

Policies and Practice of Refugee Education from Malaysian Perspective: Preliminary Findings

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Abstract : Millions of child refugees leave their countries in the hope of better and safer lives particularly in the aspect of education. However, the education access for the child refugees is strongly depending on the policies made by the federal and local governments. Malaysia, in particular, is a country which does not have a specific educational policy that is inclusive of child refugees. Hence, this study explores the feasibility of possible educational policy that specifically caters the needs of child refugees in Malaysia. These are preliminary findings of a case study which involved thirty-five postgraduate students in a local university who undertook Educational Policy coursework and five teachers in a refugee community centre in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Interviews were recorded, transcribed and thematically analysed in relation to issues highlighted in the refugee education literature. The findings showed that most of the informants felt there is an urgent need of a systematic intervention put in place by the local government to cater to the needs of equal education access to the child refugees. A further large scale study is needed in the near future by integrating different perspectives of relevant stakeholders for an effective, efficient and sustainable policy formulation and implementation related to child refugees in Malaysia. The findings may be of interests to the educators, the ministry of education, state education office, district education office, teachers, parents and surrounding communities for their awareness about the needs of refugee education and the feasibility of educational policy for child refugees in the country.

Keywords : child refugees, educational policy, inclusive education, Malaysia

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