

Educational Resilience and UNESCO: The Application and Innovation of Crisis-sensitive Educational Planning

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Abstract: The crises facing the world today are complex and changeable. Whether it is armed conflict, natural disasters, climate change or the outbreak of epidemics, there are serious impacts on many areas and societies, education is no exception. Therefore, improving the resilience of education has become one of the most urgent international issues. In the context of many possible crises, the UNESCO International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP-UNESCO) has developed a crisis-sensitive educational planning (CSP) to promote educational resilience and achieve educational sustainability in various crises. This paper will explore in detail the connotation and characteristics of educational resilience and UNESCO's efforts to promote educational resilience and take ASEAN countries as examples to explore and study the application and innovation of crisis-sensitive educational planning.

Keywords: education in emergency, crisis, educational resilience, crisis-sensitive educational planning

1. Introduction

In recent years, international relationships have become increasingly tense, and frequent disasters and conflicts around the world have brought serious impact on the education of children and young people. The global spread of COVID-19 and regional crises such as the Russia-Ukraine war and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict have all had a adverse impact on the education and development of young people. According to UNESCO's Global Education Monitoring Report 2011[1], of the 67 million children of primary school age worldwide who are out of school, 28 million live in conflict-affected countries. According to the Global Education Monitoring Report 2019[2], half of the world's forcibly displaced people are under the age of 18, with many countries excluding refugee children from their national education systems. The challenge of ensuring children's educational rights amidst disasters and conflicts is pressing. These crises often deprive young learners of normal educational opportunities, posing significant obstacles to their learning journey.

Consequently, the global education sector is urgently seeking ways to mitigate the impact of such crises on youth education. It is crucial to develop crisis-sensitive educational planning strategies that bolster resilience and sustain education in disaster and conflict situations.

2. Research purpose and significance

Education is the foundation of economic growth and human development. There is growing evidence of the need to strengthen educational resilience worldwide. Integrating crisis prevention into education policies and planning is a necessary mechanism to achieve this goal. For the post-2015 SDGS to be truly sustainable, conflict and disaster risk reduction must be integrated into sectoral policies, plans and budgets. Therefore, the aim of this paper is to provide possible applications and innovations for crisis-sensitive educational planning developed by the UNESCO International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP), with a view to improving educational resilience.

Through case analysis and innovative suggestions on the possibility of crisis-sensitive educational planning, this study will further enhance its universality and epoch-making in different countries and regions and reveal the potential value of crisis-sensitive educational planning coping with various crises. This will enable crisis-sensitive educational planning to provide more comprehensive guidance when developing emergency education plans in different countries and regions in response to natural disasters (such as climate change, earthquakes, floods), public health (such as the global COVID-19 pandemic), and man-made disasters (such as war and conflict).

3. Connotation, characteristics and importance of educational resilience

3.1. The connotation of educational resilience

Resilience [3] is an integrated concept proposed in ecology in the 1970s in response to the dynamic nature of ecosystems, which refers to the ability of a complex system to absorb disturbances and maintain an inter-subjective stable state in the face of external disturbances or internal changes. Resilience, derived from Latin for "rebound", emphasizes the ability to maintain a dynamic equilibrium under pressure to adapt to development when impacted, and is an inherent self-healing ability. According to the Oxford Advanced Dictionary, resilience is about "the ability of people or things to recover quickly after something unpleasant, such as shock, injury, etc." From the perspective of the formation process of resilience, it is seen as the ability to anticipate, prepare for and adapt to changing conditions, as well as the ability to withstand, cope with and recover quickly from breaks.

According to studies related to resilience, resilience is mainly manifested as the ability to clearly cope with crises and develop in crises. It not only includes the external representation of maintaining stability after enduring chronic stress and acute shocks through its own strength, but also includes the coordination ability of the internal system to disperse risks and automatically adjust and recover after enduring shocks. Although the connotation of resilience in different fields has been extended to a certain extent, the direction of resilience related issues is highly consistent, that is, to improve the stability and sustainable development capacity of their respective fields or systems.

Following the connotation of resilience, educational resilience can be summarized as "the sustainable ability and self-recovery ability of the education field to withstand external shocks".

3.2. Characteristics of educational resilience

As far as education itself is concerned, whether the resilience is strong directly affects its adaptability and sustainability under various external conditions. Therefore, understanding and exploring the essential characteristics of educational resilience has important theoretical and practical significance for promoting the sustainable development of education in different situations, especially in crisis situations.

According to the connotation of educational resilience, we can summarize its two essential characteristics.

The adaptability of the education sector to external shocks." The education sector" here refers to

the education system, institutions, policies, students and practitioners." In this context, "adaptability" means that the education sector has the ability to flexibly and actively respond to changes, challenges or shocks in the external environment, and can effectively adjust its structure, policies, implementation methods, etc., to maintain the effectiveness and quality of education. This may include adjusting education policies, reforming teaching methods, adopting new technologies, and meeting changing social needs. Resilience in the field of education in response to external shocks is a prerequisite for ensuring its sustainable development.

The self-recovery ability of the education sector in the face of external shocks." In this context, "self-recovery" means the ability of the education sector, after being adversely affected by external shocks, to quickly adjust, reduce the impact of external shocks, re-establish order, and return to the normal state of operation before the external shocks. The self-recovery ability of the education filed in response to external shocks is a necessary condition to ensure its sustainable development.

3.3. The importance of educational resilience in crisis situations

The impact of crisis situations such as natural disasters, public health events and man-made disasters on the field of education is direct, complex and far-reaching. These crises not only have a serious impact on the structure and functioning of the education system, but more importantly, they pose a direct threat to the safety and well-being of students and educators.

Natural disasters such as climate change, earthquakes and floods can cause direct damage to educational facilities and infrastructure. School buildings may be damaged and libraries, laboratories and other educational resources may be lost. This not only affects the learning environment for students, but also limits the physical space and resources that educational institutions need to provide a well-rounded education. Public health events, especially pandemics like the global COVID-19 pandemic, have had a severe impact on education. The spread of disease forces students to be unable to participate in face-to-face teaching. While distance learning and online education perpetuate education, it also highlights the existence of a digital divide that prevents some students from participating in distance learning due to a lack of appropriate technology and online resources. Man-made disasters such as wars and conflicts have caused the most severe and immediate damage to education systems. Schools in conflict zones have been destroyed by armed struggle, putting the lives of students and educators at risk. Conflict can also lead to the loss of teachers, increase dropout rates, and even turn education into a tool for political propaganda.

Therefore, UNESCO believes that "the current crisis will have a long-term impact on the education system in terms of access, quality, equity and management of education" [4] It can be seen that the main subject affected by the crisis in the field of education are "people", namely students and educators. Therefore, the main subject that educational resilience serves in coping with external shocks should also be students and educators. Therefore, in crisis situations, the importance of educational resilience is mainly reflected in its ability to ensure the continuity of study for students and the job stability of educators, thus ensuring the sustainability of education in the long run.

4. The proposal of crisis-sensitive educational planning

Since entering the 21st century, UNESCO, through its International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP-UNESCO), has developed policy documents. Education in Situations of Emergency, Crisis and Reconstruction: UNESCO STRATEGY (2003), Guidebook for Planning Education in Emergencies and Reconstruction (2006, Revised in 2010), Integrating Conflict and Disaster Risk Reduction into Education Sector Planning (2011) [5]

Over the years, UNESCO's approach in the field of education emergency response has matured and evolved into a coherent crisis-sensitive educational planning (CSP) model. According to the

UNESCO International Institute for Educational Planning, crisis-sensitive educational planning mainly involves:

- conflict and disaster prevention, preparedness, and mitigation in and through education;
- education for displaced populations;
- climate change impacts on education;
- teachers in crisis and displacement contexts

According to the UNESCO International Institute for Educational planning (Paris and Buenos Aires) [6] Conflict-sensitive and Risk-informed Planning in Education: lessons learned, crisis-sensitive educational planning processes include analysis, policy, programming, cost and financing, monitoring and evaluation.

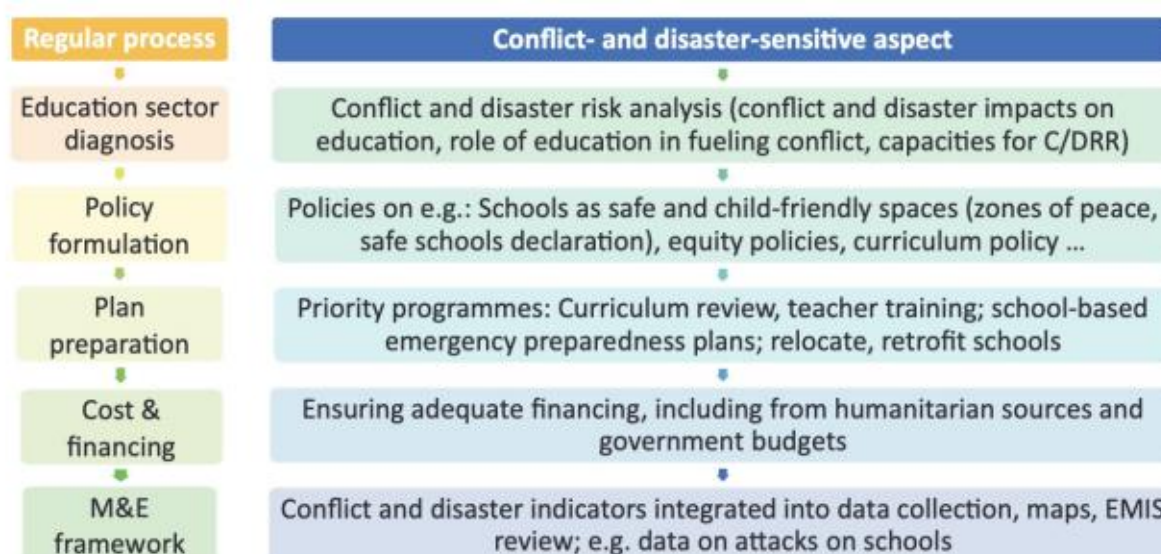


Figure 1: The crisis-sensitive planning process.

Crisis-sensitive educational planning aims to reduce the negative impact of the crisis on the education sector, while promoting the formulation of educational policies and programs to ensure the well-being of students and education practitioners. The planning process covers different time points before, during and after the crisis, aiming to minimize the harm of the crisis to education and ensure the quality, continuity and equity of education.

5. Possible application of crisis-sensitive educational planning

In the post-COVID-19 era, ASEAN has actively promoted education reforms in various aspects to address the negative impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and enhance the resilience of the education system. The COVID-19 pandemic has posed serious challenges to the education systems of ASEAN countries, but it has also provided an opportunity for these countries to review and improve their education systems. “In the face of the impact of the pandemic, ASEAN countries have clarified national strategies, reform monitoring and evaluation measures, focused on improving the resilience of the overall education system” [7], and in the process demonstrated a series of characteristics and possible applications related to crisis-sensitive educational planning.

On June 5, 2022, ASEAN released a report at the 2nd Asia-Pacific Education Ministers' Meeting “Reopen, Recover and Resilience in Education: Guidelines for ASEAN Countries” [8]. This report offers ASEAN member states valuable guidance on bolstering education resilience, focusing on strategic directions from ASEAN's perspective. It emphasizes the importance of securing and

efficiently utilizing funding at the national level, assessing costs for adapting and developing new strategies, and aligning expenditures with each country's specific circumstances and limitations. This approach aligns with the financial considerations in crisis-sensitive educational planning.

Additionally, the report advocates for the establishment of a robust supervision and evaluation system to address educational needs post-crisis. Key metrics include the number of students returning to in-person learning, achievement in core subjects, and dropout rates. While this system and the data collection aspect of crisis-sensitive educational planning have different focal points, they are interconnected and offer potential for integration and improvement after appropriate adjustments.

However, the report mainly concentrates on students and overlooks the well-being of educators. In crisis-sensitive educational planning, support for teachers affected by crises, such as those who have lost homes, is crucial. Thus, integrating teacher assistance into the report's recommendations could further enhance the supervision and evaluation systems in educational resilience planning.

6. Innovation of crisis-sensitive educational planning

According to the crisis-sensitive educational planning, it is not difficult to see that the plan does take students and educators as the main body, but the plan does not carry out detailed classification and exploration of the types of crises to be dealt with. In view of the long duration crisis situation, how to ensure the long-term effectiveness of the crisis-sensitive educational planning throughout the long duration of the crisis is an aspect that needs to be supplemented. Secondly, financial issues and types of financial support such as humanitarian resources are part of the plan process, but there is no specific planning details involved. This paper holds that ensuring adequate funding in crisis situations is one of the preconditions for crisis-sensitive educational planning to play a planning role throughout the crisis, and ensuring adequate funding in emergency situations where multiple crises overlap is an important issue for crisis-sensitive educational planning to be effectively implemented.

In the face of long-term sustained crises and overlapping crises, crisis-sensitive educational planning needs to add a series of innovative measures to ensure the long-term effectiveness and funding of the planning.

6.1. The introduction of mixed education model

UNESCO's proposed responses tend to focus on adapting education to digital development [9]. In addressing long-term and persistent crises, crisis-sensitive educational planning should prioritize a "mixed education model" that emphasizes distance learning. This model goes beyond just online learning, incorporating various distance education programs to offer students more flexible learning options. When traditional in-person teaching is disrupted, the mixed model facilitates continued education through online platforms, allowing students to learn remotely or when unable to attend school.

Key to this model is the expansion of learning environments through advanced technologies like Virtual Reality (VR) and Artificial Intelligence (AI), which allows for greater accessibility and inclusivity, especially for students in remote or crisis-affected areas who may not have access to traditional classrooms. Firstly, VR offers virtual learning environments, enabling students to participate in activities like virtual experiments, thus maintaining high-quality education during crises. Meanwhile, AI can provide personalized teaching assistance by analyzing individual learning styles and progress, offering custom content to each student. This technology-driven approach helps bridge the gap in education disparities caused by geographical or socioeconomic factors.

Additionally, AI-driven analytics can aid educators in identifying and addressing learning gaps more effectively, ensuring that each student receives the support they need to succeed, even in challenging circumstances. Furthermore, the use of VR and AI in education encourages the

development of 21st-century skills such as digital literacy, problem-solving, and critical thinking, which are essential in today's rapidly changing world. This integration of advanced technologies not only enhances the resilience of the education system during crises but also prepares students for future challenges and opportunities. This approach is particularly beneficial in crisis situations, helping to address diverse learning needs and pressures, and enhancing students' motivation and sense of achievement.

6.2. Establishment of intersectoral cooperation mechanisms and a "united crisis fund"

When dealing with the problem of funding adequacy in the case of overlapping crises, crisis-sensitive educational planning can ensure that the education sector receives sufficient funding support in emergency situations by introducing innovative cross-sectoral cooperation mechanisms in the step of Cost & financing.

In the context of overlapping crises, all sectors face urgent needs, and the education sector needs to work in tandem with relevant sectors such as health and social protection. This collaborative mechanism contributes to a holistic crisis response strategy, ensuring that various departments can work together more effectively in times of crisis.

A key solution for managing overlapping crises is the establishment of a "united crisis fund," which pools resources from various sectors. This fund addresses the urgent needs across multiple departments, such as health, social welfare, and education, which all face challenges during crises. By contributing a portion of their funds to this joint mechanism, sectors can form a cohesive crisis response strategy, enabling more coordinated and efficient action rather than competing for resources independently.

The united crisis fund facilitates shared responsibility among sectors in responding to multifaceted crises. It promotes organized and equitable participation from different areas, preventing the over-concentration or fragmentation of resources. This approach ensures that all sectors receive adequate support, allowing for a more effective and unified response to crisis situations.

7. Conclusion

As a subject of great concern in the field of education, educational resilience has become more and more urgent, especially in the situation of frequent crises in recent years. Improving resilience in education is no longer just an issue within countries, but an international issue on the international agenda that needs to be addressed jointly. Through an in-depth analysis of the connotation and characteristics of educational resilience, this paper focuses on potential application of crisis-sensitive educational planning and possible innovation of it. This paper, guided by improving the resilience of education, provides an effective path for the possible application of crisis-sensitive educational planning developed by the International Institute for Educational Planning of UNESCO, so that crisis-sensitive educational planning can provide more comprehensive guidance for different countries and regions in response to crisis in an effort to achieve Sustainable Development Goal 4 - ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education and lifelong learning opportunities for all.

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