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Challenges to the Education Rights of Children on the Move in Latin America: A Scoping Review

Claudia Diaz-Rios
Tatiana Feitosa de Britto
Gisele Cuglievan-Mindreau
Sana Abuleil



Indira Quintasi-Orosco

Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, University of Toronto
Canada

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Abstract: Research on education in emergencies underscores the significant structural obstacles refugee children encounter in accessing education within low- and middle-income countries. However, there remains a notable gap in understanding the challenges confronted by transnational migrant children and the evolving nature of these challenges amidst shifting migration dynamics. To address this gap, we conducted a scoping literature review of 144 articles written in Spanish, Portuguese, and English examining transnational migration and education in Latin America, a region undergoing profound shifts in immigration patterns. Our analysis reveals that changes in these patterns activate new challenges for education rights. As migrants gradually relocated to other Latin American countries, their children encountered barriers to education compounded by instances of assimilation and discrimination within schools. With migration waves intensifying, discrimination evolves, influenced by governance

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structures fostering diversity but enabling physical segregation and ongoing marginalization of migrant children. These findings anticipate challenges in implementing current policy recommendations for integrating refugees and other groups of children on the move into the regular education systems of Global South countries.

Keywords: migration; refugee education; education in emergencies; education rights; Latin America

Desafíos a los derechos educativos de los niños en movimiento en América Latina: Una revisión de alcance

Resumen: La investigación sobre la educación en emergencias subraya los significativos obstáculos estructurales que los niños refugiados encuentran para acceder a la educación en los países de ingresos bajos y medianos. Sin embargo, sigue habiendo una brecha notable en la comprensión de los retos a los que se enfrentan los niños migrantes transnacionales y de su evolución en contextos con una dinámica migratoria cambiante. Para cerrar esta brecha, llevamos a cabo una revisión bibliográfica de alcance, englobando 144 artículos escritos en español, portugués e inglés sobre la migración transnacional y la educación en América Latina, una región que viene experimentando cambios profundos en los patrones de inmigración. Nuestro análisis revela que esos cambios activan nuevos retos para los derechos educativos. A medida que los migrantes se trasladaban gradualmente a otros países latinoamericanos, sus hijos encontraban obstáculos en la educación que involucraban instancias de asimilación y discriminación en las escuelas. Con la intensificación de olas migratorias, la discriminación ha evolucionado, influenciada por estructuras de gobernanza que fomentan la diversidad, pero permiten la segregación física y la marginalización continuada de los niños migrantes. Estas conclusiones anticipan retos en la implementación de las actuales recomendaciones de políticas para integrar a los refugiados y otros grupos de niños en movimiento en los sistemas educativos regulares de los países del Sur Global.

Palabras-clave: migración; educación para refugiados; educación en situaciones de emergencia; derechos educativos; América Latina

Desafios aos direitos educacionais das crianças em movimento na América Latina: Uma revisão de escopo

Resumo: As pesquisas sobre educação em situações de emergência destacam os significativos obstáculos estruturais que as crianças refugiadas enfrentam para ter acesso à educação em países de renda baixa e média. No entanto, persiste uma lacuna notável na compreensão dos desafios enfrentados pelas crianças migrantes transnacionais e de como evoluem esses desafios em meio a mudanças nas dinâmicas migratórias. Para abordar essa lacuna, realizamos uma revisão bibliográfica de escopo, englobando 144 artigos escritos em espanhol, português e inglês, a respeito da migração transnacional e a educação na América Latina, uma região que vem passando por profundas mudanças nos padrões de imigração. Nossa análise revela que essas mudanças ativam novos desafios para os direitos educacionais. À medida que os migrantes se deslocavam gradualmente para outros países da América Latina, seus filhos encontravam barreiras à educação, agravadas por instâncias de assimilação e discriminação nas escolas. Com a intensificação de ondas migratórias, a discriminação evoluiu, influenciada por estruturas de governança que promovem a diversidade, mas permitem a segregação física e a marginalização continuada das crianças migrantes. Esses achados antecipam desafios na implementação das atuais recomendações de políticas para a integração de refugiados e outros grupos de crianças em movimento nos sistemas educacionais regulares dos países do Sul Global.

Palavras-chave: migração; educação para refugiados; educação em situações de emergência; direitos educacionais; América Latina

Challenges to the Education Rights of Children on the Move in Latin America: A Scoping Review

International migrant and refugee children, often referred to as “children on the move,” form a diverse population displaced from their home countries, encountering educational challenges in their host nations (IDAC, 2022). Among them, refugee children—often displaced to neighboring low- and middle-income countries—encounter education systems with structural challenges, including inadequate infrastructure and limited resources (UNESCO, 2018). These children face education denial based on legal status or attend separate, often informal, and low-quality schools (Bellino & Dryden-Peterson, 2019). Within their school environment, race, ethnicity or linguistic barriers can lead to their discrimination or academic disadvantages (Piper et al., 2020; Vandeyar, 2012). However, it remains less clear whether these challenges are the same for children who are not recognized as refugees but are still involuntary or “survival migrants” —those whose movement abroad was motivated by the search for access to fundamental conditions for human dignity not provided by their home states (Betts, 2013).

Scholars studying education for children on the move in Africa and Asia often concentrate on those affected by humanitarian crises, thereby expanding the field of education in emergencies. However, migrant children displaced by situations not officially deemed urgent humanitarian cases may encounter unique educational challenges. Furthermore, while scholars and practitioners acknowledge that refugee education cannot just be treated as temporary (Dryden-Peterson et al., 2019), research has largely overlooked how the education of mobile children evolves over time, especially when the sense of emergency diminishes or is absent. This article addresses these gaps through a scoping literature review on the education of children on the move in Latin America. The region serves as an ideal case study due to its recent shift from gradual migration to large-scale, rapid population inflows. Additionally, given the global call toward integrating refugees into regular education systems rather than enrolling them in parallel school arrangements (Dryden-Peterson et al., 2019), Latin America offers valuable insights, having consistently included mobile children in mainstream schools.

Our review indicates that changes in migration patterns have exacerbated existing problems of host education systems and activated new challenges for the education rights of migrant children. These challenges include discrimination within schools, physical segregation, and marginalization, which are influenced by governance structures and policies fostering diversity but enabling segregation. These findings allow us to anticipate challenges arising from the integration of refugee children into regular school systems in the Global South. Furthermore, our review underscores valuable lessons that can guide the reimagining of educational inclusion for mobile children, emphasizing interculturality and equity. This approach benefits both native students and newcomers.

Rights-Based Education Approach as a Conceptual Framework

Our review adopts a rights-based perspective as a framework for organizing and synthesizing the literature on education and migration in Latin America. To further understand these tensions in the Latin American context, we utilize Tomaševski’s 4As framework (availability, accessibility, acceptability and adaptability), which offers a unified perspective to identify problems, themes, and standards related to education as a fundamental human right (Klees & Thapliyal, 2007). This

framework acknowledges the interconnections between the right to education and structural and societal dynamics. It calls for the implementation of mechanisms involving multiple stakeholders, including educators, parents, and children, while emphasizing the responsibility of states and governments to ensure these rights are upheld (Dávila & Naya, 2012). Moreover, Tomaševski's 4As framework builds upon and interconnects various human rights treaties that address different facets of the right to education. These treaties include, among others, the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees (Refugee Convention), the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants, and the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (Neubauer, 2019, 2023). By synthesizing these treaties, the 4As framework defines what governments should (and should not) do to uphold principles such as non-discrimination, participation, children's free development of personality and sense of dignity, and the promotion of their skills for socio-economic and political integration.

The 4As, however, are not safeguarded by the same types of guarantees. While availability and accessibility have garnered broad consensus and are supported by legal instruments, acceptability and adaptability are subject to varied interpretations and rely more heavily on the goodwill of states to implement appropriate policies (Dávila & Naya, 2012; Neubauer, 2023). Therefore, Tomaševski's four dimensions are often interpreted as progressive stages in the application of education rights. Nations with fewer resources can prioritize these stages, starting with availability and accessibility in primary education, and progressively moving to other educational levels while also achieving acceptability (Klees & Thapliyal, 2007; Tomaševski, 2004). Adaptability, as described by Tomaševski (2006), represents the last and somewhat utopian stage. This interpretation, however, may be problematic for children on the move as migration promotes the resurgence or intensification of longstanding educational challenges, as well as the emergence of new ones. Reviewing the literature on migration and education in Latin America can therefore verify the progressive nature of education rights for children on the move.

The first dimension, availability, refers to the government's responsibility to provide free, compulsory education to all children without discrimination, recognizing it as a social and economic right. It also encompasses the freedom for families to choose educational services that respect their identity as a civil right (Dávila & Naya, 2012; Tomaševski, 2004). While most Latin American countries have achieved the universalization of primary education, some have done so by relying on private education, which favors parental choice but segregates education systems and marginalizes low-income populations (Díaz-Ríos et al., 2021). Moreover, ethnic and rural populations across the region still struggle to access schools and have higher dropout rates (Dávila et al., 2021). The inclusion of migrant children may exacerbate these trends. Consistently, global literature on migration and education has shown structural barriers to availability, such as low investment in education, insufficient number of tuition-free schools for newcomers, material shortages, and a lack of teachers to satisfy new demands (Mendenhall et al., 2019; Neubauer, 2023; Spreen & Vally, 2012). Nevertheless, barriers related to the freedom of migrant families to choose schools have received less attention.

The second dimension, accessibility, focuses on eliminating discrimination related to access to free and compulsory education (Tomaševski, 2004). Some countries, such as Argentina, Chile, Cuba, Ecuador, El Salvador, and Nicaragua, have implemented inclusion laws, signaling progress towards accessibility. However, others have not yet followed suit, and most Latin American nations face significant limitations in implementing laws and programs that prohibit discrimination (Dávila et al., 2021). Reflecting this general situation, the initial step toward guaranteeing accessibility for migrant children involves dismantling restrictive or ambiguous definitions of non-citizens' rights to

education (Dupuy et al., 2022). Nevertheless, research on accessibility for refugees reveals persistent challenges such as school fees, indirect costs of education, and documentation requirements that some children on the move cannot provide (Anderson et al., 2011; Bellino & Dryden-Peterson, 2019; Neubauer, 2023; Spreen & Vally, 2012), a scenario likely mirrored in Latin America.

The third dimension, acceptability, refers to the emphasis on the quality, relevance, and conditions of the educational experience itself (Tomaševski, 2006). While acceptability does not explicitly define the quality of education, it underscores the imperative to establish standards that prioritize the best interests of the child and aim for the full development of human personality (Tomaševski, 2004). This includes acting in accordance with human rights, preparing children for an uncertain future, safeguarding their identity and safety, supporting their socio-emotional development, and promoting student achievement from a social justice perspective (Neubauer, 2019, 2023). Nonetheless, the discretion afforded to countries in defining such standards and practices may inadvertently neglect the needs and circumstances of mobile children. For instance, refugee children, having missed years of schooling and lacking proficiency in the language of instruction, may find themselves in educational systems devoid of catch-up programs, adequately trained teachers, language-learning initiatives, or strategies for instruction in their mother tongue (Mendenhall et al., 2019). These obstacles significantly impede refugees from meeting the educational expectations set by host countries (Piper et al., 2020). Thus, it is imperative to examine how countries redefine the quality of education to include migrant children, the practices derived from these definitions, and their impact on children on the move.

Lastly, adaptability calls for addressing the multifaceted role of education in fostering peaceful coexistence, empowering children with diverse identities, and instilling values in future generations (Tomaševski, 2004). Nevertheless, despite some Indigenous education programs in Peru, Ecuador, Bolivia, Colombia, among others, Latin American nations still expect children to conform to the education system rather than tailoring education to meet their needs (Dávila & Naya, 2012). This situation may have a deeper impact on children on the move. For them, education must offer equitable access to fair and culturally relevant content and practices that contribute to eradicating the intergenerational transmission of xenophobia and racism (Anderson et al., 2011). The literature on refugee education has criticized nationalistic curricula and monolingual education for disregarding the diverse identities of mobile children, seeking to assimilate them, or discouraging their continued education due to misalignment with their present and future aspirations (Dryden-Peterson, 2020; Friedrich et al., 2021). Similarly, stereotypes and discrimination perpetuated by peers and educators can exacerbate this issue by undermining the sense of belonging of migrant students (Vandeyar, 2012). Alternative approaches that challenge these assimilationist, discriminatory, and unresponsive trends in the curriculum concerning migrants and refugees have yet to be fully developed.

The 4As framework has not only inspired the development of various indicators and standards for education in emergencies but has also significantly influenced the discourse surrounding refugee education (e.g., Anderson et al., 2011; Spreen & Vally, 2012). It is helpful to further understand the tensions between the right to education, education policies, and the actual conditions schools have for the inclusion of migrant and refugee children that others have pointed at (see Bruel et al., 2021). In addition, we selected this framework as our conceptual guide because it provides a shared language for both researchers and practitioners in the relatively new field of education rights for children on the move, where definitions and standards are still evolving. While our analysis using this framework does not intend to provide a legal panorama or evaluate the right to education for migrant children in Latin America, it offers a synthesis that helps identify practical challenges, advancements, and gaps in research. Understanding these aspects is crucial for informing policymakers, educators, and scholars in developing more effective and inclusive educational strategies for migrant children.

Methods

Latin America has witnessed significant shifts in its migration patterns over recent decades, setting it apart from other regions. Between 2000 and 2020, the proportion of international migrant children in the region doubled from 5% to 10%, contrasting with stable figures in Africa, decreasing numbers in Southern Asia, and only slight increases in Western Asia. Despite hosting just 14% of the global refugee population, Latin America experienced an annual growth rate of 50.6% for refugees and asylum seekers between 2015 and 2020, far surpassing rates in Africa (3.7%), Western Asia (2.8%), and Southern Asia (1.7%; UNDESA, 2020). These dynamic shifts make Latin America an exceptional case study for examining changes in the education rights of children on the move.

Search and Selection Strategy

Our study employed a scoping review that allows a comprehensive coverage and detailed description of findings, range of research, and gaps in education of children on the move in Latin America. Following PRISMA guidelines (Page et al., 2021), we first conducted a search in three languages (English, Spanish, and Portuguese) on multiple databases that encompass a wide range of disciplines (Web of Science, EBSCOhost, ProQuest, and Redalyc). We limited our search to articles published between 2005 and 2022. Our Boolean search terms were tailored to reflect the characteristics of each database. In each language, search terms were essentially a variation (using synonyms and truncated words) of the following: (migr* OR refuge*) AND (educa* OR school) AND (“Latin America*” OR [regions] OR [countries]).

After identifying relevant studies and removing duplicates (Figure 1), two team members independently evaluated articles based on their titles and abstracts. In cases of disagreement regarding inclusion, a third team member resolved conflicts through additional screening. Studies were selected for inclusion if they met the following criteria: 1) the study focused on Latin American transnational migration; 2) the study focused on educational issues regarding children on the move; and 3) the study focused on K-12 education. Since our review focuses specifically on the educational situation of immigrants and refugees in recipient countries, articles were excluded if they focused on the effects of educational attainment on migrants’ outcomes, left-behind children, or remittances.

Following the initial screening, 200 papers were automatically registered in a Google spreadsheet for full-text screening, but 15 papers did not have an accessible digital version. Again, following our inclusion and exclusion criteria, the third and last author screened Spanish and English articles, the fourth author focused exclusively on English articles, and the second author screened Portuguese articles. All doubtful papers were discussed among all co-authors, resulting in 144 relevant articles.

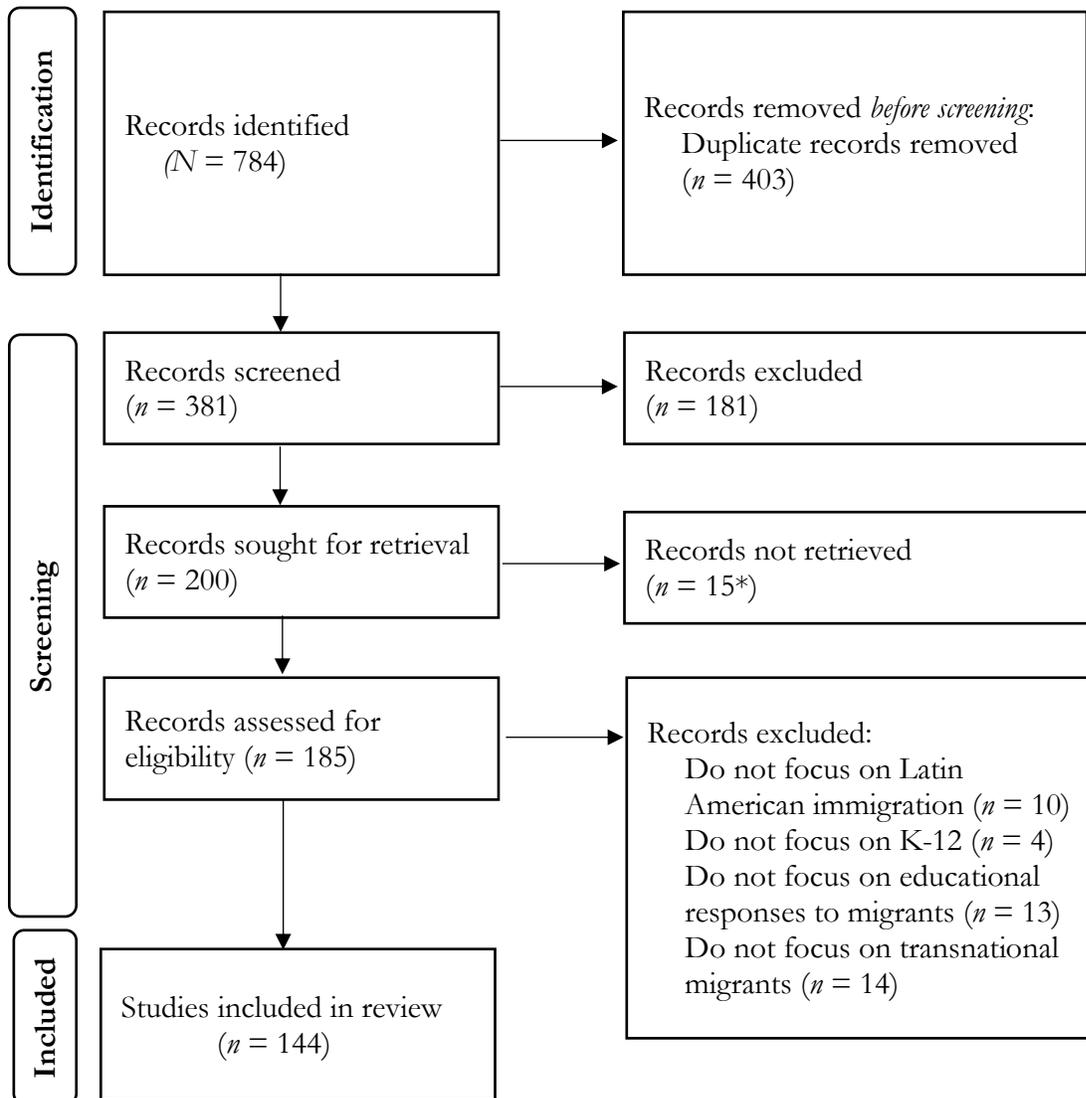
Data Charting and Analysis

During this phase, we automatically coded articles for date of publication and language and manually classified the sending and receiving countries as described in each article. We used open coding through NVivo to identify barriers and their effects on the education rights of children on the move. To ensure intercoder reliability, coders independently coded a small sample of data. Then, the team discussed any discrepancies and developed a coding scheme identifying patterns in these challenges. This pilot coding and subsequent codebook ensured that all coders had a shared understanding of the codes and their definitions. In addition, we implemented a peer debrief process where coders reviewed each other's work and provided feedback. This peer debrief was accompanied by regular meetings to discuss coding progress and resolve any ambiguities or disagreements. This continuous dialogue helped maintain consistency. During these meetings, we

also classified our codes into the four overarching categories of the conceptual framework: 1) accessibility, 2) availability, 3) acceptability, and 4) adaptability.

Figure 1

Identification of Studies



* Articles with unavailable digital version.

Results

Latin America has historically experienced a negative net migration balance, with most migration prior to the 2000s directed towards the Global North, particularly the United States (US). This trend, coupled with limited intraregional movement driven by factors like violence and poverty (Villa & Martínez-Pizarro, 2000), resulted in a lack of scholarly attention to migration and education in the region, as evidenced by low article publication rates between 2005 and 2009 (Table 1). However, the 2000s saw an uptick in transatlantic migration to Brazil from Africa (Uebel, 2021) and intraregional migration, particularly among women migrating as care workers (Stefoni, 2018). This

led to a gradual increase in the migration of children under 19, who comprised 20% of the immigrant population in 1995 and rose to 23% by 2015 (UNDESA, 2020). Table 1 indicates that the gradual increase in migration has significantly incentivized the growth of scholarly production on migration and education. This production increased more than sixfold from 2010 to 2015 compared to the previous five years. Recent political and social crises in countries such as Venezuela and Haiti have further fueled intraregional movements, resulting in large-scale migration and an increased proportion of children on the move, reaching 23% in 2015 and 27% in 2020 (Stefoni, 2018; UNDESA, 2020). These changes likely account for the rapid increase in scholarly output, which reached 55 articles between 2015 and 2019—more than double the number from 2010 to 2014—and continued to grow, with 59 articles published in just two years between 2020 and 2022 (Table 1).

Table 1

Number of Selected Articles by Year and Dimension

Years	Availability	Accessibility	Acceptability	Adaptability	Number of articles by period
2005-2009	0	1	1	2	4
2010-2014	4	8	5	16	25
2015-2019	7	12	17	33	55
2020-2022	4	9	17	36	59

Note: The numbers in the column 'Number of articles by period' do not correspond to the sum of articles in each dimension. Each article may address more than one dimension.

A closer examination of the evolution of literature on migration and education in Latin America, according to the 4As framework, raises questions about the linear progression of education rights. Instead of focusing primarily on the areas of availability and accessibility—areas that governments should theoretically prioritize to guarantee the right to education—Table 1 reveals an early emphasis by researchers on adaptability, followed by an interest in issues related to acceptability. Since migration before 2010 was predominantly gradual and small, issues of availability and accessibility were unlikely to be perceived as problems deserving scholarly attention.

Nevertheless, since 2010, there has been a modest increase in research concerning the availability of education for migrant children (Table 1). This trend suggests that, with the growing number of migrants and refugees in some Latin American countries, the segregation of this population within host education systems has become more apparent to scholars. Table 1 also highlights a more significant increase in studies on accessibility. Although most Latin American countries formally guarantee access to education for all children, regardless of nationality or status, the rise in scholarly interest indicates that barriers beyond regulatory frameworks may impact the enrollment of migrant children. The evolution of research on availability and accessibility reflects emerging concerns related to the right to education that were previously considered unproblematic. Thus, the progression of education rights for children on the move might not follow a linear trajectory when migration patterns undergo rapid change.

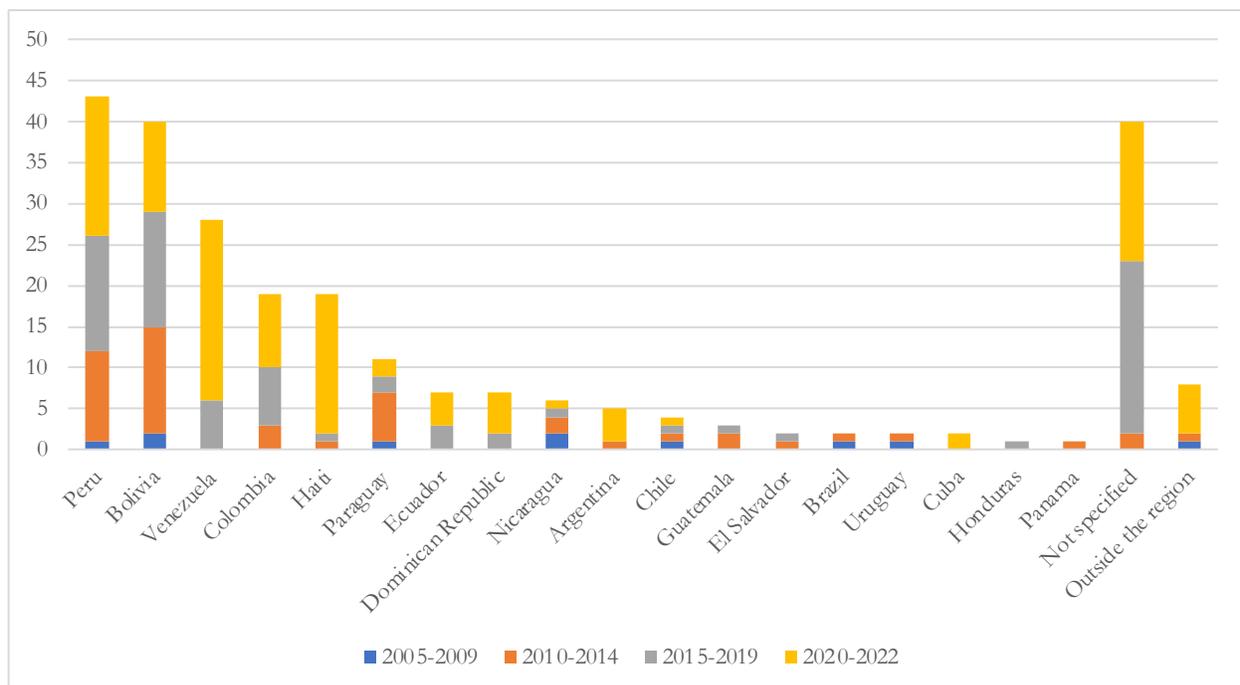
Scholarly attention to migration and education also varies across Latin American countries, reflecting diverse trends in mobility. The predominant sending and recipient countries in the literature (Figures 2 and 3) suggest that scholarly attention has primarily focused on exploring the rights of migrant children transiting through some of the typical corridors of intraregional migration in the 1990s and 2000s. These corridors included routes from Bolivia and Peru to Argentina, as well as from Peru to Chile (Stefoni, 2018; Villa & Martínez-Pizarro, 2000). However, Figures 2 and 3 also

show that the education of children migrating through other typical corridors received less attention, including those from Paraguay to Argentina, Nicaragua to Costa Rica, Haiti to the Dominican Republic, and Colombia to Ecuador and Venezuela. Migration from Central American countries to Mexico also received limited consideration. This oversight may be partly due to smaller academic communities in recipient countries, as well as the lack of data and the rapid changes in migration patterns, which make it challenging for academic research to keep pace.

Nevertheless, the case of Mexico, a country with one of the largest academic communities in the region, suggests that this research agenda is not only shaped by the size of the scholarly production. Historically, Mexico has been treated as either a country of mass emigration or a transit country for migrants heading to the US (Cornelius, 2018). These assumptions likely explain the lack of attention to the education of immigrants within its borders. However, Mexico hosted 23% of Latin American migrant children in 2000, a figure that rose to 32% in 2010. While only 13% of them are considered refugees, migrants from El Salvador, Honduras, Guatemala, and Haiti are likely survival migrants. The number of migrants from these countries to Mexico doubled between 2010 and 2020, reaching around 110,000 people (UNDESA, 2020). Yet, between 2005 and 2022, we only identified a few articles on the education of migrant children in this country. In contrast, Mexican literature is dominated by studies of Mexican children who migrated to or from the US. While these studies are important, they were outside our selection criteria and do not address the education of other migrant children from the Global South.

Figure 2

Number of Articles by Period and Sending Country

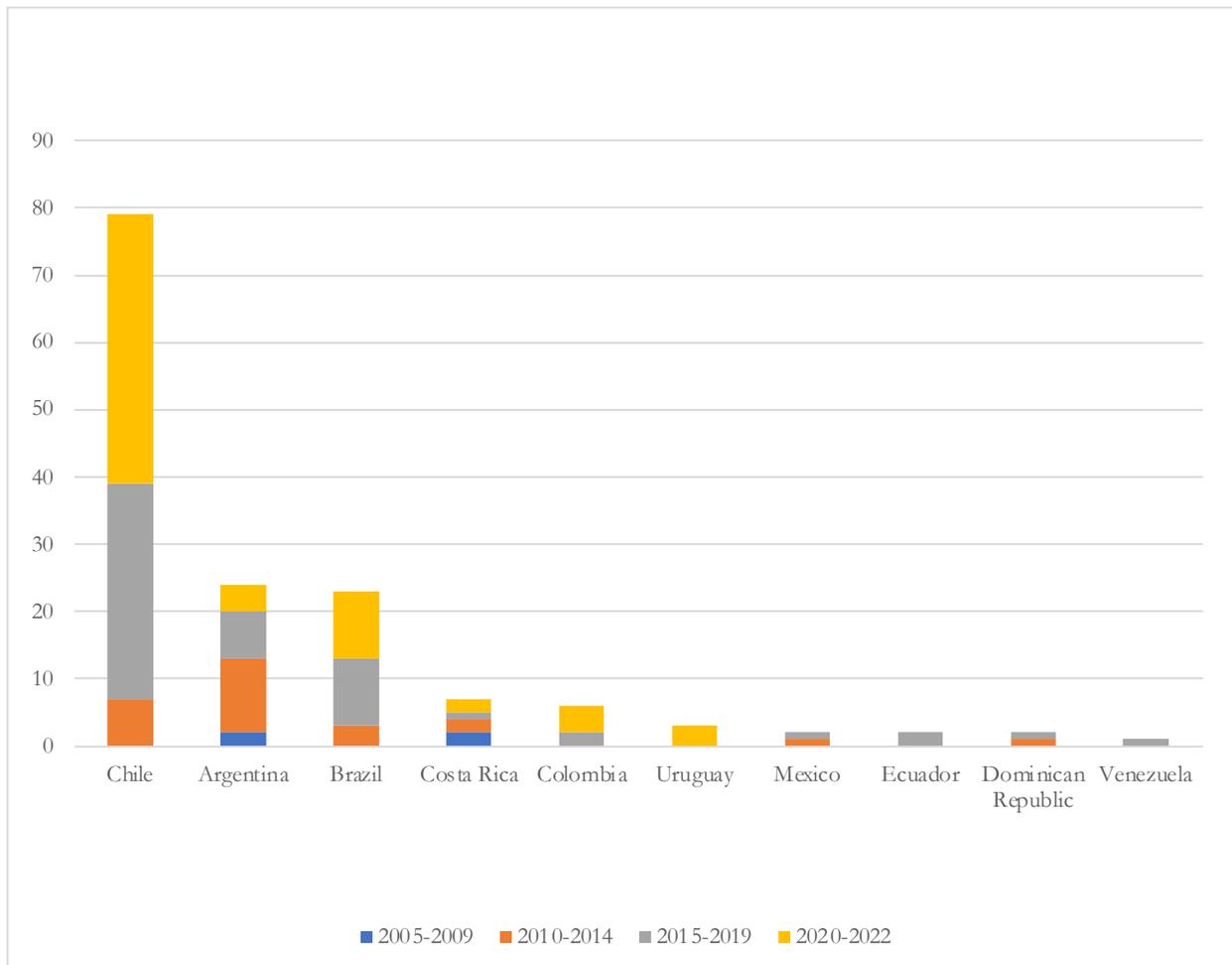


Despite the predominance of typical corridors, the recent academic production on migration and education reflects the impact of changes in migration patterns and the emergence of large-scale migratory movements in the region. First, the trend toward movement from more distant Global South nations both outside and within the region likely contributes to an increased number of studies that do not specify the country of origin of migrants (Figure 2). Secondly, this shift in

migration patterns has spurred research on the education rights of child groups originating from more distant countries, such as Haitians, Venezuelans, and Colombians in Chile, as well as Haitians and Congolese in Brazil (Figure 2 and 3). Thirdly, countries that were traditionally studied as sending nations are now being investigated as host countries. For instance, Colombia, traditionally studied as a sending country between 2010 and 2019 (Figure 2), has increasingly been examined as a recipient country since 2015 (Figure 3). However, other major recipients of this new large-scale migration, such as Peru and Ecuador, have been overlooked in the scholarly literature. In contrast, a typical recipient nation, Chile, is significantly overrepresented in academic production since 2015 (Figure 3). This is likely because Chile is among the five major recipients of Venezuelan migration, its migrant population has substantially diversified (Canales, 2019), and the country has a highly productive social science community (Vélez-Cuertas et al., 2016). This concentration, along with the lag in academic production on overlooked typical corridors and new migration routes, prevents research from identifying the diversity of new challenges or proposing adequate solutions for the various situations that other Latin American countries may be facing.

Figure 3

Number of Articles by Period and Host Countries



Finally, as expected, most studies are published in Spanish, representing 74% of reviewed articles. This is followed by 15% of articles in Portuguese, and only 10% of articles in English. This distribution confirms the lack of attention that researchers in the English-speaking community have paid to migration and education in Latin America, despite the region's significance in terms of South-South mobility and its extensive production in the field. In the next subsections, we will organize the analysis around the four dimensions of our conceptual framework.

Availability

As stated before, the availability of education for migrant children has gained some relevance only recently but with a focus on traditional migration corridors from Peru and Bolivia to Chile and Argentina. Unlike barriers identified by refugee education studies in other regions, such as insufficient infrastructure, Latin American research has focused on explaining the concentration of migrants in underserved schools. Reflecting the large inequality of the region, two themes are predominant in the literature: the impact of urban segregation on educational segregation, mirroring patterns observed in Global North countries (Bruel et al., 2021), and the school choices of migrant families in segregated education systems.

Urban Segregation Constrains the Educational Opportunities of Children on the Move

Although most Latin American education systems exhibit rampant inequality tied to socioeconomic disparities (Torche, 2010), only researchers studying Argentina and Chile have examined how urban segregation affects the educational opportunities of migrant children. Since migrant families often reside in impoverished urban areas, their children tend to be concentrated in under-resourced public schools paired with lowest-income national population (Cerrutti & Binstock, 2019; Eyzaguirre et al., 2019; Tijoux, 2013). Thus, despite having educational opportunities available, migrant children still encounter discrimination due to educational segregation. This segregation is one example of what Novaro has conceptualized as “subordinated inclusion,” a situation where migrant students are formally included within schools and have certain rights and opportunities on paper, but in reality they remain in a subordinate position with significant limitations and inequalities that prevent them from fully benefiting from education (Novaro, 2020; Russo & Novaro, 2016).

The concentration of migrants in under-resourced schools in Chile and Argentina gives rise to both external and internal stigmatization. Schools with a majority of migrant students are often stigmatized as low-quality institutions crowded with problematic students. Within these schools, even when they are the majority, migrant students are also stigmatized as academically disadvantaged or students with behavioral problems (Domenech, 2014; Eyzaguirre et al., 2019). However, this phenomenon of urban and educational segregation does not equally affect all migrants. Spatially segregated migrant communities are more likely to attend marginalized schools, as observed with Bolivians and Paraguayans in Argentina (Cerrutti & Binstock, 2019).

While research is dominated by Argentina and Chile, urban segregation and its effects on education are not exclusive to these two countries. Other host nations, such as Mexico, Colombia, and Brazil, also face similar challenges (Terigi & Perazza, 2010). Consequently, it is likely that the availability of education for migrant children is similarly affected across other Latin American host countries. Moreover, as migration patterns shift towards large-scale movements, school segregation of migrants may become more evident, as well as the insufficiency of educational system capacities. This topic deserves more scholarly attention in the region.

Navigating School Choices: Constraints, Self-Selection, and Market Impacts for Migrant Students

Building on existing research on urban and educational segregation, scholars have recently turned their attention to how migration influences parental school choices. This emerging line of studies is prevalent in Chile due to the significance of school choice in this country, but Argentina and Mexico have followed suit due to the increase of private education in these countries. Moreover, the surge in large-scale migration has heightened awareness of the presence and distribution of migrants in schools, making the study of school choices for new migrant families even more pertinent and complex.

Research on school choice and migration in Argentina, Chile, and Mexico provides three explanations for the concentration of migrants in public schools, adding nuance to studies on the impact of urban segregation on migrant education. Firstly, national families tend to avoid schools with a high concentration of migrant students due to the associated stigma, leading locals to choose private institutions while migrants enroll in public ones (Cigarroa de Aquino et al., 2016; Joiko & Vásquez, 2016). A second group of studies examines factors related to migrants' choices, such as the limited opportunities they face due to transportation costs or lack of information about the education system (Novaro, 2014). A third group of studies emphasizes migrant agency, illustrating how they self-segregate to avoid discrimination. Migrant families choose schools based on socio-demographic composition or seek guidance from migrant networks to find safe schools for their children. Consequently, they often end up concentrated in schools with other migrants (Eberhard Aguirre & Lauer Zegarra, 2019). These explanations need to be tested in other host countries with significant private sector involvement in education, such as Peru and Colombia (Balarin, 2018; García et al., 2013).

In addition, studies in Chile have explored organizational behaviors that complement individual-oriented explanations of school choice. Demographic decline and school funding based on enrollment may encourage schools to welcome migrants. Institutions with low enrollment see migrant children as an asset for increasing their resources or even ensuring survival, since without this population, they might face closure (Tijoux, 2013). Although these studies are primarily conducted in Chile, it is likely that similar dynamics occur in other education systems characterized by embedded market logics and/or facing declines in the school-age population such as Colombia (Díaz-Ríos et al., 2024).

Accessibility

Although the literature on education accessibility for children on the move in Latin America remains limited, the region has contributed two significant themes. First, scholarly work sheds light on the persistent implementation challenges related to enforcing the right to education for migrant and refugee students. Second, studies conducted in the region emphasize that the socio-economic vulnerability of migrants impacts their children's access to education, regardless of tuition-free schooling. This intricate interplay between gaps in regulatory enforcement and the socio-economic inclusion of migrant adults highlights the complex challenges faced by migrant children in accessing education within the region.

Gaps between Regulatory Intention and Implementation in Migrants' Education Rights

Most Latin American countries have ratified international treaties and integrated the right to education into their constitutions or policies, thereby formally allowing undocumented migrants to enroll in schools (Arguedas, 2007; Beech & Princz, 2012; Jimenez Vargas et al., 2017; Rodrigues, 2020). One exception is the Dominican Republic, where changes in migration regulations have

deprived migrant children of attending school (Bartlett, 2012). While legal restrictions for migrant children to attend schools are not that common in Latin America compared to other regions (Dupuy et al., 2022), recent investigations indicate that eliminating restrictive legislation alone does not solve accessibility barriers as schools persistently hinder or deny enrollment to migrant children by asking them to provide specific documentation during school registration (e.g., certificates of previous grades, health insurance), which can be unfeasible for migrant families to obtain. In Costa Rica, Mexico, Argentina and Brazil, staff negligence in following legal procedures for registering undocumented foreigners contributes to this issue (Rodrigues, 2020). Furthermore, in Ecuador, bureaucratic demands for additional documentation, even after enrollment, can discourage migrant children from continuing their education (Rodríguez-Gómez, 2019). This dissonance between formal regulatory frameworks and actions at the school level not only ratifies the fragmentation of policy highlighted by Bruel et al. (2021) in their discussion on the right to education, but also underscores how frontline interpretations of regulations—beyond material school conditions—play a critical role in shaping access.

Simultaneously, the information available to migrant families regarding their rights plays a crucial role. In Brazil and Costa Rica, navigating the host educational system poses challenges due to migrant families' limited access to information and their fear of reporting irregular procedures, stemming from concerns about potential retaliation (Arguedas, 2007; dos Santos & Cotinguiba, 2019). Parents often perceive enrollment as a favor granted by schools, further complicating the situation (Mendes et al., 2020). Despite regulations theoretically applying to all migrants, barriers to their implementation do not affect them all equally. For instance, in Mexico, Ecuador, Chile and Argentina, factors such as nationality, age, gender, race, class, and educational level significantly influence their enrollment chances (Cerrutti & Binstock, 2019; Cigarroa de Aquino et al., 2016; Rodríguez-Gómez, 2019; Tijoux, 2013). Faulty implementation of regulations, combined with limited parental information on enrollment procedures and rights, reinforce each other, leading to the continued educational exclusion of migrants, especially racialized teenage boys.

Socioeconomic Barriers to Schooling Are Not Compensated by Tuition-Free Education

Despite exceptions, such as the case of Haitians in the Dominican Republic (Bartlett, 2012), the absence of tuition fees for migrant students in public schools is a common practice in the region, exemplified by countries like Argentina, Chile, Brazil, and Costa Rica (Arguedas, 2007; Beech & Princz, 2012; Jimenez Vargas et al., 2017; Rodrigues, 2020). However, education remains inaccessible for migrants as their families are unable to cover additional education-related costs, including transportation, school supplies, textbooks, uniforms, among others (Arguedas, 2007; Cerrutti & Binstock, 2019).

This inaccessibility is rooted in a barrier that extends beyond schools: the economic vulnerability of migrant families. This barrier operates in three ways. First, in Costa Rica and Ecuador, job instability resulting from weak labor markets or migrants' lack of legal status in recipient countries forces families to prioritize basic needs such as housing, food, and health at the expense of education (Arguedas, 2007; Rodríguez-Gómez, 2019). Second, the pursuit of economic opportunities compels migrant families to frequently relocate in search of employment, often disrupting their children's educational trajectories, a situation reported in Costa Rica (Artavia Aguilar, 2020). Third, according to studies in the Dominican Republic, Argentina, and Chile, insufficient household income increases the likelihood of migrant children engaging in labor (Bartlett, 2012; Cerrutti & Binstock, 2019; Eyzaguirre et al., 2019). The second and third ways in which economic vulnerability affects accessibility are particularly detrimental for teenagers, as their ability to contribute economically, coupled with frequent disruptions to their education, significantly discourages school attendance (Eyzaguirre et al., 2019).

While these circumstances resemble those experienced by the most marginalized groups of native-born students, migrant children tend to be overrepresented in the working student and lowest-income population categories (Cerrutti & Binstock, 2019). These findings not only underscore the insufficiency of having available schools and eliminating tuition to include migrants in educational systems but also emphasize the interdependence between immigrants' labor incorporation and their children's access to education, a situation that can be more acute in recipient countries of large-scale migration.

Acceptability

Although widespread throughout the region, studies on the acceptability of education for children on the move in Latin America have predominantly focused on teachers' perceptions of migrants. These perceptions are often influenced by a deficit-oriented perspective, leading teachers to undervalue the cultural diversity, languages, and racial backgrounds of migrant children. More recently, the surge in large-scale migration has sparked interest in exploring how standards and accountability contribute to disparities in learning outcomes among migrant children. However, comprehensive knowledge regarding the quality of education received by migrant children and the effectiveness of language-related programs is still in its early stages of development.

Challenges in Migrant Education Quality: Teachers' Perspectives and Language Barriers

Research in the region on the quality of education for migrant students revealed that educators often held a deficit perspective toward migrant children, due to a lack of teacher training on cultural diversity. Negative assumptions about the curricula from migrants' home countries in Argentina, Brazil and Costa Rica led teachers to view children's previous education as inadequate, including content, curriculum sequencing, pedagogical practices, and teaching styles from their home countries (Almeida, 2019; Beheran, 2012; Mejía Arias, 2008). In Chile, teachers' emphasis on cognitive and socio-economic issues prevented them from devising new practices, as they believed their existing strategies for the native vulnerable population addressed migrant children's needs too (Jiménez & Fardella, 2015). Although changes have been adopted in Colombia, Mexico, and Argentina, the focus was primarily on helping migrant children catch up academically using traditional pedagogies (Aliaga-Sáez et al., 2022; Beech & Princz, 2012; Cigarroa de Aquino et al., 2016). As these pedagogies resulted ineffective, teachers perceived migrant children as a burden, inadvertently perpetuating discriminatory practices (Jiménez & Fardella, 2015).

Research on language of instruction in relation to migrant education in Latin America has been limited, largely because migration involving speakers of different mother tongues is a relatively recent phenomenon (Friedrich et al., 2021). Brazil stands out as the only country that has extensively explored this area due to its linguistic differences from the rest of the region. However, the recent influx of extra-regional migrants to Argentina, and the Haitian diaspora in Chile and Brazil, have sparked new research on the language of instruction for migrant students. These studies consistently reveal the dominance of monolingual language policies, despite official discourses promoting diversity, equity, and linguistic human rights (Friedrich et al., 2021). One recurring challenge is the insufficient training of teachers to effectively navigate multilingual classroom dynamics and evaluate students' existing knowledge and learning progress. Consequently, migrant students are often perceived through a deficit lens, primarily due to their limited proficiency in the host country's language (Assumpção & Aguiar, 2019; Campos-Bustos, 2019). Unfortunately, this situation often leads to student failure (Aguilar et al., 2013; Poblete Melis, 2018). In addition, the deficit-oriented perspective extends to parental involvement, where parents' struggles in supporting learning in a second language leads educators to label them as disinterested (Aguilar et al., 2013). Moreover, Brazilian studies reveal that teachers discourage parental communication in the mother tongue,

considering it detrimental to the learning process (Assumpção & Aguiar, 2019; Gondin et al., 2020). Finally, except for a few initiatives such as translanguaging pedagogies in Brazil (Oliveira & Bulegon, 2019) and bilingual initiatives for Haitian children in Chile (Jiménez-Vargas et al., 2020), the region lacks language learning programs. Consequently, teachers and schools often resort to ad hoc strategies, such as utilizing more advanced students as interpreters or mentors and relying on non-verbal communication (Pereira et al., 2019). Ultimately, even in the most inclusive scenarios, language tends to be treated merely as a tool for integration, with little regard for the preservation of students' linguistic rights and heritage languages (Friedrich et al., 2021).

The Effects of Standardization and Accountability on the Quality of Migrants' Education

Recent research has shifted focus from solely examining teachers' perceptions of migrant students to considering the broader governance structures of host countries' education systems as critical determinants of educational quality for mobile children. Given that large-scale migration is a relatively new phenomenon in the region, policy responses have largely been reactive—designed to address immediate access needs rather than grounded in long-term, strategic frameworks aimed at fostering genuine inclusion. As a result, implementation has often been fragmented and uneven across regions and schools (Quezada et al., 2021).

In addition, in countries such as Brazil, Argentina, and Chile, educational policies grounded in the principle of inclusion as equal treatment for all children often lead educators to perceive the adaptation of pedagogical practices specifically for migrant students as a form of discrimination (Beech & Princz, 2012; Cerón et al., 2017; dos Santos & Cotinguiba, 2019). This interpretation of “equal treatment” is further reinforced in centralized education systems like the one in Chile, where limited autonomy at the local level constrains schools and municipalities from tailoring policies to their specific contexts (Quezada et al., 2021). While this standardized approach to inclusion is intended to ensure equal opportunities, it inadvertently marginalizes migrant students by overlooking their distinct cultural and linguistic identities, effectively rendering them invisible within curricula and classroom practices.

Given the market-oriented Chilean education system, research in this country illuminates the complexity of standardization effects on migrant education. A group of studies argue that curriculum standards and test-based accountability create the perception among teachers that adapting the curriculum to migrant needs would compromise school performance goals (Poblete Melis, 2018). Indeed, this research generally indicates higher dropout rates and lower academic performance among migrant children compared to national students, a situation that is not exclusive to Chile (Cerrutti & Binstock, 2019; Eyzaguirre et al., 2019). Nevertheless, Gelber et al (2021) reveal variations in student performance in Chile based on nationality, with only those possessing different racial or linguistic characteristics obtaining lower results (e.g., Haiti and Dominican Republic). Another group of studies has shown that migrant students, compared to Chilean counterparts, exhibit higher scores in academic self-concept, reflected in their overall school performance. These findings likely result from the importance migrant families place on education and the positive reinforcement of students' commitment by teachers and peers (Céspedes et al., 2021). The variation in learning outcomes among children on the move highlights the imperative for studies in Latin America to place increased emphasis on the interaction between standards and the intersectionality of children on the move (nationality, race, gender, language). By doing so, researchers can gain a deeper understanding of the diverse treatments and educational experiences that migrant children encounter in their host countries.

Standards, along with the increase in large-scale migration, has also prompted research on the impact of migration on the performance of native students. Contreras and Gallardo (2022) specifically find that native children in Chilean schools with migrant students have experienced a

decrease in performance in standardized tests. This decline is likely attributable to an increase in the student-teacher ratio, making human resources insufficient to address the new demands posed by a growing migrant population. These findings are probably not unique to Chile, highlighting the interdependence between availability and acceptability, and emphasizing the need to examine how education rights may face setbacks amid changing migration patterns.

Adaptability

The sustained emphasis on adaptability within Latin American scholarship concerning the education of children on the move has evolved alongside changes in migration patterns. Early studies highlighted colonial legacies and structural racism as influential factors shaping exclusionary and assimilationist educational practices. As migration rates increased, the literature identified a shift toward a multicultural approach that acknowledges diversity while maintaining structural hierarchies in the curriculum. These two themes are complemented by a significant contribution from Latin American studies: the introduction of intercultural education as a critical framework towards both assimilationist and multicultural practices. However, empirical studies that shed light on the implementation of intercultural education are still emerging, underscoring the need for further exploration and examination.

Colonialism and Racism Fuel Assimilation Practices

Early literature on adaptability revealed that in traditional host countries such as Argentina, Brazil, Chile and Costa Rica, curricula, pedagogical practices, and interpersonal relationships within schools, are often shaped by a dominant national identity that portrays migrants and refugees as “others” who need to be assimilated (Almeida et al., 2020; Domenech, 2014; Locke & Ovando, 2012; Pavez-Soto et al., 2019). The literature identifies two driving forces behind this assimilation perspective. Firstly, structural racism underlies the construction of the “inferior other,” particularly impacting Black, Indigenous, and other racialized migrants (Pavez-Soto et al., 2019). This impact extends even to those sharing similar racial characteristics with the host community (e.g., Congolese in Brazil, Haitians in the Dominican Republic), reflecting colorist logics (Bartlett, 2012; da Silva, 2019). Secondly, the creation of otherness is seen as a manifestation of the colonial nature of Western-centric curricula in host countries that have shaped the national identity in Argentina, Chile, Brazil, and Uruguay, excluding or portraying migrants’ knowledge, history, and culture as inferior (Aguilar et al., 2013; Hernández Yulcerán, 2016; Kohatsu et al., 2020; Silva & Martin, 2022). The assimilationist approach fuels in turn the idea of inclusion as equal treatment and rigid curricular standards, showing the interdependence between acceptability and adaptability.

In addition, the construction of the “inferior other” often results in mockery, isolation, and, in extreme cases, physical violence, leading to identity tensions within the migrant community (Cerón et al., 2017). Scholars have identified various strategies employed by migrant children to navigate these discriminatory challenges. In Argentina, Bolivian migrants choose to go unnoticed by minimizing their participation in school, yet this approach renders their needs and contributions invisible (Novaro et al., 2008). In Mexico, migrants from Central American countries attempt to assimilate by concealing their identities and adopting local customs and accents, though this strategy often results in a loss of connection to their own culture (Cigarroa de Aquino et al., 2016). In Brazil and Chile, some migrants address tensions by reinforcing their cultural identity and interacting exclusively with peers of similar origins (Gondin et al., 2020; Tijoux, 2013). However, scholars caution that such strategies may inadvertently contribute to further subordinating migrant children (Novaro, 2014). Indeed, these various forms of dismissal of migrant identities in schools, along with the strategies migrants employ in response, exemplify their subordinated inclusion. This

subordination allows for school attendance but simultaneously invisibilizes and devalues their culture.

Multiculturalism Acknowledges Migrants without Dismantling Subordination

Partially driven by the increasing presence of migrants in classrooms, education policies in the region have undergone notable changes to incorporate the recognition of diversity (Jimenez Vargas et al., 2017). This integration has likely led to a shift from an assimilationist to a multicultural approach. This approach emphasizes the positive contributions that different cultural groups bring to the broader society by including them in the curriculum with the purpose of acknowledging diversity and fostering tolerance among different cultures (Banks, 2001; Cuevas, 2019). This shift is particularly evident in studies from Chile, which highlight the incorporation of certain elements or practices from migrant cultures into the curriculum (Beniscelli et al., 2019; Jiménez & Fardella, 2015). For example, schools include discrete cultural activities from migrants' countries in the school calendar, such as folklore performances, food fairs, national anthems, and cultural presentations (Beniscelli et al., 2019; Poblete Melis, 2018). However, critics argue that the multicultural approach falls short in challenging colonial hierarchies and providing actual recognition to migrants' culture. Activities and additions are often filtered by teachers to promote peaceful coexistence without acknowledging power inequalities. Consequently, these additions do not really transform the curriculum, and may inadvertently exoticize migrant identities by simplifying traditional expressions as less complex than the hegemonic national identity of the host country (Cuevas, 2019; Stefoni et al., 2016).

In addition, studies examining attitudes toward multiculturalism yield contradictory results. Most Chilean literature reports the persistence of hostile interactions and prejudice, even in contexts where the multicultural rhetoric is present in schools (Beniscelli et al., 2019). Other studies highlight intermediate attitudes, subtle prejudice, and positive stereotypes. Specifically, teachers characterize certain migrant groups positively based on perceived qualities. For instance, Peruvians, Bolivians, Haitians, and Congolese in Argentina and Brazil are characterized by their teachers as obedient, honest, respectful, and dedicated (Novaro, 2014; Russo et al., 2020), while Colombians in Chile are perceived as bringing joy to school life (Cerón et al., 2017). Scholars note that these assessments may contribute to breaking xenophobic attitudes and challenge stereotypes of deficit (Russo et al., 2020). However, other researchers argue that positive stereotypes may emphasize only the characteristics that facilitate teachers' work, potentially homogenizing migrant identities (Gondin et al., 2020). Although small, a third strand of literature identifies positive attitudes toward migrants among both teachers and peers, particularly in highly diverse contexts in Chile (Mera-Lemp et al., 2021). Migrant students, in turn, express high satisfaction with their schooling, suggesting a heightened sense of belonging. Both native and migrant students are reported to exhibit high levels of competence in managing cultural diversity at school, indicating their ability to process information from other cultures, interact satisfactorily with diverse backgrounds, and understand alternative ways of life (Mera-Lemp et al., 2020). The varied findings of the effects of multiculturalism at schools may result from methodological differences in the studies, but they also reflect the nuanced and ambiguous nature of this approach, which promotes tolerance yet may maintain underlying hierarchies and elicit a range of attitudes toward increasing diversity in educational settings.

Intercultural Education as a Critical Approach to Assimilation and Multiculturalism

Anchored in three principles—cultural relativism, reciprocity, and participatory decision-making—intercultural education challenges the structural hierarchies in which the assimilationist and multicultural approaches are grounded. It involves a willingness to change local culture and incorporate diversity, recognizing the need for a critical examination of hegemonies and the

deconstruction and modification of existing cultural norms. Unlike multiculturalism, which adds cultural elements without transforming the existing curriculum, intercultural education emphasizes acknowledging and rectifying power imbalances through dialogue and the participation of marginalized communities in curriculum redesign (Brito et al., 2020; Riedemann et al., 2020).

While intercultural education is formally recognized in policy documents (Quezada et al., 2021), it has been primarily employed as a conceptual framework for critiquing educational policies for migrants in Chile, Colombia, and Brazil (Cuevas, 2019; Perez, 2020; Russo et al., 2020). Moreover, its practical implementation remains a topic of debate. Some scholars argue that the implementation of intercultural bilingual education (IBE) for Indigenous peoples can offer valuable lessons for the educational inclusion of migrants (Brito et al., 2020). However, others contend that IBE has generally adhered to a multicultural approach, often as an addition or separate curriculum, which maintains the status quo. This approach does not fully address the marginalization of non-hegemonic cultures and identities nor grant them equal stature within the curriculum (Riedemann et al., 2020).

Although empirical studies on intercultural education for migrant students in Latin America remain limited, a few examples from Brazil offer valuable insights. For instance, Russo et al. (2020) found that involving migrant students in school decision-making processes can help counteract racism and xenophobia. Similarly, Kohatsu et al. (2020) demonstrated that classroom discussions on discrimination and migrant experiences can lead to the institutionalization of intercultural projects within the curriculum, transforming migration into a meaningful learning opportunity for the entire school community. Additionally, research by Pereira et al. (2019) highlights the importance of school leadership and organizational culture in fostering and sustaining these participatory initiatives. Despite these promising cases, the broader implementation of intercultural education remains hindered by a lack of teacher training, curricular adaptation, and institutional support (Quezada et al., 2021). Further research is needed to explore how intercultural approaches can be effectively implemented in both newly emerging host countries, such as Colombia and Peru, and in more established yet under-researched contexts like Costa Rica. These lessons offer important pathways for enhancing teacher awareness and addressing discrimination through curriculum and pedagogy.

Discussion and Conclusions

Our scoping review of 144 articles explores the challenges to the education rights of children on the move in Latin America amidst shifting migration dynamics. Our findings revealed that changes in migration patterns have transformed existing adaptability challenges of assimilation into a multicultural perspective that fosters diversity but still enables the subordination of migrants. Moreover, our review highlights the rise of new challenges in availability, accessibility, and acceptability, which contribute to the physical segregation of migrant children and reinforce a deficit-based view of them. These findings not only highlight the complex and evolving nature of educational inclusion for migrant children in Latin America but also shed light on potential challenges that other Global South nations with changing migration patterns may face as they integrate refugees into their regular education systems.

Our findings have significant theoretical and practical implications. Theoretically, by applying Tomaševski's 4As framework, we uncovered the interconnectedness and non-linearity of availability, accessibility, acceptability, and adaptability in the context of migrant education. As large-scale migration increases, issues in acceptability and adaptability appear to stem from availability problems that were previously considered resolved in countries like Chile and Argentina and are likely exacerbated in nations with fewer resources. These dynamics suggest that all four dimensions are interdependent rather than progressive stages. Another theoretical contribution is the

underscoring of the concept of subordinated inclusion (Novaro, 2020), which explains how migrants can be integrated into regular education systems while still facing overlapping forms of structural marginalization, such as socio-economic exclusion, urban segregation, and cultural discrimination, which channel migrant students into disadvantageous educational trajectories. This concept adds depth to the literature on refugee education by highlighting the persistent inequalities within inclusive frameworks, underscoring the need for more comprehensive and equity-focused approaches to genuinely support refugee students' educational success and social integration.

Practically, our findings accentuate the need for Latin American countries to examine how governance structures and policies can create tensions for migrant inclusion. This is particularly evident in curriculum standards that foster othering and deficit perspectives, along with inadequate implementation that enables schools to control access to migrant education rights despite inclusive policies and regulations. Our review also highlights the potential consequences of the global initiative to integrate migrants into regular schools in Global South host nations. While this integration aims to address sustainability challenges by leveraging existing education infrastructure and capacity (Diaz-Rios et al., 2024), an increasing number of migrants can exacerbate school segregation, straining resources for both traditional populations and newcomers. Although such dynamics should ideally promote government interest and public support for education delivery targeting both migrants and host communities, they may also escalate political tensions and lead to the scapegoating of migrants for the structural issue of insufficient educational resources.

To effectively address the challenges identified in the literature, education policies and practices must reframe migration not as a burden, but as an opportunity to strengthen education systems for all. Migrant children bring valuable perspectives that can catalyze reforms in resource distribution, curricular design, and participatory governance—helping to redress power imbalances and foster more inclusive, equitable learning environments. Realizing this potential requires clearly defined responsibilities across actors.

In the context of large-scale migration and growing involvement of international humanitarian organizations, these entities must move beyond short-term emergency responses and commit to long-term investments that reinforce host education systems. This shift is essential to prevent resource-related tensions and ensure that education becomes more available, accessible, acceptable, and adaptable—not only for migrants, but also for historically marginalized host communities. Such reinforcement is particularly important in newly emerging host countries in the region.

National and local education policymakers must critically examine the governance structures that perpetuate the subordinated inclusion of migrants. This includes addressing how school choice mechanisms, standardized curricula, and dominant cultural narratives marginalize migrant and other minoritized communities. Policymakers should also ensure the effective implementation of inclusive education policies by removing bureaucratic barriers to enrollment, allocating adequate resources, and issuing clear guidance to schools, especially in contexts without experience with migrant inclusion. Additionally, sustained professional development is needed to equip educators with the skills to support diverse learners and foster inclusive classroom environments.

With appropriate training and support, teachers and school leaders can adopt culturally responsive pedagogies and promote intercultural dialogue that enhances participation and belonging for all students. These grassroots innovations can serve as models for scaling up inclusive practices and challenging deficit-based and colonial assumptions embedded in education systems. In doing so, education policies and practices can begin to reconcile the gap between the formal recognition of migrant children's rights and the everyday realities of schools tasked with enacting them.

While Latin American scholarship helps understand the educational challenges of children on the move in the context of changing migration patterns, the concentration of scholarly

production in a few countries raises questions about different and more critical challenges migrant children face in other nations. Future research should focus on exploring Latin American countries that are not used to hosting migrant populations and might have fewer resources to serve them. Moreover, research should delve into the effectiveness of different policy and practice approaches in various Latin American contexts. Factors such as socio-economic conditions, political stability, cultural attitudes toward migrants, and the capacity of educational institutions can all play significant roles in shaping the outcomes of migrant education policies. Research that takes into account these contextual variables will provide a more nuanced understanding of what works, where, and why. In particular, empirical studies on the implementation of intercultural education and diverse languages of instruction are essential to understand how these programs are being adopted and adapted in different Latin American educational contexts. Such studies need to investigate the impact of intercultural education and language policies on the educational outcomes of migrant children, including academic achievement, sense of belonging, and overall well-being. Moreover, as migration continues to be a global phenomenon, understanding the implementation of intercultural education and the role of languages of instruction can provide valuable lessons for countries worldwide. This research can contribute to the global discourse on migrant education and help develop more effective and inclusive educational strategies for children on the move.

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About the Authors

Claudia Diaz-Rios

Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, University of Toronto

claudia.diazrios@utoronto.ca

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-2336-7123>

Dr. Claudia Diaz-Rios is an associate professor at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE), University of Toronto. Her research explores the intersection of global dynamics, domestic politics, and school change in low- and middle-income countries, with a focus on education governance and the right to education in crisis contexts. She has published on migration, education, and the politics of education policy in Latin America.

Tatiana Feitosa de Britto

Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, University of Toronto

tatiana.britto@mail.utoronto.ca

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-4530-3668>

Tatiana Feitosa de Britto holds a master's of education from the University of British Columbia and a master's of arts in development studies from the Institute of Social Studies, Erasmus University. She has published on education policy and social protection in Latin America. Currently a doctoral candidate in education leadership and policy at OISE, her research focuses on global education policy and governance.

Gisele Cuglievan-Mindreau

Independent consultant

giselecuglievan@yahoo.com

Gisele Cuglievan-Mindreau is a researcher and education specialist focusing on issues of equity, inclusion, and interculturality in education in Latin America. Her work explores critical approaches to social justice in education policy and the role of the middle-tier in education reform. She has led multiple qualitative studies and published articles on diversity, equity, intercultural and bilingual education, migration and local governance. Recent work includes publications in peer-reviewed journals like *Comparative Education Review*, *Journal of School Leadership* and *Canadian Journal of Educational Administration and Policy*.

Sana Abuleil

Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, University of Toronto

sana.abuleil@mail.utoronto.ca

Sana Abuleil is a PhD candidate at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE), University of Toronto. Her research focuses on the effect of school composition and age of arrival on refugee students' academic outcomes. Using multilevel modeling and longitudinal data, her work highlights systemic barriers to educational equity. Sana also explores refugee

education through poetic inquiry and has published creative works, including *Letters to the Person I Was*. She is active in mentoring, research, and academic outreach.

Indira Quintasi-Orosco

Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, University of Toronto

indira.quintasi@mail.utoronto.ca

Indira is a PhD student with Quechua roots in the Educational Leadership and Policy (ELP) program at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE – UofT). She holds an M.Ed. from OISE and a B.A. in political science from the Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú. Indira is a co-founder and member of the Kuskalla Abya Yala organization, an Indigenous-led nonprofit based in Canada, the USA, and Peru. She balances her studies, research, and consultancy work with advocacy and active participation in community-led organizations.

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