UNDERSTANDING THE ROLE OF THE HOLLOW STATE IN EDUCATING REFUGEES

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Since the Second World War, the U.S. government has largely if not entirely ceded control of refugee resettlement and all associated social services to the private sector. Here we draw on the metaphor of the hollow state to synthesize the existing research on refugee students' academic supports both inside and outside of public schools to illustrate how the complexities of the refugee resettlement structure in the United States affects refugee children's long-term educational and social integration. We draw on two major hallmarks of the hollow state: the degree of separation of funds and joint production of services. Specifically, we show how entrusting the delivery of public goods (i.e., refugee student services) to the hollow state results in instability and uncertainty of service provision, lack of accountability and oversight, and little if any quality control for services and programs. We argue for a shift in federal policy to improve provision of services and introduce more governmental oversight. Ultimately, our findings suggest an alarming need for impartial scholarly assessment of refugees' educational programs both on the national level and globally where private sector's involvement in refugee services has increased dramatically. We conclude with recommendations for future research and policy.

Keywords: refugees, hollow state, the Refugee Act, volag, nonprofit

Historically, the United States has resettled the highest number of refugees[1] and asylees[2] in the world. In addition, more than half the refugees admitted by the United States in the past few years are under the age of 17 (UNHCR, n.d.). Research shows that education is the key to social and emotional healing for refugee and asylee children (McBrien, 2005) and critical to ensure their long-term socioeconomic wellbeing (Hanushek & Woessmann, 2015). Refugee students' education in U.S. schools exists at the intersection of federal policies regarding immigration (i.e., the Migration and Refugee Assistance Act of 1962, the Hart Cellar Act of 1964, and the Refugee

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[1]The United Nations' definition of a refugee is a person outside his or her country of nationality who is unable or unwilling to return to his or her country of nationality because of persecution or a well-founded fear of persecution on account of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion. In addition, in the United States, a refugee has been granted admission most often after waiting in a third country for their case to be approved.

[2]An asylee is a person who meets the U.N. refugee definition but has not yet been legally admitted into the United States; this asylum seeker is either already present in the United States or is seeking admission at a port of entry.

Act of 1980), education (Every Student Succeeds Act, 2015), and language acquisition (*Lau v. Nichols*, 1974). Most importantly, the Refugee Act of 1980 addresses all aspects of refugees' resettlement including education, housing, employment, and English learning. In fact, the Refugee Act of 1980 is one of the most expansive public-private partnership policy programs in the country (Ives et al., 2010). The private and, in most cases, faith-based and nonprofit agencies involved in U.S. refugee resettlement are referred to as Voluntary Agencies or volags[3].

For refugee youth enrolled in K-12 schools, devolution of authority, privatization, managerialism, and workfare legislated in the Refugee Act of 1980 (Benson, 2016) parallels the increasing privatization efforts of U.S. public education (Adamson & Galloway, 2019; Klees, 2020) and the increasing involvement of private organizations in providing educational supports to refugees worldwide (Menashy & Zakharia, 2017). We argue that the emergence of the hollow state—that is, the decision by the government (federal and state) to contract out to the private sector organizations to provide public services (Milward et al., 1993) for refugee students' educational integration—may prove counterproductive to the goal of facilitating the successful academic, professional, and civic integration of refugee youth in particular. By reviewing existing literature on educational services provided for refugee youth by private, nonprofit agencies, we demonstrate the implications of the hollow state on these programs' quality, sustainability, accountability, and effectiveness.

Purpose

Recently, education policy scholars have begun to address the tension in the privatization of public education (Adamson & Galloway, 2019; Klees, 2020), the influence of neoliberal ideas on refugee resettlement and education policy (Benson, 2016; Faw & Jabbar, 2020), and the way that immigration policies function as education policies (Callahan et al., 2020; Turner & Figueroa, 2019. In this article, we intend to bring one of the most vulnerable K-12 student populations—refugee youth—to the forefront of education and public policy discourse. Most educational service-related grants issued by the federal government are run by volags or resettlement agencies (Office of Refugee Resettlement [ORR], 2021), yet we know relatively little about how these organizations shape K-12 refugee students' educational integration. Instead, most research has examined how public schools shape refugee students' educational integration (Akay & Jaffe-Walter, 2021; Mendenhall et al., 2017; Sarr & Mosselson, 2010; Suárez-Orozco, 1989). Through this critical review of the literature, we document not only the involvement of the nonprofit, private sector in refugees' education but also call attention to the lack of critical examination, much less oversight, either by educational and other human services scholars or by the funding agencies themselves. We use the framework of the hollow state (Milward et al., 1993) to explore the systemic dependence of federal government on the private sector to address refugee resettlement and more specifically refugee students' educational integration.

In this article, we begin by providing an overview of refugee resettlement policy and its implications for refugees' educational integration after resettlement. We then present the hollow state framework and discuss its utility in the review of extant literature on refugee youth's educational services. In particular, we expand on two main tenets of the hollow state that may pose challenges to effective program implementation. After we detail the methods for our systematic review of the literature, we provide an overview organized around the key tenets of the hollow state. The review of the literature is followed by our discussion and conclusions.

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[3]We use the terms volag and resettlement agencies interchangeably depending on the literature under discussion.

Background and Overview: U.S. Refugee Policy

In the wake of the global refugee crisis that led up to and followed WWII, several U.S. Jewish, Christian, and Protestant organizations lobbied Congress to pass the 1948 Displaced Persons Act (Tempo, 2008). A pioneer to the official U.S. refugee resettlement policy, the Displaced Persons Act granted displaced Europeans a clear pathway to U.S. citizenship following the war. However, it soon became clear that the sheer number of displaced persons in Europe far exceeded the limits of the Displaced Persons Act. In 1953, President Eisenhower lobbied Congress to grant an additional 240,000 emergency visas to solve Europe's refugee crises (Tempo, 2008). That year, Congress passed the Refugee Relief Program that defined a refugee, for the U.S. context, as an individual escaping communism or communist rule (Tempo, 2008). The Refugee Relief Program laid the groundwork for policies to accommodate refugees fleeing the communist states of Cuba and Southeast Asia in the 1960s and 70s (Holman, 1996). It was not until the passage of the Refugee Act of 1980 that the United States adopted the United Nation's more inclusive definition of refugee (Immigration and Nationality Act, n.d.; Tempo, 2008) and more systematically handed the responsibility of resettlement over to the nonprofit sector. At present, refugees in the U.S. context are those who have been granted admission under the Refugee Act of 1980 and must apply for Legal Permanent Resident status after one year of their arrival (Homeland Security, n.d.). Despite the federal involvement in determining which individuals qualify as refugees, the U.S. government largely cedes oversight of their incorporation and resettlement to volags and private entities. Securely grounded in the private sector, volags use federal funds to develop, implement, and, at times, evaluate programs and policies to support refugee resettlement and refugee students' education.

Voluntary Agencies or Volags

The Refugee Act of 1980, the first dedicated refugee resettlement law, placed nonprofit and private organizations (i.e., volags) at the forefront of refugee resettlement (Tempo, 2008). In fact, the policy specifically employed the term "voluntary" to underscore the expectation for minimal state involvement (Howlett, 2000). Globally among the top resettlement countries, the United States is alone in its reliance on volags to determine refugee placement; that is, selection of the states and cities in which refugees will settle upon arrival (Van Selm, 2003; Yan, 2006). There is an active network of nine major volags in the United States, and although the United States takes pride in its separation of church and state, most of the major refugee resettlement agencies are religiously affiliated (Bose, 2018; Ives et al., 2010), which is explicit given their names (ORR, 2012b). Historically, religious organizations have been at the forefront of refugee advocacy and resettlement even before World War II (Bose, 2018; Eby et al., 2010; Ives et al., 2010; Tempo, 2008). This article reveals how despite the lengthy experience of resettlement, the services volags provide mostly remain out of the public policy debate or privatization debate and, therefore, have remained beyond public or academic scrutiny.

Volags have driven refugee resettlement globally and shaped refugee policies in the United States and abroad (Holman, 1996; Tempo, 2008). Notably, the work of volags extends beyond the initial resettlement phase to include cash and medical assistance programs as well as English language and employment skills training services upon arrival (Nawyn, 2010). Some research shows that refugees in the United States who are resettled and sponsored by religiously affiliated groups are employed in positions that offer more than minimum wage, healthcare, and retirement

benefits (Ives et al., 2010) and also experience better opportunities to integrate in the community (Eby et al., 2011). However, critics argue that the services provided by volags leave refugees unprepared and ill-equipped especially in geographically disperse regions with limited linguistic and racial diversity (Anders & Lester, 2013; Bose, 2014; Ives, 2007).

More research conducted on volags' quality of service provision suggests that the support systems and services they provide are inadequate to meet the needs of refugees. Most notably, Coughlan et al. (2016) found that Somali Bantu refugees resettled across five states in the United States faced numerous economic problems, including job dissatisfaction, problems at work, and challenges with poverty and dependence. Likewise, Anders and Lester (2013) identified the lack of access to adequate job and English language training as drivers of the economic subjugation experienced by refugees following resettlement. Further, Anders and Lester found area schools and hospitals ill-prepared to cater to the needs of refugees and that the resettlement agency did little to provide support that the refugees needed. In studying the travel behaviors, preferences, and needs of the recently arrived refugees in a small city in Vermont, Bose (2014) found a conflict between the preferences of the resettlement agencies and the needs of the refugees as the resettlement agencies chose noncentral residential locations for the refugees thereby resulting in refugees' limited ability to access healthcare, education, and employment. This among other disconnects suggests that volags' long-term and historic involvement in refugee resettlement may not always result in optimal service provision. In examining the relegation of refugee resettlement to the hollow state, we observe that as most services are offered by private groups and most programs are left to self-evaluation, there is little real understanding of program effectiveness. Therefore, we argue for a more critical evaluation for all services provided to refugees through the resettlement agencies, which may open doors for better and improved services over time.

Volag Involvement in Refugee Education K-12

The role of volags is especially salient in refugee youths' integration as their education occurs at the nexus of the public and private sectors on two aspects of their identity: their immigrant (i.e., refugee policy) and K-12 linguistic status (i.e., EL[4] language education policy). U.S. schools offer refugee students a critical venue for integration in the host society (Newcomer et al., 2020) and long-term socioeconomic stability (Hanushek & Woessmann, 2015). Ideally, refugee youth should find a system that is prepared to educate them; however, research suggests that schools are often unable to meet refugee students' needs in ways that promote their integration and long-term socioeconomic stability (Strekalova-Hughes, 2017). As a result, U.S. schools often seek out external programs, grants, and volunteers (Anders, 2012; Koyama & Chang, 2019; McBrien, 2011) in order to offer additional support for refugee youth. The interactions between the public and private sectors related to refugee students' education and the results of these efforts are relatively understudied. The hollow state framework offers a lens through which to examine refugee students' educational experiences.

Theoretical Framework: Understanding Refugee Education in a Hollow State

Scholars have used the hollow state as a metaphor to describe the increasing reliance of the public sector on the private to deliver taxpayer-funded goods and services such as housing, education,

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[4]English Learner (EL) students are those bilingual youth identified by the K-12 school system as requiring linguistic support services to successfully engage in the core academic content.

and health care (Milward, 1996, 2012). In 1993, Milward et al. borrowed the concept of "the Hollow Corporation" from a *Business Week* cover story. They coined the term "the hollow state" to capture recent developments in the local delivery of health and human services in the United States. Here, the word hollow implies a small, empty headquarter-like center of command the purpose of which is not to produce services or goods but rather to arrange contracts. The metaphor of the hollow state was meant to effectively capture the complexities that are introduced when governments rely on and contract with private entities for the delivery of public goods (Milward et al., 1993). For the first time in 1993, Milward et al. employed this metaphor in their study of a community mental health system in a western U.S. city where the state or county funded nonprofit, private entities to provide client services. Privatization and deregulation of the public sector began in the 1980s (Sclar, 2001; Terry, 2005), serving to exacerbate existing governmental mistrust through decreased resources and has continued to flourish well into the 21st century (Feigenbaum et al., 1998; Terry, 2005). Ongoing, increasing privatization and deregulation forced federal, state, and local governments to reduce their direct involvement in service provision while still maintaining control over the economy and society (Peters, 1994). Delegating responsibility for service provision outside of the governmental oversight achieves two main goals: hiding the true costs of programs from taxpayers and shifting accountability for any program content or service provision away from the governmental funding agency (Peters, 1994).

Advocates for the privatization of public goods argue that competition results in better services or programs (Adamson & Galloway, 2019; Sclar, 2001). The same argument has been used by proponents of school choice (Wohlstetter et al., 2013); yet, research on school choice shows no improvements in student outcomes in public or charter schools (Bettinger, 2005). Opponents of charter schools and voucher programs point to the research documenting the resulting accountability crisis (Ladd, 2019) and increased racial and economic segregation of students (Adamson & Galloway, 2019), two phenomena that further weaken an already strained public education system. The impact of the privatization of refugee educational support programs via the hollow state has yet to face any such empirical scrutiny. One goal of this review of the literature is to examine whether and how evaluation of the services implemented by the hollow state occurs especially when those services are meant for vulnerable and marginalized populations.

The Hollow State

The hollow state plays a key role in providing many public services on behalf of the government in countries all over the world. Hollow state service provision range from mental health (Milward & Provan, 2003) to affordable housing projects (Fredericksen & London, 2000), social programs, and welfare (Kissane, 2012; Michel, 1997). Not only does the federal government relinquish service delivery to private entities but also state and city governments (Milward & Provan, 1993). However, this reliance on the private sector lends to several issues not the least of which include misalignment of goals, lack of organizational capacity to handle the government projects, and instability over time (Fredericksen & London, 2000; Milward & Provan, 2000). In particular, two hallmarks of the hollow state—the separation between funding sources and their application and the joint production of services by public-private partnerships and networks (Milward; 2014; Milward & Provan, 2003)—both tend to exacerbate the challenges noted above.

Degree of Separation of Funds

One defining characteristic of the hollow state is the degree of separation between sources of funds and beneficiary of services; research has found that in the presence of a hollow state, often no services are provided until the third or fourth layer (Milward & Provan, 2000). Here layers indicate the links or actors through whom the funding passes until it finally reaches the last layer, the recipient of services. "The more links in the funding chain, the more hollow the state" (Milward, 2014, p. 72); with each added link, governmental accountability for the quality of the services decreases. The complex and layered funding structure with its numerous organizations and service providers leaves it open to questions of accountability, validity, and sustainability of the programs and services.

Dependency on Networks

Another characteristic of the hollow state qualifier is its dependence on the joint production of services where networks and public-private partnerships, rather than individual institutions or agencies, provide services (Milward; 2014; Milward & Provan, 2003). Network dependence highlights a main difference between public/government and hollow state service provision. The hollow state has very few command and control mechanisms and public managers find themselves involved in "arranging networks" rather than benefitting from existing bureaucratic mechanisms to implement policy (Milward & Provan, 2000). Notably, the hollow state's reliance on networks can be a weakness as well as a strength, which we will explore in the subsequent review of the refugee education literature.

Prevalence of Public-Private Partnerships

The final and perhaps most important defining characteristic of the hollow state is the prevalence of public-private partnerships. Reliance on public-private partnerships is especially evident in community-level policy implementation. Saidel (1989) found that government agencies targeted community-based organizations for public service delivery for three reasons:

> First, the non-profit [*sic*] organizations were capable of relatively rapid implementation. Second, the nonprofit organizations were able to customize programs to address local conditions. Third, nonprofit organizations could deliver services to clientele who might not be reachable through direct public delivery. (Fredericksen & London, 2000, p. 232)

We argue that community-based nongovernmental organizations or community development organizations may also be supporting schools and school districts in refugee students' academic as well as social integration. In the hollow state, very often the most promising avenues of action do not involve the state; while the state is only one of many possible means of achieving political change, it is not necessarily the most effective one (Delfeld, 2014). Often, communities and community-based organizations are forced to take the actions themselves, which they can no longer rely on the government to take or fund. The research reviewed in this article documents some of the partnerships established by communities and schools in response to acute needs.

In particular, refugee resettlement processes in the United States are susceptible to the challenges presented by the hollow state. In this article, we explore how refugee students'

educational experiences may be shaped by the prevalence of the private sector not only during resettlement but also via schools and schooling that is the primary context for refugees' integration.

Method

To start searching for the relevant literature for this review, we undertook a systematic search. We began the search for literature relevant to the framework of hollow state and refugee education in January 2020, limiting it to peer-reviewed material published between January 1980 to mark the onset of the Refugee Act and 2020. Due to the multidisciplinary approach often used by organizations to approach refugee education, we used the following databases to ensure inclusivity: Education Resources Information Center, Academic Search Complete, Education Source, Educational Administration Abstracts, APA PsycInfo, and SocINDEX. The review began by searching the literature for terms including "education or programs or mentor* or tutor*," "refugee or asylees," and "non-profit or resettlement organizations or community-based organizations."

  The initial search using the terms described above yielded 790 articles 235 of which were automatically excluded because they were duplicates. The initial screening of abstracts was done to review the remaining 555 articles that resulted in exclusion of 481 articles because their focus was not on the education of refugees. The remaining 74 articles were screened in full and prompted us to include nine additional peer-reviewed articles and one book chapter for full examination. In total, 83 articles and one book chapter were screened in full. This final screen led us to excluding 64 articles based on the criteria given in Table 1.

Table 1

Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

Criteria	Included	Excluded
Language	Study is published in English	Study is not published in English
Geographical Location	Study is about a program implemented in mainland USA	Study is about a program implemented outside of USA
Educational Focus	Study discusses a program of academic nature for K-12 students	Study does not discuss a program of academic nature for K-12 students
Participants	Study includes refugee children who attend K-12 or their parents	Study does not include refugee children or their parents
Hollow State Involvement	Study discusses a program implemented by nonprofit or private sector organizations	Study does not discuss a program implemented by nonprofit or private sector organizations

The flowchart in Figure 1 details the selection process. In total, the analytic sample included 20 peer-reviewed studies. In the sections that follow, we synthesize refugee education research findings around three key themes: degree of separation of funds, dependency on networks, and prevalence of public-private partnerships.

Figure 1

Selection Process for Peer-Reviewed Studies
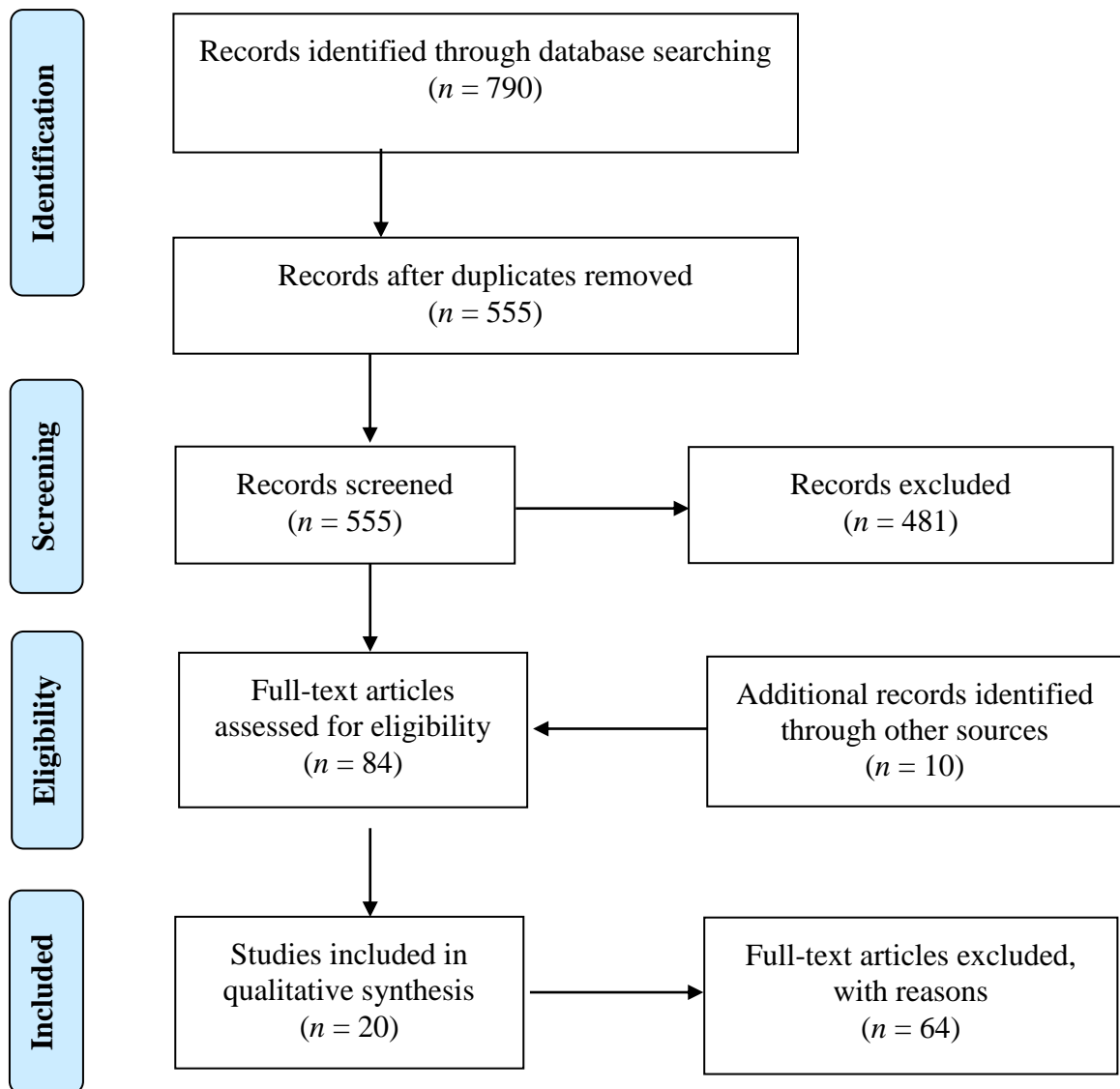
Note. Adapted from Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses diagram of selection process (Page et al., 2021)

Review of the Research: Refugee Education in the Hollow State

The studies we synthesize call attention to the ways in which public schools rely on private entities to support refugee students in ways that they are neither funded nor equipped to do. Notably, refugee resettlement agencies' involvement in some of the programs calls attention to the salience of the Refugee Act of 1980 in the educational experiences of refugees. The literature is organized to reflect the aspects of refugee education programs that align with the characteristics of the hollow state.

Degree of Separation of Funds: The Refugee Act

The Refugee Act of 1980 illustrates how policy passed in the era of privatization reflects a hollow state; it not only delegates responsibilities of resettlement to volags but also disguises the true costs and eludes accountability of the program by adding layers of organizations and actors. The Refugee Act of 1980 introduced grants that were made available for the public and private sectors to support all types of refugees, including older populations, school-aged children, adult wage earners, and female refugees (ORR, 2012c). Among the grants most relevant to this inquiry is the Refugee School Impact Grant, allocated to the states and state-alternative programs "to support impacted school districts with the funds necessary to pay for activities that will lead to the effective integration and education of refugee children" (ORR, 2012c, p. 1). By including a provision that grants should cover "specialized approaches suited for newly arriving ORR-served populations, such as cultural orientation, refugee parents/teacher meetings, and school orientation" (Holman, 1996; ORR, 2016, p. 1), the federal agency has determined the general content of the programs while delegating the actual program and provision of services to the contenders for the grants (Peters, 1994).

   Although meant for refugee students enrolled in public schools, the main beneficiaries of the Refugee School Impact Grant are the volags and individual states (ORR, 2012a). As both entities lack the context and resources to meet the varied and specialized needs of the refugee populations, they subcontract with local or community-based organizations to provide related services (Bose, 2018). Subcontracting adds additional layers between the funding source (i.e., the federal government) and the beneficiaries of services (i.e., the refugees). Other programs administered by the ORR such as the Refugee Social Services Program are meant to support integration and economic independence of the refugees (ORR, 2012c). Up to 15% of these funds are set aside annually to be issued on a competitive basis only to nonprofits and other privately-run organizations (Holman, 1996) that subcontract or partner with local or community-based organizations to deliver those services (Bose, 2018; Nawyn, 2010). This subsequent subcontracting further separates the funding source from service beneficiaries. Budget allocations such as these demonstrate the close involvement of the private sector in the resettlement process and also highlight the responsibility they shoulder in the process.

Degree of Separation of Funds: Refugee Education

Most refugee education research is either unclear or vague about the programs' funding source(s) thus leaving the reader to speculate about potential conflicts of interest. Additionally, none of the studies reviewed mentioned the Refugee School Impact Grant, distributed by the ORR. The programs implemented through Refugee School Impact Grant are usually monitored and evaluated

by the grantee whether it is a state refugee office or a volag (CTOR, n.d.; STOR, n.d.). We limited article inclusion to those that directly mention resettlement agency involvement, an indicator that the federal or state government is providing at least some funding for the programs.

      In their qualitative study of an Arizona school district's mentor program, Koyama and Ghosh (2018) discussed an afterschool academic program for refugee youth implemented by a faith-based resettlement agency for which one of the authors served on the program advisory council. Further review of the literature will show that conflict of interest, such as this one, in studies about refugees' educational programs is a common occurrence. The program offered regular one-on-one or small group tutoring across all subjects, including mathematics, English, the sciences, economics, and history, to 40–60 middle and high school refugee students. Similarly, Mendenhall and Barlett (2018) discussed the academic support provided to refugee students in New York by the International Rescue Committee[5], a resettlement agency that sponsored and organized afterschool support programs as well as summer camps funded by grants from the ORR, Department of Health & Human Services (International Rescue Committee, n.d.). Mendenhall and Barlett recommended that schools could establish partnerships with afterschool programs such as the ones offered by the International Rescue Committee in New York to better support their refugee students. In addition, the authors recommended that schools establish their own afterschool programs, modeled after the International Rescue Committee's programs for refugee students (Mendenhall & Barlett, 2018). However, we found in this review of the research that schools rarely establish such programs independently; whether this is due to lack of will, human resources, or funding, we do not know. We do suggest that recommendations like those laid forth by Mendenhall and Barlett would benefit from the inclusions of potential ways for schools to fund such programs. Acknowledging where the International Rescue Committee receives the funds necessary to implement afterschool programs could help schools access those funding channels independently if they are, in fact, accessible to them.

      In their work as volunteer tutors at an afterschool program for refugee students run by a nonprofit refugee resettlement organization in Jacksonville, Florida, Cancino and Cruz (2019) discussed how volunteers used bibliotherapy[6] to help students uncover trauma and ultimately heal from traumatic experiences. The case study is based on one student's learning experience in the program; the authors suggested that the bibliotherapy helped this student write about her traumatic experiences. Although well-intentioned, the authors casted doubts on the veracity of the program's success as they designed, implemented, and evaluated the program. Further, their work highlights the experimental nature of the afterschool programs implemented by resettlement agencies and the liberty that scholars and volunteers may exercise over program content. In fact, their work brings to light additional questions such as the following: (a) who determines the content of afterschool programs for refugees? (b) did the researchers purchase the necessary program supplies out of pocket? and (c) were the researchers subcontracted (paid) by the resettlement agency to implement this program? The answers to these questions and others are necessary not only to establish program accountability but also to gauge the validity of the authors' findings. Not surprisingly, the authors leave these questions unaddressed.

      On the other hand, McBrien (2011) studied a parent liaison program implemented by Help for Refugee Families, a resettlement agency. Help for Refugee Families also offered after-school

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[5]An internationally recognized nonprofit, the IRC is one of the nine major resettlement agencies actively involved in refugee resettlement (ORR, 2012b).

[6]Bibliotherapy can be defined as the guided reading of written materials in gaining understanding or solving problems relevant to the person's therapeutic needs (Başari et al., 2018).

tutoring and summer camps for the children and English language and computer training for refugee mothers. However, in her study, McBrien (2011) noted that Help for Refugee Families received nongovernmental funding to implement part of these programs, providing evidence regarding not only program resources but also how resettlement agencies collaborate with other nongovernmental entities to provide services to their refugee families.

Other programs were indirectly sponsored by the resettlement organizations. For example, Rosenthal (2015) described a community-college partnership in the Northeast United States with the locally run Refugee and Immigrant Support Services at Emmaus Center that ran an afterschool program for 75 refugee children in the grades K-8. Refugee and Immigrant Support Services at Emmaus works in partnership with United Methodist Church of Emmaus and the U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants (RISSE, n.d.), one of the nine major refugee resettlement agencies in the United States. The U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants (USCRI, n.d.) also receives funding from the ORR to implement programs to support refugee communities. Brown and Grinter (2016) implemented a tech initiative titled Rivertran in collaboration with another resettlement agency to support parental involvement in schools via interpretation. Similarly, Koyama and Bazuka (2017) discussed a program implemented by Wayside's English Language Learner, an organization supporting refugee parents' involvement in schools that depended on volunteers from the community as well as various resettlement agencies. However, the extent of involvement of the resettlement agencies in this program and their sources of funding remained unclear. This is alarming for several reasons the most important being accountability and transparency. The involvement of multiple agencies at different levels obscures the funding source and, thus, the accountability of the programs.

Furthermore, McBrien and Ford (2012) discussed a unique liaison program that was implemented by the resettlement agency Refugee Family Services (RFS) in the Southeastern United States. In addition to resettling refugees, RFS also focused on refugees' integration in the United States after the initial resettlement period was over. The program hired women liaisons from ethnic and linguistic backgrounds that matched with the newly arrived refugees in the community. These liaisons worked with refugee families to help them understand how schools work in the United States and translate for them when needed. RFS partnered with local schools, and the liaisons were sent to schools to provide cultural orientations to enable the teachers with understanding their refugee families better. The program became so popular that RFS had to establish a waiting list of schools that wanted to use RFS's services with their refugee populations. Although very successful, some teachers expressed concerns over the reduction of RFS involvement in their schools as the demand of RFS's services increased locally (McBrien & Ford, 2012). The authors also discovered that some schools in the area with significant number of refugee enrollment did not seek RFS for help. This suggests instability that comes with the hollow state's way of service provision; it is unstable over time and its continuity depends on more than one entity involved (Klijn, 2002; Milward & Provan, 2003).

The programs discussed represent only a handful of educational programs currently being implemented across the United States by resettlement agencies for refugee students. It appears that refugee resettlement agencies are not only the first avenues of adult refugees' social and economic integration but also critical to refugee children's academic and social integration. Resettlement agencies' direct involvement is indicative of the federal and state funding available to them and demonstrates the various layers that exist between the funding source and its recipients. In almost all cases reviewed, we identified at least three layers between the federal or state government funding source and the refugee service recipients. Layers included resettlement agencies (Help for

Refugee Families, U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants, International Rescue Committee) as well as local subcontractors or organizations (Hub, Refugee and Immigrant Support Services at Emmaus, Wayside's English Language Learner, and Rivertran), marking the distance between the government agency and the service recipient. Since the funding entity, federal government, is layers away from the program implementation, the accountability of the programs remains ambiguous.

Dependency on Networks: The Refugee Act

Refugee education is also defined by the joint production of services either through public-private partnerships or networks, another hallmark of the hollow state. Networks may enable public managers to focus on the scope and scale of the task without having to consider the negatives; that is, redundancy and rising costs (Milward & Provan, 2000). For example, the Refugee Act of 1980 employs a network of nine major resettlement organizations to carry out the resettlement work across the United States (Bose, 2014; Ives et al., 2010). These nongovernmental stakeholders frequently meet at the ORR to assign refugees to states and localities (Van Selm, 2003), and in doing so, they remove not only the resettlement responsibilities but also their associated additional costs from the ORR. In addition, resettlement agencies depend on large, local volunteer networks and community organizations to assist with refugee integration (Bose, 2018), highlighting the complexities introduced by policy implementation via networks.

Milward and Provan (2003) argued that networks are a relatively weaker form of social action because they need to coordinate for joint production, which makes service provision unlikely because networks are inherently unstable over time. Additionally, Klijn (2002) suggested that traditional sequential management does not work well when networks carry out policy and program implementation as decision making is complicated when various actors all experience a problem in different ways and prioritize or implement unique solutions. Similarly, not all actors may be equally invested in decision making resulting in a blockage or stagnation of tasks across time (Klijn, 2002). In the case of refugees, which is an extremely vulnerable population, such weak actions on behalf of the government make social adjustment for them difficult not only by affecting their children's socialization but also by shaping their educational integration and, thus, their socioeconomic futures in the United States.

Dependency on Networks: Refugee Education

Networks are critical to service provision when it comes to refugee education. The federal government's funding structure through grants further enables and enhances the role of networks. Refugee resettlement offices in most states also play a limited role in the resettlement process by contracting out tasks and delivery of services to nongovernmental organizations (Bose, 2014). Therefore, in most cases, even when federal grants (e.g., Refugee School Impact Grant) are awarded to states, the funds eventually find their way to the local privately-run, nonprofit organizations (ORR, 2012a). Local nongovernmental organizations or community organizations implement these programs in partnership with local or national resettlement organizations (Bose, 2018) to help the local school districts educate the refugees.

In a qualitative study, Koyama and Chang (2019) explored how a network comprised of school, district, community organization, and resettlement agency actors all made sense of and enacted state and federal policies relevant to refugee students. The authors studied an afterschool

program, the Hub, affiliated with a faith-based resettlement organization that worked in partnership with a local school district where the majority of students served were refugees. In fact, one of the authors was closely involved in implementation of a refugee mentors' program by the school district that hosted the Hub. Koyama and Ghosh (2018) found evidence of territorial behavior that limited student success. Specifically, district-appointed mentors for refugee students asked their students not to go to the Hub for additional help with homework or college applications possibly due to the intense documentation of time and services required by the district. The authors found that many school-district appointed mentors were pressured to justify the existence of their job and the continuation of funds by documenting "contact hours" (Koyama & Chang, 2019, p. 151). However, Koyama and Chang (2019) also argued that the mentors' territorial behavior prevented the refugee students from accessing valuable resources available to them. This territorialism hints at the instability that is introduced when programs or services are jointly produced. Individual actors represented several institutions often making services either inaccessible (i.e., the Hub) or unstable over time (i.e., high turnover of district mentors). This further highlights the reason why schools are hesitant to implement their own educational programs for refugees.

Likewise, Rosenthal's (2015) study of an afterschool program also highlights how public-private partnerships often involve multiple institutions with different goals and agendas. Here, St. Rose's College partnered with the Refugee and Immigrant Support Services at Emmaus Center, which in turn partnered with the United Methodist Church of Emmaus and the U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants (one of the major U.S. resettlement organizations) to provide services to refugee families, including an afterschool homework program. In a study of the Refugee and Immigrant Support Services at Emmaus program's effectiveness, Rosenthal (2015) found that 50% of the refugee student participants improved at least one reading level and 15% improved 4–6 reading levels; the author was also closely involved with the afterschool program's implementation, suggesting a potential conflict of interest. Similarly, Lepore (2015)—an academic researcher—in association with a local school district, Jewish Family and Children Services (a volag), Catholic Charities (a volag), The Greater Pittsburgh Literacy Council, Lutheran Family Services (a volag), and others developed Project Liberty and subsequently published findings as to its efficacy. While multiple agencies coalesce via a network, evaluation of the effectiveness of their programs largely remains in the hands of academics and researchers with close ties to the programs, posing an additional conflict of interest.

When discussing the shortcomings of public schools in reaching refugee communities, research has shown that many refugee or immigrant parents are reluctant to participate due to the language barrier that they experience in schools (Kim, 2009; Rah et al., 2009). Koyama and Bazuka (2017) studied a program implemented by an organization titled Wayside's English Language Learner in the neighborhood of Wayside, located in the Northeastern United States. Wayside's English Language Learner was headed by a network of volunteers from a resettlement agency, a university, a local school district, and several community organizations. Wayside's English Language Learner sponsored trainings for schoolteachers and parents where the trainers from worked as "cultural brokers" between the refugees and the schools. The study found that when parents felt supported by the school and the community organization, they took part in decision making in schools, challenged place-taking practices that restricted their involvement, and negotiated alternative positions for themselves and often for their children (Koyama & Bazuka, 2017). However, as previously noted, networks bring instability in service provision;

Koyama and Bazuka mentioned that Wayside's English Language Learner was disbanded in 2014 when several board members moved out of Wayside or became seriously ill.

For implementation of a program at the local level, involvement of community-based organizations was prevalent in the literature. Symons and Ponzio (2019) examined the implementation and outcomes of a summer camp program titled Gaining Learning Opportunities through Better English sponsored by a nonprofit community-based organization titled Hope Resource Center (HRC). HRC is also involved in supporting and advocating for refugees and immigrants, providing year-round English language development classes for adult refugees and sponsoring K-12 afterschool programs. The summer camp program was designed and implemented in collaboration with the local school district each year. The goal of the program was to provide opportunities for English language development to middle and high school newcomer students. The program focused on three main strands of curriculum, and each strand was sponsored by a different local organization. One of the strands was sponsored by a local coalition of business leaders that supports small business startups. The involvement of private and for-profit entities raises questions of ethics of motivation behind their involvement (Zakharia & Menashy, 2018), and this article fails to address those concerns. The curriculum on English language development in the summer camp was provided by the school district. However, Symons and Ponzio (2019) discussed that in 2017, the year they studied the program, HRC did not collaborate with the local school district. It allowed HRC to focus on "promoting students' learning of English through providing meaningful experiences in which students could learn about their community and the resources available in it; make new friends; and develop confidence by taking risks, making mistakes, and trying again" (Symons & Ponzio, 2019, p. 104). It is an interesting observation because it points toward the fact that the school sponsored curriculum may have hindered HRC's ability to achieve those things. It also reiterates the apparent experimental nature of afterschool programs for refugees where involvement of stakeholders may be dictating the curriculum for programs.

Additional research indirectly explored the programs that fall under the hollow state's involvement in educating refugees. For example, Herrenkohl et al. (2019) studied how STEM undergraduates worked as mentors to low-income refugee and immigrant youth of color in an afterschool program. The program titled STUDIO: Build Our World was the result of a partnership between the University of Washington and a multiservice community-based organization and was funded by the National Science Foundation and the National Library of Health (STUDIO, n.d.). The research found that mentors were surprised to see the kinds of learning that took place in the sessions where refugee youth took control of their learning and expressed their excitement because the learning processes differed from their experiences at school (Herrenkohl et al., 2019). The researchers also noted that collaboration with community-based organizations was key in the successful implementation of this program (STUDIO, n.d.), which hints toward the important role that community-based organizations may play in shaping the educational programs for refugees.

Another way in which organizations came together to support refugee parents was through implementing tech-based initiatives. Brown and Grinter (2016) studied the implementation of a human-in-the-loop interpretation tool titled Rivertran in a southern state of the United States. This program was designed by the researchers and was implemented in collaboration with a refugee resettlement agency. It provided support to the new refugee parents in the United States and aimed to help parents approach schools without worrying about the availability of an interpreter for their appointment. The study found that parents felt more confident with this tool and asked for what they needed more freely. However, the study was unsure of the quality of interpretation that the

tool provided (Brown & Grinter, 2016). Furthermore, the program was available for refugee parents to be used only within the first 90 days of their arrival. This is an example of a network jointly producing interpretation services for refugee parents and also shows the instability of the program both in terms of quality and availability.

All of these examples demonstrate the kinds of academic learning and support that refugee students are undertaking outside of schools through programs and partnerships between school districts, colleges and universities, faith-based organizations, and other private organizations. Overall, the programs demonstrate the variety of ways through which networks in the hollow state are involved in supporting the refugee students academically and also address the instability they bring to program implementation.

Prevalence of Public-Private Partnerships: The Refugee Act

In the United States, the government plays a limited role in refugee resettlement by contracting out its production capability; instead, it retains a systems integration function limited to negotiating, monitoring, and evaluating contracts (Milward & Provan, 2000). Despite running the largest refugee resettlement program in the world, the U.S. ORR employs only 30 people, indicative of the delegation of tasks to external organizations (Van Selm, 2003). In the following section, we demonstrate that schools are also often preferring to partner with the private sector and delegate the task of supporting the unique needs of their refugee students over to the private entities.

The dependency of school districts on public-private partnerships to provide services to refugee students may be a consequence of the federal government's excessive requirements from schools. A small number of school districts have applied and gotten approved for the Refugee School Impact Grant (Bridging Refugee Youth and Children Services, n.d.); however, this practice does not seem to be prevalent among most school districts. This may be due to the ponderous compliance related requirements that may involve extensive paperwork (Koyama & Ghosh, 2018) imposed on the school district by the federal government. Therefore, school districts may avoid securing the grant themselves but rely on other nongovernmental organizations, community-based organizations, and private sector organizations to provide these services in their communities.

Beside the advocacy element of community-based organizations or nonprofits, research also shows that private organizations often bend or ignore government standards and expectations while implementing policy (Fredericksen & London, 2000; Klofft, 2019). Fredericksen and London studied the nonprofits involved in building affordable housing units in the Southwest and found that most did not have conflict-of-interest policies in place and board members' selections often represented interests from real estate and finance. This article questions the accountability mechanisms present for the private sector when they implement educational programs in collaboration with or contracted by government agencies and schools or school districts.

Prevalence of Public-Private Partnerships: Refugee Education

In this section, we highlight the programs that were implemented in the form of a public-private partnership and services that were produced as contracted between actors from those entities. In her book *Human Rights and the Hollow State*, Delfeld (2014) stated, "the hollow state develops because people behave in accordance with what they think '*should*' happen" (p. 26). Therefore, some of the programs discussed below will include researchers or individuals as the private entity,

which provides further evidence that involvement of the hollow state exists beyond the federal, state, or local government level.

The following is an example of a school community coming together to take action as needed. Dwyer and McCloskey (2013) implemented a soccer summer camp where refugee students enrolled for the summer and worked on their English literacy skills. The program was started because teachers felt that the summer break may revert the progress their refugee students had made over the year. The program was funded by private donors from the community and helped students play soccer and learn English. The school provided the space, teachers volunteered their time to run the program, and community members volunteered to support the program overall. Ryu et al. (2019) examined a program implemented by a Burmese community development organization in partnership with the local high school. The community organization created space for the high school students, most of them were Burmese refugees, to engage with STEM learning and explore their cultural identities. The researchers were involved with the program implementation and their research found that the afterschool program helped refugee students utilize their place-based ethnic practices and knowledge while learning science (Ryu et al., 2019). These initiatives are courageous and praiseworthy but beg the question of sustainability and ethics of motivation given the private funding aspect of the programs.

Harper (2017) privately implemented an afterschool science program in partnership with a local elementary school. The elementary school had a high population of newly arrived Karen refugees, and the researcher offered to design and implement a science program with dual language instruction: Karen and English. The program implementation was successful, and the findings suggested that science learning embedded within a cross-cultural learning community can empower refugees to construct their own hybrid cultural knowledge and use that knowledge to engage in a meaningful way with science (Harper, 2017). Similarly, Anders (2012) provided a postcritical ethnography of her own involvement as an in-class volunteer to support newly arrived Burundian refugees with English and math in a public-school classroom. Additionally, the researcher in collaboration with the school helped coordinate neighborhood and community forums that addressed Burundian parents' concerns about the schools. Furthermore, Anders (2012) with the help of a team of graduate students and a translator developed guides in Kirundi about public schools to help the refugee parents navigate the expectations of the school system alongside their children. Another example of the researcher as participant or enactor of the program, Daniel (2019) examined how an afterschool writing workshop may generate new understandings about refugee identities. The workshop was designed by the researcher to be offered within an existing afterschool academic program titled Odyssey. Odyssey was sponsored by a community-based organization that supported refugee youth in a local high school and helped refugees with homework and college applications (Daniel & Zybina, 2019). The study found that the writing program empowered youth to discuss and write about their futures in postsecondary education while developing reading and writing skills (Daniel, 2019). All of these initiatives are commendable, but the effectiveness or outcomes of the programs remain questionable because of the nonfinancial conflicts of interest posed by the researchers' role in the development or implementation of the programs.

The development of programs that support integration of refugee parents into a school's community are crucial to the academic and social success of refugee children (Isik-Ercan, 2012). Rah et al. (2009) studied schools in Wisconsin that sought help from the community organizations to facilitate and encourage Hmong refugee parental involvement in their schools. The program was funded by a federal grant and was collaboratively run by leaders from the school, the local

Hmong community, and the community-based organization (Rah, 2013). Rah et al. (2009) found that when community organizations supported schools in engaging parents, parents reported positive change in their relationship with the schools. This provides further evidence that the involvement of the hollow state is not solely dependent on the federal or state level (Milward & Provan, 1993); local governments, stakeholders at the community level, and community members also play a part in deciding whether or not to invite the hollow state for service delivery.

The research reviewed to this point highlights some interesting dynamics within the programs that may raise questions of accountability and ethics. For example, faith-based organizations are closely involved in the implementation of educational programs and most researchers reporting on such programs are involved with the programs in various capacities thereby likely making complete objectivity difficult to attain. Thus, the synthesis presented here cannot speak to the quality, effectiveness, and partiality of the programs being implemented. Ultimately, this presents a major limitation to our work as well as to refugee education research more broadly. The studies we synthesize next further highlight the ways in which public schools rely on private entities to support refugee students in ways that they are neither funded nor equipped to do. Notably, refugee resettlement agencies' involvement in some of the programs illuminates the salience of the Refugee Act of 1980 in the educational experiences of refugees while also showing how the government has systematically abdicated responsibility for refugee education to philanthropy and the private sector. The literature already discussed raises questions regarding the effectiveness and quality of the programs being implemented and also the lack of attention being paid to the fiscal accountability for the private organizations involved.

Discussion

Three key findings emerged in this critical review of the research. First, refugee youth's educational experiences, specifically in the United States, are predominantly shaped by nonprofit, private sector entities in and outside of schools. Second, the involvement of the hollow state in educational program implementation for refugee youth not only presents challenges to establishing clear accountability but also proves detrimental to the sustainability of the programs. Third, and finally, there is a need for the research community to guard against conflicts of interest and to carefully consider its own role while examining and arguing for the programs it has developed or implemented.

Public-Private Partnerships

The nonprofit and private sectors have long shaped refugee students' experiences, and the programs studied in this review represent a small percentage of those implemented nationally in a given year. This review provides examples from several programs outlining who is involved and in what ways. We learned that nonprofit resettlement and community-based organizations often partner with schools and districts to support the academic growth of their refugee students. As both Koyama and Ghosh (2018) and McBrien and Ford (2012) noted, when nonprofits establish these partnerships, the likelihood of successful program implementation increases. Notably, if educators and educational liaisons in the districts were unaware or skeptical of the services being provided by private organizations, refugee students were either unlikely or unable to access these programs. However, in most cases, schools were not passive recipients of these services but rather actively sought out partnerships as their needs emerged (Dwyer & McCloskey, 2013; Ryu et al., 2019). So

far, education scholars have mostly explored the struggles of refugee children and their teachers in schools while other researchers have covered how nonprofit, community-based organizations implement programs to facilitate refugee children's educational integration. By focusing on programs implemented by nonschool entities, our inquiry highlights how schools and communities across the country strive to ensure the success of refugee youth in schools. It further highlights the limitations of schools, as noted in existing research, when it comes to effectively meeting the needs of diverse and vulnerable refugee student populations (McBrien, 2005; Strekalova-Hughes, 2017).

Accountability and Sustainability

The presence of the hollow state is further realized when resettlement agencies implement federally-funded programs for refugee youth. In a service model fostered by the hollow state, refugees as service recipients are several organizational layers away from the funding entity (i.e., the federal government). There is a need for more inquiry into who is accountable for successful quality implementation of the programs; is it the funding entity, the main recipients of the Refugee School Impact Grant as mentioned on the ORR's website, or the community-based organizations? Most research articles focused on the community-based organizations, but none mentioned accountability in their discussion. Furthermore, when researchers participate in the design and implementation of refugee youth's educational programs, we argue that they comprise an additional layer between funder and the recipients that further obscures program accountability.

In addition, our inquiry revealed that the involvement of multiple networks or partnerships with diverse goals and expectations to support refugee students' education results in instability of services over time. Specifically, Symons and Ponzio (2019) showed how with the involvement of each new entity, the program's structure, curriculum, and implementation changed. Koyama and Bazuka (2017) also discussed how a successful network-based program disbanded when some members in the network could no longer participate in service delivery. Nearly two decades ago, Milward and Provan (2003) foreshadowed this challenge, warning that the network-based program and policy implementation could result in unsustainable and weaker initiatives (Fredericksen & London, 2000). Scholars who research and design refugee education programs must carefully consider what accountability could, if not should, look like and who or what entity will be responsible for measuring it. Without external evaluation and clear accountability measures, the field knows little about actual program effectiveness much less whether or not and how different programs help meet the goals of refugees' education. Since the origins of refugees resettled in the United States change from year to year (Adida et al., 2019; Chao, 2019; Krogstad, 2019), variation in their needs must be considered while designing educational programs for refugee children.

Conflict of Interest

Further complicating the matter, many of the researchers studying the nonprofit-run programs are themselves closely involved with either program design or implementation. While most researchers acknowledged the volunteer nature of their work with these programs, they avoided acknowledging any potential conflict of interest when detailing program effectiveness. As the prevalence of the hollow state in refugee student education in the United States is neither a recent nor, as this article reveals, rare occurrence, there is a need for more impartial research to examine the outcomes and effectiveness of such programs. Researchers working with vulnerable populations such as refugees must consider their own contributions and programmatic influences

while evaluating the outcomes of the programs. Let us borrow from the field of medicine to understand how conflicts of interest that are beyond financial can be acknowledged in scholarly research. Rothman (1993) has argued for a consideration of conflicts that are beyond financial that may either increase or decrease the probability of a researcher reaching a specific result or conclusion. We argue that scholars and educators whose research has been reviewed in this article are people with great enthusiasm towards facilitating refugee children's educational integration in and outside of schools. Therefore, to ensure validity and fair use of their research, researchers must acknowledge and disclose the extent of their involvement with a program that they plan to either evaluate, describe, explore, or support (Maurissen et al., 2005). Furthermore, research journals must also play a role in ensuring that nonfinancial conflicts of interest such as examining the outcomes of a program designed by the researcher themselves are considered as potential conflicts of interest and must be declared by the researchers.

Conclusions and Implications

The central role of the hollow state in refugee education has clear implications for educational systems both public and private as they endeavor to support refugee students' educational attainment. Education has become a policy priority in the mandates of international organizations in the areas of conflict, unrest, and mass migrations (Menashy & Dryden-Peterson, 2015). Given the private sector's involvement in facilitating refugee integration worldwide such as providing food, refugee camps (Gluck, 2020), and pro-bono legal services (Gaynor & Bigg, 2019), their involvement in education is unsurprising. For example, Menashy and Zakharia (2017) observed private sector involvement in refugee education in Jordan, Lebanon, and Turkey to range from educational funding to technological innovations for the classroom and teacher training. Later, Zakharia and Menashy (2018) called into question the ethical foundation of the private sector organizations that were "creating markets, increasing visibility and developing brand loyalty" (p. 41). The abdication of oversight for refugee students' education in the United States can only make a vulnerable population more vulnerable.

As U.S. educational policies and practices increasingly favor privatization through charter and voucher school systems, both educators and refugee advocates must consider the disproportionate impact that this privatization coupled with the hollow state control over refugee integration will have on an already vulnerable population. Educators and researchers have long documented the struggles of refugee students in schools both before and after resettlement (Dryden-Peterson, 2016; Symons & Ponzio, 2019) as well as the struggles of educators to address those needs (Perry & Hart, 2012; Roxas & Roy, 2012; Strekalova-Hughes, 2017). However, we know much less about the long-term educational attainment of refugee students. Future research can address other important questions on what school-to-college pathways look like for refugees, how many even do access college, or how many graduate high school and what factors shape their high school completion.

As a society, we must carefully question our societal dependence on the hollow state in informing refugee educational support systems. Myriad questions must be addressed if we are to successfully promote refugee student programming. How well are the programs currently in place to help refugees integrate into schools working? Why? Which factors are more and less impactful? How can existing programs better address refugee youth's integration? Which programs can be revised, which should be disbanded, and what new ideas might emerge from the ashes? Future research is necessary to examine the behind-the-scenes decision making processes that take place

within volags and other private for-profit organizations involved in the refugee students' educational service provision both internationally and in the United States. In a similar vein, Tompkins-Stange's (2016) study of the four influential U.S. education philanthropies suggests that the elite foundations' K-12 policies may threaten democratic public education. While Tompkins-Stange argued for increased transparency and accountability requirements for the foundations, we hypothesize that closer scrutiny of how volags and private sector organizations shape refugee education may reveal potential conflicts of interest and mechanisms that work against the broader goals of refugee student education. Furthermore, the education community must hold not only the volags and private entities involved responsible but also the state as it is the primary entity responsible for the provision and oversight of public education. Refugee students represent one of the least protected groups in our society, and these young people deserve an equal opportunity to thrive and achieve their own American dream.

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