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# Migrant Education in Morocco: Cross-Cultural Competence Favored Over Integrative Reform. An analysis of the Moroccan government's migrant integration efforts through education.

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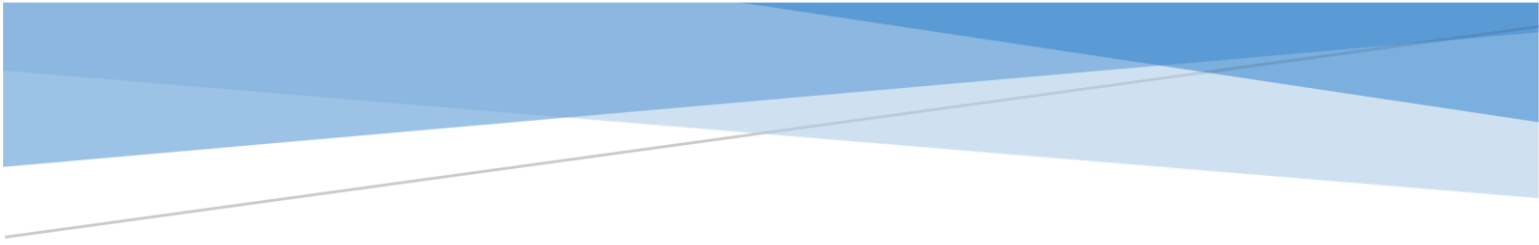
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# MIGRANT EDUCATION IN MOROCCO: CROSS-CULTURAL COMPETENCE FAVORED OVER INTEGRATIVE REFORM

An analysis of the Moroccan government's migrant  
integration efforts through education.

Ella Schoenen  
SIT: Migration and Transnational Identity, Fall 2016

# Abstract

In 2014 the Ministry in Charge of Moroccans Abroad and Migration Affairs, adopted the National Policy of Immigration and Asylum detailing efforts to realize an adaptive education system, sensitive to migrant education and inclusive of teaching and learning strategies directed towards children of foreign heritage. As migrant networks grow more and more fortified, and people all over the world experience improved mobility, destination countries are finding multicultural and inclusive education systems integral to the wellbeing of its new residents, and the tolerance of its native citizens. Based on the national strategy for immigration and asylum put forth by the Ministry of Migration, this paper aims to explain what ideology/framework is fueling current integrative educational efforts, and how this ideology is influencing the experiences of teachers and students in Morocco. Results were gathered mainly through current reports concerning the state of migrant education published by children's rights NGOs, and through a series of interviews with the Ministry of Migration, National Center for Human Rights (CNDH), a Moroccan public school teacher, and a site visit to a Moroccan school. Large discrepancies were found in how the Moroccan government approaches migrant education, and current literature on best practices in this field. Integration in this context is often confused with cross-cultural competence; cultural performances like food and dance exhibits suffice in terms of cultural promotion and cross-cultural understanding. And, that educational actions detailed in the National Strategy for Immigration are majorly hindered in Moroccan governance by post-colonial attitudes and development. Suggestions for forwarding migrant education in Morocco include: comprehensive educational reform, especially in the field of teacher training, and a movement away from a national security based education system.

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# Introduction

Over the past few decades Morocco has become an increasingly popular destination for migrants and refugees from around the world (de Hass, 2014). Historically Morocco has been used as a transit country, with large numbers of refugees, asylum seekers, and economic migrants using Morocco as a portal to Europe. Now, due to externalization of European border policies, migrants from around the world are settling permanently in Morocco (CNDH, 2014). Following a report published by the National Council for Human Rights (CNDH) in 2014 detailing the shortcomings of the Moroccan government's treatment of migrants, the Moroccan government attempted to ameliorate human rights abuses against sub-Saharan (individuals originating in countries south of the Sahara Desert) by instating a yearlong free residence card application program (Donaldson, 2015). During this year 30,000 migrants from 116 different countries applied, tens of thousands more did not apply. There is no formal count of exactly how many migrants are living in Morocco, as the majority reside without any form of identification, but recent studies show as many as 80,000 migrants are currently living in Morocco, of which 14,000 are sub-Saharan (IMO, 2016). Of the migrants approved for residence cards, most came from Senegal, followed by Syria, Nigeria, and Cote d'Ivoire (Donaldson, 2015). It is important to note: the Moroccan government automatically granted all Syrian applicants legal status with implied understanding of their refugee status. This practice is indicative of Moroccan political and civil society as a whole: sub-Saharan are largely discriminated against, and often ignored. It is just recently, in 2014, that the Moroccan government (the Ministry in Charge of Moroccans Abroad and Migration Affairs), adopted a national policy of immigration and asylum. This report includes the first ever efforts by the Moroccan government to recognize an adaptive education

system, sensitive to migrant education and inclusive of teaching and learning strategies directed towards children of foreign heritage.

My original research focus was to examine how the explicit discourse and implicit attitudes of the Ministry of Migration concerning sub-Saharan integration through education influenced the experiences of West African migrants in Moroccan public schools. In my research, both the critical discourse analysis and interviews with sub-Saharan migrants proved difficult to arrange, and ultimately not possible to complete given my allotted research time. Governmental literature is rarely translated into English, and my French skills proved too limited to translate and give a nuanced analysis of the language used in government texts. Furthermore, when I initially set out to do my discourse analysis I was primarily interested in the language used in actual legislative functions: bills, laws, constitutional amendments, etc. In my first week of research I learned there has been limited *actual* legislation passed concerning the Ministry of Migration's 2014 National Strategy of Immigration and Asylum. So, I did not have any legitimate bills concerning the integration of migrants into the education system available for analysis. Thus, my research question shifted to: based on the national strategy for immigration and asylum put forth by the Ministry of Migration, what is the ideology/framework affecting the current integrative educational efforts, and how is this ideology influencing the experiences of teachers and students in Morocco. Education practices specific to the experiences of migrants is crucial as globalization runs its course; effective education of vulnerable populations is one of the most influential tools in protecting human rights and promoting fairness and equity among different populations. The issue of integration in Moroccan education must be addressed now to protect the unalienable human rights and livelihoods of current migrants and the multi-national generations to come.

My paper will progress as follows: in my literature review, I will first examine the 2013-2014 proceedings concerning overarching migration reform, then, the general structure and history of the Moroccan education system. Following, a description of the select actions recommended by the national strategy of immigration and asylum I chose to focus on in my interviews. Then, a review of current literature concerning migrant education. Following this review, I will delve into my results – detailing official governmental results and my own fieldwork findings. I analyze the discrepancies among these results, and explore the motivations/context driving the discrepancies. I conclude with recommendations for future study, limitations, and a synthesis of my study.

## Literature Review

On the 9<sup>th</sup> of September, 2013 the National Human Rights Council published a report calling for a radically new asylum and migration policy (CNDH, 2014). In the time leading up to this report conditions for migrants and refugees were dismal; there was no system in place to issue residency documents to UNHCR sanctioned refugees, and no policy of integration for said refugees. Conditions for official refugees lacked significantly; those with internationally recognized rights to asylum struggled to find assistance. Thus, irregular migrants (migrants travelling outside of political regulation) had even fewer outlets for assistance. One day after the report was published, the King Mohammed VI responded with a public statement recognizing the grave importance of migration policy in Morocco. Exactly one month later, on October 10<sup>th</sup>, 2014, the Ministry in Charge of Migration Affaires was created. Throughout the year of 2014, the ministry focused much of its energy on the residence card program, ensuring the documentation of migrants in Morocco and thus granting them access to the same social services



as native Moroccan citizens. A successful year of migrant documentation concluded with the official adoption of the National Strategy for Immigration and Asylum, which detailed twenty-seven specific objectives, within which there are eighty-one specific actions, working towards the integration of all migrants into Moroccan civil and social society (Ministry of Migration, 2014). The report's first section details amendments to the Moroccan education system.

Before examining the projected educational revisions laid out in the 2014 strategy, one must first examine the historical context of the Moroccan education system. An all-inclusive national educational system did not exist until the French Protectorate in 1912; before French control schools in Morocco were limited to *madrassas* (Koranic schools) only open to males (Freeman, 2010). During the French protectorate schools were remodeled to follow the French system of education, broadening curriculum, attendance, and number of schools. After independence in 1956, Morocco maintained the educational system followed by the French. Education was made compulsory in 1960, and reformed in October of 1999 when the Ministry of Education issued the National Education and Training Charter. This charter declared 2000-2009 the "Decade of Education;" the reform mainly focused on enrollment and literacy, but also mentioned methodological innovation. In my research, I found little improvement in the field of methodological innovation; I will discuss these shortcomings and their roots in my results section.

The general organization of Moroccan education is the same as the French; there are four main schools: Pre-School (ages four to six/seven), Primary School (ages seven to eleven), Secondary School (in French: college, ages twelve to fifteen), and High School (in French: lycee, ages sixteen to eighteen). Schooling in Morocco is only compulsory until age 15; at age 15 students choose whether to take an exam for placement in lycee (the baccalaureate program)

(Ameziane, 1983). In the baccalaureate program students spend the last two years of their education studying for a culminating test casually referred to as “the bac”. The French not only established the framework of the Moroccan education system, but left lasting impacts on curriculum. In years three and four students take eight hours of French language instruction per week, two more hours than Arabic language (Freeman, 2010). In lower secondary school (college) students on average take the same amount of Arabic and French, studying each for six hours a week. But, in addition to French language as a class, the sciences (math, natural sciences, physical sciences, etc.) are taught in French while the humanities (Islamic instruction, social studies, art) are taught in Arabic (Boutieri, 2012). It is said that the Moroccan academic setting is fitting for French language instruction, as technological education in Arabic is often met with gaps in vocabulary (DeGorge, 2002). French language education is a somewhat contested subject in the field of Moroccan education. After independence from the French the country underwent a process of Arabization, a movement to unite and fortify the new country on the basis of Arabic heritage – notably Islam (Boutieri, 2012). Thus, schools began teaching standard Arabic (Fusha) and French side by side. Some scholars argue that French language education has remained in Morocco to preserve hierarchy established during colonialism, and that French is used as a tool to mobilize elites while simultaneously disparaging the lower classes.

Because I chose to focus on how the Moroccan government instated integrative educational reform through teacher training, I offer a brief description of the teacher training process. The path to becoming a primary school teacher in Morocco begins with receiving a baccalaureate, and then proceeding to university to receive a diploma of general university studies (Freeman, 2010). The diploma of general university studies entails one year of general courses in all areas of study, and a second year in either an academic or professional track

(teaching, in this case). Once the diploma of general university studies is attained students enroll in one additional year of training and receive a certificate of professional ability (CPA).

Secondary school teachers (college) are trained in two year programs at regional teacher training schools. Admission to these regional schools requires a baccalaureate, Moroccan nationality, and an entrance examination. Upper secondary school teachers (lycee) are trained in a four-year program of which entrance requires a baccalaureate and a series of pre-tests. Partly by accident and partly by choice I found my research surrounding integration policy focused on teacher training; settling on delving into the specifics of the National Strategy of Immigration and Asylums' action 1.6: Inclusion of immigration issues in teacher education programs.

The three specific actions in the National Strategy of Immigration and Asylum analyzed and researched are as follows: 1.4: Integration of immigrants and refugees into non-formal education programs. 1.6: Inclusion of immigration issues in teacher education programs. 1.7: Integration of cultural diversity into school curriculum (Ministry in Charge of Moroccan Residents Abroad and Migration Affairs, 2014). In my results, I detail the ministry's explanation of each action, describe the ministry's findings concerning the implementation of each action, and compare these official results with my fieldwork findings. In my analysis and conclusion, I will be taking a theoretical look at the integrative practices in Morocco and how they relate to current literature in the field of migrant education.

*Multicultural Education and Newcomer Youth: Re-Imagining a More Inclusive Vision for Immigrant and Refugee Students* by Ramona Amthor and Kevin Roxas summarizes many of the issues immigrant and refugee youth experience, from educational gaps due to displacement, to their roles as caretakers and voices for their parents, and how this position influences their educational needs. They highlight the widely understood fact in educational studies that most

often public education systems are structured to benefit the majority, marginalizing minority groups. This literature calls for advancement in the role of cross-cultural relationships over traditional cross-cultural competence. That is, performances or simple acknowledgement of culture in the form of dances, costume shows – anecdotal learning – is not enough to engage native youth with migrant youth. Often, these efforts can leave migrant youth feeling more excluded than before, because instead of creating long lasting ties or connections based in shared culture, or cultural interest, their identity has simply been put on display.

A report published by the Migration Policy Institute titled *The Educational Experiences of Refugee Children in Countries of First Asylum* details the ways refugee education harshly conflicts from the educational strategies migrant children require. Because of their position, they often experience gaps in learning, reluctance towards education, language confusion/deficit language opportunity compared to their peers, poor language instruction quality, teacher-centered pedagogy, and discrimination. This report explores these factors in detail, drawing off testimonies and case studies, concluding in policy recommendations focused on individualized education for migrant children, nuanced understanding of migrant positions for teachers, and auxiliary attention granted to language barriers and discrimination in the classroom.

## Methods and Ethics

At first, I aimed to conduct research on implicit attitudes and their influence on integration policy practice by performing a critical discourse analysis of specific legislation concerning integration. I was not able to execute this, as no official *legislation* is available regarding integration. Instead, I performed a more practical study, comparing the results of integration actions 1.4, 1.6, and 1.7 gathered by the government to my own findings. I gathered

the governmental results of these actions from a report published by the Ministry of Migration in September of 2016. My fieldwork consisted of a personal interview with a Ministry of Migration employee, a National Council for Human Rights (CNDH) employee, a site visit to a Moroccan public school with sub-Saharan students facilitated by East-West Foundation, and an interview with a Moroccan public school teacher.

My ministerial interviews were semi-structured, as our discussion were more casual in nature and focused on specific subjects, in contrast with a narrative or life story. The goal of these interviews was to gain an understanding as to the attitudes of the government towards integration, and to discuss in person the results of the three specific policies. By asking explicitly about the three policies I examined in my paper I was able to collect results that deviated from the governmental report I was given, which proved extremely valuable as in many cases the governmental results were not compatible with my findings. I took shorthand notes during my meeting with the employee of the Ministry of Migration, I have opted to omit his name from my paper, as he expressed to me the views and information he presented were not indicative of his personal beliefs or information, but were representative of ministerial attitudes as a whole. I have not included the name of the CNDH employee, as a language barrier made it difficult to receive verbal consent as to whether I could use his name in my paper.

Ms. Malika Okhatar was my contact at East-West Foundation, she met with me multiple times in order to facilitate a visit to a Moroccan public school with a sub-Saharan student population. No information will be presented as to the name or location of this school, to protect the rights of the sub-Saharan students attending. Similarly, the identity of the Moroccan public school teacher will remain anonymous, as speak disparagingly towards the government in Morocco can be a sensitive subject. This was apparent through his mannerisms during the

interview – speaking in a hushed tone, and inquiring as to why I was recording the interview multiple times. During the school visit I exchanged limited words with teachers and students, opting to observe over collecting informational data. My interview with the public-school teacher was semi-structured, I posed some questions concerning his educational background, explicit questions concerning circulaires (memorandums) and the challenges he faces as a teacher in Morocco. Most of the results I present from this interview are the consequence of asking “why”. Mr. Ayoub Nissim (pseudonym) would mention specific issues in the Moroccan education system, and I would ask him to elaborate on what he believed causes these deficits.

I did my best to adhere to ethical research guidelines by obtaining informed consent, acting appropriately when it was not obtained, and preserving the identities of vulnerable populations; the only of which to appear in my study are the sub-Saharan students I observed passively. Part of the reason I was ultimately unable to access sub-Saharan migrants to conduct interviews was the hesitation of NGOs like East-West Foundation to allow undergraduate researchers to speak with individuals who regularly have their rights infringed upon. When interviewing vulnerable populations one must take into account the inherent power dynamic present. In my fieldwork, I was seldom put in a position of power, as I mostly interviewed highly qualified and seasoned professionals in government or governmental partner, agencies. Actually, I often found that when dealing with government officials, and at East-West Foundation, it was quite difficult to obtain the time of day. People are busy, and I am just another undergraduate conducting somewhat shallow (only one month long) research; I understand this position made it difficult to obtain meetings. I was presented with some degree of power in my meeting with the Moroccan public school teacher, as he offered sensitive information regarding the true state and practices of the Ministry of Education. I understood the sensitivity of this information; I

preserved his name in my paper, and did not let anyone access my full transcript, in an attempt to protect him from any potential backlash.

In terms of my positionality, the literature *I* used to define integration and analyze best practices in the field of migrant education are coming from a U.S., European, and liberal perspective. A more conservative persons' analysis of best practices would be much different – social efficiency educators might commend the Moroccan government for its approach to migrant education, especially in the non-formal sector – that people mainly need to be prepared for the job market, not developed holistically as individuals (Burnham, 1960). There are many disciplines concerning migrant and multi-cultural education – I am analyzing the status of migrant education in Morocco from one perspective, which is that of liberal, developmentalist, education. Developmentalists believe the most effective and quality education occurs when teaching practice is made to fit the characteristics and proclivities of children. This viewpoint only represents one dimension of educational studies; if I were to elaborate on this research as a whole I would examine the state of the Moroccan education system through multiple viewpoints: social meliorism, social efficiency, behaviorism, etc.

## Results

The ideology behind the Moroccan government's current integrative educational efforts is overwhelmingly rooted in access. From a liberal educational studies perspective, successful integration implies social identification, a sense of belonging, and cross-cultural relationships (Amthor, 2016). Ager and Strang, 2011, offer a conceptual framework for integration, breaking down the different spheres of integration into four categories, within which there are sub-categories. My research has found that the ministerial definition of integration speaks to the base of Ager and Strang's pyramid, in that integration primarily aligns with rights and citizenship.

The working definition within the field of educational studies recognizes the importance of an integrative foundation in rights and citizenship, but calls now for a more nuanced vision of integration centered around social connection, the third tier of Ager's pyramid. Focus on the first tier, and only the first tier, in Moroccan government is imminently present in the results report/elaboration report published concerning the National Strategy of Immigration and Asylum, and in much of my fieldwork. For example, the 2015-2016 ministerial report on integration actions cites strategy 1.4 as a response to the individual situations of refugees and migrants, which is a commendable step by the Moroccan government towards increased individualistic pedagogy. But, upon further examination, the policy is not so much focused on individualistic pedagogy, but on granting access to education for those not compatible with Moroccan public school.

In personal communication with a representative from the Ministry of Migration, I was told that one of the only compulsory aspects of migrant education the ministry requires from NGOS is that non-formal education classes be mixed between Moroccans and migrants. The ministry does not want the two populations separate in non-formal education classes because this is segregation and does not promote tolerance. This attitude exemplifies the tendency within the Moroccan government to define integration as simply migrants speaking with, being around, etc., Moroccans. I detail in my report how this definition of integration has affected the efficacy of the National Strategy for Immigration and Asylum's policies, and how toxic this definition truly is for migrants. Following, I examine to what extent the actions have actually been implemented by detailing the ministry of migration's results, and then compare the official results with my fieldwork. I then offer my explanations as to the context inciting these conditions, often relating to the ministry's definition of integration.



#### 1.4 Integration of immigrants and refugees into non-formal education programs.

The National Policy of Immigration and Asylum Report briefly details the creation and purpose of the non-formal education, citing how it caters to the individual and unique situations of migrants (Ministry of Migration, 2016). The non-formal education curriculum aims to accomplish “academic integration, integration in rural areas, preparation for vocational training, and social integration”. The report also cites the efforts of the non-formal education system to promote Moroccan culture and language in immigrant and refugee populations. There is no further elaboration offered as to the actual practice of these goals; the next section in the report addresses assessment of non-formal programs through teacher inspection. Non-governmental Organizations play a large role in the implementation of non-formal education; for example, the Ministry of Migration funds much of the language training at Foundation East-West (Fondation Orient Occident), and many other NGOs around the country. In 2013/2014 there were 110 migrant participants in the non-formal education system. This figure grew to a total of 1,628 participants backed by 15 different organizations. The number of participants decreased to 482 for the 2015/2016 school year, no reasoning was offered by the report. This figure concluded the section on action 1.4: Integration of immigrants and refugees into the non-formal education system.

Now, a presentation of personal intel gathered during fieldwork in the area of Moroccan migrant education. I had the pleasure of speaking with a Moroccan educator, Ayoub Nissim, who had spent some time at Orient Occident, working in the non-formal education sector. This individual taught English there occasionally, and spoke unfavorably of the foundation’s organizational skills. He recounted incidents of unqualified instructors, and widespread logistical issues.

“I worked there with non-formal education, I was supposed to teach English for a couple of refugees, they had a German girl there. The problem was the migrants spoke French, so I was always wondering how the girl communicates with them, because there is no shared language. The mother tongue is important. There is a whole debate about using the mother tongue or not, because there are abstract things like 'freedom, love,' how can you explain this in English? You would not be able to define these things, but if you use the mother tongue... So i was always wondering how the girl communicated with them.”

He also recounted a situation in which his class was transferred to a different teacher without his consultation or notification. Issues with instruction quality are accompanied by barriers surrounding enrollment. A 2014 report by the organization Tamkine-Migrants, co-financed by the European Union and Terre des Hommes foundation, called attention to the lack of outreach among migrant parents (Qassemy, 2014). Most parents are not aware non-formal education is an option for their children because notices concerning enrollment are rarely translated into French or English, two languages widely spoken by the sub-Saharan migrant population. Even if parents are aware of this option, the extensive enrollment process keeps children from utilizing this service. To enroll, parents must show a copy of a birth certificate “or equivalent copy of civil status, or any other administrative document identifying the name of the student and his age...”. This requirement is particularly constraining for migrants, as their highly mobile situations make it difficult to obtain paperwork.

#### 1.6: Inclusion of immigration issues in teacher education programs.

The National Policy of Immigration and Asylum report’s findings concerning the implementation of action 1.6 are remarkably scarce. The report begins by briefly detailing the intent propelling this action; action 1.6 attempts to strengthen the competence of teachers and administrative staff on migration issues by introducing modules in training programs on the values of equality and tolerance (Ministry of Migration, 2016). As of December 2015, the regional centers for teacher training were “informed about the integration of immigrants and

refugees”. The section concludes with a statement of intention to instate sensitization activities for teacher trainers, including “the preparation of final dissertations on migration issues for the validation of the training of teachers”. My findings on the state of migrant sensitive teacher training align with the conclusions offered by the National Policy of Immigration and Asylum in that efforts to implement action 1.6 have been lack luster.

I received verbal confirmation from a representative of the Ministry of Migration that cross-cultural education has not been institutionalized yet, and that training concerning how to deal with migrants and their specific issues is not compulsory, but should be. Testimony from a Moroccan high school teacher confirms this absence. Mr. Nissim informed me that the pre-service teacher training is a yearlong program divided into two semesters – one theoretical semester and one practical. The theoretical semester is supposed to introduce topics such as classroom management, teaching philosophies, communication, as well as school legislation (how to interact with administration, teacher’s and student’s rights). During the practical semester students observe classes, and after one or two weeks begin giving sample lessons. Nissim informed me explicitly that professors in the theoretical training portion are often unqualified to teach advanced pedagogy.

[At the Center for Jobs of Training (CNMF)] from where do they get their trainers? They are just teachers who just spent a lot of time in teaching, and they come there and teach. They are not qualified to be teacher trainers. Like, we had a class on teaching theories, like behaviorism, etc... so then obviously, the woman there did not know anything about teaching theories. She said 'what are the teaching theories? We're not going to study the teaching theories, they were on the selection test...' so we sat doing workshops and things, just put something and put a smiley face on it and everything is fine. So, that was terrible.

I asked Mr. Nissim to elaborate on this experience, inquiring if in his teacher training the subject of how to teach people from different backgrounds was ever addressed. I elaborated on this

question, asking if in his teacher training a professor ever talked about teaching a Moroccan from the south versus a Moroccan from the north?

No. There is no recognition of the age difference, the sex, the culture... you can do research in that, in the training you also have to do research and you can write about this, but the training does not address it... If we are talking about recognition of people with disabilities... even the infrastructure of the buildings is not designed for people with disabilities. If you go to any Moroccan school, any school in Morocco - you will not find a small passage for people who have wheelchairs... just stairs.

My analysis section will attempt to explain the reality of multicultural/migrant sensitive teacher training in Morocco; my fieldwork points to issues in national education governance and the securitization of the education system as a whole.

#### 1.7: Integration of cultural diversity into school curriculum.

The National Policy of Immigration and Asylum defines action 1.7 as an effort to introduce themes relevant to migration, cultural diversity and openness to others in school textbooks and curriculum. The ministry is currently studying the method of which to reform the curriculum in conjunction with the higher education council (Ministry of Migration, 2016). In 2016, the Ministry of Education developed a values guide for teachers “e.g. equality, tolerance, etc.,” mentioning specifically designing textbooks to explore the theme of “image of the other”. Three hundred sixty-four manuals out of three hundred ninety were revised for the 2015/2016 school year “to bring their content into agreement with the 2011 constitution... tolerance, and living together”. If I had more time to focus on this project I would have liked to attain a Moroccan high school social studies or history book, to see the outcome of these revisions. For now, I have the testimony of a National Center for Human Rights employee concerning the right for migrants to learn about their home countries in public education. I asked him if it was a human right that sub-Saharan learn about their home countries in school, and was told that this is not feasible. He explained to me how there could be from six to 10 different nationalities in

one classroom, and therefore it was the responsibility of the parents to educate their children on the subject of home nationality. This statement conflicts with the Convention on the Rights of the Child that Morocco ratified, which stipulates that a child's education should develop "respect of his parents, identity, language, and cultural values and the national values of the country in which he lives, the country from which they may originate, and for civilizations different from theirs" (Qassemy, 2014). It seems the Moroccan government has officially recognized everything the international community and National Council of Human Rights has recommended, but mobilizing these recommendations has proved difficult for Morocco.

## Analysis

From the limited amount of fieldwork I conducted it is apparent the Moroccan government is struggling to incite all of the policies outlined in the National Strategy for Immigration and Asylum. The intent to adopt internationally recognized, humanitarian, education protocols is explicit. Why, then, are many of these conventions absent today? My findings point to: 1) logistical issues in the national education system, 2) the view of the national education system as a tool for national security.

### Education as a Tool for National Security

Private sector teaching jobs and immigration issues in education are often overlooked because of the political rhetoric surrounding national education focused on primarily on national security. A major shortcoming of action 1.4: integration of migrants into the non-formal education system, is poor educator quality. As I cited in my results, NGOs like East-West Foundation sometimes have difficulty maintaining regular teachers for their classes, and

occasionally must resort to undergraduate students with limited language skills. Poor educator quality in the private sector is to be expected, as public sector jobs are favored immensely in Morocco. Mr. Nissim elaborated on attitudes concerning the private vs. public sector:

“...this is the attitude people have towards working with the government, in Morocco, if you work with the government, you are the king. You are set for life, no matter how hard you mess up, you are safe and no one can touch you.”

It is logical, then, that NGOs may have difficulty maintaining a consistent and dedicated teaching force. Students entering the Moroccan teacher training program sign an eight-year contract with the government after completing the pre-selection phase. Recently, the government has tried to put more barriers in place for teachers to keep them from finally completing official training because of a shortage in public teaching positions. These barriers have disrupted the long-standing promise to teachers in Morocco; that when they finish their nationally sponsored training, they are effectively government employees, which entitles them to a *secure* job. There are obvious perks to working in the government, accountability being a major factor. Nissim shed some light on a cultural aspect of the prioritization of public sector jobs/security:

“People are more concerned with getting married and getting to buy a nice house and that's it. Self-improvement in Morocco is [inaudible] The people working in the ministry, in finance, in the police, they just [makes stamping motion] that's all. There are individual initiatives, certain teachers that like to improve themselves and fill in gaps in the training.”

This sentiment is assuredly not specific to Morocco, but illuminates the workings of a global phenomenon. The vast majority of Moroccan teachers gunning for the same jobs has created a competitive market. Nissim confirmed: “The best teachers are in the public, not private, the people who are not accepted in the public who go teach in the private, usually.” Because of this ultra-competitive public market, NGOs experience difficulties accessing trained Moroccan

teachers. Unfortunately, the reality of the Moroccan education system dictates training does not necessarily signify readiness to teach, or engage with, multiculturalism and topics of diversity.

I detailed in my results that the Moroccan government has stated intent to introduce issues of integration of immigrants and refugees into the teacher training system. Unfortunately, this intent has not come to fruition. It has become clear to me that much needs to be accomplished in the teacher training system before policies surrounding specific curriculum such as migration affairs can be introduced. One of the major problems with the Moroccan teacher training system is underqualification of professors. In my results, I highlighted one example of an education professor not being willing to discuss teaching theories, and holding arbitrary workshops instead. I hypothesize the teaching methods used in teacher training programs are deliberately authoritarian, to implicitly enforce this fashion of control in public schools, through public school teachers. Mr. Nissim spoke to the teacher training school's emphasis on discipline, and not on content.

“Theoretically, the system is designed not so you can cheat it, but what happens is that, either in the training, either in the pre-selection, the focus is not on quality or performance it is on discipline... the focus in general is on if you are disciplined and if you attend, on time, every day, and if you do not challenge anyone's authority. It's not about teaching or whether you are a good teacher or not, this is a marginal thing.”

By modelling an authoritarian system to prospective teachers, the Moroccan government perpetuates this authoritarianism with public school students. The following quote from Mr.

Nissim shows the authoritarian system in action:

“The problem is that no one cares if they are learning. They have to be in class. They have to stay in class. They can burn the whole class, it doesn't matter... they have to stay there, that is the law... Reforming the whole certification system requires willingness in the culture, because what's informing the state is not the desire to improve, it's security concerns. That's why I was saying the goal is not to teach them but it's important to keep them in class.”

When one of the motivating forces behind national education is security and maintenance of the status quo, my findings concerning the lack of migration issues and cultural diversity in public and higher education do not surprise. Morocco has had a historically heterogeneous population, and was united during independence on the basis of Arab Nationalism (Ikeda, 2007). Much of this unification was to ensure security and loyalty within the newly formed country, to combat the self-destructive ramifications of colonial interference. My findings suggest the issues of governance and logistics in the national education system are largely at fault in the delayed implementation of certain areas of the National Strategy for Immigration and Asylum.

#### Logistical Issues within Moroccan Education System

Inclusion of immigration issues in education programs/curriculum is largely limited because of logistical issues within the Moroccan education system, some of which are the result of French colonization. One of the major roadblocks to curriculum reform is the appointment of unqualified teachers and lack of human and financial resources in general. A national education system's curriculum cannot undergo reform without education professors already in place adopting and dispersing this new information. Curriculum is further stagnated by a new practice the Moroccan government has adopted in relation to teacher recruitment. Mr. Nissim informed me that because young education graduates contracted to work with the government are demanding certain rights and securities, the government has begun hiring individuals without contracts or training.

“In 2016 the government even made it worse and said we open teaching positions with contracts... but not really contracts, just temporaries - 1 year. For us it is permanent, for them it is not permanent. It's one year and they either renew your contract or kick you out. The problem is that these people come from the street. No training, no nothing, just pass a test and get in. That's the deal.”



Teaching is a nuanced and difficult task. It requires expert knowledge of subject matter in conjunction with teaching strategies and methodologies; to effectively manage, support, and instruct a large group of adolescents requires background knowledge and most importantly, practice. The fact that teachers are being hired without training is reckless on behalf of the Moroccan government. Further research must be conducted to uncover how many teachers currently employed by the government have no background in education. Multicultural and migration focused curriculum and teaching strategies will never gain headway if teachers are not receiving adequate training. Another factor hindering the implementation of actions 1.6 and 1.7 is the lack of transparency between educative administration and teachers.

Mr. Nissim informed me that many schools across the country operate without the guidance of supervisors, individuals with masters or doctorate degrees in education that often perform diagnostic tasks to ensure the holistic wellness of schools. Mr. Nissim recounts:

“Supervisors are super qualified, there are usually the best educators in their region and then you take a two years training, the problem is that there are very few of them... The government cannot appoint many people because they get paid double the sum of teachers...” The expert presence of supervisors in schools is invaluable, especially at a time when teachers many not be appropriately qualified. Unfortunately, Mr. Nissim informed me that there is a shortage of supervisors, meaning many schools operate with extremely limited directions from the Ministry of Education.

“So like in my region, there is no supervisor. What they do is they bring one in and they give him 40 teachers from Rabat and you give him another 40 teachers that are are not in Rabat, they are in distant villages, he has to go one day just to get to the place. So like, he's not gonna go, you know?”

Upon hearing this, I asked Mr. Nissim if he was contacted by his school administration when the circulaires (circular, or memorandum) were published concerning the enrollment of sub-Saharan children into the public education system. He smiled, shook his head, laughed a little, and simply said: “No”.

There are many reasons the Moroccan government has yet incorporated all of the actions and policies it promised in the National Strategy of Immigration and Asylum. I found the framing of national education as a security measure, and logistical shortcomings of the education system to be influential culprits as to why actions 1.4, 1.6, and 1.7 have experienced stunted implementation. Mr. Nissim credits much of the national education system’s faults to a hierarchal structure established during French colonization. He stated that the French educated Fesi (people from Fes) elites who constructed the national education system after independence were not willing to give up any of the power or wealth they had amassed during French rule. It was not in this group’s interest to mobilize the masses with education, because this would put the hierarchal system and existing power structures at risk of change. For this reason, the implementation of multi-cultural curriculum and migrant specific education in Morocco has been strained.

## Conclusion and Recommendations

My results have shown large discrepancies between what the government claimed to enact through integration actions 1.4, 1.6, and 1.7, and what is happening in practice. The main shortcomings of action 1.4: Integration of immigrants and refugees into non-formal education programs include: issues with teacher qualification and barriers to enrollment. My fieldwork showed that the poor teacher qualification in non-governmental organizations can be linked to

the incentivization of public sector teaching jobs, and that barriers to enrollment are largely connected to the lack of services focused on highly mobile individuals. I found the main shortcoming of action 1.6: Inclusion of immigration issues in teacher education programs, to be simply that it is not being enforced effectively. Teacher trainers are struggling to even examine topics such as pedagogical theory in their classes. Immigration issues, migrant sensitive practices, and multicultural curriculum is far from present in the education system Mr. Nissim described to me. I attributed the lack of reform in teacher training programs to authoritarian pedagogy affected during colonization, and lack of human and financial resource in the national education system. Deficiencies in action 1.7: Integration of cultural diversity into school curriculum can be largely traced to the framing of the national education system as a tool for security (in part a product of colonialism), and a lack of accountability/resources among school supervisors.

Because of these numerous road blocks hindering effective enactment of the actions detailed in the National Strategy for Immigration and Asylum, the education system and Ministry of Migration have begun to conflate cultural exchange with integration. Cultural exchange, the performance of culture for others to visually digest, does not establish genuine cross-cultural relationships (Amthor, 2016). Cross-cultural relationships are formed when individuals intake meaningful information concerning the importance, or impact, of other cultures on their own lives. During my visit to the Moroccan school with a sub-Saharan student population, I was shown a video of a group of sub-Saharan students, semi-clad in a form of West-African traditional dress, dancing to an Arabic song for a group of adult onlookers. Each student was holding a little Moroccan flag, swinging and twirling this symbol of loyalty. This is not integration. Reliance on cultural exchanges in the form of art and cuisine ultimately tasks

migrants themselves with the feat of integration – they are supposed to show Moroccans their culture, instead of Moroccan institutions adopting cross cultural education practices and perspectives.

The Moroccan government must do better to implement the integrative actions into the education system. First, the theoretical framework of the national education system needs to be considered: does Morocco want to use education as a tool of control, or an agent of change? If the latter, teacher training and curriculum must be reformed alongside a critical look at resources of the education system. Teacher training and curriculum cannot be effectively changed if those in charge of changing it are overworked and unsupported. This shift in many ways must operate from the top down. Curriculum cannot implement cross-cultural relationships without the national education system making a highly organized and pointed effort to do so. And if curriculum is reformed, the movement cannot stop there; this is where support is crucial. The government cannot continue to just explain its well intentioned integrative reform, but must develop the capacity to see this change through. The subjects of multi-culturalism in Moroccan schools, and the logistics of education reform specific to Morocco are fascinating, relevant, and necessary to continue studying. To further understanding of multi-cultural education in Morocco I would recommend speaking to many more teachers concerning conditions of teacher training. I unfortunately am only presenting the opinions of one teacher, who in no way speaks to the experiences of every teacher in Morocco. More research must also be done on curriculum. If I were to continue my study my next step would be to analyze Moroccan textbooks for examples of cross-cultural literacy and culturally inclusive pedagogy. As more migrants gain access to the public education system it becomes increasingly necessary to foster these new Moroccan

resident's senses of self, and for their Moroccan peers to develop a positive and nuanced understanding of their new classmates.

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