

Good practices to promote the integration of migrant children in schools. An standard concept?

Pablo Rivera-Vargas, pablorivera@ub.edu

Universitat de Barcelona

Raquel Miño, rmino@ub.edu

Universitat de Barcelona

Fernando Hernández-Hernández, fdohernandez@ub.edu

Universitat de Barcelona

Keywords: Integration, Migration, Youth, Policies, Good practices.

Abstract

The phenomenon of migration in Europe have drastically changed and increased in recent years, especially because of the inequality of life conditions among countries and the risen of international conflicts. This situation forced 1.3 million people to ask for asylum in other countries in 2016 (EASO, 2016) and more than 2.3 million people to illegally cross the European Union borders.

The research project "MiCreate. Migrant Children and Communities in a Transforming Europe" (H2020-SC6-MIGRATION-2018) aims to understand the limits and potentials of current integration policies and educational systems from a children-centred approach in order to stimulate his social integration at educational and policy level. This involves the analysis of current measures for the integration of children migrant in European countries (including children of refugees, asylum seekers and unaccompanied minors), an identification of the social impacts of these integration programmes through case studies and the design of integration measures with a cross-national and local perspective.

The main objective of this project is to listen to migrant children interests and needs. In order to achieve this goal, an Integration Lab and Policy Lab is going to be created in six countries (Slovenia, Austria, Denmark, United Kingdom, Poland and Spain) to gather experiences and viewpoints of migrant children in relation with the past and present experiences, as well as the difficulties they have faced and the challenges they will face in the future.

This proposal will present part of the results of the first specific objective of the project, which consists on creating a state of the art on migration and integration of children through a cross-disciplinary approach (WP2 of 12 WP). From the empirical work of this initial phase of the project (WP2) we propose to define and problematize the notion of "good practices" in each of the dimensions proposed in the project. For this, we have searched for different key aspects that allow their analysis in educational contexts.

In general terms, "good practice" is understood as a model or example of an activity carried out with satisfactory results that respond to a shared vision of "wanting to advance" and constitute the product of the identity of a specific context where they are carried out (Chickering & Gamson, 1987). An inherent aspect of the concept of good practices is the character of

transferability and exportability (Benavente, 2007). According to Biesta (2015) for a good practice to be considered as such it is necessary to overcome difficulties and have the capacity to implement them in contexts, thus enabling its application to new situations. Therefore, a good practice would entail a transformation in the forms and processes of action and that can suppose the beginning of a positive change in the traditional methods of action.

In methodological terms, by problematizing the notion of "good practices" we will identify different experiences promoted from different institutions, towards actions developed in school contexts. Based on a review of these experiences and their analysis based on OER, the different speeches prevailing in relation to certain "good practices" of migrant integration in school contexts will be announced.

The aim of generating a review of literature, policies and study cases of good practices on migration and integration of children is to provide a solid theoretical base for the research project. On the one hand, we will present the results of case studies that point out at good practices of integration of migrant children in school, local community and wider society. The practices will be specially oriented to: (a) language courses and teaching in schools, (b) religion instructions in public schools, (c) general organization of school life in relation with food, expression of religious beliefs, resolution of intercultural conflicts. On the other hand, we will discuss the contradictions related with the identification of "good practices", highlighting the interests and contextual characteristics that might be behind the identification of an initiative as successful.

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