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Educating Refugee Children out of Refugee Misery: A qualitative Assessment of Refugee Education in Uganda

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ABSTRACT

Given that urban refugee education has been understudied, this study explored the relevance of secondary education to urban refugees in Kampala, Uganda. The study argues that despite the global policy and rhetoric of linear processes for refugees - going back home, integration, and relocation - the trajectories of refugees are multi-layered and/or precarious and as such, there is uncertainty on how the designing and delivery of relevant urban refugee secondary education can be approached. It found that equipping refugees with socialisation competences needed to be accorded priority. It also revealed that the curriculum being English-centric, it is considered inappropriate to the refugees' lived experiences yet other participants regarded it appropriate. The study demonstrated that dropping out of school due to hostilities and economic constraints amid the high cost of education, high rent, unemployment and nepotistic hiring were concerns to refugees yet Ugandan educators indicated that refugees were not marginalised in schools. Conclusively, collaborative learning pedagogies instead of the conventional top-down pedagogies could foster mutual learning and relevance to the diversity in education spaces.

Keywords: Urban refugee education, Refugee secondary education, Refugee education in Kampala

Introduction

Forced migration and conflicts being protracted processes, they necessitate reconsidering the education of refugees in the long run, linking it to both repatriation and the usually, continuous stay in host communities (Dryden-Peterson 2017). It is therefore pertinent to interrogate the multi-layered forces shaping access to education which is relevant to refugees residing in urban contexts (Erwin *et al*. 2020). A

study conducted by Khasalamwa-Mwandha (2021) in Adjumani District in Uganda revealed that while to the majority of the Sudanese refugee households, security and education for the children take precedence, appropriateness of the education experiences in the host communities was dependent on the former's continuing to study in Uganda. The study further showed that refugee families were better off educating their secondary school children in Sudan where education is cheaper and more appropriate because the teaching and learning in schools in the host community does not sufficiently tackle the educational needs of students who have multiple languages and customs (Khasalamwa-Mwandha 2021). The current study argues that despite the global policies and rhetoric of a linear process for refugees - going back home, integration, and relocation - the trajectories of refugees are multi-layered and/or precarious and as such, there is uncertainty on how to design and deliver urban refugee secondary education which is relevant to them (Dryden-Peterson 2017). The study uses the term urban refugees to refer to people who forcibly leave their countries of origin due to conflict and related predicaments, are granted legal status as refugees in the host communities, and ultimately live in cities and/or towns (Erwin *et al*. 2020).

Research indicates that the specific necessities of refugees have hitherto been neglected in policy and scholarship, which in turn, has undermined their integration in host communities (Taylor & Sidhu 2012). There is also substantial research regarding the material conditions of refugees around the globe (Block *et al*. 2014; Taylor & Sidhu 2012; Hos 2020; Pugh, Every & Hattam 2012; Vergou 2019) and increasing scholarship pertaining to the situations of refugees in sub-Saharan Africa (Balyejjusa 2017, 2019; Bhagat 2020; Dryden-Peterson 2006a, 2006b, 2017). However, there is an intriguing paucity of studies on urban refugee education (Erwin *et al*. 2020; Hos 2020). This qualitative study therefore explores the potential of education to uplift students from the misery that accrues from the refugee status.

By illuminating the contradictions in participants' conceptions of how a relevant urban refugee secondary education curriculum could look like , the study contributes to literature on refugee education in Uganda, sub-Saharan Africa, and the global South. The study is also crucial to understanding and appreciating that how to educate and prepare educators and education institutions to address the needs of refugee students, is a collective responsibility of local students, teachers, the community, and the refugee students themselves (Pugh, Every & Hattam 2012). The findings of the study could be valuable to refugee educators, students or researchers, and practitioners (Taylor & Sidhu 2012) as well as shape policies on refugees and their (secondary) education in host communities in and beyond the African contexts.

This study derives from qualitative case study data collected in July 2017 in Kisenyi ward, Kampala for my thesis for Master of Research and Public Policy. Kisenyi was selected for study because as Balyejjusa (2019) posits, it is where the majority of the urban refugees in Uganda live. The data was collected

through conducting individual and group interviews (Berg 2001), purposively sampled (Cohen, Manion & Morrison 2007) and thematically analysed (Braun & Clarke 2006; Creswell 2012) owing to the flexibility of a thematic approach to data analysis. The study engaged thirty three participants, of whom 21 were Somali refugees, and 12 were Ugandans. Individual interviews were carried out with a Somali refugee opinion leader and a staff of InterAid Uganda. In line with participants' right to engage (not) in the study, the rest of the staff of InterAid opted not to participate in the study when approached, stating that they had other engagements. It is however important to note that InterAid Uganda facilitated access to the Kisenyi Somali refugee communities and offered one of their Somali staff to help in interpretation during the interviews with Somali refugees. Likewise, four group interviews were conducted as follows; one group engaged with 11 refugee parents who had their children in secondary school, eight refugee secondary school students, eight secondary school teachers, and four opinion leaders in Kinsenyi. As Yin (2014) commends, the focus group interviews enabled the participants to freely express themselves during data collection.

The paper is divided into six parts- the introduction, the global refugee education scene as explored in previous research, theoretical framework, findings and discussion, and finally a conclusion and implications. I first introduce the paper, highlighting the rationale and contribution of the study. The paper next elucidates the global refugee education scene as explored in previous research in different host contexts. It then lays out the theoretical framework, and presents as well as discusses findings of the current study. The paper further points out the implications for policy, practice and further research and finally concludes that collaborative learning pedagogies instead of the conventional top-down pedagogies could foster mutual learning and relevance to a multiplicities in diverse education settings, of which refugees are part. The subsequent sections delve deeper into the foregoing aspects.

The global refugee education scene as explored in prior research

Rights of refugees to just treatment without ethnic or racial and other forms of segregation, including, though not limited to access to basic education, are guaranteed by Uganda's policy framework (Government of Uganda 2006). Without nurturing reciprocal appreciation of the inherent worth of all people in a socially diverse context, there is tendency for the dominant social group(s) to alienate the rest (Agbenyega & Klibthong 2013). This is supportive of the contention that urban refugees are oppressed and their predicaments exacerbated by their unrelenting pursuit of self-sustenance in host communities (Bhagat 2020; Dryden-Peterson 2006a). Agbenyega and Klibthong's postulation also reflects research conducted in Uganda foregrounding the presence of latent fees, financial appropriation, and elimination of the less privileged from schooling (Dartzberger, 2018) which exacerbates the latter's drop-out rates in

secondary and tertiary education (Datzberger, 2018; Uganda Bureau of Statistics 2017). The requirement by the UNHCR and the government of Uganda that refugees be self-sustaining in order to vacate camp settlements is also prohibitive and infringes on their freedom of movement (Balyejjusa 2017). Similarly, Balyejjusa (2019) postulates that refugees are perpetually understood as deficient and requiring support yet Somali refugees in Kampala are agentic in addressing their basic necessities of life given the activities they participated in which were instrumental to their welfare. This is also supported by Bhagat's (2020) study in Nairobi, Kenya. These studies foregrounded the discrimination of refugees evidenced by deficit narratives about them, and the jeopardies related to the pursuit of self-reliance in neoliberal logics. However, the aims and some cases contexts of the studies being different, the current study is critical for sound contextual conclusions regarding urban refugee secondary education in Uganda.

Further, the worsening lack of jobs and economic engagements resulting from the Covid-19 pandemic exacerbate these predicaments for the poor and refugees yet systemic inclusion of refugees in education did not translate into relational inclusion in schools in Kenya and Uganda (Dryden-Peterson 2020) despite the prevalent country neutral interventions. Moreover, where refugees attend different class shifts, the content of what they study is not relevant to civic role considerations (Dryden-Peterson 2020). Due to the multiplicity of caregiving realities, poverty, and instability at family level (Datzberger 2018; Erwin *et al.* 2020), significant others among relatives are crucial partners in scholarship and planning to tackle (secondary) education of urban refugees (Erwin *et al.* 2020). This echoes the position of the Government of Uganda (2008) that caregivers and parents are important actors in education as they have a duty to avail basic needs, engage in communal assistance to the education institution, and raise morally decent children as well as get them formally documented. While the studies illuminate the contradictions of refugee inclusion in education and the intricacy of the role played by stakeholders (refugee households, educators, and the host community as well as refugee students) in education of refugees, the persistent contradictions in how urban refugee education could be approached warrant the current study.

In lieu of educational leadership, community-based organisations in Australia have availed important resources to facilitate educators' work with refugee students (Taylor & Sidhu 2012) to refocus the trajectories and cater for the probability of protracted stay and need for education in exile (Dryden-Peterson 2017). Many a time, this requires internal and external institutions to cooperate with the school to widen refugee students' options, including language trainings, and working towards harmonious living with the host community (Dryden-Peterson 2017). However, refugees' lived realities are alienated by the content of education in schools due to policy and politics yet even the nationals themselves are facing these socio-economic asymmetries because many places which include refugee students already serve underprivileged nationals (Dryden-person 2016; Dryden-Peterson *et al.* 2019; Dryden-Peterson, 2020).

For instance, following the Al-Shabaab attack on Kenya, much more state hostility was directed at Somali refugee students in schools in Kenya (Dryden-Peterson 2016). Thus, management of educational institutions ought to be creative to carry out their version of the whole-school model and a duty to foster personal and social connections to nurture collective intervention (Carrington *et al*. 2021). Whereas the reviewed studies postulate the othering and multilayeredness of considerations in refugee education, they offer a point of departure for interrogating the appropriateness of the secondary education afforded to refugee students in Kisenyi, Kampala.

Furthermore, where student refugees are recognised, there is a tendency to homogenise them instead of acknowledging the multiplicity of their histories (Block *et al*. 2014; Taylor & Sidhu 2012) as well as the unique necessities they bring to the refugee experience (Block *et al*. 2014). To gain the backing of educators, management, and the state, it is crucial to consider integrating curricula development instead of designing new programmes (Hargreaves 2008). The assumed role of education for refugees visualised by countries around the globe is that they can have access to quality teaching and learning, grow (inter)personal connections in the host communities, and gain financial advantages from the education (Dryden-Peterson *et al*. 2019). Similarly, with the quality of education for the nationals already low, refugees' access to quality education might be a myth (Balyejjusa 2019; Dryden-Peterson *et al*. 2019) though refugee households conceded that their need for relevant education notwithstanding (Balyejjusa 2019; Erwin *et al*. 2020), any accessible education was still important because at minimum, it can foster learning of a new language and intercultural competences (Balyejjusa 2019). The refugees also considered education pertinent to affordance of a decent future for their households (Dryden-Peterson 2006b; Vergou 2019) yet this is compounded by employment prospects tilted towards people from well-to-do households (more so in relation to the education level of the father) which compound the jeopardies of the poor (Vergou 2019) and marginalised populations such as refugees. Though the studies foreground the presumed homogeneity of refugees, the low quality of education accessed by refugees, and the urgency to refugees to be educated regardless of the quality, many of the researches were conducted in contexts different from Uganda. They thus form a building block for the current research for contextually relevant findings and conclusions.

Further still, hopes of developing personal connections in schools of host nations are miserable because of tense relationships with refugees, mismatch of practical and desired imageries of the future, as well as absence of job prospects after graduation (Dryden-Peterson *et al*. 2019). Right from the onset of refugee education, the type of future the education prepares them for continues to be dynamic because till the recent past, the education laws of refugees imagined finally going back to the home country (Dryden-Peterson *et al*. 2019). In the study conducted by Dryden-Peterson *et al*. (2019) in 14 different nations, the

unpredictability of the futures was ubiquitous but the explicit objectives of education for refugees were distinct for each context. That said, in instances where refugees attend classes with nationals, the chances of the former's language being used for instruction are minimal, in which case the policy is for local integration (Dryden-Peterson 2006b). This is because as Dryden-Peterson (2006b) commends, a single language needs to be used for education to ensure stability in the present, regardless of the future prospects because refugee students require to be stable to envisage the future. The studies foreground the precariousness and uncertainty of refugee trajectories which complicate the question of whether to adopt multiple or a single language of instruction in diverse classrooms involving nationals and refugees. The persistent uncertainties and contradictions visible in the literature therefore warrant the current study.

Rose (2018) also conducted an empirical study in Australia which found that many factors seem to interact to facilitate refugee teachers' exercise of agency within and outside the context of an education institution. Tactics of promoting social equity encompass valuing difference as well as hiring support workers and educators of different social histories (Block *et al*. 2014). Nonetheless, in a bid to recognise and value difference and assist refugee learners (Agbenyega & Klibthong 2013; Rose 2018), care ought to be taken not to alienate or even reinforce conventional deficit narratives about them (Bhagat 2020; Rose 2018). Relatedly, considering that refuges forcibly run away from their home countries without alternatives (Hos 2020), their education is an intricate field necessitating that education institutions reflectively and carefully consider the possible barriers associated with individualised agency as well as values projected on refugees (Rose 2018). Whereas these studies foreground the necessity to recognise and value difference and caution against perpetuation of deficiency articulations and othering of refugee students, given that they were conducted in Kenya and Australia with different study aims (contexts different from that of the current study), they form a basis for the present research on urban refugee secondary education in Uganda. Having interrogated the previous research on refugee education, the next section lays out the theoretical lens which underpins the current study.

Theoretical framework

The study was grounded in the whole-school approach as its theoretical framework. A whole school approach attends to the education institution in its entirety - curricula, day to day functions as well as other aspects of a school, and engages every stakeholder of the institution including the wider community (Hargreaves 2008; WWF-India 2014). It is therefore a multifaceted strategy of educational and development interventions. Considering that resuming school in host communities after forced migration necessitates enormous adjustment of day to day practices, including but not limited to the language, student refugees confront multiple difficulties to their education compounded by the forced nature of the

migration (Pugh, Every & Hattam 2012). Trainers of educators can consider the whole school approach to inculcate appreciation and cognisance with the intricacies of multicultural diversity in an egalitarian setting (Agbenyega & Klibthong 2013). In this regard, contemporary global scholarship and policy-making on refugees ought to swiftly re-consider and explicate the reciprocally reinforcing relationship between economic and forced migrations (Taylor & Sidhu 2012). It should also be noted that previous research has stressed language needs while ignoring other education needs yet education institutions which were guided by a whole school approach to learning support had robust support arrangements (Taylor & Sidhu 2012). Given that the approach attends to concrete concerns and engages the whole community of the institution, that is, educators, participants, non-teaching staff at the level of determining and implementing activities, it is transformative and/or emancipatory (WWF-India 2014). Moreover, it has extra potential to prepare students to address concrete life demands beyond schooling (WWF-India 2014). Though resource gaps complicate the operationalisation of the whole-school approach (Hargreaves 2008), its collaborative mode of operation has additional value to the nurturing of responsible adults (WWF-India 2014).

To achieve educational equity for refugee students, the whole-school approach (encompassing the school organisation, pedagogies and practices), as opposed to just a few superficial interventions, ought to guide the interventions (Pugh, Every & Hattam 2012; Taylor & Sidhu 2012) since it takes into account all the forces that shape student life (Pugh, Every & Hattam 2012). The approach calls for engagement with students, teachers, and school leaders in working towards given goals (Hargreaves 2008) and each education institution can individually adapt the development of its whole school approach (WWF-India 2014) depending on its needs and context of operation. Further, to improve educational achievement for refugees, education practitioners need to debunk the normative misconceptions that refugees are a source of problems (Agbenyega & Klibthong 2013; Taylor & Sidhu 2012) let alone rethink the conventional schools' heavily meritocratic assessments which are hitherto uninviting to refugee students (Pugh, Every & Hattam 2012) and other underprivileged student groups. In a similar light, Pugh, Every and Hattam (2012) elucidate the anomaly of a heavily meritocratic education system by exemplifying it with the dilemmas of the Australian education system. Here, Australian students, who are more privileged in terms of skills, knowledges, resource endowments, and refugee students compete in an examination-based school atmosphere, which necessitates systemic and policy level transformations (Pugh, Every & Hattam 2012). Yet the neoliberal model of individual responsibility for access and attainment in education (Pugh, Every & Hattam 2012; Taylor & Sidhu 2012) implies constricted public funding and homogenised assessments (Pugh, Every & Hattam 2012). This whole school approach promotes involvement of the community in a bottom-up implementation fashion, which in turn, fosters mutual intercultural learning in

the community (Pugh, Every & Hattam 2012). However, the approach has so far, been under-utilised considering that research has cautioned that seldom can one find exemplary whole-school practices of education in schools (Hargreaves 2008; Taylor & Sidhu 2012). I deem the whole-school approach an appropriate theoretical lens for this study because it informs the study's foregrounding of the pertinence of collaborative and rigorous efforts in the light of the complex terrain of addressing the relevance of urban refugee secondary education amidst the precariousness of the trajectories of forced migrants in the long term. Now that the theoretical positioning of the study is laid out, the subsequent section presents and elucidates the results of this study, illuminating insights and pointing to new directions for further inquiry.

Findings and discussion

The findings showed that the educators who participated in this study deemed it pertinent for schools to prioritise developing refugees' abilities to effectively socialise with host communities through teaching language and cultures of the local communities. This result partly aligns with prior research which foregrounded the importance of mutually appreciating the inherent dignity of all persons in a diverse social setting to curb the tendency to alienate the rest of the social groups by the dominant (Agbenyega & Klibthong 2013) let alone appreciating the immense difficulties associated with being a forced migrant (Pugh, Every & Hattam 2012). Though participants' call for exclusive inculcation of socialisation abilities in refugee students, such as, intercultural competences is a crucial step, it still falls short of the vision of an inclusive multicultural education guided by a whole-school approach (Agbenyega and Klibthong, 2013). This is because of its blindness to the indispensability of value for mutual learning among all educational stakeholders in a transformative curriculum evidenced by its exclusive focus on refugees' socialising skills. Similarly, the results are supportive of past research on urban refugees which demonstrated that refugees are perpetually understood as deficient and requiring support (Balyejjusa 2019; Bhagat 2020) yet Somali refugees are agentic in addressing their basic necessities of life given the activities they participated in, which were instrumental to their welfare (Balyejjusa 2019). The insight for policy makers and educators is that refugees are agentic beings (Balyejjusa 2019) and refugee education interventions could benefit immensely from fostering mutual learning among refugees and the host communities.

The findings also revealed that to some refugee student participants, the curriculum was inappropriate and blind to their lived realities because of its English-centric outlook and by so doing, marginalises other languages which are internationally relevant, that is, Kiswahili and Arabic. Contrarily, a Ugandan staff of InterAid-Uganda when interviewed, indicated that though the curriculum was appropriate, it had yet to

regard the cultural diversity that refugee students bring to the host schools. For instance, the staff stated thus:

To add cultural diversity to the teaching. Also if they can add the culture of the foreigners for like one term and it's very important for them to study here. Ugandan studies are very important to refugees. Some Somalis even when they were in Somalia, they had a very big problem of English. They are learning English.

The results corroborate Dryden-Peterson's (2020) work in Uganda and Kenya, which postulated that inclusion of refugees in education at the structural level did not translate into relational inclusion in schools and compounded by the country-neutral practices and policies. These contradictions notable in the findings regarding what the prevalent practice of exclusively having English as the language of instruction in schools means to curriculum relevance reinforces Agbenyega & Klibthong's (2013) foregrounding of the complexities and difficulties of tackling multicultural diversity for appropriate interventions. The insight for educators and policy makers is that the immensity of work in a diverse setting might require unrelenting devotion and sensitivity given the multiplicity of considerations the diversity necessitates.

Further, a Somali refugee community leader and refugee students revealed that the curriculum addressed their needs while Ugandan educators noted that the science education was particularly relevant to the refugee students and considering their educational needs in the curriculum meant completely changing the current curriculum to reflect oneness with the refugee students. This is resonant with the findings of previous research conducted across several nations, including, Uganda, Kenya, Rwanda, Sudan, among others, which underlined that the lived realities of refugee students were disregarded by curricula designs in the nations studied (Dryden-person 2016; Dryden-Peterson et al. 2019; Dryden-Peterson 2020). Illumination by the teachers that science subjects were exclusively relevant to both refugees and nationals is suggestive of the irrelevance of the humanities and social sciences to refugee students' concerns and educational needs. It is likely that the presumed irrelevance is shaped by the Uganda government's rhetoric and emphasis on natural sciences correspondingly followed with its disregard for the arts, humanities and social sciences. It is also highly likely that the humanities and social sciences are so in-ward looking (for the nationals) that the concerns of refugees are neglected implying irresponsiveness of the curriculum to their needs. The insight for educators, researchers, and policy makers is that exploring the implications of marginalising the arts and humanities subjects in a country that still grapples with post-graduation unemployment and skills deficits could be instructive.

The refugee parents expressed concern about their children dropping out of school before university and that Somali refugee students are at times unfriendly. A closely related finding in a focus group with refugee student participants was that they did not enjoy warm relations at school and preferred to spend less time at school. Further, the study showed that the refugee parents were concerned about the high cost of education, high rent, the high unemployment levels in Uganda combined with nepotistic hiring, and the conspicuous absence of Somali teachers in the schools in Uganda. The results are consistent with previous research in Uganda, which found that there were latent fees, financial appropriation, and elimination of the poor from schooling due to economic weakness of their households (Datzberger 2018). The findings are consistent with the position that neoliberal individualisation of responsibility for access and attainment in education (Pugh, Every & Hattam 2012; Taylor & Sidhu 2012) constricts educational funding and homogenises assessment. The findings thus confirm that the huge costs of rent and education were more pressing issues for refugee households than the curriculum itself, which reinforces Balyejjusa (2017) finding that despite Somali urban refugees being perceived as well-to-do, some are underprivileged. Further, the findings support prior work which noted structural exclusion and marginalisation of the less privileged from education in Uganda (Datzberger 2018), reciprocal relationship of economic and forced migrations (Taylor & Sidhu 2012), and the high levels of drop-out from secondary and higher education in Uganda in proportion to the demographic characteristics of different regions in the country (Uganda Bureau of Statistics 2017). However, the same results contradict Balyejjusa's (2019) work which suggested that there were mutually cordial relations of refugees with nationals at school and in the wider host community and consequently low drop-out rates for refugee students. The insight for policy makers and educators is that the multi-layered forces shaping completion and/or drop-out rates among refugees in the current study, including, lack of warm interpersonal relations, high levels of joblessness for their families, individual responsibility for educational access and achievement (high costs of access to education) might give a glimpse into the role of privilege in shaping educational access and completion rates.

A related finding was that some Ugandan educators (participants in the study) indicated that refugee students were not marginalised in schools and the government was giving land to the refugees though it was acknowledged that the prospects of taking into account the high costs of education services for urban refugees were minimal. This finding, in part, corroborates previous research in Kisenyi, Kampala which foregrounded the hospitality of Uganda's refugee policy environment and host communities (Balyejjusa 2019). However, the results contradict previous research in Australia which illuminated the tendency for the dominant social group(s) to alienate the rest of the social groups they live with (Agbenyega & Klibthong 2013) visible in deficit conceptions about refugees (Rose, 2018). It also contrasts findings of

prior studies which reported that there is subjugation of urban refugees, which is also exacerbated by their unrelenting pursuit of self-sustenance in Nairobi, Kenya (Bhagat 2020) and the lack of acknowledgement of their unique histories and the uniqueness of the realities they bring to the education experience in the Australian context (Block et al., 2014). The finding is consistent with Agbenyega & Klibthong's (2013) postulation that the provision of some services to refugees at a structural level does not suffice as evidence of absence of marginalisation of refugees in a given community. Specifically, the participants' mention of the land the government gives to refugees for settlement in camps amounts to weak proof of absence of marginalisation in schools because it is a structural intervention which might not necessarily reflect at the relational level. It is also likely that though there could be discrimination in schools, there are expectedly many cases of non-discrimination, more so, given the welcoming attitude of the communities (people) of Uganda. The insight for researchers and educators is that interrogating the impact of hostilities among nationals and urban refugee students on completion rates could be instructive for interventions in urban refugee secondary education. Having presented and made sense of the findings in light of the context of the current study, the next section concludes this study and points out its broader implications for research, policy and practice of education.

Conclusion and implications

Through the whole-school approach, this qualitative case study explored the relevance of urban refugee secondary education in Kampala, Uganda. The key argument of the study was that global policy visualisation of a linear path of refugees - going back home, integrating, or relocating - the trajectories of refugees are intricate and precarious and as such, there is inherent ambivalence regarding how to design and deliver a relevant urban refugee secondary education (Dryden-Peterson 2017). The study found that educators deemed it crucial to give priority to equipping refugees with socialisation competences - language and cultures of the host communities. It also revealed that to the extent that the curriculum is English-centric, it is inappropriate to the lived experiences and relegates comparably international relevant languages, such as, Kiswahili and Arabic. Conversely, other participants regarded the curriculum as appropriate though disregarding to the cultural diversity they bring to the education experience. Further, the study showed that Ugandan educators regarded science education particularly relevant to the refugee students and considerations of refugee educational needs meant completely changing the current curriculum to reflect oneness with the refugee students. Furthermore, the study demonstrated that dropping out of school due to hostilities in school was a concern to refugee parents yet Ugandan educators (participants in the study) indicated that refugee students were not marginalised in schools. It illuminated that the high cost of education, high rent charged on them, the high unemployment levels in

Uganda combined with nepotistic hiring, and the conspicuous absence of Somali teachers in the schools in Uganda worry refugee households.

The research adds to knowledge on education of urban refugees in Uganda, sub-Saharan Africa, and the global South. The study is pertinent to fathoming the way to approach preparing and training of education institutions to tackle refugee student and other minoritised students' needs is a collective responsibility of teachers, students (refugees and nationals), the community (Pugh, Every & Hattam 2012). Aside from the possibility that the results could shape policies on urban refugee secondary education, they are also beneficial to educators of student refugees, students, scholars, and practitioners. The discussion of findings has provided pointers to some new lines of inquiry. For example, a study how hostilities in school among nationals and urban refugee students impact achievement and completion rates could aid macro and micro-level interventions in urban refugee secondary education. Similarly, a study on how the neoliberal individual responsibility for access and achievement in education reproduces poverty and social-class exploitation could be immensely enlightening. This study recommends that first, educators and policy makers need to consider encouraging and practising transformative pedagogies such as Freirean pedagogies that value and enable co-learning of the educator with participants in the educational experiences to collectively interrogate their material realities instead of the conventional top-down approaches of knowledge transmission from the teacher to the students. This could foster mutual learning and enable mutual understanding among the diversity of occupants of education spaces in different host communities of refugees. Second, the government and the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) needs to make some policy changes to facilitate access to education by the less privileged among the urban refugee households (Balyejjusa 2017) to address drop-out rates, which are generally a problem for students from the least privileged families.

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