

A Challenge for Early Childhood Education for Teachers: “Search – Reach – Teach”

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Abstract:

The Syrian war, displacement of refugees and Lebanese government policy to enroll Syrian refugee children in public schools, brought Early Childhood Education (ECE) teachers in Lebanon to face diverse young children affected by violence and warfare. With funding from the British Academy, a collaborative mixed methods study was undertaken between the University of East London -England- and Rafik Hariri University -Lebanon- to explore strategies for achieving equitable ECE access for both Lebanese children and Syrian child refugees and realizing sustainable development goal 4.2. Interviews were conducted with parents, teachers, head teachers policy makers and NGOs. The current paper examines the factors influencing creativity and innovation in public school kindergartens under the three concepts of search, reach and teach: a) The search for teaching beliefs, styles, and pedagogy available for ECE. b) Reach challenges faced including language barriers, different perceptions, and expectations of the roles of the teacher and students, and communication with parents. c) Teach skills in creating resilience in traumatized children, enhance skills about social cohesion, and change in the external and internal dialogue with parents. These three concepts will be described and integrated in a model for

organizational innovation at KGs public schools. The model presented, limitations and implications for practice are discussed.