



SCHOOL OF POST GRADUATE STUDIES

**EXPLORING THE CHALLENGES IN THE SOCIAL- ECONOMIC INTEGRATION
OF REFUGEES IN THE FORMAL EMPLOYMENT SECTOR IN ZAMBIA: A CASE
STUDY OF CHAISA, LUSAKA.**

BY

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A dissertation submitted to the University of Lusaka presented in partial fulfilment for the requirement for the award of the Master of Arts in Peace and Security

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DECLARATION

I, Bwalya Chungu, do hereby declare that this dissertation is my own work. Any published or unpublished work or materials of other persons used have been acknowledged and that this work has not previously been submitted at any other University for similar or any other purposes.

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my supportive family and friends whose effort and tireless work towards seeing my success in my endeavors cannot go unnoticed, God bless you.

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This study would not have been a reality without the support and encouragement given to me by various people and institutions whose contributions I feel strongly indebted to. I would like to begin by extending my heartfelt gratitude to my ever hardworking and encouraging Supervisor, Dr. Alex Ngoma.

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Lastly but not the least, I would like to appreciate the research participants for their willingness to participate in the research study, if it was not for them this research would not have been done.

ABSTRACT

This study sought to investigate the challenges associated with the socio-economic integration of refugees into the formal employment sector in Zambia, focusing on Lusaka as a case study. The specific objectives were to assess the primary challenges refugees face when seeking formal employment in Lusaka, examine the factors that limit their access to education and skills training necessary for formal employment, and identify the self-employment activities refugees undertake as an alternative to formal employment in Lusaka.

A stratified random sampling technique was employed in this research to ensure fair representation of participants. An equal number of participants were randomly selected to prevent any overrepresentation that could lead to biased or erroneous data interpretation.

A case study design was utilized to explore the challenges faced by refugees in their socio-economic integration into the formal employment sector in Lusaka. Adopting a qualitative research approach, empirical data was gathered from a total sample size of 150 participants. Data collection methods included interviews, field notes, informal dialogues, focus group discussions, and observations.

The research findings revealed that refugees in Lusaka encounter several challenges in accessing formal employment. These challenges include difficulties in obtaining work permits, corruption, discrimination, and high levels of youth unemployment and underemployment. Additionally, barriers to accessing education and skills training, such as language challenges, the high cost of education, and stigma or discrimination, further hinder refugees' competitiveness in the formal employment sector. Moreover, the study identified that many refugees opt for self-employment activities over formal employment, such as operating grocery shops and engaging in vending.

Based on these findings, the study recommended that the government relax restrictive policies on refugees' rights to work and freedom of movement, thereby enabling them to participate in productive livelihood activities that foster economic development. It also suggested that local communities should appreciate and utilize the skills refugees bring to enhance entrepreneurship among Zambians.

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AAH- Action African Help

COR- Commissioner for Refugees

COMESA- Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa

DAFI- Albert Einstein German Academic Refugee Initiative

GRZ- Government of the Republic of Zambia

JCTR- Jesuits centre for Theological Reflections

MOE- Ministry of Education

NGO- Non Governmental Organisation

OECD- Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development

PTSS- Programme and Technical Support Service

SME- Small and Medium Enterprises

UNHRC- United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Zambia has, over the years, hosted a substantial number of refugees, primarily from neighbouring countries such as the Democratic Republic of Congo, Rwanda, and Burundi. The influx of refugees into the country is largely driven by conflicts and instability in these nations, prompting many individuals and families to seek safety in Zambia, which has enjoyed peace since gaining independence in 1964. In response, the Zambian government, working in partnership with international organizations like the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), has undertaken significant measures to support displaced populations. This has included the establishment of refugee camps and settlements (UNHCR, 2021). However, despite these efforts, refugees in Zambia encounter considerable difficulties in securing formal employment opportunities. The formal employment sector operates under a framework of regulations and requirements that create significant barriers for refugees seeking lawful and stable employment (UNHCR, 2017).

A key regulatory challenge is the requirement for work permits, which refugees must obtain to engage in legal employment. The process of acquiring these permits is often complicated, costly, and lengthy, which deters many employers from hiring refugees (Zambian Immigration Act, 2010). Additionally, the need for specific identity documents poses another obstacle, as potential employers may not recognize these documents. This lack of recognition creates further complications for refugees attempting to access formal employment. Labour market restrictions present yet another hurdle, with certain economic sectors being reserved exclusively for Zambian citizens. This limitation excludes refugees from employment in industries such as retail, agriculture, and education. Refugees also face challenges related to the recognition of their qualifications, as Zambia's professional accreditation bodies may not accept certifications or degrees obtained from foreign institutions. Other barriers, including language difficulties, societal discrimination, and

limited social connections, further compound the challenges faced by refugees in pursuing formal employment in Zambia (Zambian Ministry of Labour, 2010).

Lusaka, as Zambia's capital and largest urban center, offers both opportunities and challenges for refugees seeking formal employment. While the city provides a more diverse job market compared to rural areas, the competition for available positions is intense. Refugees often struggle to compete with local residents who have better access to educational and other resources. Analyzing the barriers faced by refugees in Lusaka's formal employment sector is essential for informing policies and interventions aimed at promoting their socio-economic integration. Conducting a case study focused on Lusaka enables a deeper understanding of the specific challenges refugees encounter in an urban setting and helps identify potential strategies to address these issues (UNHCR, 2017).

Overall, the study contributes valuable knowledge to efforts aimed at supporting refugee populations and promoting their self-reliance and well-being in their host country.

1.2 BACKGROUND OF STUDY

The socio-economic integration of refugees into Zambia's formal employment sector is a pressing issue that requires urgent attention. Refugees face numerous challenges in securing stable employment, primarily due to various hindrances. One of the major obstacles is the legal constraints they encounter, such as the requirement for work permits, which are often costly and time-consuming to acquire. These stringent regulations frequently discourage employers from hiring refugees, thus limiting their access to stable jobs (UNHCR, 2017). Furthermore, language barriers and the non-recognition of foreign qualifications significantly limit refugees' employment prospects. Many refugees possess valuable skills, but these are often not acknowledged by professional bodies in Zambia, making it difficult for them to compete in the formal job market. The situation is further aggravated by discriminatory hiring practices, which exclude refugees from many employment opportunities. Additionally, limited access to

essential resources, such as social networks and financial support, impedes their job search and career advancement (Zambian Ministry of Labor, 2010).

Over the years, Zambia has been a host to a considerable number of refugees, with urban centers such as Lusaka accommodating a significant proportion. By 2021, there were approximately 70,000 refugees in Zambia, a substantial number of whom reside in Lusaka, seeking improved livelihood opportunities (UNHCR, 2021). Lusaka serves as a hub of economic activity and a focal point for employment prospects, making it a strategic location to explore the challenges refugees encounter in accessing formal employment. Zambia's formal employment sector operates within a framework of regulations that can present challenges to refugees. These include requirements tied to work permits, residency status, and labor laws. Cultural norms and societal attitudes towards refugees can also affect their acceptance and integration into the workforce. These aspects underline the multifaceted challenges refugees face in securing formal employment in Zambia.

Using Lusaka as a case study enables researchers to explore the unique dynamics affecting refugees in urban environments. This includes analyzing how legal barriers, language challenges, and discriminatory practices influence their integration into the labor market. Additionally, examining the availability of vocational training and social support systems provides insights into possible solutions to improve refugees' socio-economic integration (Zambian Ministry of Labor, 2010). Policymakers, organizations, and stakeholders must understand these challenges to design strategies that facilitate the effective inclusion of refugees in the formal workforce. Addressing these barriers can help Zambia develop more inclusive employment policies, benefiting both refugees and the broader economy.

1.3 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The socio-economic integration of refugees in the formal employment sector in Zambia, particularly in Lusaka, presents a complex challenge. As of 2021, Zambia hosts approximately 70,000 refugees, primarily from countries such as the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Angola, and Rwanda (UNHCR, 2021). Many of these refugees reside in urban areas of Lusaka, where they seek formal employment opportunities in sectors such as retail, agriculture, and skilled trades. However, their ability to secure stable and decent work is significantly hindered by various factors. Legal restrictions, such as the requirement for work permits, pose substantial barriers to employment (Zambian Immigration Act, 2010).

Additionally, the lack of recognition of foreign qualifications prevents many refugees from fully utilizing their skills and experiences, as Zambian professional bodies may not acknowledge credentials from their home countries. Language barriers further complicate communication in the workplace, limiting job prospects for those who are not proficient in English. Discrimination based on their refugee status can lead to biased hiring practices, leaving many refugees marginalized within the job market (Hussen, 2019)

Furthermore, limited access to vocational training programs restricts their opportunities for skill development, essential for competing in the formal labor sector (Zambian Ministry of Labor, 2010).

Addressing these challenges is crucial not only for promoting the self-reliance and well-being of refugees but also for maximizing their potential contributions to the local economy. By facilitating their integration into the workforce, Zambia can benefit from the diverse skills and experiences that refugees bring, ultimately fostering a more inclusive and robust economic environment (Kagan,2011)

1.3 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

1.3.1 GENERAL OBJECTIVES

- To investigate the challenges faced by refugees in Zambia, specifically in Lusaka, regarding their social-economic integration into the formal employment sector.

1.3.2 SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

- To assess the barriers refugees, encounter in accessing formal employment opportunities in Lusaka.
- To examine the various factors that limit the refugees' access to education and skills training.
- To establish self-employment activities that refugees decide to pursue over formal employment in Lusaka.

1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What are the primary challenges refugees encounter when searching for formal employment in Lusaka?
2. How do the various factors limit the refugees' access to education and skills training that may enhance their chances to be in formal employment in Lusaka?
3. To what extent do socio-economic factors, such as access to resources and legal restrictions, influence refugees' decisions to pursue self-employment over formal employment in Lusaka?

1.5 DEFINITION OF TERMS

- **Refugees:** Individuals who have been forced to flee their home country due to persecution, war, or violence and have sought refuge in another country.
- **Integration:** The process of incorporating refugees into the social, cultural, and economic fabric of their host society.
- **Social-Economic Integration:** The process by which refugees become active participants in the social and economic aspects of their host country, including access to education, healthcare, employment, and social services.
- **Employment Sector:** The part of the economy that encompasses all jobs and positions available for individuals to earn a living through work.

- **Formal Employment Sector:** Refers to jobs that are officially recognized and regulated by the government, often offering benefits such as job security, social security contributions, and legal protections for workers.

1.6 DELIMITATION

Firstly, the research specifically concentrated on refugees residing in Lusaka and seeking formal employment opportunities within the city. This delimitation ensures a targeted analysis of a specific group of refugees within a defined geographical area. Secondly, the study was primarily to investigate challenges related to social-economic integration into formal employment and may not extensively cover other aspects of refugee integration such as education or healthcare access. Thirdly, the research focused on refugees who have legal status and authorization to work in Zambia, excluding undocumented migrants or asylum seekers awaiting official recognition. Lastly, the study considered challenges faced by refugees themselves rather than employers or governmental policies, narrowing down the scope to issues directly impacting refugee job seekers.

1.7 SIGNIFICANCE OF STUDY

By conducting this research, potential solutions can be identified to bridge these gaps and facilitate the successful integration of refugees into the workforce. Moreover, understanding the challenges faced by refugees in accessing formal employment is crucial for policymakers and stakeholders in Zambia to develop targeted interventions and policies that promote inclusivity and economic empowerment among refugee populations. Enhancing the socio-economic integration of refugees not only benefits the individuals themselves by providing them with stable income and improving their quality of life but also contributes to the overall economic development of the host country by tapping into the skills and talents that refugees bring. By shedding light on the specific challenges faced by refugees in Lusaka regarding formal employment, this research aims to pave the way for evidence-based strategies that foster a more inclusive and diverse workforce while promoting social cohesion and harmony within Zambian society.

1.8 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Time posed a significant challenge in this study as most participants operated on their own schedules. Furthermore, obtaining data from all refugee camps proved to be a cumbersome process due to the numerous protocols required by the UNHCR and the Commissioner for Refugees. These challenges were compounded by the time and financial constraints faced by the researcher. Another notable difficulty was the language barrier encountered with some of the refugees. However, the research was successfully conducted by aligning with participants' availability and utilizing research agents who were proficient in interpreting the language.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 EMPIRICAL REVIEW

2.1.1 Global Literature Review

Refugees' socioeconomic conditions are heavily influenced by their legal rights, employment opportunities, and social and political contexts. Many refugees are relegated to jobs perceived as undesirable by locals, such as cleaning or caregiving. Evidence from countries like Bangladesh, Chad, Costa Rica, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Iraq, Kenya, Mexico, Uganda, and Yemen indicates that during the COVID-19 pandemic, refugees experienced significant declines in health access, education, wages, and other income sources (Costa, 2006).

Lack of recognition for formal or informal educational and professional qualifications further limits refugees' job opportunities. For instance, refugees in Uganda rank the absence of proof of education and experience as the second most significant obstacle to finding employment, preceded by language barriers. Similarly, an OECD survey from 2023 found that equivalency issues with Ukrainian qualifications were a major hurdle for Ukrainian students enrolling in EU higher education systems (Davidson, 2013).

Refugees face worse labor market outcomes compared to other migrants, especially initially. Challenges include asset losses, separation from family, low demand for skills in host markets, the psychological and economic effects of forced displacement, and limited social networks. However, over time, refugees often bridge the employment gap and may even outperform other migrant groups and locals.

Global Trends and Regional Differences

UNHCR's 2023 Global Survey on Livelihoods and Economic Inclusion reports that approximately 45% of refugees live in countries with unrestricted access to formal

employment, up from 18% in 2019 and 38% in 2021. Global Refugee Work Rights Report reveals that while 62% of refugees live in countries with de jure work rights, 55% experience significant practical restrictions.

Since 1997, high-income countries have implemented more restrictive refugee laws, while low- and middle-income countries have adopted more inclusive policies, despite hosting most of the global refugee population. Legal frameworks for livelihoods remain restrictive compared to those governing movement and territorial access. Common labor market restrictions include prioritizing citizens in employment, sector-specific work limitations, geographical restrictions, and temporary employment bans (Kaiser, 2005).

Freedom of movement laws, including encampment policies and curfews, limit refugees' access to employment opportunities. Bureaucratic challenges, high permit fees, and mobility restrictions exacerbate this problem. Regional differences in legal frameworks are notable, with Latin America leading in de jure work rights, aided by shared language and cultural similarities. Africa and Europe perform moderately, with policies in countries like Uganda standing out positively. In contrast, the Middle East lags behind, with restrictive work rights in countries such as Jordan and Iraqi Kurdistan (Marshall and Elliott, 2005).

Asia ranks lowest in de jure work rights for refugees, with countries like Bangladesh and Malaysia providing minimal protections. Japan grants refugee rights but processes only a few cases. The EU has shown leniency toward Ukrainian refugees, waiving common restrictions under the Temporary Protection Directive, which contrasts with recent restrictive refugee policies in other regions (Piesse, 2014).

Challenges Faced by Refugee in Accessing Education

Refugees in host countries face numerous and multidimensional challenges when it comes to accessing education. In the United Kingdom, for instance, the frequent mobility of asylum seekers caused by the government's dispersal policy disrupts children's schooling (Doyle, 2008). Due to their unstable status, children are often

forced to relocate. Additionally, some schools in the United Kingdom refuse to admit refugee students out of fear that their academic performance may lower the school's average grades, potentially leading to school closure (Paloma, 2010). Language barriers further hinder access to education, as the available support for pupils whose first language is not English is insufficient to meet their needs (Doyle, 2008). Teachers often lack the requisite expertise and experience to support children who have experienced trauma, as they are not trained psychologists (Rong, 1998).

Continental Literature Review

In Africa, the movement of refugees has gained increased attention over the past decade, driven by trends in globalization and human migration. Many individuals migrate in search of better living conditions or refuge from natural disasters, conflict, and other crises (Ncube et al., 2019). South Africa has become a popular destination for migrants and refugees, especially from other African nations, due to its relative political and economic stability. As of 2021, official statistics recorded approximately 3.95 million immigrants in South Africa, representing about 6.5% of the population of over 60 million people (Bazirake, 2017).

Despite significant poverty, unemployment, and inequality across the continent, South Africa offers a degree of social integration to refugees and asylum seekers (Msabah, 2019). Unlike many other African countries where refugees are confined to camps and reliant on humanitarian aid, South Africa integrates refugees into local communities. However, while the South African Constitution guarantees socio-economic rights for all, asylum seekers are excluded from social assistance, and many eligible refugees struggle to access social grants (Nzabamwita & Dinbabo, 2022; Nutz, 2017). Consequently, refugees must earn their own income to meet basic needs, which exposes them to socioeconomic marginalization (Niyigena, 2013).

This marginalization often creates competition between refugees and economically disadvantaged South Africans for limited resources and employment opportunities, fostering resentment. Refugees are perceived as threats to local livelihoods, particularly in impoverished communities. These tensions have sometimes resulted in xenophobic attacks, with properties and businesses owned by foreign nationals being looted or

destroyed (Makanishe & Umubyeyi, 2023). The resulting loss of livelihoods forces refugees into urban areas, where living conditions are more expensive compared to rural areas (Crush et al., 2018; Philip, 2010).

While some African countries, such as Uganda, implement policies that enable refugees to participate in income-generating activities like agriculture and food services (Harris et al., 2014; Jinnah; Nutz, 2017), the situation in South Africa remains challenging. High levels of poverty and unemployment hinder the successful integration of refugees, complicating their ability to achieve sustainable livelihoods and contributing to ongoing socio-economic instability.

Challenges Faced by Refugee in Accessing Education

Kenya has been a host to refugees fleeing conflict in various African countries for over four decades. The influx of refugees saw a significant rise in 1992, with the population reaching approximately 427,000 (Loescher and Milner, 2005). Wagacha and Guiney (2008) report that many refugee children in Nairobi were born in Kenya but lacked birth certificates. Policies in Kenya often hinder access to education for refugee children, as parents are required to present proper documentation such as the UNHCR mandate certificate and the child's birth certificate to enroll them in city council primary schools (Karaja, 2010). However, even with proper documentation, barriers such as discrimination and extortion prevent many refugee children from accessing education in public primary schools (Jacobsen, 2005).

Although Kenya introduced free primary education in 2003, which allowed refugee children to enroll in public schools, many urban refugees were unaware of this opportunity or lacked the means to take advantage of it (Karanja, 2010). (Moro, 2002) and (Kattan, 2006) note that the increased enrolment of Kenyan children under the free primary education program led to limited resources, infrastructure, and a decline in the quality of education. Some school administrators prioritized Kenyan pupils, leaving refugee children without access (Pavanello, 2010). Refugee parents whose children accessed free primary education were still required to provide school-related materials, including textbooks,

uniforms, and desks. The precarious economic situation of refugees in Nairobi made it challenging for many to support their children's education (Karanja, 2010).

Among refugees in Nairobi, Sudanese children face the most barriers in accessing education. While Somali, Ethiopian, Rwandan, Burundian, and Congolese refugees engage in informal businesses to support themselves, many Sudanese prioritize education as a means of self-development, leaving them more vulnerable to economic hardships that limit their ability to support their children's education (Karanja, 2010).

Zambia's encampment policy restricts refugees' movement and opportunities for self-reliance (UNHCR, 2012). Refugees are confined to designated settlements unless granted special permission, which limits their ability to work or settle in urban areas. Employers must prove the unavailability of local candidates before hiring refugees, and self-employment permits require significant financial investment, making it difficult for refugees to participate in the formal economy (Darwin, 2005). Although Zambia is a signatory to the 1951 Refugee Convention, its reservations to this treaty and the Refugees (Control) Act of 1970 limit refugees' rights, including access to work, education, and property ownership.

Refugees in Lusaka face challenges such as discrimination, exploitation, and limited access to resources and infrastructure, which exacerbate their poverty. Urban refugees are also constrained by regulations restricting their movement and access to tertiary and vocational training (Kaluba, 2016). (Muvandimwe, 2013) highlights barriers to education in refugee settlements, including long distances to schools, lack of academic documentation, and unfair scholarship distribution. These factors severely hinder educational opportunities for refugee children, leaving many unable to pursue secondary or tertiary education.

2.2 THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES

Olson's theory of collective action, as discussed by (Mancur Olson 1971), challenges the widely accepted notion that individuals with shared interests will naturally collaborate to achieve their goals. He argues that, except in cases where the group is small, or where coercion or specific mechanisms compel action, rational individuals acting in their self-interest are unlikely to work collectively to achieve group objectives (IRMA, 1992).

The benefits provided by most groups are often collective goods, akin to the public goods provided by a nation-state, such as defence and police services. These goods, once made available, can be enjoyed by all members of the group. However, just as a state cannot function solely on voluntary contributions, large organizations also struggle to sustain themselves without employing coercion or offering incentives that motivate members to contribute towards the production and maintenance of collective goods. An individual in a large group, much like a taxpayer in a nation-state or a firm in a perfectly competitive market, has minimal impact on the organization's outcomes through their contributions. Nevertheless, such an individual can still benefit from the group's provisions without contributing, leading to what is commonly referred to as free-riding.

The tendency to free-ride is particularly pronounced in large groups due to the reduced visibility of individual contributions, higher transaction costs of organizing members, and challenges in collective coordination. As a result, large groups often fail to deliver collective goods effectively. Olson demonstrates, using basic economic principles, that small groups are better equipped to provide collective goods without requiring coercion or additional incentives beyond the good itself. This is because, in smaller groups, individual contributions are more noticeable, and members may perceive personal gains from the collective good that exceed the costs of providing it. While Olson does not specify the exact size of such small groups, he emphasizes that they must be small enough for the actions of individual members to be evident to others within the group.

Olson's theory has practical implications for managing refugee participation. When dealing with a large and diverse group of refugees, it is advisable to divide them into smaller, more homogenous subgroups. Each subgroup should then be assigned a

proportionate share of participation, with assignments rotated periodically if participation is divisible and mechanisms exist for such division. This approach aims to reduce the free-rider problem and promote collective action within the group.

Despite the challenges posed by the free-rider problem, Olson notes that voluntary groups can successfully provide collective goods across various domains, including education, labour unions, and natural resource management. However, group action can also emerge in less favorable forms, such as collusion and oligopolies, where firms or agents collaborate to limit supply and maintain high prices (IRMA, 1992).

Olson also highlights the role of the political entrepreneur in facilitating collective action. A political entrepreneur possesses traits such as leadership, community trust or influence, and the ability to understand others' motivations. This individual plays a key role in organizing the group and employing selective incentives to encourage participation. Furthermore, a political entrepreneur provides assurance to members that their participation will yield expected benefits, which will be equitably distributed (IRMA, 1992).

Human Capital Theory: Human capital is the intangible economic value of a worker's experience and skills. This includes factors like education, training, intelligence, skills, health and other things employers' value, such as loyalty and punctuality. The human capital theory posits that human beings can increase their productive capacity through education and skills training.

In the 1960s, economists Gary Becker and Theodore Schultz pointed out that education and training were investment that could add to productivity. As the world accumulated more and more physical capital, the opportunity cost of going to school declined. Education became an increasingly important component of the workforce. The term was adopted by corporate finance and became part of intellectual capital, and more broadly as human capital.

Intellectual and human capital are treated as renewable sources of productivity. Organisations try to cultivate these sources, hoping for added innovation or creativity.

Sometimes, a business problem requires more than just a few machines or more money. The possible downside of relying too heavily on human capital is that it is portable. Human capital is always owned by the employee, never the employer. Unlike structural capital equipment, a human employee can leave an organization. Most organisations take steps to support their most useful employees to prevent them from leaving for other firms.

Much of the existing research on barriers to employment among refugees and asylum seekers can be identified as adopting a “human capital” approach, focusing for example on individuals’ skills and capabilities (Rosenkranz, 2002). As Rosenkranz argues, a human capital approach can be criticized for adopting a deficit view of refugees, because the sources of barriers to employment are located within the refugees themselves (for example, as the result of poor English language proficiency, cultural gaps or inadequate training and qualifications). Consequently, such approaches tend to conceive of responses in terms of increasing human capital among refugees (for example, providing more education, information, skills or training).

Social Network Theory: This is a theory that was by Jacob Moreno, which emphasizes on the importance of social relations, it is a complex discipline. It was first introduced in in the 1890s as a study on the structure of the society (Williams, 2024). Social network theory emphasizes the role of social relationships and networks in facilitating employment processes, including information exchange, resource mobilization, and social support. Social networks play a crucial role in shaping migration patterns, destination choices, and integration outcomes for refugees, influencing their access to employment, housing, and community resources (Granovetter, 1973). The researcher supports this theory because it helps to explain the importance of working together and to factors that separate of bring people together.

Structuralism Theory: Structuralism theory focuses on the broader socio-economic structures and institutional frameworks that shape migration flows and outcomes. In the context of refugees, structuralisms perspectives highlight the role of macroeconomic factors, labor market dynamics, government policies, and legal frameworks in driving employment patterns, labor market segmentation, and socio-economic inequalities

(Massey et al., 1998). Structural factors have the greatest impact on the socio-economic integration of refugees in the formal employment sector. The nature of the experiences of refugees can influence the way they feel about their position in the host society.

2.3 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The theoretical framework for this study draws on several key concepts and theoretical perspectives to provide a comprehensive understanding of challenges in the socio-economic integration of refugees in the formal employment sector in Lusaka. Kasonde (2013) defines a theory as a supposition or speculation about a phenomenon which can be looked at as a collection of interconnected ideas based on theories. Furthermore, Kombo and Tromp (2006) envisage that a theory is a logical set of prepositions derived from and supported by data and or facts. In view of the above, this study therefore was guided by Maslow's hierarchy of needs.

Maslow's hierarchy of Needs: Maslow's hierarchy of needs is a theory in psychology developed by Abraham Maslow in 1943. This theory is a description of the needs that motivate human behavior. He aimed to create an understanding of human behavior in relation to human needs. According to Maslow, human beings have five needs that need to be satisfied, including physiological needs, safety and security needs, love and belonging needs, esteem and self-actualization (Cohen et.al, 2013). These needs range from lowest to the highest, in other words, among the five needs there are some that are classified more important than the other needs. In order for one to move to the higher needs, the lower needs must be partially satisfied first (Martins & Joomis, 2007).

Moreover, the first four needs are regarded as deficiency needs, whereas the self-actualization constitutes the growth needs (Martins & Joomis, 2007). Therefore, Maslow by physiological needs meant the basic needs that people need for their survival, such needs includes water, shelter, food and clothes (Martins & Joomis, 2007). Thus, many refugees don't have a place to call home as they feel like they don't belong in Zambia, and beside that some can't afford to earn a decent living. They end up staying in engaging in self-employment activities (most of them do not proper documentation to support their

activities which makes them vulnerable to being deported once caught by immigration officers. Moreover, one can argue that lack of employment in the formal sector is one of the reasons that result in refugees failing to satisfy their basic needs. In addition, the physiological needs of refugees are not fully met in Zambia, and Lusaka in particular.

Thus, when physiological needs are met, people move to safety and security needs. Safety is the feeling that people get when they know they won't get harmed (Martins & Joomis, 2007). On the other hand, security is the feeling people get when their fears and anxieties are low (Martins & Joomis, 2007). Moreover, safety and security needs include protection from elements, security, order, law, stability, freedom from fear (McLeod, 2014). Thus, most refugees in Lusaka their needs to safety and security is not fulfilled as they are often stigmatized and discriminated in many settings.

The protection that is being provided by the Zambian government to refugees is not enough as many Zambian citizens still attack refugees. One can argue that the high rate of unemployment in Lusaka and Zambia in general is the major influence of xenophobia as many Zambians citizens believe that refugees take their jobs. Thus, once the need to safety and security has been met, one has to move to the next level, which is a need to love and belonging.

The love and belonging needs consist of friendship, intimacy, affection and love from work group, family, friends, and romantic relationships (MacLeod, 2007). However, that is not applicable to refugees because they feel like they don't belong in Lusaka. In addition, refugees do not have a satisfactory relationship with their Lusaka's friends and other people they interact with because they betray them. They further feel unaccepted in Lusaka due to the unfair treatment they get from the people in their locality.

Moreover, based on the above one can say that the refugees' needs are not satisfied in Lusaka. Hence, it is difficult for them to move from deficiency needs to growth needs.

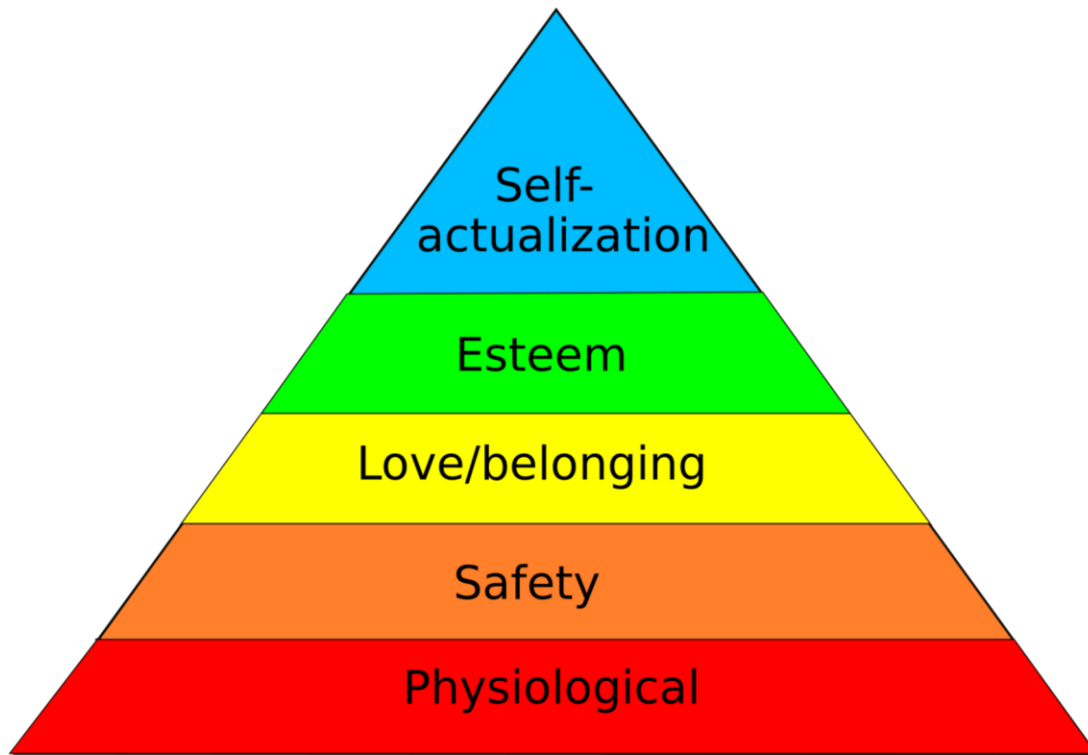
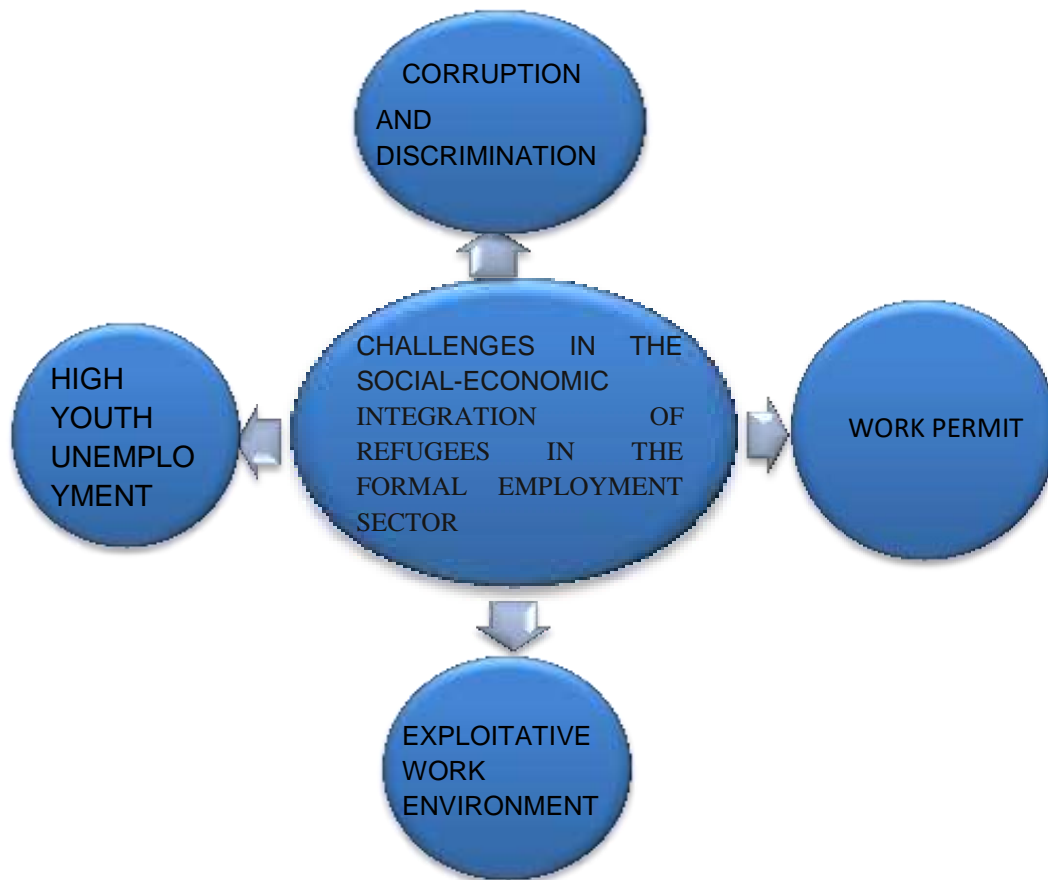


Figure1 Maslow's hierarchy of needs

2.4 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Figure 1: Flow Chart of the Conceptual Framework



Source: (Researcher's Construct, 2018)

2.4.1 Description of the Conceptual Framework

Challenges in the socio-economic integration of refugees in the formal employment sector

In this study, challenges in the socio-economic integration of refugees in the formal employment sector are used as a dependent variable that depends on other variables. Changes taking place in independent variables affect and change the status of this variable.

a) Work Permit – Refugees in Lusaka, and Zambia as a whole, face significant challenges in obtaining work permits. Securing employment is an additional hurdle. While many refugees and immigrants are willing to take any available job upon their arrival, progressing within the job market is exceedingly difficult. Educated refugees or those who previously held reputable positions in their home countries often experience frustration when they are unable to secure similar opportunities in Zambia.

b) High Youth Unemployment and Underemployment – The high rates of unemployment and underemployment among Zambian youth, particularly in Lusaka, make it challenging for refugees to find formal employment. Refugees in Lusaka face strict limitations on accessing legally sanctioned employment. They are often relegated to the lowest levels of the job market, which is already characterized by widespread unemployment and underemployment.

c) Corruption and Discrimination – Corruption, both in interactions involving refugees and in the broader society, significantly hampers employment opportunities in the formal sector. Only individuals who can afford to bribe recruiting officials are often able to secure jobs. Corruption, a pervasive issue affecting many facets of Zambian society, has compounded the difficulties faced by refugees. Zambian law mandates that refugees can only be employed in roles where no Zambian is suitably qualified, further narrowing their options. Consequently, only a small number of refugees willing to engage in corrupt practices manage to secure employment.

d) Exploitative Work Environment – Refugees employed in the formal sector often endure exploitative conditions, including low wages and unsafe work environments. These unregulated workplaces expose refugees to significant risks, and about one-fifth of refugees report workplace injuries, health issues, or exposure to hazardous conditions. As a result, many refugees in formal employment do not retain their jobs for long.

2.5 GAPS IN KNOWLEDGE

Despite many studies being carried out in Zambia, there are still a number of issues to be addressed in regards to the challenges that refugees experience in relation to social and economic integration in the formal employment. For example, it is difficult to conduct the study because most refugee areas are hard to access or some are not willing to speak up freely without fear for being taken back to their counties.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

3.1 Chapter Introduction

This chapter outlines the research methodology employed to explore the challenges in the socio-economic integration of refugees in the formal sector in Zambia. The methodology provides a framework for collecting and analyzing data, ensuring the validity and reliability of the findings.

3.2 RESEARCH APPROACH

This study utilized a mixed-methods approach, integrating both qualitative and quantitative research techniques to comprehensively examine the challenges refugees encounter in terms of socio-economic integration into formal employment in Zambia, with a specific emphasis on Lusaka. The qualitative methods allowed for an in-depth exploration of the personal experiences, perceptions, and social dynamics related to issues like illegal immigration, while the quantitative methods provided insights into demographic, economic, and environmental data (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004).

3.3 RESEARCH DESIGN

A case study was used to explore the challenges in the social-economic integration of refugees in the formal employment sector in Zambia: a case study of Lusaka, in line with the objectives of the research. (Kombo & Tromp, 2006) state that a case study seeks to describe a unit in detail, in context and holistically. It is a way of organizing data and studying it. This study allowed for an in-depth investigation of the challenges in the social-economic integration of refugees in the formal employment sector in Lusaka.

The researcher employed a qualitative methodology because it is particularly suited for exploring complex phenomena, aiming to describe, understand, and explain these phenomena from the participants' perspective (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005:94). Interviews and open-ended questions were utilized in the questionnaires to capture participants' views.

Case studies are designed to address 'how' and 'why' questions (Myers, 2009), which aligned with the objectives of this study. Therefore, qualitative techniques—being both descriptive and explanatory (Mouton, 2001)—were chosen. Moreover, (Pacho, 2015) suggests that qualitative analysis is appropriate when participants are intentionally selected, which was the case in this study. Qualitative research also aims to develop a theory that reflects the findings (Bendasolli, 2013).

(Atieno, 2002:16) argued that qualitative analysis is effective at simplifying and managing data while maintaining its complexity and context. As (Pacho, 2015) pointed out, qualitative research permits the introduction of new elements into the research process. The use of open-ended questions can lead to the discovery of new knowledge or even the formulation of additional research objectives. Pacho also emphasized the flexibility of qualitative research, which allows the researcher to explore new directions as they emerge during the study.

However, qualitative data does not quantify the frequency of linguistic features within the research findings (Atieno, 2002). According to (Atieno, 2002:17), rare phenomena are given the same attention as more common ones. Furthermore, qualitative findings are not generalizable to broader populations and are confined to the specific case study. While qualitative research can be contrasted with other studies, it cannot be generalized. Additionally, qualitative research can be time-consuming and demanding (Pacho, 2015), requiring the researcher to conduct interviews, then read, categorize, and code the results from the interviews and open-ended questions in the questionnaires.

By and large, this study used a descriptive design because it aimed to describe and summarize the characteristics or behaviors while understanding the parties involved. It focused on providing a detailed account. With using methods such as surveys, observations, case studies. This assisted the researcher to assess the knowledge on the challenges that refugees face when searching for formal employment.

3.3 STUDY POPULATION

The study population comprised 300 individuals from various stakeholder groups that are either directly or indirectly affected by the integration of refugees into the formal employment sector in Lusaka. The population size was determined based on estimates from local community records, government reports, and data provided by non-governmental organizations operating in the area. The groups involved were: 100 refugees currently residing in Lusaka, 20 government officials from the Immigration Department, around 50 representatives from non-governmental organizations and civil society groups, 50 former refugees, and 80 local residents of Lusaka where refugees are situated.

Sampling methods such as purposive sampling, snowball sampling, and random sampling were employed to select participants from each of these stakeholder groups. This approach aimed to ensure a diverse representation and a thorough coverage of various perspectives and experiences related to illegal immigration in the study areas (Creswell & Creswell, 2017).

3.4 SAMPLE SIZE

The sample size for this study was 150 participants, carefully chosen to meet both the qualitative and quantitative research requirements, ensuring a balanced representation of the various stakeholder groups involved in addressing the challenges faced by refugees in the formal employment sector in Lusaka. The sample breakdown consisted of 70 refugees currently residing in Lusaka, 60 former refugees who previously lived in Lusaka, 10 participants from organizations that focus on refugee affairs in Lusaka, and 10 participants from the immigration department.

This sample size was determined based on the concept of saturation in qualitative research (Guest et al., 2006) and power analysis for quantitative research (Soper, 2020).

To select participants from each stakeholder group, a combination of purposive sampling, snowball sampling, and random sampling techniques were employed. These methods

ensured a diverse and representative set of perspectives and experiences related to illegal immigration within the study areas (Creswell & Creswell, 2017).

3.5 SAMPLING TECHNIQUE

A simple random sampling method was used to select the refugees for participation in the study, while purposive sampling was applied to choose the key informants. Refugees were randomly selected in equal numbers to ensure there was no overrepresentation of any particular group, which could potentially lead to biased or inaccurate data interpretation.

Subjects in the population are sampled through a random process, using either a random number generator or a random number table, ensuring that every individual in the population has an equal chance of being selected for the sample (Frerichs, 2008)

3.6 DATA COLLECTION/INSTRUMENT

The study employed a structured questionnaire to collect quantitative data on participants' demographic characteristics, economic activities, and environmental perceptions. In addition, semi-structured interviews were conducted to gather detailed insights into the experiences, attitudes, and perceptions of refugees in Lusaka regarding the challenges they face in securing formal employment. Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) were also organized to encourage group interactions and collective discussions, providing participants with an opportunity to share their views and experiences on the topic. Documentary analysis of relevant reports, documents, and records from government bodies, NGOs, and community organizations was undertaken to complement the primary data sources and offer contextual background information (Bowen, 2009).

3.7 DATA ANALYSIS

Both qualitative and quantitative methods were utilized for data analysis:

Qualitative Analysis: Thematic analysis was used to examine qualitative data obtained from interviews, FGDs, and document reviews, identifying recurring themes, patterns, and categories (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

Quantitative Analysis: Descriptive statistics, inferential statistics, and regression analysis were employed to analyze the quantitative data from the surveys. This analysis helped to uncover trends in demographics, economic activities, and participants' perceptions of their environment (Field, 2013).

3.8 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Ethical standards were central to the research process, with particular attention given to informed consent, confidentiality, and the respect for participants' privacy and autonomy. All participants were provided with comprehensive details about the study's objectives, methods, and any potential risks or benefits before their consent was obtained. Confidentiality was ensured by assigning unique identifiers to participants and securely storing all collected data. Furthermore, ethical approval was obtained from the appropriate institutional review boards or ethics committees before the commencement of data collection (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011).

CHAPTER FOUR: PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

4.0 Chapter Introduction

This chapter presents findings of the study. The findings are being presented according to research objectives. The chapter will begin by presenting the demographic characteristics of respondents.

4.2 Demographic characteristics of respondents

The aim of this section is to describe the demographic and social characteristics of respondents. Demographic variables include age and sex while social variables take an account of education, marital status and main occupation. These variables are discussed in the following sub-sections.

4.1.1 Age Distribution of the participants

Table 1: Age of participants

S/No.	Age	Participants	Percentage
01	10-20	07	4
02	21-30	63	42
03	31-40	52	35
04	Above 40	28	19
Total		150	100

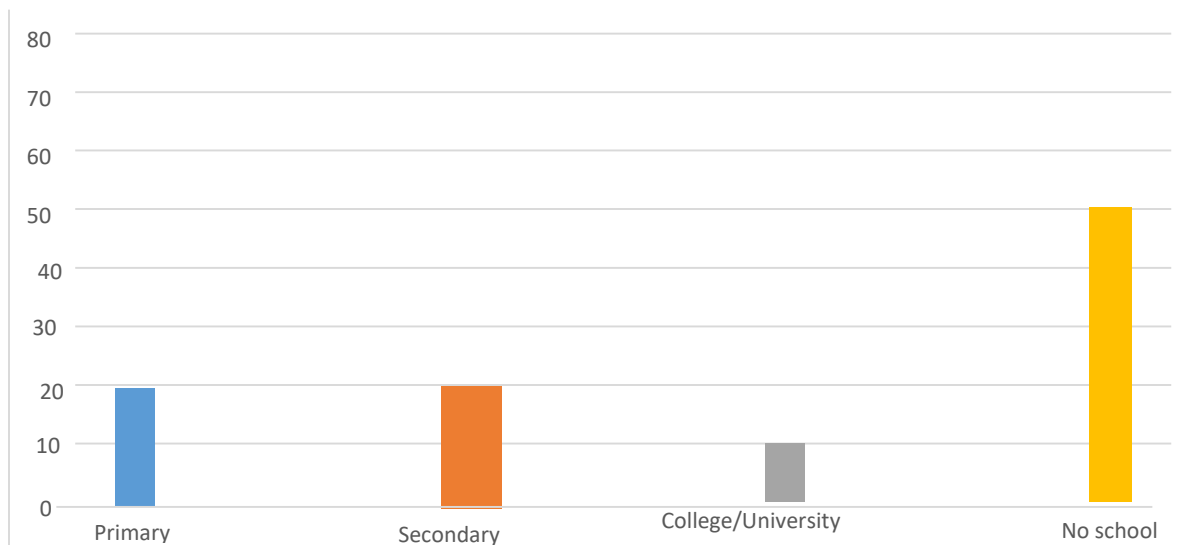
4.1.2: Sex of participants

Table 2: Sex of participants

S/No.	Sex	Number	Percentage
01	Male	100	67%
02	Female	50	33%
Total		150	100

4.1.3: Level of education

Figure 2: Level of education of the participants



4.1.4: Participation of refugee in social and economic activities.

Table 3: Participation of refugees socially and economically in Lusaka.

S/No	Response	Number	Percentage
01	Much	39	26
02	Not Much	81	54

03	Not at all	30	20
Total		150	100

4.2 RESEARCH FINDINGS

The findings are presented in line with research objectives. Prominent themes that emerged in the process where used to direct the presentation.

4.2.1 Objective one: To access the challenges refugees encounter in accessing formal employment in Lusaka

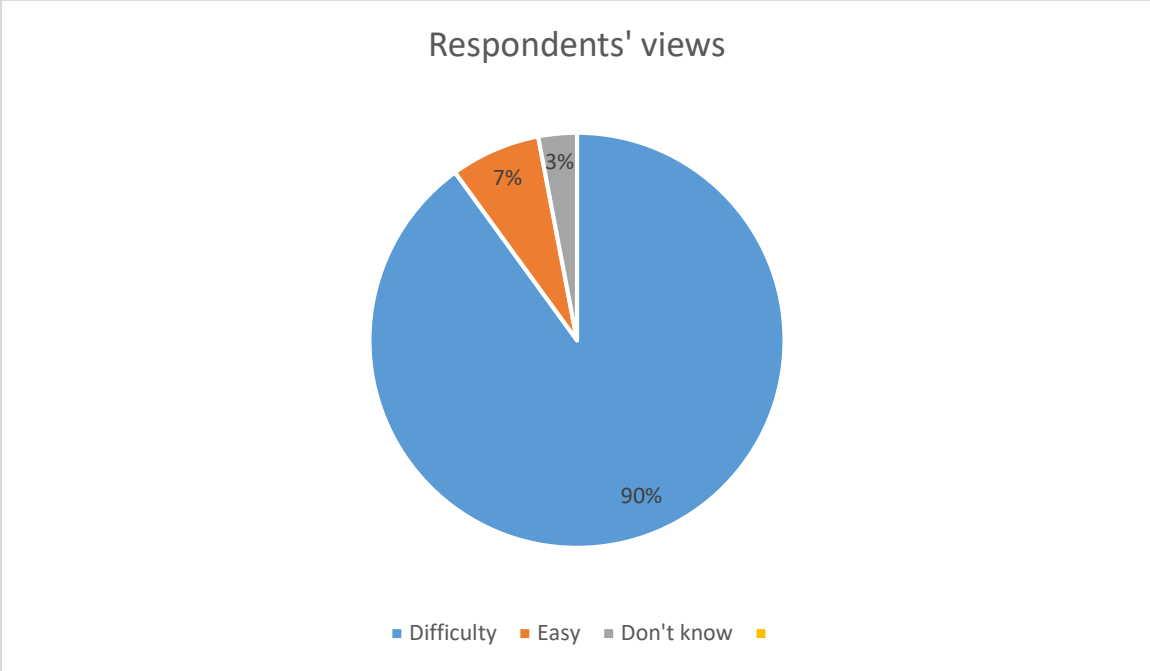
Under this objective, four themes emerged as challenges refugees encounter in accessing formal employment in Lusaka as presented below:

- (a) Work permit
- (b) Corruption and discrimination
- (c) Pervasive youth unemployment and underemployment in Lusaka
- (d) Exploitative work environment

4.2.2 Work permit

In figure 3 below, the respondents were asked how easy/ difficult it is for refugees to obtain a permit

Figure 3: how easy/difficult it is for refugees to obtain a work permit in Lusaka



As it can be seen from figure 3, 90% of the respondents said that it was difficult for refugees to get a work permit in Lusaka, while 7% said it was easy and 3% of the respondents did not know. According to one of the respondents:

It pains us. Many refugee children completed their secondary education a long time ago but they are getting old without having done anything in terms of employment. Any talk of employment implies work permits, and these are very hard to acquire.

4.2.3 Corruption and discrimination

In table 4 below, the respondents were asked if there was corruption and discrimination when it came to employing refugees in Lusaka.

Table 4: Whether there is corruption and discrimination when employing refugees in Lusaka

	YES	NO	UNSURE
TOTAL	80%	15%	5%

As it can be seen from table 3, 80% of the respondents agreed that there is corruption and discrimination when it comes to employing refugees in Lusaka, while 15% said no and 5% were unsure. As one respondent observed the following:

When you complete your high school education, even if you were to acquire a residency permit, you still would not get a job. This is because corruption is rampant here. They get bribes from people. Nowadays those that get jobs are those that know people in positions of power. For us, once one of them know that you are a refugee, they blacklist you and it is hard for you to get even just a small job to help feed the family. So we just stay at home and play when school is closed.

We do not get employment because of the label 'refugees'. So when we look for employment, we are not hired because we are Congolese.

4.2.4 Exploitative work environment

In table 5 below, respondents were asked if exploitative work made it hard for refugees to get into formal employment in Lusaka.

HOW DO THE FOLLOWING MAKE IT HARD FOR REFUGEES IN LUSAKA TO BE IN FORMAL EMPLOYMENT	PERCENTAGE
Low wages	55%
Hazardous working conditions	45%
TOTAL	100%

From table 5 above, 45% cited hazardous working conditions and 55% of the respondents said low wages made it hard for refugees to get into formal employment in Lusaka. One

respondent remarked; “It is hard [for youth refugees] to work. And when they do, they don’t get the same salary. Refugees may get half from the same job as what a Zambian is paid... they are second class citizens.”

4.2.5 High youth unemployment and underemployment in Lusaka

Figure 4: Respondents’ views on high youth unemployment in Lusaka

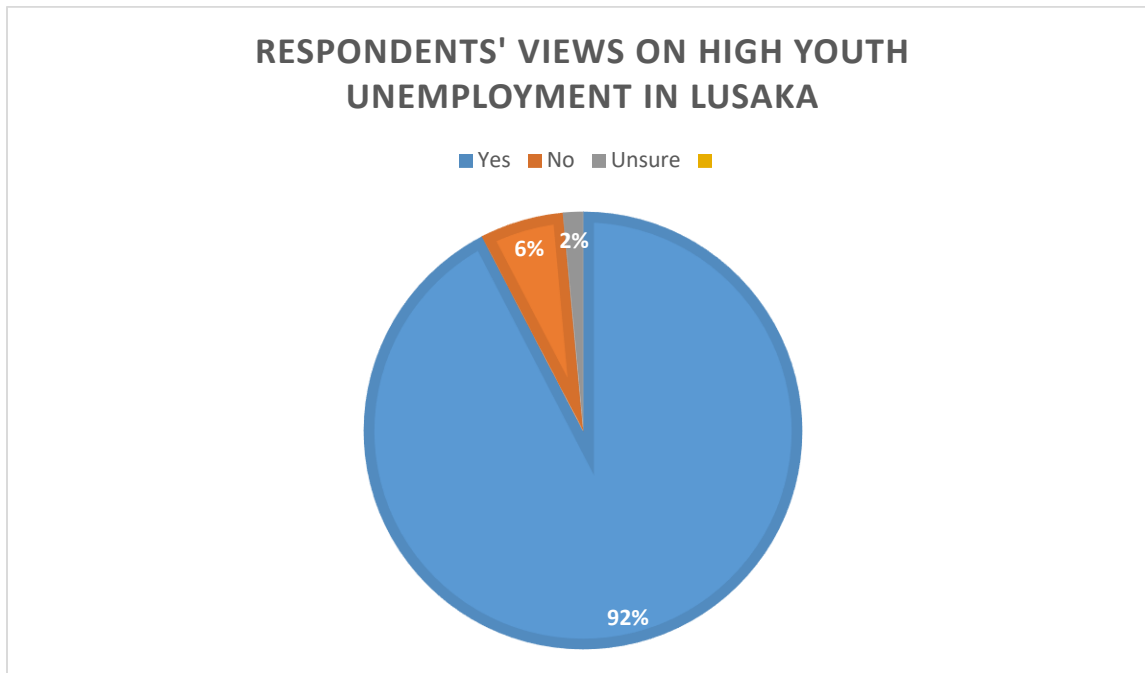


Figure 4 shows that 92% of the respondents agreed that there is high unemployment and underemployment in Lusaka, while 6% said no and only 2% were unsure if there is high unemployment and underemployment in Lusaka.

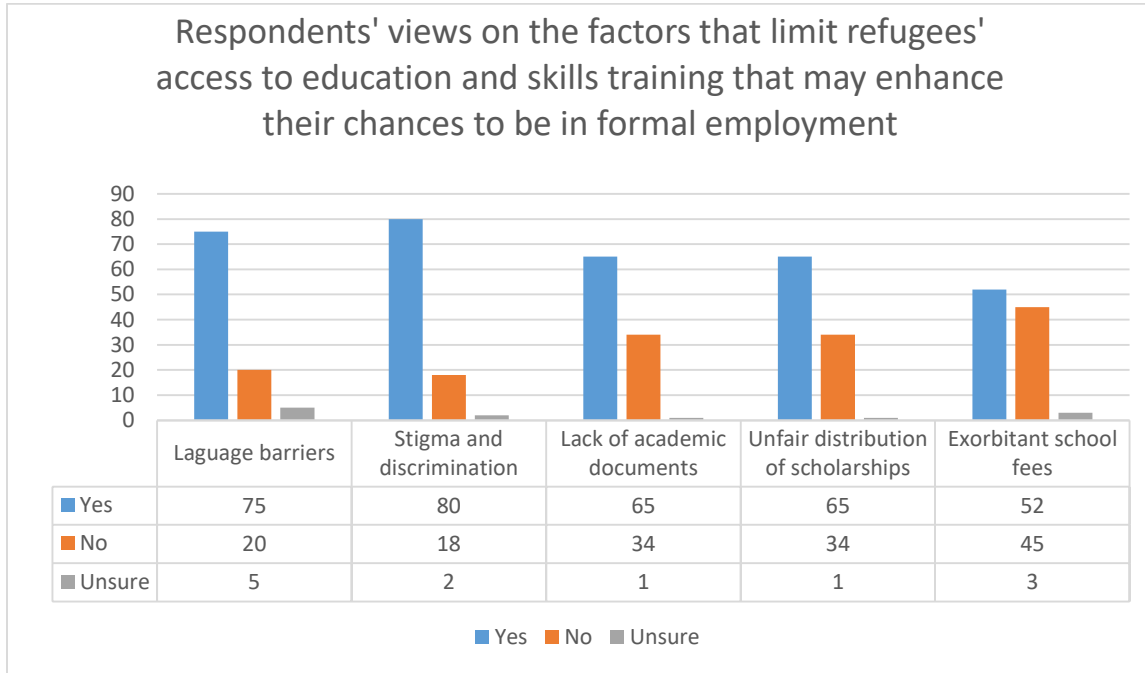
4.3 Objective two: To examine the various factors that limit the refugees’ access to education and skills training that may enhance their chances to be in formal employment in Lusaka

Under this objective, five obstacles came out that hindered refugees in Lusaka to have access to education and skills training to enable them be competitive in the job market;

- (a) Lack of academic documents
- (b) Unfair distribution of scholarship
- (c) Language barriers
- (d) Exorbitant school fees

(e) Stigma and discrimination in schools

Figure 5: Various factors that limit the refugees' access to education and skills training that may enhance their chances to be in formal employment in Lusaka



From figure 5, 75% of the respondents pointed out that language barriers made it hard for refugees in Lusaka to access education and skills training to enhance their chances of being in formal employment, while 20% of the respondent said and 5% said they were unsure. One respondent commented, “the number one [need not being met] is access to education. It’s very difficult to put them in school because of the language barrier, it often means refugees miss out.”

With regards to stigma and discrimination, 80% observed stigma and discrimination against refugees in schools as a factor, while 18% said no and only 2% said they were unsure. Interviews revealed that some children or young people fail to access education due to being sidelined. Both interviews and focus group discussions revealed that both refugee parents and children are victims of discrimination and stigma. The notable concepts that could be captured are: discrimination, harassments, exploitation, sidelined either by nationals or by refugees themselves and this has affected education for most of

the children. Several respondents reported changing their names at school to sound more “Zambian” and avoid name-calling and harassment from others. One adolescent commented: “I face discrimination at school. It’s alright when I am with friends and they do not know that I am a foreigner. But once they do, I’ll be in trouble.” Another Participant explained that “We face stigmatisation as refugee students; we are living in hardships. The communities and in the schools, they take us as different and isolated from them. They talk ill about us in this country. This causes insecurity and makes us lose self-confidence”. Furthermore, a Congolese man complained;

One of my sons stopped school because he was always addressed as Kasai by teachers and fellow pupils. Any slight mistake committed by a Congolese is blamed on Kasai. So it seems like there is a history behind Kasai that is making every Congolese to be called a Kasai.

To continue, 65% of the respondents blamed it on unfair distribution of scholarships, while 34% said no and only 1% said they were unsure. It was agreed that the distribution of scholarships in the settlement was not fairly done, some of the children have very good results that could take them to a college, university even at secondary school, but the problem is that they are not considered when offering scholarships no matter how much they apply. This has hindered their access to education. A Rwandese young boy aged 20 complained; “I completed grade twelve in 2010 with 14 points, I applied for a scholarship with the Albert Einstein German Academic Refugee Initiative Fund (DAFI) but I was not picked.” Furthermore, other participants explained:

Sometimes you just feel useless, like there is no point in going to school, because even if you get good marks, you aren’t going to get bursar to go to university.

We do not know if most of us will be able to go to school next year because the fees have been difficult to find and we have not cleared our previous balances.

Similarly, 65% of the respondents blamed it on lack of academic documents, while 34% said no and only 1% said they were unsure. The findings from interviews and focus group discussions revealed that lack of academic documents or proper documentation so to say for previous education is an obstacle to the access of education. Most of the young people

who are supposed to be at secondary and tertiary level are at home because they have nothing to prove that they have been to school in their countries of origins. This is because when they left their homes all the papers remained others were destroyed in their houses, even those that managed to escape with them; they got lost on the way due to hard and long journey. The following excerpts attest to lack of academic papers: One Congolese young girl aged 24 narrated; *“all my papers that prove that I have been to school went with water when I was trying to cross Congo River in Congo so I have nothing to show.”* A Sudanese young man aged 26 narrated;

I left my home country in hurry I could not pick my diploma, when arrived here I went to ask for a place at a college, I was told to apply and attach previous academic papers which I don't have so that is how I failed to continue with my education.

Furthermore, 52% pointed out exorbitant school fees, while 45% said no and 3% were unsure as to whether delay in age was a factor limiting refugees' access to education and skills training to enhance their chances of being in formal employment. It was noted that when a child is sent to a boarding school, the fees become a problem, they pay more than K1000 for boarders, and as for tertiary it is even worse because refugees under international students in most colleges and universities who are charged more than what the Zambians pay. As a result, so many children are at home because they cannot afford the required school fees. Sudanese young man aged 20 noted;

I completed my grade 12 with good results worthy to take me to a University or a College however when I got a quotation I realised that the fees were too much for my parents to afford then I decided to stay home. This situation forced me into early marriage.

4.4 Objective three: To establish self-employment activities that refugees decide to pursue over formal employment in Lusaka

4.4.1: Self-employment activities that refugees in Lusaka engage in

Table 6 Lusaka self-employment activities by refugee nationality (percent distribution of top three self-employment activities by refugee nationality).

Self-employment activities by refugee nationality	Percent
Congolese	
Hawking/vending (not owning any shops)	28.6
Small shop	21.4
Selling clothing/textiles/shoes/accessories	14
Somali	
Restaurant	25
Small shop (petty trading)	18
Butchery	16
Medium/Large shop (employing other people: super-market, wholesale trading, etc.)	10
Factory workers	10
Burundi	
Small shop (petty trading)	42
Hawking/vending (not owning any shops)	37
Rwandese	
Small shop (petty trading)	34
Medium/Large shop (employing other people: super-market, wholesale trading, etc.)	25
Restaurant	19

The table above shows the self-employment activities that refugees in Lusaka engage in per nationality. 28.6% of Congolese were involved in hawking/vending, while 21% ran small shops and 14% were selling either clothes, textiles, shoes or accessories. With

Somalis, 25% ran small shops, 18% ran butchery business while 10% ran large shops/supermarkets employing people in the process. 42% of Burundis ran small shops while 37% were hawkers/vendors. With regards to Rwandese, 34% ran small shops, 25% large shops/supermarkets and 19% were in restaurant business.

One respondent observed some of the major self-employment activities orientation differences among the different refugees' nationalities when he said:

Some refugees are just business minded like the Rwandans and Burundians who run groceries with ease. The Rwandese and Burundians are very good and disciplined people, you would give them a little something to start a grocery within a few months/years you would see how they would just progress because of their disciplined minds and lifestyles.

The Rwandans and Burundians mostly run grocery shops, some rent those groceries and others are fortunate enough to own the same groceries. They are a disciplined people and lead disciplined lifestyles, a thing which helps them in managing capital and profits. They say that their money is best kept in such a business-like grocery, wholesale or shop.

4.4.2 Conclusion

In this chapter, findings of the study on the challenges in the social-economic integration of refugees in the formal employment sector in Zambia: a case study of Lusaka have been presented. These findings have been presented according to the three objectives enshrined in chapter one. The chapter that follows will dwell on discussion of the findings of this research study.

CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

5.1 Chapter Introduction

This chapter outlines the findings concerning the challenges refugees face in their socio-economic integration into the formal employment sector in Zambia, using Lusaka as a case study. The research was guided by the following questions:

- What are the primary challenges refugees encounter when searching for formal employment in Lusaka?
- How do various factors limit refugees' access to education and skills that may improve their chances of securing formal employment in Lusaka?
- To what extent do socio-economic factors, such as access to resources and legal restrictions, influence refugees' decisions to pursue self-employment rather than formal employment in Lusaka?

5.1: Challenges refugees face when searching for formal employment in Lusaka

To obtain a work permit, refugees must provide a job offer letter, a job contract, and a letter of support from the Commissioner for Refugees, in addition to presenting educational or professional qualifications. The organization offering the job must also demonstrate that no Zambian is qualified for the position. Furthermore, the employment permit fee is K6,000, with a government-sponsored permit costing K3,000. While these requirements pose significant barriers, some refugees still manage to secure employment, particularly in the medical and education sectors, where there is a shortage of skilled workers due to brain drain.

Securing employment presents another significant challenge. Many refugees, particularly those with prior experience in skilled professions in their home countries, find it frustrating when they cannot obtain similar positions in Zambia. This difficulty is highlighted by (Stige and Sveaass, 2010), who report that employers in Zambia generally prefer local work experience, and foreign qualifications may not be recognized. Additionally, refugees and immigrants are vulnerable to workplace discrimination and exploitation. As noted by (Rauchfuss and Schmolze, 2008), refugees can be exploited due to their urgent need for employment, which may lead them to accept undesirable or hazardous roles.

Refugees in Lusaka face considerable legal restrictions on employment opportunities. Most start at the bottom of a job market that is already characterized by high levels of unemployment and underemployment. A significant number of refugees, particularly youth, have limited access to regulated employment. Only about 20% of refugees interviewed had worked in the past year, and of those, only 3.4% reported that their employment was formally registered. This unregulated employment exposes them to unsafe conditions, with approximately 20% of respondents reporting injuries or health issues related to their work environment.

5.2: Various factors that limit refugees' access to education and skills training that may enhance their chances to be in formal employment in Lusaka

Zambia is a signatory to the 1989 Convention on the Rights of the Child but has made reservations concerning Article 22(1) of the 1951 Refugee Convention, meaning it does not provide the same level of elementary education to refugee children as it does to nationals. Refugees in Lusaka without urban residency permits are particularly vulnerable regarding education access. Children of such refugees often cannot attend basic primary school due to their family's illegal status. While organizations like UNHCR, JRS, and YMCA provide limited scholarships for these children, these opportunities are scarce.

Refugees who spontaneously settle in Zambia can access government schools if they can afford the fees, but secondary education remains out of reach for many due to the costs involved. Refugees, like Zambian citizens, can enrol in secondary schools if they can pay school fees and afford an education permit, which costs 100 USD. However, the financial hardships faced by most refugee households mean that refugee youth often rely on limited scholarships from donors to cover these expenses. Higher education is similarly inaccessible to most refugees due to the high cost of tuition. Though refugees can apply for DAFI scholarships through UNHCR, the number of scholarships awarded is very limited.

Several barriers restrict refugee youth's access to education in Lusaka, including:

Language barriers: A major challenge refugees face when they arrive in Zambia is the difficulty of learning English and other local languages. This is consistent with Davidson and Carr (2010), who highlight that language barriers can lead to delays in healthcare and other critical services. For refugees who do not speak English or other local languages, securing employment, interacting socially, or even completing daily tasks like shopping or filling out forms becomes exceedingly difficult. In schools, English is the primary language of instruction at the secondary and tertiary levels, although many community schools in Lusaka use local languages. Without formal language integration programs, refugees who are not already proficient in these languages face substantial challenges in educational settings. While some refugees attend English classes, finding time to study while managing work and family responsibilities is often difficult. Many refugees reported that their education inadequately prepares them with the skills needed to compete for jobs, and that anti-refugee discrimination exacerbates the difficulty of finding employment.

Stigmatization and discrimination in schools: Refugee students often experience stigmatization and discrimination, particularly in secondary schools and universities. Being labelled as "refugees" in schools can lead to feelings of alienation and loss of self-confidence. Refugee students in Lusaka schools, whether near or within settlement areas, frequently encounter discrimination, which can negatively impact their sense of belonging and overall educational performance.

Exorbitant school fees: In Lusaka, the cost of an education permit for refugees is 100 USD. Refugees also face additional expenses, such as project fees, transportation, food, and school uniforms, which make school attendance unaffordable for many. While UNHCR provides limited support to highly vulnerable refugees, it is insufficient to address the broader financial barriers. These economic and social challenges are even more pronounced when it comes to accessing tertiary education, where Zambians are typically the only ones eligible for government financial support.

Quality of schools: Some refugee youth drop out of school or do not enrol at all because they perceive that the education they receive will not help them advance in life. Several community schools attended by refugee youth fail to meet national standards due to overcrowding, lack of qualified teachers, insufficient learning materials, and inadequate infrastructure. As one key informant explained, "Sometimes the teachers are not properly qualified... Sometimes the teacher doesn't show up for work. The services are quite compromised."

Lack of academic documents: Refugees who missed years of schooling during their migration journey often face challenges reintegrating into the Zambian education system. Some refugees never completed their education in their home countries, and despite their desire to continue learning, they are uncertain about where to start due to the lack of academic records. One respondent noted, "Some of us did not start schooling from here; we started from our home countries and stopped at some point because we had to flee the war. We don't know what we should do."

5.3: Self-employment activities refugees pursue over formal employment in Lusaka

According to the Refugees (Control) Act (1970), refugees seeking a self-employment permit must have assets or cash amounting to K120, 000.00. The same requirement applies to external investors who must have an investment of \$250,000.00. Additionally, refugees need a supporting letter from the Commission for Refugees (COR) and must pay a statutory fee of K5, 000.00. They are also required to present a certificate of business registration or incorporation in Zambia, as well as a bank statement.

Given the strict regulations surrounding refugees' access to formal employment, self-employment becomes the dominant form of livelihood for refugees in Lusaka. However, according to immigration laws, self-employment without a permit is considered illegal, as refugees are required to have work permits to engage in both formal and informal employment. Several refugees raised concerns about the restrictive nature of work permits. For example, if a work permit is granted to a church minister, the individual would be breaking the law if involved in any livelihood activities beyond the church ministry. Similarly, if a permit is issued to a husband running a grocery store, the wife would be violating the law if she assisted him in selling goods (Costa, 2006).

Refugees in Lusaka, particularly those from the case study areas, engage in informal economic activities to sustain themselves. Many refugees are self-employed or work within the informal sector. The study found that the refugees interviewed were involved in various types of businesses to earn a living. Opportunities within Lusaka's market led many refugees to engage in small-scale businesses such as selling groceries, second-hand clothes, and street vending. Running grocery shops was the most common business activity. Items like sugar, cooking oil, salt, and bread were among the most sold products in these stores. Refugees operating grocery shops enjoyed daily sales due to the high demand for essential goods. These businesses were often based in the refugees' residential areas, at home, at local markets, or in the Central Business District (CBD).

Entrepreneurial refugees, particularly from Burundi and Rwanda, have been notably proactive in seeking business opportunities in Lusaka. Many have established small businesses without the necessary permits from the Refugees Office. Although these businesses are technically illegal, refugees often continue to operate them due to the strong desire to survive. A few refugees possess work and investor permits, but most do not have the required capital to meet the permit fees. Despite the risk of legal consequences, the necessity for economic survival often outweighs the fear of potential prosecution.

The study revealed that Somali refugees in Lusaka had a more diversified range of livelihood activities compared to other refugee groups. Despite this, there were several

commonalities among the four refugee communities observed in Lusaka: grocery shops, small retail businesses, hawking, and vending were prevalent across all groups. Additionally, restaurant businesses and medium-to-large-scale shops, including supermarkets and wholesale trade, were especially popular among Somali and Rwandese refugees.

Congolese refugees, on the other hand, tended to specialize in selling clothing, textiles, shoes, and accessories. Many of them focused on selling chitenge materials, a popular product they source from the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). They have developed strong connections and frequently travel to the border to reorder these materials. The long-standing relationship between Congolese refugees and chitenge materials illustrates the enduring nature of this entrepreneurial activity.

Gender roles in business among Congolese refugees are relatively inclusive of women. In fact, there is some specialization, with women focusing on chitenge sales, second-hand clothing (salaula), and personal beauty services, such as hair salons. A key informant observed that it was not uncommon for refugee couples to operate separate shops. For example, a husband might run a shop at the COMESA market, while his wife runs one at the city market, both selling similar goods.

Hairdressing is another prominent self-employment activity, particularly among Masai men from Tanzania and Kenya, who operate hairdressing businesses in Lusaka. This trend is supported by the profitability of the business, which often leads these refugees to invite family members and friends from their home countries to join them. This reflects the dual labour market theory of migration, which posits that refugees often invite their relatives once they have become established in their new country (Fussel, 2012; Spooner, 2015).

In conclusion, Zambia has made reservations to Articles 17 (2) and 26 of the 1951 Convention. Under the country's immigration and refugee control laws, refugees wishing to start businesses must apply for investor permits and meet the minimum investment requirement of K120, 000.00. Those who meet this threshold can apply for an investor's

permit by paying a fee of K5, 000.00. However, these conditions are often unattainable for many refugees, particularly since most fled their countries under urgent circumstances and do not have the financial capacity to invest in business ventures.

CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Introduction

This chapter provide a conclusion of the whole study. The main purpose of this research was to explore the challenges in the social-economic integration of refugees in the formal employment sector in Zambia: A case study of Lusaka.

6.1: Conclusion

The first objective of this study was to assess the primary challenges refugees face when searching for formal employment in Lusaka. The key challenges identified were: difficulty obtaining work permits, corruption, low wages, hazardous working conditions, and high unemployment rates in both Zambia and Lusaka in particular.

The second objective was to investigate the various factors that limit refugees' access to education and skills training that could improve their employability in Lusaka. The findings revealed that refugees in Lusaka face barriers such as language difficulties, stigma, and discrimination in their pursuit of education and skills development. Furthermore, the high cost and low quality of education, along with delays in reaching an appropriate age for education, contribute to refugees being unable to acquire meaningful education or skills that would improve their chances of securing formal employment.

The third objective was to identify self-employment activities that refugees in Lusaka choose to pursue as an alternative to formal employment. The findings show that refugees often engage in small-scale business ventures, such as running grocery stores that sell essential goods, second-hand clothes (salaula), shoes, accessories, or operate as street vendors.

6.2: Recommendations

The findings of this study lead to the following recommendations:

1. **Relax the restrictions on refugees' right to work and freedom of movement:**

Even before Zambia fully aligns with the 1951 Convention on the Status of Refugees, it could ease the stringent restrictions on refugees' rights to work and freedom of movement. This would allow refugees more opportunities to engage in productive activities that contribute to the economy.

(a) A potential starting point could involve linking the relaxation of these conditions to the length of time a refugee has been in the country. For example, refugees who have been in Zambia for up to five years, between five and ten years, and more than ten years could have varying levels of rights to work and freedom of movement. Given that Zambia has not made reservations on Article 18 of the 1951 Convention and the Refugees (Control) Act of 1970 does not prohibit self-employment, allowing refugees to engage in self-employment could be a feasible first step. Over time, as refugees establish their businesses, they could transition to formal work permits, reflecting their business experience.

(b) Consider extending the validity period of gate passes for refugees to six months or twelve months with automatic renewals, provided there are no security concerns. This approach would reduce administrative costs for both the government and the refugees while providing more time for refugees to engage in livelihood activities.

2. **Encourage legal channels for self-employment activities:** Currently, many refugees engage in self-employment, but their activities are often viewed as "illegal," with some refugees paying protection fees to officials. It is recommended that the government relax these restrictions, allowing refugees to pay fees and taxes directly into public funds rather than through informal, illegal channels.

3. **Support local communities in embracing refugees' skills:** Encouraging local communities to recognize and value the skills refugees bring could improve entrepreneurship and reduce competition-related tensions. This, in turn, would

decrease xenophobia and foster a more inclusive environment for refugees and locals.

4. **Support refugees in building self-sufficiency:** More efforts are needed to help refugees become self-sufficient through access to education and skills development. This should include initiatives for peer support networks, as well as facilitating access to further education to enhance their competitiveness in the job market. Additionally, local-level coordination should be strengthened to raise awareness of where refugees can access emergency services.
5. **Integrate refugees' skills into broader employment strategies:** Given the high unemployment and informality in Lusaka's job market, strategies should be developed to better utilize refugees' skills. These strategies should be incorporated into broader efforts to tackle unemployment in Lusaka and improve the overall employment landscape.
6. **Implement a screening process for refugees:** The government should establish a comprehensive screening process to distinguish between military and non-military refugees. This would help tailor more effective policies for their social and economic integration while ensuring national security. Additionally, this screening would enable skilled refugees to access appropriate employment opportunities.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Questionnaire for Immigration officers



STUDY TITLE: Exploring the challenges in the social-economic integration of refugees in the formal employment sector in Zambia: A case study of Lusaka.

INTRODUCTION

Dear respondent,

I am a post graduate student at the University of Lusaka pursuing a post-graduate Master of Arts program in Peace and Security Studies. I am currently undertaking a research study on the challenges in the social-economic integration of refugees in the formal employment sector in Zambia: A case study of Lusaka.

You have been selected to participate in this study. I am therefore humbly requesting you to fully participate by providing responses to the questions asked.

The information collected will be used for academic purposes only, and all information will be treated in confidence. Therefore, your identity will be anonymous in reporting the findings of this research.

INSTRUCTIONS

Use a tick to indicate your choice for multiple choice questions in the spaces provides

Write down your responses in the spaces provided

Use a tick to indicate your choice for multiple choice questions in the spaces provides

Write down your responses in the spaces provided for open ended questions

Background Information

1. What is your sex? (a) Male [] (b) Female []

2. What is your age group?

(a) Below 20 years []

(b) 21 to 40 years []

(c) 41 to 60 years []

(d) Above 60 years []

3. What is your highest level of your education?

(a) Primary []

(b) Secondary []

(c) College []

(d) University [] (e) Other [] (Specify).....

4. How long have you been working for the Immigration Department?

(a) Less than 5 years [] (b) 5 to 10 years [] (c) more than 10 years []

5. What is your current position in the immigration department?

.....

6. How long have you been serving in the position mentioned above?

(a) Less than 5 years [] (b) 5 to 10 years [] (c) more than 10 years []

7. Regarding refugees in Lusaka, why do many refugees decide to pursue self-employment over formal employment?

.....
.....
.....

8. What are the challenges refugees face to be in formal employment in Lusaka?

.....
.....
.....

9. As an officer in the immigration department, what would you recommend as to what should be done to reduce the challenges in the social-economic integration of refugees in the formal sector in Lusaka?

.....
.....
.....

Thank you for responding to this questionnaire.

Appendix 2

Interview Guide for Refugees

1. What is your age group?
 - (a) Below 20 years []
 - (b) 21 - 40 years []
 - (c) 41 - 60 years []
 - (d) Above 60 years []
2. What is your nationality (country of origin)?
3. If married, what is the nationality of your spouse?
4. What is your highest level of education?
5. When did you come to Zambia?

6. Did you come alone into Zambia or did you come with any your family members (wife and/or children)?
7. Why did you leave your country of origin?
8. How long have you lived in Lusaka City?
9. Why did you choose to settle in Lusaka City and not any other part of Zambia?
10. Are you in any formal employment? If so, what kind of employment?
11. What is your monthly income?

(a) Less than K1000 [] (b) K1000 to K5000 [] (c) Above K5000 []
12. At your place of work, how do Zambians treat you and other foreigners (if any)?
13. Apart from your job, do you have any other income generating ventures?
14. If yes, specify.
15. What challenges do you face as an outsider (not Zambian) in Lusaka City?
16. What would you recommend the government of the Republic of Zambia to be doing to improve the welfare of the refugees in Zambia and Lusaka in particular?

Thank you for your time.

Appendix 3

Interview Guide for former refugees/local residents

1. What is your age group?
 - a) Below 20 years []
 - b) 21to 40 years []
 - c) 41to 60 years []
 - d) Above 60 years []
2. If married, what is the nationality of your spouse?
3. What is your highest level of education?
4. How long have you been staying in Lusaka City?
5. What made you settle in Lusaka City?

6. Are you in any formal employment?
7. If yes to the question above, what is your monthly income?
 - a) Less than K1000 []
 - (b) K1000 to K5000 []
 - (c) Above K5000 []
8. Do you have any refugees at your place of work?
9. If so, how do you associate with the refugees at places of work?
10. Apart from your job, do you have any income generating ventures?
11. In your income generating ventures (especially small businesses), what competition do you face with undocumented immigrants to the City?
12. What is your residential area in Lusaka City?
13. How long have you been staying in your residential area in Lusaka City?
14. How do Zambians associate with refugees in your residential area?
15. What reasons would you give for the high number of refugees in Zambia?
16. What are the reasons why refugees choose to settle in Lusaka City other than in other parts of the Country?
17. What recommendations would you suggest in order to arrest the challenge in the socio-economic integration of refugees in the formal employment in Lusaka?

Thank you for your time.

Appendix 4

Plagiarism Report



15.61% **68.70%**
SIMILARITY OVERALL POTENTIALLY AI
SCANNED ON: 19 JAN 2025, 6:26 AM

Similarity report

Your text is highlighted according to the matched content in the results above.



AI Detector Results

Highlighted sentences with the lowest perplexity, most likely generated by AI.



Report #24465067



Appendix 5
Checklist

SCHOOL OF POSTGRADUATE STUDIES
12TH TO 20TH JANUARY 2025 GBS800 DISSERTATION SUBMISSION

No	Item	Done
1	Were you registered for GBS800 in the JUL-DEC 2024 semester?	YES
2	Has your FINAL DISSERTATION been signed by your supervisor ¹ ?	YES
3	Have you attached the plagiarism similarity report to the appendix?	YES
4	Is your plagiarism similarity report below 20 percent together with the AI generated?	YES

¹ Please ensure that the “SUBMISSION OF DISSERTATION FOR EXAMINATION FORM” (available on page 43 of the dissertation guidelines) is printed and signed by your supervisor and included as part of your submission.

	Please append the similarity report to your dissertation.	
5	Have you submitted a soft copy version of your dissertation to the UNIVERSITY CLASS called “GBS 800 FINAL SUBMISSIONS- 12TH - 20TH JAN 2025?” See point (3) on the next page for more details.	YES
6	What is your dissertation’s total word count (including references and appendices)?	Fifteen Thousand eight hundred and sixty-two WORDS
	Candidate Name: BWALYA CHUNGU	
	Student Number: MPC23119828	
	Signature: B. CHUNGU	
	Date: 16/01/2025	

EACH STUDENT MUST ATTACH THE FOLLOWING SIGNED CHECKLIST AS PART OF THEIR DISSERTATION SUBMISSION.

A STUDENT WHO DOES NOT MEET ALL REQUIREMENTS LISTED IN THE CHECKLIST ABOVE MAY NOT BE READY FOR SUBMISSION AND MAY HAVE TO RE-REGISTER FOR GBS800 IN THE FIRST SEMESTER OF 2025.

DETAILS REGARDING EACH ITEM ON THE CHECKLIST

No	Item
1	<p>If you were not registered for GBS 800 for the period JUL-DEC 2024 you must do so otherwise you risk:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not being scheduled for dissertation defense • Not receiving communication • Not receiving your GBS800 results • Not meeting graduation criteria

2	<p>If supervisor can't sign off the hard copy dissertation, approval for submission can be submitted by either:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appending an electronic signature in the dissertation, or • Sending consent via email to abby.nakalinda@unilus.ac.zm or jmwewa@unilus.ac.zm (copying the student) the email must then be printed and included as part of the submission.
3	GBS 800 FINAL SUBMISSIONS- 12TH -20TH JAN 2025
4	Ensure your word count is as per University requirement (i.e. 15,000-20,000 words).
5	If anything is unclear, email the GBS800 coordinator or postgraduate office.