Education in Emergencies: Research Methodologies Identifying Successes and Gaps

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Abstract

Education in emergencies (EiE) is both a research "field in its infancy" and a rapidly "emerging field" (Tomlinson & Benefield, 2005). This scoping study reviews a wide range of academic articles and grey literature in the education in emergencies field to map current and past research methodologies used by academics and practitioners. It identifies the unique successes and gaps in the evidence base in order to support future academics and practitioners in conducting and documenting research. This study concludes that ensuring sound ethical and rigorous reflective research practices is critical to fill research gaps and to move EiE from infancy to a well-developed, reputable research field.

Keywords: Education in Emergencies, Education and Conflict, Education and Natural Disasters, Research Methodologies

Education in Emergencies: Research Methodologies Identifying Successes and Gaps

Education in emergencies (EiE) is a research "field in its infancy" (Tomlinson & Benefield, 2005). Over the past decade, academics' and practitioners' interest in the challenges of educating children affected by emergencies – natural disasters (e.g. hurricanes, typhoons, floods) and human-made crisis (e.g. war, internal conflict and genocide) (Kagawa, 2010) – has grown rapidly. As EiE is still an 'emerging field' (Seitz, 2004; Sinclair, 2002; Sommers, 2005; UNICEF, as cited in Rappleye & Paulson, 2007), documentation of quality research with credible methodologies at both the macro and meso level exists but is limited. Thus, there is a pertinent need to establish a sound professional research foundation to examine the effect of emergencies on education at different stages of emergency (INEE, 2010). This desk study will provide an overview of current and past evidence generating activities within the field of education in emergencies, while focusing specifically on research methodologies. The study will determine gaps and analyze the successes and challenges of the methodologies identified in the research within this field of knowledge.

Outline

The first section of this paper outlines the methodology of this desk study and provides a background of the EiE research field. The second section of the paper is broken down into the following parts: 1) Education in natural disasters and conflict/post-conflict settings; 2) Overarching methods used in the field: quantitative, qualitative and mixed methods; 3) Study sizes; 4) Duration of Research; and 5) Ethical Practices. Successes and challenges will be addressed throughout the above categories. In the conclusion the overarching success, challenges and lessons learned will be detailed and recommendations for further research will be provided.

Desk Study Methodology

A scoping study was chosen to identify relevant literature to address the following research questions: 1) What are the research methods used in this field? 2) What are the successes and challenges of the methods used? 3) What are the overarching gaps that exist for research in the field? The articles, reports, papers and documents included in this study were selected based on the quality of their research methodologies and ethics. The study includes: grey literature – unpublished documentation in the form of assessments, project evaluations and donor support; practitioner-oriented literature[1] – published policy papers and documents typically written by and for staff working at international organizations and NGOs (Burde, Kapit-Spitalny, Wahl, & Guven, 2011); and academic literature. The field of education in emergencies has in "large extent been taken forward by development agencies and fieldworkers rather than the academics or education professionals" (Smith, 2005, p. 387), and thus it is critical to incorporate practitioner-oriented literature into the study of research methods in the field.

To identify and evaluate EiE research methodologies, I reviewed 65 pieces of published and unpublished literature. The process of collecting this literature included surveying many subject-specific search engines and databases. In my preliminary search I used the key words and phrases of 'education in emergencies' and 'research methodologies' to identify sources[2]. The primary search engines used for this research included: ERIC (Education Resources Information Center), University of Toronto Library, JSTOR, the Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE) and Google Scholar. The first four sources were used to identify academic literature, while the fifth allowed for the inclusion of both academic and grey literature. Specific

[1] These papers are for or commissioned by UN or international NGOs and are generally intended to help guide staff in conducting their work in the field. They provide large amounts of data and often offer the first insight into an important research question or field dilemma facing practitioners (Burde et al., 2011). They may, however, not give significant weight to research design and/or assume best practices. Practitioner-oriented literature that failed entirely to develop research design was not included in this study.
[2] See appendix A for further detail on data collection.

journals were also reviewed including: Conflict and Education, Current Issues in Comparative Education, Compare, International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education and Comparative Education Review. Many agencies and non-governmental organizations contributing to this field were also reviewed and used in this study, such as, Global Information Network of Education (GINE), UNESCO-IIEP, UNICEF, World Bank and Save the Children research. Once the preliminary data was collected, a snowballing technique was used to identify further research in the field; this included a review of reference lists in each article, and related article searches via academic journals. My attendance at several education in emergencies sessions at the 2010 Comparative International Education Society (CIES) conference led me to identify further credible sources. I narrowed the scope of this review by removing literature that did not either include a methodology section or discuss methodology at some point in the document.

After narrowing the scope, I thoroughly reviewed the remaining 48 articles and categorized them in a chart format in order to synthesize and interpret the data. The following subheadings were used for categorization: author, title, source, year; type of source; purpose; hypothesis or questions; methodology; participants; findings/results; and research challenges and/or lessons learned. I utilized a uniform reporting approach for all literature reviewed. Out of the 48 articles, 36 articles included adequate data to be included in this study. Once complete, the data was sorted into methodological and thematic categories to be summarized, analyzed and included in this paper.

Limitations

Several challenges arose when identifying literature to be consolidated in this study. There is a dearth of researchers who clearly incorporate their research methodology in their academic articles. Good scholarship demands that researchers reveal and explain their methods

(King, as cited in Jacobson & Landau, 2003; Ragin, as cited in Jacobson & Landau, 2003); therefore, literature that failed to document methodologies could not be included in this study. Of the 65 pieces of literature viewed only 36 documents included sufficient methodological information to be included. It must be noted that documents that only included a brief summary of methodology but that failed to explain the details of successes and challenges were excluded from this review.

Another key challenge was in analysis of practitioner-oriented and grey literature. There is a lot of literature developed by NGOs and international organizations for the purposes of internal program and project monitoring and evaluation and/or advocacy for EiE funds and policy change. This can result in documents that glorify project successes without providing balanced or unbiased analysis of their genuine strengths and weaknesses. In addition, because much of the research in the EiE field is based on advocacy research where researchers set out to "prove" their claims, there tends to be a weaker emphasis on methods and on developing high quality research designs (Jacobson & Landau, 2003). This reduces the opportunity for academics and practitioners to compare competing hypotheses and collect valuable data.

These challenges were taken into consideration during the data evaluation process. Literature that focused on NGOs' and international organizations' evaluation of their own education programs was critically examined and was only included when the research had extraordinary methodology and detailed examination of successes and challenges. NGO and practitioner-based work that involved external consultants and/or focused on issues instead of examination of specific projects are used more frequently in this study. A couple of academic articles, however, referenced in this study are based on analysis of NGO-based education systems where the author was previously employed (Kirk & Winthrop, 2007).

Background – Education in Emergencies Field

"Education in emergencies" refers to theories and practices guiding the provision of education in context of crisis and post-crisis transition (Sinclair, 2001). EiE broadly refers to multiple levels and types of education (from pre-primary, primary, secondary and tertiary to formal, non-formal and vocational) and to multiple types of crisis (from acute emergencies to protracted refugee contexts, from post-conflict recovery and civil war to natural disaster) (Winthrop, 2009). This metanarrative encompasses several narrower terms used to describe the field including: emergency education, education in conflict, education and fragile states, education and crisis, education and post-crisis transition, and education and natural disasters. Although EiE has been called a "new field" by several contemporary scholars (Talbot, 2005), the practice of providing education services during war and disaster dates back decades. It is not a new practice on the ground but has emerged rapidly as a new field of study, policy and practice (Winthrop, 2009, p. 16). The field itself developed quickly between the mid-1990s and the mid-2000s due to several significant external trends including: the changing nature of conflict and humanitarian action; increased focus on child protection; and recognition that Education For All (EFA) and Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) will not be met without education in emergencies (Winthrop, 2009, p. 8).

The EiE field of research was augmented by the development of the Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE) in 2000. The birth of INEE led to a plethora of research focused on EiE. The INEE Strategic Research Agenda was developed to facilitate the expansion of knowledge and an evidence base in EiE by building collaborative consensus around research gaps and research themes for investigation and guiding research questions. This paper

acts to support the INEE Strategic Research Agenda to identify dominant research methodologies and gaps in the field.

Education in Emergencies Research Field

In the EiE field, the majority of high-quality research available has focused on education in conflict and post-conflict settings. A significant finding is the paucity of research carried out on education and natural disasters. Of the 36 documents included in this study less than one-fifth of them are based on natural disasters. The little research that focuses on natural disasters is primarily conducted in Southern Asia and is in the form of grey literature. The majority of sound research on education in emergencies, conflict and post-conflict, is based in the African continent and in Central Asia. A small percentage of research is focused in Europe on Northern Ireland and the Balkans. Most of the research in this field has historically focused on education for refugee children. In the past decade the focus has increasingly expanded to child soldiers and Internally Displaced Persons (IDP). This desk study will briefly introduce education and natural disasters but focus primarily on education and conflict, where I found that the majority of strong research and analysis had been conducted.

Education and Natural Disasters

Literature on EiE in the context of natural disasters is limited. Chand, Joshi and Dabhi (2003) argue that emergencies caused by natural disasters are a secondary concern in research compared to conflict-triggered emergency education. The data available in this sector is primarily quantitative and focuses on the numbers of children attending school prior to and post disasters. The qualitative component looks at developing education programs that focus on emergency preparedness. There is a dearth of strong qualitative research conducted on the psychosocial effects on learning for children who have been affected by natural disasters. Very

little academic research is available on natural disasters' effects on education. The majority of literature on this subject is comprised of strategies for teaching about emergencies and how to respond to them. Minimal literature focuses on measuring the effects of emergency on education for persons affected by natural disasters, and even less literature documents methodologies for researching the effects of natural disasters on education.

Education in Conflict and Post-Conflict

In contrast to education in natural disasters, an abundance of research has been conducted and published on education in conflict and post-conflict settings in the last two decades. The majority of this research has been carried out on the African continent, Central Asia and some in Ireland. As mentioned above, research has primarily focused on the experience of refugee education and Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) education.

Research Methodologies

The most common research methods used are reflective of the education field and are qualitative (for example, see Bakhshi, 2008; Bird, 2003; Burgess, 2009; King, 2011; Kirk & Winthrop, 2006; Mareng, 2010; Mitchell, 2011; Shepler, 2011; Sommers, 1999; Yasin & Tilson, 2009). Mixed methods approaches are also very popular in the field as they provide quantitative support for qualitative data (Becklund, Wheaton, & Wessells, 2005; Bengtsson & Bartlett, 2011; Burde, 2011; Chelpi-den Hamer, 2007; Dryden-Peterson, 2011; Dryden-Peterson, 2003; Jacobsen & Landau, 2003; Kirk & Winthrop, 2007; Lloyd, El-Kogali, Perlman Robinson, Rankin, & Rashed, 2010; Thomson, 2008). Quantitative research has rarely been used alone in the field of education in emergencies.

Quantitative Research

Historically, most of the research conducted in this field has been qualitative (Ostby & Urdal, 2010) and it is only in the past ten years that quantitative research is being carried out. In 2005, Sambanis asserted "there is not a wealth of quantitative results in education to discuss" (as cited in Ostby & Urdal, 2010, p. 9). In 2010, in Ostby and Urdal's review of quantitative, empirical literature on education and civil conflict, the authors were stretched to find quantitative conflict studies that included education as a primary focus (Barakat & Urdal; Krueger & Maleckova; Thyne, as cited in Ostby & Urdal, 2010). Ostby and Urdal's (2010) quantitative literature review focused on the role education has in leading to/blocking conflict. A similar quantitative review focusing on the opposite, conflict's effect on education, would be a vital addition to the EiE field.

INGOs and international bodies such as UNESCO-IIEP, World Bank and UNHCR have initiated the majority of quantitative research conducted in the EiE field. The data has been collected in the recent decade primarily to inform the international public of the challenges that exist in achieving Education For All and to push for funding of education projects in education in emergency locations (UNESCO, 2011). Quantitative data on Gross Enrolment Rates (GER) for refugee education is collated by UNHCR; however, there are many limitations to the accuracy of refugee GERs, including estimating population size and tracking movement of refugee students (UNESCO, 2011). Scholars in the field saw the Global Survey on Education in Emergencies by the Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children, as a first step in increasing access to such data for the field of education in emergencies and early reconstruction (Talbot, 2005). Further quantitative research has been conducted to increase data collection in connection with the Education for All Goals and the Millennium Development Goals. The UNESCO Institute for

Statics uses survey programs, such as the Demographic and Health Surveys and the Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys (MICS), to collect household data to determine effects of emergency on education (UNESCO, 2011). These studies can use quantitative household data to determine education trends over an extended period of time and across multiple countries. UNESCO's (2011) "Quantitative Impact of Conflict Education" study examined the impact of conflict on 25 countries' education level over an eight-year period. These quantitative studies are often not used in conjunction with qualitative inquiry (UNESCO, 2011).

NGOs, international organizations and governments use this data to advocate for project funding, and academics have utilized it to back their qualitative research findings. In order to develop credible statistics, however, a more rigorous systematic focus on data collection is needed. In general the literature I collected in this study lacked sound statistical data. An exception to this was Lai and Thyne's (2007) use of UNESCO data on educational expenditures in "The Effects of Civil War on Education – 1980-1997" to support their assertion that conflict destroys a state's system of education as both expenditures and enrollment rates decline. Other researchers used datasets on Gross Enrolment Rates produced by established research institutions and teacher foundations, such as the Centre for Research and popular education, to include quantitative scientific validity in their research.

Only one scholar included in this study examined an education initiative in an emergency context using quantitative research methods as the primary focus. Burde (2011) used a randomized trial in her research study to measure the effects of community-based schools (CBS) in Afghanistan on children, households and villages. This was groundbreaking in the field as it was the first research study in EiE to use a randomized trial (ibid). Burde analyzed the impact of an intervention by using the randomized trial research study design of dividing a population into

two groups, and randomly administering a treatment to one group, and not the other. In Burde's study, one group had access to community-based school while the other did not. The design allowed Burde to make strong statements on education program impact. Burde found that children were almost 50% more likely to attend school if there was a CBS available to them and that proximity to school was the key reason for the dramatic increase (ibid, p. 267). The quantitative findings provided systematic, numeric assessments of phenomena that affect large groups of people over a period of time.

The support of randomized trials as a form of quantitative research is divided by proponents (Anfrist; Cook; Duflo; Kremer, as cited in Burde, 2011) and critics (Lareau, 2009; Lather, 2004; Philips, 2009; Ranis, as cited in Burde, 2011). Proponents support randomized trials on the grounds of program impact, while many critics argue that they limit the scope of research by confining studies to narrow questions, are difficult to realize accurate results, and are unethical because of the idea that experimental design requires control groups that are not being supported during the action research process. Although Burde was able to challenge critics' assumptions in the use of randomized trials, she states that her research could not have been effectively conducted without pairing it with a qualitative approach in order to address the "how" and "why" questions that are answered during observation and interview.

Qualitative Research

Qualitative research is the primary method used in the education in emergencies field as it is devoted to an understanding of the humanities. Qualitative research studies things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meaning people bring to them (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005, p. 3). Denzin and Lincoln (2011) assert qualitative research is two-fold: 1) a commitment to some version of the naturalistic, interpretive

approach to its subject matter; and 2) an ongoing critique of the politics and methods of post positivism. This research involves the studied use and collection of a variety of empirical materials including case study, personal experience, introspection, life story, interview, observation, cultural texts and visual texts (ibid). Although qualitative research has been critiqued for not generating 'hard evidence', it is an essential research form for examining the field of education. A variety of qualitative methods have been expanded and refined, and paradigms, theoretical perspectives and epistemological stances have been developed and elaborated in recent years. The majority of researchers in this desk study used several qualitative tools in their studies to triangulate their data. This supports researchers to assess effectively and to provide information on situation from different points of view and vantages.

Observations. Observations were used in several studies as an ethnographic tool to garner an understanding of the daily actions of the research subjects. EiE observations have primarily been used as a qualitative method to support interview data and participatory research. Since the majority of primary researchers conducting studies on EiE are from the West and/or those foreign to the community, researchers seeking to use localized ethical practices and contextualized data work with local research assistants for the observation component of their studies. For example, Kirk and Winthrop (2007) worked with local research assistants to carry out classroom observation for their research in Afghanistan to ensure important contextual cultural understanding of interactions in the classroom. Others have used observations as both a qualitative and quantitative tool. Maxwell et al. (2004) asked teachers to use locally developed, structured observations as both a qualitative and quantitative tool to examine aggressive and pro-social behaviour in a peace education pre-school program. The data was compared across

classrooms to determine significant behaviour change of students. Research that used observation as its only tool was not included in this study.

Case Studies. Case studies, ethnographic research studies that investigate contemporary phenomenon within real-life contexts using single units, such as an individuals, groups or organizations (Yin, as cited in Denzin & Lincoln, 2011) are frequently used to investigate the real-life phenomenon of Education in Emergency situations through detailed contextual analysis. The case study in the EiE field is useful in detailing specific communities and as a tool for comparative analysis (Bakhshi, 2008; Bird, 2003; Davies et al., 2008; Nicolai, 2004; Obura, 2003; Sommers, 2005; Yasin & Tilson, 2009). Unfortunately, the credibility of case studies has been diminished in the EiE field due to many organizations use of the term "case study" to present research lacking in methodological grounding. This study found that the preponderance of researchers using the case study method effectively triangulate it with other forms of data collection to corroborate their information.

Interviews as a Qualitative Tool. The most common qualitative tool used in the EiE field is the interview. The majority of credible sources reviewed in this paper used interviews as a method of data collection to understand individual knowledge, values, attitudes and beliefs (Arnold, 2005; Becklund et al., 2005; Bird, 2003; Burde, 2011; Burgess, 2009; Chelpi-den Hamer, 2007; King, 2011; Kirk & Winthrop, 2006; Lloyd et al., 2010; Mareng, 2010; Mitchell, 2011; Shepler, 2011; Sommers, 1999; Yasin & Tilson, 2009). Interviews ranged from narrow structured questions to open-ended narratives. Interviews were conducted in groups, pairs and one-to-one format depending on circumstance and purpose. Each interview style selected was chosen based on research questions and contextual realities. For example, King (2011) conducted 35 interviews with teachers in Rwanda to determine the different relationship between violent

conflict and education. Since "trust in post-conflict contexts is so tenuous," King used one-to-one interviews to build trusting relationships with her participants (ibid, p. 139). Conducting one-to-one interviews forced King to forego a translator and sacrifice the knowledge of local language and French speakers in her study, but allowed for participants to openly share experiences. Another method used to elicit detailed open-ended responses is individual life narratives. Shepler (2011) focused on life narratives when interviewing 640 teachers in Liberia and Sierra Leone. This method supported Shepler to identify triumphs, challenge and structural issues that were predominating in her large sample size. Both authors avoided use of probing questions and allowed their participants the opportunity to opt out of questions with which they felt uncomfortable.

The majority of researchers using the interview as a semi-structured or open-ended qualitative tool focused on interviews with adult subjects. The limited inclusion of children in interviews occurs for many reasons. For academics, it is challenging to obtain university ethics approval to subject children to long, in-depth one-on-one interviews. A perception also exists that children's cognitive development level is not sufficient to elicit comprehensive findings through an interview process. More recent research, however, includes children in the interview process (Burgess, 2009; Dryden-Peterson, 2011; Kirk & Winthrop, 2007). Dryden-Peterson (2011) used semi-structured interviews and informal conversations in her research with refugee children in Uganda to examine the ways in which current educational realties shape refugee children's constructions of their future livelihoods. Burgess (2009) interviewed primary students to determine their perception of the level of government support for education in Colombia. By engaging in interviews with both adults and children, researchers are able to widen their findings and come to more representative conclusions.

Participatory Research with Children. Participatory research with children, also known as "child friendly" research, has become a popular research methodology to study education, and has been innovatively used in the education in emergencies field in the last decade to determine the effects of conflict and disaster on children's psychological state, learning and development. Research methods are developed specifically to meet the needs of children and are based on their particular competencies and interests. Traditionally, research in challenging crisis contexts has focused on the education system as the unit of analysis (Winthrop & Kirk, 2011), which usually fails to take the children's perspective into full account. In contrast, current research in this form seeks to include the child as a subject (rather than an object), social actor and participant/co-researcher in the research process (Christensen & Prout, as cited in Bengtsson & Bartlett, 2011). A challenge in effective child participation is the focus on rapid assessment research that limits engagement of children as co-researchers and/or true participants. This challenge must be realized during the research planning phase. Academics and practitioners using participatory child-centered research methods in this study use many different tools to elicit valuable information from their participants.

Child-friendly Participatory Visual Research. Practitioners and academics have used participatory visual research for social research studies. This form of research is now being used in the EiE field through tools of photovoice, participatory video and digital storytelling. Mitchell (2011) used visual research several times when working with marginalized groups in order to develop findings through the eyes of the participants and shift the boundaries of knowledge production. In Mitchell's study, 16 girls living in the street in Rwanda photographed images of "feeling safe and not so safe" in relation to gender violence in their lives. One "not so safe" image captured was of football players' houses where females were scared of abuse. This finding

was in contrast with the perception of sports heroes in the community and was used to push a Rwandese NGO to stop its campaign plans to use sports heroes to address gender-based violence. Mitchell's study substantiates the need to include children in the research and decision-making processes of situations that affect them, in order to avoid conclusions that are based on adult assumptions.

Bengtsson and Bartlett (2011) also focused on the use of child-friendly methods in their research in order to identify obstacles to essential services in schools in Lesotho, Nigeria, Rwanda, Swaziland and Tanzania. They developed several child-centered research tools to identify the state of inclusion, gender equity and participation in policy and practice of UNICEF child-friendly schools including: camera activities, writing activities, drawing activities and play-based activities (ibid). Bengtsson and Bartlett insist that true child-friendly methods should include a wide range of creative activity for the purpose of triangulation and should be 'fun' and encourage full child participation (ibid). Challenges around culturally appropriate methods were identified in this research. When developing child-friendly research practices, it is critical to develop tools that are based on the understanding of childhood and child-related activities existing within the community. Bengtsson and Bartlett considered the implications of imposing Western child-friendly models in their research and worked with local research assistants to examine their research methods prior to engaging children in their study.

A useful participatory research tool, both with adults and children, is community mapping (Becklund et al., 2005; Lloyd et al., 2010). Becklund et al. (2005) used this method to determine key protection issues in communities in Afghanistan. Development practitioners, government agencies and independent researchers frequently use community mapping to gauge

people's understanding and beliefs of both the risk factors and safe havens within their own communities.

Many child-friendly research data collection tools, evidenced in grey literature, are of child development practitioners working in conflict and post-conflict education settings. Child Development and Protection Monitoring and Evaluation practitioners in NGOs use these methods to evaluate the success of their projects and programs. Unfortunately, depending on the organization, this documentation is primarily used to serve the internal interests of the organization and its donor requirements. As Talbot (2005) states, grey literature enjoys "limited circulation and [is] rapidly lost in dusty filing cabinets and…C-drives" (p. 22). The successes and challenges in these data collection processes, if made available to the public, can serve to support the research field of EiE. NGOs, such as Save the Children and Plan International, have begun sharing their organizational EiE findings to support the research field.

Mixed Methods Approach

The majority of literature in this desk study used a mixed methods research approach. Most of the researchers focused primarily on qualitative research methods, while including quantitative tools to triangulate their findings and increase credibility of their research on a global level in political or academic spaces, where qualitative research is not deemed as valid as quantitative. Quantitative tools that have supplemented qualitative methods include Gross Enrolment Rates (GER) and household survey data collected by governments, the UN, NGOs and INGOs, as well as questionnaires administered by the researchers themselves.

Questionnaires. Questionnaires are effective as both qualitative and quantitative tools to gather a variety of data from participants. This method is useful in EiE as it is relatively inexpensive and allows researchers to reach a large number of participants. The design and use

of the questionnaire must be carefully developed in order to effectively elicit sound data that address the research questions.

Lloyd et al. (2010) utilized questionnaires to assess the reach of basic schooling to the displaced populations in diverse settings in North and West Darfur and to document aspects of school quality. The use of questionnaires allowed the researchers to study 88 primary schools in 17 communities (ibid, p. 9). Kostelny and Wessells (2008) used locally developed questionnaires to determine children's level of well-being.

Study Size

A wide range of sample sizes has been used in the EiE field to gain an understanding of education practices during and after emergencies. Sample sizes reviewed in this paper ranged from 12 participants (Burgess, 2009) to 640 (Shepler, 2011). Small studies provided issue-specific evidence, while larger studies generated evidence that can be used as a comparison tool in further data collection. The majority of the research conducted, however, was community specific and the limitations should be noted when using the data for comparison studies and EiE advocacy.

Research Duration

The majority of literature encompassed in this study is based on short-term research. There are several reasons for the use of short-term studies, including: the risk involved in conducting research in emergency settings; action-oriented focus in this field; and limited funding for research. Although short-term research studies provide useful information for immediate response, they also pose several limitations by impeding the development of well thought-out responses based on careful planning (Martone & Neighbor, 2006).

Rapid Assessment Studies

Most of the EiE studies carried out are short-term and are often rapid assessment studies. Due to the nature of this field, these humanitarian studies are frequently used as advocacy tools to garner support for policy change and donor funding for EiE projects. Thus short-term studies are administered to provide immediate evidence that can be used to push governments and international bodies to take action. Many studies are also carried out on a short-term basis to minimize risk to the researcher. Unfortunately Bird (2005) found that in the Rwanda and DRC contexts, "rapid programmatic assessments rarely followed a standard layout, and that while much data and statistical information were collected, very little was utilised for further analysis" (p. 37). When thorough context analysis is done prior to rapid assessments and an extensive data collection review occurs after the rapid assessment, this form of research can provide sound evidence to shape policy and programs (Becklund et al., 2005). Although rapid assessments have resulted in useful findings that have shaped educational planning, there are limitations to the quality of research practices and findings.

Longitudinal Studies

Longitudinal studies in EiE pose many challenges and are less frequently performed than short-term studies. Longitudinal studies are expensive and difficult to fund due to the instability that exists in emergency zones and the difficulty for researchers to track their participants over a long period of time. Safety measures for the researchers and participants, such as secure housing and transportation, increase monetary implications for carrying out studies. The challenge of tracking participants in emergency zones deters researchers from investing in this research. In refugee and IDP contexts, many participants do not have a permanent residence and/or contact information available for longer studies. Despite the challenges, the need for longitudinal studies

in the field of EiE is crucial to effectively measuring impact over time, and to understand and develop sustainable solutions for education in emergencies. Dryden-Peterson's (2011) three-year longitudinal study of the educational experiences of refugee children from the Democratic Republic of Congo, who were living and attending school in Uganda, produced unique findings that identified the important element of education as social integration. The three-year duration of this study allowed her to critically examine the refugee education experience and collect high quality data. Another significant longitudinal study was conducted by Kirk and Winthrop (2007) in Northern Ethiopia through the International Rescue Committee's Healing Classrooms Initiative (IRC HCI), to determine how teachers' lives and experiences shape their teaching practices.

The greatest challenge identified in longitudinal studies in EiE is tracking participants over a period of time due to the transient lifestyles of persons living in conflict, crisis or post-conflict settings. In order to mitigate this challenge in her research, Dryden-Peterson, and local research assistants supporting the project, structured their data collection to build relationships with research participants through frequent and meaningful contact. Participants were interviewed only once a year but had check-ins with data collectors every four months. This well-deliberated research strategy resulted in complete data collection of 53 of the 60 initial participants (S. Dryden-Peterson, personal communication, August 8, 2011). Both Dryden-Peterson and Kirk and Winthrop's studies highlight the importance of identifying teachers' and students' long-term aspirations in education and developing sustainable education systems that are not used as a "quick-fix" in emergency contexts.

Ethics and Research

The ethical imperative of research – to do no harm – is intensified in conflict and post-conflict zones and in natural disaster zones where the research environment is politically polarized, armed actors may be present, and the local population involves vulnerable groups (Thomson, 2008). Clear ethical practices in education in emergencies should be outlined in all academic and grey literature. Unfortunately, the majority of articles fail to clearly present their ethics approach to data collection. The need to present ethical challenges and successes is crucial to improve EiE research practices. The realization of this in recent years has resulted in researchers increasingly including explanations of their ethical practices in their studies. This is exemplified in several authors' articles in the recent edited book *Educating Children in Conflict Zones: Research, Policy, and Practice for Systemic Change – A Tribute to Jackie Kirk.*

As all EiE research focuses on vulnerable persons, consideration must be taken to ensure no harm during and after the data collection. Over the past few decades there has been a move to examine the relationship between the researcher and the researched, to develop an equitable power relationship (Alderson, 2004). The focus on using child participatory research methodologies pushes researchers to ensure children's voices are heard and respected, making children "subjects rather than objects" of inquiry (Christensen & James; Greig, Taylor, & Mckay; Woodhead & Falkner, as cited in Bengtsson & Bartlett, 2011). These studies take into consideration informed voluntary consent, avoidance of deception, confidentiality, age and cultural appropriateness (Kirk & Winthrop, 2007; Bengtsson & Bartlett, 2011; Mitchell, 2011). Several researchers working with children on the African continent identified obtaining written informed consent as a challenge (Bengtsson & Bartlett, 2011; Kostelny & Wessells, 2008). Differing literacy levels restricted what could be included in consent forms, and suspicion around

signing documents existed in several communities (ibid). Oral consent is often used in emergency settings. In these cases a clear explanation of benefits and risks of participating in the study are presented to the potential participants (Thomson, 2008). Mitigation strategies included simplification of standard consent tools and oral transmissions (Bengtsson & Bartlett, 2011). Kostelny and Wessells (2008) similarly simplified their consent tools and had local researchers administer them. In their study, participants thumb printed consent forms instead of signing them. Further articles and reports published in the EiE field should include discussion of alternative methods to ensure ethical practices and to support researchers in planning ethical research studies.

Another ethical challenge that must be examined in this field is the North-South power dynamic that exists in the humanitarian and development sector. Much of the research is funded by NGOs and international organizations that, at points in time, have been critiqued for Eurocentric, neo-colonial ideologies that fail to incorporate indigenous ideologies and cultural understanding into planning. The potential biases of the research approach, hypothesis and findings must be critiqued. Because researchers' personal experiential realities and identities shape how they understand and interpret social reality and interpret their findings, it is critical that researchers of varying ideological backgrounds and subject positions of the countries where emergencies are occurring conduct studies in this field (Nilan, 2002).

Due to the emergency nature of this field, the majority of research is based on problem-solving and is not critical. Although this is legitimate due to circumstance, the field runs a risk of existing only to serve the purpose of immediate action for policy and development organizations while failing to examine the complexities of micro- and meso-level issues and ethical challenges (Novelli & Cardoza, 2008). Rappleye and Paulson (2007) assert that the education in

emergencies field would benefit from introducing theories of education transfer to critically examine issues in the field, such as policy borrowing and education model transfer (e.g. Education in a box). Critical analysis of the implications of new education models and/or development of pre-existing models can expand the scope of research in the field.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Education in emergencies can no longer be deemed as a field in its infancy. An abundance of research has been carried out in this field over the last decade. The Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies' emphasis on the critical importance of this research has helped to augment studies in this field by developing a website that increases awareness of critical issues in EiE, centralizing research, and supporting learning exchanges between practitioners and academics in the field. An abundance of grey literature exists on programs in education in emergencies that lack rigorous, methodologically sound research practices. However, innovative methods and critical analysis are beginning to enter the field. If practitioner work is to be accredited as research, it is essential that practitioners carrying out this work critically examine their objectives and develop sound methodological tools. This may require practitioners to develop tools that could be adapted to different situations prior to the onset of emergencies in order to avoid the use of unethical, poorly developed studies. Academics must also focus on improving their methodologies and ethical practices when conducting researching. The recently published book *Educating Children in Conflict Zones: Research, Policy, and Practice for Systemic Change – A Tribute to Jackie Kirk* is an important addition to this field as it includes many diverse innovative research studies conducted by esteemed academics of education (Mundy & Dryden-Peterson, 2011). Some of the research, such as Dryden-Peterson's longitudinal study, moves away from the mainstream problem-solving and rapid response

evaluations that have dominated the field of EiE. The need to understand aspirations of students and teachers, and critically examine the education system and the constructs of emergency, has pushed researchers to persevere and to engage in in-depth studies.

While the field of Education and Conflict has expanded in the last decade, research on education and natural disasters *is* still in its infancy. Much of the reports on this topic focus on providing recommendations for setting up preventive mechanisms, but fail to share any evidence of needs assessments or research with the individuals affected by the emergency. The failure to present methodology within these papers depletes the credibility of the recommendations and makes the recommendations lack any transferability. Building the capacity of practitioners on the ground in emergency settings could greatly benefit the research field.

Because EiE research is emerging concurrently with the push for education to be considered the fourth pillar of humanitarian aid, much of the research is conducted and/or used for the purpose of EiE advocacy and project design, focusing on a linear model of relief to development. This advocacy push has blocked the field from developing "strong theoretical and analytical tools to support critical scholarly inquiry and research" (Rappleye & Paulson, 2007, p. 260). This, as evidenced in the literature, results in a dearth of theoretical research and research that critically examines the positives and negatives of education (Bush & Saltarelli, 2000), and long-term effects of persons affected by emergencies. Education theory, such as that presented by Davies (2003) and Novelli and Cardoza (2008), should be infused into the research design process. The use of theory is critical. It could aid researchers in linking different patterns found in evidence and increase the credibility of qualitative research conducted in EiE.

A large portion of in-depth sound research in this field focuses on early reconstruction, post-reconstruction and a return to normality. Research that focuses on the crisis stage is

prevalent, but is limited in quality due to urgency and potential danger for the researcher. Further research on preventative work and monitoring education and emergencies should be carried out in this field of research.

Innovative participatory research methodologies have taken root in the EiE field (Mitchell, 2011; Bengtsson & Bartlett, 2011). The use of child-friendly qualitative methods that seek to understand children's perceptions of their own education and aspirations is pertinent. The participatory studies thus far have predominantly focused on examining NGO-based education programs. This method should also be used to understand non-formal, community-developed education programs that are not influenced/developed by INGOs and international organizations. A central tension that lies at the heart of comparative and international education, and plays out in education in emergencies, is the belief of being able to "learn from elsewhere," constrained by the realization that contextual differences make importing 'best practices' observed elsewhere extremely problematic (Rappleye & Paulson, 2007).

This challenge of best practices being transferred elsewhere is evident in the challenges of ethical standards in this field. Due to the insecurity and complexity of carrying out research in the emergency context, often ethical practices are not/cannot be carried out. For example, researchers often fail to receive signed consent from participants and/or fail to clearly inform them of the way in which the research will be used. Alternative methods of consent are often necessary, such as verbal consent and thumbprints (Bengtsson & Bartlett, 2011; Kostelny & Wessells, 2008). A review of ethical standards should be done by Ethical or Internal Review Boards, to appreciate the complexities and realities of carrying out research in emergencies, and realistic ethical requirements should be developed that can be successfully implemented in the field (Thomson, 2008).

In order for education in emergencies to be established as a credible and professional research field, academics and practitioners must move away from focusing on rapid, quickly planned studies. In order to be able to assess underlying causes and patterns that are not evident in short-term studies or single case studies, researchers need to move towards long-term studies that can identify and track patterns over time. Several credible research studies have emerged in this field in the last decade that have tracked education patterns over time including Dryden-Peterson's (2011) and Kirk and Winthrop's (2007) longitudinal studies. The research must expand to be conducted by researchers of different disciplines, theoretical backgrounds, cultures and geographical backgrounds. The emergence of Education in Emergency university programs, such as the EiE program in Nairobi, Kenya, will help to build knowledge on this subject and diversify the subject position of researchers. Sound ethical and rigorous reflective research practices are critical to fill research gaps and to change EiE from being "stuck in its emergence" (Rappleye & Paulson, 2007) to a well-developed, reputable research field.

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Appendix I: Desk Study Research Methodology

Search engines were essential tools to this research including: ERIC (Education Resources Information Center), University of Toronto Library, JSTOR, the Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE) and Google Scholar. The first four sources were used to identify academic literature, while the fifth allowed for the inclusion of both academic and grey literature. Specific journals were also reviewed including: Conflict and Education, Current Issues in Comparative Education, Compare, International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education and Comparative Education Review. Many agencies and non-governmental organizations contributing to this field were also reviewed and used in this study including: Global Information Network of Education (GINE), UNESCO-IIEP, UNICEF, World Bank, and Save the Children research. This search specifically targeted education in emergency research methodologies and concepts.

Key words and phrases used during the preliminary searches included:

- Education in Emergencies
- Emergency Education
- Conflict and Education
- Education and post-conflict
- Conflict Education Research
- Peace Education
- Conflict Resolution Education
- Education and Natural Disasters
- Education in Emergencies Research Methodologies

Key Authors searched included:

- Lynn Davies
- Jackie Kirk
- Sarah Dryden-Peterson
- Alan Smith
- Marc Sommers
- Rebecca Winthrop

Once the preliminary data was collected, a snowballing technique was used to identify further researchers in the field. This included review of reference lists in each article and related article searches via academic journals. My attendance at several education in emergencies sessions at the 2010 Comparative International Education Society (CIES) conference led me to identify further credible sources. I narrowed the scope by removing literature that did not either include a methodology section, or discuss methodology at some point in the document.

Once my scope was narrowed, I reviewed all the remaining articles in detail and categorized them in a chart format in order to synthesize and interpret the data. The categories are as follows:

- Author, Title, Source, Date
- Type of Source
- Purpose
- Hypothesis/questions
- Methodology
- Participants
- Findings/Results
- Research Challenges/Lessons Learned

I sought uniform reporting approach to all literature reviewed, although some of the literature failed to include adequate data for the chart. Once complete, the data was sorted into methodological categories to be summarized, analyzed and included in the study.