine Snow

Dr. Zeena Zakharia

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Dedication

To my most precious gifts: Chamoun, Isaac and Beatrice.

My life shines with your brilliance and joy.

And in greatest memory of Sonia Goodman,

whose love I will forever cherish.

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Abstract

The on-going war in Syria is a humanitarian crisis. Since conflict began in 2011, more than 1.2 million Syrians have crossed into Lebanon. Almost half of these refugees are school-aged children. Education is an essential component of any humanitarian response, serving to provide children physical, emotional, and cognitive protection. Teachers have a central role for ensuring these benefits become a reality in classrooms.

Foundational documents from the field of education in conflict outline expectations for teachers working in crisis. Teachers must deliver academic content, foster social cohesion, and support children's emotional recovery. While the expectations are clearly articulated at a policy level, how teachers understand these obligations has rarely been researched.

This dissertation investigates the role of teachers within refugee education from three different perspectives, each framed within the context of Lebanon. The first paper explores how proposed global and national-level strategies for integrating refugee students into public schools compare with experiences of integration from the perspective of teachers and school leaders. National frameworks guiding refugee education policy in Lebanon aligned closely to global strategies related to access, quality, and integration. However, in practice, the strategies enacted focused primarily on providing refugee students access to education, leaving other goals aside. The second paper considers how teachers understand their educational, social, and emotional obligations towards refugee children in their classrooms and whether these understandings vary between host-country teachers and refugee teachers. Teachers often decided which obligations to meet, given their skills, priorities, and comfort level. Personal background, professional experiences, and relevant

local circumstances were important factors influencing how teachers of refugees executed their ascribed obligations, factors not reflected in global frameworks. The final paper focuses on the experience of Syrian teachers living as refugees in Lebanon and how their personal and professional identities intersect. While global frameworks depict refugee educators as having the power to prepare a new generation of Syrian students, these educators felt powerless to transcend the social, economic, and political barriers constructed around them in Lebanon. Educators welcomed the opportunity to reclaim a professional identity, yet their work often left them with a sense of frustration and loss.

Introduction

Over the last ten years, the number of people forcibly displaced from their homes due to conflict has increased by over fifty percent. By the end of 2017, the population of displaced persons numbered 68.5 million; with 25.4 million of these individuals living as refugees, having fled across an international border due to fear of persecution. Fifty-two percent of the world's refugee population is children (UNHCR, 2018a). Refugee families have a host of complex needs, among which access to education for their children often has high priority (Dryden-Peterson, 2011). Over the last twenty years, the international aid community has come to consider education an essential component of any humanitarian response (INEE, 2010; Machel, 1996, 2001a; UNESCO, 2011). Through supporting the development of an economically productive and civically engaged population, quality education lays the foundation for transforming conflict-affected countries[1] into stable states (Machel, 1996; UNESCO, 2011; Winthrop & Matsui, 2013). Without education, entire generations of refugee young people are at risk of being left to face harsh futures without the skills and credentials necessary to access economic opportunities (UNICEF, 2013).

In this work, I focus instead on teaching processes that construct and shape what refugee students learn and how they develop. Foundational documents including the Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies' (INEE) Minimum Standards For Education (INEE, 2010) and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)'s Education Strategy (2012) outline obligations for teachers working in crisis. In addition to delivering academic content, teachers must ensure a safe learning environment,

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[1]The term 'conflict-affected countries' includes countries experiencing conflict within their borders, such as the case of Syria. It also includes countries impacted in various ways by the repercussions of conflict including receiving an influx of refugees across their borders, such as the case of Lebanon. Countries receiving large numbers of refugees are also often referred to as 'host countries.

support children's emotional needs, foster social cohesion, and lay the foundations for peace and stability. The obligations set for teachers are significant, yet how teachers work within difficult circumstances and how these circumstances impact teachers' everyday activities and decisions within the classroom has rarely been researched (Kirk, 2004; Penson & Yonemura, 2012; Richardson, MacEwen, & Naylor, 2018).

This three-paper dissertation is dedicated to understanding the experiences of teachers of refugees and how these educators conceive of their roles, responsibilities, and relationships within the classroom. It reports on work carried on in Lebanon, where Lebanese and Syrian refugee teachers are working, in different contexts, to educate Syrian refugee students. Lebanon is host to the greatest number of refugees per capita worldwide (UNHCR, 2018a). Around 1 million Syrians (UNHCR, 2018b) and 450,000 Palestinans (UNWRA, 2018) live within Lebanon, a combined population equivalent to one-quarter of the Lebanese population. The status of refugees in Lebanon is particularly complex as the Government of Lebanon (GoL) is not signatory to the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees and does not consider itself an asylum country.

This dissertation is composed of a set of comparative case studies, with each paper exploring a different set of relationships: between global, national, and local actors and policies; between national and refugee teachers; and between personal and professional experiences. The analysis presented here is based on data collected over three years, including 99 interviews with teachers, school leaders, and key informants, and 281 observations conducted at schools, stakeholder meetings, and relevant public gatherings. Throughout this dissertation I prioritize the experiences and perspectives of teachers and

principals, individuals whose voices are so often absent from the policies and mandates that frame their work.

In my first paper I ask how frameworks and policies proposed by globally- and nationally-situated actors regarding the integration of Syrian refugees into the Lebanese national education system relate to the local experiences of Lebanese school leaders and teachers working in public schools. I compare perspectives vertically, from global frameworks to national policies to local decisions; horizontally, between schools; and transversely, over a three year time period. I find considerable disconnection/misalignment among global strategies, national policies, and local practices. On paper, national frameworks guiding refugee education policy in Lebanon aligned closely to global strategies related to access, quality, and integration. However, in practice, the national policies enacted focused primarily on providing refugee students access to education, leaving goals for quality education and refugee integration aside.

National regulations were continually changed and modified, often in a haphazard, contradictory manner, leading to differences in the implementation of policies across schools. School leaders and teachers regularly made their own decisions about the structure of the refugee education program and about the content to prioritize based on their interpretation of policies and their assessment of the needs of their students and schools. They also expressed frustration with the lack of support and the inconsistent messages they received from global and national institutions. International actors working to advance global agendas for refugee education within Lebanon expressed similar frustrations, feeling their efforts and those of school leaders and teachers were often thwarted by poor communication and minimal support from national institutions. This paper concludes with a

set of policy recommendations focused on improving alignment between global and national priorities and experiences at the local level.

My second paper more closely considers experiences at the local level, examining how Lebanese national and Syrian refugee teachers working in Lebanon understand their academic, emotional, and social obligations towards the refugee children in their classrooms. This analysis involves a vertical comparison, between obligations laid out for teachers of refugees within global refugee education frameworks and teachers' prioritization of these obligations, and a horizontal comparison, between the experiences of national and of refugee teachers working with refugee students. Global frameworks outline a challenging set of obligations for teachers of refugees, yet offer no consideration of the challenges teachers may face in efforts to meet the needs of their students, including limits on the available time, training, and support. Academic, emotional, and social obligations carry equal importance within these frameworks, yet teachers often decide which obligations to meet, given their skills, priorities, and comfort level. Personal background, professional experiences, and relevant local circumstances were important factors influencing how teachers of refugees understood and executed their ascribed obligations within the classroom, factors not reflected in global frameworks.

The majority of Lebanese teachers saw students' academic development as their main responsibility, feeling they had little time and little preparation to address students' social and emotional needs. In comparison, Syrian refugee teachers considered students' social and emotional development as a precursor to students' academic learning and therefore these goals carried greater importance in their classrooms. Teachers' conceptualization of the futures of their students also differed. Lebanese teachers focused on

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students' short-term progress in school but felt at a loss taking into account how or where Syrian students' futures would unfold. Syrian teachers often discussed the future with their students, underlining the students' need to invest in their studies and imagine brighter possibilities ahead. This paper concludes with a set of recommendations for improving global frameworks, setting national priorities, and further supporting teachers of refugees.

My third paper extends Western conceptions of teacher identity and teachers' social position by applying these theories to the "extreme case" (Flyvbjerg, 2006) of refugee teachers. Specifically, I consider how being a teacher influences the experience of being a refugee and conversely, how the experience of being a refugee influences the teacher's role. Teacher identity research has highlighted the importance of considering how experiences at school and in daily life influence the teacher both personally and professionally. I draw on the concept of "impossible fictions" (Walkerdine, 1990), a construct that delineates the implicit and explicit tensions present within the work of teachers. I present portraits of two Syrian educators living as refugees and working to educate refugees within Lebanon. I find that educators struggle to balance obligations related to teaching refugees with the realities of living as refugees. While global frameworks depict refugee educators as having the power to prepare a new generation of Syrian students, these educators felt powerless to transcend the social, economic, and political barriers constructed around them in Lebanon. In their personal lives, educators struggled with loss of hope and psychological exhaustion; yet these individuals were expected, and expected themselves, to project hopefulness and psychological strength into the classroom. While educators welcomed the opportunity to reclaim a professional identity, their work often left them with a sense of frustration and loss. This paper concludes with a set of recommendations focused on improving the support extended to refugee teachers.

Global and national frameworks outline the goals for refugee education in conflict settings. However, teachers shape what refugee students learn and how they develop. The three papers in this dissertation provide new insights into how teachers of refugees understand and enact their obligations, demonstrating the importance of considering teachers' personal and professional positionality as well as local circumstances when constructing refugee education policies. This work emphasizes the importance of extending consistent support to teachers of refugees and ensuring that they have the tools and orientations necessary to ensure the success of their students.

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Paper 1: Reaching for all in Lebanon: A case study of the integration of Syrian refugee students into Lebanese public schools

INTRODUCTION

It's 2:35pm and the noise reverberating off the cement walls of Al Hassan School[1], situated in the heart of Beirut, Lebanon, is deafening. Even from the principal's office on the second floor it is difficult to be heard over the screams and shouts of the around 500 Syrian refugee students playing in the courtyard downstairs, awaiting the start of their school day. The bell rings, provoking a sudden rise in noise level, escalating to a high, frantic pitch. Hiba[2], the school's principal, explains the sound of the bell scares many of the refugee students, even though they have heard it all year. Pulling a microphone from her desk drawer, Hiba careens out of her office and down the dark, wide staircase in her bright pink heels. Emerging into the schoolyard, she weaves her way carefully through the chaos, dodging children as they hurtle after one another. Joining the gathered teachers, Hiba bellows into her microphone, demanding silence and attention. She reminds students yet again not to come to school before the end of the first shift at 2:00pm, not to throw litter, not to push and shove. Hiba later shared that the behavior of the refugee students was a major issue for her. In the schoolyard they act like "they are fighting an enemy," which confused Hiba as she assumed they would band together as Syrians. To combat their violent

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[1] Schools, school leaders and teachers have been given pseudonyms to ensure anonymity of the participants.

[2] Pseudonyms for school leaders and teachers begin with the same letter of the corresponding school name to allow readers to identify to which school participants are associated.

behavior, she tries to convince students "you are from one home country. Like each other, love each other." In the schoolyard, Hiba watches attentively as children troop single file into the school where, for the next few hours, these Syrian students will study the core Lebanese subjects according to the Lebanese curriculum, under the guidance of Lebanese teachers.

During the 2015/2016 school year, Al Hassan was one of over 300 public schools in Lebanon participating in a second shift program, designed to provide Syrian refugee students access to education in exile (MEHE, 2017). The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) 2012-2016 Education Strategy calls for "integration of refugee learners into national systems" as the preferred approach to providing quality education for refugees (UNHCR, 2012). In theory, integration into existing national school systems ensures refugee learners access to a stable, established education. Students can gain educational credentials transferable to other settings, possibly even their countries of origin, should they return. Integrating refugee students within national schools may also help foster an environment of inclusion and acceptance and support positive interactions between refugee and national students. Through integration, efforts by donor organizations to strengthen quality inputs in the host country, such as teaching skills and school management, could benefit both refugee and national students. Placing refugee and national students within the same education system can help streamline funding efforts and ensure that investments target sustainable education systems.

These theoretical benefits of integration run up against numerous challenges of implementation, many of which are not reflected in guiding policies and strategies. Few studies have considered how expectations and policies regarding integration set by globally-

and nationally-situated actors migrate into schools and classrooms serving refugee students or the reverse, how challenges and experiences of teachers and principals, like Hiba, are addressed within national or global frameworks (Ball, Maguire, & Braun, 2012). In this article, I employ the comparative case study method (Bartlett & Vavrus, 2016) to examine how the policies and processes proposed by globally- and nationally-situated actors regarding the integration of Syrian refugees into the Lebanese national education system align or fail to align with the local experiences of school leaders and teachers as policies are adapted and "enacted" at the school level (Ball et al., 2012).

To develop this case, I explore the global level perspective in relation to UNHCR and the United Nations Children's Fund's (UNICEF) refugee education and protection strategies and through the experiences of international education staff working in Lebanon with United Nations (UN) agencies and nongovernment organizations (NGOs). At the national level, I examine the design of Lebanese policies and frameworks guiding the response to refugee education. Finally, I consider the impact of global and national refugee education policies at the local level, documenting how teachers and school leaders in three public schools in Lebanon have experienced the process of integrating refugee students into the education system.

Through this analysis, I find goals at the global and national level align more closely on paper than in practice. While priorities related to access to education for refugee students transfer across the levels, there appears to be a disconnect regarding the purposes of integration as imaged by globally situated actors and the priorities for education as determined at the national level. At the local level, teachers struggled under a myriad of ever-changing regulations and expectations, allowing them limited time and energy to dedicate to

anything more than covering the curriculum. Globally situated actors had limited access to schools while schools had inconsistent relationships with nationally situated actors, making the flow of information and communication disjointed. As a result, local level practitioners often felt isolated in their work with no clear mechanisms of support available and little opportunity to integrate their experiences into the policies defining educational programing.

CONTEXT

Refugees in Lebanon

The origins of the current conflict in Syria can be traced back to March 2011 when the Syrian government ordered the arrest and torture of 15 teenage boys for painting revolutionary slogans on the walls of a school. The government of Bashar al-Assad responded violently to the pro-democracy protests that erupted in the wake of these arrests, killing hundreds of demonstrators and imprisoning many more (Al Jazeera, 2017; de Bel-Air, 2016). Soon rebel groups were engaged in bloody clashes with the government's army. As the violence intensified and expanded across Syria, civilians began flooding into neighboring countries, desperate to escape the escalating conflict. As of September 2017, over 5.2 million Syrians had registered as refugees in Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq and Egypt (UNHCR, 2017c), a number that continues to grow.

Lebanon experienced a progressive increase in the number of Syrians fleeing across its borders as the conflict deepened. By spring of 2015, Lebanon was officially host to over 1.4 million registered Syrian refugees (UNHCR, 2017b), a number equivalent to one-quarter of the Lebanese population (Le Borgne & Jacobs, 2016). The status of Syrian refugees in Lebanon is particularly complex as the Government of Lebanon (GoL) is not signatory to

the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees and does not consider itself an asylum country. The GoL suspended the registration of new refugees in May 2015, making it impossible to determine how many refugees currently reside in the country. While Lebanon stopped officially accepting refugees, during the scope of this study Syrians continued to cross over the border illegally, in the face of ongoing conflict and unstable living conditions in Syria (Aranki & Kalis, 2014). As of June 2017 UNHCR estimated there to be around 1 million Syrian refugees in Lebanon, while formal documents from the GoL suggest 1.5 million (Republic of Lebanon, 2016; UNHCR, 2017b). According to either estimate, Lebanon is host to the greatest number of refugees per capita worldwide (UNHCR, 2016a).

Syria and Lebanon have a long history of complex and tense political, economic and social relations, stretching back long before the creation of these two nation-states in the mid-1940s (Traboulsi, 2007). This relationship became more complicated when Syrian troops formally occupied Lebanon during the Lebanese civil war starting in 1976, only fully withdrawing 30 years later in 2005 (Khalaf, 2002). The civil war, which lasted from 1975 to 1990, cost Lebanon the lives of an estimated 120,000 civilians, devastated the country's infrastructure and crippled economic development. While Lebanon has managed some modest growth since the end of hostilities in 1990, ongoing domestic, political and regional conflicts, most recently those in Syria, have hindered a strong recovery (Le Borgne & Jacobs, 2016). Both the continued unrest in Syria and the burden of hosting refugees have taken a significant toll on the Lebanese economy. Experts estimate that, as of 2014, Lebanon had suffered an estimated loss of US$7.5 billion due directly to the Syrian crisis (Le Borgne & Jacobs, 2016). The influx of refugees has placed immense pressure on public services, which, given the history of conflict and slow subsequent growth, were compromised long before the Syrian crisis began (Le Borgne & Jacobs, 2016; World Bank, 2013).

Lebanon case: National development of refugee education

The education sector in Lebanon has seen an overwhelming increase in demand since the start of the refugee crisis, a demand that continues to grow as the situation becomes protracted. As of February 2017, the GoL estimated there to be 488,000 school-aged Syrian refugees (aged 3-18) in need of education, a number equivalent to 50% of the school-aged population in Lebanon (1,038,738 Lebanese and non-Lebanese students) (CERD, 2016; MEHE, 2017).

Although the reported numbers vary (CERD, 2016), according to data shared by MEHE, only around 200,000 Lebanese children enrolled in public schools in the 2016/2017 school year, a number that represents less than one-third of the school-aged population (MEHE, 2017). Low enrollment rates in public schools by Lebanese nationals reflect a belief shared by many citizens that the public system provides poor quality education (Chami, 2016). The majority of families with the financial means to afford private education or semi-subsidized schools opt out of the public system, leaving the most marginalized within the lowest resourced schools and classrooms (MEHE, 2014; CERD, 2016). Grade repetition and failure rates are indeed higher among public school students than students in private schools (CERD, 2016). While there is limited empirical research evaluating the quality of the public system, studies suggest a lack of qualified teachers (Mattar, 2012; MEHE, 2016), inadequate pre-service and in-service teacher training (Bahou, 2015), poor quality textbooks and outdated curriculum (Shaaban, 2013), dependence on rote-based teaching practices and overall low investment in public schools (MEHE, 2014) may all contribute to poor student performance.

Despite the challenges facing the public education system, MEHE requires all schooling for Syrian refugees take place within the formal sector, reflecting global UNHCR policy as well. Newly arrived refugee students were integrated directly into regular public school classrooms as early as 2011 (MEHE, 2016). However, as the number of refugee students grew, schools in some areas of the country became overcrowded and MEHE began to express concerns regarding pressure on resources and infrastructure (MEHE, 2014). In order to accommodate the drastic increase in demand, in 2013, MEHE implemented a second shift program in a select number of public schools for students in grades one to nine, enrolling over 43,500 Syrian students (Shuayb, Makkouk, & Tutunji, 2014). By the 2016/2017 school year the second shift program had expanded considerably with 130,000 students enrolled in 313 participating schools, bringing the total number of refugee students in public schools to 200,000. Enrollment was highest in grades one and two, dropping progressively in the upper grades with less than 2% of students enrolled at the secondary level (MEHE, 2017).

Since the start of the second shift, MEHE has modified and clarified the policies defining the program. The second shift is most often run by the first shift principal and usually employs some first shift teachers and additional teachers as needed. By policy, refugee students attend school in the afternoons and Lebanese children in the mornings, although refugees may enroll in the morning shift under certain conditions. However, in morning classrooms, for every one non-Lebanese[3] student enrolled, there must be at least two Lebanese students; schools that exceeded the 1:2 ratio must either move refugee students to the second shift or apply to MEHE for a special exemption. The second shift

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[3] The category "non-Lebanese" includes Syrian refugees, long-standing Syrians whose families had been in Lebanon since before 2011, Palestinian students or students of any other nationality.

includes five periods (as opposed to the six periods in first shift for grades one to six, or seven periods for grades seven to nine) during which time only the basic subjects are covered, including Arabic, foreign language, math, science, geography, and civics, as well as history in grades seven to nine. Once a week students receive a health lesson and a session with the psychosocial support (PSS) teacher (MEHE, 2015). In an effort to address issues related to language of instruction, MEHE decided that beginning in the 2015/2016 school year, schools should teach grade one math and science classes in second shift using the English version of the Lebanese curriculum; by 2016/2017 math and science in both grades one and two should be taught in English with the English curriculum continuing as students moved through the school system (MEHE, 2015).

Since early in the Syrian crisis, MEHE has led the coordination of the country's response to refugee education with UNICEF, UNHCR, the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the World Bank as its main partners. UNICEF is the main implementing partner of MEHE, providing technical support for programs and initiatives of the Ministry. UNHCR also works closely with MEHE, but with a focus on community-based initiatives such as homework support programs. UNESCO supports efforts related to secondary school and higher education and the World Bank assistance includes education financing, school rehabilitation and professional development (World Bank, 2015). An extensive number of national and international organizations, both corporate and non-profit, also work within the field of refugee education in Lebanon; some directly support MEHE in their efforts to integrate refugee children into national schools while others implement their own non-formal education (NFE) programs.

The guiding policy framework for refugee education in Lebanon is referred to as Reaching All Children with Education (RACE). The first iteration of RACE was implemented in 2014 and ran to 2017 (MEHE, 2014). RACE II spans 2017 to 2021 (MEHE, 2016). In 2015, MEHE created the Program Management Unit (PMU) to oversee and coordinate the implementation of RACE, with a specific focus on the second shift program (World Bank, 2015). The RACE strategies, analyzed in detail below, were developed in close coordination with UN agencies, the World Bank, international donors, NGOs and other education experts (Jalbout, 2015). As such, it is no surprise that the national-level strategies reflect the policies and goals held by many of these globally situated organizations as well as MEHE priorities. However, the incorporation of global priorities into national policies does not guarantee their implementation, especially when global solutions do not necessarily align with local level challenges or the existing practices and cultures of a school (Ball et al., 2012).

CONCEPTUAL FRAMING

Globalization of priorities within refugee education

The provision of education for refugee children first attracted global concern due to the large-scale displacement of individuals across international borders during World War II. Responsibility for refugee education on a global scale was initially mandated to UNESCO but was later assumed by UNHCR (Dryden-Peterson, 2016). Post-WWII, education began to be recognized as an essential component to establishing and ensuring peace and stability within a nation-state and globally (Mundy, Green, Lingard, & Verger, 2016b). In reconsidering the role and power of education, international donors and organizations became increasingly concerned with, and involved in, the development of national education

policies that supported human rights and social equality. As such, education policy, historically managed solely by the nation-state, developed into a field influenced by a community of transnational actors (Mundy et al., 2016b). While nations ultimately have sovereignty over the shape, form and content of their education systems, an abundance of bilateral and multilateral institutions, agencies and organizations influence national education policy.

There are multiple mechanisms through which these globally situated actors may affect national policy (see for example Dale, 1999; Johnson, 2006; Phillips & Ochs, 2003, 2004). The body of literature that explores the many processes, procedures, relationships and complexities related to globalization and cross-national policy borrowing in the field of education is extensive (see for example Mundy, Green, Lingard, & Verger, 2016a; Phillips, 1989; Steiner-Khamsi & Waldow, 2012; Verger, Altinyelken, & Novelli, 2013). In this paper, I focus on three mechanisms that influence the implementation of policy among global, national, and local levels: power, including financial assistance; relationships, both historical and current, among actors; and structures of the education system.

Mechanisms of policy transfer

The power globally situated actors hold to mandate change at a national level is often linked to the provision of financial and technical resources (Mundy et al., 2016b; Steiner-Khamsi, 2012, 2016). Over 80% of the world's refugees live in developing countries (UNHCR, 2016a), settings where resources are severely constrained and local expertise regarding refugee education may be limited. Through the provision of large-scale loans, relief aid and technical assistance to national and local governments, globally situated actors can

wield considerable influence over how educational policies and priorities are set within countries receiving global aid (Dale, 1999; Mundy et al., 2016b; Steiner-Khamsi, 2004). Frequently these reforms reflect the agendas of the funding organizations and not necessarily the priorities, nor the realities, of the country being granted assistance (Steiner-Khamsi, 2016). Decisions regarding which global solutions institutions may fund or promote often occur before agencies have developed a clear understanding of local problems (Steiner-Khamsi, 2010). Failure to incorporate local actors into the process of adopting global policies can hinder transfer efforts and derail long-term change (Burde, 2004).

Regardless of the amount of leverage funding institutions may wield, education policies generated at the global level do not transfer unilaterally from international design to national adaption to local implementation (Ball, 2013; Mundy et al., 2016b). A close consideration of the local policy context, including the political, economic and social forces at play, is key to understanding how policies 'borrowed' from globalized agendas translate into national outcomes and local practices (Dale, 1999; Halpin & Troyna, 1995; Steiner-Khamsi, 2012). In the case of refugee education, historical and ongoing relationships between host-country and refugee-country governments and citizens may influence what global policies are adopted at a national level and how they are adapted through implementation in the local context (Dale, 1999; Johnson, 2006). In the case of Syria and Lebanon, the two countries share strong economic and social ties, which may contribute/lead to policies more tolerant of refugees at the governmental level. However, the history of conflict between the two countries as described above remains salient for the government and citizens and may have a direct influence on policy transfer and adaptation.

In addition, many nations have experienced multiple waves of refugees throughout the past few centuries, the repercussions of which may impact how willing, able, and interested a country is to align national refugee policies with global ones. Lebanon has a long and complex history of hosting refugees, most notably Palestinians who first arrived in 1948 and who remain (Al-Hroub, 2014). While this article does not address the education of Palestinian refugees, Lebanon's turbulent relationship with this refugee population, linked in particular to Palestinian involvement in the Lebanese civil war, has had a significant influence on the development of current refugee policies regarding Syrians. Palestinians, even those born in Lebanon, have not been granted Lebanese citizenship and thus have very limited civil rights, including restricted access to public schools (Shafie, 2007). As such, the majority of students attend schools administered by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNWRA), located within Palestinian settlements and totally separate from the Lebanese education system (UNHCR & REACH, 2014; UNICEF & Save the Children, 2012). Similarly, Syrians have been afforded very few rights and in some regards, such as work permits, face even stricter regulations than Palestinians (Human Rights Watch, 2016). Syrian refugee children have been permitted into the public education system, but most are enrolled in the second shift program, separating them from the Lebanese population.

Existing national educational structures also influence the transfer of global education policies. Global reforms that can be easily integrated into a current education system are more likely to be adopted and sustained than policies that demand significant change (Halpin & Troyna, 1995). If a government does not believe global policies address the actual needs or priorities of its education system, it may adopt the rhetoric related to global reforms but utilize the funding to advance national goals (Steiner-Khamsi, 2010). Individual actors working at each level of the education system, including the national,

regional, community and school level, may also influence what is omitted and permitted within policies as well as what is prioritized, adapted and ignored within implementation (Ball et al., 2012). As Ball et al. (2012, p. 3) argue, "the degree of play or freedom" actors may assert in respect to how policy is interpreted and enacted depends on "the apparatuses of power in which they are set." For example, in systems with a higher degree of decentralization or in which adherence to rules and regulations is loosely monitored or enforced, individuals may have more opportunity to reinterpret, reconstruct or remake policy. The adaptation of policies at the local level also depends on how well reforms align with the existing culture and practices of a school. As Ball et al. (2012) highlight "policy is done by teachers and done to teachers" (p. 3), but not done *with* teachers. Too often the experience and insight of these key actors are never considered during the actual policy development process, making the direct transfer of policy even less likely.

Global priorities in education

Education goals developed and promoted by global agencies and stakeholders have evolved over time: yet *access to* and *quality of* education continue as two key priorities. Within the field of refugee education, UNHCR, with support from other nationally- and globally-situated actors, considers the *integration* of refugee students into existing national systems as the best mechanism for ensuring sustainable access to quality education (United Nations, 2016).

The goal of achieving universal access to education was first introduced on a global scale at the World Conference on Education for All (EFA) in 1990. Universal access was central to the United Nations Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and continues in its

salience in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which in comparison to the EFA and MDG targets, outline an expanded commitment to quality education for primary, secondary and post-secondary students.

The globalization of education goals has brought demonstrated results. As of 2014, 90% of children of primary-school age in developing countries were enrolled in school, up from 79.5% in 1991 (Hanushek, 2013; United Nations, 2015). Quality indicators suggest an improvement in literacy rates among youth, higher transition and retention rates and lower pupil/teacher ratios (UNESCO, 2014; United Nations, 2015). However, many of these global trends do not hold true for the six million refugee learners protected under UNHCR's mandate. In 2015 fewer than half of all refugee children and adolescents were enrolled in school (UNHCR 2016). In fact, the proportion of out-of-school youth in conflict-affected countries increased from 30% in 1999 to 36% in 2012 (United Nations, 2015), a figure that continues to rise given ongoing conflicts around the globe. Access to and transition into secondary and post-secondary schooling is also less likely for refugee students. Globally, 84% of adolescents attend lower secondary school compared to 22% of refugee adolescents and only 1% of refugees enroll in tertiary education, compared to 34% of non-refugee students (UNHCR, 2016b).

The challenges related to providing quality education to refugee learners are complex and vary across contexts. Ensuring refugees access to existing national education systems depends first and foremost on the willingness of the host country to consider this form of integration; in some settings, refugees are not permitted to enroll in government schools (Dryden-Peterson, 2016). Even when access is possible, students may face additional barriers that complicate enrollment including language of instruction, school fees, transportation

costs and overcrowding. Education quality is often lacking as refugees frequently live in countries whose governments already struggle to provide its citizens adequate education opportunities (UNHCR, 2016b). A shortage of trained teachers, insufficient learning materials and outdated or non-relevant curriculum may also hinder students' educational advancement (Dryden-Peterson, 2016). Integrating students into the public system may be possible at the start of a crisis but difficult for nations to sustain financially if conflicts become protracted. Ministries of Education may support integration but barriers including non-recognition of refugee status, lack of equivalency procedures and discrimination can hinder refugee enrollment (UNHCR, 2017a).

Policies developed at the national level may strive to meet the global educational goals of access, quality and integration, yet their adoption is inevitably influenced by political, social and economic factors. As the actual 'enactors' of policy, school leaders and schoolteachers must also adapt national expectations to fit the complex community, school and classroom environments serving refugee students. How then are global priorities for refugee learners translated into national policies and enacted in schools and classrooms? How are challenges experienced at the local level reflected in national or global priorities for refugee education? In the analysis that follows, I consider the ways in which articulated global- and national-level processes and policies for integrating refugee students into public schools in Lebanon compare with the experience of integration from the administrative- and teacher-level perspective.

METHODOLOGY

Research Approach

This study draws on the comparative case methodology (Bartlett & Vavrus, 2016), with the goal of exploring complexities inherent to the provision of education in conflict-affected states across three axes: the "vertical", where attention is paid to differences at the local, national and global level; the "horizontal", which considers experiences across distinct settings; and the "transversal", which looks at differences in experiences across time (Bartlett & Vavrus, 2014). Exploring these multiple dimensions allows for a broader understanding of how global policies are translated into national frameworks and further transformed by local implementation in schools and classrooms.

Across the vertical axis, I first consider the interaction between policies developed at the global and national levels. I then examine how proposed processes are reflected in the practice of refugee education in schools and classrooms. On the horizontal dimension, I explore the experiences of Lebanese school leaders and teachers working to educate refugees in three public schools, in two regions of the country. I develop the transversal dimension based on three years of data collection conducted between August of 2014 and May of 2017. This transversal dimension allows unique insight into the ways policies and programs evolved and how the broader social, political, religious, and economic environment influenced formal strategies and experiences of refugee education. Through developing long-term relationships with Lebanese citizens, Syrian refugees, individuals at NGOs, UN agencies, and local and governmental entities, I gained an expanded understanding of the historic and current complexities influencing the provision of refugee education. As few

official reports were publicly available, these relationships granted me access to information shared informally among education actors and provided an opportunity to triangulate data across various sources.

Despite being immersed in the Lebanese context, I was aware of my position as an outsider throughout the process of data collection and analysis. In addition to differences in my racial, religious and linguistic background, I was also one of very few researchers granted permission by MEHE to collect data in public schools. At the start of my data collection, teachers and students were visibly aware of my presence in the classroom. However, visiting schools on a weekly basis helped normalize my presence and allowed me to build strong relationships with school staff. By the end of the school year, teachers were inviting me to observe their classrooms and actively engaging me in conversation and reflection. I also worked with a local translator who accompanied me during interviews with school staff and through school and classroom visits. While I recognize the limitations of relying on a translator, I was careful to choose an individual with a background in education and an understanding of rigorous research methods. We spent considerable time discussing the goals of the research, the data collection objectives and the data collection process before entering schools. I also worked with the same individual on a daily basis for an entire year, which helped ensure consistency throughout the process.

Data collection

I designed this analysis to explore (dis)connections between global strategies, national policies, and local practices in relation to refugee education in Lebanon and to consider how this (mis)alignment is experienced by school leaders and teachers. To do so, I

used multiple methods of data collection, including document analysis, interviews, and observations, and engaged with a wide range of actors across the education sector in Lebanon.

In order to develop an understanding of global and national level policies, I conducted semi-structured interviews with education experts (n=26), observed meetings hosted by international and national actors (n=19) and reviewed national and global frameworks for refugee education (n=5). I gathered these data throughout the three-year time period. The purpose of the expert interviews was to gain an understanding of the evolving landscape of refugee education in Lebanon and the function of relationships across global, national and local levels. All interviews were conducted in English and lasted approximately one hour. Participants included MEHE staff members, education officials at various UN organizations, staff from numerous national and international NGOs, policy experts, researchers, and local philanthropists. The first set of research participants worked at institutions identified by MEHE as key education partners for the refugee crisis. I selected additional key informants though a process of snowball sampling, asking each participant to identify organizations and individuals involved in the education of Syrian refugee students in Lebanon. During interviews, I asked participants about, for example, the organization/individual's role regarding the provision of education, policies and processes related to integration and non-formal education, challenges within the sector, relationships across global, national, and local institutions and the perceived roles and responsibilities of teachers and school leaders.

I augmented my understanding of the larger global and national context by attending various meetings, presentations, and planning sessions hosted by different institutions

including MEHE, UN agencies, universities, and local NGOs. Meetings often involved the sharing of information regarding new policies, regulations, or programs related to refugee education. These spaces were also an opportunity for organizations to share data, voice concerns, identify challenges and offer solutions. Participating in these meetings provided insight into how global and national policies influenced decisions made at the organizational level and the types of working relationships present among different institutions involved in the refugee education sector. Meetings were most often conducted in English, but for those held in Arabic I had support from a translator. I documented these meetings through field notes.

In order to understand the implementation of global and national policy at the school-level, I collected data at three public schools during the 2015/2016 academic year: Foushat Amal and Al Hassan schools, both located in Beirut, and Al Tajadood School, located in the Beqaa, a rural setting host to the largest population of Syrian refugees (MEHE, 2017). I randomly selected these sites from a list of public schools participating in the second shift program circulated by MEHE and UNICEF after stratifying by location and size of refugee student population (see Table 1). I required schools to have at least 200 refugee students enrolled in the second shift in order to be of comparable size to the non-formal schools I was visiting as part of a larger research study. Given the tenuous security situation in Lebanon, I was careful to limit my research sites to areas of the country that I could safely visit on my own. MEHE granted me formal permission to visit schools and provided principals with a letter of introduction on my behalf.

Throughout the 2015/2016 academic year, I collected data at each school at least once a week for entire school days at a time. During visits I interviewed school leaders (n=4)

and teachers (n=27) and conducted school and classroom observations (n=146) (see Table 2 for a detailed summary of data sources). I observed classes in the morning and afternoon shifts in Foushat Amal and Al Hassan schools. In Al Tajadood School, I observed only the afternoon shift as there were no refugee students enrolled in the morning. As the vast majority of refugee students attending public school are enrolled in grades one through six (MEHE, 2017) I focused on teachers and classrooms from these grades. In each school I observed almost every teacher working in grades one through six in the afternoon shift on multiple occasions and visited the same teachers in the morning if they were employed during first shift. During observations, I took detailed field notes on various dimensions of the classroom including pedagogy and instructional techniques, academic content, classroom management, and student-student and teacher-student interactions.

At each school, I randomly selected one to two teachers to interview from each grade I observed. I conducted interviews with 11 teachers at Foushat Amal and Al Hassan schools and five teachers in Al Tajadood School. I also interviewed two school principals and two vice principals. Interviews were conducted in English or in Arabic, the latter with the support of a translator, and lasted approximately one and a half hours. During interviews, I asked teachers to discuss their experiences working with refugee students, their perception of the second shift program, challenges they faced in and outside the classroom, and their roles regarding students' social, emotional and academic development. Interviews with school leaders focused on the process of integrating refugee students into public school from an administrative/policy perspective and the challenges and benefits of implementing a second shift program.

In addition to classroom visits and interviews, I spent time at each school in the teacher's lounge, the principal's and supervisors' offices, and in the schoolyard interacting with and observing students, teachers, staff, and parents. I captured this data in detailed field notes. These observations and informal conversations provided insight into the school environment, school procedures and regulations, personal and professional challenges faced by school leaders and teachers, and the ways in which staff and students interacted outside the classroom.

Data analysis

Data analysis was an iterative, ongoing process throughout and after data collection. Interviews with teachers and school leaders were audio recorded, transcribed and translated (when necessary). An additional translator reviewed a random selection of transcripts to ensure accuracy. I did not record interviews with policy actors but instead took detailed notes throughout each conversation. After every interview I reviewed the audio recording, the transcript and/or my notes to develop in-depth memos documenting recurring themes, salient quotes, emerging patterns, and new questions. By continually engaging with the data, I had the opportunity to refine instruments, test hypotheses, triangulate information, and gather feedback on my interpretations from interview participants and other key informants.

I coded all interviews using the qualitative data analysis software Atlas.ti. I developed an initial set of etic codes informed by the literature and emic themes that arose during the memoing process. For example, within the family code of international perceptions, I first included codes for challenges to integration, policy development, and MEHE/UN/NGO relations, among others, and then identified a second set of emic codes drawn from a deeper

understanding of the overarching themes including program ownership, global-national communication, national-local communication, and school autonomy.

In addition, I reviewed all classroom and school observations to create a profile for each school. Each profile included a summary of school-level data and reflections on recurring themes such as teaching methods, curriculum implementation, discipline, and teacher behavior, among others. I used a similar process in the analysis of field notes from meetings, presentations, and events. I employ these profiles to contextualize the information from stakeholder, teacher, and principal interviews presented in the findings.

FINDINGS

The case of Lebanon brings to light disconnects in refugee education between global frameworks, national policies and daily experiences in schools and classrooms. In this section, I consider the relationships between global expectations for refugee education as outlined within UNHCR and UNICEF strategic documents, national goals within Lebanon as documented in the RACE framework, and local realties from the perspectives of teachers and school leaders working at three Lebanese public schools. I then return to the experiences of international actors working to advance global agendas for refugee education within Lebanon to analyze the ways in which their work is (mis)informed by national and local experiences. I consider this data as it relates to priorities for education in contexts of crisis including access, quality, and integration, and the role of collaboration across these three dimensions.

1. Global level: Guiding frameworks for refugee education

UNHCR is dedicated to ensuring the political, social, and personal protection of refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs) through the provision of humanitarian relief, including food, shelter, water, and education. The agency delivers assistance in crisis-affected countries by working in coordination with national governments, international agencies, and local organizations. The ultimate goal of UNHCR is to support refugees and IDPs to reestablish their lives through three durable solutions: return to country of origin, resettlement to another nation-state, or local integration into host-countries.

In line with its commitment to local integration, the 2012-2016 Education Strategy for UNHCR prioritizes access to quality education for refugee learners through integration into national systems "where possible and appropriate" (UNHCR, 2012, p. 8). Key activities related to expanding access to primary schooling and improving learning outcomes among young refugee learners include teacher professional development, literacy development and assessments, strengthening school governance, adherence to standard school norms, language training for teachers and students, and expansion of information and communication technology (ICT) in schools. Additional objectives outlined in the Strategy include ensuring safe learning environments in schools, expanded access to secondary school and higher education, improved educational opportunities for all age levels, and early provision of education in times of crisis. These objectives are to be operationalized primarily through the development of partnerships with Ministries of Education in refugee-receiving countries.

UNHCR advocates for "on-going consultation with refugees" (UNHCR, 2012, p. 8) in order to determine the most appropriate structure and content for proposed education

programing, especially in relation to integration. It also highlights the importance of working closely with national Ministries of Education to implement inclusive education strategies that foster welcoming environments within schools and classrooms to better support refugee integration and retention. While the Strategy formally acknowledges the need to involve refugees in the process of developing and implementing an education response, as well as national actors within the Ministry of Education, there is no mention of the role host-country teachers and school leaders could or should play within the process. Activities and goals are targeted at strengthening the work of teachers and school leaders but there are no proposed mechanisms for incorporating their specific challenges and needs into educational planning.

The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) works to meet the needs of marginalized children and at-risk youth around the globe by supporting programing focused on child protection, health, and education. While UNICEF works in various contexts, the organization has a long history of providing humanitarian assistance to children living in emergency settings. The Core Commitments for Children in Humanitarian Action (CCCs) serve as UNICEF's guiding policy regarding the protection of children affected by humanitarian crisis (UNICEF, 2010). The CCCs framework makes explicit the importance of establishing partnerships between UNICEF and national host governments, relief agencies, additional UN institutions, and other domestic and international organizations, pointing to these relationships as the key mechanism for providing humanitarian assistance. In fact, the term "partner" or "partnership" appears on almost every page of the document.

In regards to educational priorities, the CCCs outline five specific commitments related to the overarching goal of providing children access to "safe and secure education"

(UNICEF, 2010, p. 36). These include ensuring effective coordination mechanisms with national authorities and other education partners are established, access to quality education opportunities for all children is provided, schools serve as safe learning environments, psychosocial and health services for children and teachers are integrated into the overall educational response, and programing for out-of-school youth is made available. The CCCs specify a commitment to supporting national authorities as they plan for and undertake activities related to the provision of education in emergency settings. The document employs the term "integration" in reference to sectoral commitments and programing components but never in regards to integrating learners into national systems. Instead the framework advocates more broadly for the reopening of schools with no specific mention of how access for affected populations may be mobilized. The CCCs also promote the provision of non-formal education opportunities and temporary learning spaces, although it is unclear whether those are to be established by national authorities or other educational actors.

2. National level: Official strategies for refugee education

The RACE framework that guides refugee education policy in Lebanon aligns closely to the global strategies, focusing on access, quality, and integration, and support to national governments as promoted by UNHCR and UNICEF. RACE I lays the foundation for the inclusion of refugee students into the public system. RACE II extends this commitment while placing greater emphasis on long-term planning and overall strengthening of the education system. RACE II was not introduced until after data collection for this article was completed. However an analysis of both documents is useful for understanding the evolution of MEHE's priorities through the refugee crisis. Both documents outline a set of goals MEHE would like to accomplish vis-à-vis refugee education, although as is highlighted

in RACE II, they are non-binding regulations, they are not fully funded, and there is no guarantee that they will be completed. In fact, much of what is outlined within the strategy has yet to find its way into schools or classrooms.

With a projected cost of US$599.9 million, RACE I aimed to facilitate "the smooth (re)integration and transition of Syrian refugee and other vulnerable children into the formal education system in Lebanon or back in Syria" (MEHE, 2014, p. 42). Funding was to address issues related to access, quality, and systems management for the entire education program (Lebanese and non-Lebanese students), as well as challenges brought by the addition of Syrian refugees including overcrowding, overtaxed infrastructure and school resources, and a lack of teacher preparation regarding the specific needs of refugee students.

RACE I goals focused on improving access included transportation support, establishing and subsidizing the second shift program (school registration and staff salaries), limited financial support for first shift costs (school registration), funding of accelerated learning programs (ALP) and NFE run by MEHE, and financing rehabilitation of schools across the country. Proposed activities targeting education quality included funding for textbooks and teaching and learning materials, the introduction of school libraries and an e-learning platform, mechanisms for improved communication between refugee parents and schools, and training of teachers working with refugee students on topics related to management of large classes, use of child-centered pedagogy, support of students' language development, and how to address issues of conflict and psychosocial support. Goals for strengthening the overall education system included development of education management and information system (EMIS), strengthening of monitoring and evaluation (M&E),

strengthening of the Direction d'Orientation Pédagogique et Scolaire (DOPS)[4], and the development of policies and guidelines on language of instruction, curriculum, and certification.

The RACE II framework remains focused on addressing challenges related to the pillars of access, quality, and systems management. However, programing is significantly expanded under RACE II (with an expanded budget of US$2.1 billion) and much of the language of the framework has shifted away from specific support of refugee students to general support of Lebanese public schools. Integration is not mentioned at all in this new national framework, and the idea of social cohesion appears only once, as related to society broadly and not specifically to refugees (MEHE, 2016, p. 16). However, most of the access goals related to refugee education remain the same with emphasis placed on strengthening efforts to enroll refugee students through greater community outreach and an expansion of ALP and NFE programing. School rehabilitation continues but with additional funding for equipment for sports, music, art, science and IT labs, programs which are only accessible to students in the morning shift. Under the pillar of quality, teacher training is again a focus of RACE II, as much of the envisioned training did not occur during the RACE I period. Other activities include training of school directors, revising the entire public school curriculum along with teaching materials and guides and updating teacher recruitment and assessment processes. Systems programing is significantly expanded under RACE II as well, including the development of a long list of frameworks and policies, the development of EMIS and major capacity building for MEHE staff in project administration, procurement, and financial management.

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[4] DOPS is a department within the Directorate General of Education that provides instructional, health and psycho-social counseling to other teachers and students in the national public school system.

Under RACE I, MEHE expanded and evolved its education programing to improve access to education for refugees: first allowing refugee students to enroll in public schools, next launching the second shift to support increased numbers, and later implementing accelerated learning programs to meet the needs of refugee students who, as observed, were not prepared to enter the formal system. These efforts have resulted in a significant increase in the enrollment of refugee students in public schools since 2011 (MEHE, 2017). Additional accomplishments include the rehabilitation of a limited number of schools, training for 2,500 teachers, provision of textbooks and materials (although textbook distribution was severely delayed), introduction of psychosocial support (PSS) classes in the second shift, and the development of MEHE's NFE Framework (Government of Lebanon & United Nations, 2017; MEHE, 2016).

MEHE has also worked diligently to advocate for its own citizens, ensuring donor funding and support is directed at both Lebanese and Syrian students. These efforts are even more apparent in the activities proposed under RACE II, which specifically focus on improving the overall education system. Despite the challenges faced by MEHE, the Ministry continues to assert ownership over the education programs. As one MEHE official explained to donors and education actors in an open meeting "we want to feel accountable for the children themselves and the teachers themselves."

While these are important achievements, it is critical to note that a large portion of RACE I targets were not met (Government of Lebanon & United Nations, 2017; MEHE, 2016), particularly those related to education quality. Given the lack of training at the national and local level, it is also unclear whether the provided supports will translate into the national goal of improved learning outcomes for all students (Government of Lebanon

& United Nations, 2017; Jalbout, 2015; MEHE, 2015, 2016) or the international goal of social cohesion for refugees, envisioned by the integration of Syrian refugees into the national education system. In fact, I argue that while the second shift program allows for the *accommodation* of refugee students within public education, it does not actually support the *integration* of refugees into this existing schooling system.

3. Local level: Policies as enacted at schools

At the national level, the RACE strategy and MEHE's supporting policies establish the second shift program as the solution to ensuring refugees in Lebanon access to schooling. However, at the local level, opening schools to an entirely new population of students has been a complex experience for principals and teachers. Many of the challenges these actors face are not reflected in the strategies or policies regulating refugee education. In the following analysis, I consider the local realization of integration as it relates to the global (UNHCR, UNICEF) and national (RACE) goals of providing access to quality education for refugee students within public schools.

3.1 Access: Opening schools and classrooms to refugee students - "They have the right to learn."

Policymakers within Lebanon working at either the national or global level highlight the significant increase of refugees enrolled in public schools as one of the major accomplishments achieved under the RACE I strategy. Two central components to access are creating space in schools and finding teachers to teach these new students. Both the central and regional offices of MEHE are responsible for selecting which public schools in Lebanon host second shift schools. This decision takes into account different factors

including local demand and school capacity. According to MEHE staff, principals can (and sometimes do) refuse to run a second shift program for reasons ranging from the political (disapproval of Syrian refugees) to the personal (protective of free time). One MEHE Regional Director explained most schools under his supervision originally rejected the idea of opening a second shift as they did not want Syrians in their schools. However, once they saw the amount of funding hosting schools were receiving, principals began actively requesting to be included in the program.

Leaders from the three schools included in this study had varying understandings of why their institutions were chosen to participate in the second shift. One saw it as affirmation of the school's good work and quality of education provided, another felt the school had been given no real choice, while another considered it as a request that could be rejected. School leaders were aware that if they refused to accept a second shift, most likely someone else would be chosen to serve as principal in "their" school during the afternoon, a suggestion that MEHE staff admitted sounded like a threat to many school leaders.

Not only did school leaders have different interpretations of *why* their school was hosting a second shift, they each had different interpretations regarding the details of *how* the second shift was to be run. Across the three schools, procedures such as enrollment in first and second shift, placement exams, student promotion, the school schedule and language of instruction all varied. Differences in refugee education policies at the school level were in part due to the lack of clear communications from MEHE. Vice Principal Fadia was often unsure how to interpret the information sent to her by MEHE. "The Ministry of Education makes my job difficult because they always come up with new rules and regulations. I believe that the Ministry of Education and the UN…are not in agreement in the first place, and we

are trapped in the middle of this. The Ministry of Education told us to take X teacher, for example, as an English teacher. Then the UN told us not to. We are confused as what we should do." Official communications regarding changes in policy for the second shift program were often delayed as they made their way from the central administration to the regional offices, often adding to the confusion. For example, Al Tajadood did not receive notification regarding the need to hold classes over winter recess until the break was already completed. Foushat Amal was told to extend the school day weeks before the other two schools were informed. Sometimes schools did not even receive documentation of policy changes. As Principal Tamara explained, many times someone from MEHE would notify her of a change in regulation by telephone. "Legally I am not allowed to apply verbal notifications; there should be a written publication signed either from the Minister himself or from the General Director. [MEHE] obliges you to work according to the verbal notification, as you might receive a written publication or you may not." Working without proper documentation made Tamara feel uncomfortable as she had no written proof that changes instituted at the school had been mandated by the government.

Communication challenges often led to principals making local decisions based on their own interpretation of the regulations or the school's specific circumstances. For example, none of the schools followed the MEHE policy regarding the 2:1 ratio of Lebanese to Syrians in the morning. School leaders at Foushat Amal and Al Hassan allowed any Syrian with proven legal Lebanese residency previous to 2011 to enroll in first shift, while at Al Tajadood enrollment was kept at 50% Lebanese, 50% Syrian regardless of residency/refugee status. School leaders believed they were following the policy correctly but had in fact misunderstood the rules. At Al Tajadood, all students took placement exams to determine grade level, while at Al Hassan, in order to speed up the enrollment process parents were

simply asked to report the child's grade level. At each school the second shift was of varying length and time. At Al Tajadood, the principal decided to eliminate the mid-day break as she found students too poorly behaved to play safely. At Al Tajadood all math and science classes were taught in English across all grades as the principal believed this to be beneficial for students over the long term. Foushat Amal teachers were using only Arabic but switched grades one and two to English three years into the second shift program. Originally, English language instruction began in grade four in Al Hassan school. Mid-year the principal changed the policy, delaying English instruction until grade six in an effort to align the language of the classroom with the language used in the provided textbooks.

School leaders expressed frustration at the continual shift in policies as well as the amount of additional monitoring and reporting required for the second shift. Principal Tamara explained with a sigh "every week we receive piles of papers [from MEHE] to fill and send them. A week later, they send another set of papers that contradict the previous ones, so you fill them all over again. I consider such work useless and time consuming." Vice Principal Fadia was asked mid-year to report student absenteeism from the beginning of school, data she had not previously been required to track. Surrounded by a mountain of attendance books Fadia said wearily, "no one sees how much we work or what we are doing." With the addition of the second shift, administrators began essentially running two schools at once, doubling their responsibilities and their work hours. The total student population at all three schools doubled or tripled in size, with a larger enrollment in the afternoon than the morning (see Table 1). School leaders started working full time morning and afternoons, making for a very long day. Principal Hiba would get to the school each day by 7:00am and leave around 7:00pm, shortly after the end of second shift. "I am the first one who comes to school and I'm the last one who leaves…I stay here twelve hours."

Despite the increased workload, each school leader considered opening their schools to refugee students as an important service to a population in need. As overwhelming as the task often felt, Vice Principal Fadia believed in her work, adamant that these students "have the right to learn." Principal Tamara described her work as a "humanitarian commitment," explaining "God has placed people within your arms and you are now responsible for them, regardless of everything else." Similarly, Principal Hiba was motivated by the desire to help her students, "they need the proper care…when I saw these kids I [thought] oh my God, oh my God. I had a sensitive feeling…That's why I told all the teachers 'please love them as well as your kids…If you don't love the Syrian students you don't love anything.'"

The time, energy, and emotion school leaders were willing to invest in their refugee students influenced the way in which the second shift program took shape at the local level. Each of the three school leaders whom I interviewed managed a balance between national level policies and local level needs that best served their community, even if those choices did not fully comply with the MEHE regulations. Decisions regarding the school schedule, enrollment regulations, language of instruction, and how and when to implement new policies shaped the educational experience of refugees and, as explored below, had a direct impact on the experiences and responsibilities of teachers.

3.2 Quality: Providing learning opportunities in the classroom – "My battery is empty"

Opening schools and staffing classrooms may ensure seats are available to students, but it does not guarantee the global and national level goal of students receiving a quality education. For investments in education to be realized, refugee (and national) students need dedicated teachers, equipped with the training, materials and support necessary to meet the

unique needs of their students. Although these goals are clearly articulated within the RACE I strategy, they were not always present at the local level.

Teachers struggled with two basic quality inputs in their classrooms: the number of students and the number of textbooks. In the morning shift, teachers were used to classes of 20 to 25 students[5], while in the afternoon, classroom enrollment was closer to 35 or 40 students. For Hala, class size was a considerable challenge. As she explained, across her three classes in second shift "I teach almost 105 students [per day]. I don't know even their names…I've been teaching for maybe one month and a half." In Lebanese public schools, teachers are in charge of a subject, not a classroom, rotating into different grades and sections throughout the day. Therefore, an increase in class size has a major impact on the number of students that teachers interact with during the day. In her school, Vice Principal Fadia had originally organized classes in the afternoon to be similar in size to the morning shift. However, three months into the school year she was instructed by MEHE to ensure no fewer than 35 students per classroom, forcing her to restructure the entire teaching schedule. Not only was this a logistical nightmare, but for Fadia it also had a direct impact on the quality of instruction "the teacher cannot pay attention only to one student when she has 36 students in the same classroom." She assumed the restructuring decision related to reducing the cost of the second shift in her school but was never given any explanation.

In addition to large classrooms, teachers also struggled with a lack of basic materials. Textbooks at all three schools were not delivered until the end of December, over three months into the school year. Teachers and school leaders spent hours photocopying portions of the textbook to use in class in an effort to ensure students did not fall too far

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[5] The national student-teacher ratio in Lebanon is 7:1, although this masks considerable regional variation (Al-Hroub, 2014).

behind in the curriculum. Principal Tamara was proud of what her school accomplished despite the lack of support from MEHE. "We were able to provide what the government could not provide. We were able to provide it by photocopying the books. [We] took advantage of the time [without books] to help students who did not know even the letters." However data from classroom observations showed teachers often did not prepare photocopies and instead dedicated a large portion of class transferring lessons onto the board for students to then copy into notebooks.

When asked why they were teaching second shift, the majority of teachers interviewed pointed to financial compensation as the most important motivating factor. As Farah explained clearly "everybody is teaching for the money." Other teachers voiced personal concern about the actual commitment of fellow colleagues to the refugee students in their classrooms. Fayrouz worried that teachers in her school were there just "to take the money" and were doing little to support their students' educational development. "They don't [care] about their students or what will happen or how they can…be very effective in their lives…In the morning they don't do anything so what do you expect from them in the afternoon?" However, a minority of teachers expressed sentiments similar to those articulated by their school leaders. While Hala admitted the additional pay was important, she also described the satisfaction of seeing underserved students develop. Pointing to a young student in her first grade English classroom she remarked "just to look at him, how he started. He [did not] know how to hold his pencil and now he's identifying letters, he's writing, he knows his name, he knows how to start using some vocab[ulary]…This feeling is good. It just makes you proud of yourself."

During my own classroom observations, I visited the same teacher during both the first and second shift to understand whether the quality of pedagogy varied in relation to the background of the students. I found that teachers used very similar approaches to instruction and classroom management regardless of when and whom they were teaching. For example, in both her morning and afternoon English classes, Fatima dedicated her lessons to reviewing past material and introducing new concepts through oral repetition. However, in the afternoon, the pace was significantly slower as Fatima was visibly tired and students struggled with very basic concepts, including how to write their names. It was hard to identify the learning objectives in either of Farida's morning or afternoon classrooms as she spent most of the time during both lessons trying, and failing, to demand order. During the morning and afternoon lessons, students were pulled from their desks, pushed out the door, or made to stand in the corner as the teacher attempted to gain control of her classroom.

Patterns in classroom observations were similar across all three schools. A competent teacher observed in the morning became a tired but well-intentioned teacher in the afternoon while an ineffective teacher in the morning became an exhausted and often careless teacher in the afternoon. Teachers who physically or verbally threatened refugee students during second shift employed the same classroom management approaches with Lebanese students in the morning shift. In comparison, teachers who relied on more positive disciplinary techniques never resorted to aggressive physical behavior during either shift. Less effective instruction generally entailed reliance on rote memorization and teacher-centered learning. Classes across both shifts were typically delivered lecture-style, with students as early as grade one expected to sit passively in their seats throughout the day. In classrooms with better instruction, teachers often ensured students had an opportunity to

engage with new material and practice a lesson in class. In these classrooms, I observed more productive classroom management, greater student engagement and more positive student-teacher interactions.

The teachers included in this study had reason to be exhausted. The vast majority of teachers interviewed and/or observed worked in both the morning and afternoon, some at two or three different schools. In my data I found most teachers taught between 30 and 50 hours a week, time which did not include class preparation or grading. Haneen was teaching 37 periods a week but explained "I am not sure I can continue doing this because I am tired; so tired." Fatin taught 46 hours a week plus additional hours when she had to cover for an absent teacher, which was quite often. "My batteries are empty," she admitted. Faihaa struggled with the lack of recovery time between shifts: "imagine that we teach 6 consecutive hours [in the morning] and have only half an hour of break between the morning and the evening shifts." Hidaya agreed that teaching all day demanded additional energy. "There's a big difference between leaving home at 7:00am and getting home at 1:00pm and leaving home at 7:00am and getting home at 6:30pm." However she was not tired enough to stop teaching in the afternoon, not yet. "I'm not forced to teach, it hasn't gotten so bad that I need to quit."

Not all teachers shared Hidaya's continued dedication to the second shift. Almost one-quarter of the teachers interviewed for this study were no longer teaching second shift in the following school year. Most cited exhaustion and frustration as a reason for leaving the afternoon shift. Others left due to family pressure/obligations or better job opportunities during the morning. As Taghrid explained "it's really tiring, especially during the exams; [I have to give] 14 exams, I have to make the exams and each one takes 2 hours,

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then you have to grade the exam and that takes time too. I got exhausted, I am tired." The departure of any effective teacher from the second shift is a significant loss as these individuals have gained considerable knowledge regarding how to meet the specific needs of refugee students.

For many teachers, working the second shift had a substantial impact on both their personal and professional lives. Teachers had to juggle demands at work and at home, often having to choose between caring for their own family and caring for their students. As Fatima recounted "I have to leave my daughter. She's in grade two. There's no one to teach her at home so I have to go back [at night] and teach her. Then I have my baby… it's not easy to leave your baby at home." As the year progressed, Faihaa felt the stress of the job impacting her own health. "The thing that I hate the most (although you did not ask me) is that I am always nervous, tired, and sick. I cannot tolerate anyone, and I directly start crying." She explained that before school vacation she was at a breaking point. "I could not do anything other than cry. I cannot vent. I get nervous, but I try to keep everything inside me, until I can no longer tolerate it and I start crying. This is my profession and my life. I keep in mind that I should be tolerant and remain calm because this is my profession and I know that this is the life of a teacher. It is not the kids' fault for me to yell at them whether in the morning or the afternoon shifts. I try to be relaxed." Teacher exhaustion was more evident across all three schools later in the day. During the last periods of second shift teachers were often seated at their desks while students worked independently or simply entertained themselves. Fatin acknowledged "I always come motivated; I only lose it at the end of the [day]. But, how do I keep this motivation? Sometimes I feel that I really love [my students], I feel as if I am raising my own children. Yet, other times I feel that I don't like

them…Lately I am not motivated at all. I come to my work because I have to do it…I think I match my motivation to the salary because we are not being paid each month."

Teachers commonly spoke about a lack of motivation in connection to a lack of pay, especially as the year progressed and salaries were not delivered. Second shift staff did not receive any payment until March, five months into the school year. Many teachers reported that they were forced to take out loans to cover expenses while they awaited their paycheck. Not only was payment delayed, but staff also received little information regarding when their salary would be delivered, making financial planning very difficult. Although she is dedicated to her profession, Faihaa admitted "if I can leave teaching, I would not say no. I am going to start a family now, and I cannot keep waiting to get paid once a year because we have a house to pay for." The lack of transparency regarding staff salaries created a negative perception of MEHE at the school level. When asked whether someone from MEHE had provided information to schools concerning payment Hani stated simply "we don't trust anyone [in MEHE]." Principal Tamara also found it difficult to believe the explanation provided by MEHE regarding late payments, especially since during the first year of the second shift program the funding arrived on time. "[MEHE] tells you that we don't have enough money, and we are facing financial deficit, but how and where!? We have been through the same experience previously and a lot of money remained; what are you [MEHE] going to do with it?"

In an interview, MEHE staff explained that payment was delayed due to a combination of auditing procedures, bureaucratic processes, and a late transfer of funds by the donor community. However donors were also confused as to why staff was paid so late in the year and concerned with the impact it was having on teaching quality. One UN staff

member reflected, "how can a teacher be productive in their classroom if they are not getting paid?" Regardless of the reasons behind the delay, school staff described the lack of pay as yet another burden they had to bear. Hani admitted feeling "additionally stressed" due to finances but tried to find some balance between "stress that will motivate you and stress that will be stressful." After voicing her own frustration at the situation, Fatin shrugged her shoulders as if in defeat. "We got used to it," she sighed.

In addition to experiencing a lack of financial support, teachers across the sample reported feeling isolated in their work, depending on themselves alone to tackle any issues confronted in the classroom. Fayrouz described feeling "like I'm swimming in the ocean by myself. No one will help me, no one wants to help me." Despite the fact that teachers in each grade shared the same students, they rarely reported working together. As Tamam explained "I don't mix up with teachers. I just come and do my job and go to work." The lack of coordination among staff was present in both the morning and afternoon shifts. In addition, only three of the teachers interviewed for this study had the opportunity to participate in professional development supported by MEHE and specifically related to refugee education. While each of the three teachers felt they learned something from the training, they believed most of the changes they made in their classrooms were drawn from their own experiences. The one type of classroom support teachers did find useful were visits by the DOPS counselors. Although few teachers had actually been observed by a counselor during the 2015/2016 school year, those that were selected found some of the feedback helpful, especially regarding what lessons to prioritize within the curriculum.

Many teachers wished their school had a psychologist available to help them work with troubled students. Fatin reflected that if her school had "a counseling department I

would send any student whom I suspect of having any sort of a problem [there], and they [would] solve the issue. Yet, because we don't have this, I am unable to follow all of the students' problems." Each of the schools did have a teacher tasked with providing psychosocial support (PSS) classes during second shift, a position created under the RACE I strategy. Students received one PSS class a week during second shift. In the three schools observed, PSS classrooms where one of the few places students had the opportunity to discuss their past experiences in Syria and their current realities as refugees in Lebanon. However, the manner in which those conversations were developed and fostered depended entirely on the interest and skill level of the PSS teacher. At Al Tajadood school, the teacher engaged actively with the students, carefully crafting conversations around difficult topics like appropriate physical interactions and how to avoid unwanted advances from strangers. In addition to giving classes, this PSS teacher had asked the principal for a private room where she could see students individually, time for which she was not compensated. In Al Hassan school, the PSS teacher did little more than lecture students with little student participation. The two PSS teachers at Foushat Amal engaged students in multiple activities designed to support psychosocial recovery, but rarely provided children the opportunity to discuss or reflect on the activities. For example, in one class students were asked to draw their 'life river' to symbolize how they remembered past events, how they felt about the present, and how they imaged their futures. Students created detailed drawings, but no time was dedicated to discussing the pictures as a class. Across the three schools, subject classroom teachers rarely interacted with the PSS teachers. Hala once asked the PSS teacher in her school to observe one of her more difficult classes but felt she received little help from the visit. "She didn't do any improvements." At Foushat Amal the PSS teachers declined requests by the administration to provide training to other teachers as they felt they

did not have enough time. At Al Tajadood school, subject teachers were unclear as to the role of the PSS teacher and while they might refer students to her, were reluctant to grant students permission to visit her office during their class time.

<u>3.3 Integration: Addressing issues of social cohesion – "There wasn't a lot of interaction among the students"</u>

Providing refugee students access to education via integration into the public system is, as articulated in global policy, an efficient approach to meeting large-scale need. However, the success of such a policy demands a shared awareness of the significant social and political challenges such a strategy imposes on schools and a level of commitment from actors within the entire system to address resulting issues. Neither the RACE strategies nor any MEHE policy documents provided guidance on how schools should approach the process of integrating students into the public system whose national ties are related to current and historic unrest in Lebanon. MEHE officials acknowledged the integration of Syrians into the public system had "created a conflict" but believed it was also "an opportunity to teach how to remove this barrier," suggesting that teachers should assume responsibility for ensuring Syrians and Lebanese develop accepting and understanding relationships. However, teachers and principals were given no specific training or support regarding how to prepare themselves or their Lebanese students for the arrival of Syrian students into schools and classrooms.

When asked how they separated the political from the professional in their interactions with Syrian refugee students, the vast majority of teachers and school leaders interviewed shared a similar perspective, pointing to the fact that their students had nothing to do with past or present actions taken by the Syrian government or the Syrian army.

Acknowledging the broader political context surrounding Syrian refugees, Principal Hiba reflected: "Okay, Lebanon doesn't like the government of Syria, but what about the kids? What is the relationship between the government and the kids?…Most of the directors, the people [say]: 'let them learn.'" Fadila, a teacher in her 40s who suffered greatly during the Lebanese civil war and the Syrian occupation, provided an honest reflection of how she regarded the presence of refugees in her classroom:

> In the beginning yes, we used to feel sorry for them, but later on we stopped. We don't anymore because we stayed [in Lebanon during the war]...We used to remove cockroaches off a bread loaf to eat it. I was once buying a bundle of bread when a missile fell on our neighbor as I was looking at him. I took the bread and left…What the Lebanese people suffered from the Syrian army cannot be forgotten. Sorry. What was done to us by the Syrian army is unparalleled. Sorry. I reiterate: the Syrian army, not the people, but the army…What guilt do those children have? It's not the fault of this generation…This is not the people's decision, it is a political decision.

Teachers and school leaders interviewed for this study considered their students innocent bystanders of the political relationship between Syria and Lebanon, regardless of their own personal experiences or their own personal opinions regarding the presence of refugees in their country. However, school staff felt Lebanese students did not share this sentiment, especially when Syrians first began to attend public schools. "I cannot begin to describe the amount of problems we used to face [in the school yard]" recounted Vice Principal Fadia, referring to violence that would occur between students before the

introduction of the second shift. She explained that "the Lebanese felt as if someone occupied their classrooms…They felt that this is their school, and the Syrians took it away from them." Similarly, in Principal Tamara's school "there was repulsion among the students, not only inside the school, but also outside the school. Lebanese students considered the Syrian students' presence as sort of an invasion to the school." School leaders described applying various measures to help reduce the tension between Lebanese and Syrians ranging from communicating messages of tolerance, to targeted awareness campaigns, to threats of suspension and expulsion. While suspending students for fighting did help reduce violence, Fadia reflected that "we no longer have these problems because the Lebanese leave the school and the Syrians enter," In Tamara's school awareness campaigns did help, but things improved especially when "[Syrians] later had their own shift [and] there wasn't a lot of interaction among the students."

Although first and second shift students did not cross paths inside the school, tension between the two groups still managed to enter the classroom. Teachers reported that students would blame each other when items went missing, a desk was marked or a chair broken. Farida reflected "there is a bit of a struggle between the two shifts." She recalled trying to hang student work on the board from the second shift but each time "the morning shift students would rip them down. I would post them again because…I don't want them to say the morning shift students removed them and get annoyed. But they removed them again. Eventually I am a teacher and had no choice but to roll them up and place them in the drawer." Farida attempted to speak to her students about the importance of respecting other's rights. However, in the end she found it easier to encourage separation between the two groups. Instead of storing personal items in the classroom Farida began to tell her students "not to leave it here, take it, and when you come back, you bring it with you. This is

what they do, and this is the simplest matter." As teachers had no specific training or support to address these types of issues, they found it easier to simply avoid possibilities of conflict between their Lebanese and Syrian students than mediate lessons of acceptance.

4. Global level: Policy implementation from an international perspective

As the direct providers of education, teachers and principals offer a unique perspective on the day-to-day challenges and realities related to integrating refugee students into Lebanon's public school system. Donors, multilateral organizations, and NGOs hold a more intermediary role, coordinating among international, national, and local actors in an effort to best support the provision of education to refugee students. As intermediaries, education policymakers and practitioners provide insight into the challenges of balancing international priorities with national goals and regulations while also aiming to ensure local level needs are recognized and addressed. These actors engage at the invitation of national governments but act in response to the needs of refugees, placing them in the difficult position of advocating for a population whose presence may be a source of tension for the nation-state.

4.1 Defining partnerships and programing - "Policies are clear, implementation is confused"

Although both RACE documents were developed in collaboration with the international community, most stakeholders described their relationship with MEHE as complicated. Some of the principal partners for MEHE reported feeling frustrated that they were expected to follow the lead of MEHE, even when their expertise in the area of refugee education would have been particularly helpful in avoiding challenges. As one Education Officer described, "we have no authority to push back," even if there was disagreement with

the decisions made by MEHE. Organizations were constantly aware of the boundaries placed on them by MEHE and that those restrictions could be tightened or amended at any point. For example, at the beginning of the crisis, UNICEF and UNHCR organized an Education Working Group so national and international actors working in refugee education could meet regularly. However, MEHE disbanded the group once it had established its own unit and committee for refugee education (Mendenhall, Russell, & Bruckner, 2017). In addition, once MEHE assumed responsibility for the second shift from donor agencies, UNHCR and UNICEF were no longer permitted open access to public schools. Some individuals in these organizations whose responsibilities require interaction with public schools reported they try to keep a low profile within their work due to concerns that MEHE may decide to restrict their efforts.

International and national NGOs expressed similar frustrations, often feeling MEHE was blocking any of their efforts to support the provision of education programing to refugee students. Even in public forums, messaging from MEHE underscored this sentiment. At a presentation attended by a variety of donors and NGOs, the Director General invited any registered organization to "join the team" of the Ministry, but warned them to "leave the teaching to us." Staff at several organizations voiced disappointment with the fact MEHE had taken over programs they initiated and then excluded them from the work. The tension over program ownership was acknowledged during a planning meeting for early childhood education led by MEHE. In his opening remarks, a MEHE representative assured the group of NGOs gathered to generate programming ideas that "no one will be out of the game…We are not cutting a cake into pieces. We are joining one cake for the sake of the children." Despite this rhetoric, global actors often felt the actions taken

by MEHE actively discouraged the concept of partnerships. Instead of contributing to solutions, organizations were expected to follow the decisions made by MEHE.

Similar to sentiments expressed by school leaders, organizations struggled to provide consistent programing to refugee children as many felt MEHE was constantly shifting the rules and policies. At a routine meeting of international and local actors, staff from multiple NGOs voiced frustration that MEHE had placed certain programing on hold for months with no explanation. Concerned about the ability of his organization to actually meet the needs of refugee students, one participant worried aloud "will it be the same merry-go-round next semester?" In a later interview, one UN representative reflected that there had been a "breach in communication at all levels" especially in information sharing among national actors (central MEHE, regional MEHE offices and schools) and across national and international actors (MEHE, NGOs, multi/bilateral organizations). Data was shared sparingly and inconsistently and rarely made it to the local level. When asked whether he had read the RACE document, the head of one regional MEHE office explained he was just waiting for the central office to brief him on the pertinent details. MEHE officials explained that as "schools are not involved" in the development of the RACE program, it was not necessary for them to understand the document. "They know how much they get paid" one MEHE staff commented, suggesting that was sufficient.

Education actors at the national and global level noted that inconsistent communication also played a role in the variability of policy implementation across schools. NGO and UN staff would often hear about changes in regulations long before the message was officially communicated to principals. In addition, principals at schools throughout Lebanon demonstrated significant autonomy regarding adherence to national refugee

education policies. Staff at various organizations, including UN agencies and MEHE, acknowledged that decisions made by school leaders were often influenced by personal preferences, religious or political beliefs, community pressure, and expectations from local leaders. As one UN official reflected, even when policies were clear to principals "implementation is confused," as schools tried to balance demands made at the local, regional, and national levels. "Everything plays a role" explained another UN staff member "politics, religion…there is no set rule." In a country where sectarian loyalties play a defining role in everyday society, it was difficult to ensure even nationally mandated regulations were applied equally.

4.2 Focusing on quality - "There is a lot of educating to be done"

Within an environment of complicated partnerships and shifting communications, one message repeated consistently by stakeholders was the need for MEHE to invest more time and resources towards strengthening the quality of education provided in public schools. According to MEHE staff at the central and regional level, students in the morning and afternoon shift were receiving the same level of education. As one member of the PMU stated, "the quality in the morning shift is not better than the second shift." However, stakeholders were well aware that the public education system was struggling with issues related to quality long before the refugee crisis began and assumed current events had compounded the challenges, in both shifts. As one NGO staff member commented "when you have a system with fundamental flaws…[and] you try to double it in less than a year, you exacerbate the problems." While the RACE strategy focuses significant attention on strengthening the effectiveness of the public system, donors working closely with MEHE voiced concern that the Ministry was prioritizing access-related goals over programing aimed

at improving education quality. For many education actors, it was unclear if conversations related to education quality were even taking place within MEHE. "There is lots of educating to be done, including with the Ministry of Education," reflected one donor representative in reference to the need for MEHE to focus greater attention on issues related to quality. "Kids just don't learn" in the public system the representative explained simply.

Evaluating the success or failure of programing provided to Syrian refugee students has been especially difficult given the lack of data available on even the most basic quality measures including repetition, dropout, and passing rates. Some education actors believed MEHE genuinely lacked the capacity to monitor and distribute such data, while others felt they simply preferred not to share the information. NGOs, no longer permitted to run many of their own NFE projects, were frustrated that they had no way to determine whether MEHE's programing was actually benefiting their previous students. NGOs trying to follow student performance in the public system were told by UNICEF to contact refugee families directly as no one outside of MEHE had access to even aggregate achievement data.

During interviews, globally-situated actors often raised teacher selection and preparation for the second shift program as possibly related to concerns regarding education quality. Although the social, emotional, and academic needs of students within the public system had shifted dramatically, various interview participants believed MEHE continued to support, train, and distribute teachers as if nothing had changed. "Lebanese teachers are not very qualified to run multi-level, multi-grade, multi-national classrooms," explained a UN education officer. Global and local stakeholders outside of the Ministry believed that current teachers lacked the skills necessary to support students impacted by displacement and

trauma and were unaware of how to employ positive discipline in the classroom, how to support children in the same classroom with divergent needs or even how to manage larger class sizes. In contrast, none of the MEHE staff interviewed for this study believed teachers needed any specialized training to work with refugee students. They were also unaware of whether second shift teachers had received any professional development and did not believe any wide-scale training was planned for the near future. Some stakeholders worried that no one within MEHE was listening to the actual needs of teachers. While MEHE staff did meet with the principals, one UN officer believed this was not sufficient. "They really need to go and listen to the teachers, the janitors, the bus driver." According to her experience, those were the individuals who knew what the real challenges were for students and school staff and were often better equipped to identify contextualized solutions.

4.3 Complexities of integration - "We are doing isolation now"

Integration into the public system may be the preferred solution for the provision of refugee education in Lebanon by globally- and nationally-situated actors. However, there was shared sentiment among NGO and UN staff that the implementation of the second shift program was a move towards separation of Syrian students, as opposed to integration. As one UN official reflected, "we are doing isolation now…if you look at the schools you see isolation" of students, not integration. The official further argued that had MEHE been dedicated to the concept of integration, then they would not mandate how many refugee students were permitted to enroll in the first shift. Many organizations with extended experience working in Lebanon were not surprised by the reluctance to fully integrate refugees into the public system. In a country divided by religious affiliation, political beliefs, and socio-economic background, social cohesion just among Lebanese citizens has been a

long-standing issue. "Do you think the Lebanese are integrated?" reflected one NGO staff member. "You keep referring to a Lebanese community…I don't see a Lebanese community." The disjointed nature of Lebanon's society made it difficult for stakeholders to contemplate even how to begin the process of integrating of Syrians.

In fact, according to MEHE staff, inclusion of Syrian students into the public education system initially caused more Lebanese students to leave public schools. Although no official data is available, in meetings and interviews, MEHE staff suggested that the presence of Syrian refugee students in first shift classrooms was "causing a real problem" and "making the Lebanese withdraw from school." One regional staff member believed a few thousand Lebanese students in his district had left the public system since the start of the crisis. Students only began returning to public schools once the second shift was established and the school fee waiver was extended to all students. Another MEHE leader expressed concern that the integration of refugees into the national system was having "a big impact on the education level in the public schools" such that "[in] the long term we might have greater challenges" regarding educational quality and student enrollment and retention. Instead of focusing only on the needs of refugee students, MEHE believed greater efforts must be made "to stabilize our national system and to enhance it at a later stage." This position is evident in the comparison of the RACE I and II strategies, with the latter focusing much more on strengthening public schools than developing refugee education.

MEHE staff members were also reluctant to acknowledge any significant problem regarding discrimination or abuse towards refugee students. The staff member articulated the general belief within MEHE that "there is not a widespread problem with violence" and that MEHE was following up on any reported case. However, the issue of abuse was still a

common topic of concern during Education Partner Meetings. NGO staff members were frustrated with the lack of systematic structures in place to report acts of violence towards refugee students within schools and concerned that there were no means of tracking whether the issues had been addressed. While UN representatives acknowledged the problem, few solutions were provided. MEHE is expected to release a child protection framework that the donor and NGO community hopes will provide mechanisms for reporting these types of issues. However, it is unclear how these incidents will be addressed as the use of corporal punishment and violent language by teachers is a long-standing issue in public schools, regardless of students' nationality and despite specific Ministry rules forbidding such aggressive acts (Bahou, 2016; Save the Children, 2011).

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This article examines the ways in which global strategies for refugee education influence national policies and how these policies are interpreted, translated and experienced at the school level. Focusing specifically on the priorities of access, quality, and integration, I consider the ways in which these polices relate to or address the challenges faced by teachers and school leaders as they strive to meet the diverse needs of their refugee students. Woven through this analysis is an exploration of the types of collaboration present between global, national and local level actors and how those relationships influence program design and implementation. I find there to be greater alignment of priorities related to educational access across these multiple levels than of priorities regarding quality and integration. Disconnect between global, national and local level priorities for quality and integration become apparent as select policies move from paper into practice while others are left

behind. Overall, policies appear to flow from the top down, with little opportunity for the experiences of local actors to influence global or national frameworks.

The increasing number of refugees enrolling in the second shift program demonstrates the substantial progress Lebanon has made towards meeting the goal of access to education prioritized at the global level and explicitly outlined in the RACE strategy. As suggested in the literature regarding policy transfer, the success of this policy may be partially due to the fact that, from a national perspective, the accommodation of refugees into the system did not demand substantial changes in the structure and content of education, just an expansion of the current services (Halpin & Troyna, 1995). While doubling a school system is an impressive logistical feat, it is often easier to accomplish than redesigning a curriculum or developing new programing. However achievement of this global and national level priority still depended heavily on the willingness and ability of local level actors to take on the additional responsibility of educating a new group of students. School leaders were amenable to this work, but a lack of clear and consistent communication from both nationally- and globally-situated actors created confusion and frustration at the local level. Schools described having to work *around*, as opposed to working *with*, the directives from MEHE. Instead of seeing MEHE as a source of support, schools turned inward, with principals making decisions that aligned with the school's existing practices and culture, as opposed to any systemic goals developed for refugee education.

Providing quality education to refugee learners is an integral part of global frameworks and was identified as a priority by global level actors working within Lebanon. While the RACE strategy addressed the issue of quality, there was little evidence that this rhetoric had translated into action. Instead, national level actors appeared more interested in

supporting quality education for refugees vis-à-vis larger investments in the national system. While in the long-term those investments may directly accrue to refugee learners, in the short-term teachers and school leaders working with refugee students were left with few support mechanisms to resolve immediate challenges. There was a shared sentiment among teachers and staff that their experiences educating refugee students were not reflected in many of the policies applied to their work. When asked what message she would like to send to MEHE concerning her work, Faihaa voiced her frustration with the lack of understanding regarding the challenges she faced. MEHE is "always expecting us to have new teaching methods, new teaching techniques, to be patient, to not yell, to be calm. But having this amount of kids coming from very rough backgrounds, I mean at the end of the day I do have limited energy and I'm going to lose it at the end. If people would just notice this and help to make it better or easier for teachers with refugees I think it would be nice." Long hours, lack of consistent pay, and little to no relevant training left teachers like Faihaa feeling isolated and simply exhausted. Other than going on strike (which happened repeatedly over the course of this research) teachers and school staff had no formal mechanisms for voicing concerns or asking MEHE for support.

The global goal of integration also changed form as it was adapted at the national level and enacted in local schools. Refugee students were provided educational integration through access to public schools, but as the majority had to enroll in the second shift, there was minimal opportunity for social integration. Teachers and school leaders often preferred to limit contact between Lebanese and Syrian students, choosing to avoid conflicts as opposed to engaging in the long and hard work of resolving them. While this tactic may have reduced problems within the school, it did little to address tensions present in the community. As one UN staff member observed, "how do you have social stability in a

village where kids are not even together in the school?". While globally-situated actors may have preferred schools to serve as a mechanism for social integration at the local level, there was no systematic approach to supporting positive interactions between national and refugee students inside classrooms. School leaders each had a different approach for resolving issues but found separating national and refugee students most effective. Teachers were unprepared to facilitate the types of interactions and conversations necessary for resolving conflict and building connections. Hindered by a lack of time, a lack of training and influenced by their own personal experiences, teachers preferred to keep students focused on academics with the assumption that community development would happen elsewhere.

The global frameworks of UNHCR and UNICEF underscore partnerships as a key mechanism for developing and implementing programing in settings of humanitarian crisis. National governments, international agencies, local organizations and local level actors all bring expertise and experience essential to creating a cohesive, effective response to serving a population in need. However, in the case of refugee education in Lebanon, partnerships across global, national and local level actors appeared constrained, with most of the decision power resting within the national government. Global level actors found limited opportunity to work as partners with national level actors and were often frustrated by the lack of transparency regarding data. Data from the national government was not widely shared, greatly frustrating those actors without access. From a local perspective, there was little chance for teachers and principals to seek out alternative support mechanisms for their work apart from formal communication with MEHE. Policies were handed down to teachers and school leaders were expected to enact new regulations with minimal information regarding the plan and purpose of refugee education in Lebanon and few possibilities to share what they had learned through the process. At the same time, national and international

organizations interested in supporting the efforts of teachers and learners found few opportunities to engage within the system. A lack of collaboration and partnership often resulted in schools receiving inconsistent and at times contradictory information, leading to varying interpretations and adaption of policies by school leaders.

The Government of Lebanon, with the support of national and international actors, has invested considerable time and resources into the provision of education for Syrian refugee students. As the crisis has stretched on, MEHE has continued to adapt its refugee education strategy and expand the types of services available to refugee students, widening the opportunities for refugees to access education. While these efforts are commendable, this analysis demonstrates that strategies designed by globally and nationally situated actors often fail to address the daily challenges faced by teachers and school leaders working to implement education programing for refugees. In addition, a disconnect between global and national priorities results in certain polices being advanced and others ignored.

Findings from this study suggest a number of important policy implications. At the global level, more attention should be paid to the historical experience of refugee-hosting countries whose national priorities may be impacted by previous experiences with refugees or complex relationships between countries. In the case of Lebanon, integrating Syrian students into national systems implies a level of tolerance and acceptance starting at the national level and extending into schools and communities. Greater effort should be made to ensure actors across all levels are prepared to support the integration of refugees into national systems and with the skills necessary to mediate challenges and conflicts that might arise. This analysis also demonstrates the need for improved communication across all levels of actors, especially better mechanisms for communicating national policies to schools.

Without clear and consistent communication, teachers and school leaders are often left to interpret policies (or the lack thereof) on their own, resulting in inconsistent programing for refugee students. It is also essential that the contributions of local actors be acknowledged, their challenges addressed and their efforts properly compensated. Integrating the experiences of local actors into global and national strategies will help ensure problems are actually resolved in a comprehensive manner. In addition, teachers and school leaders need consistent training and support to help ensure that the diverse needs of their refugee students are met. While getting students into classrooms is a significant accomplishment, if teachers are too tired to teach or lack the necessary materials and training, investments in access will reap few benefits. The burden of providing education to hundreds of thousands of additional students falls squarely on the shoulders of school leaders and teachers. Unless their needs are prioritized, it will be difficult to ensure positive, productive educational opportunities for refugee learners.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Tables

Table 1.1: Overview of School Sites

	Type of Institution	Lebanese Enrollment (first shift public schools)	Refugee Enrollment (second shift public schools)	Grade levels serving refugees	Years Teaching Refugee Students	Refugee Language of Instruction: Grades KG-6	Religious Composition: Teachers	Religious Composition: Students
School 1: Beirut	Public	525	621	1-7	3	English & Arabic	Predominantly Sunni, some Shi'a	Sunni
School 2: Beirut	Public	289	545	1-7	3	Arabic	Predominantly Sunni, some Shi'a	Sunni
School 3: Beqaa	Public	222	466	1-9	3	English & Arabic	Christian	Sunni

Note: Numbers reflect data from the 2015/2016 school year. Enrollment numbers are subject to change during the year as students dropped out and/or enrolled continuously through the year across all schools. First shift enrollment in Lebanese schools includes students in grades 1-9.

Table 2.1: Summary of data collected

School level data		Type of Institution	Shifts Observed[a]	School Participant Observation	School Administrator Interviews	Teacher Interviews[b]	Lesson Observations	Policy level data	Key Informant Interviews[c]	Sector Meetings[d]
	School 1: Beirut	Public	First & second	weekly	n = 1	n = 11	n = 58		n = 26	n = 19
	School 2: Beirut	Public	First & second	weekly	n = 1	n = 11	n = 56			
	School 3: Beqaa	Public	Second	weekly	n = 2	n = 5	n = 32			
	Total			**9 months**	**n= 4**	**n = 27**	**n = 146**		**n = 26**	**n = 19**

Note: a. I observed schools during shifts that enrolled refugee students.
b. Three of the teachers I interviewed at public schools were school psychologists. They teach classes like all other teachers.
c. Key informants include multilateral donors (e.g. UNHCR), bilateral donors (e.g. USAID), international organizations (e.g. Save the Children) and local organizations. Fifteen of these interviews took place in 2015/2016. The other 11 took place in 2014.
d. Sector meetings were most often hosted by UNICEF, UNHCR or MEHE and designed to share information, updates and data with the larger local/international community working in refugee education.

Paper 2: Examining teachers' understandings of their academic, social and emotional obligations towards their Syrian refugee students in Lebanon

INTRODUCTION

Irada City School[1], a non-formal[2] school serving Syrian refugee students, is situated deep within the maze of Lebanon's whirling capital city of Beirut. Inside Amira's grade one classroom, students are making new name cards for their desks. It is a challenging task for these children as many still struggle to hold a pencil, let alone write their names. Amira moves from desk to desk, helping to guide students' small fingers across the page. Children run up to Amira continually to show her each step of their progress, seemingly just to hear her exclaim in Arabic "beauuutiful, so beautiful." Receiving positive affirmation from the teacher is an important part of this task and although she repeats it again and again, her praise always sounds genuine and enthusiastic. Despite the encouragement, students make slow progress. The bell rings before even half of the students have complete name cards. Amira moves on to the next subject, mathematics, collecting materials as she simultaneously begins a lecture on shapes.

A few blocks from Irada City sits Foushat Amal public school. By 2:00pm the schoolyard is buzzing with children waiting for the start of the school's second shift, which

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[1] Schools, school leaders and teachers have been given pseudonyms to ensure anonymity of the participants.

[2] In this paper, 'non-formal' schools refer to programs implemented outside of the formal public school system (Coombs & Ahmed, 1974). I employ this term differently than how it is used in Lebanon where any program descried as non-formal education must fall under the Ministry of Education and Higher Education's (MEHE) official framework of alternative education programs offered to refugee students. MEHE considers any school operating outside of its jurisdiction as an illegal entity (personal communication, March 9, 2017).

accommodates only Syrian refugee students. Manar begins Arabic class for her grade two students by reviewing the proper way to sit: arms crossed, feet planted squarely on the floor, mouths closed. Next, she reads a story aloud to students from the textbook, slowly explaining the vocabulary and sentence structure. Her lecture is drowned out temporarily by a teacher down the hall yelling furiously at her students to quiet down. In Manar's class, children are quiet and attentive, passively listening and repeating lines of text when prompted. Manar moves to a lesson on long and short vowels. She asks for an example and twenty-six small hands shoot furiously into the air accompanied by a chorus of 'Miss, Miss!' Students call out, desperate to be chosen, even if they do not know the answer. One eager child answers incorrectly, prompting ridicule from his seatmate. Manar silences him, stating loudly to the class "we are all here to learn." Before she can bring the lesson to a close, the bell rings, prompting Manar to gather up her belongings and move swiftly to her next class.

In Lebanon, the fall of 2015 marked the start to yet another school year in which teachers like Amira and Manar were tasked with the role of supporting the education of some of the estimated 490,000 Syrian refugee children (age 3-18) living in the country (Government of Lebanon, 2015). Prominent policy documents including the Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies' (INEE) Minimum Standards for Education (2010a) and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)'s Education Strategy (2012) outline an extensive list of obligations for teachers working in crisis related to students' academic and social development and emotional recovery (INEE, 2010a, 2010b; INEE, 2014; Sinclair, 2002; UNESCO, 2006; UNHCR, 2012; Winthrop & Kirk, 2008). Recently, integration of refugee students into host-country schools has become the recommended model for sustainable education programing (UNHCR, 2012). In these

settings the national, racial and/or linguistic background of teachers is often different from that of their refugee students (UNHCR, 2012).

Despite the very central role of teachers within global refugee education frameworks, how teachers work within such difficult circumstances and understand their obligations vis-à-vis the children within their classrooms has rarely been examined, an omission highlighted often within refugee education research (Hoot, 2011; Kirk, 2004; Penson, 2013; Penson, Sesnan, Ochs, & Chanda, 2011; Penson & Yonemura, 2012; Richardson, MacEwen, & Naylor, 2018; Sesnan, Allemano, Ndugga, & Said, 2013; Winthrop & Kirk, 2005). Furthermore, there have been few efforts to consider whether and how the ways in which teachers meet these obligations differ by a teacher's position as host-country national or refugee. This paper examines how host-country and refugee teachers working in a conflict-affected setting understand their academic, emotional, and social obligations towards the refugee children in their classrooms. To do so, I use a comparative case design within the context of Lebanon, exploring the perceptions of Lebanese national teachers working in national public schools and Syrian refugee teachers working in non-formal education settings.

Through this analysis I find Lebanese and Syrian teachers identify many of the same educational challenges within their classrooms. Regardless of nationality, teachers strove to cultivate students' successful academic, social, and emotional development. However, when faced with competing demands, Lebanese and Syrian teachers often prioritized different goals. Lebanese teachers remained focused on the academic development of their students, following more teacher-centered approaches within the classroom in an effort to ensure students had the opportunity to interact with the material they were expected to be learning.

Syrian teachers in comparison placed social and emotional needs in line with or ahead of academic ones, prioritizing these goals based often on their own personal experiences as refugees.

CONTEXT

Syrian refugees in Lebanon

Syrian refugees first began entering Lebanon in 2011 when conflict between the Syrian government and opposition forces started to escalate. By 2015 there were approximately 1.2 million registered Syrian refugees living in Lebanon, a country with a national population of only 4.5 million people. As of March 2018, the number of registered Syrian refugees in Lebanon was closer to 1 million (UNHCR, 2018a). However, as the Government of Lebanon (GoL) requested UNHCR to halt registration of new refuges in May 2015, there is no accurate figure for the number of Syrian refugees residing in the country. In official documents, the GoL estimates the population of Syrian refugees to be closer to 1.5 million (Republic of Lebanon, 2016; UNHCR, 2017b) and, as of 2018, estimates that 586,500 of those individuals are of school age (years 3-18) (GoL & United Nations, 2018). Regardless of the exact figure, Lebanon has the highest number of refugees per capita in the world (UNHCR, 2016).

The current presence of Syrian refugees in Lebanon is set in the context of a long, contentious history between the two countries marked by struggles for land and power, complicated by competing religious and sectarian identities (Traboulsi, 2007; Weinberger, 1986). Political, economic, and social relations between Lebanon and Syria were further tested when, starting in 1976, Syrian troops formally occupied Lebanon during the Lebanese

Civil War, only fully withdrawing 30 years later in 2005 (Khalaf, 2002). The intentions and impact of the Syrian army in Lebanon continue to be debated, particularly whether Syria's intervention in the conflict exacerbated or deescalated violence and division in Lebanon (Deeb, 2003; Khalaf, 2002; Traboulsi, 2007). The recent conflict in Syria stirred new tensions between the two countries as the massive flow of Syrians into Lebanon has taken a significant toll on the Lebanese economy and placed immense pressure on an already strained set of public services, in particular the education system (Le Borgne & Jacobs, 2016; World Bank, 2013).

Educational opportunities for Syrian refugees in Lebanon

During the 2015/2016 academic year, approximately 87,000 Syrian refugee students attended private school in Lebanon while 157,000 refugee students enrolled in public school: 66,000 into regular morning programs and 91,000 into a second shift program opened only for Syrian refugee students (UNHCR, 2016). Historically Lebanon offered one schooling shift. However, in 2013 the Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MEHE) introduced a second shift for Syrian students at select public schools in response to the increased demand for education by Syrian refugees (Shuayb, Makkouk, & Tutunji, 2014). Public schools in Lebanon tend to serve a more vulnerable population as two-thirds of Lebanese families choose to send their children to private or semi-private schools (CERD, 2016; MEHE, 2014; World Bank, 2010). Lebanese citizens, including Lebanese public school teachers, commonly consider private or semi-private schools to provide better quality education (Chami, 2016; MEHE, 2017). The experience of students attending public school in Lebanon has been documented as negative and unproductive. Teachers and school leaders commonly rely on teacher-centered pedagogy and harsh disciplinary practices, hold low

academic expectations for students and provide limited support for students' learning (Bahou, 2016).

All public schools, in both the first and second shift, follow the Lebanese curriculum. By grade six, if not before, mathematics and sciences are taught in English or French, while other courses are conducted in Arabic. Given time constraints, during the second shift only core academic subjects are taught. Refugee students sit for the same exams as national students and those who pass are provided a certificate from the MEHE (Shuayb et al., 2014). As of the 2015/2016 school year, there were 98,454 teachers working in Lebanon, 42,686 of whom were employed in public schools. Sixty-four percent of all teachers had a university degree or higher (CERD, 2016). Lebanon has added more than 10,500 teachers to its teaching force since the start of the Syrian refugee influx (CERD, 2016; World Bank, 2010). The majority of new hires are contractual teachers, many of whom have minimal teaching experience and limited knowledge of how to manage multi-level classrooms (Government of Lebanon & United Nations, 2018). While the MEHE is invested in improving teacher capacity, as of December 2017 only 365 of the 20,323 teachers and education personnel targeted for training specific to the provision of education for vulnerable Lebanese and refugee children had been provided with professional development (UNHCR, 2017a).

Refugee students may also attend alternative school programs run by Lebanese, Syrian, or international organizations. These are referred to in this paper as non-formal schools and differ from public education in several ways. Non-formal schools are not accredited/certified by the MEHE, follow their own school calendar, and students cannot sit for national exams. In accordance with Lebanese law, public schools employ only Lebanese

teachers. In contrast, teachers working in non-formal schools are often Syrian (Shuayb et al., 2014). Non-formal schools in Lebanon use a variety of curricula including an adapted version of the Lebanese curriculum, the Syrian national curriculum, or a curriculum from another country (Shuayb et al., 2014). As there is no government oversight, teachers in these settings often have more flexibility regarding both *what* they teacher and *how* they teach and therefore may be more likely to adapt their approaches to reflect the needs of their students. There is no formal record of the number of non-formal schools within Lebanon nor are there data available regarding teachers employed at these schools. In short, non-formal schools are not formally recognized by the Government of Lebanon.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMING

The role of teachers in refugee education

Education in settings directly or indirectly affected by armed conflict can be productive or destructive for both individuals and societies (INEE, 2010b; Machel, 1996, 2001b; Pigozzi, 1999; Sinclair, 2001; UNHCR, 2012; Watkins & Zyck, 2014). Teachers are central to the possibility of education being protective and productive in conflict settings rather than contributing to on-going harm. The INEE Minimum Standards for Education (2010a, 2010b), UNHCR's Education Strategy (2012), and UNESCO's Guidebook for Planning Education in Emergencies and Reconstruction (2006) are normative frameworks that guide approaches to refugee education, and they ascribe roles to teachers to meet these aims. Teachers are expected to create safe, positive learning environments that protect their students' physical and psychological health (INEE, 2010a; INEE, 2014; UNESCO, 2006; UNHCR, 2012). Teachers should create inclusive classrooms that promote students' self-

esteem and self-worth, encourage cooperation and tolerance, and foster a positive vision for the future (INEE, 2010a; INEE, 2014; UNESCO, 2006; UNHCR, 2012). Teachers' pedagogy and classroom practice should develop students' academic knowledge, as well as their skills related to peace development, conflict-mitigation, and social responsibility and integration (UNESCO, 2006; UNHCR, 2012). Teachers should be prepared to support students' psychological and emotional healing and to provide a familiar routine to restore some sense of "normalcy" into students' lives (INEE, 2010a, 2010b).

Taken together, these documents suggest three categories of obligations for teachers: academic, social, and emotional. Rationales for providing education in conflict settings rest on the belief that teachers can meet each of these obligations successfully within any classroom, regardless of their personal or professional positionality vis-à-vis the students they are responsible for teaching. National and international actors set these obligations, yet they are given shape and form by teachers, who often have not heard about these standards, in their daily work (Richardson et al., 2018).

Racial, ethnic, and gender dynamics between teachers and students can have a significant effect on teachers' pedagogical approaches, the obligations they set for their students, and how teachers evaluate students' behavior and academic performance (Dee, 2004; Dee, 2005; Oates, 2003; Picower, 2009; Santoro, 2009). In settings impacted by conflict, tension across social and cultural identities may be heightened, further impacting how teachers address the needs of the students with differing backgrounds within their classroom (Lopes Cardozo & Shah, 2016). Pairing students and teachers of similar backgrounds has demonstrated a strong, positive influence on students' self-perception and academic success (Gibson & Hidalgo, 2009). In some settings, teachers who identified as

socially or culturally 'other' have been more successful in supporting the social and emotional needs of minority students than teachers identifying with the mainstream ethnic/social class (Santoro, 2007).

In schools serving refugees, the demographic difference between teachers and students may extend past race and gender to include nationality, language, and politics, broadly encompassing teachers' positionality within the conflict (Dryden-Peterson, 2015; Mendenhall et al., 2015). In countries experiencing high influxes of refugees, both refugee and national teachers are often recruited to help address an expanded demand for education (Penson et al., 2011; Richardson et al., 2018). As actors positioned in different, but possibly overlapping, contextual frames and conflict experiences, national and refugee teachers may perceive their roles in the education of refugee students differently, even though they are tasked with the same set of obligations. National teachers working with refugee students may harbor feelings of resentment or distrust towards students who are 'guests' within their country; refugee teachers may see students as a reminder of their own difficult circumstances (Bekerman & Zembylas, 2010; Hattam & Every, 2010; Zembylas, 2010; Zembylas, Charalambous, Charalambous, & Kendeou, 2011). Differences in teacher and student country of origin are particularly pertinent in the present study, given the historical and contemporary political, economic, and social relationships between Lebanon and Syria.

Cross-national evidence demonstrates teachers are among the most central contributors to ensuring children experience a constructive, quality education (Conn, 2017; Darling-Hammond, 2000; Glewwe, Hanushek, Humpage, & Ravina, 2011; Rivkin, Hanushek, & Kain, 2005; Schwille, Dembélé, & Schubert, 2007). Teachers in settings of conflict are expected to ensure a safe learning environment, support cognitive development

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and the development of academic skills, and establish and maintain academic routine (INEE, 2010a; INEE, 2014; UNESCO, 2006; UNHCR, 2012). However, researchers often highlight that little is known about the actual teaching processes implemented in classrooms in conflict settings (Penson, 2013; Penson et al., 2011; Penson & Yonemura, 2012; Richardson et al., 2018; Schweisfurth, 2014; Winthrop & Kirk, 2005). Literature that does exist finds teachers are often unprepared to address the specific educational challenges refugee students bring to the classroom (Sesnan et al., 2013), including interrupted schooling, lack of exposure to age-appropriate content, and shifts in language of instruction (Dryden-Peterson, 2015; Mendenhall et al., 2015). During conflict, professional development and training is often neglected or stopped, leaving teachers unsupported in deciding how to adjust their pedagogy to the new challenging circumstances (Buckland, 2005; Penson et al., 2011). Even when teachers are provided specific training and support, they often still express uncertainty about how they can meet the academic needs of their students (Kirk & Winthrop, 2007).

Schools also play an important role in promoting the social and emotional development of children (Dicum, 2005; Durlak, Weissberg, Dymnicki, Taylor, & Schellinger, 2011; Greenberg et al., 2003; Jennings & Greenberg, 2009; Novelli & Smith, 2011; Roeser, Eccles, & Sameroff, 2000). School is a place where students learn and practice social skills and behaviors, develop skills to recognize and manage emotions and foster positive relationships, internalize dominant social values and norms, and develop ideas of what constitutes citizenship and belonging (Elias et al., 1997; Greenberg et al., 2003; Zins, Bloodworth, Weissberg, & Walberg, 2007). Student-teacher relationships also have a significant influence on students' social and emotional development impacting for example, students' motivation to learn (Ames, 1992; Brophy, 2013; Wentzel & Wigfield, 1998), their feelings of belonging, security, and sense of identity (Goodenow, 1993; Wentzel, 1998), and

their ability to develop prosocial behavior (Howes, Hamilton, & Matheson, 1994; Howes, Hamilton, & Philipsen, 1998; Pianta & Steinberg, 1992).

In the context of conflict, student-teacher relationships are especially critical as students may have few other opportunities to establish stable, trusted connections with adults (Betancourt & Khan, 2008; Winthrop & Kirk, 2005; Zakharia, 2013). Teacher-mediated programs prove to be effective mechanisms for supporting students' recovery from war-related stress and decreasing symptoms related to posttraumatic stress disorder in various settings (Berger, Gelkopf, & Heineberg, 2012; Wolmer, Hamiel, Barchas, Slone, & Laor, 2011; Wolmer, Hamiel, & Laor, 2011; Wolmer, Laor, Dedeoglu, Siev, & Yazgan, 2005; Wolmer, Laor, & Yazgan, 2003). Teachers can help children recover from traumatic events by monitoring and moderating children's stress, assisting in students' emotional processing, and helping to reestablish familiar roles and routines (Alisic, Bus, Dulack, Pennings, & Splinter, 2012; Prinstein, La Greca, Vernberg, & Silverman, 1996; Rolfsnes & Idsoe, 2011). Relationships that foster caring and comfort are particularly important for helping children to cope with the psychological effects of war, to persevere in difficult circumstances and to foster hope for the future (Benard, 1995; Betancourt & Khan, 2008; Elbedour, ten Bensel, & Bastien, 1993; Toros, 2013; Winthrop & Kirk, 2008).

When adequately prepared, teachers can also play a critical role in rebuilding social cohesion within conflict-affected countries (Halai & Durrani, 2017; Horner et al., 2015; Vongalis-Macrow, 2006). Teachers are expected to model qualities of forgiveness and caring and foster tolerance and understanding (Elbedour et al., 1993). They are often considered peacebuilders, assigned the role of promoting inclusiveness, teaching children how to overcome prejudice and how to cultivate positive relationships across social, cultural, or

political boundaries (Arnot, Pinson, & Candappa, 2009; Horner et al., 2015; Zakharia, 2013). However, in their role as socializing agents, teachers may also purposefully or inadvertently hinder change, perpetuate distrust, and/or foster divisions between opposing ethnic, religious, or political groups, actions that could have significant repercussions outside of classrooms (Bush & Saltarelli, 2000; Davies, 2004; Horner et al., 2015; Niens, O'Connor, & Smith, 2013).

Teachers are vital, influential actors in contexts of conflict, with a vast array of obligations ascribed to them. However, teachers' ability to meet these obligations is largely shaped by local and national structures and experiences. Teachers must manage these different levels of influence as they juggle their own individual responses to the needs of their refugee students. In the analysis that follows, I focus on the experiences of teachers in an effort to emphasize their meaning-making and the challenges they identify when trying to meet the diverse and important needs within their classrooms.

METHODOLOGY

This study is a comparative case (Bartlett & Vavrus, 2016), designed to explore experiences of both national and refugee teachers working with refugee students in Lebanon. In horizontal analysis, I compare the different ways in which national and refugee teachers view their academic, social, and emotional obligations towards refugee students. In vertical analysis, I consider the interplay between local experiences in schools and global frameworks, as I analyze how the roles and responsibilities teachers assume relate to the expected obligations outlined by these frameworks. While this research is comparative by design, its purpose is not to argue that one type of teacher would be more beneficial to

refugee students. Instead, considering the experiences of both national and refugee teachers side by side and in relation to global frameworks illuminates gaps between policy and practice. This comparison also suggests ways to better prepare and better support teachers from any background and in any setting to meet the many challenges and responsibilities embedded within their work.

Data collection and analysis

For this study I conducted ethnographic fieldwork in Lebanon during the 2015/16 academic year at three public schools and four non-formal schools. Three schools were located within the governorates of Beirut, the urban capital, and four in the Beqaa, which is a rural setting (see Table 1). The majority of Syrian refugees in Lebanon reside in the Beqaa while Beirut is host to the second largest number of refugees, a population which continues to grow (UNHCR, 2018a). This sampling structure therefore reflects the four major schooling options available to Syrian refugee students: formal/non-formal schooling in urban areas, formal/non-formal schooling in rural areas.

The three public schools included in this study were randomly selected from the 2015/16 list of Lebanese government schools hosting second shift programs circulated by MEHE and UNICEF, stratified by location and size of refugee student enrollment. Schools with fewer than 200 students enrolled in the second shift were not considered for the study. All of the teachers I interviewed in public schools had a teaching degree or the equivalent. Only one teacher was in her first year of teaching. Sixty-two percent of teachers had taught second shift previously. Only three teachers (10% of the sample) had received any training for working with refugee students.

As this is a comparative case, I purposefully sought out non-formal schools that closely mirrored the educational structure provided in the second shift in public schools. The four non-formal schools in this study all followed a form of the Lebanese curriculum using the Lebanese textbooks (in English, French or Arabic), taught the same subjects as public schools, and had a set of structured academic goals for each grade level that students were required to pass to continue with their education. Three of the schools were run by the same NGO, named here as Irada. Across the four schools, 79% of teachers interviewed had finished their university training, while all had completed some education past secondary school. Sixty-five percent had formally taught before coming to Lebanon and all had participated in some form of training (or multiple trainings) since arriving in Lebanon designed specifically to support the teaching of refugee students.

I conducted in-depth semi-structured interviews with 62 teachers, 35 in non-formal schools and 27 in public schools, focusing on teachers' understanding of their educational, social, and emotional obligations to students within the classroom and how they adjusted their pedagogy to fit the needs they perceived among their students. I limited my sample to teachers working in grades first to sixth as the majority of refugee students are enrolled in these grades. In each school, I randomly selected one to two teachers from each grade, inviting the teacher to participate in the research. I observed the classroom(s) of each teacher I interviewed at least twice, as well as the classrooms of many others, collecting in total 262 hours of observations. I also conducted semi-structured interviews with 11 administrative staff and 26 staff members from donor institutions and NGOs working to provide education to refugees within Lebanon. Interviews focused on these actors' perceptions of short-term and long-term goals for education of refugee children and their understanding of teachers' obligations in relation to these goals (see Table 2 for a summary of all data

collected). I coded interviews using the qualitative software Atlas.ti. I developed etic codes informed by the literature around the three focal areas of this research: academic, emotional, social obligations. I identified additional emic codes based on themes that arose in interviews, memos and field notes including, for example, learning goals, student support, and knowledge of students' background.

I worked closely with an Arabic-speaking research assistant throughout the data collection process as many interviews, classroom sessions, and school meetings were conducted in Arabic, a language I do not speak. The research assistant served as a linguistic translator during interviews and observations, as well as a cultural translator, explaining relevant contextual information such as the significance of certain activities or rituals. I recorded each interview and hired a local translator to translate and transcribe the recordings. Some teachers chose to speak in English during interviews. These conversations were transcribed and are quoted verbatim.

FINDINGS: TEACHING UNDER NEW CIRCUMSTANCES

During interviews, teachers identified a myriad of challenges they were facing in their classrooms when working with refugee students. As the causes of these difficulties were entwined, the manners in which teachers reflected on and worked to meet students' academic, social, and emotional needs were often overlapping and interrelated. In particular, teachers' views of their relationships with students were influential across all domains. In the following sections I first briefly present the challenges teachers highlighted and then discuss various ways in which Lebanese and Syrian teachers conceptualized their obligations to their students and tried to support the educational success of their students.

1. Academic obligations: Different goals lead to different approaches

Syrian and Lebanese teachers discussed similar issues regarding students' academic development. These included students missing basic skills such as how to hold a pencil or which side of the paper to write on; students demonstrating large gaps in their understanding due to missing school for an extended period of time; the complexity of balancing a mix of ages and/or abilities within the same classroom; limited English language skills, which hindered progress in classes where English was the language of instruction; and limited parental support. While teachers described comparable academic difficulties in their classrooms, the approaches Syrian and Lebanese teachers took to tackling these issues – including the goals they set for students in their classrooms, their efforts to adapt pedagogy and curriculum to meet students' academic needs, and the level of responsibility they assumed for supporting struggling students – were often divergent.

1.1 Learning goals

Consistently across the sample, Lebanese teachers pointed to the mastery of foundational skills as a central learning goal for their refugee students. Teachers focused on basic skills as many of their students entered the classroom far behind the level assumed within the curriculum. Asma's primary objective in her grade one English class "for the whole of the year" was to teach students the letter names and sounds and to read words, although according to the curriculum, grade one students should already be reading full sentences. In comparison, some teachers saw completing the curriculum as their main responsibility, regardless of whether students had the foundational skills necessary to learn new material. As Rita explained, "I have a curriculum in my hand. If the students reach, and finish the curriculum, this means that I accomplished my mission." Asma and Rita highlight

a balancing act many teachers had to practice. While there was a need to build students' basic skills, teachers also felt compelled not to wander too far from the lessons outlined within the official curriculum. This was a decision most often made at the classroom level as teachers reported receiving no direct pressure from principals or MEHE officials to fully implement the curriculum. However, as primary schools in Lebanon often practice automatic promotion, teachers were sensitive to the fact that students needed to master the knowledge in their classrooms in order to understand material presented the following year. Teaching to the curriculum was also the approach Lebanese teachers were expected to follow during first shift, so it was not surprising that in the second shift the official curriculum served as the benchmark for the goals they developed.

Syrian teachers also focused on teaching foundational skills, yet goals related to social and emotional competencies were often of equal, or greater, priority. For Hala, she wanted her students to learn first to "be honest, loyal, and [so] I focus on morals before teaching [content]… If they learn it from now, students will keep it with them throughout their life." Hadia created a yearly lesson plan with academic milestones for her students alongside which she developed a "social objective…lesson by lesson" to help teach students how to effectively manage personal challenges. In addition, many Syrian teachers pointed to the development of communication skills as an important learning objective for their students. As Farah described for her grade one students, "I want them to learn numbers and letters. I want them to be able to verbally communicate with each other. I want them to learn and discover words that would help them interact with each other and express their thoughts." Farah points first to key academic concepts and second to key social skills she believes her students are lacking. Like Farah, Mohammed wanted his first grade students to learn "how to communicate with other people, how to live in different communities." With no end in

sight to the conflict in Syria, teachers were aware their students could spend many years, if not all of their lives, outside of the country. It was therefore essential that alongside academic knowledge, students gain the skills needed to interact with and understand different societies.

1.2 Adapting pedagogy

In line with their teaching goals, most Lebanese teachers chose to reduce the speed and content of their lessons in order to help students master the basic information in each subject. When teaching science during the second shift, Adnan explained, "I teach very slowly…I don't write any paragraphs. I only draw and label [diagrams]." A number of teachers also chose to spend time reviewing material from an earlier grade level before embarking on the lessons for the current year. For Imad, dedicating a considerable amount of time to reviewing previous English lessons as well as moving slowly through the curriculum meant a chance to ensure real learning occurred. He was less concerned with finishing the textbook, asking, "what's the point?" if students lacked the background knowledge needed to understand and retain the information. He hoped instead that his grade six students would establish a strong foundation in the language so they could continue learning in the next grade. Not all teachers held such high hopes for their students. For some teachers, reducing the curriculum went hand in hand with the low expectations they held for their students. In her math classes, Adela tried to cover the basic concepts during the year, but made little effort to teach more difficult material. "Things that they do not need in their daily lives, or are a bit more complicated, I say – why should I bother their brains with it – because really they do not comprehend it. Why should I spend all this effort for nothing?" Adela decided to eliminate material that she believed students could not

understand, saving her the "effort" of trying to find ways to teach difficult concepts and her students the extra effort of trying to learn them.

Eliminating lessons and simplifying content was an approach Lebanese teachers decided on for themselves, within the confines of their own autonomy and classrooms. However, when teachers articulated concern regarding students' academic development during sporadic visits by MEHE staff, 'reduce the curriculum' was also one of the only suggestions Ministry staff provided. While this approach gave teachers the freedom to create classes as they wished, it also placed an immense amount of responsibility on teachers' shoulders, leaving them alone to determine what their students should and need not learn.

In contrast, some teachers made no real changes to their pedagogical approaches, assuming that the most fair way to treat Syrian students was to act as if they were the same as their Lebanese students. During the morning and afternoon Rita used "the same method," explaining, "I don't differentiate" between shifts. When asked how she adapted her teaching styles across shifts, Michelle explained, "I am the same teacher, I do not differentiate between students based on their nationality…I teach in the morning the same way I teach in the afternoon." For Rita and Michelle, adapting what or how they taught in the afternoon suggested discriminatory treatment as opposed to a means of ensuring their students' needs were fully met.

While Lebanese teachers were most concerned with *what* content they should be teaching their students, Syrian teachers were often more focused on *how* they were getting the content across. The majority of Syrian teachers found it necessary to leave behind the type of teacher-centered pedagogy they had relied on in Syria. As Batoul explained, "when I first came here, I used my old method but it didn't seem fruitful. The students weren't

benefitting, they weren't happy…I had to change my ways." Through training and their own independent research, teachers like Batoul adapted to more activity-based, student-centered pedagogy in an effort to more effectively convey information and engage students at different levels of learning. Hadia, for example, used activities to help students continue to learn new content even if they struggled with certain basic skills such as reading or writing. Hadia found that introducing activities, games or physical movement into lessons "helps [in] delivering the idea to the child without him feeling obliged to write, eventually he will write by himself." In her classroom, Sana relied on activities to effectively teach a classroom of students with a real range of academic levels. For example, by using a game of dice to practice addition, all students could practice their math skills at the same time. "Even if students do not get the right answers, it is enough that they count the numbers, write the numbers, and the plus sign."

Syrian teachers also adapted content and activities to align with the circumstances their students were facing outside the classroom. For example, teachers avoided questions about family as some students had parents who were missing or had passed away in the war. Teachers also tended to modify lessons about the home to instead focus on spaces in a tent or an apartment as most children no longer lived in houses. Teachers believed their lessons were more effective and more inclusive when the content aligned with the realities of their students. When Hala taught a science lesson on the four food groups, she knew "some students in my class are not getting the nutrition that they need. So I limit my discussion of nutrition to the basic level," focusing on foods families can afford and avoiding "things that the students cannot have."

<u>1.3 Supporting struggling students</u>

In both public and non-formal schools, teachers had to address a wide range of skills and abilities in each of their classrooms. While all teachers wanted to see their students master the content, the support Lebanese teachers offered to students struggling in their classrooms was often limited by time and by their own level of patience. Basma extended extra support depending "on the time I have in the class. If I have my time I…take them aside and we work alone. If I don't have enough time I just try to encourage them" to work harder. When time permitted in her mathematics class, Nada would ask a peer to tutor a struggling student. However, if the student did not catch up, Nada felt there was little more she could do. "In the end, if the student doesn't want to [learn], it's over. I try to pay attention to him, but eventually there is another student who needs more attention."

Like Nada, many teachers believed students who were not learning lacked the proper motivation, as opposed to the proper instruction, to succeed. Mazen did little to support students struggling in his math classes explaining, "[students] who want to get better and work on themselves, they will get better. On the other hand, the ones who don't want to change or get better, they'll stay the same." Teachers often expressed a feeling of frustration towards students whom had fallen behind, especially when they had no clear strategies to address the problems. As Asma recounted, "honestly I'm hopeless. They are hopeless. I can't do more than my effort and more than what I'm doing in the classroom." Faced with new demands in her classroom, Asma believed she had pushed her skills to the limit and could do little more for students who, in her words "don't want to listen…don't want to learn." Implicit in Asma's response is the dearth of support available to her as a teacher,

leaving her on her own to navigate a set of challenges that are new both to her and to her students.

A select number of Lebanese teachers developed techniques for supporting their struggling students. In Adnan's science class, if a student failed a test, he tried never to give the student a poor grade. "It's not nice to put a zero," he explained. Instead, he allowed the student to repeat the exam at home or he would give the test again as an oral exam. Adnan found that when he asked his students the questions orally, they often knew the answer, suggesting the problem was in their writing skills, not their comprehension of the material. Nadine found a combination of peer support and teacher guidance often helped her struggling students to grasp new material. For example, when solving problems on the board, if a student was unable to answer a question with her support she would call on a friend to explain the concept. In response, a student was often motivated to solve the next problem alone "so that his friend won't have to explain for him; I give him the push to learn by himself, without his friend's assistance."

Syrian teachers also felt challenged by students who were not advancing in their classrooms. However they were less likely to place the responsibility of learning on the shoulders of the students but instead tried to look for and address the root causes of a student's poor performance. Aya remembered her 11-year old student Mariam who at first could not hold a pencil and refused to speak to anyone. Aya spent time observing Mariam, speaking to other teachers, working with the school administration, and meeting with her parents. Aya learned Mariam had been treated poorly in her last school by the teacher and therefore worked hard to build a positive relationship with her. "I praise her and give her stars. I only ask her to solve questions on the board that I know she can do so that I can

build her self-confidence. She now raises her hand to answer without being afraid…[Her] performance started getting better." Mariam's case was not unique; almost every Syrian teacher identified students in their classrooms who needed considerable support in order to advance academically. Consistently, teachers dedicated significant time and effort to these students, feeling compelled to help in some way, even when at times, their efforts were not always rewarded. When asked why she invested so much in Mariam's development Aya explained simply, "I am her teacher at the end of the day."

Syrian teachers often could not resolve the challenges their students faced outside of the classroom, yet they were conscious of these issues and tried to work within these limitations. As Firas explained, "sometimes students' circumstances affect their academic achievement and studies. For example, a student who is living in a tent will not have electricity to study…the student will not have the space to sit alone, concentrate on studying, and review the lesson he/she took in class. We take all of these things into consideration whenever we want to evaluate a student." Syrian teachers were well aware of students' individual circumstances and kept those challenges in mind when targeting their academic development. In addition to working closely with individual students, Syrian teachers described a number of different techniques they used at the classroom level to support struggling students including asking advanced students to model approaches, introducing opportunities for peer-mentoring, offering extra sessions after class, and coordinating efforts with caregivers at home. While teachers reported feeling frustrated at times, Syrian teachers remained motivated to find and implement techniques to keep struggling students engaged and learning in the classroom.

As the above analysis reveals, Lebanese and Syrian teachers expressed a similar dedication to advancing students' academic achievement, but the pathways they prioritized to arrive at that goal differed. These different priorities were reflected in, and had an influence on, the ways teachers adapted their pedagogy to support their students' academic development. Lebanese teachers were most often determined to follow the only guide they had at their disposal, the official curriculum. However, this tool did little to help them navigate the multiple learning challenges their students brought to the classroom. Faced with competing academic demands, teachers had to make new compromises within the classroom, often leading to the slowest learners getting left further behind. Alongside their academic expectations for students, Syrian teachers saw the need and the opportunity to set goals related to their students' social and emotional development. Syrian teachers invested considerable effort into how they were teaching, especially in regards to the support they provided to struggling students. These decisions often led them away from the official curriculum and at times placed academic progress as a secondary goal for their students.

2. Social-emotional obligations: Negotiating relationships from different perspectives

Teachers discussed a plethora of difficulties students faced outside of school that impacted students' social development and emotional wellbeing. Refugee students often recounted experiences of discrimination and racism when interacting with Lebanese citizens. Families suffered with the strains of poverty. Many students lived in tents or in shared apartments full of extended family members, leading to heightened levels of stress. Students missed school to work, as families struggled to afford basic necessities. As Firas, a Syrian teacher, observed, "the parents' financial conditions and the parents themselves are

problems…[At school] we try to make students forget the harsh reality that they are living in…but eventually, they have to go back to their homes and to the harsh conditions of life."

Many teachers spoke with concern regarding the violence their students witnessed in their communities or suffered from at home. Even though refugees shared a common national background, differences in political views, religious beliefs, and economic standing often created friction among families. Hadia, a Syrian teacher, observed tensions in her classroom between her students based on "what they are learning at home," including political opinions and social beliefs. Teachers often associated these complicated circumstances with poor conduct they observed in the classroom and playground. Students were quick to accuse each other of improper behavior, played extremely roughly in the schoolyard, and regularly resolved problems using fists. Adela, a Lebanese teacher, noted, "There is a lot of violence between them. You see when they hit, it's as if they're hitting an enemy or something. I always tell them, you're all from one country, et cetera. But they don't listen."

Teachers described the adverse impact conflict had on the emotional wellness of their students in multiple ways. Many knew about traumatic events their students had experienced, including surviving bombing raids, witnessing the death of family members, having a loved one arrested by the government, or having to abandon their homes in a state of fear. In addition, teachers described difficult circumstances in Lebanon that had a negative impact on student behavior, including parents getting divorced or remarried, family separation due to onward migration, or moving locations recurrently so parents could find work. In the face of these challenges, Lebanese and Syrian teachers developed varying approaches to support students' integration into their temporary home and to foster

tolerance among students, and they provided different opportunities for students to reflect on their experiences.

2.1 Addressing challenges of integration

Lebanese teachers had some understanding of the difficulties Syrian students confronted as they tried to reestablish their lives in Lebanon as refugees. However, teachers rarely discussed issues related to students' integration into Lebanon directly with their students, as many felt they did not have the time or the responsibility to broach the subject. As Lamia explained, "You have only 45 or 50 minutes…I don't have time to discuss…their problems, and what they are feeling, so I am just giving my lesson and that's it." Najib felt that such conversations were "outside the teaching framework." According to Nadia, teachers "don't do anything" in relation to integration. "I go in, I teach, and I leave. There is a specialist who works on that [integration challenges], but I don't. It is not my responsibility." Other teachers considered students' stay in Lebanon as transient and therefore discussions related to integration were not pertinent. As Ranya explained, there was no need to help students "adjust to living in Lebanon given that eventually, they will go back to their home country." Time and again teachers referenced the temporality of students' presence in Lebanon, suggesting minimal responsibility for helping students address social issues they might be facing within this new context.

A few Lebanese teachers did believe they had a role in supporting their students' integration into Lebanon. However without a clear understanding of the challenges students faced engaging with Lebanese society, teachers often had no clear approach for helping students feel more comfortable in this new setting. As Basma described, "Sometimes I feel responsible for [students] adapting in Lebanon. But I don't give it lots of time…I talk to

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them a little, not every day, from time to time. I ask them where do you go, what do you in the afternoon? Which places do you like in Lebanon?" Basma did give her students the opportunity to discuss their experiences, yet focused the conversation on students' exploration of the country, as if adjusting to living in Lebanon as a refugee were a question of just becoming acquainted with the surroundings.

Regardless of the specific attention Lebanese teachers placed on the issue of integration, the fact that Syrian students were spending time in Lebanese schools with Lebanese teachers served to connect students to the new community and in many cases, allowed teachers to foster and model positive relationships between themselves as Lebanese and their students as Syrians. As Manar explained, Syrian students "come to school and see the same things every day. It deletes the misconceptions that some students might have that Lebanese people do not like them because they came to Lebanon. When they come to school and deal with people who are kind to them, those misconceptions start to change." For Aatifa, supporting students through the process of integration meant making her students feel welcomed in her classroom as well as welcomed in the country. "I'm a Lebanese teacher and I choose to teach them, so I have the responsibility to let them know [I accept them]. And it's not their fault or their mistake to come to Lebanon. They are innocent people." Teachers like Manar and Aatifa had no specific approach to supporting students as they struggled to settle into a new country, yet they believed their consistent presence in the classroom was one way to help refugee students feel more at ease in their new home.

Syrian teachers reported that conversations related to the challenges of integration were common in their classrooms. Most teachers believed they shared some responsibility in

supporting students' adjustment to Lebanon and described a variety of approaches to helping students manage the experience. Teachers commonly tried to show compassion and a shared understanding for what students confronted on a daily basis. Nour wanted her students to feel that "we are all the same and I am experiencing the same thing… I don't let students feel that they are the only ones suffering…[Coming to Lebanon] was a shock to all of us and we have to pass through certain stages to deal with this shock." When students reported instances of mistreatment by Lebanese, teachers often encouraged students not to draw assumptions about all Lebanese based on the actions of a few individuals. Sana tried to teach her students that "one cannot judge all people based on the actions of one person. There are good Lebanese people and there are bad ones; we cannot generalize and say that all Lebanese are bad people. Even amongst us Syrians, there are those who are good people and those who are not."

Teachers often compared the actions of Lebanese to those of Syrians in an effort to help students recognize similarities between themselves and their host community. These comparisons also challenged the idea that the discrimination Syrian students were experiencing as refugees was a one-way street, suggesting instead that both Syrians and Lebanese needed to learn to accept each other. Dalia wanted her students to understand that "we are all brothers and there is no difference between Lebanese and Syrian children…We are all the same." In addition to promoting acceptance, teachers also encouraged students to just ignore poor behavior, recognizing that as refugees, students had few forms of protection within Lebanon. As Wafaa explained, "I am trying to make [Syrian students] understand not to provoke the Lebanese much, because they are being targeted…I am trying as much as I can to make them control their tongue and behavior. I am not teaching them to be weak, but returning insults would not lead them anywhere." Wafaa felt responsible for teaching her

students strategies that would protect them as refugees in the present but without damaging their self-confidence and personal strength, skills that they would need far into the future.

Syrian teachers were acutely aware of the social challenges their students faced as they too confronted acts of racism, discrimination and even violence due to their status as refugees in Lebanon. Some teachers found it difficult to separate the reality they encountered outside the school from what they advocated for inside the classroom. Naser struggled to provide a positive perspective to students regarding life in Lebanon when he was himself very unhappy in the country. "I don't think that Lebanon is a good place to live…I didn't like the people here. I didn't like anything." Maher felt that "the Lebanese people rejected the Syrians, so this makes it difficult for me to tell the student that he should fuse or adapt in the Lebanese society…I cannot teach a student how to adapt in a society that is rejecting him." While he may not actively discourage students from associating with Lebanese, Maher found it hard to encourage positive interactions with Lebanese given the ways in which he saw and experienced the country's treatment of Syrians.

2.2 Promoting tolerance

Lebanese teachers described a variety of approaches to address and improve student behavior, most often vacillating between encouraging love and connections among students and reprimanding and punishing troublemakers. When Nadine observed Syrian students hitting each other sometimes she would "yell at them, and punish them. Then I realize that this isn't their fault, it's the environment they are living in. So I apologize and talk to them calmly saying that we shouldn't hit or harm our friends, instead we should love them." Like most teachers, Nadine had a general sense of what factors may be influencing students' behavior, pointing to "the environment they are living in," but had never spoken directly to

her students regarding their circumstances outside of school and the causes behind this conflictive behavior. Without a clear understanding of what was dividing students, teachers tried to foster tolerance by focusing on what students did share: their nationality. When Majeda would observe a student fighting she would speak to the student "to tell him that he's first your classmate. He's Syrian like you. He's from maybe from the same city that you come from. You have to love each other, you don't have to fight with each other." However, few teachers reported this approach as successful. More often, Lebanese teachers were frustrated that behavioral issues were distracting from academics. Hanan believed it her job to address intolerance among students "but if [it's a] hopeless case what can I do? Because I have to explain the lesson. I can't keep saying 'stop talking, don't hit him, don't do that, don't do that'…most of them didn't listen." As classroom and school observations demonstrated, teachers like Hanan would try to control rowdy classrooms by screaming loudly or pulling an authority figure into their classroom in hopes of getting students back in control. Although these approaches may have helped in the short term, they did little to address the underlying tensions among students.

Syrian teachers were also frustrated with the amount of time and energy they had to dedicate to addressing student behavior, especially as often their efforts seemed short-lived. As Rayya explained, "From Monday to Friday there is progress. They go two days home, they come back, the same person as like the way you started. From here I'm acknowledging the fact that it's only temporary…[if] parents are not working with kids the same way you are working, it's leading nowhere." Despite feeling that change was an uphill battle, Syrian teachers still actively found or created opportunities to teach tolerance and acceptance in their classrooms. Approaches included providing positive reinforcement, modeling tolerance

and acceptance, engaging students in group work, and talking to parents about how to model behavior at home.

When asked how she encouraged tolerance in her classroom, Aabira described how she sought to teach her students the concept of respect "If you told them that they should respect their friend, they won't understand what respect is. So, you have to do some sort of a play in the classroom, reflecting on dealing with each other in a respectful way, giving them real examples of the importance of saying 'sorry' and how it helps them forgive each other and solving the problems they face with each other." Hadia believed that school was not just a place for academic development, but also a place for learning "first, how to love and get along with each other, then to face the outside." She applied this perspective to formal and informal lessons in the classroom. For example, during art class "two boys came to me, one drew the [Syrian] revolutionary flag and the other drew the [Syrian] regime flag, and they started arguing which flag is ours, this or that, expecting me to answer them. I asked both of them if they had a house and they both replied with a no, so I said what about we find a land where we can build a house on, and then we argue about the flag." Hadia used a shared sense of loss and shared need for hope as a means of diffusing tension between her students. In using the collective 'we' she also demonstrated how as fellow refugees, she and the students were united in circumstance, if not in political belief, a fact that should bring them together, not push them apart.

2.3 Developing identity

In public schools, Lebanese teachers spent little to no time teaching refugee students about their Syrian identity. Most teachers never considered discussing Syria, as lessons related to the country were not included in the official curriculum. As Michelle stated clearly

"We do not learn about Syria. In the afternoon, we teach them Lebanese lessons, not lessons related to their country." For Michelle, who taught grade six Civics, giving only "Lebanese lessons" meant teaching Syrian students what it meant to be a Lebanese citizenship, an identity to which they could never have formal access. Other teachers avoided topics related to Syria altogether as they worried discussions might result in political or social tension in the classroom. When asked whether he taught his students anything about Syria in his class, Imad stated, "I'm not allowed. I don't allow myself to speak about politics because I know that not all the class has the same [politics or] support the same leader. So I don't want them to have a fight." Imad assumed any discussion about Syria would include a discussion about current politics and could lead to problems between his students, problems that he did not feel prepared to address. He therefore never mentioned Syria during lessons as he preferred to avoid possible conflict in his classroom.

When teachers did find ways to integrate the topic of Syria into the curriculum, they were often impressed with the positive reaction the subject received. Leila would rarely discuss Syria in class as "there is nothing about Syria" in the curriculum. However, for the lesson on 'My Country,' she remembered asking students "to describe one beautiful area from their country, and they wrote! Some chose a city from their country, like Homs, Aleppo or Damascus. It's like I brought back a feeling of nostalgia." For Leila, giving students the opportunity to reflect their own identity in their schoolwork provided students with greater motivation to engage in the task at hand.

Unlike most Lebanese teachers, Rita actively tried to integrate teaching about Syria into her lessons "I always talk to them about Syria, always, because this attracts them…They want to talk, and [discuss] that there's a difference between here and there… So we start to

compare and say what you had there we have here, in terms of employments and occupations, etc." For Rita, integrating discussions of Syria into her lessons served to engage and motivate students as well as to help students build connections between their home country and their host country. The efforts of teachers like Rita and Leila were particularly notable given the specific context of Lebanon. In addition to the political friction between Lebanon and Syria and the social friction between the host community and refugees, Lebanon itself is a country of complex identities and social relationships. For example, the Lebanese history curriculum does not include the Lebanese Civil War, as there is no collective agreement on the events, reflecting Lebanon's own internal tension. Therefore it is not surprising that many teachers would avoid a topic they believed to be sensitive, as that expectation has already been set within the curriculum.

Despite tensions surrounding their own country, Syrian teachers, in contrast, commonly reflected feeling it was their responsibility to teach students about Syria. As Yara expressed, "It is my duty towards my country and the children of my country to constantly remind them of their beautiful country." Across the sample, Syrian teachers saw their classroom as an opportunity to build a stronger bond between their students and their home and found multiple ways to integrate lessons about Syria into both the curriculum and the school environment. At each school, the supporting NGO encouraged teachers to augment civics lessons included in the Lebanese curriculum with basic information about Syria such as important cities and geographical features. Firas started this portion of the curriculum by having students interview family members about their villages in Syria and share the information in class so students would "get to know each other better." Throughout the year, Firas used lessons related to Syria to teach students about their homes and culture and to build deeper, shared connections with their peers.

Farah began to incorporate lessons about Syria into her class when she discovered her students did not have a clear idea of their own origins. "If a student is living in [a Lebanese town], he would say that he is from [that Lebanese town]…They have no idea where they are from…I feel sad for this generation because they are Syrians, but they do not know it…I feel sad that we are scattered and that our children have no sense of their identity." In an effort to build a stronger sense of identity, Farah began to teach students "about the nature of Syria, the mountains and the beach, and about the historical sites that we have in Syria. I would show them pictures of how Syria was." Farah believed teaching students about "how Syria was" was an essential component for their development of both collective and personal identity. Teachers also saw discussions about Syria as a way to communicate to students that their stay in Lebanon was temporary and to encourage, and hope for, return. Batoul reflected, "I like to teach them that we must believe in Syria. I like to tell them that it's our country and it is our duty to protect it, to rebuild it. They must learn these things." For Batoul, teaching about Syria meant developing a sense of national pride, a means of building connections among students and an opportunity to plant the seed for a brighter possible future.

Syrian teachers felt it important to incorporate lessons about Syria into the school day, yet like Lebanese teachers, they also recognized the subject could lead to difficult conversations and emotions within the classroom. Aabira acknowledged that asking her students to talk about Syria sometime brought up "rough memories" of loss or suffering. However, for her, these impressions of Syria were also important for students to grapple with as they represented, in her words "the truth. We shouldn't deny reality." When his school would sing songs about Syria together, Maher noted that some of his students would start crying. As students sang he felt "the words [of the songs] are coming right from the

heart because they know what is happening. These events have left psychological effects on these students," effects that often surfaced when students were given the opportunity to remember Syria. In addition to difficult emotions, discussion about Syria could also lead to controversial topics and contested identities. During art class, Nawal remembered asking her students to draw something related to Syria. Expecting pictures of their homes or community, students instead "started drawing flags, which show political sides" in relation to the warring factions in Syria. Nawal quickly stopped the lesson and asked students to all draw the same image, hoping to avoid any possible conflict among students.

2.4 Navigating student experiences with conflict

There was considerable variation in the ways Lebanese teachers viewed their roles regarding the provision of emotional support and opportunities for students to share memories and experiences of conflict. Manar described trying to offer support to any of her students who seemed to be grappling with a difficult situation. Specifically, she tried to help students "forget about the unfortunate events that are happening in Syria. I help them laugh and give them some hope or a chance to study and become good citizens." While she believed it was "the teacher's duty" to support her students, she felt that neither she nor her colleagues had the correct training to help refugee students grapple with past and present experiences of trauma. Many teachers expressed a similar concern about their refugee students and their Lebanese students, suggesting that, in general, public schools were not prepared to meet the needs of any student demonstrating emotional stress, regardless of nationality.

Other Lebanese teachers were less concerned with their ability to support students who had experienced trauma as they believed their role was to focus on academics, not

emotions. As Adnan explained, "I work on academic purpose not on emotional purpose…We have two hours per week and we have a big book to give them. I don't have time to discuss about emotional [problems]." Adnan knew little about the specific circumstances that might be impacting his students whom, he observed, "share their problems with each other" but not with the teacher. When students did become visibly upset in his classroom, Adnan sent them to the principal. He said, "I see them cry, but I don't ask them [why]…I think, but it's wrong, it is not my job." Adnan saw supporting children's emotional wellness as a task separate from and secondary to their academic development. Despite feeling there was something "wrong" about his approach, Adnan believed he was not responsible for anything other than moving students through the curriculum.

When students did share experiences with their Lebanese teachers, teachers often tried to steer students' focus back to academics. For example in Leila's classroom "one student would tell me that they had two floors that fell down, and another would tell about the area he lived in, and how he is feeling nostalgic. I listen to everything they say, eventually I feel that they are getting sad and depressed, some girls would start to cry! Then, I change the subject in a simple, indirect way." Leila allows her students the opportunity to express themselves but did not encourage or foster such discussions as she worried they were more problematic than productive. Similarly, Majida tried to keep conversations regarding difficult circumstances out of her classroom as she believed they did more harm than good to students' wellbeing. "I don't let them speak about the war in their countries, no. I want them to forget that, as much as I can. Believe me, because that is very harmful for them…Whenever they think about that…[y]ou feel their suffering…Poor them, there's no way I get involved in such things. Always I try to find something that is beautiful about their country, let us remember it. But about war? No. No way." Majida believed strongly that the

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best way to support emotional recovery in her classroom was to focus students on positive memories and deliberately not to mention any negative circumstances in hopes that avoiding the topic might prevent students from suffering. Her preference not to "get involved" was an attitude many teachers shared, feeling strained by competing priorities and a lack of proper training and support to effectively manage the emotional and developmental impact of conflict and displacement on their students.

In comparison, almost all Syrian teachers expressed the belief that as teachers, they were an important emotional support for students, despite feeling, as their Lebanese peers did, that there was a lack of training and specific resources. Teachers shared the concern that students were not receiving support at home given the strain families were experiencing and tried to make themselves as available as necessary. As Nasr explained "I give [my students] an open ear to listen to them…I think that maybe the family is not listening to them so they try to talk with the teacher. All the time when they have a break I sit [outside] or they come to me and say my mother did bad things, my father…They want to express [their feelings]." Muntaha actively encouraged her students to speak to her when they had no other outlet. "I make them feel that I am their refuge, that I can keep their secrets…I tell them that a teacher is like a second mother, what they can't tell their mothers at home, they can always talk to me about in school."

Syrian teachers discussed various ways they tried supporting their students through difficult experiences. Some like Naser and Muntaha, served as confidants to students' experiences and memories. Other teachers drew on shared experiences to help students move forward, highlighting the unique ability teachers had to comprehend and empathize with students' past and present challenges. When students told Fadiya "that their house was

bombed, I also tell them that my house was bombed as well. They also tell me that they have not been to Syria in a long time, so I also tell them that I have not seen my mother in a long time. I try to show them that we share the same pain, but I show them that I am trying to be strong and that we have to continue living." Teachers took the role of emotional support very personally, as if the care they extended to their students was akin to helping their own family, or their own selves. Sana described that when dealing with a child who has lived through a traumatic event: "I consider him or her as a son or a daughter. There is no way that I would allow my child to remain scared; I need to help him or her overcome that feeling and experience. We should forget what happened in Syria and move on. We should start a new chapter in our lives." Sana considered helping her students as equal to helping her own children and therefore demanded the same compassion and support. At the same time, Sana underscored the collective 'we', suggesting that together, she and her students needed to move forward from difficult events and build towards a better future.

While most teachers at non-formal schools encouraged their students to confide in them, teachers often described feeling unprepared and unsure of the best way to support students. Haroun admitted that sometimes he felt at a complete loss regarding emotional support for his students. "I don't know. I hug them and I tell them that things are going to be okay. I lie…Sometimes I just feel helpless and that I cannot help them, honestly." Fatima considered that as teachers "we're responsible. I know I am responsible, but I just feel like I lack the tools necessary. Because words are very powerful…one word can build a character and another one can break it." A number of teachers shared a similar concern as to whether the responses they provided were correct, or if their words did more harm than good. With few outside resources or supports to draw from, teachers often gave advice based on how they were processing their own experiences. As Nawal explained, "I was not trained in

psycho-social support and how to deal with refugees, especially kids who have witnessed war, but I tell them my point of view. Whether it is right or wrong, I don't know." Adding later, "Sometimes I fear that what I say to them is incorrect." Yet despite this hesitation, teachers felt compelled to continue listening to students and made their best effort to support them as they processed very complex emotions.

Through formal and informal lessons, both Lebanese and Syrian teachers provided students with the opportunity for social and emotional development. However in the classrooms of Lebanese teachers, these lessons were most often implicit in nature, communicated indirectly through the type of relationship that developed between teacher and student and reinforced through the daily routines that brought students and teachers together. Lebanese teachers were aware that their students faced tensions in both their Syrian communities and the larger Lebanese community, but they felt that the classroom offered neither the time nor the secure space to effectively address these issues. Syrian teachers focused on bolstering students' social skills across multiple domains including their personal identity as Syrians, their relation with the immediate Syrian refugee community, and their connection to the larger Lebanese society. Syrian teachers explicitly encouraged and modeled tolerance and understanding for others even when students faced clear messages of exclusion and rejection. In general, Syrian teachers invested more time and effort than Lebanese teachers to provide students with social and emotional support. This is not surprising given that Syrian teachers had clearer understandings of their students' challenges given their own experiences as refugees. However, all teachers expressed equal uncertainty regarding how best to support students struggling to make sense of traumatic events of the past and present.

3. A synthesis of obligations: Hope for the future

Implicit in the work of Lebanese and Syrian teachers to meet the educational needs of their refugee students was the assumption that these efforts were aimed at preparing students for a productive future. The differences in how Lebanese and Syrian teachers conceived of the future for their students mirrored in part the differences in how they conceived of their academic and social-emotional obligations to their students. Teachers' expectations for the future also influenced their conception of their role in shaping and supporting students' futures and the messages they communicated to students regarding what might lie ahead.

Many Lebanese teachers framed students' short-term futures in relation to their academic progress and success. Students who were bright, worked hard and had support from their families would, as teachers described, continue their education, while those who struggled would end up out of school, working as laborers at a young age. Adela thought some of her Syrian students "would become something" but "three-quarters of them I feel [will] not," pointing to their "weak" performance in her grade three classroom due, in her opinion, to lack of parental support and individual ability. Aalia also imagined her good students would stay in school, but felt those who were already behind in her grade one classroom would not go far. "I can't save them if they are weak," stated Aalia, explaining that the challenging circumstances students faced outside of school were too large for some to overcome and not her job to address. As early as grade one, teachers like Adela and Aalia seemed to place the responsibility of building a positive future squarely on the shoulders of the students, suggesting that their role as teachers was to simply direct students' steps rather than help construct the road forward.

When Lebanese teachers did consider a long-term future for their students, the picture they conjured was one of uncertainty, both about *what* the future would hold for their students as well as *where* that future would unfold. Leila worried about what awaited her students once their schooling was over. "Unless they go somewhere else, they will not have a good future, as you know they can achieve a better future outside [Lebanon], yet, I think there is no future for them in Syria." Leila's vision of her students' future was located somewhere in the unknown. Given GoL regulations prohibiting Syrians refugees from working in Lebanon (Khater, 2017), Leila did not believe her students would find gainful employment in their host country but neither could she imagine a positive return to their home country. For his students, Mazen believed it was still "too early to think about their future," but that "here in Lebanon they don't have any future since they can't get any good official job" and their ability to return to Syria was still unknown. Without a clear vision of the future for refugee students, Lebanese teachers often avoided discussing the topic in class. Najib, for example, would speak about the future to his Lebanese students in the morning as "their orientation is known" but not his Syrian students in the afternoon. He believed their circumstances were too uncertain to even consider the future. Refugee students "don't know for example if the government will open for them [the schools] next year or not. And they're dispersed and distracted, they have twenty different circumstances…Really there's no future…How will [a student] build his life? Based on what?"

A number of Lebanese teachers did feel invested in the future of their students, even if they could not envision what that future would hold. Often teachers used the promise of a better future as means of motivating students in their learning and as encouragement for persevering through difficult times. As Imad explained "I tell [my students] about the future. That maybe there's a great future waiting for you and you have to prove yourself…I keep

encouraging them and giving them motivation in order to keep on going." More often than not, the brighter future teachers described involved students' return to Syria. Ranya would tell her students to try their best to benefit from the education being provided in Lebanon as "in the future, you will go back to your country, and you will move on with your lives." Rita also linked hard work in Lebanon to a better future in Syria, motivating students to finish their studies and receive a diploma that will be recognized in Syria. In order to encourage them in their studies, she would tell her students "if you return, you have to be educated. You shouldn't be illiterate. That's how I was motivating them, that they will go back to Syria. I gave them hope of a life, not of continuing to be refugees." Both Ranya and Rita believed their students would reap the rewards of their education in Syria, not Lebanon.

For Syrian teachers, the future was an important topic that they often discussed in their classrooms. Similar to Lebanese teachers, Syrian teachers used the promise of a better future as a means of motivating students to remain engaged in their studies. In an effort to keep her students in class studying as opposed to in the street working, Aabira would tell her students, "I am sure that one day you will have a house, so keep this goal within you, and in order for you to achieve it you must be educated: selling tissues will not do you any good…Your education is your weapon." Similar to Lebanese teachers, Syrian teachers strove to demonstrate the importance of education as a transferable investment that would benefit students regardless of how, when, and where their futures would take shape. Wissam kept his students engaged in his English class by linking the need to learn a language to the range of possible futures that might await his students. "Many of the students are dreaming of traveling out of Lebanon…So I tell them you need to learn languages and try to focus on English because English will help you to learn other languages." Nour tried to keep her students focused on their present studies as a means of preparing themselves for the promise

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of something better ahead. "I assure the student that if they are successful over here [in Lebanon], then they will be successful wherever they go." Wissam and Nour were unsure of where their students would find their futures, yet both teachers wanted their students prepared with skills and knowledge that could support a more productive future in any setting.

Overwhelmingly, Syrian teachers communicated a very strong feeling of responsibility for the future of their students as well as a need to help students imagine a life beyond their current existence as refugees. Lina believed it was her duty "to make kids understand that this situation is temporary and things will become better." During art class, Lina remembered asking her students to draw their homes. "A kid came and asked which home should he draw? The current tent he is living in or the actual one he had back in Syria? I said draw the current one, the one in Syria, and the one you imagine. It's my duty to give them hope." For Lina, hope included acceptance of the present, respect for the past, and a limitless imagination for the future. As Syrian teachers reflected on the hope they tried to impart onto their students, they often spoke in relation to reconstruction, both in terms of rebuilding the country of Syria and rebuilding the next generation of Syrians. As Hala shared, "I want them [my students] to become important people so that we can rebuild Syria. Our goal is that we are going back, and there is hope that we will go back to rebuild Syria." Naser expressed his own hope that his students would be part of a "generation that will be the builders of Syria. The new Syria. The democracy in Syria. The Syria that we all of this time imagined." Like many teachers, Naser saw his own future as intricately linked to what his students could or would become and how they may or may not reshape Syria into something he had been hoping for "all of this time."

While the messages Syrian teachers relayed within the classroom were ones of possibility and promise, privately teachers admitted harboring a deep concern for their futures and those of their students. Abed hoped his students would become "doctors, engineers, or people who are effective in society. But in reality, I don't know. I am pessimistic." Abed felt pessimistic about his students' future as well as his own, explaining that "the Syrian reality is very tragic." Teachers were cognizant of the challenges students faced, many of which threatened students' ability to continue with their education or realize a productive future. Rayya worried the future awaiting her students would be difficult due to "family, the war, the stressful experiences [students] are going through each and every day…[Lebanese] society treating them as minorities and inferiors, it's not helping them with having ambitions…I wish it would be so bright because some of them are so good. They're so brilliant, and they're so smart and ambitious, but I don't think that it's very easy for them." Rayya saw roadblocks all around her students, barriers that were cemented in place by circumstances out of their control. Choices made by parents, structures put in place by governments, and beliefs assumed by society left students feeling powerless to shape their own futures and teachers feeling frustrated that their efforts could do little to change the fate of their students.

Both Lebanese and Syrian teachers struggled to envision the future for their students, especially within the space of Lebanon where students' options as refugees for further education and employment were limited. Daunting circumstances seemed to stymie how Lebanese teachers conceived of their students' futures. Lebanese teachers had difficulty imagining a long-term future for their students given the tenuous circumstances teachers believed their students faced in Lebanon and the instability continuing in Syria. Instead, they often described the future in relation to students' academic development and achievement.

This stance towards the future aligned with the goals Lebanese teachers tended to set in the present: focusing on academic achievements above social or emotional development. In comparison, Syrian teachers tried to develop a clearer vision of the future for their students, one that most often entailed a return to Syria and the rebuilding and rebirth of their country. This vision was also reflected in the academic, social and emotional priorities teachers described: students would need a strong sense of Syrian identity, effective social skills and an ability to work across political and cultural divides. However, once behind closed doors, all teachers expressed concern for what lay ahead for their students, for themselves and for their country.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The potential for education to serve as a life-saving and life-sustaining intervention in settings impacted by conflict depends greatly on the role of the teacher. Refugee education frameworks outline a complex set of academic, social, and emotional priorities for teachers of refugee students. However research rarely considers how teachers tasked with this work actually understand or implement these goals. By examining the experiences of both national and refugee teachers working to educate refugee students, this study demonstrates dissonance vertically, between the global vision of these obligations and the local realization of this work, and horizontally, between priorities and approaches of national and refugee teachers. Personal background, professional experiences and relevant local circumstances were important factors influencing how teachers of refugees understood and executed their ascribed obligations within the classroom, factors not reflected in global frameworks.

Global frameworks for teachers of refugee students attribute equal importance to academic, social, and emotional obligations with the expectation that teachers support students in all three domains. Yet as evidenced in this study, teachers needed to make decisions about the kinds of support they could provide, given their skills, time, priorities, and comfort level. When confronted with an entirely new set of professional demands and expectations, teachers chose to rely on the most familiar tools they had at their disposal. For Lebanese teachers, this meant following the official curriculum. In comparison, Syrian teachers drew on personal experiences and their own visions for the future when setting learning priorities for their students.

Even though Lebanese teachers described considerable autonomy regarding how and what they taught during the second shift, the majority of teachers saw students' academic development as their main, if not only, responsibility. This approach was in part a result of Lebanese teachers having only their previous experience to draw on, as most teachers received no specific training related to supporting refugee students. Teachers demonstrated varying degrees of commitment to students struggling to learn, accomplishing what they could in the time provided, but often leaving the responsibility of learning squarely on the shoulders of their students. Lebanese teachers also preferred to maintain a professional distance from the emotional stress their students were confronting, believing there was little time or space within the classroom to address such issues. Lessons rarely acknowledged students' position as refugees and instead Lebanese teachers often avoided any discussion of students' experiences in Syria or Lebanon, often feeling it was not their place to engage students in conversations related to their personal backgrounds. Most teachers were unsure of what role they could or should have in facilitating students' integration into the country, a

stance that echoed the dominant political and social messages that refugees were temporary guests who should and would definitely return, soon.

In contrast, Syrian teachers found it difficult to separate academic goals from social and emotional development, and often used opportunities during the same lesson to address all three domains. When students struggled in class, teachers made it a point to explore the root causes of their poor performance. Given the detailed understanding of their students' experiences, teachers often addressed students' social and emotional needs first in order to support their academic development. Syrian teachers believed it their obligation to help students adjust to their new circumstances in Lebanon, and they provided space for students to discuss their experiences in Syria and as Syrian refugees. Furthermore, Syrian teachers' efforts to imagine a positive future for themselves and their students as rebuilders of Syria influenced how they conceived of their obligations, particularly the importance they placed on identity formation and social cohesion. As 'insiders' to the conflict and political division in their country, Syrian teachers drew on their connections to students to model tolerance and to emphasize circumstances that brought students together, as opposed to the conflict that wedged them apart. While teachers often saw improvement within their classrooms, once students moved out of these structured spaces, their social behavior would often deteriorate. Teachers expressed frustration about what they could do to change the environment surrounding students outside of class, which they described as having a detrimental impact on their behavior. Teachers were also concerned that they did not have the proper training to support children's complex psycho-social needs and worried the support they provided was insufficient or even detrimental for their students.

Moving forward, efforts to prepare teachers of refugee students should include a greater emphasis on how to address the many competing academic, social and emotional priorities within the classroom. Currently, the argument for placing students back into schools in conflict settings assumes that these priorities are and can be addressed at schools. Yet, as this research shows, teachers are often unable to meet all of these obligations. In particular, teachers need effective techniques for extending social and emotional support to students as well as ways to manage conversations that involve complex social and political circumstances. The latter is particularly true when the teachers of refugees are host-country nationals as these individuals are more likely to have a different perspective or a limited understanding of experiences endured by their students.

Integrating refugee students into national systems has become a greater priority across the globe. However, as this study demonstrates, teachers who are refugees can have an effective role in supporting students who are refugees, particularly in terms of providing students emotional support and a positive perspective on the future. It is therefore important to consider ways of involving refugee teachers in the education of refugee students, even in countries where integration is the guiding policy. Finding ways for non-formal programs and refugee teachers to compliment, as opposed to compete, with formal schooling may prove a more effective mechanism for ensuring students social, emotional and academic needs are met.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 2: Tables

Table 2.1: Overview of School Sites

	Type of Institution	Lebanese Enrollment (first shift public schools)	Refugee Enrollment (second shift public schools)	Grade levels serving refugees	Years Teaching Refugee Students	Refugee Language of Instruction: Grades KG-6	Religious Composition: Teachers	Religious Composition: Students
School 1: Beirut	Public	525	621	1-7	3	English & Arabic	Predominantly Sunni, some Shi'a	Sunni
School 2: Beirut	Public	289	545	1-7	3	Arabic	Predominantly Sunni, some Shi'a	Sunni
School 3: Beirut	NGO	N/A	220	KG-3	2	English & Arabic	Predominantly Sunni, some Christian	Sunni
School 4: Beqaa	Public	222	466	1-9	3	English & Arabic	Christian	Sunni
School 5: Beqaa	NGO	N/A	650	KG-3	2	English & Arabic	Sunni	Sunni
School 6: Beqaa	NGO	N/A	329	KG-3	2	English & Arabic	Sunni	Sunni

| School 7: Beqaa | NGO | N/A | 400 | 1-6 | 1 | Arabic | Sunni | Sunni |

Note: Numbers reflect data from the 2015/2016 school year. Enrollment numbers are subject to change during the year as students dropped out and/or enrolled continuously through the year across all schools. First shift enrollment in Lebanese schools includes students in grades 1-9.

Table 2.2: Summary of data collected

		Type of Institution	Shifts Observed[a]	School Participant Observation	School Administrator Interviews	Teacher Interviews[b]	Lesson Observations[c]		Key Informant Interviews[d]	Sector Meetings[e]
School level data	School 1: Beirut	Public	First & second	Weekly	n = 1	n = 11	n = 58	**Policy level data**	n = 26	n = 19
	School 2: Beirut	Public	First & second	Weekly	n = 1	n = 11	n = 56			
	School 3: Beirut	NGO	First & second	Weekly	n = 2	n = 9	n = 26			
	School 4: Beqaa	Public	Second	Weekly	n = 2	n = 5	n = 32			
	School 5: Beqaa	NGO	First & second	Weekly	n = 2	n = 10	n = 20			
	School 6: Beqaa	NGO	First & second	Weekly	n = 2	n = 9	n = 27			
	School 7: Beqaa	NGO	First & second	Weekly	n = 1	n = 7	n = 43			

	Total		9 months	n= 11	n = 62	n = 262		n = 26	n = 19

Note: a. I observed schools during shifts that enrolled refugee students.

b. Three of the teachers I interviewed at public schools were school psychologists. They teach classes like all other teachers. Three interviews at school 3 took place in the 2014/2015 school year.

c. Eighteen observations took place in the 2014/2015 school year.

d. Key informants include multilateral donors (e.g. UNHCR), bilateral donors (e.g. USAID), international organizations (e.g. Save the Children) and local organizations. Fifteen of these interviews took place in 2015/2016. The other 11 took place in 2014.

e. Sector meetings were most often hosted by UNICEF, UNHCR or MEHE and designed to share information, updates and data with the larger local/international community working in refugee education

Paper 3: When the personal becomes the professional: exploring the lived experiences of Syrian refugee educators

INTRODUCTION

Dalia[1], a soft-spoken 26 year-old, appears many years older as she recounts the exact moment her family decided to leave Syria due to ongoing conflict. "A rocket landed right next to our house…The glass was scattered and everyone was screaming; I will never forget the scene." Since arriving to Lebanon two years ago as a refugee, Dalia has worked as a teacher in a non-formal[2] school for Syrian refugee students. Dalia knows that her experiences of being a refugee and being a teacher of refugees are intertwined, and yet she describes how she tries to separate her work from the personal difficulties of her past and her present. "When I enter the class, I leave everything behind and enter with the mentality that we are coming to school to learn, have fun, and play." On the one hand, Dalia embraces this professional commitment because she believes it allows her to be a better teacher. Yet, on the other hand, she feels a constant tension: it is not always possible to forget her personal challenges within the classroom and she observes the same to be true for many of her students. As she observes this tension, Dalia questions whether linking her personal identity to her professional work could be productive for her students and herself. This paper explores the ways in which educators, like Dalia, negotiate these tensions and make

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[1] Schools, school leaders and teachers have been given pseudonyms to ensure anonymity of the participants.

[2] In this paper, 'non-formal' schools refer to programs implemented outside of the formal public school system (Coombs & Ahmed, 1974). I employ this term differently than how it is used in Lebanon where any program descried as non-formal education must fall under the Ministry of Education and Higher Education's (MEHE) official framework of alternative education programs offered to refugee students. MEHE considers any school operating outside of its jurisdiction as an illegal entity (personal communication, March 9, 2017).

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decisions about how to link their personal and professional identities as refugees and teachers of refugees in Lebanon.

Teachers play a central role in supporting students whose lives have been disrupted by crisis (INEE, 2010a, 2010b; Sinclair, 2002; UNESCO, 2006; UNHCR, 2012; Winthrop & Kirk, 2008). However, most often the teachers teaching refugee populations are refugees themselves (Kirk, 2010; Penson, 2013; Sesnan, Allemano, Ndugga, & Said, 2013; Winthrop & Kirk, 2008). As refugees and as teachers, these individuals negotiate a continual tension between the expectations of their professional roles and the limitations inherent in their positions as refugees. As educators, they are figures of authority and knowledge, expected to support the cognitive development of their students, aid in their social-emotional recovery and wellbeing, restore a sense of stability to the present and foster hope for the future (INEE, 2010a, 2010b; Sinclair, 2002; UNESCO, 2006; UNHCR, 2012; Winthrop & Kirk, 2008). As refugees displaced to a new country owing to conflict, their positions within the host community are often marginalized. Teachers face many of the same difficult realities of living in exile as their students, including loss of home and family, economic stress, emotional strain, and continued uncertainty about their futures (Sesnan et al., 2013).

Much of the literature related to refugee teachers focuses on system-level challenges such as teacher supply and retention or classroom-level challenges such as language of instruction and pedagogical approaches (Burde, Guven, Kelcey, Lahmann, & Al-Abbadi, 2015; Mendenhall et al., 2015; Richardson, MacEwen, & Naylor, 2018; Ring & West, 2015; Sesnan et al., 2013; West & Ring, 2015). Very few studies consider the relationship between the personal and professional experiences of refugee educators and how it may influence their work (see for example Kirk, 2010; Penson, 2013; Sesnan et al., 2013). In this paper I

ask, how does being a teacher influence the experience of being a refugee and conversely, how does the experience of being a refugee influence the teacher's role? I explore this question through in-depth interviews with Syrian educators living as refugees and working to educate refugees within Lebanon. I draw on research on teacher identity to highlight how experiences at school and in daily life interact and influence the teacher both personally and professionally. To this framing, I apply the concept of "impossible fictions" (Walkerdine, 1990), a construct that delineates the implicit and explicit tensions and contradictions present within the work of teachers. Used together, these perspectives allow me to explore how educators negotiate the tensions inherent in the experiences of teaching and of being a refugee and how their decisions and actions reflect and respond to these tensions.

For this analysis I consider the narratives of Azhar and Haroun, two Syrian refugee educators working in non-formal schools within Lebanon. Azhar's and Haroun's narratives demonstrate how the identity of refugee and the identity of teacher are interwoven and interconnected, yet at times contradictory and conflicting. I elicited similar narratives from a larger group of refugee teachers but focus on the accounts of two individuals to create an in-depth, nuanced understanding of the processes through which refugee educators reconcile their different identities and the specific contextual circumstances that shape these experiences. I chose to write about Azhar and Haroun as their accounts included themes resonant across my data: experiences of displacement and loss of identity, tensions between teachers' professional agency and personal powerlessness, dissonances between teaching hope and experiencing hopelessness, and the psychological exhaustion that accompanies their work and their present circumstances. This research extends the study of teacher identity formation, explored most often in Western settings, into context of refugee education where an educator's personal experiences as a refugee, marked often by feelings of

powerlessness, loss of hope and psychological exhaustion collide with professional expectations of teachers, individuals expected to project hopefulness and psychological strength in the classroom. Documenting the tensions refugee educators experience suggests ways these individuals can be more effectively supported in their work and has implications for how refugee educators might best support students.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMING

Teacher identity: As personal and professional

Teacher identity is a key influence on teachers' motivation and commitment to the job, their sense of purpose, as well as their emotional well-being and effectiveness in the classroom (Hammerness, Darling-Hammond, & Bransford, 2005; Day, Stobart, & Sammons, 2007). In the last few decades, extensive research has sought to understand teacher identity formation as an essential mechanism for improving individuals' preparation for the teaching profession, for supporting professional growth and development and for strengthening connections and relationships across the profession (Akkerman & Meijer, 2011; Rodgers & Scott, 2008). Literature also points to the inextricable link between teacher identity and teacher agency and how realization of the former can empower teachers to implement new ideas and bring positive change to the classroom (Alsup, 2006; Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009; Olsen, 2008).

While there is consensus regarding the importance of teacher identity, a precise definition has yet to be agreed upon within the literature (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009; Beijaard, Meijer, & Verloop, 2004; Sfard & Prusak, 2005). Instead, most work on teacher identity focuses on how it is constructed. In particular, teacher identity involves the

collapsing of boundaries between the personal and the professional (Alsup, 2006), suggesting professional identity as influenced by and constructed from "personal histories, patterned behavior and future concerns" (Akkerman and Meijer 2011, p. 6). While many teachers find themselves in stable professional roles in which their personal identities align both with those roles and with their students' identities, an increasing number of teachers do not. A critical question unexplored in the body of research on teacher identity is how teachers negotiate tensions between their personal and professional identities. Refugee teachers in Lebanon represent an "extreme case," productive to examining the processes involved in identity negotiation (Flyvbjerg, 2006).

Refugee teachers face a multitude of personal challenges, including struggles with poverty, inadequate shelter or nutrition, xenophobia and discrimination from members of the host community, and the psychological strain of managing loss and displacement (Sesnan et al., 2013). They are often unable to work in host country schools due to social, political or language barriers and instead find positions in non-government schools or schools serving only refugees, which may offer lower pay, longer hours and less job security (Sesnan et al., 2013). These factors may influence an educator's ability and/or willingness to return to teaching as well as their commitment to the job (Penson, 2013; Sesnan et al., 2013). Personal and professional circumstances of refugee eduators may also interact with educators' pedagogical and ideological approaches. In some settings, teachers have reported drawing on their identities as refugees as a resource to teach tolerance and understanding to students living in a society divided by conflict. Others felt their background marked them as outsiders, restricted their agency in class, and hindered their abilities to progress professionally (Perumal, 2015).

The curricular choices teachers working in conflict make may also reflect tension between personal and professional identities, when, for example teachers must decide between adhering to national curricular standards or adapting content to reflect counter-national movements (Lopes Cardozo & Shah, 2016). In Aceh, Indonesia, for example, teachers struggled with contradictory expectations related to their membership to a community in conflict with the national government, and their roles as teachers, hired by the national government to teach the national curriculum and nationalized concepts of identity. To ensure their personal safety and professional legitimacy, teachers identified themselves to some as civil servants implementing the work of the national government and to others as government employees using their position to prepare children for independence (Lopes Cardozo & Shah, 2016). In Ethiopia, refugee teachers working in refugee schools experienced a sense of agency and capability in their classrooms. Yet their accomplishments as teachers were undermined by gender-related power dynamics present within the broader refugee community where they were expected to be women, mothers, wives, and caregivers first and professionals last (Kirk, 2010).

Refugee teacher identity: "Impossible fiction"

The development of professional identity may be complicated when teachers feel personally marginalized or like outsiders within society. Individual and collective experiences and assumptions related to race, gender, class, and in this case, refugee status, impact the ways teachers experience their work, suggesting the importance of considering how broader contextual settings and social relationships influence teachers' personal and professional identities (Alsup, 2006). The tensions and discord inherent to the pairing of the identity of teacher with the identity of woman have been deeply explored in the literature from North

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America and Europe (see for example Acker, 1989, 1999; Casey, 1993; Dillabough, 1999; Dixson & Dingus, 2008; Henry, 1998; Munro, 1998). Walkerdine (1990) suggests that female teachers within Western society embody an "impossible fiction," (p. 19) a contradiction between the identity of teacher, which is associated with power, authority, status and respect, and the position of woman, which is often seen as secondary, subservient, powerless and marginalized. Kirk (2004) extends the application of the concept of impossible fictions past Western settings, to explore the personal and professional experiences of female teachers working in Pakistan. The author argues that impossible fiction describes not a state of irreconcilable differences, but instead articulates "a constant tension between possibility and impossibility" as well as the "fact and fiction" inherent in the work of women teachers in relation to broader policy aims and expectations (p. 379). Kirk demonstrates a considerable disconnect between what she refers to as 'official' conceptualizations of the role of women teachers and 'lived' experiences of women teachers in this setting.

In this paper, I expand Kirk's application and interpretation of the concept of impossible fictions to consider the experiences of refugee educators working with refugee students. Within their professional roles as teachers of refugees, they are considered important members of the school community: individuals with knowledge, power and agency to ensure the growth and development of a generation of children (Kirk & Winthrop, 2008; Vongalis-Macrow, 2006; Winthrop & Kirk, 2008). As educators of refugees, they are expected to impart academic knowledge, establish a sense of stability and normalcy to children's lives, promote peacebuilding, ideals of citizenship and belonging, nurture students' psychosocial well-being, and embody a promise of a better future (INEE, 2010a, 2010b; Sinclair, 2002; UNESCO, 2006; UNHCR, 2012; Winthrop & Kirk, 2008). Yet outside of school, within the host community, these individuals are relegated to the liminal status of

being refugees, temporarily suspended in a state of limbo and uncertainty, often powerless to alter the structures, policies and practices that so sharply mark their experiences of displacement (Penson, 2013; Sesnan et al., 2013).

THE STUDY

How then do the experiences of being a refugee and being a teacher intersect? How do refugee teachers navigate the tension inherent in these often contradictory experiences? To examine these questions, I present portraits of two Syrian refugee educators, named here as Azhar and Haroun, working in two different non-formal schools in Lebanon. Portraiture is a qualitative social science methodology that seeks to "capture the richness, complexity, and dimensionality of human experience in social and cultural context" (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997, p. 3). Azhar's and Haroun's portraits enable a nuanced understanding of how two individuals make sense of their experiences as refugees and as educators, how they make decisions in relation to these experiences, and how the specific social, cultural, and political environments in which these participants are situated influence this process.

To construct these portraits, I draw on data from multiple in-depth interviews with Azhar and Haroun as well as observations of these educators at schools, in classrooms and during informal gatherings. I met Azhar and Haroun during my first visit to Lebanon in 2014. Haroun and I were in contact through in-person meetings in Lebanon and over Skype for the first year of my research before he was resettled outside the country. Azhar remained in Lebanon and I continued to observe and interact with her throughout the three years that I was conducting research for this project. All interview transcripts were audio recorded, transcribed and translated (when necessary). I took detailed field notes during all classroom

and school observations. After every interview I reviewed the transcript to develop memos documenting recurring themes, salient quotes, emerging patterns and new questions. I coded all interviews using the qualitative data analysis software Atlas.ti. The final set of codes used for this analysis was based on relevant literature as well as themes that arose as I reviewed all data sources.

I documented the experiences of Azhar and Haroun as part of a larger research study aimed at understanding how educators in Lebanon working with Syrian refugee students conceived of their roles, responsibilities and relationships within the classroom. In this paper, I use the term educator to refer to the experiences of both teachers and principals. The larger research project included semi-structured interviews with 31 refugee teachers and principals across four non-formal schools and 116 school and classroom observations (see Table 1 for a summary of data collected). Azhar's and Haroun's experiences echoed the accounts I heard in interviews with educators in my broader sample of Syrian refugee teachers. Though their personal and professional accounts vary, they provide insight into the different types of experiences and circumstances refugee teachers may confront. Azhar had been a teacher for many years in Syria and taught at one non-formal school in Lebanon before becoming a principal at her current school. I focus here on her time as a principal although her experiences encompass the role of teacher as well. Her narrative sheds light on the life-altering event of becoming a refugee and how returning to the role of educator serves to reestablish an identity lost. Haroun taught English to adults in Syria and then began working with elementary school children in Lebanon. Haroun's narrative affords a direct view into the classroom and helps illuminate the complex interplay between teaching refugee students and being a refugee.

CONTEXT

Since 2011, Syria has experienced devastating violence and destruction. Between 2011 and 2018, more than 400,000 individuals lost their lives on account of the conflict (Human Rights Watch, 2018a). Another 12 million Syrians were displaced from their homes: 5.6 million of these individuals fled into neighboring countries (UNHCR, 2018b). Turkey is host to the greatest number of Syrian refugees (3.6 million) (UNHCR, 2018a), yet Lebanon has more refugees per capita than any other country in the world (UNHCR, 2016). Currently, Lebanon hosts close to 1 million registered Syrian refugees, but the exact number is unknown and likely to be higher, because the government suspended registration of new refugees in May 2015 (Republic of Lebanon, 2016; UNHCR, UNICEF, & WFP, 2017).

In Lebanon, refugees face political, social, and economic barriers that significantly impact their ability to live and work within the country. As the Government of Lebanon (GoL) is not signatory to the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees, individuals who flee to Lebanon due to conflict are not legally recognized as refugees under international law. The GoL has permitted individuals seeking safety to reside within the country but exercises its right to implement laws that restrict their legal and living conditions. For example, Syrian refugees must obtain a legal residency permit to remain within Lebanon. Due to the relatively high cost[3] and strict policies governing applying for and renewing residency permits, within the population of Syrian refugees only 15% of children and 26% of adults have legal residency in Lebanon (UNHCR, UNICEF, & WFP, 2017). Without legal papers, many Syrians limit their movement within the country in order to avoid military checkpoints and possible deportation (Lebanese Center for Human Rights, 2016).

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[3] In 2017 the GoL decided to waive the yearly $200 fee associated to renewal of legal residency papers and it is expected that a greater number of Syrian refugees will be able to obtain legal status.

Employment opportunties for Syrian refugees in Lebanon are also severely restricted. Since 2015, the GoL required all Syrian refugees wishing to renew their residency permits to sign a pledge not to work. Syrian refugees may obtain legal work permits but only for jobs in construction, agriculture and cleaning services. Educators looking to work within government schools are effectively banned from these positions (Khater, 2017). Due to the complexity and cost of obtaining a work permit and the restrictions on the type of positions available, the majority of Syrian refugees work within the informal sector (Errighi & Griesse, 2016). For example, refugee educators wishing to continue teaching or working in schools may only work in non-formal education centers where salaries and job security are often limited.

Furthermore, Syrian refugees also confront discrimination and xenophobia in public and private spaces in Lebanon (El Gantri & El Mufti, 2017). Politicians and media outlets often blame Syrian refugees for Lebanon's worsening economy and continued security concerns, rhetoric which has exacerbated tensions and increased the likelihood of violence towards refugees (Geha & Talhouk, 2018; Yahya, 2018). Some municipalities have chosen to close all Syrian-run business and to implement curfews for Syrian refugees. Others have forced Syrian refugees out of the community altogether (Human Rights Watch, 2018b). In addition to systemic discrimination, Syrian refugees commonly report negative encounters with Lebanese citizens, including incidents of harassment, bullying and physical abuse (Yahya, 2018).

FINDINGS

Azhar: On becoming a refugee educator

From Beirut, the journey to Lebanon's Beqaa Valley entails a twisting, turning, harrowing drive along the Damascus Highway, up and over the steep Daher Al Baydar mountain range. Traveling down towards the valley affords a breathtaking view of expansive olive groves, vineyards, and fields of wheat and corn. The highway continues across Lebanon's border and into Syria's capital city of Damascus. The road serves as an essential artery between the hearts of these two neighboring countries, pulsating with a constant stream of cars and trucks, people and goods. Historically, Syrian laborers would travel across the border on a seasonal basis to cultivate, care for and harvest the many crops this region produces. However, when the conflict in Syria began, the porous border became an important corridor for flight. Syrians with and without ties to the valley crossed into Lebanon with extended family members and settled into surrounding communities, staying for years instead of weeks.

Irada Valley School is nestled in the western section of the Beqaa Valley. A long, uneven dirt road runs from the surrounding community to the school, a path that seems to mark separation as opposed to connection. This morning four blue, white and orange buses bounce along the route, stuffed to the brim with school children. As the buses pull into the school's parking lot, children spill out of the vehicles, their voices infusing the serene surroundings with new energy. Teachers and staff are in attention, careful observers of the ensuing disorder. Soon the school's principal steps back from the crowd, raising her hand to signal attention. Azhar is a notable presence among the gathered adults, her broad, strong

frame wrapped in a long, dark housecoat, her hair hidden under a soft brown scarf. Students are quick to notice her stern glare and within moments are standing single file behind their teachers, waiting their turn to be ushered into the school building.

Azhar may be strict with her students, but each time I walk into her office she envelops me in a large embrace as if our last encounter took place many months ago. Today she gently scoots two small children out the door, emptying her office in preparation for our interview. She watches as the young students scamper down the hallway and disappear behind doors made of dark pressboard, painted brightly with rainbows and stars, and balloons and clowns, in an effort to hide their rough exterior. Azhar most often carries a soft smile on her face, one that extends upwards at the corners of her mouth, catching her eyes so they too light up with quiet joy. Hidden behind Azhar's quiet demeanor is an engine of energy and persistence that she continues to fuel, regardless of the challenges set in her path. At the age of 43, she has many professional accomplishments, including earning a degree in electrical engineering, managing a successful family construction business, and working as a teacher in multiple educational settings. This is her second year as a principal at Irada Valley School, and her fourth year as a refugee in Lebanon.

Today is one of the first times I see Azhar's smile melt away, albeit briefly, as she recounts her experience of becoming a refugee in Lebanon, a harrowing tale of back-and-forth migration as she sought to protect the lives and the futures of her children and family. In her first act of flight, Azhar, her husband, her two teenaged sons and her young daughter left their home in a Damascus suburb after being informed the area would soon be raided by local militia looking to capture members of the official Syrian military. "We were told that we were going to be pulled out of our houses and killed if we did not leave. In half an hour, I

left the house that I had been living in for six years." They departed to a family home in a neighborhood a few hours away, not realizing that area was under attack. After a rocket passed by the kitchen window Azhar took the risky decision to bundle her three children back into the car and flee yet again. "When the bombing worsened, I did not know what to do. I felt that at any minute, a rocket was going to hit the house and we were going to die. My son Ahmed put his fish in a glass and my other son brought his birds as well because he did not want to leave them behind…we were in the car in 30 seconds."

Azhar and her family found shelter in an area that overlooked the home she had just left behind. While the family was physically safe, she felt "psychologically tired" as she watched her old neighborhood get bombarded for days and as her family experienced continual harassment from army personnel manning nearby checkpoints. Azhar and her husband eventually decided to cross into Lebanon to ensure the family's continued safety. For Azhar, the decision to move her family was a difficult one as it meant choosing between the need for safety and suspending her children's education. "For me, learning is sacred. I am willing to lose everything, but I want my sons to be educated."

Suddenly the bell rings, teachers bustle into the office with questions about students, materials, an upcoming training. Azhar returns to her present self, stepping away from her personal identity and into a purely professional one, managing a bombardment of demands and complaints with swift decisiveness, a skill I imagine was of great use to her during moments of chaos in Syria. Finally, Azhar ushers everyone out of the office and turns her attention back to the past. Azhar explains that her family returned to Syria from Lebanon as soon as the fighting abated so her children could continue their education. Azhar was able to re-enroll her children in school, yet her family was repeatedly interrogated and threatened by

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the Syrian army and other armed forces. After an armed militant pulled her son from their taxi and tried to kill him in front of her, Azhar decided Syria was simply too dangerous for her children. Azhar sent her husband and one son across the border as she tried to complete the paperwork to enroll her eldest child into the university, the only way to postpone forced enlistment in the Syrian army. But in the middle of the night her house was raided and the neighborhood bombed. Azhar forsook all her important paperwork in a terrifying scramble for her life, narrowly escaping down the back steps of the apartment building, hands tightly entwined with those of her daughter and son, as armed militia stomped up the front. Azhar and her children found shelter that evening and left the next day for Lebanon, knowing they would not be returning to Syria in a long time.

In her flight across the Lebanese border, Azhar abandoned more than just documentation. Her identity as an electrical engineer, businesswoman and teacher was left behind in Syria, replaced in Lebanon by the label of "refugee". Thus marked, Azhar labored to find a place willing to hire her for decent wages. A combination of national policies prohibiting Syrians entry into the workforce along with anti-Syrian discrimination made it difficult for anyone in her family to find employment. Before starting her job as principal at Irada Valley School, Azhar worked in numerous NGOs, getting a "volunteer" salary of less than $100 a month from each organization. In each of her positions, her salary was a fraction of what her Lebanese counterparts were earning -- a fact that Azhar found emotionally diminishing. "This used to affect us psychologically because we were working very hard, yet being paid so little." Although she received little economic reward, Azhar continued to work at various NGOs as her identity had so long been defined by her professional activity.

Navigating the tensions between professional aspirations and societal limitations was not a new experience for Azhar. Back in Syria, Azhar originally moved into teaching after realizing that, as a woman, her accomplishments as an electrical engineer in her husband's business would always be overlooked. "People only recognize[d] that my husband was the one working. I was invisible." Azhar began tutoring students in her home, then expanded to teaching in a grade school and next in an information technology institute, all the while still supporting her husband's office. Teaching brought both personal and professional satisfaction as well as recognition. "I loved teaching. I loved that I felt comfortable with all age groups. I loved that I met a lot of children, and I felt that I left a mark by making children happy."

When national labor laws kept her from teaching in Lebanese public schools, Azhar decided to apply her skills towards helping the refugee families in her community. She began visiting nearby informal tented settlements to document the number of children who were out of school with the goal of starting a small education center in her living room. "I discovered that numbers are high. I started thinking that a year or a year and a half had passed and how many students [were losing] the opportunity of being educated. Who is going to teach those students?" Azhar's own efforts to provide classes to out-of-school children were blocked, as her landlord did not want a school run out of his building. However, soon after, she interviewed for a position at the newly founded Irada Valley School where she was eventually offered the role of principal.

Returning to the role of educator has given Azhar a renewed sense of professional accomplishment and agency. Instead of volunteering across organizations or offering classes to a handful of children in her living room, Azhar now oversees the education of around 700

refugee students a year, meaning "that the number of people who are benefiting from my work and expertise is more." Outside school, Azhar continues to feel unwelcome and out of place in Lebanon, yet inside school her efforts are appreciated and recognized. "I am happy [at school] because I am working with people who respect us…Huda [my Lebanese supervisor] is very kind and respectful towards us. She never makes us feel the way other Lebanese people make us feel. Many make us feel humiliated." As a refugee, Azhar often feels powerless, "mistreated" and "reject[ed]." Working at Irada Valley School has provided Azhar a sense of professional purpose, a reason to command respect and appreciation, and in the eyes of some Lebanese, an identity above and beyond "refugee".

However, school is also a place that reinforces Azhar's refugee status as it ties her to a space where students, parents, and teachers all share this label. At school Azhar is constantly reminded of the detrimental impacts conflict and displacement have had on her community. Teachers display moments of emotional distress due to past and present circumstances, at times lashing out at Azhar in an effort to release frustration. Many of the families who send their children to Irada Valley School face extreme poverty. Parents consistently pull their children out of school during harvest times so their work in the fields can augment the family's income, resulting in students falling far behind in their studies. Azhar tries to remain hopeful for the future of all her students, but finds it difficult to imagine their success given the very difficult circumstances they face as refugees. Azhar is aware of the tension between the hopelessness she feels and the hopefulness she wants her students to experience. Azhar worries as she reflects on the future of her more accomplished students: "I am not 100% sure that they will continue their education. To be honest, there are always doors getting closed in their faces," noting how difficult it has been for Syrian

refugees to enroll in secondary school in Lebanon due to missing documents as well as challenges regarding English as a language of instruction.

Azhar has watched doors close on the futures of her own children. While she has been able to enroll her daughter in elementary school, Azhar has been unable to find space in a secondary school for her younger son and does not have the means to pay for university for her eldest son. For Azhar, seeing her sons' education stalled is what is "bothering me the most in our situation in Lebanon," more than the discrimination she experiences or her strained financial status. As if to compensate for her inability to alter the circumstances facing her own family, Azhar bends over backwards to meet the needs of the students in her school, including visiting tented settlements to encourage families to send their children to school, and working closely with parents to support children who show signs of neglect or psychological strain. Azhar also reorganizes classrooms and schedules multiple times a year to accommodate children who return to school after leaving for a harvest. Azhar admits that teachers often complain loudly and forcefully when she changes their schedules, frustrated that their own professional agency has been overpowered. However, Azhar is willing to take on yet another set of complaints if it means she can extend the opportunity of schooling to more students. "There are students outside waiting for the chance to be given a pen and paper and be told to come to school. My main mission is to get these students educated, even if it means that my feelings get hurt because of what teachers say. We are grown-ups and can tolerate difficult situations; however, those students have a right to learn and should be educated."

Surrounded by the stress of teachers and families, Azhar admits that "every once in a while, I feel psychologically tired," a sentiment that has become common for her. At these

times, Azhar draws personal strength from her professional accomplishments, finding fuel in her role as educator to continue supporting those who depend on her both inside and outside the school. "If I am not strong, my family will fall apart and [so will] all the people who depend on me over here [at school]." Speaking specifically about the teachers in her school, Azhar "feel[s] responsible for them," and therefore makes an effort to support teachers as best as she can as they process the difficult circumstances they are experiencing. However, there are times when she too wishes "to find a person to listen to my concerns," acknowledging briefly the great emotional strains she hides behind a wall of professionalism.

In my final conversation with Azhar, I ask if there is anything more she would like to share regarding her experiences as a principal working with refugee students. The question elicits a reflection on her feelings regarding refugeehood, not her work. Without pausing, Azhar explains, "even though I have been here [in Lebanon] for four years, I do not feel at home. I do not feel comfortable. I feel that we are still suffering from the difficulties that we have come with from Syria." Despite her efforts to reestablish some semblance of her professional identity, the difficulties she carries from the past alongside the complexities of the present are what define her current experience. Her own future "is not clear. My husband wants us to travel." For Azhar, the future has come to be defined as some distant, unknown destination that, in its ambiguity, can hold a promise of lives reestablished and possibilities reimagined.

Haroun: On being an educator of refugees

Irada City School is buried deep in the heart of Beirut, within the neighborhood of Kaskas, one of the most congested and most impoverished sections of the city. The area is a

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maze of narrow streets packed tight with crumbling apartment buildings, tiny bakeries offering fresh *manoushe* and *sfiha* pastries, and small grocery shops stuffed to the ceiling with cans of powdered milk, jars of Nescafé and other daily necessities. Kaskas is also home to a major Palestinian refugee camp. The neighborhood carries the shadow of the Sabra and Shatila massacre of Palestinian civilians in 1982 during the Israeli invasion of Beirut— arguably the bloodiest episode in Lebanese history. The population in this section of the city has grown significantly since Syrian refugees began entering the neighborhoods in search of inexpensive housing, adding additional stress to overcrowded buildings, overstretched public services, and over strained relationships.

The school is housed within a long, narrow cement building in the complex of a well-established non-governmental organization. Students and teachers are expected to come and go through the back door so as not to interrupt the classes held for Lebanese students in the other buildings. The first floor of Irada City School is a large, open room where students line up in the morning and afternoon for general assembly before marching off to class. Teachers and volunteers spent their weekends transforming this space into a place that embraces children and adults alike. The walls are decorated with big, bright, graffiti-style writing; the name "Irada" is proudly splashed across one, "Syrians forever together" across another. Paintings of a dolphin, flowers, hearts, peace signs and even a stencil of Mickey Mouse dance around the space. Beirut's familiar soundtrack of honking cars and screeching motorcycles is inaudible here.

Today I knock at the door of Haroun's classroom and within moments I am greeted with a warm smile. Waving his hands next to his ears, Haroun ushers me into the classroom with a loud, excited, high-pitched "Yaaah! Welcome!!" Haroun is in his first year of teaching

English in Lebanon. He is in his early 20s, has a wiry build, and curly, unkempt brown hair. His pale cheeks are stained with a few angry patches of red that, according to Haroun, have recently developed due to stress. In class, Haroun's energy is infectious; students buzz around the room and hop in place as they tackle today's task. Haroun has split his 18 students into two teams; whichever team fills out the worksheet first wins. The children work avidly, huddled over the worksheets in deep secrecy, debating the answers in excited whispers, popping up to murmur a question directly into Haroun's ear. One girl sits silently in the middle of the commotion, completely unengaged, watching with a blank, empty expression. Haroun leaves her on her own, as do the other students. From my vantage point she looks like a small statue whose garden has been invaded by a flurry of starlings. Her expression and position remain transfixed despite the rufflings and chirpings surrounding her.

The happy, boisterous personality that Haroun projects within the classroom is, as he explains, "a performance" he puts on for his students, with the goal of providing them at least one positive experience among so many difficult ones. Outside of class, as this act falls away, Haroun most often appears distracted and on edge, nerves rubbed raw by the ongoing battles and concerns he faces outside of school. Haroun moved to Lebanon from Syria in 2011 in an effort to escape the violence encroaching on his city as well as his impending conscription into the Syrian army. In Lebanon, Haroun may not face the same level of physical danger as he did in Syria, yet he carries with him the accumulated stress of past memories and the continual frustrations of present challenges.

As a Palestinian refugee from Syria, Haroun suffers from two tiers of discrimination in Lebanon, one rooted in over 60 years of history and one triggered by current events.

Although he considers himself Syrian, due to his travel documents, he shares the same status as any long-standing Palestinian refugee in Lebanon, a group that has been consistently marginalized within the country since they first arrived in 1948, seeking safety from an open-ended conflict. Haroun describes becoming a refugee in Lebanon as living "one disappointment after the other, after the other, after the other, after the other, after the other." While he knew leaving Syria "wasn't going to be easy," he never anticipated the difficulties he would confront in Lebanon, especially those related to his nationality. Each time Haroun has tried to make plans for his future, such as continuing his education, finding a job, or immigrating to another country, he has found his choices and opportunities blocked by his status as a Palestinian refugee from Syria. He recently had to turn down a scholarship to a university in Malaysia as Lebanese national security would not let him exit the country without a proper visa, one he could not obtain given his refugee status. Feeling trapped by his own identity, Haroun has taken to speaking English when interacting with Lebanese people to hide his Palestinian accent and avoid discrimination.

For Haroun, the classroom is one of the few places where he can "mentally disconnect" from the barriers he faces as a refugee and focus on the possibilities he identifies within his role as teacher. Haroun admits that learning "English in not really the purpose all the time" in his classroom. Instead, Haroun focuses on providing his students with a sense of structure, consistency and dependability that, through personal experience, he knows is often absent from their lives as refugees. He regularly strays from the English curriculum to focus on lessons related to self-esteem, self-empowerment and students' ability to determine their own future. For example, when students complained about the paint peeling from the walls of the classroom, Haroun turned the problem into an opportunity for learning. He told his students "if a wall is dirty and depressing you...just paint over it." His students spent a

day pasting large sheets of paper to the wall and decorating it as they wished. Haroun continued to use the wall as an example for months, with the goal of teaching students that they had the power to change things for the better within their own lives. Feeling overwhelmed by the experiences of violence and poverty that students shared in the classroom, Haroun designed activities to help students identify positive aspects of their lives. He began sending his students home with post-it notes and instructions to label five things a day around their homes that made them happy. In an environment where so little is under their control, Haroun wants his students to realize they do have certain power over their own happiness.

In the classroom, Haroun has learned to take his own lessons to heart. He describes how training himself to see "everything in the classroom [as something] that we can control and change…is helping me to look at the positive things" in his own life. Haroun describes the strong sense of hope he gleans from just seeing his students smile. The happiness on their faces reminds him "life will go on…there's always going to be challenges that can always be overcome because we can still smile, we can still be here to learn." Haroun reflects, "when they learn a new word, I just feel like I own the world." His students' progress provides a sense of professional accomplishment, reminding Haroun that he actually has something important to contribute to the society around him.

However, Haroun admits that as the roadblocks in his own life have grown higher, he has found it harder to maintain his positive perspective in the classroom. Lately, he has begun questioning the purpose behind his teaching. "What I'm doing is just insane. It's going nowhere. It's spinning wheels." Haroun cannot help but see that all the cards are stacked against his students. "I need to believe that they have a bright future, but then there [are] so

many, so many overwhelming factors" that stand in their way to happiness. While the school, the classroom and the teachers may offer momentary protection, the fact remains that Haroun's students are poor Syrian refugees who, with little support at home, are struggling to learn. Originally Haroun thought the shared refugee background best equipped him to teach his students. However after spending time in the classroom, he now feels "sometimes it's too much of a burden." Haroun finds it hard to assume the responsibility of so many lives when he is struggling to assert any control over his own future. In these moments, Haroun talks about feeling exhausted, explaining how hard it is to "exert any positive energy" in his professional sphere when circumstances in his personal life feel so daunting. Sometimes Haroun explains, "I cannot give anymore…I just feel completely drained."

Back in Syria, before the civil war erupted, Haroun saw his life as simple and linear— laid out for him in a straight line. But since the violence began, Haroun has started to feel this line has been "interrupted…cut into pieces" with the "loose ends all over" the map. Outside of school, Haroun has lost a sense of who he is and where he is going. "I used to identify myself with my surroundings and as my surroundings changed, so did I. But they changed much faster than my ability to process everything that I literally don't know where I am in life." Yet within his position as teacher, Haroun is grounded in a sense of purpose and belonging, encompassing a role that provides "my life a meaning" despite the shadow of uncertainty that falls just outside the classroom door. However, even his identity as an educator feels precarious, as Haroun continually struggles to believe in and work for a new future for himself and his students.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Navigating the impossible fiction of teacher and refugee identities

The narratives of Azhar and Haroun demonstrate how the identity of educator and the identity of refugee merge, diverge, and shift in relation to cultural, social, situational, personal and professional experiences. Taken together, the experiences of Azhar and Haroun illuminate a number of impossible fictions inherent in the work of refugee teachers that I subsequently discuss: tension between teachers' professional agency and personal powerlessness, dissonance between the hope they are expected to impart and the hopelessness they continually experience, and the psychological toll that accompanies both their challenging past and present circumstances.

<u>Powerful or powerless?</u>

Considering the narratives of Azhar and Haroun within a broad contextual lens highlights the contradictions that exist between the status and agency these educators experience as professionals at school and the marginalized, constrained positions they live as refugees. At work, both Azhar and Haroun described experiencing a sense of daily purpose and belonging as members of their school and the Syrian community. They had the power to make choices and decisions that impacted their students and the colleagues around them. At school Azhar and Haroun were identified as educators, individuals whose efforts were respected, valued, and recognized by the children who returned to school each day and the parents who chose to send them there. Yet outside school walls, Azhar and Haroun's identities were bound by the "master status" (Gonzales & Vargas, 2015) of refugee, a status that supplants all other experiences and identities. Global and national structures, policies,

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and practices circumscribed the professional and personal possibilities for these individuals. Despite their seemingly important role in the preparation of Syria's next generation, Azhar and Haroun continually felt powerless to transcend the social, economic, and political barriers constructed around them in Lebanon. Both found it extremely difficult to locate respectable jobs within the Lebanese labor market and struggled with the small salaries they earned in their current positions. For Azhar, this lack of financing was particularly devastating. She had moved her family to Lebanon for the express purpose of ensuring her children could continue their education, but without access to a better paying job, she was not able to afford university tuition for her son. When Haroun left Syria, he left behind his family, his home, and his sense of citizenship. In Syria, his Palestinian heritage had minimal impact on his daily life, yet in Lebanon it exacerbated the position of refugee and further restricted his rights.

Locating the hope in hopelessness

The tension between the agency Azhar and Haroun experienced in their jobs and the limitations they were subject to in their daily lives was replicated and reinforced by their roles within schools. Given their collective identity as refugees, Azhar and Haroun had an intimate understanding of the challenges facing their students, knowledge that influenced what these educators believed their own students could or could not accomplish. While the label of refugee shared by these educators and their students afforded a feeling of solidarity and connectedness, it also served to accentuate the impossibility of a meaningful and productive present, as well as insecurity regarding the future. Thus, the second impossible fiction emerging from these narratives is the contradictory position in which refugee teachers find themselves. As teachers, they are expected to instill in their refugee students a sense of

agency and a hope for the future, experiences implicit to education. Yet as refugees, they share an insecurity related to what the future will bring or what freedoms they or their students will be able to enjoy.

In her role, Azhar oversees the educational development and advancement of hundreds of students, yet she clearly identifies the contradictions in her work. Azhar's students face continual barriers to their academic futures, or as she describes, her students "are always getting doors closed in their faces." In Lebanon these same doors are closing around her family as Azhar's children struggle to continue with their education or find meaningful employment. Similarly, Haroun tries to imagine a "bright future" for his students but at times he feels the challenges present in their homes, their communities, and the broader Lebanese society are too momentous to contend with. While Haroun feels frustrated and hopeless on account of the barriers he and his students face, he draws motivation and inspiration from the dedication his students show to their studies, allowing their belief in the future to propel him forward.

Psychological strains of past, present and future

In her application of the concept of impossible fictions, Kirk (2004) explores the contradictions experienced by female teachers in relation to their current circumstances. In the narratives of Azhar and Haroun, however, tensions between possibility and impossibility are embedded not just in their present experiences, but in the confluence of the past, the present, and the anticipated future. As Azhar reflected, four years into her time in Lebanon, she was still "suffering" from the complex emotions brought on by what she lived through in Syria. Although both Azhar and Haroun found physical safety in Lebanon, they continued to face tremendous stress in their daily lives as they managed economic hardship and social

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exclusion. Though temporarily settled, Haroun and Azhar continued to grapple with feelings of instability as they contemplated an "unknowable future" (Dryden-Peterson, 2017), unsure how long their exile would last or where the future may lead them.

Compounding these personal experiences was the professional expectation that, as teachers of refugees, these individuals were responsible for restoring a sense of normalcy and hope in the lives of their students who came to school each day carrying their own stress related to past experiences, present circumstances, and future unknowns. Azhar and Haroun welcomed this responsibility, as it served as a temporary distraction from the psychological strain and exhaustion related to their own personal experiences. As Haroun explained, teaching was an opportunity to "mentally disconnect" from everything that worried him on a continual basis. For Azhar, work was a place where she felt appreciated and needed; it restored a sense of purpose and promise to her life.

Teachers are not the only professionals whose work in exile provides a sense of dignity as well as a welcomed distraction from every day challenges. However, unlike many other professionals, refugee educators are expected to model for their young students emotions and aspirations that they might not fully embody themselves. For teachers and principals interviewed in this study, the very semblance of security and hope they were meant to engender in their students' lives was markedly absent from their own. Azhar felt compelled to lend strength both to her family and colleagues, an effort that left her feeling "psychologically tired." Enthusiastic at first, Haroun believed his efforts were doing little to improve the status of his students, ultimately leading him to see his job as a burden, one that left him "completely drained." Across the sample, teachers often described moments when they found it challenging to manage the emotional responses brought on by a story or

memory shared by a student, suggesting that their own past was still imbued within their present reality.

Understanding teachers' identities in settings of conflict expands the range of insights into how teacher identity formation impacts teachers' commitment to, engagement in, and persistence within their roles as educators. For Azhar and Haroun, stepping over the physical border between Syria and Lebanon, citizenship and refugeehood, brought momentous shifts—visible and perceived—to their personal and professional identities. As both educators and refugees, they were continually navigating the expectations inherent in their role as educators and limitations imposed by their status as refugees. As educators, they were seen to play an instrumental role in reconstructing the lives of their refugee students by supporting students to learn, grow, and dream about a better future to come. Yet as refugees, they faced considerable challenges as they worked to reestablish their own lives, tend to their own psychosocial needs, and develop their own vision for the future.

What support then is needed for refugee educators who are tasked with such significant responsibilities regarding the rebuilding and reimagining of the future, but whose own present and future realities appear so unsure? Providing teachers opportunities within their schools to build community with fellow teachers and staff is one step towards mitigating the psychological stress educators experience. While Azhar, Haroun, and the other educators within the broader sample shared many of the same personal frustrations and professional concerns, there was no structured mechanism within schools to encourage shared problem-solving or provide community support, particularly in relation to teachers' personal challenges. Research on teacher professional learning communities (PLCs), which aim to foster a supportive, collaborative work environment in schools, is limited in conflict-

affected settings. However, studies set in more stable contexts suggest participation in PLCs can lead to greater teacher well-being (Vescio, Ross, & Adams, 2008). Similarly, for humanitarian aid workers deployed to crisis settings, strong social networks serve as an important buffer to the negative mental health consequences of such work (B. Lopes Cardozo et al., 2012). Implementing PLCs in schools and providing educators with time, training, and support to foster their success may prove an effective mechanism for helping refugee teachers manage stressful events.

In conflict-affected countries, aid organizations focused on child protection may provide counseling to refugee children, often using schools as a convenient location to identify and support children in need of services. Providing teachers with psychological support service as well as training regarding mechanisms for supporting their students' social and emotional recovery could have an important impact on teachers and students. Three of the schools included in this study began offering counseling to teachers and principals after this research was concluded. Although the evidence is anecdotal, educators reported feeling less depressed or anxious and more capable of managing stress after these sessions. Counseling also influenced teachers' and principals' work. Educators reported having greater patience with their students and more confidence regarding the emotional support they could offer. Participants also saw improvements in their relationships with co-workers and found it easier to talk about and resolve problems that arose in school (Education Director, Irada City School, personal communication, April 6, 2018).

Teachers' experiences as refugees outside the classroom have an important impact on their work inside schools as teachers of refugees. For Haroun and Azhar, their own personal frustrations were compounded by the difficulties they witnessed among their

students at school each day. If they are to foster quality education for refugees, global frameworks and funding mechanisms must consider these personal and professional needs of teachers of refugees, who serve as the lens through which students see the world around them and the future ahead.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 3: Tables

Table 3.1: Summary of data collected

	Type of Institution	School Participant Observation	School Administrator Interviews	Teacher Interviews	Lesson Observations
School 1: Beirut	NGO	weekly	n = 2	n = 9	n = 26
School 2: Beqaa	NGO	weekly	n = 2	n = 10	n = 20
School 3: Beqaa	NGO	weekly	n = 2	n = 9	n = 27
School 4: Beqaa	NGO	weekly	n = 1	n =7	n =43
Total		**9 months**	**n = 4**	**n = 27**	**n = 116**

Conclusion

Through the work of teachers, students have the opportunity to learn, grow, and engage with the world around them. In settings where war and violence have interrupted daily life, teachers play a crucial role in supporting children through the struggle of reestablishing their lives and reimagining their futures. Global frameworks characterize the work of teachers in conflict-affected settings as central and indispensable, yet research has rarely considered how teachers in these settings understand their roles and accomplish their obligations.

This three-paper dissertation focused on the case of Lebanon, a country impacted by civil war in Syria. Through this body of work, I examine how Lebanese and Syrian teachers conceive of their roles, relationships with and responsibilities towards their Syrian refugee students. To shape this understanding, I developed a set of comparative case studies that explore the experiences of Lebanese and Syrian teachers from three different perspectives: integration, obligation, and identity. First, I built a vertical case to consider how global frameworks and Lebanese national strategies outlining the goals for integrating refugees into national education systems compare to the local experiences of Lebanese teachers working to integrate refugee students into their classrooms. Next, I compared experiences horizontally, exploring how Lebanese national teachers and Syrian refugee teachers understand their obligations towards their Syrian refugee students. Finally, I focused on the personal and professional experiences of Syrian refugee teachers, building comparisons that underscore tensions inherent to their identities as refugees and as teachers.

In this conclusion, I synthesize research findings across all three papers, highlighting the connections among teachers' experiences of integration, obligation, and identity. Drawing from this analysis, I present implications for the work of teachers in settings of both conflict and stability.

INTEGRATION, OBLIGATION AND IDENTITY: A SYNTHESIS OF FINDINGS

The three papers of this dissertation explore the experiences of integration, obligation, and identity separately, demonstrating the challenges faced by teachers of refugees from different perspectives. Here, I explore how global and national policies, local practice, and personal circumstances interact to shape the work of teachers in this study (See Figure 1).

Figure 1: Intersections across integration, obligation and identity
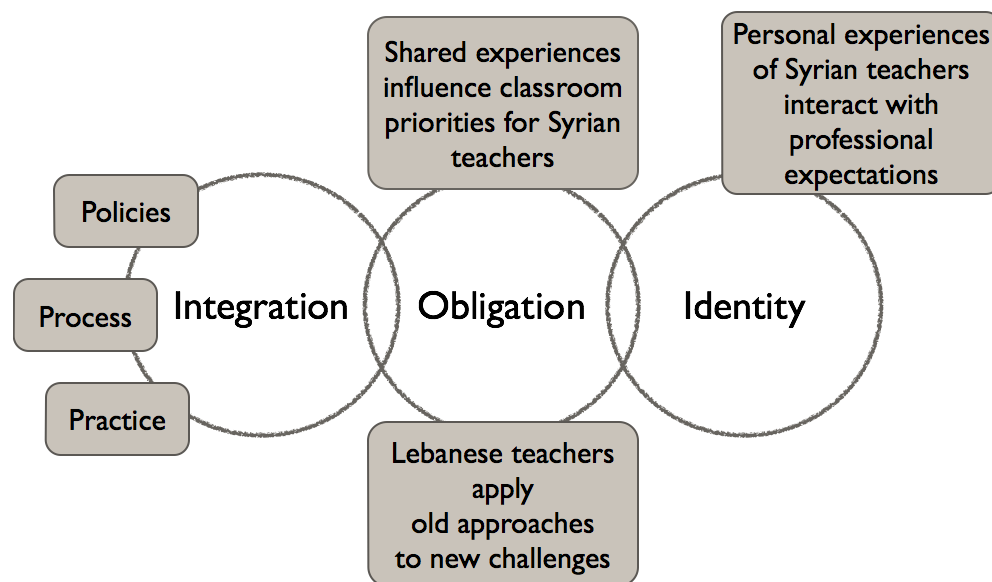
In the first paper, I show how disconnections between the conceptualization of integration policies for refugee education at the global and national level left teachers and school leaders struggling with the process and practice of education at the local level. As global frameworks were reorganized into national strategies, emphasis moved from the integration of refugees into Lebanese schools, to the accommodation of refugees in a separate shift -- accommodation that was contingent on investments to Lebanon's education system. While national actors were focused on how education for Syrian refugees would be funded, these actors provided limited support or guidance to local school leaders working through the many challenges of integrating an entirely new population of students into their schools. Without clear communication of policies and continued oversight, the concept of integration changed shape from school to school. School leaders each made independent decisions about programming for Syrian refugee students that met the local needs of schools, but did not always align with stated national or global objectives for refugee education. For example, in some schools, refugees were allowed into the first shift with Lebanese students, while in others they were moved out in the second shifts. In some schools, refugee students were placed in class according to skill level, in other schools it was according to age. Some schools used an Arabic curriculum while others used a bilingual curriculum with certain subjects taught in French or English, languages to which most Syrians had never been exposed.

In seeming contradiction to the integration rhetoric at the global and national level, teachers and school leaders focused their attentions on keeping Lebanese and Syrian students separate. They described friction between Lebanese and Syrian students when refugees first arrived at the schools. Teachers and school leaders addressed this friction by putting distance between students. In schools, these efforts translated into ensuring first and

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second shifts did not overlap. In classrooms, this meant ensuring the room was decorated and organized to reflect the presence of Lebanese students, and not Syrians. Finally, consideration for the specific needs of teachers was nowhere included in this process. The majority of the exclusively Lebanese teachers had received no training specific to teaching refugees. Instead teachers were left on their own to navigate the practice of teaching a new set of students with a their own set of challenges. Teachers commonly described feeling unsupported and overwhelmed in their classrooms as well as overworked and frustrated by extensive delays in payment of their salaries. While access to education was mostly guaranteed within this process, quality learning was not.

The misalignment between the policies, processes, and practices of integration had a direct impact on Lebanese teachers' approaches within the classroom and the type of learning refugee students were provided. Without any consistent support, guidance, or even payment, Lebanese teachers drew on their past teaching experience with Lebanese students to inform their present approaches with Syrians. Moving through the curriculum became a priority over all else, regardless of whether students showed academic progress. While the existing structures of the curriculum, school assessments, and textbooks at times helped guide teachers, they also hindered their work. Teachers felt the pressure to meet academic goals on time and struggled to adapt their teaching methods to align with students' needs. Facilitating students' social integration into the country seemed an out-of-place goal for most Lebanese teachers, as the majority considered students' time in Lebanon to be temporary. Lebanese teachers also tried to avoid any conversation related to students' experiences during the war in Syria or as refugees in Lebanon. They felt they did not have the time or the training to support students' emotional recovery. Lebanese teachers were accomplishing what they could academically and leaving other social and emotional obligations behind.

Identity played an important role in both how Syrian teachers understood their obligations and how they envisioned the purposes of their work, quite differently from Lebanese teachers. Syrian teachers' experiences living as refugees shaped their conceptions of educational priorities for refugee students. Syrian teachers could not separate students' social and emotional development from their academic learning as students often shared difficult experiences with teachers and teachers themselves had an intimate understanding of the challenges students were facing. As a result, Syrian teachers felt compelled to adapt how and what they taught to reflect these multiple learning needs of their students. The majority of Syrian teachers found it necessary to leave behind the type of teacher-centered pedagogy they had relied on in Syria and instead focused on student-centered learning and activity-based approaches. Syrian teachers reported conversations related to tolerance and social integration were common in class as students often recounted stories of negative encounters with Lebanese. In response, teachers tried to reinforce acceptance and help students recognize similarities between themselves and their host community. Syrian teachers were able to make these adaptations, as in the non-formal schools in which they were allowed to teach, they had flexibility over what and how they taught, unlike Lebanese teachers in the public system. Ironically, it was in these non-formal classrooms, outside the public system, that students were learning skills related to integration even while they were separated from their Lebanese peers.

For Syrian teachers, developing strong relationships was an important avenue for providing students with emotional support, an obligation that almost all Syrian teachers believed was within their job description. Teachers often drew on their own experiences as refugees to help guide this support. While this shared identity was at times an asset in the classroom, being a refugee and teaching refugees also placed considerable strain on Syrian

teachers. Syrian refugee teachers experienced these tensions as they worked to meet the many obligations expected of them in the classroom while at the same time managing their own difficult circumstances as refugees. Despite being committed to students' educational development, teachers struggled to envision a path ahead for their students given the immense challenges facing themselves and their fellow refugees both in exile and in their country of origin.

IMPLICATIONS FOR REFUGEE EDUCATION

Findings from this dissertation suggest a number of implications for practice, policy, and research within the field of refugee education.

As this research shows, there is an urgent need for capacity building for teachers and school leaders working in conflict-affected settings. Training should be ongoing and directly linked to the challenges these actors face within their schools and classrooms. This support should be a top priority for donor organizations, which can strengthen the capacity of teachers within the national system by investing their additional resources in this kind of support. Engaging teachers in meaningful training outside of the formal education system could also provide an opportunity to bring national teachers and refugee teachers together in relevant contexts. In this study both Lebanese and Syrian teachers brought numerous skills to their work, but there was no opportunity to share this knowledge.

In addition to investments in professional development, support for teachers working in crisis-affected settings should be expanded to include a wider range of services. Teachers are expected to provide some level of emotional care to students, but no specific emotional care is extended to them. Education funding during crisis is most often focused

on meeting the needs of students with little consideration for teachers' experiences. As a first step, organizations working to support refugee education can help teachers build community within their schools so that there are structured opportunities for teachers to discuss experiences. There also needs to be greater advocacy for teachers working in these contexts as their perspectives are so often absent from decision-making conversations.

In order for national schools to meet the needs of refugee students, they need to be prepared to educate a larger population and one with different needs. If integration is to be the policy of choice for refugee education, policymakers need to think more concretely about how teachers who are refugees themselves can be engaged to support refugee learners either by providing opportunities within national systems or in partnership with national schools. In difficult settings of crisis and displacement, it is hard for even the best intentioned and the best trained teachers to accomplish all they are asked to do. Finding ways for national and refugee teachers to support students together could augment the quality of students' educational experiences.

Finally, there is a need for more research focused on the experiences of host-country and refugee teachers working in the context of conflict. What patterns can be identified across settings and what experiences are dependent on context? As additional countries choose to integrate refugee students into national systems, further studies considering how national teachers work to include these learners into their classrooms and into their communities are necessary. How do teachers' perceptions of their refugee learners change over time? What support mechanisms are most effective for ensuring quality learning opportunities? Further research might also consider the connections between teachers' educational priorities for their refugee learners and refugee students' expectations for

learning. How do the goals of teachers of refugees and those of refugee students align, and where do they disconnect?

IMPLICATIONS FOR GLOBAL EDUCATIONAL PRIORITIES

The challenge of providing education in settings of conflict and displacement is increasing, as the numbers of those displaced continue to expand. Currently more than 68.5 million people are living displaced from their homes due to violence; 25.4 million of them are refugees1. While the United States may close its borders and cut off international aid, other countries around the world are assuming the challenging responsibility of providing education for a new generation of students, whose futures are assuredly unknown. These children have been sold the promise of education as their ticket into society, a means for establishing belonging, building applicable skills and knowledge, and preparing for future employment. These are promises that accrue not only to the individual but also more broadly, as education is considered a global good. Education is promoted as a tool for establishing and maintaining peace and stability and ensuring economic prosperity to nation states. It is supposed to keep generations from falling into dangerous company, open new opportunities and perspectives and cultivate engaged citizenship across societies. Yet these promises cannot be fulfilled if the individuals most responsible for the delivery of education, that is to say teachers, do not have the support and training to help children along a steady path, especially in settings where the road ahead is so uncertain.

As the number of displaced individuals has expanded around the globe, even countries physically distant from conflict have had to grapple with difficult decisions related

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[1] UNHCR. (2108). *Figures at a glance.* Retrieved from http://www.unhcr.org/en-us/figures-at-a-glance.html

to education for refugees. Countries must decide, for example, who is responsible for providing education to refugee learners; is it global, national or local actors? How are these responsibilities met; is it through integration, separation, or by envisioning totally new systems? How long are countries dedicated to these students; is it a temporary arrangement or a long-term commitment to students' educational futures? The answers to these questions will vary across contexts and crises and should reflect the needs of both host and refugee communities. Yet it is essential that these decisions and intentions be communicated to teachers so that their efforts in classrooms may be informed by larger expectations for refugee learners.

Disruption occurs across the globe, as well as close to home. From natural disasters in New Orleans, to school closures in Chicago, to political rallies in Charlottesville, the United States is grappling with events that pull communities apart, uproot families, and displace loved ones. Across the U.S., teachers play a fundamental role in supporting the rebuilding of communities, the integration of displaced individuals, and the cultivation of acceptance, tolerance, and support. Yet how are educational actors helping teachers to reach these goals? How can policy ask more from an already overstretched resource? Teachers are one of most precious resources provided to children. Attention to the needs of teachers should meet expectations for their work.