

Education and Training Initiatives at the Central Methodist Church Refugee House in Johannesburg

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Zimbabwean economic migrants and political refugees have been given refuge and provided with shelter at the Central Methodist Church (CMC) Refugee House, in central Johannesburg. The refugees have successfully initiated learning and training programmes which resulted in the establishment of a combined school, namely St Albert Street Refugee School, an adult education programme, a pre-school, an infant day care, an Adult Basic Education Training (ABET) and vocational training centres for sewing, basic computer studies and waiting courses. The research presented here was conducted over a period of five months. It used an ethnographic approach and employed three primary strategies for gathering data: non-participant observation, interviewing and document collection. Using the theoretical framework of the Community Based Approach (CBA) to refugee education development, the article explains how the weekly refugee and School Council meetings served as forums for initiating education and training programmes and for important decisions that influenced the refugees' education and training policies and curriculum guidelines. The Refugee School's adoption of a modified Cambridge curriculum resulted in 'Renewed education for repatriation', whilst the vocational skills centres orientated themselves towards the 'Adjusted education for integration', which prepares adult refugees to integrate into the host country's economic communities.

Keywords: refugee-emergency education, Community Based Approach (CBA), Central Methodist Church (CMC).

Introduction

It is estimated that about 3 million Zimbabweans have migrated to South Africa, mainly because of their country's economic crisis which started in the late 1990s (Lubbe, 2008). By November 2008; Zimbabwe's annual inflation rate was 89.7 sextillion (Hanke, 2009). Political violence, economic collapse and mismanagement and the violation of property rights led many Zimbabweans to flee their country into neighbouring South Africa.

Some Zimbabwean economic migrants and political refugees have been given refuge and provided with shelter at the Central Methodist Church (CMC) in the Central Business District of Johannesburg. Built in 1965, the five-storey CMC today serves a humanitarian function by sheltering Zimbabwean (adult and child) refugees, a small number of migrants from other African countries and a few South Africans. Between 2004 and 2005 Zimbabweans desperate for accommodation, basic provisions and financial assistance began to seek help at the church from the generous Bishop Paul Verryn. Most of them had no alternative accommodation and were sleeping in the open at Park Station. The CMC housed these immigrants, beginning with fewer than 10 in 2004, 50 at the beginning of 2005 and over 300 by the end of that year (Climb, pers. comm.).

Between 2006 and 2007 there was a marked increase in the number of people seeking shelter at the CMC Refugee centre. By the end of 2007 more than 1 500 refugees were staying at the Refugee House, sleeping on the bare floors, corridors, steps and different halls in the five-storey building (Parra, 2009). At the peak of the Zimbabwe crisis between 2008 and the first quarter of 2009 the church housed about 4 000 political refugees, asylum seekers and economic migrants, with some refugees sleeping on the pavements and streets outside the building (Seale, 2009). The accelerated rise in the number of refugees at the church house is attributable to a wave of violence experienced by foreigners in South African townships during the May 2008 xenophobic attacks (Waghid, 2009). This ugly form of 'cosmopolitan justice' affected

foreigners living in some Johannesburg townships and in the inner city (Waghid, 2009, 88; Kruger & Osman, 2010). During and after the xenophobic attacks many affected foreigners sought refuge and shelter at the CMC (Zhou, pers. comm.). It is within this context that the need for education and training was felt. Thus the refugee community has established a combined school – St Albert Street Refugee School – and, early childhood, adult education and vocational training centres that offer courses in sewing, basic computer studies and waitering.

This paper investigates the education and training developments at the CMC refugee centre. Refugee education is an emerging field of study that is under-researched in South Africa, though cognate articles dealing with immigrant learners' experiences in public schools have appeared in this journal (Sookrajh, Gopal & Maharaj, 2005; Kruger & Osman, 2010). The present article focuses rather on educational initiatives by a homogenous refugee group in a challenging context. It raises issues of importance in the field of adult education and innovatively attends to questions of education and training in disadvantaged communities. The article also empirically reports on two variations on the existing forms of refugee education, namely 'Renewed education for repatriation' and 'Adjusted education for integration'.

Research methodology

This article comes out of my Masters' research report¹ submitted to the Wits School of Education. In carrying out my research I used the ethnographic approach - or more precisely what Merriam, (2001, 14) calls 'educational ethnography' – to elicit information about the development of a refugee centre in an urban environment and how the Zimbabwean refugee community initiated and provided education and training programmes in such a context. Ethnography is a qualitative research approach used to study a group's social and cultural system (McMillan & Schumacher, 2001; Merriam, 2001). Both writers concur that the term 'culture' refers to beliefs, values, attitudes and life patterns of a specific group of people. I have borrowed the ethnographic methodology from cultural anthropology and applied it to this emergency education study. In this research therefore the educational ethnography approach interprets and describes the education and training initiatives of the Zimbabwean refugee community taking into account their social and cultural setting. I employed three strategies for gathering data – non-participant observation, interviewing and document collection, over a period of five months, from mid-June to mid-November 2009. It is typical of the ethnographic approach to use a variety of data collection techniques with the primary strategies for gathering data being observations, interviews and document collection (McMillan & Schumacher, 2001; Merriam, 2001).

I attended and observed 20 weekly refugees meetings, five School Council meetings and teaching and learning interactions in Grade 1 and Form 3B classes for one week. I also spent two hours a day for seven continuous days observing the vocational training and early childhood centres. During this non-participant observation, field notes were compiled. I obtained the minutes of refugee, school council, and school staff meetings and school principal reports. I used two sets of standardised open-ended interview schedules to elicit information from key, knowledgeable members of the refugee community. In compiling this paper I used information from interviews conducted with the Church Bishop (Paul Verryn), one senior elder member (Climbs), the principal of St Albert Street Refugee School (Zhou) and heads of the following training centres: ABET (Leon), Computer Centre (William), Sewing Project (Vhiriri) and the Day Care Centre (Rute). During the interview sessions I took notes. I have used fictitious names for the refugee informants in this study, however I have disclosed widely known and commonly used names like the CMC, St Albert Street Refugee School and that of Bishop Paul Verryn.

As my research dealt with refugees who are considered vulnerable, for the original Masters Research study, I sought ethical clearance from the Wits School of Education. This was granted and a copy of the letter of permission is appended to this paper. Before entry into the research site I was given permission to carry out my research by the Church Bishop and also by the head of the refugee school. Prior to interviewing or observing participants I secured their 'informed consent' having explained to them the purpose of my study and how the findings would be disseminated.

A detailed data analysis and most of the ethnographically rich data are contained in the Masters Research report¹; however in writing this article I explored and made sense of raw data and information using an ethnographic deductive data analysis strategy (McMillan & Schumacher, 2001; Merriam, 2001). Under this ethnography data analysis mode I made use of pre-existing or predetermined category schemes to organise and analyse data (McMillan & Schumacher, 2001; Merriam, 2001). Thus in analysing and selecting data for this paper I was guided by the key research question, the theoretical framework and existing literature on forms of emergency education. On the basis of the study's main research question (which focused on investigating education and training initiatives at the refugee centre), and in the next section in this article, I give a chronological account of how the refugees at the CMC started their educational and training programmes. The theoretical framework (CBA) provided me with templates for data on the main forums used by the refugee community (Refugee and School Council meetings) to initiate and deliberate education and training programmes and issues. Towards the end of this paper, literature on the forms of refugee education illuminates my empirical findings regarding new variations on the categories of emergency education.

As a Zimbabwean doing research on my fellow countrymen, I may have been susceptible to bias although I attempted as much as possible to be objective in the collection of data and reporting of my findings. I also had the advantage of speaking the same language as most of the refugee participants (Shona), and in some of the interviews the refugees would respond in our indigenous language.

Adult education and training centres at CMC Refugee House

Vocational training provides trade and craft skills that lead to gainful employment, self-employment or livelihood supplementation, both in refugee situations and after repatriation (Dickerson, 1974). According to the UNHCR (1995), vocational courses must relate to labour market conditions, match the needs of the host as well as the country of origin and wherever possible such skills training initiatives should also enrol local students. The vocational training courses offered at the CMC Centre appear to meet all these requirements, having trained many refugees as well as local citizens to secure jobs in South Africa. Also important in emergency settlement is adult education which teaches literacy and numeracy amongst adults and children who would have not attended formal schools (Betheke, 1996). The CMC has two such centres.

ABET Centre

The ABET Centre is perched on the fourth floor of the building and has been one of the most successful adult education programmes initiated by the refugees. One of its students went on to enrol for full-time undergraduate degree studies. The programme was started in the last quarter of 2006 by four Zimbabwean adult refugees in collaboration with a South African educator. The initiators found that there was need to provide literacy and numeracy skills to some of the illiterate members of the refugee community. In the past few years, tuition has been provided for Zambians, Congolese, Mozambicans and the South Africans as well as Zimbabweans. The centre has enjoyed financial support from Lonehill Methodist Church and Media Works, who have provided study materials, learners' workbooks and computers, and trained the facilitators (Leon, pers. comm.). But the key donors have withdrawn their funding and the programme faces imminent closure. The centre is currently being used as a sleeping area by school-going learners. One of the former facilitators of the programme is alleged to have stolen four computers and fled with them to Zimbabwe. Most of the remaining computers and furniture at this centre have been vandalised.

Computer Centre

A total of 778 people from the refugee community and all the learners from Grade 3 to Form 5 at St Albert Street Refugee School have become computer literate. On the 5th of August 2007, and with no computer, the founder of this centre started computer theory lessons in the 'Chapel' with 10 students. The centre received a donation of five computers from the Anglo American Company in October 2007 and moved

into the spacious ‘Boardroom’, on the second floor. Today the centre boasts 20 computers donated by various NGOs. The computer centre offers basic short computer courses with trainees being issued with certificates from Gifford College, and has managed to maintain a 100% pass rate throughout. The majority of the trainees have been Zimbabweans though Mozambicans, Congolese, Burundians, Malawians, Cameroonians, Swazis and South Africans have also been trained (William, pers. comm.).

Sewing Project

Mr Vhiriri trained as a high school teacher specialising in Cutting and Design in Zimbabwe. In consultation with the Bishop, he decided to start the garment making training centre with an initial enrolment of 21 refugees. The students are trained in the various aspects of garment making over a period of 3 months. In partnership with Loveck College, the trainees are offered a certificate in Cutting and Designing. Although the centre has three industrial sewing machines, like the other refugee-initiated training programmes at the CMC, it lacks adequate space as well as sufficient money to buy fabric and other clothing accessories. Nevertheless, the project has trained 66 refugees; a third of these have been employed at Mama Africa Clothing and Singer Clothing factory, while some are working in local small sewing business ventures.

Hotel and Catering Training Centre

The Hotel and Catering training centre was started at the same time as the Sewing Project when the community recognised the need for skills so as to get employed in the host country. It was Mr Zhou, the current head of St Albert Street Refugee School, who announced in the refugee meetings that they needed to train refugees in hotel and catering. The Hotel and Catering Training Centre trains members of the community to be waiters, waitresses and barmen for eight weeks, with half of that time being spent on practicals in hotels and fast food outlets in Johannesburg. To date, the programme has trained over 400 people, with most of the trainees being highly sought after at places like Chicken Inn, Nandos, Spurs, Kentucky Fried Chicken, Indaba, Emperors Palace and Beachwood Hotel. The trainees who complete their courses are examined and given certificates by Gifford College.

St Albert Street Refugee School

The St Albert Street Refugee School is about a kilometre away from CMC Refugee Centre and was opened on the 7th of July 2008 by four volunteer refugee teachers. By the end of the first week the refugee school had enrolled 35 students. The volunteer teachers decided to start the school after they found out that there was an increase in the number of loitering refugee children at the CMC centre who were not attending school (Zhou, pers. comm.). When I left the research site on 15 November 2009, the school had a total of 21 teachers and – 534 learners, of whom 421 were, ‘accompanied students’ and 113 ‘unaccompanied students’ (see Table 1). The term ‘unaccompanied students’ denotes learners living at the CMC Refugee House who came from their country of origin without parents or guardians, most of them Zimbabwean. The term ‘accompanied students’ means learners who came from their countries with parents or guardians and who, do not stay at the Refugee House. The same term is also applied by the School authorities to the few South Africans learners who attend the refugee school (Zhou, pers. comm.).

Table 1: Student enrolment, categories and teaching staff establishment at St Albert Street Refugee School

Date	School Total Enrolment	Accompanied Students	Unaccompanied Students	Teaching Staff
14 July 2008	35	8	27	4
12 September 2008	140	57	83	9
21 October 2008	180	84	96	11
7 December 2008	220	120	100	11

Date	School Total Enrolment	Accompanied Students	Unaccompanied Students	Teaching Staff
5 January 2009	561	487	74	21
20 February 2009	456	341	115	21
13 July 2009	523	399	124	18
11 September 2009	531	394	137	18
14 October 2009	528	394	134	22
15 November 2009	534	421	113	21

The St Albert School curriculum

The combined school provides tuition from Grade 0 (R) to Form 5. In addition it also feeds the unaccompanied children, provides counselling and sporting activities, and the teaching staff act in *loco-parentis*. The school follows the Cambridge curriculum, which also externally examines the learners. This decision was reached by the refugee community when the school was started. The Cambridge curriculum followed by the refugee school is used in most private schools and colleges in Zimbabwe. The Zimbabwean government had localised school examinations in 1995, through the Zimbabwe School Examination Council. The Cambridge curriculum was identified by the refugees as internationally recognised (School Council meeting, 13 April 2009), and the learners could use their school leaving certificates on return to Zimbabwe. The decision to follow this British-based curriculum was necessitated by the fact that the refugee learners could not register for the South African Matric as they did not have identity documents. The local Cambridge examination centre run by the British Council did not require the refugee examining candidates to have identification cards, birth certificates, asylum seeker or refugee status papers. It is on these grounds that the refugees collectively decided to adopt their former country's curriculum and examining body.

The Refugee school's Cambridge curriculum was slightly modified to incorporate Life Orientation (L-O), Computers Studies, Music and Drama, Arts and Physical Education, which are done by learners from Grade 3 to Form 4 (see Table 2). These subjects are not externally examinable except for Computer Studies, in which learners are issued with a certificate endorsed by Gifford College. L-O was adopted from the South African's Revised National Curriculum Statements (RNCS) and the teachers used South African textbooks in facilitating this learning area.

Table 2: The Refugee School curriculum.

Subjects	School Levels				
	Primary School		Secondary School		
	Grade 1-3	Grade 4-7	Form 1-2	Form 3-4	Form 5
English Language	√	√	√	√	
Maths	√	√	√	√	√
Science		√	√	√	
Life Orientation	√	√	√	√	
Computers		√	√	√	
Art	√ *	√			
Music & Drama	√ *	√			
Physical Education	√ *	√	√	√	
Geography			√	√	√

Subjects	School Levels				
	Primary School		Secondary School		
	Grade 1-3	Grade 4-7	Form 1-2	Form 3-4	Form 5
History			√	√	√
English Literature				√	√
B K/Divinity				√	√
Accounts				√	√
Business Management					√

* subject(s) only done from Grade 3

Adult education

The adult education programme was started immediately after the main refugee school had been opened. This programme, which strictly follows the Cambridge curriculum, is an after-work free programme that accommodates adult refugees and working immigrants. The adult education school uses the same premises as the St Albert Street Refugee School and the lessons start at 5:00pm and finish at 7:00pm. By mid November 2009, the adult education programme had an enrolment of 20 adults, with 18 students doing ‘Ordinary’ level and two students ‘Advanced’ level studies. In South Africa the ‘Advanced’ level is at least the equivalent of Matric and is accepted as a university entry qualification. The four volunteer teachers of this adult programme are untrained ‘Advanced’ level certificate holders from the refugee community.

Early Childhood Development Centres

There are some people, according to Sinclair (2001), who think that pre-schools or kindergarten activities are a luxury. This view is not shared at the CMC, where refugees’ children have access to two Early Childhood Development centres. Early childhood learning is an important aspect of the refugee curriculum which assists child development and prepares the child for school learning (Bird, 2003; Pigozzi, 1999). Flock Pre-School prepares South African and refugee children for primary school, whilst the refugee-initiated Day Care Centre is a babysitting establishment serving resident refugee mothers when they go off to look for work or to work (mostly as shop assistants, housemaids or security guards).

Flock Pre-School

Flock Pre-School was established in 1989 by the South African Central Methodist inner-city church congregants. This inner-city, all races pre-school is situated in the basement of the church building. It has an enrolment of 35 children between the ages of 2 and 5. A third of the children’s parents are either refugees or economic migrants from Zimbabwe. The centre is managed by South Africans and has a well-run learning programme and a kitchen that serves nutritious meals to the learners. The pre-scholars’ parents pay R200.00 every month, a sum that is beyond the reach of some Zimbabwean refugees.

Day Care Centre

The CMC Day Care Centre was opened on 17 July 2007 and is currently run by three female volunteer Child Carers. More than 20 children are left by their mothers every morning and collected at the end of the day. The idea of the Day Care Centre came from a refugee, Mr Zhou, who consulted with working mothers in the community and after holding discussions at the refugee meetings decided to start the programme. The Centre gets financial support and donations from the Bishop and other charitable individuals (Rute, pers. comm.), but is sometimes short of food for the children, while some refugee

mothers cannot afford the R150.00 a month fee payment. Finally at 20 square metres the Day Care Centre's room is too small for the children whose number rises at times to as high as 30.

Theoretical framework: the CBA

I investigated the education and training initiatives in this urban refugee centre as framed by the central features of the "Community Based Approach" to education development (Bird, 2003, 67). Under this model, refugees or refugee education committees initiate, collectively decide, cooperatively plan and manage education and training activities in the emergency settlement population (Bird, 2003; UNHCR, 1995). The CBA to refugee education development was formally recognised by the UNHCR in mid-1996 after it had been successfully undertaken by Rwandan refugees at Ngara Refugee camp in Tanzania (Bird, 2003). Other successful community based rapid responses to education were recorded at Mayukwayukwa refugee camp, in Zambia between 1999 and 2000 within Congolese and Angolan refugees, amongst Bhutanese refugees in Nepal, in the late-1990s (Sinclair, 2001; Williams, 2001). The CBA to refugee education provides the study with a theoretical lens and a language to describe the CMC's refugee community's training and educational initiatives just as was the case amongst the above cited refugee education examples which were initiated and continued to be run predominantly by the refugees themselves. The CBA to education development has revolutionised emergency education.

This model ensures and promotes continuity, sustainability, effectiveness and is cost-effective (Betheke, 1996). According to Sinclair (2001), the other advantage of the CBA is that it gives the refugees control over one important element of their social function education. If refugee communities participate in their education programmes this will promote self-reliance and reduce dependency on external support (Bird, 2003). Self-initiated refugee education approaches stand a high chance of being successful and help to improve the refugee capacity to meet their own needs and solve their own problems (Mwaba, 2007). The fact that the community collectively decides what to learn promotes dialogue within the community, a basic ingredient of democracy and empowerment. It is because of these advantages that the CBA to education is currently the preferred approach to refugee education development.

At the CMC Refugee centre the two major committees or forums for initiating learning and training programmes, and developing education policies and curriculum guidelines, have been the Refugee meetings and the School Council meetings. It was through the Refugee and School Council meetings that decisions on educational matters were made, as different choices were considered and evaluated before, consensus solutions were reached.

Refugee Meetings

The first refugee meeting was held in 2005 and led to the election of the first Refugee Committee. Refugee meetings are held in the church's 'Main Sanctuary' every Friday from 7pm and last for 2 to 3 hours. The meetings are chaired by Bishop Paul Verryn with the Refugees' Secretary recording the minutes. All members are free to make contributions and air their views during the communal deliberations. Attendance at the Refugee meetings is compulsory for refugees (Refugee meeting minutes, 23 October 2009). The 'Main Sanctuary' is filled to capacity during these refugee meetings.

The first important education-related decision made by the Refugee Committee during a refugee meeting was to endorse that the ABET Centre be established. The collective decision to establish the Day Care Centre was grounded on the premise that resident refugee women needed to leave their children somewhere as they go for work or to look out for employment.

Between August and September 2007 the refugee community reached major decisions regarding vocational training. The need for computer, tailoring and hotel and catering courses was recognised by the refugees in collaboration with the Bishop. The main reason for starting these training projects was the immediate and crucial need to provide skills to the refugee community which would make it easier for them to find employment. It was also agreed in several refugee meetings that trainees be issued with certificates from South African private colleges.

Another unanimous educational decision taken by the refugees that affected the content of what was taught in the school, as well as the teaching and learning styles, was the adoption of the Cambridge curriculum. It was felt that the Cambridge curriculum should be followed by the St Albert Street School and the Adult education programme as it was both acceptable in Zimbabwe and internationally recognised. The South African's RNCS was regarded as inferior by the refugees and rejected (Refugee meeting minutes, 24 July 2009).

The School Council

The St Albert Street School Council comprises – the Refugee School Principal, three senior teachers, Bishop Paul Verryn, church leaders, and student and parent representatives. Other members of the refugee community are free to join and participate in the School Council's educational deliberations. The idea of a School Council was mooted three months after the school had been opened and School Council meetings are held once or twice a month.

The School Council has made a number of important decisions on curriculum, teaching and learning and school governing principles. For example, at the School Council Meeting of 21 October 2009 it was decided to adopt English as the medium of instruction. The phrase 'integration centre' was crafted in School Council meetings. It meant that the School was seen as catering for "displaced children, less privileged, and traumatised children from low income families" and from different countries (Zhou. pers. comm.). Its enrolment policy is inclusive, embracing Zimbabwean refugees and immigrants from other African countries as well as South Africans. School Council meetings have also functioned as plenary sessions for making important teaching and learning decisions, for example in a feedback report of the School Council deliberations; the School Principal urged educators to enhance teacher-pupil interaction in the classroom (School meeting minutes, 25 July 2009).

The supreme school body also decides on extra-curricular issues. Through decisions of the School Council, the sports day was changed from Friday afternoon to Thursday afternoon in a move aimed to accommodate accompanied learners (School Council meeting minutes, 29 August 2009). The School Council meeting also agreed that entertainment such as movies, music, drama, dancing and indoor games be provided (School Council meeting minutes, 8 December 2008). It is the School Council that also made the resolution that fees be pegged at R125.00 per month for accompanied learners (School Council meeting, 21 October 2009).

The issue of student discipline cropped up in School Council deliberations, and it was agreed that delinquent children were to be sent to reformatories (School Council meeting minutes, 5 January 2009). At times the School Council meeting dealt with challenges facing the refugee learners: for instance, Council resolved that learners would be made to wear their school uniform at all times so as to elude police arrests (School Council meeting minutes, 07 December 2009).

To deal with the problem of the acute shortage of learning space, the School Council first made the decision to relocate the classes for Grades 3 to 7 to the CMC building (School Council meeting minutes, 12 February 2009). When a similar problem surfaced in secondary school classes the Council agreed on partitioning the Form 2 and Form 3 classrooms. In the same meeting the Principal told School Council members that learners would write tests and classes would be screened according to the results thus the Form 2 and Form 3 classes were divided into A and B cohorts, with each group of learners being assigned a partitioned classroom.

The decision to adopt the Cambridge curriculum must be credited to a series of both Refugee and School Council meetings. It was in a School Council meeting of 13 April 2009 - that it was suggested that the Cambridge curriculum be adopted. The School Council generally reached conclusions pertaining to core education matters, in the process developing and shaping their own curriculum.

The forms and types of refugee education at CMC Refugee Centre

There have been traditionally three forms of emergency or refugee education: 'education for repatriation, education for integration and mixed curriculum'. Education for repatriation is consistent with core elements

of the curriculum of the country of origin and prepares children for return to their home country (Preston, 1991). Learning the curriculum of the country of origin has a positive psychosocial impact as it “lessen the shock of exile to the children”, utilises refugee teachers, allows refugee communities to contribute towards their schools and enables refugees to continue their studies on return to their home country (UNHCR, 1995, 19). An example of the concept of ‘education for repatriation’ recorded by Preston (1991) is that of Mozambican refugees in Malawi and Zimbabwe in the mid-1990s, who followed the Mozambican curriculum, using Portuguese as the medium of instruction.

Education for integration utilises the core elements of the host country’s curriculum and prepares learners to integrate (Sinclair, 2001). Education for integration allows refugees to easily integrate into the local and economic communities (Preston, 1991). A classical example of education for integration is recorded by Bird (2003) at Ngara Refugee Camp amongst the Burundians. The CMC’s ABET programme and its curriculum is a typical example of ‘education for integration’. The key elements informing the ABET learning programme are outcomes-based education, integration and learner-centredness, and these are core design features of the South African RNCS.

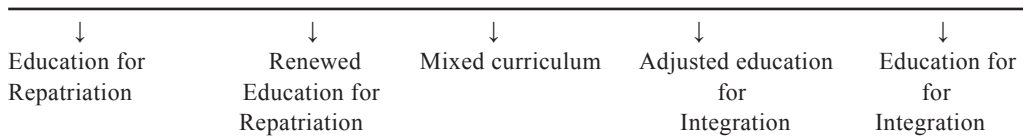
In-between education for integration and education for repatriation lies what has been called a “mixed curriculum” (UNHCR, 1995, 10) that “faces both ways” (Sinclair, 2001, 26) and “incorporates core elements of the curricula of the country of origin and country of asylum” (Betheke, 1996, 11). This concept prepares refugees for both eventual return and settlement, and provides linguistic skills for children whose families can repatriate or integrate (Sinclair, 2001; Williams, 2001). Such a mixed curriculum system was evident amongst Bhutanese refugees in Nepal (Williams, 2001).

Following an extensive review of the literature on forms of refugee education and my own research empirical findings and subsequent critical reflection, I have identified two variations on existing forms of emergency education which I have called ‘Renewed education for repatriation’ and ‘Adjusted education for integration’. The terms ‘Renewed’ and ‘Adjusted’ can be used interchangeably. These varieties of refugee education involve slight or moderate changes to the curriculum. If the changes are extensive the result is better described as a mixed curriculum. The three main forms and variations on the existing forms of refugee education can occur sequentially, as presented in Figure 1, or they can occur in any order. The continuum serves to show how forms and variations of refugee education can evolve or change: in some cases, from one form or variation into the next form or variation on the continuum, while in other situations the change can occur in any order. This model is informed by key international and influential bodies and authorities in emergency education such as the UNHCR (1995), Sinclair (2001), William (2001) and Betheke (1996).

The Refugee School curriculum has been slightly adjusted resulting in what I have called ‘Renewed education for repatriation’. Most of the core elements of this hybrid school curriculum are from the country of origin, with some modification and incorporation informed by the host country’s curriculum. Thus the St Albert Street Refugee School curriculum had been modified through the incorporation of non-examinable subjects of L-O, Computer Courses, Art, Music and Drama and Physical Education. L-O is a learning area in the South African RNCS that would assist the refugee learners to acquire life survival skills and to know about South Africa’s career and study opportunities, its religious and cultural life. The ‘Renewed education for repatriation’ is a convenient variant of curriculum adjustment in emergency education practices.

The ‘Adjusted education for integration’ hybrid type of refugee education was evident in the refugees’ vocational training programmes, which had adopted the host country’s training curriculum and its certification modalities. This was done in cooperation with local private colleges. Most of the key elements informing this hybrid curriculum emanates from the host country’s curriculum. However the refugees’ teaching and learning or training approach within the vocational training centres was teacher-centred or resembled the social efficiency orientation. The ‘Adjusted education for integration’ training initiative allowed the refugees to be assimilated more easily into the economic communities of the receiving country.

Figure 1: The forms and variations of refugee education (curriculum)



Conclusion

About 3 million Zimbabweans have migrated to South Africa because of their country's deteriorating economic and political situation. Some Zimbabwean economic migrants and political refugees sheltered at the CMC Refugee House have initiated successful education and training programmes. Using the theoretical framework of the CBA to emergency education I have described how the weekly Refugee and School Council meetings have provided decision-making forums whose deliberations led to the development of the St Albert Street Refugee School, and the early childhood, adult education and vocational training centres. The success story of the CMC's education and training initiatives follows in the footsteps of other renowned refugee-centred community responses to learning and training.

The article has identified the emergence of certain 'hybrid' or variations on the traditional main types of refugee education. The paper identified the CMC's vocational training centres as having adopted the 'Adjusted education for integration' which prepare adult refugees to integrate into South Africa's economic communities, whilst the Refugee School's adoption of a modified Cambridge curriculum has resulted in 'Renewed education for repatriation'. These are convenient forms of education and training curriculum modification within the emergency education context.

Endnotes

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Appendix A: Ethical clearance letter



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STUDENT NUMBER: 331885

Protocol: 2009ECE56

25 August 2009

Mr. Peter Pausigere

WSoE

Dear Mr. Pausigere

Application for Ethics Clearance: Master of Education

I have a pleasure in advising you that the Ethics Committee in Education of the Faculty of Humanities, acting on behalf of the Senate has agreed to approve your application for ethics clearance submitted for your proposal entitled:

Curriculum development in an Urban Refugee Centre in South Africa

Recommendation:

Ethics clearance is granted.

Yours sincerely

Matsie Mabeta

Wits School of Education

Cc Supervisor: Dr. D Naidoo (via email)



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6 February 2012

To Whom It May Concern

This confirms that, at his request, I have edited Mr Peter Pausigere's article "Education and Training Initiatives at the Central Methodist Church Refugee House in Johannesburg" for grammatical and idiomatic correctness.

Yours faithfully

Gareth Cornwell

D G N Cornwell
Professor