

5-7-2016

What Are the Barriers to Economic Self-Sufficiency of Congolese Refugees in Abilene, Texas?

David M. Bayoh
dmb14a@acu.edu

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ABSTRACT

Economic self-sufficiency of refugees is critical for refugees but also for the host country, given the potentially negative economic impact of refugees not attaining self-sufficiency. This study examined the predicting factors of economic self-sufficiency in a sample of 108 Congolese refugees who have lived in Abilene, Texas for over a year. This research used a quantitative method for data collection. A multiple logistic regression analysis showed that education (whether outside or inside the U.S.) and ESL attendance were the main predictors of economic self-sufficiency among the sample. This study suggests that the resettlement agencies should develop a mechanism to encourage refugees (especially the young ones) to go to school or continue their education. The results also suggest a need to develop a more effective way of implementing ESL programs for refugees who have an imminent need to work. Given the limitations of this study, the conclusion of this study should be treated with caution and verified by further studies.

Keywords: refugee, economic self-sufficiency, dependency

What Are the Barriers to Economic Self-Sufficiency
of Congolese Refugees in Abilene Texas?

A Thesis

Presented to

The Faculty of the Graduate School

Abilene Christian University

In Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirement for the degree

Master of Science

In Social Work

By

David Magonah Bayoh

May 2016

I would like to dedicate this study to my late dearest father, Joseph Paul Bayoh, who spent 7 months with the rebels during the Sierra Leonean civil war, and to all refugees and their host communities, especially the Congolese refugees and the people of Abilene, Texas. Also to the International Rescue Committee for the good work they are doing for these refugees.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First and foremost, I would like to express my sincere thanks to the Almighty God for bringing me this far in my academic pursuit. I would also like to express my profound gratitude to my supervisor, Assistant Professor Kyeonghee Jang, and co-chair Assistant Professor Stephanie Hamm, whose invaluable information, suggestions, and encouragement helped me to complete this study.

I further thank all my professors and guest speakers, their lectures and contributions gave me much theoretical and practical grounding to do this study.

I would like to acknowledge the support and assistance that I received from my colleagues; their knowledgeable suggestions and constructive criticisms during lectures and presentations played an important role in completing this study. I would also like to thank the Congolese refugees who freely participated in the survey; their cooperation helped me the gather the data for this study.

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DEFINITIONS OF TERMS AND ACRONYMS

Adjustment: A process through which refugees undergo changes towards self-sufficiency and integration into the community.

Country of refuge: A country where refugees or those fleeing from persecution are granted refugee status (asylum) and protection by the United Nation High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR).

Host society: Local population or indigenous ethnic community in country of resettlement or country of refuge.

HHSC: Health and Human Service Commission

Immigrant: A person who leaves his or her country to seek permanent residence in another country for economic reasons.

IRC: International Rescue Committee

MLR: Multiple logistic regression

Public assistance: Monetary assistance (e.g., food stamps) and services (e.g., Medicaid) provided by the government for low income or disadvantaged families and individuals.

Receiving country: The country a refugee first enters after fleeing his/her homeland.

Refugee: A person who has been forced to flee his or her country because of persecution, war, or violence

Resettlement: The transfer of refugees from a receiving country to another country that has agreed to admit them and ultimately grant them permanent settlement.

Self-sufficiency: An economic condition whereby people are able to provide for themselves without government or private assistance. In the context of refugees, families are expected to attain self-sufficiency and move off welfare programs.

SNAP: Supplementary Nutritional Assistance Program

TANF (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families): Temporary monetary assistance provided to low-income families to alleviate economic hardships.

UNHCR: The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, a UN branch in charge of refugee affairs. The UNHCR was established in 1951 (UNHCR, 2000).

Variable: Any characteristic or attribute of persons, objects, or events that can take on different numerical values.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Background of Study

One of the most pressing concerns of the 21st century is undoubtedly the refugee crisis. As people flee their home countries and harsh conditions around the world with the attempt to somehow create a better life for themselves and their families, they often times relocate and settle in developed countries. Conflicts in third-world countries have increased the number of people seeking refuge in other countries (Bloch, 2000). These transitional events, where people within these countries simply wish to live safer, more productive lives, become more of a worldwide phenomenon than simply a localized occurrence.

Often these refugees trade one dire situation for another. It may seem easy to believe that once in a safer, more economically stable place like the United States of America, refugees' fortunes have greatly improved. Yet if analyzed more deeply, it soon becomes apparent that their economic viability, and thus self-sufficiency, is in severe jeopardy due to certain barriers they must overcome if they wish to contribute to their new society in a meaningful way. In addition, there are some extremely valid concerns as to the potentially negative economic impact that refugees may pose on the host country.

The International Rescue Committee (IRC) defines refugees as people fleeing from war, persecution, and political upheaval in their countries to seek resettlement in a

new country they will call home. These fleeing people are uprooted with little or no warning, which causes them to endure great hardships during their flight to a place of safety which they later call their home. They become refugees when they cross borders and seek safety in another country (International Rescue Committee, 2013).

Even though earlier refugee populations were Jewish people from Germany during Hitler's brutal discrimination against the Jews, the European refugee population has decreased over time (Gowricharn, 2002). In fact, the Asian and the African refugee populations have increased dramatically for the last decade. When refugees arrive in countries for resettlement, they depend on governmental assistance for a certain period of time. In order to help these people to live happily in the United States, the U.S. Department of State (DOS) has contracted voluntary agencies to provide services that will refugees attain economic self-sufficiency (Xu, 2007).

For the next 3 years, the government of the United States intends to resettle at least 10,000 Congolese refugees (Office of Refugee Resettlement, 2014). Most of these refugees are living in different camps under the supervision of the UNHCR. Most of these camps are located in Kenya, Uganda, Burundi, Tanzania, and Rwanda. This UNHCR mobilizes humanitarian organizations to assist refugees in camps by providing for their basic needs (UNHCR, 2000).

Upon arrival and depending on the location of resettlement, refugees receive different kinds of aid, be it financial or material. Some resettlement agencies support refugees longer than others. Regardless from where they arrive and what agency is providing services, the refugees are on limited financial assistance; therefore, they must strive to be self-sufficient within a very short time. Most times this does not happen, and

refugees continue to depend on either the government or local charitable organizations for their needs.

This study examined the economic self-sufficiency of Congolese refugees in Abilene, Texas. Abilene may not be the U.S. city with the largest Congolese refugee population, but a good number live in Abilene. According to an IRC Abilene report (2010), Abilene continues to attract Congolese refugees who were formally resettled in other cities of the United States.

Not many studies on this population in respect to the barriers they face in the process of enhancing economic self-sufficiency have been conducted. The purpose of this study was to determine the barriers to economic self-sufficiency of Congolese refugees with the aim of providing information to refugee resettlement agencies and other service providers. It is expected that they can use this information to improve their services to the refugees that would contribute to economic self-sufficiency and reduce dependency. The Congolese population was chosen for the study because they are one of the largest refugee populations in Abilene. It is estimated that 150 Congolese refugees will be resettled in Abilene in 2016. Records from the IRC indicate that 570 Congolese refugees have been resettled in Abilene since 2010, constituting about 280 households (IRC Abilene Report, 2015). According to the Abilene Public Housing Authority report (2013), 40% of occupants are refugees and 50% of applicants on the waiting list are also refugees. These numbers show that the refugees are not self-sufficient; they still depend on government benefits.

This study sought to understand the main barriers the refugees face and how they would overcome those obstacles in order to attain economic self-sufficiency. At the end

of the research study, the author hopes to have addressed the question: What are the barriers to economic self-sufficiency of Congolese refugees in Abilene? The author hopes that the resettlement agencies and other volunteer organizations that are working with refugee populations may find this research study helpful in understanding refugee perspectives on successful resettlement.

Problem Statement

The Congolese refugees were legally admitted to the United State by the Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR). Like other refugees, they arrived with the dream of achieving a better life. According to the United States Office of Refugee Resettlement, one problem sponsors may face when dealing with refugees that have lived in refugee camps is the syndrome of dependence. It is believed that a culture of dependence has been created and facilitated by humanitarian organizations who provided basic services to refugees in their camps (Phillips, 2009). These refugees come to the United States with this same culture of dependency; 80% of the Congolese refugees in Abilene are still on food stamps (IRC Abilene Report, 2010); the Congolese refugees are the highest population of refugees living in public houses, and they are the highest applicants for section 8 vouchers (Abilene Public Housing Authority, 2013). Also, reports have reached the IRC in Abilene about the many Congolese refugees reaching out to churches for financial assistance to pay their rents and utility bills. These statistics indicate that there are barriers affecting the economic self-sufficiency of Congolese refugees which lead them to depend on government benefits and seek financial assistance from churches. Therefore, there is absolute need to look into this issue.

According to Irvin and Gambrell (2013), many refugees depend on public benefit for a very long time due to the government's short-term financial support, the refugees' inability to speak English, lack of full-time and well-paid jobs, and many other factors. These findings show that refugee assistance programs should continue after the initial placement period. Government and service providers should look at the current resettlement policies to improve their support mechanisms to refugees beyond the placement period. Refugees need to have access to programs that can improve their English speaking ability, provide job trainings, and lead to better paying jobs. Records from the Office of Refugee Resettlement show that 324,234 refugees were admitted worldwide into the United States from 2009 to 2013. Of these, 71,240 were from Africa, mostly from the Congo DR, Rwanda, Burundi, and Somalia. A national survey conducted on refugees from 2000 to 2013 revealed that 38.4% of African refugees lived in public housing. The total number of African refugees that arrived in Texas from 2009 to 2013 was 3,120, of which 1,903 were Congolese (Office of Refugee Resettlement, 2014). An increase in the refugee population means more people seeking public assistance. The problem this study addresses is how to overcome barriers to economic self-sufficiency of Congolese refugees, to decrease dependency on public assistance and increase self-reliance.

Purpose of Study

This study sought to investigate the barriers to economic self-sufficiency of Congolese refugees in Abilene, Texas. In light of the increasing number of refugees in Abilene, it is crucial for the service providers such as the Health and Human Service Commission, Health Department, school districts, Work Force Center, library,

resettlement agency, and local churches to have information to help them better understand and assist the Congolese refugee population in Abilene, Texas. The state of economic self-sufficiency for refugees implies that refugees are able to provide for themselves without pursuing external support such as Medicaid, food stamps, or childcare and housing aid from the state, friends, or family (Halpern & U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2008).

On a larger scale, the Congolese refugees need support to move from depending on public assistance to a more self-reliant life. Such support will enable them to stand on their feet to provide their basic needs. With governmental support, nonprofit organizations' assistance, and improved service delivery by refugee resettlement agencies, refugees can successfully transition into economic self-sufficiency and self-reliance.

Research Question

The research question is: What are the barriers to economic self-sufficiency of Congolese refugees in Abilene Texas? This question sought to ascertain what factors Congolese refugees perceive as barriers to economic self-sufficiency in the United States.

Scope of Study

This study considered Congolese refugees in the State of Texas. The target population was drawn from Abilene, where the majority of the Congolese refugees in Texas reside. There are some Congolese refugees living in Amarillo, Dallas, and Houston, but they are in small numbers. Abilene resettles the highest number of Congolese refugees in the state of Texas. Since characteristics of Congolese refugees are presumed to be the same across geographical precincts, it is expected that results from

this study would be consistent with similar studies of Congolese refugees in other states. The sample for this study was drawn based on criteria described further in Chapter 3.

Significance of Study

Not much research has been done on Congolese refugees in America. Records from the US Refugee Admissions Program shows that more than 10,000 Congolese have arrived in the United States since 2001. In FY 2009 to 2012, with resettlement of 4,522 refugees, Texas received 50% of that number among 10 receiving states of Congolese (Office of Refugee Resettlement, 2014).

This research could have a significant impact on those residing in Abilene. Studies of this nature are beneficial to service providers, especially the IRC that leads the resettlement program in Abilene, and this study will also be useful for the society that hosts the refugees. Since many churches are helping the refugees to fully integrate into Abilene society, this study will help to clarify the difficulties or challenges that refugees have. The church will be in a better position to implement services that will adequately address these difficulties. The Texas Health and Human Service Commission and the local social services providers will find this research useful as they plan services for this population.

On the part of the refugees, the study will serve as a piece of information that highlights their experiences and challenges. It will also help the host community to further understand the challenges of the refugees. Such information will promote good relationship between the host community and refugees. The research was designed with the hope that its findings would lead to improvement in the living conditions of economically disadvantaged Congolese refugees in Abilene, Texas.

Summary

This research attempts to increase awareness of the difficulties confronting Congolese refugees as they pursue economic self-sufficiency in Abilene, Texas.

Although there are studies on refugees, little research has addressed Congolese refugees in general, and those residing in Abilene in particular. This study sought to investigate the barriers to economic self-sufficiency of Congolese refugees who have live in Abilene for more than one year.

Findings from this study will provide the HHSC, the IRC, and other interest groups with a clear picture of the barriers Congolese refugees face in attaining economic self-sufficiency. The goal is to draw support from these groups so that services for newly arrived refugees can be improved and the transitional period after initial resettlement can be facilitated.

Chapter 2 of this study reviews literature on economic self-sufficiency, Chapter 3 describes the methodology, which is quantitative, Chapter 4 describes the data collected, and Chapter 5 summarizes the study findings, draws conclusions, and provides recommendations for further research.

CHAPTER II
REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Introduction

The literature review locates scholarly studies of economic self-sufficiency of refugees. The first part includes a description of the refugee resettlement process, followed by a description of economic self-sufficiency from the literature, and finally a detailed description of the independent variables.

Refugee Resettlement Process

A refugee is a person who resides outside his or her country of birth and is unwilling or unable to go back due to fear of persecution on account of religion, political opinion, race, nationality, or membership in a certain social group (Clements, 2001). According to the United Nation High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), refugees are “persons who have been forced to flee his or her country because of persecution, war, or violence” (UNHCR, 2000). Refugees are protected under international law.

A refugee is a person who owing to well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable, or owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country; or who, not having a nationality and being outside the country of his former habitual residence as a result of such events, is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it. (UNHCR, 2000)

Most of the Congolese refugees fled their country as a result of a civil war which killed thousands of their people. Most of the refugees who are admitted and resettled in the United States spent much of their time in refugee camps in neighboring countries. Camp resettlement saved them from the psychological trauma and physical hardship experienced during the time of violence (Anste, 2006).

Different refugee resettlement agencies and other volunteer organizations in America resettled these displaced people in different cities and states (Irvin & Gambrell, 2013). These organizations help refugees start a new life and successfully integrate into U.S. society. Generally speaking, one can say that service providers play a major role in helping refugees manage and balance their emotions and changing identities (Alessio, 2014). Refugees come from all over the world, different social environments, different cultural backgrounds, different educational backgrounds, and different economic backgrounds. In light of this, getting them settled in a new technologically sophisticated environment is a challenging task for the resettlement agencies. Many refugees tend to give up hope after witnessing the death of their family members or loved ones in their war-torn country (Xu, 2007). For those who have survived, their immediate goal is to live in a safe place (Neal & Bohon, 2003). However, it is very challenging to get to that safe place without being patient. For instance, the applicants for overseas resettlement must wait for more than 5 years in the refugee camps while their cases are being processed by the UNHCR.

The United States first started resettling refugees or displaced people in 1970. Overall, the United States is still resettling more refugees than any other country (Newland, Baker, & Tanaka, 2007). The IRC is one of the voluntary agencies (VOLAGs) that assist refugees from all over the world. In 2005, the IRC opened its sub-office to the

Dallas office in Abilene. Since then, the IRC in Abilene office has resettled and provided services to over 1,500 refugees from over 20 countries (IRC.org). The government, the UNHCR, and the VOLAGs are working together to best assist refugees from all over the world to successfully resettle in the United States. VOLAGs are volunteer agencies that are contracted by the Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) to resettle incoming refugees from all over the world according to guidelines and policies stipulated by the federal government (Obamehinti & Selidlitz, 2013). The IRC, as one of those resettlement agencies, is dedicated to providing services to refugees with the goal of facilitating their economic self-sufficiency. The refugees are offered several services, such as initial housing support, employment assistance, household furniture and goods, education, guidance, and referrals to enable them attain self-sufficient lives (Xu, 2007). The Refugee Law of 1980 and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 state that reducing welfare dependence and escalating economic self-sufficiency are the most significant goals of the refugee resettlement program (UNHCR, 2005). However, the government does the very best to ensure that these refugees attain a sustainable and productive life like all Americans. The government makes sure that refugee rights are observed according to the Refugees Act and the human rights recommendations (Heale, 2011). To attain these goals, the government has put in place modalities to provide humanitarian support to all refugees during the resettlement process, including creating massive opportunities for education and career advancement. Some of the refugees, after gaining economic containment, have become the main source of financial support to their families who are still living in their home countries (Cortez, 2004). Several refugees have been helped by the humanitarian support of the United States, and their lives have changed to a great extent.

In Abilene, the IRC's staff members set up the apartments and do grocery shopping before the arrival of the refugees. After their arrival, refugees receive refugee cash assistance (RCA) and refugee medical assistance (RMA) from the government (Irvin & Gambrell, 2013). Upon arrival, refugees are eligible for RCA and RMA for 8 months (Irvin & Gambrell, 2013; Newland et al., 2007). At the IRC Abilene office, 90% of the funds come from the federal government; the other 10% of the funds come from donations and fundraising drives organized by the IRC. The federal government matches community involvement and makes it possible for the refugees to receive cash assistance in order to help them become self-sufficient. For those who cannot receive RCA, Match Grant (MG) is given to them with the expectation that they will have jobs and be self-sufficient within 120 days of arrival in the U.S (Obamehinti & Selidlitz, 2013). It is a very difficult goal for a refugee to reach, since many refugees come to the U.S. with very limited or no English; communication with social service offices, schools, and hospitals is challenging, except with the help of interpreters (Ott, Office of the UNHCR, & Policy Development and Evaluation Service, 2011).

Several studies have been conducted on the lives of refugees in the camps; these have shown that many refugees develop the dependency syndrome since they depend on humanitarian aid. Such dependency affects their ability to become self-sufficient in their new country (UNHCR & Evaluation and Policy Analysis Unit, 2010). These refugees come to the United States with this same culture of dependency, and with the initial funds and services which are provided to them, they quickly forget that they have to work hard to earn their living in their new environment.

Economic Self-Sufficiency

Economic self-sufficiency is the state of not needing any financial support or aid from government or charitable organizations for one's survival. The term self-sufficiency is used in various circumstances to describe sustainable living. The state of economic self-sufficiency for refugees implies that they are able to provide for themselves without pursuing external support such as Medicaid, food stamps, or childcare and housing aid from the state, friends, or family (Halpern & U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services, 2008). Similarly, self-insufficiency is characterized by poverty and other basic predicaments that make people dependent on others or the state.

Economic self-sufficiency is mostly measured by the income of a person and the size of the household. However, refugees rarely enjoy the good payment rate accorded to citizens of the host country (Mott, 2010). Moreover, acquiring a job as a refugee is a nightmare (Smith, 2008). All over the world, refugees are not able to get well-paying jobs which will eventually grant them a high income. This is predominantly due to the fact that they have no educational background, have low English language proficiency, or lack job training and history (McBrien, 2005).

On a positive note, the refugees in Abilene are able to get entry-level and low-income jobs within a relatively short time, especially housekeeping and manufacturing jobs. According to the staff members of the IRC in Abilene, they have observed that most refugees quit their jobs in a very short time. One of the main reasons is that most of them have not engaged in an official type of work life; it is difficult for them to follow instructions and policies and be punctual at work (Shield & Price, 2001). Therefore, most of them are discharged of their duties within a very short time after being hired. The majority of immigrants are not employable due to high levels of illiteracy and lack of

relevant skills in specific fields (Korac, 2003), especially in cities where there are limited housekeeping and manufacturing jobs. These issues deprive them of economic self-sufficiency, forcing them to be dependent on public assistance. Manufacturing and housekeeping jobs, which require fewer skills and hence have low payment, are common jobs for refugees but do not lead to economic self-sufficiency, especially for those with large families (Jacobsen, 2005).

Income determines the level at which a family can sustain itself without depending on external support. For example, if one of the family members has a good income, then the rest of the family can be satisfied through his or her earnings. Poor earnings are attributed to the type of job, skills, and educational level (Connor, 2010).

Some refugees have commented that they are not recognized at their work place due to the type of work that they do. They have said that some employers do not speak to them respectfully, and make them do extra jobs which were not specifically assigned to them (Potocky-Tripodi, 2003). Employer attitudes lead them to abandon their jobs, but the limited job market makes it difficult for them to get another job (Connor, 2010). Therefore, their dependency on the government continues.

To encourage the placement of more refugees in higher paying jobs, the United States refugee resettlement program has ensured that qualified refugees are given jobs that are proportionate to their acceptable qualifications, thereby helping them earn decent wages. Income is one of the main factors that promote economic self-sufficiency. The UNHCR has recognized that an improved income is one of the best ways of ensuring refugee self-sufficiency within the resettlement program (UNHCR, 2005).

According to a survey conducted by the Office of Refugee Resettlement (2008), \$8.30/hour was the average wage for new refugees; for those who have

maintained employment for over 5 years, \$9.20/hour was the average wage. A 2010 survey indicated an hourly wage for refugees who spoke English was \$9.50, compared to \$8.31 for those who did not speak English (Office of Refugee Resettlement, 2010). In Abilene, the average hourly wage for new refugees is \$7.25 and \$8.00 for those with over 5 years of employment.

Employment is an important factor in the refugee self-sufficiency process. It creates the possibility for income, giving the refugee the status to take control of his or her life. As considered by Bloch (2000), employment is a major element for the integration of refugees. They need jobs so that they can decrease their dependency on government benefits. Moving away from depending on government support symbolizes good progress toward economic self-sufficiency. As outlined in the resettlement policy, resettlement agencies must make sure that employable adults have jobs within a month or two after their arrival (Office of Refugee Resettlement, 2008). The report from a 2010 survey showed that 67.4% of African refugees who were resettled in the U.S. were employed: 75.7% of males and 51.2% of females. The unemployment rate was 8.3%, with 5.9% of males unemployed and 13.6% of females (Office of Refugee Resettlement, 2010).

The resettlement policy requires employable adult refugees to gain employment as quickly as possible. Therefore, several innovative strategies and approaches have been put in place to increase the chances for refugee employment. These methods include financial literacy education, administrative approaches, community and groups' involvement, and employment-related outreach strategies (Jacobsen, 2001). As key players in refugee employment services, there are several creative collaborations among employers, refugee employment specialists, and public colleges in facilitating short-term

occupational training and employer-specific trainings. These short-term trainings help skilled refugees to be quickly placed in jobs.

Due to the sensitive, political nature of the situation, and the fact that refugees are being plunged into a country they most likely have never been to before, there are a wide variety of barriers they must overcome to make a successful life for themselves and their families once inside the United States. With regards to the recent situation in Syria and the massive number of refugees fleeing that country, there are concerns as to the financial impact the influx of people into the U.S. might have on the country. According to some sources, there are over 4 million Syrian refugees fleeing that country, with a somewhat small percentage of them coming to American shores (Skerry, 2004). Syria is of course not the only country where this is happening, however, and the consequences of letting refugees into the United States are not always clearly defined.

The question becomes, then, what these extra people living in the United States will do to the current economy. If they can contribute, what are the specific hurdles they must overcome to become a positive, contributing member of society rather than simply a drag on the financial resources of the country? If they can, in fact, become positive influences on the economy at large by overcoming these obstacles, then there is no reason these refugees should be turned away at the border, and other countries like the United States should be able to open their doors and welcome more. It will not be easy for either side, though, because of the barriers each and every one of these refugee faces.

Predicting Factors of Economic Self-Sufficiency

Educational level. The domain of education is one of the highest priorities entitled to the refugee communities. Education plays an important role in the integration of immigrants into American society (Akresh, 2008). The lack of protective and quality

education for immigrants stands as an obstacle in attaining durable solutions, and achieving career objectives, sustainable development, reconstruction of host and home countries, and overall economic self-sufficiency (Dodoo & Takyi, 2002).

Gowricharn (2002) found that refugee access to education is uneven and limited in refugee camps as well as in the areas of displacement. It is worth noting that the systems that have been put in place for refugee education are of low quality and face numerous challenges globally. Education is one of the basic human rights, and it is closely linked to poverty reduction. According to recent research findings, the majority of refugees aged 18 years or older had obtained formal education; one-third reported primary education while a few reported secondary, intermediate, and technical learning (Cortez, 2004).

Refugee education is one of the rising concerns of the UNHCR. In most refugee camps, both formal and vocational education are provided. However, this is done on a minimal scale. Some refugees are given the opportunity to attend public schools, but due to the demands of life in the camps, most of them drop out of the program (Bloch, 2000). Some humanitarian organizations working with the refugees in the camps do provide some sort of scholarship programs to deserving refugee students to further their studies in colleges or overseas. In the host country, refugees are provided with short-term educational training programs in cultural orientation, job training, coaching, and other information that will enable the refugees to start a new life in their host country. But as Bloch (2000) maintains, the lack of adequate education in the refugee camps hinders the attainment of economic self-sufficiency of many refugees. Several measures (setting up schools in the camps, providing transportation for those attending schools outside the camps, and providing school materials) are needed to ensure that the education programs

offered by the humanitarian organizations working with the refugees in the camps and the resettlement agencies in host communities create opportunities that may lead to economic self-sufficiency.

Through education, one can secure a reasonable and decent job that can in turn enhance economic self-sufficiency (Allen, 2009). Some short-term vocational trainings have proved to enable people to be self-reliant, thus promoting economic self-sufficiency. Most of the Congolese refugees who are resettled in Abilene have little or no education background. This hinders them from competing in the limited and scarce job market in Abilene.

Education helps people to acquire high paying jobs or be employable. Sometimes, it is presumed that having education can help to secure a high paying job, but Dodoo and Takyi (2002) found that high-paying jobs were not always accessible to immigrants with high educational qualifications.

As Bloch (2000) commented, the introduction of a good education system aids in building a good foundation for the children living in refugee camps. Most of them spend almost 10 years in these camps before they are approved for resettlement. Educated people have access to better employment (Korac, 2003). The data from the refugee resettlement center show that 70% of refugees above 18 years had no higher level education certificates or high school diploma. The girls and the women are the most affected groups; the rate of school attendance by girls in DRC is alarmingly low; thus the majority of the girls and women have no high school or primary education (Anste, 2006).

This barrier goes hand in hand with the language barrier that will be discussed later. For obvious reasons, becoming educated is strongly dependent upon language skills and acquisition. Without a proper education, a refugee is simply stuck at a certain level of

economic efficacy and will find it extremely difficult, if not impossible, to rise above poverty and thus will become an economic burden on the rest of the region/country (Cassidy, 2015). If they acquire the ability to fully learn and speak English, then the next obvious step is to become better educated and find themselves a good-paying job. Of course, sometimes these refugees are already highly educated from their native lands and it is simply a matter of integrating them into the American workforce; however, the issue remains: if they are not educated, how can they go about changing their personal situation?

For the children and youths who are half of the total number of refugees, education has tremendous influence over the future viability of their potential within the workforce. In fact, education has been shown to be of incredible value to each refugee's acculturation and economic self-sufficiency within the United States over time (McBrien, 2005). By becoming better educated, they can achieve more in regards to their future jobs, future income, and living standards; the possibilities for economic self-sufficiency thus become much more varied and strong.

Access to education can also be one of the most challenging aspects to some refugees. Regardless, having an educational system set up to improve the knowledge base of the children and adults involved can help achieve financial viability over time (Ott et al., 2011). If some kind of system is not put in place, many of these refugees will be doomed to a life of financial dependence on the State.

Post-war trauma effect. According to Segal and Mayadas (2005), the impact of war on refugees is a significant global issue. Many refugees, including the Congolese refugees in Abilene, have had negative and traumatic experiences of war which then forced them to leave their countries. Some of them went through horrendous experiences

which have had great impact on their current way of life. These refugees saw their loved ones being killed and tortured and their wives, sisters, or daughters raped.

The increase in civilian deaths during war is based on the fact that the combatants or rebels target local and innocent populations, forcing the civilians to give their loyalty, and support their mission. Those who fail to support the combatants' mission are destroyed, either by death or inflicting on them significant amount of pain which they will never forget. The same occurred in the DRC; rebels used torture and other painful punishment to terrorize and manipulate the Congolese. Most refugees have gone through some of these issues. It is believed that psychological symptoms always follow torture or other forms of pain that were inflicted by the rebels (Rasmussen, Smith, & Keller, 2007). War victims deal with post-traumatic stress disorders which continue to have a lasting effect on their day-to-day activities.

Most of these refugees do not understand the impact stress or trauma has on their daily lives. They do not know whether they are stressed or need to do something about the way they feel (Nawyn, 2006). They carry this pain and torment to their new environment, which results in difficulties in adjusting and living well in their new home. They also lose their jobs due of lack of concentration; some do not trust people which makes it difficult to work with others (Pedersen, 2002). The inability to keep jobs due to traumatic symptoms leaves them with no option but to depend on the government (Campbell, 2007). Though they are in a new environment, moving from harm to home, the past continues to linger in their memories which hinders their integration and economic self-sufficiency (Horst, 2005). This situation is especially true if such persons were not given a proper PTSD diagnosis and interventions.

During the war in the DRC, women and young girls suffered the most; in addition to being subjected to the threat of torture during times of war, women and young girls were terrorized by rape. Most African women do not like to talk about their experiences with rape (Jewkes, 2007). Therefore, they keep these events in them, which causes trauma and depression in their lives. During the civil war in DRC, sexual assaults occurred when a woman was alone or vulnerable without male protection; sometimes women were coerced into sex in return for benefits like food or protection (Jewkes, 2007). The refugee camps, which are supposed to be a place of safety for the fleeing refugees, become prisons in which refugee women become easy targets for rape. These issues continue to have lasting effects on the refugees as they resettle in their new home. In most of the rape cases, the victims suffer rejection, denying them the stability of family and community life.

Campbell (2007) argued that the effect of rape on women and young girls extends far beyond the individual who is raped. African men who view themselves as protectors of their wives and young girls are humiliated and demoralized when unable to protect them during a rape episode. Also, there is an uneasy calm among families with children who were the products of rape. These children are sometimes not accepted by the families, and if they are, they are treated unfairly within the society.

Refugees leave their towns or villages with the aim of finding peace and security in a foreign land. Those in Abilene have had a long journey with different experiences as they arrive in the United States, a country where dreams are achieved. Researchers have also found that the ongoing stress levels of the refugees in their new homes is attributed to previous exposure to traumatic events, and resettlement stressors have compounded the effects of traumatic stress for refugees (Campbell, 2007).

Resettlement in a new country creates stress. Clements (2001) identified four ways in which the resettlement process was stressful for refugees who arrived in Sweden; these dimension can be applicable to those in Abilene: social and economic strain, alienation, discrimination and status loss, and threats of violence. Adjusting to a new country for refugees is stressful, but when it is combined with the problems of the past, it becomes overwhelming. As Korac (2003) explained, even though the refugees are now living in a safe environment, they will continue to experience difficulties with adjustment and integration into their new community. These difficulties affect their work, and subsequently can cause them to lose their jobs and become dependent on government benefits.

Length of residency in the U.S. The UNHCR mandate offers support to refugees and decides whether they can be resettled in safer countries like the United States, Australia, Germany, Canada, and the United Kingdom. The international mandate of refugees uses six procedures to decide if resettlement is appropriate. The resettlement center helps refugees and their families to apply for resettlement by checking fact files, taking photos, and conducting security clearance. After the interview is done, the refugees and their families undergo medical check-ups. The Department of Homeland Security decides on the person's eligibility to settle in the United States as a refugee (Office of Refugee Resettlement, 2008). Under American law, an applicant for refugee status is not judged on race, nationality, belief, political judgment, or membership in a certain social group. However, immigrants must be deemed admissible to the United States. Refugees who are admitted into the United States do not become United States citizens automatically after arriving; they have a waiting period of 5 years to attain citizen status.

They maintain their refugee status for about 12 months. During this period, the refugees are granted work authorization and they have access to most public benefits. After the 12-month period, they qualify to adjust their status to permanent resident alien, and eventually apply for citizenship after 5 years.

Establishing an economic self-sufficient life in a new and foreign country is not achievable within a very short time. These new arrivals who are coming from poor, underdeveloped countries need ample time to maintain a well-established life and be part of the host community. According to Skerry (2004), the success of refugees in the United States largely depends on the services that the resettlement agencies provide and the attitudes of the host communities to the refugees. The longer the refugees stay in their new country, the more progressive they become. Length of time ensures understanding of their new environment, its culture and way of life. The longer they stay in their new country, the more open they become to accessing knowledge which they will use to navigate the system for better services and economic enhancement (Neal & Bohon, 2003).

The length of stay within the borders of the United States matters because even if they become educated and learn the language, refugees may not have the opportunity to pay back the financial input they enjoyed upon entry. This situation can thus have an overall negative impact on the nation in question that takes them in, for it must put forth monies and resources but then get no viable positive impact later on if the refugees leave before having a chance to “give back” to the host country. It goes deeper than this, though, as the immediate economic impact usually goes far and beyond the expected expenditure, sometimes far exceeding initial expectations (Potocky-Tripodi, 2003). This

means people come in, use up resources, then usually leave or many times simply continue to be an economic burden to the U.S., sometimes for decades.

Sometimes, however, the economic impact is much smaller than many financial experts might think. In fact, in many of the surrounding countries that are dealing more directly with the Syrian refugees than the United States, some statistics show an economic growth occurring (Cassidy, 2015). In some instances, even if their length of stay is quite short, only a few months or even weeks, the economic impact will be positive if they engage in work that maximizes production and profit for the company. Also, another benefit to a shorter stay is that locals will not be upset due to the refugees taking potential jobs away from them, as this is a contentious issue in some places. However, refugees that are resettled in UNCHR approved countries are there to stay, with the goal of becoming economically self-sufficient and making meaningful contributions to that country's economy.

English language proficiency. This is one of the most, if not *the* most, important aspects for refugees (and any other immigrants for that matter) to be successful in their chosen country of refuge. Without understanding the basic language of the United States, English, a refugee has virtually no chance at succeeding in integrating into the country and becoming a valuable member of the country. From an economic standpoint it is nearly impossible for anyone to get a good job and begin to make enough money to not be a financial burden on the country once they enter.

One of the biggest economic drawbacks of language barrier is the ability of the person to get trained for a job which they obviously desperately need to provide for their families. In addition, many employers find it unproductive to hire any potentially new employee if the person cannot speak or write in English. A language barrier makes

conveying information too difficult, therefore posing a risk to job accomplishment and profitability (Cosgrove-Mather, 2002). From a job-based standpoint, this makes perfect sense because if workers cannot understand the directives given by management and supervisors, they are in no position to perform their jobs well at all.

Though refugees are only a small portion of the immigrant population, they still contribute significantly to the issue of potential economic burden they might place on certain regions within the United States. While the issue of refugees is certainly one of a federal nature, the most basic integration of the refugees into the societal structure of the United States is one of a localized nature, as it is up to the regional economies to find a way to integrate them into the public level (Holeywell, 2012). Breaking through this language barrier, then, becomes more about local people helping to establish a framework upon which refugees can become functioning members of the community.

Every Congolese ethnic group has its native language. However, many of the refugees are bilingual. Kiswahili is their second homeland language. On the other hand, French is the instructional language of conversation in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Refugees who have secondary education have better knowledge of French; they can more easily study English than those who never went to school (Anste, 2006). Additionally, a small percentage of those who attended primary schools have knowledge of French. Only a small number of Congolese refugees have been exposed to English. The refugees who resided in Malawi, Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, and Nigeria are better placed in English language proficiency than those who were camped in Burundi and Rwanda (Office of Refugee Resettlement, 2010).

Results of the survey conducted by the Office of Refugee Resettlement in 2008 found that among African refugees arriving: 36.1% were fluent in English, while 23.7%

had no English and about 28.8% had little command of English. Those who spoke English were easily integrated into their new environment, given the advantage of job security over those who do not speak English.

According to the IRC Abilene Annual Report (2010), the Congolese refugees in Abilene are offered in-house English language training by the AmeriCorps Associate as a short-term venture, while others are enrolled at the public adult educational center. Refugees looking for a job take advantage of English language training programs to secure better paying jobs. Also, some local volunteers are paired with the refugees to assist them in understanding basic English language in order to increase their chances of success in the workplace. A 2007 U.S. survey found that 59% of the Congolese refugees do not possess any skills of spoken English, 65% of the refugees were unable to read, and 66% cannot write (Office of Refugee Resettlement, 2008). According to the UNHCR *Resettlement Handbook* (1998), employment and education barriers can be minimized when a decent level of English language skill is attained. The minimization of these barriers often leads to economic self-sufficiency (Cortez, 2004).

Studies have shown that English language training is often offered by public colleges and other learning centers that do not provide refugee-friendly English language programs (Nawyn, 2006). The English language classes are offered partially through in-house training at the IRC; the downside with this is the teachers are not trained as English as a second language (ESL) teachers. These classes are also overcrowded which makes it difficult for the unqualified ESL teacher to create a real impact. According to Pine and Drachman (2005), refugees who attend outsourced English language training program attain skills faster than those who attend in-house training.

The lack of English language proficiency remains a challenge to newly arrived refugees since English is the common language used in the United States. Refugees find it difficult to work in places where the conversation takes place in a language that they cannot comprehend (Shields & Price, 2001). This unfortunate situation often causes them to abandon their jobs, making their dependency on government benefit continue (Potocky-Tripodi, 2001). In addition, it is difficult for them to express their views, thoughts, or ideas on particular issue. The vocational trainings and other educative services offered tend to be difficult until the refugees have gained some skills in English. Back in the refugee camps, some humanitarian agencies provide English language training to those who are in the process of resettlement in the U.S., but these trainings have not been effective (Jacobsen, 2005).

Host-refugee relationship. The relationships between refugees flooding into host countries and the people of said country are often times difficult to manage. In addition, there are certain logistical issues that come up from time to time and these must be dealt with. For example, often times host countries must deal with the spread of communicable diseases from the refugees, which sets up another layer of barrier during the initial entry (Neal & Bohon, 2003). This adds to the inherent fear Americans might already have about refugees entering the United States. Refugees take space, use products and services normally designed for host country members, and add to a general feeling of unease at times (Lawre & Wim, 2003). These products and services being used often lead to other situational issues between host country members and the refugees who use them. This is where many members of the host country might see the drain in local resources come to fruition.

Furthermore, refugees come in contact with people of different cultures, and this in turn leads to many other issues. These issues include a clash of cultures that is not simply a matter of overcoming the language barrier, but also the American way of life. What makes the situation even more dramatic is the fact that these refugees were forced to flee their native land, their comfort zone, to live in foreign countries like the United States. But some of them have regretted their decision to come because of the barriers which they have to overcome. For some, overcoming these barriers to attain economic self-sufficiency seems to be impossible (Segal & Mayadas, 2005). This can lead to feelings of anger and resentment on the part of the refugees themselves and create even more conflict among them and the Americans with whom they live.

In some countries, refugees are resettled in cities where refugees of the same ethnicity have already established themselves. The new arrivals who are placed in these established communities can receive support from refugees that have established themselves. Since they speak the same language, it becomes easier for them to adapt and integrate with the host community. As research has shown, immigrants found in homogenous regions often suffer discrimination from the host citizens (Horst, 2005). In most places, including workplaces, refugees face race discrimination and other forms of ill-treatment. Moreover, racial discrimination in America is not a new problem. Racism is experienced by many foreigners in America, including Africans. There have been a few cases of friction between the host and the refugees here in Abilene. However, some Americans are very caring to refugees. Some have helped the refugees to integrate quickly in the society by helping them with employment services and linking them to local services. The relationship between some Americans and refugees is reliable and influences the level of self-sufficiency positively (Kuhlaman, 1991).

Many refugees experience difficulties in living in a new and foreign environment. The Congolese refugees experience loss in many ways. They are in anguish with divided loyalties and they are now longing for an identity in a new community. The wider community and the specific cultural and identity differences that refugees bring with them to resettlement in their new community provide a human face to the structural and situational conflicts that they have been exposed to in their homeland (Myers, 2010). The Congolese refugees bring these conflicts with them as they are resettled in Abilene, their host community. However, by gaining a more in-depth background of their struggles, identity, formation, and the adjustment difficulties faced in resettlement (Renck, 2006), the International Rescue Committee might be able to develop more appropriate policies to enable them to better serve and accompany this unique group of people through their transition.

According to Rasmussen, Smith, and Keller (2007), the traumatized refugees arriving in their communities are changing the composite experience of these communities. In Abilene, refugees are not only poor, but they are black and mostly uneducated. These refugees are marked by ethnic and racial diversity from the majority culture of the people in Abilene. They, therefore, face challenges in assimilating or melting into the Abilene culture and society. Distinctively, they are racially different from other refugees, like those from Nepal or Iraq who look like “Americans.” They do not speak English fluently, if at all, which makes it difficult to interact with the American people. Therefore, integration of the refugee into the host community should not be an isolated process; it must be an interactive process with the host community. To achieve maximum integration, the two parties should engage in partnership and become agents in the process. If the host community becomes hostile to the newcomers, such an integration

will be very difficult for refugees, and it will have an effect on the hopeful but fragile newcomers (Jewkes, 2007). Refugees admitted into the US are here to stay; this must be acknowledged by the host community. To facilitate refugee self-sufficiency, the host community must open up to the newcomers for coexistent living.

Renck (2006) suggested a different approach to refugee integration in the host community, through intermarriage between couples from different cultures. If members of the host community have entered into marriage with one of the refugees, this will potentially diminish negative concepts the host community has for refugees. This will foster faster integration in the host community. Although some of the refugees have attained some degree of independence and self-sufficiency, there are many others who are still struggling for self-sufficiency and adjustment in the American culture and society. Other studies on refugees have reported negative attitudes in the host community towards refugees in Georgia (Neal & Bohon, 2003). On the other hand, Elliot and Jonsescu (2003) found that ethnic networking facilitates employment and successfully resettlement for new refugees.

Hypotheses

A literature review was conducted to answer the research question of this study: Based on the identified predictors, the following hypotheses were proposed:

1. The educational level of Congolese refugees is positively associated to economic self-sufficiency.
2. The post-war traumatic experience of Congolese refugees is positively associated to economic self-sufficiency.
3. The length of residency in U.S. of Congolese refugees is positively associated to economic self-sufficiency.

4. The English language proficiency of Congolese refugees is positively associated to economic self-sufficiency.
5. Attending ESL classes is positively associated to English language proficiency.
6. The refugee-host relationship of Congolese refugees is positively associated to economic self-sufficiency

Summary

The following factors affect the self-sufficiency of refugees: education level, length of residency in the U.S., English proficiency, host-refugee relationship, and post-war trauma effect. Not surprisingly, limited English proficiency is the main problem that causes many refugees to earn lower wages (Newland et al., 2007). They are more likely to experience higher rates of unemployment (Irvin & Gambrell, 2013). As a result, they are more likely to be dependent on government support. It is arguable that refugees' lack of self-sufficiency is because the government cuts refugee assistance too soon after arrival due to lack of funding (Segal & Mayadas, 2005). Most of the refugees want to live a free life and support themselves knowing that they are eligible for lawful employment upon arrival in their designated country (Office of Refugee Resettlement, 2014). Many refugees hold a common belief that learning English is the first step they should take while integrating in a new country, but many find it very difficult to learn, especially those who never went to school (Phillips, 2009).

Refugees face a wide variety of potential pitfalls when they enter the United States. Usually they do so under a cloud of oppression from their native lands, or difficulties of a political nature which follow them onto American soil. Barriers of language, education, their length of stay within the United States, and possible issues

with members of the host country can all lead to problems. Achieving economic self-sufficiency is a difficult process for anyone, and with refugees it can be even harder with these barriers to overcome. Yet with diligence and persistence, they can achieve anything.

CHAPTER III
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The purpose of this study is to answer the research question: “What are the barriers to economic self-sufficiency of Congolese refugees in Abilene Texas?” From the literature review, a set of factors that predicts economic self-sufficiency of refugees has been identified: education, post-war trauma effect, length of residency in the U.S., English language proficiency, and refugee-host relationship. The researcher hypothesizes that these factors would affect the economic self-sufficiency of Congolese refugees in Abilene, Texas. This chapter describes the research methodology used to test these hypotheses and data collection.

Research Methodology

This research was conducted under the supervision of the IRC Abilene with the intent to identify the general needs of Congolese refugees so that IRC staff members will be better equipped to respond to those needs in order to encourage self-sufficiency. A quantitative descriptive study using a survey was used to answer the research question: What are the barriers to economic self-sufficiency among Congolese refugees in Abilene, Texas? The data were obtained through a questionnaire of predetermined variables. A quantitative research method was chosen to answer this research question. The hypotheses of this study were tested by examining the associations among the variables.

Measurement

The researcher prepared questionnaires to measure all variables, both dependent and independent (Appendix D). Therefore, it is important to ensure construct validity and reliability of these measurements. In order to ensure validity of the measurements, the original version of the survey was assessed by a researcher who has a doctoral degree and a Congolese community partner to know if the instrument was able to gather valid data from the study group. Multiple revisions were made based on this feedback. Furthermore, using this revised survey questionnaire, a pilot survey was carried out with 10 Congolese refugees who were not part of the sample group to determine whether the survey questions were appropriately worded. After review, the survey questions were found to be appropriate and relevant; as a result, no further modification was needed. Since the measurements are straightforward and consist of a single question (e.g., family income and education level), internal reliability is not a major concern.

Economic self-sufficiency, the dependent variable, is defined in this study as the primary factor that contributes to the successful integration of refugees in Abilene, Texas. Its operationalized definition is determined by household size, employment status, individual and household monthly income, and public housing status of refugees. Refugees who belonged to one or more of the following categories were labelled as not economically self-sufficient: (1) living in public housing facilities; (2) a household size of 4 -5 with a monthly income of less than \$1000, a household size of 6-7 with a monthly income less than \$3000, or a household size of 7 or more with a monthly income less than \$4000; and (3) unemployed with a family income of less than \$1000. Refugees who

did not belong to any of the categories mentioned above were labelled as economically self-sufficient.

One of the independent variables, being married, was measured by recoding the answers of marital status. The value of '1' was assigned if the respondent answered married. Otherwise, '0' was assigned to not being married. The same was also used for the question about ESL attendance.

English proficiency both before the transition and after the transition were measured by subjective self-perception of the respondents' level of spoken English skills. Respondents were asked to respond to the question about their rating in their spoken English using a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (Very poor) to 5 (Very good). The same 5-point Likert scale for was applied to questions about host relationship and host financial support.

Sampling

The target population is Congolese refugees who are expected to be self-sufficient. The sampling frame consisted of all Congolese refugees who had lived in Abilene for more than 1 year at the time the survey was administered. The Congolese refugee population was chosen because: (1) they are the largest refugee population in Abilene; (2) they are legal residents of the U.S., and (3) very little study has been done on this population. Refugees who had lived in Abilene less than 1 year were excluded because they are recipients of direct cash assistance either through a Matching grant or Refugee Cash Assistance.

Since there are more than 400 Congolese refugees in Abilene Texas, the sample were current Congolese refugees who are 18 years old and older and have lived in

Abilene for more than 1 year. There was no gender target. The researcher visited all public housing facilities and some churches to recruit participants. The main sampling method was convenience sampling, which was justified given the difficulty of having a comprehensive list of the population. The identity of participants remained confidential in data collection and analysis. Without knowing the expected response rate, at least 130 participants were projected as a sample size to obtain reliable statistical results.

IRB Approval

Since the study had human subjects, approval for the research was requested from Abilene Christian University's Institutional Review Board (IRB). The IRB granted approval (IRB# 16-023) on 02/24/2016 by expedited review (46.110(b)(1) category 7.

Data Collection

Some questionnaires were mailed to the selected participants, and others were hand delivered by the researcher. Assistance in completing the questionnaire was available for those who were not literate in English. The researcher made follow-up calls to make sure that the participants received their questionnaire. All participants signed a consent form (Appendix B) prior to participating in the study, and a copy was given to them. A total of 130 consent forms were sent to potential participants. Within a week, 125 of them were returned. The researcher spent 2 weeks collecting questionnaires from participants, and at the end of that period, 108 questionnaires were received, a 91% response rate.

Data Analysis

Descriptive analyses were conducted to report the sample characteristics. To investigate the relationship between the dependent variable (economic self-sufficiency)

and the independent or predictor variables (education, post-war trauma effect, length of residency in U.S., English language proficiency, and host-refugee relationship), a multiple logistic regression analysis was performed, using the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) software. A regression analysis, which assumes a causal relationship between an outcome variable and a predictor, is widely used for observational data to study a causal structure. It is known that studies that do not use a rigorous experimental design fail to control for threats to internal validity of causal inferences. Confounding effects of other causes are expected to be controlled for at some levels by including multiple predictors in the regression model. Having these concerns considered, the researcher constructed a regression model consisted of multiple hypotheses, each of which is based on the literature review. The causality in this study should be understood as descriptive and exploratory and should be verified with further rigorous studies.

Summary

Chapter 3 outlined the methodology used in this research. Discrete data were collected quantitatively using a questionnaire. A convenience sampling method was used in selecting 108 Congolese refugees in Abilene, Texas. Before completing the questionnaire, participants signed a consent form for voluntary participation after IRB approval.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

Introduction

This chapter presents the result of a quantitative research study of economic self-sufficiency among Congolese refugees in Abilene, Texas. Data were collected through a questionnaire from 108 participants who have lived in the U.S. for more than 1 year, and are over 18 years old.

Results

Table 1 presents demographic characteristics of the sample. Though more males than females participated in the survey, both genders were well-represented, 51.9% males and 47.2% females. Also, more married than unmarried people (77.8%) participated in the survey. In regards to educational attainment, 41.7% of the respondents did not attend any form of school. However, 11.1% of them had bachelor's degree, 12.0% attained primary level, and 34.3% attained high school level of education. The sample showed that 58.3% had some form of education before coming to the U.S. Since arriving in the U.S., 14.8% sought education. It suggests that the participants who have some level of education either before or after the transition expectedly is higher than 51.7%.

A good number of the participants (69.4%) responded that they had never gone through any form of traumatic experience. More than 50% of the respondents have lived in the U.S. for more three years. Such a data is very important to determine if this variable is of any significance to economic self-sufficiency.

Table 1
Characteristics of the Sample (N=108)

Variable	Category	N	%
Gender	Male	54	51.9
	Female	50	48.1
Marital status	Single	18	16.7
	Married	84	77.8
	Divorced	4	3.7
	Widowed	2	1.9
Highest education before coming to America	No formal education	45	41.7
	Primary education	13	12.0
	Secondary/high school	37	34.3
	Bachelor's degree	12	11.1
	Master's degree	1	.9
Highest level of education achieved in the U. S	Did not go to school	92	85.2
	Middle school	1	.9
	High school	6	5.6
	2-year college	6	5.6
	Bachelor's degree	2	1.9
	Master's degree	1	.9
Post-war (??) Traumatic experiences	Rape	10	9.3
	Family member killed	21	19.4
	Other	2	1.9
	None of the above	75	69.4
How long have you lived in America	1-2 years	22	20.4
	2.1-3 years	29	26.9
	3.1-4 years	31	28.7
	4.1-5 years	18	16.7
	5.1 years or more	8	7.4
Spoke English before coming to America	Yes	44	40.7
	No	64	59.3
Rate your spoken English now	Very poor	13	12.0
	Poor	24	22.2
	Average	38	35.2
	Good	29	26.9
	Very good	4	3.7
Attend ESL classes	Yes	67	62.0
	No	41	38.0
Host social support	Very poor	6	5.6
	Poor	6	5.6
	Average	34	31.5
	Good	52	48.1
	Very good	10	9.3

Table 1 (continued)

Variable	Category	N	%
Host Financial support	Very poor	8	7.4
	Poor	13	12.0
	Average	31	28.7
	Good	44	40.7
	Very good	12	11.1

Regarding speaking English before coming to the U.S., 40.7% did not while 59.3% did speak some level of English before coming to the U.S. It was expected that an overwhelming number must have attended ESL classes. Data showed that only 62.0% attended such classes. Rating their level of spoken English now, 35.2% rated as average, 26.9% as good, 22.2% as poor, and 12.0% as very poor. Finally, data indicated that Abilene is a welcoming city; 65.8% of participants responded in a positive way in respect to their relationship with the host community.

Table 2 presents characteristics regarding economic status. This information was used to measure economic self-sufficiency, which was operationally defined in the Chapter 3. The Congolese refugees in the sample had big families; 44.4% had a household size of 4 or 5, and 32.4% had a household size of 6 or 7. The majority of Congolese refugees (51.9%) are living in public housing. According to the Abilene public housing manual, occupants in public housing are low income earners whose financial status cannot afford them decent housing. They are, therefore, classified as not economically self-sufficient (2013). Data showed that many of the participants (79.6%) were employed, but a good number of those (58.3%) employed had a monthly income between \$1000 and \$2000. When the total household income is considered, many of them (44.4%) are within the \$1000 and \$2000 range. The not-sufficient group ($n = 67$, 62%) was a higher proportion compared to the self-sufficient group ($n = 41$, 38%).

Table 2
Variables Related to Economic Self-Sufficiency

Variable	Category	N	%
Household size	1 – 3	16	14.8
	4 – 5	48	44.4
	6 – 7	35	32.4
	8 or more	9	8.3
Living in public housing	Yes	65	51.9
	No	52	48.1
Employment status	Self-employed	2	1.9
	Employed	86	79.6
	Not employed	20	18.5
Monthly income	\$0-1000	38	35.2
	\$1001-2000	63	58.3
	\$2001-3000	4	3.7
	\$3001-4000	3	2.8
Total family income	\$0-1000	12	11.1
	\$1001-2000	48	44.4
	\$2001-3000	30	27.8
	\$2001-4000	18	16.7

A multiple logistic regression (MLR) was performed to identify significant predictors on the likelihood of self-sufficiency. Table 3 presents bivariate correlations among predictors included in the MLR.

Table 3
Bivariate Correlations Among Predictors Included in the MLR

	Male (1)	Married (2)	Trauma # (3)	ESL attend (4)	English now (5)	Some Edu (6)	Time in US (7)	Host relationshi p (8)	Host support (9)
1	1								
2	.287**	1							
3	-0.116	-0.064	1						
4	0.01	0.087	-0.063	1					
5	0.066	-0.019	.478**	-0.18	1				
6	0.125	-.226*	.255**	-.197*	.636**	1			
7	-0.106	0.119	.204*	.196*	.424**	-0.004	1		
8	-0.02	-0.071	.354**	-0.153	.662**	.511**	0.187	1	
9	-0.021	-0.132	.262**	-0.147	.575**	.392**	.190*	.597**	1

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Table 4 shows the results of the MLR. The logistic regression model was statistically significant, $\chi^2(9, N = 108) = 33.277, p < .001$. Nagelkerke R^2 indicates that this model explained 36.1% of the variance in self-sufficiency and correctly classified 75.9% of cases. Among the nine predictors included in the model, two predictors were significant after controlling for all other predictors included in the model. The effect of having some level of education was statistically significant, Wald $\chi^2(1, N = 108) = 5.349, p = .021$. The odd ratio indicates that those who had some formal education were about 5.4 times more likely to be self-sufficient compared to those who did not have any education. The effect of having experience of ESL attendance was statistically significant, Wald $\chi^2(1, N = 108) = 5.490, p = .019$. Interestingly, the odd ratio indicates that those who had ever attended ESL were about 70% less likely to be self-sufficient compared to those who had never attended ESL. The other predictors (i.e., being male, being married, no trauma experience, current English proficiency, time in America, relationship with host community, and financial support from host community) were not significant factors for economic self-sufficiency.

Table 4

A Multiple Logistic Regression Analysis for Predictors of Economic Self-Sufficiency (N = 108)

	B	SE	Wald	OR	95% CI	
Male (0/1)	.046	.515	.008	1.047	.381	2.875
Married (0/1)	1.005	.635	2.510	2.733	.788	9.479
No trauma (0/1)	.941	.628	2.243	2.562	.748	8.773
ESL attend (0/1)	-1.204	.514	5.490*	.300	.110	.821
English now (1-5)	-.228	.432	.277	.796	.341	1.859
Some education (0/1)	1.691	.731	5.349*	5.427	1.294	22.751
Time in US (1-5)	.220	.238	.854	1.246	.781	1.988
Host relationship (1-5)	.126	.389	.105	1.134	.529	2.430
Host support (1-5)	.343	.286	1.437	1.409	.804	2.470
Constant	-3.909	1.420	7.576	.020		

$\chi^2(9, N = 108) = 33.277^{***}$; Nagelkerke $R^2 = .361$; * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Although it was not part of the research questions before data collection, the researcher conducted an ANCOVA analysis in order to understand the effect of ESL programs on English proficiency. Table 5 presents the result of the ANCOVA revealing that the effect of ESL attendance had no significant effect on current English proficiency level, $F(1, 105) = 3.471, p = .065, np^2 = .032$, after controlling for the statistically significant effect of use of English before the transition: $F(1, 105) = 69.927, p < .001, np^2 = .400$.

Table 5
Results of ANCOVA of Current English Proficiency After ESL Attendance

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Partial Eta Squared
Intercept	217.472	1	217.472	329.209***	.758
ESL attend	2.293	1	2.293	3.471	.032
English before	46.193	1	46.193	69.927***	.400
Error	69.362	105	.661		

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$; $R^2 = .419$ (Adjusted $R^2 = .408$)

According to Table 6, after controlling for the effect of previous English capacity, the ESL attending group ($M = 3.01$) had a higher estimated mean than that of the no ESL attending group ($M = 2.67$), but this difference was not statistically significant, $t = -.342, p = .065$.

Table 6
Estimated Marginal Means of Current English Proficiency and Coefficients

Factors	Estimated Marginal Mean	B	SE	t	
Intercept		5.422	.337	16.102***	
ESL	Not attend	2.67	-.342	.183	-1.863
	Attend	3.01	0		
English before		-1.515	.181	-8.362***	

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Summary

This chapter analyzed the results from the study which sought to explore barriers to economic self-sufficiency of Congolese refugees. A multiple logistic regression analysis was conducted to determine the effect of predictors of economic self-sufficiency on variables related to economic self-sufficiency. Results from this sample showed that two predictors (some education and no ESL attendance) were significantly related to self-sufficiency. That refugees who have some level of education or did attend ESL classes have a better chance to attain economic self-sufficiency than those who do not have some level of education or did not attend ESL classes.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

Introduction

This quantitative study examined barriers to economic self-sufficiency among Congolese refugees in Abilene, Texas. A survey was conducted on 108 participants and the results were subjected to statistical analysis. This chapter discusses the results of the study, draws conclusions, and makes suggestions for further research.

Identified Barriers

A multiple logistic regression analysis of variables related to economic self-sufficiency (household size, living in public housing, employment status, monthly income, and total family income) and predictors of economic self-sufficiency (gender, marital status, trauma, ESL attended, English proficiency now, some education, time in U.S., host relationship, and host financial support) revealed that only two (some education and ESL attended) had a statistically significant association with economic self-sufficiency.

Significant Effect of Education

Does the education level of Congolese refugees have an association with attaining economic self-sufficiency? The Multiple Logistic Regression (MLR) analysis showed the effect of having some level of education was statistically significant. The odd ratio indicates that those who had some formal education were about 5.4 times more likely to be self-sufficient than those who did not have any education.

However, descriptive results indicated that many Congolese refugees who were resettled in Abilene, Texas did not go to school before coming to America. A high proportion of respondents (41.7%) did not attend school, 34.3% attended secondary level of education, and only 11.9% completed 4-year College. While in the United States, 85.2% did not attend school. The results indicate that the majority of the refugees never went back to school after their arrival in America. Findings from the survey indicate that refugees prefer to work because it is financially necessary than going to school; 81.5% responded that they were employed while 18.5% were unemployed. Even though many of them were working, only those who have some education (whether inside or outside the U.S.) were economically self-sufficient.

Education is one of the most important cornerstones of self-sufficiency and a good quality of life. It is a crucial factor in addressing the long-term challenges facing the Congolese refugees. In the resettlement program, most refugees are placed in the matching grant program. These employable refugees are required to get employment within 90 days of enrollment in the program. Being employable does not mean that these refugees have educational or employment backgrounds, just that they are within the working age limit and are healthy. It is easier for refugees with some form of education to be placed in jobs than those without some form of education. Also, refugees with some form of education can get better paying jobs than those without. Better paying jobs help these families to move from dependency to self-sufficiency in a very short time.

It is notable that higher education does not guarantee better pay job. The researcher replaced 'college education' with 'some education because the former was not a significant factor when it was included in the logistic regression model. It is consistent

with previous studies. Doodoo and Takyi (2003) found that African immigrants with higher education were not able to get better paying jobs. Korac (2003) found similar results in his study on refugees in the Netherlands and Italy. These results indicate that there are certain types of jobs that are available for refugees.

The Effect of ESL Attendance and English Language Proficiency

The researcher hypothesized that English language proficiency and ESL attendance would be positively associated with self-sufficiency of Congolese refugees. Unexpectedly, current English proficiency was not a significant predictor. One plausible explanation is measurement error. Because English proficiency was measured by respondents' self-rating of their spoken language skills, it may not reflect actual proficiency. Another explanation is that it might have something to do with the type of employment available for this population. It is possible that their jobs do not necessarily require them to be fluent in spoken English. The lack of English language proficiency remains a challenge to newly arrived refugees since English is the common language used in the United States. Refugees find it difficult to work in places where the conversation takes place in a language that they cannot comprehend (Shields & Price, 2001). This unfortunate situation often causes them to abandon their jobs, making their dependency on government benefits continue.

The effect of attending ESL classes was statistically significant. Interestingly, the odd ratio indicates that those who had ever attended ESL were about 70% less likely to be self-sufficient compared to those who had never attended ESL. This result is opposite to the hypothesis regarding ESL attendance. Although ESL attendance was entered as a predictor into the regression model, the direction of causality is not warranted. The

reason for this negative association could be because refugees who already had jobs simply did not have time to attend the ESL program. It is common that when refugees were asked about their absence from ESL classes, they would always respond that their job schedules prevented them from attending the classes (Mandy Rama, personal communication, March 10, 2016). Therefore, it should not be taken for granted that attending ESL will reduce the likelihood of self-sufficiency.

An ANCOVA analysis was conducted in order to understand the effect of ESL programs on English proficiency. The result revealed that the effect of ESL attendance had no significant effect on current English proficiency level. This may be due to the fact that ESL classes that take place at the IRC office are conducted by someone who is not a professional ESL teacher. Also not all registered refugees complete the program, which indicate an excellent enrollment for the program. The ESL instructor has reported about 99% of referred refugees to the ESL program were registered. The survey did not ask for the length of attendance, only if participants attended ESL classes. Findings indicate 62% attended ESL classes. However, their attendance did not help them to be proficient in English. It is possible that most of them did not complete the ESL program. That might be related with the findings from the MLR that those who attended ESL classes were more likely to be self-sufficient than those that did not attend. Refugees also have to work to pay their bills and take care of their basic needs. In light of this, many prefer to work than to continue attending ESL classes.

Other Distinctions from the Literature

The result of the multiple logistic regression analysis indicates that some predictors (e.g., trauma, time in America, host relationship, and financial support) were

not significant factors for economic self-sufficiency. Researcher expected that traumatic experiences would be a barrier to economic self-sufficiency. The war in Congo was very brutal, and many deaths, rape and destructions were reported. Findings indicate that trauma was not statistically significant. One possible reason is the small sample size. In the sample, people who had not experienced trauma were twice more likely to be economically self-sufficient, but the size was not big enough to reject the null hypothesis about the population. There is a chance to find a statistical significance if the sample size was bigger. Alternatively, there is a possibility that the participants have developed resilience through their experiences. Or trauma may be affecting other outcomes such as quality of life, well-being, and depression but not necessarily economic self-efficiency. Further studies are needed to examine what alternative explain this outcome better than others.

According to the results, more than 50% of respondents have lived in the U.S. for more than 3 years. However, their length of residency has no effect on them attaining economic self-sufficiency. After taking into account the effect of education and ESL attendance, length of residency may not be a factor for economic self-sufficiency. Although other studies have suggested that longer residence could lead to economic self-sufficiency (Gowricharn, 2002), at the moment this is not the case for the Congolese refugees in Abilene, Texas.

According to the findings, host-refugee relationship and financial support was not significant fact for economic self-sufficiency. These results also may be attributed to using the subjective measurements, and therefore there is a need for further studies. Refugees start a new life while dealing with culture shock, which includes learning a new

language, learning new work skills, learning a new form of financial management, learning to pay bills electronically, and so on. The majority of refugees do not speak English and do not have the required skills for employment. Some of them have university degrees from their country, but in most cases, they are unable to use them in their new country. Because of these issues, the host country provides services to aid them until they can support themselves. Host communities must support these refugees to become self-sufficient and successful members of their new communities (Smith, 2008).

Recommendations for Policy and Practice

Abilene, a small city in West Texas, has experienced the flow of the resettlement process by the International Rescue Committee (IRC). Located a few hours west of Fort Worth, Abilene is not recognized as a big city, but it is big enough to accept refugees with the aim of giving them the opportunity to be economically self-sufficient. The IRC has resettled more than 1,500 refugees in Abilene.

Given education was found the most important predictor of economic self-sufficiency, there is a need to help refugees to obtain education. Education is even more essential for the second generation so that families can be fully integrated to the host society. Educated and qualified Congolese refugees should be encouraged to make use of the workforce center which charges no commission for its services. The workforce center helps qualified job seekers gain employment that befits their qualifications. Such an intervention will help refugees to get high paying jobs which will gradually lead to economic self-sufficiency.

Although English related factors were found unexpected results, the researcher would recommend that host society should support refugees in this area given the

consistent evidence of their importance in the literature and the possibility of measurement error by using subjective self-rating. As English is the main language of American society, it will be most beneficial if Congolese refugees have a level of English that gives them full access to society. Language learning for immigrants for whom English is not a first language is not the same as literacy learning for those for whom English is a first language. Immigrants require ESL. Therefore, resettlement agencies like the IRC should put in place certain modalities to increase ESL attendance. Where necessary, a mandatory ESL attendance should be enforced. Also, having a trained and qualified ESL instructor will assist the refugees to learn English in a professional way. Refugees should be advised to learn English since English language is one of the prerequisites for getting employed in the U.S. Refugees should also note that English is important, as it allows them to communicate and establish a social network. Refugees need to take advantage of ESL classes either at the IRC or Alta Vista Adult Learning Center where there are professional ESL instructors.

Public housing was not one of the factor in the study, but it may have some impact because it may influence the significant factors in this study. Congolese refugees who are living in public housing should not make those places their forever homes. Rent in public housing is very low, and rent is charged according to household size and income. Those who are living in such places should see this as an opportunity to attend school or ESL classes in order to lift the barriers that make them to depend on public benefits.

Suggestions for Further Research

The design used in this research was specifically developed for studying Congolese refugees living in Abilene. It would be helpful if other researchers could improve on the instrument used in this research to conduct further study on Congolese refugees in other states or on refugees from other countries.

It will be worthwhile to study other aspects of Congolese refugees in the United States. Investigating the influence of social participation or religious participation on self-sufficiency would be helpful for this population.

Limitations of the Study

The current study focuses on the economic self-sufficiency of Congolese refugees who were resettled by the International Rescue Committee in Abilene, Texas. It must be also noted that the data were collected in Abilene. Therefore, findings from this research should not be considered as generalizable to other Congolese refugees or other refugee population.

It was assumed that 150 participants would respond truthfully to the questions submitted to them by the researcher. Though there are more than 400 Congolese refugees living in Abilene, only 108 of them participated in this study. In addition to the concern about the representativeness, the small size and limited statistical power made this analysis difficult and results inconclusive. English is not the native language of the respondents, and the questions were written in English which may have been misunderstood or misread by the participants. Interpreters were available to assist those who cannot read and understand English. Therefore, it is possible the involvement of interpreters may have influenced the responses of the participants.

All of the variables were measured by respondents' subjective perception. Some of the variables such as English proficiency and host family relationship may not represent the reality very well. Therefore, the results of this study should be considered preliminary and verified by future studies with better measurements (e.g., objective measurements) and research design (e.g., experimental design).

Conclusion

An investigation or study of a refugee population is always important and helpful to organizations involved in serving these newcomers who are very vulnerable and in search of opportunities. This study was conducted to throw light on the barriers Congolese refugees face in achieving economic self-sufficiency in Abilene, Texas. The Congolese refugees are growing in numbers in Abilene. The low cost of living, friendly people, and availability of jobs in Abilene are attracting Congolese refugees resettled in other cities within the country to come here. Research questions were used to investigate variables related to economic self-sufficiency and predictors of economic self-sufficiency by using a multiple logistic regression analysis. This survey study results indicate that education and English were important factors of this outcome.

This study provides information for service providers such as the Health and Human Service Commission, Health Department, school districts, Work Force Center, library, resettlement agency, and local churches to help them better understand and assist the Congolese refugee population in Abilene, Texas. Their support will help refugees move from dependence on public assistance to economic self-sufficiency, helping them to achieve the American dream.

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APPENDIX A

ABILENE CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY IRB APPROVAL LETTER

ABILENE CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY
Educating Students for Christian Service and Leadership Throughout the World
Office of Research and Sponsored Programs
320 Hardin Administration Building, ACU Box 29103, Abilene, Texas 79699-9103
325-674-2885



2/26/2016

David Bayoh
Department of Social Work
ACU Box 27866
Abilene Christian University

Dear Mr. Bayoh:

On behalf of the Institutional Review Board, I am pleased to inform you that your project titled "What are the Barriers to Economic Self-Sufficiency of Congolese Refugees in Abilene, Texas?"

was approved by expedited review (46.110(b)(1) category 7) on 2/24/2016 for a period of one year (IRB # 16-023). The expiration date for this study is 2/24/2017 . If you intend to continue the study beyond this date, please submit the [Continuing Review Form](#) at least 30 days, but no more than 45 days, prior to the expiration date. Upon completion of this study, please submit the [Inactivation Request Form](#) within 30 days of study completion.

If you wish to make any changes to this study, including but not limited to changes in study personnel, number of participants recruited, changes to the consent form or process, and/or changes in overall methodology, please complete the [Study Amendment Request Form](#).

If any problems develop with the study, including any unanticipated events that may change the risk profile of your study or if there were any unapproved changes in your protocol, please inform the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs and the IRB promptly using the [Unanticipated Events/Noncompliance Form](#).

I wish you well with your work.

Sincerely,

Megan Roth

Megan Roth, Ph.D.
Director of Research and Sponsored Programs

Our Promise: ACU is a vibrant, innovative, Christ-centered community that engages students in authentic spiritual and intellectual growth, equipping them to make a real difference in the world.

APPENDIX B

CONSENT FORM



Consent Form for Participation in Research Study

What are the Barriers to Economic Self-Sufficiency of Congolese Refugees in Abilene, Texas?

You are invited to participate in a research study of economic self-sufficiency of Congolese refugees in Abilene, Texas, which is conducted by a student from the Graduate School of Social Work Department at Abilene Christian University in Abilene, Texas. You are chosen for the study because you are an adult member of the Congolese refugee population who has lived in Abilene for more than one year. Please read this document carefully and ask any questions you have before agreeing to be part of the study.

The Purpose and Length of Study

The purpose of this study is to determine the barriers to economic self-sufficiency among Congolese refugees who have lived in Abilene for more than one year. If you decide to participate, you will complete a 17 item survey in order to determine the barriers to economic self-sufficiency. The survey will be completed in your own

environment and will take no longer than 20 minutes to complete. If you agree to be in this study, you will be asked to:

- Sign the consent form
- Participant in the study for a period of 2 weeks
- Return the complete consent form to the researcher
- Direct any concerns to the researcher

Benefits and Possible Risks

Please note that your participation in this study is voluntary. That means everyone will respect your decision of whether or not you want to be in the study. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your relationship with the IRC or Abilene Christian University. If you decide to participate, you are free to withdraw your consent and discontinue participation at any time without penalty.

In this study you will be asked to give some personal information, like your income or level of education that could be sensitive. This information is, however, important in gathering information about factors that prevent Congolese refugees from achieving economic self-sufficiency. The results of the survey will be used to assist the resettlement agency to know these barriers in order to enact better methods of assisting future refugees. I cannot guarantee that you will receive any direct benefits from this research, but it may help service providers, hospitals, and school districts to understand your situation to better serve you. This survey is solely for research purposes and has no monetary value whatsoever.

Confidentiality

Any information that is obtained in connection with this study will remain confidential and will be disclosed only with your permission or as required by law. Participant identities will be kept confidential and identifying information will not be requested. If the information received needs to be released, for any reason, the IRC will provide the information. The only information given to the agency will be the results of the study conducted.

I,, have read and understand the information written above and understand that participation is voluntary and that refusal to participate will not penalize me in any way.

Signature _____

Date: _____

Age: _____

Contact person/researcher:

David Magonah Bayoh
 ACU School of Social Work Graduate Student
dmb14a@acu.edu
 214-616-0407

APPENDIX C

CONSENT FORM (KIRUNDI TRANSLATION)

ICONGEWEKO B: URWANDIKO RW'IVYO BUMVIKANYEKO

Uratumiwe kuja mu cirwa c'ubushakashatsi ku vyerekeye ukwibeshaho kw'Abakongomani muri Abilene, Texas biriko bigirwa n'umunyeshule wo muri "Graduate School of Social Work Department at Abilene Christian University" muri Abilene, Texas. Watowe muri iki cirwa kubera yuko uri umuntu akuze kandi ari mu murwi w'abantu b'impunzi z'Abakongomani babaye muri Abilene igihe kirenga umwaka. Urasabwe gusoma iki candiko kandi ubaze ibibazo imbere yuko uja muri iki cirwa.

Impamvu y'iki cirwa be n'Igihe kizomara

Impamvu y'iki cirwa ni ukugira tumenye inzitizi zibuza impunzi z'Abakongomani babaye muri Abilene mu gihe kirenga umwaka kuba bikwiye muvuyo kwibeshaho. Nimba wiyemeje kuzojamwo uzoheza wuzuze ibintu cumi n'indwi bizoba vyabajijwe kugirango hamenyekane inzitizi zo kwibeshaho bo nyene. Iryo tohoza rizogirirwa aho usanzwe uba kandi rizomara umwanya utarenza iminota mirongo ibiri kugira rihere. Nimba uvyemeye kuja muri ico cirwa, uzosabwa:

- Gushira igikumu ku nyandiko zumvikanyweko
- Kuba muri ico cirwa mu kiringo c'indwi zibi
- Gusubiza uwo mushakashatsi urwo rwandiko rw'ivyumvikanyweko ruhejeje kwuzuzwa
- Gushikiriza amakenga ajanye n'ubu bushakashazi

Akamaro canke ingorane zishobora gushika

Wowenya yuko kuja muri iki cirwa biva kugushaka kwawe nta gahato karimwo. Ibi bisigura yuko uwariwe wese azokwubaha ingingo uzoba wafashe haba kuja canke kutaja muri iki cirwa. Ingingo uzoba wafashe yo kuja canke kutajamwo ntibizokwonona imigenderanire mufitaniye na “IRC” canke na “Abilene Christian University.” Ni wafata ingingo yo kutajamwo, ufise uburenganzira bwo kwaka inyandiko y’ivyo mwumvikanyeko kandi ugaca uhagarika kubandanya umwanya uwariwe wese kandi ata gihano.

Muri iki cirwa uzobazwa nk’ibintu biraba wewe nyene, nk’ibijanye n’amahera uronka canke aho wagejeje kwiga, naho bishobora gushika ntibikunze. Ariko, ayo makuru aronderwa kumenywa arafise akamaro kanini mu kwegeranya ibintu bituma bibuza impunzi z’Abakongomani kudashikira aho bashobora kwibeshaho bo nyene. Ibizoba vyavuye muri iryo tohoza bizokoresha mugufasha ikigo kibakira mu kumenya izo nzitizi kugira bashireho uburyo busumbirije bwo gufasha impuzi zizozza mu misi izozza. Sinshobora kwemeza yuko muzoronka inyungu za vuba zivuye muri ubu bushakashazi mugabo bizofasha abantu bafasha, ibitaro, be n’uburongozi bw’amashuri kugira batahure kurusha ingene bobafasha. Rero iri tohoza rifise impamvu zijanye n’ubushakashatsi gusa kandi nta nagatoyi bijanye n’inyungu z’amahera.

Kugumya ibanga

Amakuru ayari yose tuzoba twaronse ajanye n’iki cirwa azoguma mw’ibanga kandi azoserurwa honyene igihe uzoba watanze uruhusha canke bisabwe n’amategeko. Ibiranga uwuzoba ari muri iryo tohozwa bizoguma ari ibanga kandi amakuru ajanye n’ibiranga umuntu ntazokwigera asabwa. Igihe amakuru twaronse azoba akenewe kumenyekana, bivuye ku gituma ico arico cose, “IRC” izotanga ayo makuru. Amakuru yonyene azoba yahawe ico kigo azoba agizwe ni ivyavuye muri ico cirwa cakoze.

Jewe,, nasomye kandi natahuye amakuru yanditswe
aha hejuru kandi ndatahura yuko kuba muri iki cirwa biva kugushaka kandi no kwanka
kukijamwo nta nagatoyi bizompanisha.

Igikumu: _____

Italiki: _____

Inyaka ufise: _____

APPENDIX D
QUESTIONNAIRE

This purpose of this survey is to gather quantitative data. You are not required to provide your personal information. Your name will be anonymous. It will be useful to the researcher to get your views as an individual. Please take a few minutes to answer the following questions.

Section 1 – Demographic

- 1) Gender
 - Male
 - Female
 - Transgender
 - Prefer not to answer

- 2) Marital status
 - Single
 - Married
 - Divorced
 - Widowed

- 3) What is your household size?
 - 1-3
 - 4-5
 - 6-7
 - 7 or more

Section 2 – Economic self-sufficiency

- 4) Are you living in Public Housing?
 - Yes
 - No

- 5) What is your current employment status?
- Self-employed
 - Employed
 - Not employed
- 6) What is your monthly income?
- \$0 - \$1000
 - \$1001 - \$2000
 - \$2001 - \$3000
 - \$3001 - \$4000
 - \$4001 and above
- 7) What is your total family monthly income?
- \$0 - \$1000
 - \$1001 - \$2000
 - \$2001 - \$3000
 - \$3001 - \$4000
 - \$4001 - \$5000
 - \$5001 - \$6000
 - \$6000 and above

Section 3 - Education

- 8) What is your highest level of education before arriving in America?
- No formal education
 - Primary school
 - Secondary/High school
 - Bachelor's degree
 - Master's degree
- 9) What is the highest level of education you have received in America?
- Did not go to school
 - Elementary school
 - Middle school
 - High school
 - 2-year college
 - Bachelor's degree
 - Master's degree

Section 4 – Post-war trauma effect

- 10) Did you or any member of your household directly experience any of the following
- Rape
 - Family member killed
 - Other
 - None of the above

Section 5 – Length of residency in the US

- 11) How long have you live in America?
- 1 – 2 years
 - 2.1 – 3 years
 - 3.1 – 4 years
 - 4.1 – 5 years
 - 5.1 years or more

Section 6 – English language proficiency

- 12) Did you speak English before coming to the US?
- Yes
 - No
- 13) How do you rate your spoken English now?
- Very poor
 - Poor
 - Average
 - Good
 - Very good
- 14) Have you attended ESL Classes?
- Yes
 - No
- 15) Where did you attend ESL classes?
- IRC
 - Alta Vista
 - Church
 - Other
 - Did not attend

Section 7 – Host-refugee relationship

16) How do you describe your relationship with non-refugees?

Very poor

Poor

Average

Good

Very good

17) How do you describe financial support that you have received from non-refugees?

Very Poor

Poor

Average

Good

Very good