Congolese Men and Women of Good Hope: The Legacies of Refugee Camps for Work Market Readiness in Hyper-Diverse Cities

Mr John Bosco Ngendakurio
Bachelor of International Relations, Master of International Relations

School of Humanities, Languages and Social Science
Griffith University

A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the degree of Master of Arts (Research)

July 2017
Statement of Originality

This work has not previously been submitted for a degree or diploma in any university. To the best of my knowledge and belief, the thesis contains no material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made in the thesis itself.

Signed

Mr John Bosco Ngendakurio
Abstract

The key question this thesis asks is the following: “What are the key determinants of market readiness for Congolese refugees in today’s hyper-diverse cities with particular focus on their Australian settlement?” This question is sparked by the lack of a wide ranging existing literature to develop a full understanding of Congolese refugees’ post-migration conditions and factors that influence their settlement and integration in their new home country including language, education, employment and social cohesion. But even less attention has been paid to these refugees’ pre-resettlement conditions and how they impact on Congolese refugees’ work market readiness in Australia, particularly in hyper-diverse cities. This study aims to highlight critical barriers to accessing meaningful employment within the Congolese communities in Australia and raise awareness about special needs of Congolese-Australians who have experienced long stays in the refugee camps.

The research draws on original qualitative research that involves face-to-face interviews with ten female and ten male Congolese refugees resettled from various refugee camps in Africa. The thesis interrogates ongoing legacies of refugee camps for work readiness, community trust and social cohesion. These refugees’ stories, history and experiences are discussed in this research and they will become helpful to both migrant and non-migrant Australian communities to understand Congolese refugees’ performances in different sectors.

Outlining the underlying factors of work market readiness in Australia will also enable the Congolese community and their settlement services providers to understand refugees’ need and the level of their readiness for the work market in Australia, to re-shape their business model to improve services delivery, promote social cohesion and help African refugees to access appropriate services. These factors, as discussed in greater detail in chapter four, include verbatim accounts of their health and wellbeing, their histories of torture and trauma, their prospects for education and training, the resettlement process, social network, social cohesion, self-confidence and self-image plus government policies and the cultural significance of work.
Acknowledgement

A number of people have significantly contributed to this project and I am deeply grateful to each of you.

A big thank you to the Congolese community members who kindly accepted to take part in this project. I thank you for your generosity, your openness, your time and, most importantly your trust with which you shared with me your experiences of hardships and extraordinary events in the course of your refugee and settlement journeys. Without your insights, this project would have been a non-starter.

Can I particularly thank Mr Blaise Itebelo, Mr Girmay Gebremedhin and Mr Aimable Harusha from Access Community Services who tirelessly supported this project in a unique way that enabled its smooth progress. Without your support, I would not have been able to access the valuable participants in Logan. I would also like to thank Mr Benson Kanamaharage who did whatever he could to connect me with very insightful and politically minded Congolese men and women. What would I have done without you Benson? You are a great Congolese community gate-keeper.

I owe much in way of thanks to a range of refugee settlement services providers, particularly Access Community Services- Gail Ker, Dr Mary Asic-Kobe, Joanne Magnussen and Isobel Nye, with whose endorsement, I was able to gain trust from the participants. May God keep using you as his instrument in changing people’s lives. I would also like to give special thanks to Culture in Mind for supporting this project unreservedly. Your commitment made my work a lot easier and I cannot thank you enough. To both Access Community Services and Culture in Mind, I hope this research’s findings contribute to the work you do within the Congolese refugee communities to a certain extent.

Words cannot express how I was overwhelmed by the support, understanding and patience of my wonderful supervisors, Dr Robert Mason and Associate Professor Georgina Murray of Griffith University. I sincerely thank you for your guidance and, most importantly your trust in me. Your inputs, insights, honesty and words of encouragement throughout our many conversations made me feel smart- a rare treatment throughout my academic pursue. Thank you so much for boosting my self-
Indeed, my future milestones will build up on this strong foundation of great confidence.

To my late parents, especially my father who once was one of the very few people who believed I would be a significant contributor to the family, I say thank you. I know you are watching me from heaven, smiling.

Can I thank all my friends, my Burundian community links and my colleagues, especially the Hon Cameron Dick MP and his entire team, you are all special to me. Thank you so much for your ongoing support.

To my in-laws, particularly Mr Aaron Ntukamazina and Marie Rose Nahimana, respectively my father and mother-in-law, as well as all my brothers and sisters in-law, thank you so much for your support and for allowing your homes to become “children drop centres”. You were there when I and Yvonne needed you most. I really appreciate your generosity!

To my brothers and sisters, thank you so much for being role models. Well, this project is another step forward to accomplish the very big dream of our father, please keep me in your prayers.

To my two beautiful children, Arose-Dilaine Ngendakuriyo and Revin A. Ngendakuriyo, thank you so much for your understanding when daddy was not available to say good night or to be a part of Friday movie nights during the overwhelming period of this project. I owe you much. I loved every moment you attempted to help, especially when you came to my home office and offered to make me a cup of tea when I needed it most.

Finally to my wife Yvonne Iragahoraho, thank you so much for putting up with me and, of course for your words of encouragement. I would have given up if I did not have someone along the journey who constantly reminded me that I could do it. Thank you for keeping our little family running with my minimal contribution, particularly in the last phase of the project. This is another family’s degree, we did it together!

Thank You!
Table of Content

Statement of originality ................................................................. ii
Abstract .......................................................................................... iii
Acknowledgment ............................................................................ iv
Table of content ............................................................................... vi
Acronyms ......................................................................................... ix

Chapter 1
Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), A Place Plagued By War

1 Introduction.................................................................................... 1
1.2 Congolese refugee journey ......................................................... 2
1.3 Aim of the study ........................................................................ 3
1.4 Significance of the study .............................................................. 5
1.5 Rationale ..................................................................................... 10
1.6 Conclusion .................................................................................... 12

Chapter 2
A Literature Review

2.1 Introduction ................................................................................ 14
2.2 Pre- resettlement experiences- Legacies of refugee camps .......... 15
   2.2.1 Health and wellbeing ........................................................... 15
   2.2.2 Skills and education in adult Congolese refugees ............... 17
   2.2.3 Congolese refugee children’s education ............................. 18
   2.2.4 Resettlement process ........................................................... 20
   2.2.5 Experience of female refugees .......................................... 21
      2.2.5.1 Using rape a weapon of war ....................................... 21
      2.2.5.2 Gender-Based violence in the refugee camps .......... 22
2.3 Post Migration Experience ......................................................... 23
   2.3.1 History of torture and trauma ......................................... 23
2.3.2 Barriers in accessing work market .................................................. 24
2.3.3 Social cohesion issues ................................................................. 25
2.3.4 Issues of self-confidence within refugee populations ....................... 26
2.3.5 Government’s policy based on neo-liberal approach .......................... 27
2.3.6 The legacies of remittances as a result of family splits ...................... 29
2.3.7 Cultural significance of work ........................................................ 31
2.4 Conclusion ........................................................................................ 32

Chapter 3

Methodology

3.1 Introduction ...................................................................................... 33
3.2 Qualitative methodology- snowballing technique ............................... 34
3.3 Strength and risk with the methodology ............................................ 35
3.4 Ethical Clearance ............................................................................ 36
3.5 The sample ...................................................................................... 36
3.6 Participant sample (statistical overview) ............................................ 38
3.7 Semi-structured interview ................................................................. 39
3.7 What the interviewer brought to the research .................................... 40
3.8 Data analysis ................................................................................... 42
3.8 Conclusion ....................................................................................... 42

Chapter 4

Results of Qualitative Research

4.1 Introduction ...................................................................................... 44
4.2 Implication of health and wellbeing .................................................. 45
4.3 The legacies of refugee journey for Congolese refugees skills and education .. 48
4.4 Resettlement processes .................................................................... 53
4.5 Legacies of Congolese refugees’ experiences ....................................... 56
4.6 Prospects for employment and barriers ............................................. 60
4.7 Social cohesion issues ..................................................................... 65
4.8 Issues of self-confidence within refugee populations .......................... 69
4.9 The legacies of Government policies based on neoliberal approach ......... 73
Acronyms

DRC  The Democratic Republic of Congo
SGBV  Sexual and Gender-Based Violence
PTSD  Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder
IPV  Intimate Partner Violence
UNICEF  The United Nations Children's Fund
UNHCR  United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
HSS  Humanitarian Settlement Services
MDA  Multicultural Development Australia
HRW  Human Rights Watch
GP  General Practitioner
OP  Overall Position (OP). It is a tertiary entrance rank used in the Australian state of Queensland for selection into universities
M.E  Middle East
SW  Southwest
US  United States
N/A  Not Applicable
QPASTT  Queensland Program of Assistance to Survivors of Torture and Trauma
Chapter 1

Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), a place plagued by war

1. 1 Introduction

An appreciation of the situation in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) is essential to understand the legacies of refugee camps for work market readiness within Congolese refugee communities in hyper-diverse cities such as the City of Logan. The DRC has been plagued by civil wars, conflicts and violence since it secured its political independence from Belgian colonial rule in 1960 (Edo & Adeyeri, 2013: 244). The DRC has been experiencing one of Africa’s most complex civil wars for two decades. The complexity of these civil wars stems from the legacies of colonial and autocratic governance (Edo & Adeyeri, 2013: 244), wars in the neighbouring countries Burundi, Uganda and Rwanda, military involvement of many other countries and the significant number of rebel groups operating and emerging from within (Edo & Adeyeri, 2013: 244). A report commissioned by the United Nations in October 2010 demonstrated in detail the atrocities committed in DRC by negative forces and military troops from the neighbouring countries, highlighting elements and actions that, if tried before competent courts, could be declared as crimes of genocide (African Research Bulletin, 2010: 18536-18537A).

One of these many atrocities used in DRC is using rape as a weapon of war, putting a significant number of women in some regions at risk and leading to gross violation of human rights. Due to the culture of impunity and the Congolese judicial systems that face a significant lack of resources, the lack of protection and stigmatization of the victims, in conjunction with the unaffordable legal proceedings, it is hard to effectively combat sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) in DRC (Kitharidis, 2015: 449). Indeed, using rape as a weapon of war becomes another burden on females, one of the world’s most vulnerable population groups. It is generally agreed (Kirby, 2013: 93) that the majority of offenders in sexual violence cases are men. Men carry out these crimes individually, as collective bystanders or facilitators. Using rape as a weapon of war is both a crime, immoral and a breach of International Law (Kirby, 2013: 93). At
some point, rape and the other atrocities including exploitation, torture and trauma are a part of Congolese people's everyday lives (Merke, 2005, n.p). These become so unbearable that a huge number of Congolese citizens decide to leave their country to become refugees in different countries in Africa and beyond (Moraru, 2015).

1. 2 Congolese refugees journey

The Congolese civil war shares many commonalities with other recent conflicts in Africa. It has not only resulted in the death of innocent people, causing families' loss of their beloved ones including parents, children, siblings and close friends, but it has also forced a big number to flee, taking dangerous journeys through different countries (Moraru, 2015). Refugee journeys are not easy ones. Refugees face incredible violence, insults, torture and imprisonment, all of which generate constant fear, tragedies and despair (Moraru, 2015). Traditional roles are under siege because of these wars. In contrast to the situation in their home country, men in the refugee camps lose power and property. Some women take over core duties in the family including keeping the ration cards, to ensure their children are fed (Krause, 2015: 14-15). Some women’s attention and priority are redirected to themselves and children’s survival, overlooking their traditional role in caring for men’s needs (Krause, 2015: 14-15). Men and women are therefore stuck in limbo. Men lose their traditional status, which translates into increased family violence, triggered by the men’s lack of access or denial of resources or excessive consumption of alcohol, due to the high level of desperation (Krause, 2015: 14-15). Refugees might manage to escape from wars and seek safety outside their home countries, but sexual and gender-based violence remain continuous threats to their safety and wellbeing (Krause, 2015: 14-15).

Recent literature about refugee camps (Holzer & Warren, 2015: 484) demonstrates that, some refugees have actively and successfully carried out demonstrations against harsh refugee policies within the refugee camps settings. They achieved this by empowering each other to mobilise and build strong social cohesion within the refugee camps (Holzer & Warren, 2015: 484). Escape from the DRC does not mean the end of refugee persecution. Furthermore, reaching the refugee camps in the neighbouring countries such as Tanzania is not the end of their struggles. The policies, the design and the constructed environment of the refugee camps generally remind them of the
insecurity endemic to their temporary subject position (Thomson, 2014: 376). This position has adverse outcomes, particularly in relation to Congolese refugees’ wellbeing and their hope for the future. It leads them to oppression and alienation and, most dangerously, forces them to put their life on hold indefinitely, as they cannot engage in any activities- education, job or training for an undetermined period of time (Thomson, 2014: 376). Previous research (Merke, 2005: n.p) has demonstrated the emptiness of life in the refugee camps. Such life is almost impossible to bear. Additionally, service providers struggle to meet refugees’ basic needs including food, shelter, health and education (Merke, 2005: n.p). Underlying the construction of refugee camps is an implied assumption that refugees disturb the host country’s order. These camps are the most effective means of containing displaced people, limiting some of their freedoms such as the liberty of movement due to a set of boundaries, even if locals and refugees do constantly cross them searching for opportunities in and out of the camps (Turner, 2016: 139- 142). Refugees’ common situation of belonging neither here nor there challenges the assumed link between nation, state and citizenship as well as belonging (Turner, 2016: 139- 142). These factors in conjunction with what refugees are exposed to at home are multiplied in their experiences on their way to the camps. These experiences include many types of exploitation that enhance their history or torture and trauma (Merke, 2005: n.p). Unaccompanied minors, who end up being responsible for their younger siblings’ care, health and wellbeing are forced to become adults overnight (Merke, 2005: n.p). Their childhood is stolen from them and this continues to shape their fate, even after resettlement (Merke, 2005: n.p). This thesis aims to demonstrate how these pre-migration and post-migration conditions continue to shape Congolese refugees’ work market readiness in Australia.

1. 3 Aim of the study

This thesis has as its central aim to provide an answer, through analysis and evidence, to the question: “What are the most critical issues and barriers to accessing meaningful employment within the Congolese communities in hyper-diverse cities, that is, the most multicultural cities in Australia?” It aims to raise awareness about special needs
of Congolese-Australians who have potentially experienced long stays in the refugee camps. The main research questions are:

1. How do Congolese refugees believe the refugee camps influenced their work market readiness?
2. How do Congolese refugees resettled from the camps access the work market in Australia?
3. What is the cultural significance of work for Congolese refugees in Australia?
4. Which Government’s policies do Congolese refugees perceive as most important for their settlement?
5. What is the role of the remittance monies on job choices?
6. What role do refugees’ expectations of the job market play on influencing their job choices?
7. How does the current period of neo-liberalism regulate refugees’ experience of the Australian society?

These questions are designed to interrogate ongoing legacies of refugee camps for work readiness, community trust and social cohesion. The research will form an important resource for the catharsis of the participants, for mainstream Australians, government agencies and community organisations providing settlement and employment services to refugees of Congolese and others of African background, as parts of the knowledge accumulated in relation to Congolese refugees can be applied to other African community groups in Queensland. Giving back this analysis to the Congolese community will also help those involved parties to understand refugees’ need and the level of their readiness for work market in Australia. Importantly, it will realistically enable policy makers and other stakeholders to re-shape their business model and this would improve their service delivery, promote social cohesion, help African refugees to access appropriate services and achieve better settlement outcomes.
1. 4 Significance of the study

The significance of the study lies in the fact that Australia is home to a significant number of refugees resettled from the camps in Africa among whom Congolese refugees. Australia has moral and legal obligations to protect refugees and that involves granting of asylum and providing appropriate settlement and integration services to those who meet the refugee status criteria (Souter, 2016: 795). The recent debates (Cadwallader, 2015: 01) about the legal issues surrounding the Australian immigration policies clearly show that Australia has the responsibility to protect and needs to do it right. This thesis will help in that pursuit.

A refugee is defined as someone who, due to well-founded fear of being persecuted in his or her home country based on race, religion, nationality, opinion, political or social membership, is outside his or her home country and cannot expect the protection of that country and, consequently, cannot return to it (McCuiston, 2014: 531). The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) is the leader in refugee status determination and has the coordinating and supervising role to ensure that refugee rights are safeguarded (McCuiston, 2014: 531). In December 2014, the number of refugees worldwide reached 19.5 million, of which 13,750 are resettled to different cities in Australia annually, through the offshore humanitarian program (Refugee Council of Australia, 2015:n.p).

Pre-arrival conditions have a significant impact on the refugee settlement outcome upon arrival in Australia. Each step refugees take is unique in character and, consequently most of them have obvious and undetected mental health issues which have adverse consequence for their ability to negotiate trust and achieve good settlement and integration outcome (George, 2012: 429- 437). An average day in most of the refugee camps is characterized by continuing conflicts, tensions and gender-based violence, putting female refugees at risk of rape and other abuses (Palitza, 2010: n.p). In contrast to refugees living in the cities, commonly known as urban refugees, health and wellbeing of refugees living in the UNHCR operated camps are compromised (Harvard University, 2015: 2229). To make things worse, it has been documented that most refugees spend more than fifteen years in the refugee camps before they get resettled to Australia (Thomson, 2012: 186-205). On the other hand, the existing literature demonstrates how African refugees struggle to secure
meaningful employment regardless of their educational and professional backgrounds (Hebbani & Colic-Peisker, 2012: 530-531). Service providers cannot provide adequate settlement services unless they understand pre-arrival and post-arrival traumatic experiences and examine them beyond the general assumptions and formulations about refugees and Africans (George, 2012: 429-437).

The Humanitarian Settlement Services (HSS) program provides practical support to humanitarian entrants throughout their first twelve months in Australia. It aims to help them settle in the community and become independent as soon as possible, ensuring refugees become fully active and participating members of the Australian community (Access Community Services, 2016). Services provided include tailored support to begin a new life in Australia, strengthening refugees’ ability to fully participate in the economic and social life of Australia, providing refugees with skills and knowledge to independently access services beyond the HSS program and provide services in accordance with the program’s principles (Access Community Services, 2016). This is achieved through Case Management, information and referral, on-arrival reception at the airport, emergency assistance, accommodation including the provision of household goods, volunteer support, advocacy and raising community awareness, English proficiency, literacy and social skills programs for children and adults (Access Community Services, 2016). Humanitarian Settlement Services providers work collaboratively with families to access resources available in the community and to ensure they understand what is expected of them in the Australian community and help them engage and build a network in the broader community (MDA, 2016).

It is important to interrogate why, despite all policies and services available to humanitarian entrants upon arrival to facilitate their settlement journey and integration, this population group remains with the highest unemployment rate nationally (Hebbani & Colic-Peisker, 2012: 530-531). Previous research has also highlighted that refugees who are lucky enough to get employed tend to work less hours than the minimum hours required to maintain themselves and their family financially, leading them to a loss of professional status in the community (Hebbani & Colic-Peisker, 2012: 530-531). The loss of occupational status in the community does not only affect the concerned refugees and their families but it also has adverse impact on the mainstream Australians’ perception of Africans. This is a great barrier particularly in
relation to the refugees’ ability to create a network and to minimize the impact of the cultural shock. Moreover, evidence (Hebbani & Colic-Peisker, 2012: 530-531) suggests that Africans are worse off comparing to the rest of the community groups. The SBS documentary of 26 February 2017 (Delaney, 2017, n.p) suggests that African- Australians encounter prejudice at double the rate of other groups and it makes it harder for them to secure rental properties and jobs. On the other hand, researchers such Lillian Mwanri, Kiros Hiruy and Joseph Masika (2012: 87) have concluded that African- Australians face significant poverty mainly due to most of them having no or lower education compared to the rest of the community. Poverty, in conjunction with a new environment, unfamiliarity with the systems and people puts a limit to refugees’ life choices (Mwanri, Hiruy & Masika, 2012: 87). Therefore, there is a need for an overhaul of settlement and integration services in Australia. A recent study (Emberson & Virtue, 2016: n.p) suggests that even with a university degree completed in Australia, most Congolese refugees can still only find work in chicken factories. This piece argues convincingly that current settlement systems are ineffective, expensive and inappropriate for this cohort. Settlement service providers should do more than welcoming and driving clients from the airport, teaching them how to catch a bus, linking them with social welfare agencies and helping them to rent a property upon arrival (Emberson & Virtue, 2016: n.p). This is particularly important within the Congolese refugee communities who have lived extended periods of time in various refugee camps before they were resettled to Australia (Wachter, Heffron, Snyder, Nsonwu & Busch-Armendariz, 2016:885).

The Congolese refugee journeys involve violence, wars, oppression and displacement and this continues to shape their post-resettlement context (Wachter, Heffron, Snyder, Nsonwu & Busch-Armendariz, 2016: 885). While this is the case for a number of African refugee communities in Australia, the Congolese conflict is of unusually long duration. As a consequence, their case provides an insight into an attenuated circumstance. As a result, Congolese refugees face unique acculturation stress once they arrive in Australia. These include linguistic problems, lack of employment and a lack of opportunities to access further education. Further research in this sector is crucial not only to highlight ongoing legacies of refugee camps but also to suggest solutions (Joyce & Liamputtong, 2017:18). Surviving the most horrific events throughout
their refugee journey does not mean Congolese refugees in Australia are immune or resistant to further trauma, and the opposite is more likely to be the case (Beya, 2011: 45).

There are a range of difficult factors that refugees of African background face. These include a history of trauma, racism, prejudices, poverty, a new environment and new systems in Australia. Together these create the urgent need for supportive mechanisms and programs, so that refugees of African background can access appropriate and healthy settlement experience in Australia. Indeed, failing to do so would create even bigger gaps in social classes and life standards and this can potentially lead tensions and conflicts that can generate huge impact on social cohesion and the ability to maintain an inclusive and democratic society (Mwanri, Hiruy & Masika, 2012: 87).

The systematic racism, as identified by Charles Kivunja, Ahmed Bawa Kuyini and Thomas Maxwell (2014:64), leads Africans to a loss of self-confidence, a feeling of inferiority, social isolation and depression. Africans’ obvious cultural and linguistic differences and their very small minority status in a dominant white culture will logically make their situation worse. They struggle to understand and embrace the Australian ways of life, integrate and understand the system in a way that would result in good settlement and health outcome. Women and children suffer the most (Kivunja, Kuyini and Maxwell, 2014:64). It is also important to differentiate between the different ethnic and religious types of refugees. Most theorists (Azer, McNeely & Morland, 2016: E18) are in agreement that refugees are not homogenous and that social cohesion is particularly an issue for refugees who are visibly Muslims (Fozdar, 2012: 169). Farida Fozdar (2012: 169) writes that refugees are often targeted by those in the host community who argue that diversity threatens social cohesion. In contemporary Australia, the main public concerns about social cohesion, in terms of belonging, legitimacy, values, participation and commitment, are focussed on Muslims. They are increasingly the subjects of everyday and institutional racism that targets them as alien and illegitimate members of the Australian society (Fozdar, 2012: 169).

This project takes as its evidence the material that is focused on Congolese refugees living in the city of Logan, one of the lower social economic cities within the major
conurbation of Brisbane, Australia (Markus, 2013: 11). Broadening understanding of the legacies of refugee camps for work market readiness is crucial in South East Queensland where inter-racial cohabitation has been challenged for a long time (Udah, 2017:01). There have been inter-racial tensions at school, at markets, in the community and in the playfields for a very long time. Some of these conflicts have gone so bad that they triggered physical confrontations that caused death (Markus, 2015). Moreover, the Scanlon Foundation Survey (Markus, 2015) found that school bullying has forced a significant number of students out of the classrooms. It has caused suffering to those students every single day that they attended school in Logan (Markus, 2015). Conflictual inter-racial cohabitation generally leads to discrimination against the minority (Kosny, Santos & Reid, 2017: 482-484). Discrimination shapes migrant and refugee workers’ experiences in Australia, and negatively impacts on their ability to secure a job (Kosny, Santos & Reid, 2017: 482-484). Kosny, Santos and Reid (2017: 482-484) suggest that having a non-European name can significantly reduce a job seeker’s chance of selection for an interview. Consequently, a significant number of migrants, including refugees, have no choice but to accept the so called 3D positions, that is, positions that are dirty, dangerous, and difficult (Kosny, Santos & Reid, 2017: 482-484).

The table below (Harte, Childs, and Hastings, 2009: 53) illustrates the number of refugees resettled to South East Queensland in the period from 2000 to 2008 through the Offshore Humanitarian Programme. African refugees’ figures are highlighted in red, to show the numbers and the importance of this project.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Europe</th>
<th>M.E&amp; SW Asia</th>
<th>Africa</th>
<th>Asia</th>
<th>Americas</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2000-2001</td>
<td>43.32%</td>
<td>26.96%</td>
<td>25.43%</td>
<td>3.95%</td>
<td>0.34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001-2002</td>
<td>32.03%</td>
<td>32.43%</td>
<td>33.12%</td>
<td>2.23%</td>
<td>0.19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002-2003</td>
<td>9.94%</td>
<td>39.96%</td>
<td>48.30%</td>
<td>1.78%</td>
<td>0.03%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003-2004</td>
<td>1.87%</td>
<td>24.29%</td>
<td>70.78%</td>
<td>3.00%</td>
<td>0.06%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004-2005</td>
<td>4.43%</td>
<td>26.24%</td>
<td>70.15%</td>
<td>0.16%</td>
<td>0.008%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005-2006</td>
<td>0.43%</td>
<td>33.97%</td>
<td>85.66%</td>
<td>9.87%</td>
<td>0.06%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006-2007</td>
<td>0.44%</td>
<td>27.94%</td>
<td>50.09%</td>
<td>20.69%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007-2008</td>
<td>0.54%</td>
<td>35.25%</td>
<td>30.47%</td>
<td>33.66%</td>
<td>0.05%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The significant numbers African refugees in South East Queensland, as outlined in the table above, explain the rationale behind this project.

1. 5 Rationale

The rationale for this study is to outline hardships Congolese refugees have to go through when they try to secure meaningful employment post-migration to Australia. This choice was one in which I had to consider my own background. As a Burundian I avoided to study Burundians as this would have raised a number of quality, safety and ethical questions. This project focuses on Congolese-Australians in Logan. However, the author recognises that there are several similarities in pre- and post-arrival conditions for resettled refugees, including long stays in the refugee camps, their experiences of violence and displacement, and contested resettlement process (Ireland, 2012:07). Given these factors, the lessons we can learn from this study can help understand refugees’ conditions in general terms as well as and the support they might need as they try to integrate and access the job market in South East Queensland. This does not diminish the very real differences between African Australian communities, but does recognise the reality of service delivery within local authorities such as the City of Logan.

The increasing number of refugees now being forcibly displaced by wars and conflicts puts an onus onto the international community to assist in their resettlement (Sulaiman-Hill & Thompson, 2011: 2). Notwithstanding Australia’s controversial and precarious refugee history (Cadwallader, 2015: 01), it is one of the major refugee resettlement destinations. According to Refugee Council of Australia (2015, n.p), around 13,750 refugees are resettled to different cities in Australia annually through the offshore humanitarian program.

The offshore humanitarian program is designed to help individuals located outside Australia and who are in need of resettlement. This program marks a voluntary commitment by the Australian Government and it has resulted in providing durable solutions to many refugees and their family members who are not able to either stay in their country of asylum or return home where they might potentially be subject to persecution, discrimination or face gross violation of human rights (Hot Topics, 2011:
5). Resettlement to Australia has three main functions. It provides international protection to refugees whose life, freedoms and safety are compromised. This is also a way for Australia to take part in easing the refugee burden and, most importantly it is the best way for Australia to show its international solidarity and to boost its reputation in the international community (UNHCR, 2011: 3).

Integration into the community, understanding and embracing the Australian way of life remains a core indicator of refugee settlement’s success, but it is not an easy task for refugees to achieve (The National Council of Priests in Australia, 2014:28). Society has heard stories or at least seen the face of refugees in the community. Their faces can hardly hide their hardships, vulnerabilities, hopelessness and frustrations (The National Council of Priests in Australia, 2014:28). The result of host paranoia, Ghassan Hage argues, has shaped Australia’s debates about multiculturalism and the society for a very long time, constructing non-whites as the “unintegrated other”, where the mainstream society questions the necessity, possibility, and desirability of the integration of the newly arrived non-whites (Hage, 2002: 434).

Maria Eriksson Baaz and Maria Stern (2008:57) argue that from the late 1990’s, the DRC has been known to the world due to the terrible acts of violence by its militia groups and, occasionally its regular army (Baaz & Stern, 2008:57). Refugees from DRC witnessed gross violation of human rights beyond the comprehension of the Australian society. We are looking to find whether some of the same is likely to happen to a lesser degree in the new society, this same society that is set to become their new home. This is a unique opportunity to start a new life in the new culture, new way of life, new systems and new languages (Australian Associated Press, 2007:1). When the victims of such atrocities are resettled from this situation of persecution to a peaceful and wealthy country like Australia, their expectations of a better life may be too high. While these hopes and expectations are sometimes well-founded (Atwell, Gifford & McDonald-Wilmsen, 2009:677), the process for settlement and integration often proves to be harder than anticipated (Atwell, Gifford & McDonald-Wilmsen, 2009:677). Worse still is that most of the refugees have to remit money to their personal contacts back home or from the refugee camps where they were initially resettled from. While this is good for the receivers and their host country, remittances have adverse outcome on individual financial capabilities, their education, long term
goals and it causes conflicts and tensions in family relationships of the sender (Lyndley, 2009).

The challenges African refugees have to endure when attempting to secure meaningful jobs in South East Queensland are in need of scholarly attention. Scholarly attention now needs to be paid to how pre-arrival experience and conditions, in conjunction with the Australian government’s policies, shape the integration progress in South East Queensland, specifically in Logan. Previous research has shown that refugees are highly motivated to find work, integrate and become independent as soon as they arrive in Australia (Correa-Velez, Barnett and Gifford, 2015:332).

This study will help to develop an understanding of how the legacies of refugee camps continue to shape refugees’ prospects for employment. The literature review will broaden our understanding of existing literature while the methodology chapter will demonstrate the challenges associated with doing a research with refugees as well as possible solutions. The sample in this study included Congolese adult men and women who have spent long periods of time in the refugee camps in East Africa and beyond. The participants were interviewed between January and March 2017 at Access Community Services, Logan Central and, occasionally at their homes. The findings in this study will broaden our understanding of how pre- and post-arrival conditions continue to shape Congolese refugees work market readiness in Australia. The discussion chapter will summarise the key findings and future directions.

1. 6 Conclusion

Victor Osaro Edo and James Olusegan Adeyeri (2013: 244) demonstrate what Congolese people go through daily as a result of civil wars, conflicts and violence since the country secured its political independence from Belgian colonial rule in 1960. On the other hand, African Research Bulletin (2010: 18536-18537A) demonstrate the level of atrocities committed in DRC by nefarious forces and military troops from the neighbouring countries, highlighting elements and actions that, if tried before competent courts, could be declared as crimes of genocide (African Research Bulletin, 2010: 18536-18537A). Mona Moraru (2015: n.p) argues that refugees have no choice but to flee, taking dangerous journeys through different countries. Refugee journeys are not easy ones. They face incredible violence, insults, torture and imprisonment, all
of which generate constant fear, tragedies and despair (Moraru, 2015: n.p). Simon Turner (2016: 139-142) discusses conditions in African refugee camps where their human rights continue to be grossly violated. Furthermore, refugees’ common situation of belonging neither here nor there challenges the assumed link between nation, state and citizenship as well as belonging (Turner, 2016: 139-142). Australia takes a significant number of refugees from Africa (Refugee Council of Australia, 2015) among which Congolese refugees. There is a need for Australian policy makers and settlement services providers to understand pre and post-migration conditions and this thesis aims to contribute in this regards. The literature review in this study aims to cover the exiting literature relevant to pre and post-migration conditions of Congolese refugees.
Chapter 2
A Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

Chapter two contains a review of existing literature relevant to this study of the integration of Congolese refugees. It explores pre and post- migration experiences of Congolese refugees and how these shape their work market readiness in Australia. This chapter also provides comparison with Congolese refugees’ experiences in other countries in the Global North including the United States, New Zealand, Canada and United Kingdom. The literature focuses on the legacies of refugee camps for work market readiness in Australia. The central question the chapter asks is “what does the literature anticipate will be the legacy of the refugee camps for Congolese refugees in Australia?” It is divided into two main sections. The first section provides a context for pre-resettlement experiences while the second provides the context for the difficulties Congolese refugees face when they try to secure a job in Australia.

The literature outlines the number of people forcibly displaced by wars and conflicts and argues that this continues to grow, increasingly becoming a source of concerns and a burden to the international community (Sulaiman-Hill & Thompson, 2011: 2). Australia is one of the major refugee resettlement destinations, with 17, 555 humanitarian permanent visas granted to refugees in 2015/2016 financial year, up from 13,756 the previous financial year (Department of immigration and border protection, 2017). This is a small number comparing to other countries’ refugee intake. In 2015/2016 financial year for example, the United States of America resettled 84, 995 refugees (UNHCR, 2017).

The offshore humanitarian program is instigated by the Australian Government in collaboration with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and is designed to help individuals located outside Australia and who are in need of resettlement (Hot Topics, 2011: 5). This program marks a voluntary commitment by the Australian Government and it has resulted in providing durable solutions to many refugees and their family members who are not able to either stay in their country of asylum or return home where they might potentially be subject to persecution, discrimination or face gross violation of human rights (Hot Topics, 2011: 5).
Resettlement to Australia has three main functions. It follows commitment made in the 1951 Refugee Convention through the United Nations for all nations to accept and protect refugees (UNHCR, 2011: 3). Under article 33 of the refugee convention, refugees cannot be forced to go back to places where they can face persecution or any violation of their human rights (Refugee Council of Australia, 2017: n.p). Therefore, it provides legal international protection to refugees whose life, freedoms and safety are compromised. It is also a way for Australia to take part in easing the refugee crisis and, most importantly it is central means for Australia to show its international solidarity and to boost its reputation in the international community (UNHCR, 2011: 3). The Australian Government’s treatment of asylum seekers is in contrast to its obligations (Refugee Action Committee, 2017: n.p). People free from persecution hoping to get protection in Australia and, to their surprise, they end up becoming prisoners on Nauru and other detention centres where their dreams are smashed (Refugee Action Committee, 2017: n.p). I will take from the following literature key ideas to test and to assist in an analytical interpretation of exactly what the legacies of refugee camps and the ability of refugees to become work ready in Australia is, as well as the underlying factors in the lack of job access within Congolese refugee communities in Logan.

2.2 Pre-resettlement experience- Legacies of refugee camps

2.2.1 Health and wellbeing

How much do pre-resettlement experiences impact on Congolese refugees’ health and wellbeing, and on their ability to achieve economic self-sufficiency and integration in the new communities? The study by Karin Wachter, Laurie Cook Heffron, Susanna Snynder, Maura Busch Nsonwu and Noël Bridget Busch-Armendariz (2016: 875-878) suggests that the pre-migration experiences include sudden loss of home, family and friends. This is crucial and traumatic in ways unlikely to be experienced by host countries. Furthermore, Wachter et al. (2016: 875-878) found that Congolese refugees have experienced torture, food insecurity, starvation and genocide. Additionally, the collapse of the community systems that once were key support structures involving
protection of those who experienced psychological distress leads many to despair and the loss of status. Wachter et al. (2016: 875-878) argue that those who once were respected members of the community had roles that will no longer translate into the new culture. Furthermore, evidence (Kane et al., 2014: 228) suggests that refugees in low- and middle-income countries are at highest risk of mental health and substance misuse. Some of the major mental health disorders within the refugee camps in Africa include, but are not limited to, psychological distress, major depression, anxiety and, most importantly post-traumatic stress disorder (Kane et al., 2014: 228). In addition to what they have to endure throughout their refugee journeys, refugees (and particularly women) lose their freedom to make decisions about their own lives’ direction, everyday functions and their future, developing a general feeling of despair, insecurity, fear and vulnerability. As such, their mental health is compromised by the lack of hope and human dignity that their situation creates (Pinehas, Wyk & Leech, 2016: 139).

According to Katherine Hale, Nicholas Wood and Mohamud Sheikh-Mohammed (2006: 589-590), health services in the refugee camps in Africa are minimal. There is little forward planning and sometimes no infrastructure. Most of the refugee camps are located in remote areas, with minimal water supply and shelter. Heath facilities’ conditions can be very basic (Hale, Wood and Sheikh-Mohammed, 2006: 589-590). While local health professionals are trained to diagnose and treat common acute conditions such as malaria, they have more difficulty with chronic illness such as diabetes and asthma. Medications vary in quality, quantity and availability (Hale, Wood and Sheikh-Mohammed, 2006: 589-590). A survey completed by UNICEF in 2006 demonstrated that the major cause of malnutrition among Congolese refugees in Nyarugusu camp, Tanzania, especially children, was the lack of proper food due to excessive cuts of rations given to refugees. In March 2003, food rations for refugees were allegedly reduced by 50 percent (Obodoruku, 2014: 19-20). Furthermore, it is understood that the choice of refugee nutritional necessities is calculated based on calorific value rather than the food quality or its taste. It is in the services providers’ understanding that the consumption of so-called luxuries and comforts food items is both costly and unreasonable (Oka, 2014: 23). This literature raises this question for my study “how do these conditions affect Congolese refugees’ abilities to pursue work in Australia?” I am particularly focussed here on matters of health, their skills and education as outlined below.
2.2.2 Skills and Education in adult Congolese refugees

Skills and education in adult Congolese refugees are, according to Aisling O’Loghlen & Chris McWilliams (2017; 2016: 22) variable because refugee camps are expected to be temporary. Moreover, refugee encampment policy, the camps’ design and settings in Sub-Saharan Africa have adverse outcomes on refugees’ skills and their prospects for employment. For example, Daadab, the world’s largest refugee camp, was built in Western Kenya in 1992 to initially host Somali refugees temporarily. However, Dadaab contained a population of over 263,000 people as per September 2016, some of which are three generations of Somali refugees. This protracted situation has created problems (O’Loghlen & McWilliams, 2017; 2016: 22). While this camp was not anticipated to become a permanent home to hundreds of thousands of refugees, thousands are being born and becoming adults there never knowing any other type of life (O’Loghlen & McWilliams, 2017; 2016: 22). A previous study by Isaac Yeboah Addo (Addo, 2016: 437) demonstrates that, although a number of refugees are offered skills training programs throughout their stays in the camps, it is difficult for them to secure even a menial job. Furthermore, the right to live in the city is reserved to citizens in most of the African countries. In Tanzania for example, the general policy implies that all refugees remain in camps-Nyarugusu, Mtendeli and Nduta apart from a very small number of refugees who, in very rare circumstances, may be granted the permission to leave the camps for medical or protection reasons (O’Loghlen & McWilliams, 2017; 2016: 28).

Encampment policies encourage putting skills on hold indefinitely (Oka, 2014: 23-37). Rahul Chandrashekhar Oka (2014: 23-37) analysed refugee commercial consumption at Kakuma Refugee Camp, Kenya. The Kenyan authorities and service providers in the refugee camps, Oka (2014: 23-37) suggests, have the reputation of not supporting the refugee camp economies that usually lead to the black markets, that is, clandestine markets and transactions that have some aspect of illegality. He further argues that refugee camps may hinder effective and smooth food relief process. Despite all of the difficulties they face, refugees in Kakuma make strenuous effort to take part in these commercial economies while they wait for a chance for resettlement to any western country. Oka (2014: 23-37) Continues to say that despite the practical problem
refugees have to endure, the consumption is important, reasonable and essential not only to fill the relief gaps but it also has tangible benefits such as giving refugees hope and a reason to feel a sense of dignity, which helps them to cope with the long wait and uncertain refugee life.

On the other hand, Laura- Ashley Wright and Robyn Plasterer (2010) conducted a study in the same place-Dadaab and Kakuma refugee camps where they attempted to understand the opportunities for higher education for those living in Kenyan refugee camps and whether those opportunities yield social benefit beyond those accrued by the refugees themselves. The findings in their study outline the myriad ways in which opportunities for higher education can strengthen refugee communities in their host country. They argue that, despite Kenyan Government policies being designed to limit the economic and social benefit of global education, the importance of refugees’ education is still crucial. It has huge positive impact on the service provision in the camps and gives refugees the opportunity to accumulate skills and knowledge they need to boost the effectiveness of a number of durable solutions including repatriation, local integration and resettlement to a third country. From this literature I am asking the question as to “how does the extended period of unemployment within Congolese refugee communities affect their ability to gain employment in Australia?” Indeed, it would be hard for someone who has not worked for decades to convince the Australian employers that they have skills necessary to become an asset to their business or organisation.

2.2.3 Congolese Refugee Children’s education

Many events with adverse impacts on refugee children’s education and wellbeing can occur in the course of a refugees’ journey. According to University Wire (2016), one Congolese child whose father and stepmother died within a week of each other was left with the responsibility to take care of his five and six year-old siblings as well as his grandmother. As a result, he had to drop out of his sixth grade to make money to sustain his family financially. As he was growing up, the camp life stole his childhood and his right for education. Despite his young age, he worked tirelessly in the fields, fed his family, did laundry and anything else his family needed. On the other hand, in her study, Gillian Mann (2002: 117) demonstrates the hardships Congolese refugee
girls and boys face in the city of Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania, where they had been living a clandestine life. Their clandestine life resulted in parents teaching their children to lie, especially about their identities. Their mobility is also quite restricted. With this comes harassment and the need for these children to distrust all strangers. Furthermore, Mann argues that some parents refrain from enrolling their children in local schools as they think their life in Tanzania is only temporary. In contrast, the same study finds that some of these refugee children had been in the city of Dar Es Salaam since early 1990s (Mann, 2002:117). Understandably, children whose education is interrupted at such an early age, as demonstrated in Mann’s and other examples in the University Wire’s studies, would be disadvantaged and would find it difficult to adjust to the systems in the Global North post-immigration. What these theorists describe would prevent them from accessing meaningful employment as adults.

According to Linda Kleemann, Peter Nunnenkamp and Rainer Thiele (2016: 379-395), Sub-Saharan African women are still discriminated against in their access to education. They suggest that African girls generally suffer from gender inequality depriving them of the rights to early childhood, secondary and tertiary education regardless life conditions. As a result, girls have less chance than boys to complete their primary school education. Very few girls get the chance to attain secondary school and parity in tertiary education remains very difficult to achieve. Consequently, average of school attendance in Sub-Saharan African females continues to decline. The situation is worse in the refugee camps.

In the context of the Democratic Republic of Congo, most of young pregnant survivors of sexual violence find themselves in a situation where their childhood is cut short (Mulumeoderhwa, 2016: 1042). They have to raise children themselves as adoption is generally not available in the Congolese society (Mulumeoderhwa, 2016: 1042). Young girls are victims of unwanted pregnancies either because they live in rural areas where contraceptives are not available or because they are under pressure from religious leaders who believe that contraceptives encourage immoral behaviours (Mulumeoderhwa, 2016:1042). A study by Stark et al. (2017:04), in which 377 Congolese young girls under the age of fifteen were asked about their relationship status, 16.44 percent reported that they lived with their husbands or lived with their sexual partners; while 6.6 percent of these reported being married, but in separate
living arrangements with their husbands (Stark et., 2017:04). Girls in such conditions and those in conflicts settings are a vulnerable population whose opportunity to pursue even primary school education is slim (Stark et al., 2017: 07). Given the conflicts setting in Congo and the complex refugee journeys putting education of Congolese children, men and women on hold for a very long period of time, a great number of Congolese refugees would logically be illiterate and would take much longer for them to learn the basics, enough to be employable in Australia. From this literature I need to ask the question of “exactly how does the lack of proper education affect those Congolese refugees who grew up in the camps and their prospects for employment in Australia?”

2.2.4 Resettlement process

The resettlement process is not easy. To be eligible for humanitarian visa subclass 200, that is the refugee visa, individuals must meet the refugee definition as in the 1951 Convention regarding the status of refugees (Refugee legal aid information, 2017). This means that the concerned refugees must be outside their home country based on fear of persecution. While it may be tempting to believe that the Congolese refugees case is straight forward, all resettlement candidates must convince the authorities that they are in need for resettlement (Refugee legal aid information, 2017). Marnie Jane Thomson’s study (2012:186-205) found that Congolese refugees’ resettlement process forces them to recount their personal stories in order to file their resettlement claims in front of the local United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees’ (UNHCR) Authorities. As if this alone is not traumatic enough, the camp protection officers’ common comment is “why are you not already dead then?” (Thomson, 2012:186-205). On top of that, they do not get any indication of their resettlement interviews outcome for a long time. “We will be in touch” is one of the most common words heard from these authorities, followed by a long and uncertain wait. When some of the cases are rejected, refugees have to keep trying. At some point, it is too painful to try anymore. Understandably, refugees who have lived such experiences would find it hard to trust anyone with authority. From these theorists, I need to ask whether Congolese refugees can go on to build trust in their new Australian community or if women are experiencing anything particularly different in these diverse contexts.
2.2.5 Experience of female refugees

2.2.5.1 Using rape as a weapon of war

Years ago, writers like Susan Brownmiller (1975) had identified rape as a weapon of war. Yet, this continue to happen as documented by Sophocles Kitharidis (2015: 449-472). The recent reports on mass rape and sexual violence in the DRC against Congolese women have raised serious alarm (Kitharidis, 2015: 449-472). This type of violence has become a normal part of everyday life in DRC (Kitharidis, 2015: 449-472). Once a male assumes ownership of a female body, it is perceived both as a sexual conquest and a testament to his war stature. This implies that he has to assume the responsibility to protect her by fighting off potential attackers. The other alternative is to scare the enemy away by retaliatory threat of raping their women (Brownmiller, 2013: n.p). Despite some policy and legislative changes to tackle the issue of impunity, aiming to promote equality and the rights of Congolese women, gender equality in the Congolese communities is still far from the reality. As a result, the level of gender-based violence by both armed groups and civilians remains high (Freedman, 2011: 170). In her article, Kitharidis (2015: 449-472) demonstrates the failure of the Congolese domestic system. In recent decades, sexual violence in the Democratic Republic of Congo is both a weapon and a consequence of war. The issue is so crucial that the United Nations has called upon the international actors including the Human Rights Office to move it to the forefront of the international political agenda. Using sexual violence as a weapon of war in Congo has led to gross violation of human rights and this indeed requires the attention of the international community. Kitharidis argues that, despite the attention this issue has received both at home and in the international community, the impunity plaguing the judicial and social structure in the Democratic Republic of Congo makes hard to combat sexual and gender-based violence (Kitharidis, 2015: 449-472). This research informs the question of ‘how does history of torture and trauma affect Congolese women’s prospects for employment in Australia, knowing that gender-based violence in the refugee camps is a pressing issue?’
2.2.5.2 Gender-based violence in the refugee camps

Gender-based violence is identified by Andrea L. Wirtz, Nancy Glass, Kiemanh Pham, Amsale Aberra, Leonard S. Rubenstein, Sonal Singh and Alexander Vu (2013:13) as a continuing challenge for Congolese women when they arrive in the refugee camps outside DRC, putting nearly every female refugee at risk (Wirtz et al., 2013:13). On top of having to endure a tough life, these women have also to constantly worry about gender-based violence including beatings and rape. In their study, Wirtz et al. (2013:13) demonstrate the multiple types of gender-based violence across the span of female refugee journey. These experiences include physical, sexual and domestic violence in urban or camp-based settings. Besides, this study demonstrates a general under-reporting and the reluctance of the survivors to seek professional assistance.

On the other hand, Etobssie Wako, Leah Elliot, Stacy De Jesus, Marianne E. Zoti, Monica H. Swahn and John Beltrami (2015: n.p) conducted analysis on data collected by the American Refugee Committee in two Congolese refugee camps in Rwanda (Gihembe and Nyabiheke) in 2008 found high prevalence of domestic violence in the camps. These authors demonstrate that there is an urgent need for capacity building within female refugee communities.

According to Anita Ho and Carol Pavlish (2011:88-89), promoting gender equality in refugee camps cannot be achieved unless women are empowered. Her article argues that the advocacy for women’s and girls’ rights requires an empowering environment that provides a formal process to hold perpetrators accountable. Furthermore, a supportive and empowering environment enable the victims to demand their rights. The main barrier to effectively combat gender-based violence is the refugee women’s fear that leads to secrecy. They typically want to solve the problems at the family or community levels as they do not want the so-called family matters to be known by agencies. Therefore, women often prefer to take their concerns to the traditional gathering where, ironically, they do not have a voice.

This thesis will therefore need to ask questions about the prevalence of violence against women, with the main focus on Intimate Partner Violence known as IPV. In their study, Wirtz et al. (2013:13) argue that there is a positive relationship between a history of outsider violence and Intimate Partner Violence. Ever partnered women living in Gihembe and Nyabiheke refugee camps experience a high rate of Intimate
Partner Violence. Their study found that the frequency of the intimate partner violence related to a number of things including the respondent’s age, cohabitation status, contraceptive access and practice, age at the first sexual intercourse, head of household status, and history of having experienced outsider violence. The level of education, ability to read or write or decision making power did not have significant impact on the IPV. Gender-based violence will logically influence Congolese female refugees’ post-migration performances.

2.3 Post-migration experience

2.3.1 History of torture and trauma

Given Jane Freedman’s (2011:170) description of the prevalence of rape in DRC, there may be Congolese refugees resettled to Australia, particularly females, who are the victims of gross violation of human rights. As such, Freedman’s article would indicate a need for appropriate and professional interventions. These interventions would need to be based on the integrated and individual needs of female refugees and this could be their solid ground for their further integration in Australia. Understandably, the logic of these readings suggest that, while some migrants from non-refugee backgrounds might be work ready upon arrival in Australia, most Congolese refugees resettled to Queensland will need to spend their first years of settlement attending sessions by organisations such as the Queensland Program of Assistance to Survivors of Torture and Trauma, QPASTT. QPASTT provides a range of services to people from refugee backgrounds including asylum seekers. These include direct services to individuals and families in the form of counselling, advocacy, psycho-education, group work, recreational programs and information sessions. QPASTT partners with most of the refugee settlement service providers state-wide (QPASTT, 2017). QPASTT job is very important for the refugee settlement and integration journey in Australia. According to Joseph Ssenyonga, Vicki Owens and David Kani Olema (2016), while refugees generally experience Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, PTSD, females are the most vulnerable. Their study noted that high prevalence of PTSDs in young women in the refugee communities stems from an
increased trauma load because they are females. They also found that youth and adolescents are some of the most neglected groups in refugee camps in Africa. Consequently, PTSD is associated with past exposure to trauma and assorted daily stressors currently experienced by refugees in their daily life. This work (Ssenyonga, Owens and Olema, 2016) means a special focus on the fate of Congolese refugees in necessary to see how they negotiate access to the work market in Australia.

2.3.2 Barriers in accessing work market

As Silvia Torezani, Val Colic-Peisker and Farida Fozdar’s study (2008: 135-152) demonstrates, there is a number of underlying factors in poor access to work market within the refugee communities. These factors include the lack of social capital. There is a missing link in the job search process within the African refugee communities and that is the lack of social networks (Torezani, Colic-Peisker and Fozdar, 2008: 135-152). As Pierre Bourdieu puts it (Torezani, Colic-Peisker and Fozdar, 2008: 135-152), social capital is important in the job search process as these relationships allow individuals to claim access to resources through their friends and associates, gaining information from formal institution beyond their own community. Refugees’ lack social network and connections; Australian-based education and Australian work experience are some of the key underlying factors in their failure to secure meaningful employment (Torezani, Colic-Peisker & Fozdar, 2008: 135-152). Their overseas qualifications, skills and experience are usually overlooked. According to Ignacio Correa-Velez, Adrian G. Barnett and Sandra Gifford (2015: 322-334), the factors influential in the job search process are mainly country of birth, length of time in Australia, formal and informal networks, obtaining a Driver’s License and owning a car. Other influential factors include age, work experience and gender. In contrast to previous findings, the English proficiency does not make a difference once all other variables were controlled for. Additionally physical and mental health issues including torture, trauma, long stay in the refugee camp and depression have negative impact on economic transition, negotiating trust and job networking.

The study by Sin Yi Cheung and Jenny Phillimore (2014) examined the relationship between social capital and access to labour market by refugees. Their findings indicate
that the ability for refugees to broaden their social network depend hugely on their language competencies and the length of residency in the host country. Indeed, establishing contacts in their own community links and church broadens their networks, which might be able to help with employment. In contrast to Torezani, Colic-Peisker and Fozdar’s as well as Correa-Velez, Barnett and Gifford’s studies, Cheung and Phillimore’s study suggests that mere possession of social networks does not necessarily translate into more chances to access employment. They further argue that the type of social capital does not have huge impact on the permanency, quality and type of employment, rather the level or their language skills and pre-resettlement qualifications and work experience.

This literature on likely barriers suggests for my research that there are almost insurmountable barriers for Congolese refugees in their attempt to resettle in Australia.

2.3.3 Social cohesion issues

In her book (2000: 197), Professor Anna Haebich argues that racism is an endemic problem that has plagued the Australian society for a very long time. It has been focused on Australian indigenous people in direct contrast to the “civilised white men” and promotes the general belief that Australian indigenous populations are culturally unable to adapt to changes (Haebich, 2000: 197). Following the same themes, in their book- Race Relations in Colonial Queensland: A History of Exclusion, Exploitation and Extermination, Ray Evans, Kay Saunders and Kathryn Cronin do a deep analysis of the history of racism and racial tensions in Queensland. They do not specifically argue in relation to Congolese or African refugees, but they suggest that belonging is also very important for refugees and, again hugely challenged by the level of racism in Australia (Evans, Saunders & Kathryn, 1993). Hyper-diverse cities such as the City of Logan are reportedly at more risk of inter-racial cohabitation challenges. These challenges include tensions at school, at markets, in the community and in the playfields (Markus, 2015). Mavondo (2012: 11-16) highlights difficulties Africans, especially children, face when they try to fit into Australian mainstream society. Children have to face bullying and other types of harassments from their peers. Adults too suffer from unacceptance by their neighbours and the society as whole. To make
a point, Mavondo talks about *Home and Away*, the Australian soap opera, where the first black actor ends up dangling from the edge of a cliff and eventually falling to her death. She argues that the end of this *Home and Away* character reflects negatively on the reality of refugees’ daily life. White men surf the big waves, skinny, bronzed women stroll the beach in bikinis while the black refugees frequently plummet to their deaths at Summer Bay. Mavondo argues that it is important for stakeholders involved in refugee settlement and integration programs to understand pre and post-arrival conditions and avoid stereotypes and generalisations where possible.

The form and level of education accessed upon arrival in Australia shape refugees’ future. Educators need to learn and understand specific information about their individual students, their history and backgrounds. Previous studies indicate that there is often a gap of information about individual refugee students that might result in inaccurate assumptions at the cost of the school, the involved student and the system (Stewart, 2015: 149-159). The generalisation that African refugee students will be incapable of coping with the Australian school system does not help in their future directions and their hope to complete tertiary education. Consequently, the possibility for them to secure meaningful positions when they grow up remains minimal. Recent evidence include a Sydney academic who declared publicly that black African refugees should not be accepted because they are less intelligent, crime prone and violent (Fozdar & Torezani, 2008: 30-63). When refugees suspect that society does not trust them, their self-confidence shrinks, making it harder for them to negotiate their trust in the broader community. This informed questions to individuals in the interview sample about how racism affects their ability to secure a job in Australia.

2.3.4 Issues of self-confidence within refugee populations

When refugees from non-English backgrounds arrive in Australia, they have to learn about everything from scratch (Bradford & King: 2011:43). As Dianne Bradford and Nicole King (2011:43) put it, most of the refugees have no idea about how to access employment or education information. They also have limited understanding of how to write a presentable resume or what is expected of them during the interview process. Most importantly, their previous achievements, status and education do not matter anymore. For this reason, there is a need to assess each refugee background and
employability skills individually. There should also be an integrated training and capacity building program designed to meet refugees’ complex needs. Capacity building would boost refugees’ self-confidence (Bradford & King, 2011:43). The length of time in the refugee camps has adverse impact on Congolese sentiment of belonging and self-confidence (Kritzinger & Mande, 2016: 02). According to Johannes Kritzinger and Martin Mande (2016: 02), some migrants left DRC as adults, some were born in the camps and others left in early 1990s as teenagers, as many boys of the age around 16 were being recruited as child soldiers. Growing up and becoming a man the refugee camps is not easy. There are issues of not only poverty but also inequality and exclusion. As one of the refugees puts it, the moment of exile is like an illness. It is about closing the door on people and things you feel comfortable being around such friends, culture and your country. To each Congolese family, what Kritzinger and Mande said they call home will still be another exile (Kritzinger & Mande, 2016: 02). Surprisingly, Fozdar and Torezani’s study (2008: 30-63) demonstrates some paradoxical findings. Their evidence shows a high level of discrimination of refugees everywhere in Australia, both in the labour market and in their everyday life. Ironically, this population group is the most satisfied with life, despite a range of legislative and government policy decision designed to make their life harder. From their work I will ask “what role do refugees’ expectations of the job market play on influencing their job choices?”

2.3.5 Government’s policies based on neo-liberal approach

Government’s policies based on a neo-liberal approach are, according to Torezani, Colic-Peisker and Fozdar (2008: 135-152), crucially and negatively influencing the employment agencies’ desirability or ability to secure jobs for refugees. This is mainly because these agencies prioritise mainstream Australians who are easy to get into jobs in order to keep their activity-based outcome as expected by the government, in order to secure and keep their funding. Jock Collins’ study (2013: 160-177) argues that the Australian immigration policy has changed in the past two decades to reflect the impact of globalization. What has not changed is the controversy that comes with it. He emphasizes the Australian immigration experience over the past two decades and provides a guideline for future immigration policymaking. He recommends
policymakers in the upcoming decades give a priority to large-scale immigration within the framework of prioritizing the increase of long term nation building rather than short term economic benefits currently achieved by increasing guest worker immigration. Australia should also, once again increase the permanent immigration intake with a significant number of humanitarian and family migration places while they carefully continue to grant temporary visas in a constrained and carefully monitored manner. Immigration places should not be auctioned in a way that those who are rich get access to Australia. In fact, excluding all but the richest applicants is not only unfair but also unethical and morally wrong.

The general fear of “the other” (Crock, 2010: 20-30) in the Australian society leads to not only racism but also unfair policies. As Mary Crock (2010: 20-30) puts it, despite the fact that Australia counts annual immigration entry of around 150,000 individuals, has been a country of immigration since 1788, and has temporary skilled migration that makes up five percent of the country’s labour market, fear of immigration has had profound effect on both the Australian private and public sectors. This fear leads to restrictive immigration policies at the expense of refugees and asylum seekers. She argues that Australia is not the only country vulnerable or threatened by mass migration and illegal arrivals. Yet, its responses to this issue has always been out of proportion. She finds that fear of the ‘other’ has historically shaped and helped to define Australia as a nation. It has been manipulated and exploited for political gains. Indeed, recent events have made it easier for the media and politicians to make their points and political stands by using fear of outsiders as an electoral weapon. Her study also finds that the public fear and hatred stems from the lack of genuine information and awareness about refugees. Hardworking Australians who themselves are doing it tough want to be assured that refugees allowed to settle here are not singled out for special treatment; which would not harmonise with the Australian sense of fair play. For this reason, most Australians prefer refugee applications for resettlement processed offshore, thus Prime Minister John Howard’s popular slogan of “We will decide who comes to this country and the circumstances in which they come”.

There are unacceptable costs associated with blind adherence to harsh exclusionary policies including the danger of race to the bottom in refugee policy by both major parties. Juliet Pietsch’s study (2013: 143–155) points out that Australian immigration policies segregate Africans and Asians. It is noted that up to sixty per cent of the
Australian population growth comes from the immigration while only forty percent comes from the natural increase. For this reason, immigration receives massive attention in the commonwealth global policy agenda. The increase in policy attention may not only relate to external shocks such as wars and global economic conditions, but also the alleged burden imposed by a so-called flood of refugees to the country. She argues that the Australian immigration policy has only two clear priorities; the control of immigration flows to ensure Australian sovereignty is not undermined, and the need to implement a sophisticated immigration and settlement program that promotes multiculturalism. These priorities are marked by major changes in policies, all of which are designed to create economic opportunities to Australia rather than helping people in dire need such as refugees. Tough immigration policies will continue to have adverse impact on Congolese refugee communities where almost every individual refugee has left someone behind and are compelled to send some money home. The question to be asked in my own study from this literature is “how does the current period of neoliberalism regulate refugees’ experience of the Australian society?”

2.3.6 The legacies of remittances as a result of family splits

Remitting is a very important part of refugees’ life. Anna Lindley’s study (2009: 1315-1334) aims to close the gap in the existence research on remittances by focussing on the remittances from the diaspora’s perspective in the refugee communities. She argues that the diaspora's perspective is a very important element of understanding the process of remitting and its huge repercussions for refugee migrants. Her study finds that remittance shapes relationship between the sender and the receiver as it plays a vital role on the economic welfare. It also contributes to the home country’s global economy. The study also demonstrates the conceptual implications of remitting, noting the complex decision process on who in the family is most suited to migrate for remittance purpose. Furthermore, it is noted that refugees and migrants work long hours to secure enough money to send back home. On the other hand, Supriya Singh, Shanthi Robertson and Anuja Cabraal (2012) demonstrate the difference between remittance in refugee communities, commonly known as one way transactions and remittances within migrant workers, particularly from Indian communities. In the latter
case, the money traffic is both ways. They make a point that this type of remitting has less adverse impact on the sender’s wellbeing. The remittance that went through normal channels in 2012 to developing countries reached US$374 billion which is more than the double of the official foreign aid. The study finds that, in some countries, remittance revenue is higher than the entire foreign aid investment. They also flow from the country of origin, particularly from parents to children or vice-versa. They argue that, through remittances, families hold together and create something that leads to a feeling of collective welfare and unity, leading to greater family belonging even beyond the national boundaries.

Remitting in refugee communities is meant to help family members outside Australia who, otherwise would find it difficult to survive. While it is one of the major motivations to find a job as soon as practically possible within the Congolese refugee communities, it has negative consequences as well. In his study (2010:225), Kankonde Bukasa Peter demonstrates how remittances constitute a strain on Congolese refugees’ livelihoods in host settings, causing significant setback to the realization of their own projects such as starting or expanding their business, pursue their education or travel to other destinations. He argues that remittances contribute to both protracted migration and the inability to secure social resources needed for local integration. Yet, a big number of Congolese refugees still remit despite its setbacks and the financial pressures it puts on them. They feel the need to keep good relationships with family members back at home. Generally, family belonging and social status within the Congolese communities matter so much that they would put on hold or sacrifice their own social and material promotion such as education and proper training for the sake of remitting. As long as Congolese families are split all over the world, remitting will continue to be a part of the Congolese communities’ life. Cécile Rousseau, Marie-Claire Rufagari, Deogratias Bagilishya and Toby Measham (2004:1095) suggest that the restrictive immigration policies in the Global North force refugee families to remain separated for excessive lengths of time. Georgina Ramsay (2016: 87) argues that resettled refugees play a big role in supporting the security of their family members who remain in their mother country or in the refugee camps around the world. She argues that this security is mainly provided through remittances. Additionally, Africans resettled to Australia end up in new types of family relations across international spaces. Married couples live thousands of miles apart from each other. In some
instances, women travel with an intention get married and then conceive a child even if they know that their partners will most likely remain overseas for an indefinite period of time. Additionally, failure to secure a job will always have adverse outcome for their self-image in their own refugee community. The questions to be asked in my own study from this literature are “What is the role of the remittance monies on job choices?” and “which government policies do Congolese refugees perceive as most important for their settlement?”

2.3.7 Cultural significance of work

Recent research (Kooy, 2016: 71-73) suggests that refugees have lower workforce participation, lower earnings and higher unemployment rates than other migrant groups in Australia. Moreover, they are more at risk of long-term unemployment and are less likely to secure a meaningful job. This leads to them being low-status and working in low-skilled positions (Kooy, 2016: 71-73). Despite various barriers, refugees are highly motivated to find work, integrate and become independent as soon as they arrive in Australia (Correa-Velez, Barnett & Gifford, 2015: 332). The lack of access to work has adverse consequence on refugees’ dignity and their ability to feel valuable community members. Therefore, the challenges African refugees have to endure when attempting to secure meaningful jobs in South East Queensland need scholarly attention.

Failure to secure a job impacts self-esteem, especially among male refugees. According to Correa-Velez, Barnett and Gifford (2015: 322-334), without employment, refugees are at risk of becoming trapped in a cycle of financial marginalisation. This also affect future generations as better settlement outcomes can only be achieved when refugees are in the position of securing meaningful employment, leading to self-reliance and contributing to the host country’s economy rather than depending on welfare assistance. Existing research (Ogden, 2017) proves that the lack of participation in major life activity such as work has adverse impact on life identity, sense of self and wellbeing. Failure to secure a job in the course of life implies having a life story that lacks significant and meaningful experiences, missing pieces that enable humans to live with dignity. Similarly, the quality and the level of engagement, whether work or volunteering, is more important than the activity itself in enhancing a
sense of wellbeing and self-evaluation. Indeed work is important to everyone’s sense of purpose, values and survival throughout the course of life. The lack of work means the absence of all of those things (Ogden, 2017). The insights received through this literature review enable me to summarise the key finding in the conclusion below. The questions to be asked in my own study from this literature “what is the cultural significance of work for Congolese refugees in Australia?”

2.4 Conclusion

In conclusion, this chapter would like to summarise the key findings in this Congolese refugee literature and review the questions that they provoke.

Wachter, Heffron, Snynder, Nsonwu and Busch-Armendariz (2016: 875-878); Hale, Wood and Sheikh-Mohammed (2006: 589-590) and Obodoruku (2014: 19-20) all suggest that the legacies of refugee camps significantly affect refugees’ health and wellbeing. Given the length of time in the camps and life conditions there, most of the refugees have either low or no educational background. Therefore, their work experience and skills are limited.

Torezani, Colic-Peisker and Fozdar (2008: 135-152) writes that, where refugees were lucky to get education and work experience before they are resettled, these qualifications are usually not recognised in Australia. Furthermore, the resettlement process is long and uncertain, putting refugees’ life in limbo (Thomson, 2012:186-205). Most of the refugees are survivors of torture and trauma and they need professional assistance upon arrival in Australia (QPASTT, 2017). Congolese female refugees are more vulnerable given their exposure to sexual and gender-based violence including rape (Wirtz et al., 2013:13). There are issues of social cohesion and policy implications in Australia, making life for refugees even harder. While racism, stereotypes and generalisations makes it hard for refugees to fit in, policies based on neo-liberal approaches do not facilitate refugees’ integration (Collins, 2013: 160- 177). On top of the struggles to maintain themselves financially, most Congolese refugees must remit money to help their family members spread throughout different countries in Africa (Ramsay, 2016: 87). Congolese men and women have experienced the worst of the traumatic issues covered in this literature review.
Chapter 3
Methodology

3.1 Introduction

This methodology chapter describes methods used in this study, Congolese Men and Women of Good Hope: The Legacies of Refugee Camps for Work Market Readiness in Hyper-Diverse Cities. Qualitative research methods are used and this thesis involves semi-structured interviews to collect the appropriate data. This methodology is particularly appropriate to answering my research question of “What are the key determinants of market readiness for Congolese refugees in hyper-diverse cities?” This research on disadvantaged populations, particularly in areas where deeper understanding and improved policy solutions are needed, has prompted my methodology to consider a range of ethical issues.

There are various variations within qualitative research paradigm (Abrams, 2010: 538), and purposive sampling was seen as the best approach for this study. This enabled me, as the researcher, to exercise my own judgement in relation to who and what would provide the best perspective and strategically invite those perspectives and the people into the study (Abrams, 2010: 538). Moreover, the researcher knew that Congolese refugee community was one of the hard-to-reach populations, for whom collaboration with a range of community-based stakeholders makes research a lot easier to conduct (Benoit, Jasson, Miller & Phillips, 2005: 265).

Doing research with refugee communities needs particular empathy to understand cultural sensitivities and nuances that create ethical and methodological challenges (Kabranian- Melkonian, 2015: 717). There are many different approaches necessary depending on cultural, political and ethnic backgrounds of the participants (Obijiofor, Colic-Peisker & Hebbani, 2016: 01). To address this problem of sensitivity, a qualitative interview research methodology on Congolese refugees was used. Thi Quynh Nguyen (2015) argues that it is important to create a positive relationship with participants from the beginning, particularly when working with culturally sensitive
populations. She further argues that proper self-introduction is central to an effective relationship.

The initial plan was to access all participants through the major Humanitarian Settlement Services provider in Logan, Access Community Services. However, snowballing techniques, that is, asking the first participants to link the researcher with new potential participants from their community (Scott, 2015) was particularly appropriate with my sample. Caseworkers at Access Community Services were willing to do their best to facilitate the contact between the researcher and potential participants, but the researcher quickly noticed that they had overwhelming caseloads. Therefore, asking Access staff to contact each individual participant would have been unfair given the pressure they are already working under. It would also have slowed down the research process significantly. This chapter will situate the methodological issues and approaches applied in this study.

3.2 Qualitative Methodology- Snowballing Technique

Qualitative methodology, that is studying cases in their real life context by applying multiple sources of data collection, makes it easier to understand cultural sensitivities and nuances that create ethical and methodological challenges (Kabranian-Melkonian, 2015: 717). The choice of the qualitative research method as a methodology in this study was based on the researcher’s belief that the participants would have the opportunity to provide rich information in addition to the exact verbal answers to the question face-to-face. The visibility allows the interviewer to analyse other social cues such as intonation and facial reactions (Opdenakker, 2006: 11) and this was particularly important given the background of the sample in this study. Qualitative methodology enables, as it was case in this study, the interviews to be audio-recorded and revisited later, ensuring no detail is missed (Opdenakker, 2006:11). Moreover, the qualitative research methodology gives the researcher the opportunity to have control of the general ambience throughout the whole interview process (Opdenakker, 2006:11).
On the other hand, snowballing techniques allow a process of referencing from one person to another and quickly enables the researcher to build a network and to approach the participants with an established level of trust, credibility and endorsement (Streeton, Cooke & Campbell, 2004: 35). The problem with this technique is that there is a greater risk, as involving a group of people who know each other, originally from the same place, same dialect and same ethnicity may produce methodological bias (Streeton, Cooke & Campbell, 2004: 35). Therefore, it is important to have enough knowledge about the social situation to be investigated, initially gathering information from a small set of contacts who already trust the researcher (Beauchemin & Gonzalez- Ferrer, 2011: 117). Access Community Services’ involvement remained crucial. Their case managers linked the researcher with the first participants who then helped secure more participants through the snowballing techniques. It was always helpful to tell the participants that the research has been endorsed by Access, a settlement services provider they all trust.

3.3 Strengths and Risk with the methodology

This research topic involves greater emotional and cultural risks than researchers usually face as the participants will most probably have experienced torture and trauma. On top of the recruitment statement that clearly includes the possibility that participants may experience distress as consequence of reflecting on their time in the camps and that they should not proceed if they believe this will be the case, it was made clear to the participants that they could stop the interview process at any time. Furthermore, Culture in Mind, a community based mental health service provider that specialises in refugees and asylum seekers’ mental health kindly agreed to support this project by providing counselling to the affected interviewees promptly. Access Community Services’ caseworkers and community leaders were willing to be a bridge between the researcher and participants to help the latter to understand the consent process, their rights and what was expected of them during the interviews. This level of understanding helped them choose the most suitable initial participants for the research.
3.4 Ethical Clearance

The researcher clearly understood that he is expected to carry out the research in accordance with the Griffith University policy and guidelines relating to experimentation on human subjects, as outlined in the National Health and Medical Research Council (Griffith University, 2017: n.p). As such, the researcher and his supervisory team ensured that ethical clearance was granted prior to the interviews. The process to secure the ethical clearance was lengthy and complex, given the nature of research within the vulnerable populations. Ethical clearance helped the researcher identify and prevent all potential risks in the proposed recruitment and data collection, minimising possible harms to participants, the University, the researching team and the study (Van Wijk & Harrison, 2013: 570). As far as this study was concerned, the main priority was to prevent negative mental health consequences, and to have interventionist strategies in place in case of such occurrence. This was achieved in collaboration with relevant refugee services stakeholders, as detailed in the previous paragraphs.

3.5 The Sample

The sample used here are ten Congolese men and ten Congolese women from different ethnic and language groups, age, place of origin, social status and gender, all of whom have lived in camps for internally displaced people or refugee camps outside The DRC. Most of participants lived in camps in Eastern and Southern Africa, for many years before they resettled to Australia. All the participants were of 18 years of age or older.

Though most referrals were channelled through the community leaders, the very first participants were identified with the help of Access Community Services' humanitarian settlement case managers. Access’ caseworkers made contact by phone to invite potential participants, provided them with Information sheet, consent forms and the recruitment letter. However, it was necessary to make sure an explanation was given to all the participants in relation to what is expected of them and their rights prior to
the recorded interviews. Initially, the plan was to get all the interviews done at Access Community Services’ offices in Logan, but it proved that most of the participants wanted to be met at their own homes. This became a challenge as it was hard to secure an interview-friendly site at home due to the noise and the big number of children in most of the families.

Overall, 20 Congolese refugees accepted to participate in an audio-recorded interview, comprised of 10 adult females and 10 adult males. Nineteen additional participants declined to be audio-recorded based on their previous experience where recorded interviews with Human Rights Watch (HRW) staff got them into trouble with the Congolese Government authorities, and was the reason why they had to flee their home country in fear of being executed by the Government’s officials. It was impossible to convince these Congolese refugees of any possibility to safeguard their privacy. After all, they would not take any chance even now that they have been living thousands of miles away from Congo. This made perfect sense when one of them said “I might be tens of thousands miles away from Congo, but my entire family is still trapped in there!” (JM, Interview held 18 Feb 2017). Nevertheless, they consented to be interviewed off the record and their comments informed this thesis’ findings.
3.6 Participant sample (statistical overview)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>18-30</th>
<th>31-50</th>
<th>51-60</th>
<th>Over 60</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low Class</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle Class</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upper Class</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wanyamulenge</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wafulelo</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Washi</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hutu</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tutsi</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Musongye/Songye</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kasai</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bembe</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Ethnicity</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment Rate</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full time students</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of Unrecorded interviews</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Italics = Ethnic group

These face-to-face interviews quickly broadened my understanding of Congolese refugees’ current and past experiences. This understanding and respectful approach to the participant was a very important part of this project as it helped me to easily understand the participants during the semi-structured interviews.
3.7 Semi-structured interviews

As Opdenakker suggests (2006: 03), face-to-face interviews generally provide social cues including intonation, body language such as facial reaction, original voice, all of which gave additional insight and information on top of verbal answers. Semi-structured interviews allowed relaxed but professional conversations, allowing the interviewer to collect qualitative data by asking a set of open-ended questions and keeping control over the topic and information flow. This provided information regarding the Congolese refugees’ background and a sense of how the legacies of refugee camps affect their settlement and integration journey. It is always important to carefully develop a written interview guide including sets of questions intended to guide the conversation (Given, 2008: 810). Creating good relationship and trust between the researching team and the interviewees was important. This trust leads to open discussion on issues such as racism, social cohesion, intolerance, exclusion, isolation, workplace discrimination and gave insights into the challenges they face when they try to build up a network of friends in the mainstream society, community and family support and, most importantly their hope for the future (Given, 2008:810).

Failure to create a good relationship with participants would mean a situation where the researcher is placed in empowered circumstances whereas refugee participants are placed in a weaker and more vulnerable position and would likely not want to reveal information. This leads to manipulation and, in this case, the validity of the signed consent form becomes questionable (Zion, Briskman & Loff, 2010:48). As Dean et. al (2012:03) puts it, despite their highly visible physical, racial and cultural characteristics within the predominately white society, refugee-background communities can be hidden and hard to reach. Moreover, their experience in their home country involving mistrust towards any people with higher authority and the government results in reluctance to participate in the research. There is a general feeling in the refugee communities that participating in research on culturally and socially sensitive topics may worsen the discrimination and the stereotypes they already experience upon arrival in Australia, creating even further unwillingness to participate in any research (Dean et. al, 2012:03).
Being invited to their homes was a very humbling experience for me as a researcher, and showed how much the participants trusted me. Interview questions explored the participants’ life in Congo and in which refugee camps they lived (Please see Appendix 1 for the complete list). When asking these questions, I was mindful of several cultural and psychological aspects that might be experienced by the interviewees, especially when talking about the past and its sensitive topics. Building a professional and trustworthy relationship was the key to overcoming this challenge. This was achieved by not rushing into the interview questions. I introduced myself in a great detail and took time to discuss different issues before the actual recorded interviews started. I also had to bear in mind that some ethical issues might occur as previous research attested (Nguyen, 2015:35). The researcher can overcome this challenge, as was the case with this thesis, through strong dedication, commitment and building trust within the community.

Being a part the African community in Logan myself, the choice of the research topic and the methodology was neither neutral nor naïve. I have a personal relationship with the experiences the participants are discussing- an autobiographical investment (Mapedzahama & Kwansah- Aidoo, 2014: 04). The insider knowledge provides an incisive tool to more easily understand and interpret data (Mapedzahama & Kwansah-Aidoo, 2014: 04). Indeed, this advantageous position generally helps researchers, as was my case, to gain a deeper understanding of analysis and interpretation process in a way that throws more lights on their participants’ narratives (Mapedzahama & Kwansah-Aidoo, 2017: 04).

3.8 What the interviewer brought to the research

It is important to be aware that some refugees might refrain from talking about sensitive issues in the presence of interpreters from their own community, which in turn can lead to limited or biased findings (Kabranian-Melkonian, 2015:714-722). The interviewer brought to the research an extensive language understanding, which meant that the interpreters were not needed. Relying on interpreters would have slowed the process down or potentially led to misunderstanding and missed nuances. This was because I, the author, speak fluent Swahili and French, the two main languages in Congo, as
well as a range of other dialects including Kinyamulenge and Kinyarwanda. The participants in this research preferred Swahili, Kinyamulenge and Kinyarwanda.

With my background as a man from Burundi, one of the Congolese neighbouring countries with the same history of war and violence, I kept in mind that the risk for being biased is high. Burundians are generally not neutral in the Congolese ethnic conflicts. As Thurkettle (2014:07) suggests, it is important to ensure that discrimination against some ethnic groups, gender and appearances does not occur. At the same time, it is important for the researcher to monitor that respondents do not select particular responses that are felt to be morally correct but do not necessarily reflect reality. Bias is dangerous for the study as it threatens its credibility and raises a range of ethical and procedural issues. Indeed, expression of ideological position and sympathies with a particular participants’ group would lead to poor quality study due to bias (Roulston & Shelton, 2015: 332). As a young man from the Great Lakes Region combining Burundi, Rwanda and Congo, with a history of ethnic tensions, the risk of having sympathies or hatred towards one or more ethnic groups in Congo is high. This did not happen with this study and the Congolese ethnic groups in Logan that participated were treated professionally and with respect.

The Great Lakes Region’s culture involves hiding some factors judged as morally incorrect to disclose. For example, social desirability is problematic especially where gender norms create different expectation in relation to what is socially expected behaviours and this can lead some people to refrain from engaging or reporting some outcomes (Kelly, Soler-Hampejsek, Mensch & Hewet, 2013: 14). Gender is a significant consideration. The nature and the level of interactions between men and women varies depending on the culture and the backgrounds of participants. In some cultures, it can be inappropriate or strange for a woman to participate in a research interview without a male figure (Marlowe, Osman & Alam, 2015, 383). This proved to be the case throughout the interview process. Female participants in this research spoke freely and in a great detail, but all partnered participants preferred to have their partners present. While Congolese female refugees were keen to discuss what they went through before and during the war in DRC as well as what they had to endure during their refugee journey, they tended to refrain from speaking about very sensitive information such as being a victim of rape until I had stopped recording. Some female refugees, as I understood, might not be willing to be open to a 36 year old male
interviewer from the Burundian community, the community that has significant connection with the Congolese refugees in Logan. However, I was surprised by the level of openness of these refugees generally. Additionally, I always showed my strong commitment and my desire to do my best to keep the study as professional as possible, by strictly adhering to Griffith University Research ethical guidelines.

3.8 Data analysis

Congolese men and women who agreed to fully participate in the project were audio-recorded. Their names, addresses, and other identifiers were not recorded to safeguard their privacy. The recorded data was transcribed by the researcher, who then analysed and carefully selected the most significant and representative sections for this study. The most relevant data, that is, participants’ direct voice is included in the findings chapter. The information and insights gained from the records was also useful for this study as they broadened the researcher’s understanding of the Congolese refugee conditions pre- and post-arrival in Australia.

3.9 Conclusion

Overall, the methodology applied in this research worked well. It helped the researcher gather the data needed in response to the main research question of “What are the key determinants of market readiness for Congolese refugees in hyper-diverse cities?” The key recruitment technique to get the sample, the snowball technique, made it easier to access participants even if the risk of interviewing people from the same ethnic background, place of origin and history was high. This was overcome by ensuring the participants’ backgrounds were identified prior to the invitation to participate. Even though some of the sample refused to be audio-recorded, which was completely logical given their trauma, this did not slow down the progress of this research. Indeed, their willingness to talk off the record was still an excellent way of achieving desirable results as these participants contributed enormously and were much freer and more willing to discuss in greater detail. This improved the researcher’s understanding of the Congolese refugee journey enormously. The need to follow ethical guidelines was always adhered to. This was achieved through ensuring the
interviewees are informed of the research process, their rights and what is expected of them during the interviews. The interviewer also attentively observed the participants' mood throughout the interviews in case of distress. The results in this research highlight the relationship between participants' experience in the refugee camps and their ability to secure meaningful employment upon arrival in Australia.
Chapter 4
Results of Qualitative Research

4.1 Introduction

The results of qualitative interviews reported here have been selected as being the most relevant for evaluating the ideas suggested by literature. This analytical chapter uses interviews of Congolese refugees talking freely about their settlement process and their work market readiness. These reveal original comments that emerged from their gruelling journeys towards work market readiness in Australia. These findings discussed in detail answer my research question of “What are the key determinants of market readiness for Congolese refugees in hyper-diverse cities?” The purpose of this chapter is to demonstrate how pre- and post-migration conditions continue to shape the Congolese refugees’ fate. It particularly demonstrates the underlying factors in Congolese refugees’ inability to secure meaningful employment in Australia by outlining the challenges they face when they try to improve their living conditions through work, education and training. It also outlines the extraordinary efforts Congolese refugees make as they try to break the barriers and the cycle of vulnerability.

The qualitative results of the Congolese community members’ own accounts will be triangulated with the material from primary and secondary sources to weigh the nature and impact of pre- and post-arrival experience of Congolese men and women. Indeed, large parts of the knowledge revealed about the Congolese refugee experiences in Logan can be generalised to Sub-Saharan African refugees in Australia. The stories, history and experiences discussed in this chapter will help society across Australia to understand how the legacies of refugee journeys affect their performance in different sectors. Underlying factors of work market readiness in Australia discussed in this chapter include health and wellbeing, history of torture and trauma, prospects for education and training, resettlement process, social network,
social cohesion, self-confidence, government policies and cultural significance of work. These will be discussed in details later in chapter five.

4.2 The implication of health and wellbeing in Congolese refugees’ work readiness in Australia

Ill health and poor food conditions in the refugee camps shape Congolese refugees’ work market readiness in Australia. Wachter, Heffron, Snynder, Nsonwu and Busch-Armendariz (2016: 875-878) say that Congolese refugees experience torture, food insecurity, starvation and genocide on top of the collapse of the community systems that once were key support structures involving protection of those who experienced psychological distress. On the other hand, Hale, Wood and Sheikh-Mohammed (2006: 589-590) found that health services in the refugee camps in Africa are minimal. They argue that, on top of the lack of facilities, clinicians are not trained to tackle the increasing burden of chronic diseases such diabetes and asthma.

My evidence shows that Wachter, Heffron, Snynder, Nsonwu and Busch-Armendariz as well as Hale, Wood and Sheikh-Mohammed were correct about the food and health conditions in the refugee camps, but there is a need to consider the ongoing legacies of these conditions for the Congolese refugees’ work readiness in Australia. Voice 007 for example is a Congolese female refugee who experienced torture and trauma in the course of her refugee journey to Australia via Uganda and Kenya. Consequently, even if she wants to work to sustain her family in Australia and overseas financially, she is not physically fit to carry out the anticipated tasks (interview with voice 007, 05 February 2017). She explains:

[…] Whenever you think about your family, you try your best to find a job. I tried to find a job. The first time I got the job, I quickly found out my physical health does not allow me to work […]. It was in a chicken factory. It was too cold while my arm is not physically fit. It hurts inside. I even attended some physiotherapy sessions. So due to the coldness, I had to give up […] (Voice 07, Interview, 05 February 2017)
On the other hand, Voice 018 is an older Congolese refugee woman who became diabetic during her time as a refugee in Burundi due to her life conditions there. Since she arrived in Australia, she has not been able to work. She is not physically work ready. When she tries to explain her refugee journey from DRC to Australia via Burundi, she looks sad, think deeply while she still tries to get words out. She insists she is fine and, in a very low voice, she explains:

[…] Even if I secured an employment, I am diabetic. If I do physical work, it gets worse […]
I got diabetes when I fled to Burundi from Congo […] (voice 018, Interview 04 March 2017).

My evidence suggests that poor health outcome in the refugee camp is mainly due to bad quality and insufficient food accessed by refugees. Voice 004 is a young man who grew up in one of the Congolese refugee camps located in Western Tanzania. He ate to survive, not because he enjoyed the meals provided to him.

[…] There is no good food in the camp. Prisoners in Australia have access to better food than a refugee in the camp. Imagine having to eat the same type of food all your life- hard food like beans. You would cook these beans for 24 hours with no results. For the beans to be ready, we had to put some chemicals. We also got the maize and we had to give half of the portion away in exchange for maize flour. It was a very bad food experience. We just ate to survive not because we enjoyed the meals […] (Voice 004, Interview, 01 February 2017).

While nutrition in the refugee camp is an issue for every single refugees, my evidence suggests that it affects children more than any other refugee groups. Voice 11 is a female Congolese refugee who fled DRC to the neighbouring Rwanda along with her husband and children. She described how her children struggled to adapt to food in the refugee camp and its health implications. She explains:
Life changes for the worse. Even children had it tough, especially with nutrition. Children were used to potatoes and beans and we started feeding them with the dried corn. You see this one [pointing at one of her children, now a mother herself], Mary, she drove me crazy. When I fed her with dried corn, she started pooping blood, straight away. That is how tough it was to be a foreigner […] (Voice 011, Interview, 15 February 2017)

A number of interviewees highlighted issues with high health demands in refugee camps. Understandably, while the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and other humanitarian agencies did their best to deliver health services to refugees, these refugees felt the medications was not enough as Voice 008 puts it:

UNHCR was just doing its best. When people got sick, they received their medication but that medication was sometimes not enough. It was not enough due to high demand as a lot of people fell sick. Even when someone was obviously sick, they wouldn’t be given enough medicine (Voice 008, Interview 10 February 2017).

According to this sample, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and other aid agencies worked tirelessly to provide health services to refugees. However, given the conditions in the camps leading many to being sick, there was no way for these agencies to meet such a high health demand. Therefore, only light touch health services were provided.

As Dray-Spira puts it (2013: s146), chronic diseases generally have a huge impact on employment opportunities. Therefore, understanding the employment consequences of chronic disease is crucial as it enables society to increase the comprehension and potentially implement initiatives and strategies to reduce social health inequalities. Ill health is associated with poor workforce participation, extensive
sick leaves, work limitations and early retirement (Dray- Spira, 2013: s146). Understandably, refugees whose physical health has been compromised struggle to carry out physically demanding tasks. This has an adverse outcome on their ability to secure and maintain a job in Australia, particular for those whose long stays in the camps prevented them from accessing proper skills, training and education.

4.3 The legacies of the refugee journey for Congolese refugees’ skills and education

The following findings establish that amongst my sample, there is evidence that the long stays in the refugee camps put education and skills of refugees on hold indefinitely, causing a general lack of work experience and qualifications within the Congolese refugee communities. O'Loghlen and McWilliams (2017; 2016: 22) argues that the refugee encampment policy, the camps’ design and settings in Sub-Saharan Africa have adverse outcomes on refugees’ skills and their prospects for employment, particularly for those refugees whose freedom of movement is highly restricted. Besides, Isaac Yeboah Addo (2016: 437) argues that, although a number of refugees are offered skills training programs throughout their stays in the camps, it is difficult for them to secure even a menial job.

While the evidence from the sample aligns with previous studies’ findings to some extent, these Congolese refugees go further and explore how employment and educational barriers in the refugee camps shape Congolese refugee work readiness in Australia. When refugees arrive in Australia after extensive stays out of the work market and education, they find it practically hard to sell themselves or compete in the Australian work market. This is because, as Voice 004 articulates, they arrived in one of the Congolese refugee camps in Tanzania as a primary school children and they became adults there, knowing no other life except for a short period of time some refugees, including voice 004 spent in Dar Es Salam as refugee students. When voice 004 arrived in Australia, it took him some time to be confident enough to compete in the Australian work market. He explains:

[...] and of course I spent a lots of time in the refugee camps and this has its negative impact on how I view a lots of thing and how I can
perform, technology being one of the main challenge. I had not used computers before. I had to learn from the scratch. If I grew up here, I would have experience with those things. Sometime you just refrain yourself from applying because you wonder if they can ever take you. The lack of confidence makes you uncertain if you would succeed anyway and sometimes you simply do not bother applying […] (Voice 004, Interview, 01 February 2017).

Given the fact that Congolese refugees spend extensive period of time in the refugee camps, it is hard for them to convince the Australian employers that they can contribute to their new workplaces. As voice 003 puts it:

When you complete your education, it does not matter in what, it is hard to get a job without experience […]. Well, you lived in the camp without working. When you mention how long you have been in the camp, unemployed, they wonder what you were doing all that time. Some might even think you are trying to hide something. The language is an issue too- you will never be able to speak as fluent as someone who was born here (Voice 003, Interview, 31 January 2017).

Ironically, the legacies of refugee camps affect everyone, including those who were lucky enough to complete their tertiary education before they were resettled to Australia. Voice 004 was one of the luckiest Congolese refugees who were offered scholarship to pursue their tertiary education in Dar Es Salaam, the capital city of Tanzania. Yet, he was not work ready when he arrived in Logan.

Honestly, I had some mixed feelings. When I came here, I was educated. I had completed my university degree and spoke English. So I
felt I was ready to work. However, I had never had a formal employment in my life. I was active in the camp within the community services sector but I had never been formally employed. I had mixed feeling, I thought I was ready to work but I had never written a resume before. Neither had I ever written an application letter and, here I am in Australia expected to learn all of that before I can be employable. It was a challenge. I was committed though. I checked on internet everyday and there were plenty of jobs. In my head, I was confident I would end up getting a job one day. I also kept in mind it would be very hard (Voice 004, Interview, 01 February 2017).

The conditions are even worse for those Congolese refugees who did not get the opportunity to study and develop any skills whatsoever during their long stays in the camp. They look like and are adults. However, some think and feel like small children in Australian society. Voice 001 explains:

Life in the refugee camp has held me back as long as employability is concerned. It has also affected my performance when I arrived here. We did not have proper education. The camp system did not allow anything. When you get here, it feels like you are born again, you start thinking and progressing [things] as a newborn child (Voice 001, Interview, 18 January 2017).

According to voice 008, while he was physically and mentally work ready upon arrival in Australia, his linguistic skills held him back. In fact, voice 008 missed the opportunity to pursue education when he was in the refugee camp because his first priority was to feed his young family, studying was last on his list:
It took me at least one year before I could learn the basics such as “hi” or “How are you?” [post arrival in Logan]. I had to work hard to get to the basics so that I could be in the position to face interviews. You cannot just come from the camps and start working, it is not possible […] If you have a family in the camp, you would not go to school and live in harmony with your wife and children. She would ask you if she and the children would eat your stupid pen and paper. It did not simply work (Voice 008, Interview, 10 February 2017).

This research has also tried to understand the underlying factors impacting on Congolese refugees’ education, employment and skills. In other words, it tried to answer what exactly happens in the camps. Below are few examples:

Voice 003 was primary school age when he left the DRC. While he was looking forward to resume his education upon arrival in Rwanda, it was not easy for him and his peers to pursue their education due to harsh life conditions as he summarises below:

[…] In the classroom, you would suddenly notice that some students are going hungry, falling asleep in the classrooms all day long. Simply impossible to learn anything […] (Voice 003, Interview, 31 January 2017)

On top of unfavourable conditions voice 003 had to endure, he found it hard to share the classroom with much younger children. Because he had been forced to stop school due to intense fighting in DRC and he was not able to resume his primary school education until several years later, upon arrival in Rwanda.

Personally, the war ruined my school education. I started my primary school in 1989 and in 1992, there was a war in my local area which forced me to stop attending school. I
was not able to resume school for years until I arrived in the refugee camp in Rwanda as I could not continue studying when I was in Congo due to war. It was so sad and shameful at the same time for me to share the classroom with small children [...]. Very few people in my situation dared to enter the classrooms. (Voice 003, Interview 31 Jan 2017)

Moving from one country to another, one education system to another and one teaching language to another cannot be easy for children. Congolese refugee children have been forced to adapt to new learning circumstances as they grew up and this can have adverse outcome on their educational progress and performance.

[...] I started school and that was one of my favourite parts in Uganda. I started school [...] because I came from a French school system and I did not know any English, it was starting from Zero: I had to learn English, I had to learn the local language which is Luganda. [...] (Voice 010, Interview, 15 February 2017).

Adult refugees, regardless of their educational background, are not able to use their skills and experiences as they are not allowed to leave the camps to pursue employment opportunities. Therefore, not only their life is put on hold, but also their skills and experience.

A refugee is not a free man. A refugee is considered as a person with no legs or arms. He is not allowed to move out or go around. That was our life. All we did was to make errands inside the refugee camp. We were not allowed to leave the refugee camp. If I am still afraid of the authorities here, it is due to my
experience with the police agents in the refugee camp. If you went out and were caught by the police, they would treat you very badly. Even today, whenever I see a police officer, I don't feel comfortable, I just reflect on the Tanzanian police. It is hard to be confident with any authorities because I have had to live in an unsafe environment for sixteen years because of authorities. I have been here for five years now and yet, I am still adjusting (Voice 004, Interview, 01 February 2017).

Indeed, these barriers to education in conjunction with the uncertain and complex resettlement process put refugees' lives in limbo. I understood from the sample here that all refugees had to do was just to wait in despair. For many, great hope and great belief in God helped them cope.

4.4 Resettlement processes

Refugees being considered for resettlement usually do not get to know their destination. Furthermore, they have no idea about how long the process would take or if they would be accepted at all. All they have to do is to wait. Therefore, my evidence suggests that refugees cannot plan the move accordingly. As Margot Rawsthorne, Wendy Hillman and Karen Heal (2009:306) argue, even with proper planning and clarity in future directions, relocating from one place to another, even locally, comes with some serious challenges. Thomson’s study (2012:186-205) found that refugees do not get any indication of their resettlement interviews outcome for a long time. “We will be in touch” is one of the most common words from the authorities, followed by a long and uncertain wait. My evidence from the sample suggests that the long and uncertain process prevents refugees from planning the move and from having clear future directions. Voice 003 explains:

It is up the individual countries to accept your case. As far as we were concerned, we were around eight families who started the process
in 2002 and we were not able to come before 2006 [...] and the last family came in 2010 [...] eight years later. Eight years of process. I have no idea why [...] All I know is that we were taken back to medical check-ups every year (Voice 003, Interview, 31 January 2017).

Voice 007 waited in what she refers to as detention centre where, at some point, she almost gave up. She explains:

Due to a very long wait, you get so tired. I went to the office and begged. At some point, I wanted to go back home and die. Even where I was, I was dying along with my children, slowly. I thought I would better leave and die alone instead of dying together with children. They refused and advised me to wait for the process and that our resettlement case had been submitted to the USA and everything would be alright. Short time after, we were requested to go to the US embassy. They told us we had completed first step of resettlement and we had to wait for the second stage [...]. We completed two steps, we finished the first and second one and we were asked to just wait. They came back and said that, as my husband was working back home [DRC], they would have to complete the police check and they were not sure how long it would take. For our children who were over eighteen, the case was successfully completed and they left for the US. We continued waiting. The UNHCR advised us that, while we waited for the US
decision, they would submit our case to another country to see what happens. After a short time, they told us our case was submitted to Australia. A few months later, they said our case was accepted and that all we had to do was to wait, again! (Voice 007, Interview, 05 February 2017).

While refugees express their frustrations in relation to the UNHCR resettlement process, most of those interviewed in this research admit that the Australian overseas posts are much quicker and more effective than other nations’ immigration posts. However, they note that cases must reach them before they can be able to process them and that is exactly where the problem is.

They told me “Australia is willing to assist you”. I signed a lots of paperwork. I was already very happy. Honestly, when I heard that Australia is willing to help us when I was at the embassy, I signed quickly thinking I would depart to Australia the same day so that my kids could go to school. We signed the paperwork 19 March 2013 and we were told to wait until further notice. Between April and May, we were taken for medical check-up. In November we were taken for orientation and we departed 27 of the same month […] I would not be able to express my happiness when we were told we could fly to Australia, I was particularly happy for my children. I have never had such a good feeling (Voice 005, Interview 05 February 2017).

On the other hand, a number of Congolese refugees believe that it is thanks to divine interventions that they have been selected for resettlement to Australia.
It was by the grace of God that we were selected for resettlement. There were thousands of people in the camps [...] UNHCR selected people on individual basis. The reason why individuals fled their country. If you deserve further assistance, you would be considered for resettlement. They noticed that I deserved assistance, I had much problem and that is why UNHCR decided to select me for resettlement [...]. My process took three years. Some waited for 10, 15, 18, 8 or 6 years [...] you have no choice, you cannot go back to your war-torn country (Voice 008, Interview 10 February 2017).

The process and a range of other experiences by Congolese refugees continue to shape their prospects for employment post-migration. It has significant impact on refugees’ trust in the system.

4.5 Legacies of Congolese refugees’ experiences

While this section of the chapter pays particular attention of Congolese female refugees, it also demonstrates how Congolese refugees’ experiences of torture and trauma generally makes it harder for them to be work market ready post-migration to Australia. Kitharidis (2015: 449-472) suggests that sexual and gender-based violence in DRC has become a normalized part of everyday life, arguing that sexual violence is both a weapon and a consequence of war. On the other hand, Wirtz et al. (2013:13) argue that rape and other types of gender-based violence continue to plague Congolese women when they arrive in the refugee camps outside DRC, putting nearly every female refugee at risk. My evidence confirms the points made by Kitharidis (2015:449-472) and Wirtz et al. (2013:13), but they also close an information gap, namely how the history of torture and trauma in the Congolese refugee communities
continue to shape their work market readiness in Australia. What Congolese refugees go through in the course of their refugee journey has mental health implications. As Samuel B. Harvey, Max Henderson, Paul Lelliott and Matthew Hotopf (2009:201:203) put it, mental illness is one of the major causes of absence on sick leave and incapacity benefits in most of the countries in the Global North, including Australia. The evidence from my sample confirms their argument that the majority of people out of work due to mental illness have common mental health issues such as anxiety and depression. Moreover, this was only on the basis of self-disclosure of health issues and there would likely seem to be a number of people with undisclosed or undiagnosed mental health problems.

Evidence collected in this study shows that it takes time for Congolese refugees to be work ready due to their mental health issues. Voice 002 separated from her parents during the war when she was a teenager. During the time of separation, she experienced traumatic events that have had adverse outcome on her work market readiness post-migration. She explains:

I try to secure a job but this is not an easy task for me. When we were still in the camp, I got mentally sick due to trauma. This was my hindrance to gain work experience. On top of that, I never got any type of education. This is one of the reasons why it is hard to be ready for the work market. The language is a barrier too. I am not also mentally ready to work due to my history of trauma (Voice 002, Interview 18 January 2017).

When interviewer asked voice 002 the follow-up questions to figure out what types of trauma she was referring to, she explained that, on top of a range of traumatic events she witnessed, she was raped at several occasions:

Having separated from my parents, I witnessed bad things in relation to killings. My life became so bad and difficult. Those who were hunting us took us and raped most of the
women and this continue to affect us until today […] I am not sure who raped me because it was a group of people. They raped and disappeared in a way that it was impossible to recognise the offender (Voice 002, Interview, 18 January 2017).

Due to her history of torture and trauma, voice 007 spends so much time at the clinics that it become practically impossible for her to secure employment. She explains:

I was discussing with my teacher and she asked “Why do you write English well, you try to read well but you cannot speak”? I told the teacher that if she tries to open up my brain, she would find a bunch videos that, if loaded, the bunch could grow higher than her own height. In my brain I have both good and bad videos which is hard to delete to get some space for English […]. That is the legacy of our life experience […] I still go to the hospital. At the moment, I have issues with my back and shoulder. I have constant issues- I spend most of my time at the clinics. (Voice 007, Interview, 05 February 2017).

Voice 007 has experienced things beyond our comprehension and this continue to have negative impact on her integration in the broader Australian community.

I witnessed a lot, especially the rape of women. On top being raped, they [offenders] pushed wooden sticks into the victim’s sexual organs. An example is my brother- his wife was being raped and he attempted to fight to stop the rape. They shot him multiple times and he died on spot. They also killed his wife
and we buried two bodies [...]. (Voice 007, Interview, 05 February 2017)

Rape and killings in DRC have occurred so often that they have become a part of Congolese people’s daily life, traumatizing the entire society including men in leadership who sought to protect their communities. Voice 005 was a local government senior staff and he explains:

Soldiers could come and do whatever they want with your wife and you wouldn’t say a word. Those are Congolese legacies- rape occurs all the time. Killings occur daily too [...]. When a woman was raped, we could catch the offender and get him convicted and jailed. However, he would be out within two weeks (Voice 005, Interview 05 February 2017).

Religious and cultural implications do not make it any easier for rape victims. Whenever the name of the rape victim is revealed, she has to undergo a lot of pressure from the society around her, the family and the church, as voice 018 explains:

We always told them “it is a sin. If you are raped, it is a sin. Worse if you try to hide it because you will never get to see God. You better reveal it so that pastors can ask for pardon from God on your behalf. As it is not your fault, you will be pardoned” (Voice 018, Interview, 04 March 2017).

Furthermore, Congolese refugees, including children, have generally witnessed gross violation of human rights. Voice 004 was a primary school age boy when war broke out in Congo. During the war, he witnessed gross violation of human rights.

When war started, a man who used to teach at a school where my dad was the Principal joined Mai-mai fighters. This man came riding a bike and called my mother [...] This man
was waiving. What we quickly noticed is that he went to fight and he cut someone’s hand. He had a knife but he has also attached to this knife someone’s hand. He was wildly moving that knife with that hand as if he was waiving to people, greeting [...] another thing I always remember is when they killed a young man originally from Rwanda. They chopped his head and they plunged a spear into it and marched the whole city singing [...] (Voice 004, Interview, 01 February 2017).

All these experiences undoubtedly influence Congolese refugees’ capacity to form trust and through this, their prospects for employment in Australia.

4.6 Prospects for employment and barriers within the Congolese refugee communities

The most important contributor to accessing work market within Congolese refugee community is the social network. Torezani, Colic-Peisker and Fozdar's study (2008: 135-152) argue that there is a missing link in the job search process within the African refugee communities and that is the lack of social networks (Torezani, Colic-Peisker and Fozdar, 2008: 135-152). Bourdieu argues that social capital is important in the job search process as these relationships allow individuals to claim access to resources through their friends and associates, gaining information from formal institution beyond their own community. Moreover, Correa-Velez, Barnett and Gifford (2015: 322-334) argue that those factors that are the most influential in the job search process are mainly country of birth, length of time in Australia, formal and informal networks, obtaining a Driver’s License and owning a car. Other influential factors include age, work experience and gender. On the other hand, Cheung and Phillimore (2014) argue that refugees’ ability to broaden their social network depends hugely on their language competencies and the length of residency in the host country. In contrast to Torezani, Colic-Peisker and Fozdar’s as well as Correa-Velez, Barnett and Gifford’s studies, Cheung and Phillimore’s study suggests that mere possession of social networks does
not necessarily translate into more chances to access employment. They further argue that the type of social capital does not have huge impact on the permanency, quality and type of employment, rather the level or their language skills and pre-resettlement qualifications and work experience.

The evidence in my thesis suggests that the social network Congolese refugees are linked with will translate into the nature of the job they are able to secure. All employed participants in these research secured their jobs through their friends who were already working in the factory, regardless of their English levels and qualifications.

Voice 003 tried to secure a job for several months and he was never able to secure a job until he made friends who introduced him to their work place. He explains:

I got my first job in the factory. A friend of mine from Somali helped me. He handwrote my resume and submitted it on my behalf. I quickly got an interview. But please understand that I got this through a friend. Before that, I tried very hard to secure a job through job agencies. These agencies did their best to help me but it did not work (Voice 003, Interview, 31January 2017)

While the findings in this research concur with Cheung and Phillimore (2014), when they argue that the language skills and pre-resettlement qualifications dictate the nature of the jobs refugees are able to secure, this thesis contradicts their argument that social capital does not have huge impact on the permanency, quality and type of employment. My samples’ responses suggest that those who get linked with well-established community links upon arrival have more chances for employment, not only in the factories but also in other meaningful and professional positions, as voice 004 explains:

There was a number community individuals who had been here for a while and who had previously worked in the refugee settlement sector. They played a big role to advise me. I met some young men who had arrived here
on skilled migration visas. They were educated and they had been through the same challenges. Meeting all these people helped me get feedback regarding my resume and how to get it improved. God opened the doors and I was able to secure my first job (Voice 004, Interview, 01 February 2017).

Community links who helped the research participants secure jobs took their resumes to their then workplace. That implies that if your community links worked in the meat factory, then you would likely get a job in the meat factory, not in the office.

I needed money very badly. I looked for work everywhere and it was hard. I have a great network. If you have friends, they do help. In Swahili we call it connections. My brothers from Burundi were working in meat factory. They filled in the form and handed it in on my behalf and I was able to secure the interview and the job thereafter [...]. Until today, you cannot get a job unless you know someone in the work market here in Australia....if you go to apply for a job on your own, they will ask you to prove three year experience. As a refugee, where would you get a 3-year experience from? (Voice 008, Interview, 10 February 2017).

In addition, evidence suggests that Congolese refugees’ overseas qualifications and experiences do not matter for Australian employers. Some have even given up trying. Voice 013 is an intellectual from Congo who has held various senior positions before he became a refugee. Here is how he feels about overseas qualifications:

Overseas qualifications do not mean much here. Overseas qualifications? They are not valid here. You have to graduate from here
and you know that. You cannot come with overseas qualifications, unless you want a job in the meat factory. That is how I get confused: You successfully complete your education and yet, they will need you to prove your work experience. How can you get work experience as a new graduate who has never worked? (Voice 013, Interview, 19 February 2017)

The legacies of refugee camps continue to shape refugees’ employability in different ways and forms. Voice 003 found it hard to get a job mainly because he did not have his own transport. He never got an opportunity to learn to drive as he was growing up as a refugee. He explains:

Everywhere I went, they asked me for a driver’s licence. I had not been able to secure a licence. They would come and tell me that they had a job for me but I could not start before I had a licence and my own transport [...] that was my biggest challenge [...]. In the camp, I never drove a car, neither did I even try to learn how to drive (Voice 003, Interview, 31 January 2017)

Given that the refugees are not used to Australian systems, they find the process to secure a licence in Australia harder than anticipated.

Jobs are generally scarce. On top of that, they will ask you to provide your own transport. You have to have your own transport [...] I did not come with a driver’s licence. You will at least spend a few years learning to drive. They will also impose 1 year of practice on your learner’s. Do you understand the

Those who have not lived in Australia long enough to make a great network of friends and community link are less likely to access employment. Voice 001 had lived in Australia for just 12 months when he participated in the research. Here is how he summarises his prospect for employment:

I am still trying to find a job. My problem is the fact that I do not have someone to help me secure the job. Another problem is that sometimes I find a job but I cannot complete the tasks due to my low level of English. The many years we lived in the camp without proper education holds my life back (Voice 001, Interview, 18 January 2017).

Limited English skills are a hindrance to accessing meaningful employment. Voice 002 thinks she is not ready and that she has not learned enough English to be able to compete on the work market. She has not been able to learn and understand the Australian systems. She explains:

It is hard for me to secure a job in Queensland. First of all, I am not ready. Second, my language skills are very limited. I am not used to the western world’s system (Voice 002, Interview, 18 January 2017).

Advanced age is also adverse outcome on Congolese refugees’ ability to secure a job on the Australian work market.

Employment is still a challenge [...] As far as I am concerned, for anyone aged over 50, it is not easy for anyone who has not lived in Australia for very many years to land a job (Voice 05, Interview, 05 February 2017).
Without employment, Congolese community do not feel as a part of the community and this leads to issues with social cohesion

4.7 Social cohesion issues

Social exclusion including racism is one of the major challenges that the Congolese refugee community experiences daily, decreasing their chance to access employment. The findings of this research reveal that refugees' sense of belonging in Australia is challenged hugely by the level of racism. Adults and children alike suffer from the lack of acceptance by their neighbours and the society as whole. This is particularly difficult for children (Mavondo, 2012: 11-16). Stewart (2015: 149-159) argues that there is often a gap of information about the needs of individual refugee students, which might result in inaccurate assumptions at the cost of the school, the involved student and the system. Furthermore, Fozdar & Torezani (2008: 30-63) argue the generalisation of African refugee students as incapable of coping with the Australian school system does not help in their future directions and their hope to complete tertiary education. Consequently, the possibility for them to secure meaningful positions when they grow up remains minimal. As Fenix Ndlovu (2014) puts it, Africans in Australia have increasingly attracted media, political and legislative attention. Much recent commentary has been negative about Africans, accusing them of failing to integrate in the mainstream community (reference needed). More dangerously, Africans are portrayed as problematic, the dangerous “other” and the unwanted (Ndlovu, 2014:101). Furthermore, Mapedzahama, Rugde, West and Perron's study (2012:153) demonstrates racism and racial prejudice within the Australian nursing workplaces, nurse-to-nurse racism being the most significant burden for the African migrant nurses in Australia, followed by nurse-to-patient racism and racial prejudice. Scanlon foundation’s recent survey (Markus, 2016) indicates that most of Africans, particularly South Sudanese refugees, face racism daily. 77 percent of Africans report some form of discrimination daily.

While I agree with previous literature on the issue of racism, the evidence from my sample suggests that there is a need to investigate how racism influence refugees’ education, skills and their prospect for employment in Australia. Black Africans find it
hard to navigate the work market. After Voice 004 tried to secure a job for a long time, he was so desperate that he even tried to rename himself, that is, transform his name to look more western. He explains:

Sometimes even your own name on the resume can be a hindrance. I noticed that. When I changed my name to look like a western name, I was called for interview. My last name is too long and it clearly shows that I am not originally from here (Voice 004, Interview, 01 February 2017)

In the predominantly white society where Africans are portrayed as incapable, being black implies having limited skills, as Voice 005, a young Congolese man who was resettled from one of the refugee camps in Rwanda explains:

We are undermined because we are judged as having limited linguistic skills. That is one of the major issues […] and racism. There is no way you can compete with white people in the job market and get the job offer. White people are offered first and then black people at the end […] and they do not really trust us. They do not believe we can carry out the job tasks properly […] (Voice 005, Interview, 05 February 2017)

Job agencies struggle to help Africans get jobs simply because employer prefer white job seekers who are judged as job ready. Voice 003 summarises his experiences with the job agency:

[…] I believe it was racism because other people got the jobs […]. I am not trying to be a racist, but I can attest that most of black people did not secure any jobs through there [job network] (Voice 003, Interview, 31 January 2017).
There is a positive relationship between the level of education and the nature of employment achieved. Indeed, being able to complete tertiary education comes with its advantages including the possibility to access meaningful employment. My evidence shows that some African students are not allowed to enrol in subjects giving them the pathways to University as schools do not believe they fit in those classes. Voice 009 had to fight tirelessly and to move three different schools trying to get into OP subjects. Despite all the hardships she had to endure, voice 009 was able to successfully complete her OP subjects and is currently undertaking a bachelor program at university. She explains:

I did not want to finish my high school and go to TAFE […]. The school I used to go to refused to give me OP subjects… they were just like “we just can’t”[…]. I believed in myself, I was like why not? […] at the time my Principal told me it was too late for me […] I thought it was racist because everyone else, on my level was allowed to do it […] I had to move to another school again […] I moved three times… the first time I moved because they did not want to put me in normal classes. I was put in a special class with students who could not speak English. I had to move to a third one to be offered OP subjects […]. I succeeded and got my OP at the end […] I felt good. (Voice 009, Interview, 14 February 2017).

Expectations of refugees and difference in cultures and languages make social cohesion difficult. Voice 018 is an older male refugee in his late 60s. He finds social cohesion in Australia very low:

[…] Life changed. Everyone at his own place. It was not usual where we came from […] I mean every family in their own compound […]
you can spend a whole year or two without knowing who your neighbour is […] that was very new. We thought it was because we did not speak their language. How could we make first contact with them with very limited linguistic skills? (Voice 018, 04 March 2017)

Furthermore, failure to adjust to and embrace the Australian culture make social cohesion unlikely. It can also be a source of own family conflicts. Voice 013 was culturally shocked during his first months in Australia:

There is no culture in Australia. You cannot know who is the child, the father, the adults or the children. That is my understanding. They have no manners, that is one of the issues […]. Generally, the newcomers change and assimilate- if you move to Rome, walk like Romans. That is how I view it. When we come here, we learn the negative things (Voice 013, Interview, 19 February 2017).

The length of time in the refugee camps has adverse impact on Congolese sentiment of belonging and self-confidence. While they do not believe the society around is tolerant and accommodating enough, evidences suggest that some refugees have difficulties in trusting anyone, as voice 005 explains:

Frankly, refugee experience is really bad […] In the course of refugee journey, you lose both material things and time. You get hurt both mentally and physically […] how can you trust people after that? It is not easy to regain trust to people (Voice 005, Interview, 05 February 2017).

While the majority of Australians would find refuge in the authorities, it takes time for Congolese refugees to gain trust and confidence in people with power, based on their experiences in the course of the refugee journey.
Until today, it is hard for me to have confidence in the authorities. I lived for more than sixteen years in an unsafe environment, not trusting the government officials because Government oppressed us (Voice 004, Interview, 01 February 2017).

The social cohesion issues refugees face has adverse impacts on their self-image and confidence.

### 4.8 Issues of self-confidence within refugee populations

While 19 out of 20 interviewed refugees were satisfied with their life in Logan, each and every participant in this study expressed issues with self-esteem and confidence within the African community. Issues with self-esteem hinder African refugees from even trying to compete in the global work market and this has adverse outcome on their and the next generations’ prospects for meaningful employment in Australia. Bradford (2011:43) argues that most of the refugees have no idea about how to access employment or educational information. They also have limited understanding of how to write a presentable resume or what is expected of them during the interview process. Bradford (2011:43) further argues that, refugees’ previous achievements, status and education do not matter anymore. Kritzinger and Mande (2016: 02) makes a point that growing up and becoming an adult in the refugee camps is far from easy. There are issues of not only poverty but also inequality and exclusion, so for each Congolese family, what they call home will still be another exile (Kritzinger and Mande, 2016: 02). Fozdar and Torezani’s study (2008: 30- 63) demonstrates some paradoxical findings, making a point that the refugee population group is the most satisfied with life, despite a range of legislative and government policy decisions-apparently designed to make their life harder.

While the arguments above align with the findings in this study, my evidence suggest that the society should look beyond these general assumptions and find out how the issues of self-esteem continue to shape refugees’ fates in Australia. Growing up in the refugee camps significantly reduce refugees’ self-image and confidence.
Additionally, they must cope with being black African refugee and constantly worry about what society think of them. Voice 004 explains:

Here is the truth: Look, I am a black person, a young man who grew up in the refugee camp. That is enough to put me down […] Sometimes you lack confidence because of your background- it reduces your confidence in applying for some types of jobs because you are not sure you would be considered anyway (Voice 004, Interview, 01 February 2017).

Some Congolese refugees have gone through so much hardship in a way that has affected their performance. Consequently, some adults assess themselves as small children.

Before, I did not have any plans- I was mentally destroyed and had lost the sense of life […] When I got here, I started from the scratch as a child- my level is too low, my way of thinking changed also […] nothing motivated me to work and gain experience. Those are some of the limitations (Voice 001, Interview, 18 January 2017).

Issues of self-confidence are also a hindrance for some Congolese refugees when they attempt to negotiate their trust in the community in general and particularly in the work market. Voice 011 is a former teacher and principal both in DRC and in the refugee camp in Rwanda. He states he cannot dare apply for the job as a teacher in Australia because he does not believe deserves to be a teacher Australia. He explains:

Sometimes we do not even trust ourselves. How do you think I can teach someone whose accent is way better than mine, someone who speaks more properly than me? How can you stand in front of students if you cannot talk properly? It is the other way around, students
would be your teachers. They would laugh at you [...] and students can be bullies (Voice 011, Interview, 15 February 2017).

Voice 011 face expressed more frustrations than his words, especially when he was trying to explain that, despite his high level of education and many years of experience as a teacher and a principal, the best he can be in Australia is a teacher-aid. He explains:

The language is an issue [...]. I taught in a French system. It would be hard to get used to English teaching system [...] It would be hard to translate that. I was a principal but the best I can be here is a teacher-aid (Voice 011, Interview 15 February 2017).

Generally, when refugees from non-English backgrounds arrive in Australia, they have to learn everything from scratch. Voice 005 worked in the local administration and he believes the difference in systems and his background are a hindrance to accessing local administration job in Australia. On top of that comes issues with how he assesses himself as an under-developed person despite all his many years of experience as a public servant

I told you I was working in the local administration back at home. Do you think I can be employed in the Australian local administration here [...] First of all, I am not an Australian citizen. Even if I could work on my residence permit, do you think my English would be enough to work with English people? Do you think I am at their level [...] Here is the thing: An under-developed country has under-developed population. A developed country has developed population. I am an under-developed person from an under-developed country, and currently living
in a developed country. Do you think I am on the same level as people who have lived here all the time? (Voice 005, Interview, 05 February 2017).

Despite the challenges refugee go through as they try to settle and integrate in the broader community, this interview evidence suggests that the refugees are some of the happiest residents in Logan. Voice 011 explains:

We will continue to live in Logan. No one who is used to life in Logan can live somewhere else. We have lived in this house for 10 years now. Kids complain that this house is too old, but I always remind them it is not their property. We are still paying $670 a fortnight while others pay around $1000 for a four-bedroom rental property […] Look at our Sunday market, it has African food […] we will live in Logan until we die, unless something occurs and push everyone away, I mean something as serious as a war […]. Our neighbours are nice, we have no problem at all (Voice 011, Interview, 15 February 2017)

While for voice 011 housing affordability and social cohesion are the main reasons why their family loves Logan, voice 008s main reason to feel at home in Logan is its multicultural society and the local governance.

I have never moved from Logan and I am not intending to do so. I love Logan very much… it is a multinational culture. There are so many people in Logan and yet we live like children from one father. Logan takes care of its roads, we pay car registrations, but we are sure this money comes back to the community. They repair the roads every time there is even small
holes…. Africans, whites, Europeans and Asians live like one family here (Voice 008, Interview, 10 February 2017)

Additionally, as voice 011 puts it, the location of the city of Logan is ideal for refugees. He explains:

Since I arrived in Australia, I have settled down here and I have no plan to move […] Logan is close to city, you get everything you want and it has good weather. By the way, that is the only place I know and love, no problem at all (Voice 001, Interview, 18 January 2017).

Although most of the refugees expressed high level of satisfaction, the government policies continue to make their everyday life harder. A number of participants indicated frustration with the Australian policies, particularly immigration policies that have become strict and financially unaffordable.

4.9 The legacies of Government’s policies based on neo-liberal approach

The neo-liberal approach where states and Governments continue to play coercive roles dominate the Australian policymaking (Cahill, 2007: 222). This makes refugees the least desired population groups by employment agencies as they are much harder to get into jobs, putting the agencies’ funding at risk. Moreover, the government’s immigration policies make it harder to achieve family reunion, keeping families apart. This has negative implication on refugee health and wellbeing, which adversely impact on their performances. Torezani, Colic-Peisker and Fozdar (2008: 135-152) argue that employment services are not designed for refugees and are inappropriate for this group mainly because job network agencies prioritise mainstream Australians who are easy to get into jobs in order to keep their activity-based outcome as expected by the government, and thereby secure their funding. In addition, Collins (2013: 160-177) argues that Australian immigration experience over the past two decades excludes all but the richest applicants, which is not only unfair but also unethical and morally wrong.
Crocks (2010: 20-30) traces this to the general fear of “the other” in the Australian society, which leads not only to racism but also unfair policies at the expense of humanitarian entrants. While the evidences in this study agree with the existing literature on the consequences of neo-liberal approach by the government, there is a need to demonstrate how these policies prevent refugees from achieving good education and employment outcomes. Indeed, none of the Congolese refugees who participated in this study was able to secure a job through the job agency network. Everyone was linked with the potential employer by a friend. Voice 007 explains the power of social capital:

[...] I was linked with the job network but they could not help me with anything. I got a friend who assisted me by taking my resume to Garden City. My teacher at school helped me prepare my resume. When I submitted the resume [through the friend], I was offered the job although I could not carry out the tasks at work due to my physical health weakness (voice 007, Interview, 05 February 2017).

Some have gone so far as to argue that the social network are more effective than job network agencies. Failure for job networks to help African refugees can be linked with the way the agencies business models are built based on a neo-liberal approach, whereby priority is given to those who are work ready in order to keep their outcome-based activity as expected by the funding body.

It took me six months to get a job. During that time, I did not have friends to help me secure a job. After six months, I made friends who helped me land a job. I was linked with Serina Russo and they were not able to help me. I attended many times, but they could not help me [...] (Voice 003, Interview, 31 January 2017).
Moreover, the immigration policies do not reflect the Congolese refugees’ complex needs. Every single refugee interviewed in this study had several family members left in the refugee camp somewhere in Africa.

As far as I am concerned, I left my mother. I left some family members including my mother and my cousins. They are still in the camp. Knowing their life in the camp, I could not sit and relax. I had to try to help. I tried to propose my mother for her to come here but the case was rejected. I was told that she should be referred and recommended to Australia for resettlement by UNHCR. It is a very long process. Back then, it was easier because I was still single. I am currently married but even my wife has not been able to reunify with me yet (Voice 003, Interview, 31 January 2017).

Some Congolese refugees have even given up trying to propose their family members for resettlement or family reunification because they know they would not succeed any way. This means that Congolese families are forced to live apart from each other indefinitely.

Things just changed and the processes are becoming really difficult […] and [the] waiting and giving them false hopes […] if the application is not successful, they would be disappointed. So in order for me not to go through that struggle, I just try to find something they can do back at home […] (Voice 010, Interview, 15 February 2017).

Congolese refugees also think that the settlement services are designed in a way that do not meet their complex needs. Some refugees find it hard or even impossible to adapt to the Australian policies. Voice 010 explains:
I want to bring my grandmother, but I think she is too old and I do not want to put her through the stress of the Australian system like having to go back to school […]. It is becoming really hard to bring people over here. The Migration Law is becoming really tight and the numbers are really low - it is just trying not to put myself under that stress (Voice 010, Interview, 15 February 2017).

The family splits in conjunction with strict immigration policies put some Congolese refugee families in a state of despair and with constant worries. This has adverse outcome on their health and wellbeing, which can have negative consequences on their work market readiness in turn.

I tried to propose my cousin. The one whose wife was once raped. I applied at the same time as my partner. My partner’s family members, 4 people, have already arrived here. For my family members, everything was going well until, after one year, my family received a rejection letter. They said they were some items that were not covered well in his application […] It is a big challenge […] he is in Nairobi, he has 7 children, plus himself and his wife. 9 people altogether. All unemployed (Voice 007, Interview, 05 February 2017).

Voice 016 lived with her siblings in Uganda. As she had just turned eighteen, she was given a visa but not the rest of her family members. Given the life conditions as a Congolese refugee in Uganda, she did not dare to question the Immigration Department about why she had been separated from the rest of her family. She accepted the offer for resettlement, but was, understandably scared. It was her first time to live on her own.
I did not have any option. Access had planned everything before I came. When I arrived at the airport, I was told I was supposed to share accommodation with other girls, two other girls. I said it is alright but I was very scared deep inside [...].

I kept wondering if I would manage to live by myself here [...] I was wondering if I could ever be able to study and eventually work (Voice 016, Interview, 26 February 2017).

Family separation impose financial responsibilities across multiple different countries. Consequently, the majority of Congolese refugee families have no choice but to remit regularly.

4.10 The legacies of remittances

Remitting is a very important part of refugees’ life. However, it frequently has negative implications for those in Australia. My evidence suggests that refugees’ long-term plans, including education and training that would result in meaningful employment, are put on hold, as a consequence of refugees’ responsibility for the survival of their beloved ones who remain the refugee camps. Anna Lindley (2009: 1315-1334) argues that the diaspora’s perspective is a very important element of understanding the process of remitting and its huge repercussions for refugee migrants. She notes that refugees and migrants work long hours to secure enough money to send back home, sacrificing their own and family needs here in Australia. Peter (2010:225) argues that remittances contribute to both protracted migration and the inability to secure social resources needed for local integration. On the other hand, Rousseau, Rufagari, Bagilishya and Measham (2004:1095) suggest that the restrictive immigration policies in the Global North force refugee families to remain separated for excessive lengths of time. Georgina Ramsay (2016: 87) argues that Africans resettled to Australia end up in new configurations of family relationships, divided across international spaces. My evidence suggest that as long as family splits exist, remitting will continue to shape refugees lives.
The need for remitting prevents some Congolese men and women from enrolling in tertiary education. Many are willing to take any job as soon as possible so that they can be in the financial position to help their families left behind. Consequently, their prospect to access meaningful employment are limited.

It all depends. Some arrive here with enough English and they may decide to continue their studies and get their degrees and PhD while some will think about their family behind who would suffer if they do not work straight away. They then prefer working to get money and own transport. It is tough not to have own transport if you are new in this country (Voice 008, Interview, 10 February 2017).

Some do not even wait to complete their English program at TAFE. Pressure from home force them to quit and work in order to earn some money, part of which is remitted. Understandably, if refugees cannot even finish a TAFE program, their chance to complete tertiary education are slim.

[...] With these circumstances involving my mother and the orphan relatives she is raising, I had no other options but to look for work. I tried to study English at TAFE. Imagine, I arrived here in Dec 2006 and enrolled at TAFE. I quit and started working in July in 2007 as I could not afford my own expenses and so many people I had to support (Voice 003, Interview, 31 January 2017).

Remitting forces refugees to put their own projects such as buying a house on hold. This has huge implication for Congolese refugees’ prosperity and future in Australia. This can have negative outcome on next generations too.

I fled with my mother in 1996. Until today in 2017, she is still in the camp. She has been struggling in the refugee camp for more than
20 years. She is better off because she has a child overseas, but it does not help me. I support her and her life is relatively better. It has negative impact on my life here. I am supposed to use this money on my own projects. Like buying a house but I am forced to send money.... I send roughly $300 a fortnight and the fees of $35. So it is $670 a month. Do the math based on how many years I have been here. This is an average, sometime I pay more. If I saved all this money, I would be somewhere else. I have no idea if they think of these facts when they reject [family reunion] applications like this one (Voice 003, Interview, 31 January 2017).

Voice 018 is a female refugees from Congo in her late 50s. While she is happy with the level of financial support she gets from the Australian Government, she is under pressure from children she left in refugee camps in different countries in Africa. She explains:

I love this country. Upon arrival, I was given financial assistance by Centrelink and I thought that it would be enough. However, I am a mother who left children behind. They are calling from everywhere. “Mum I am dying”. Those in Burundi are crying, those in Nairobi are crying and even those who stayed in Congo are crying too. This makes me very sad (Voice 0018, Interview, 04 March 2017)

Voice 001 does not have a job either. However, he feels like he does not have any choice but to send some of the money he receives from Centrelink to help his family back in Africa to stain themselves financially and medically.
I have a big family. Even if the money from Centrelink is not much, I must send them the money to enable them to maintain them financially, to buy medicine for themselves and children, to buy food... I sent some of my money from Centrelink (Voice 001, Interview, 18 January 2017)

Congolese refugees feel like they have the moral obligation to send money to their family back in Africa, regardless their income.

If you have any spare money, regardless the amount, you need to help back home. “whoever forgets his origin is generally a poor man”, you would die poor! (Voice 008, Interview, 10 February 2017)

Remitting is not only a moral obligation but also a part of the culture. However, a number of participants acknowledged that it does not necessarily help the sender, but rather the receiver.

It [Remitting] helps and it is a must. It is a part of our culture. We have to support each other. It does not help you as a sender, but it helps the receiver (Voice 003, Interview, 31 January 2017).

Remitting can cause family tensions, especially when one of the partners overlook family needs in Australia for the sake of remitting.

I send to Africa part of the money I was supposed to spend on my own family’s basic needs. The money I was supposed to spend on my children’s need is sent to Africa and it create tensions. My wife does not agree with me on that all the time because I am sending a lot to Africa rather than spending on family
needs here, and she is right (Voice 004, Interview, 01 February 2017).

While the sample claimed that they tried to secure a job as soon as practically possible in order to get money to send to their friends and relatives left behind, many indicated that inability to secure a job is culturally sensitive in the Congolese culture.

4.11 Cultural significance of work

Participants acknowledged that a man who fails to secure a job is considered as a half-man in the Congolese culture. Therefore, failure to secure employment within the Congolese community severely impacts refugees’ image and dignity. For this reason, the challenges that African refugees have to endure when attempting to secure meaningful jobs in South East Queensland demand greater scholarly attention. Kooy (2016: 71-73) suggests that refugees have lower workforce participation, lower earnings and higher unemployment rates than other migrant groups in Australia, arguing that they are more at risk of long-term unemployment and are less likely to secure a meaningful job. Correa-Velez, Barnett and Gifford (2015:332) argue that despite various barriers, refugees are highly motivated to find work, integrate and become independent as soon as they arrive in Australia. Correa-Velez, Barnett and Gifford (2015:332) further argue that failure to secure a job impacts on self-esteem, especially among male refugees. Without employment, refugees are at risk of becoming trapped in a cycle of financial marginalisation. Ogden (2017) argues that the quality and the level of engagement, whether work or volunteering is more important than the activity itself in its ability to enhance a sense of wellbeing and self-evaluation.

My findings agree with existing literature, particularly where it demonstrates that the lack of participation in major life activities such as work have adverse impact of refugees' identity, including their sense of self and wellbeing. However, my evidence deepens the understanding of how failure to secure a job leads to a life story that lacks significant and meaningful experiences and dignity, especially for Congolese male refugees. Working is a part of Congolese culture and a source of pride, as voice 024 explains:
When we were growing up throughout our generation, President Mobutu had a saying he often proclaimed. He called it article fifteen—“Do your best”. This implied that everyone had to sustain himself or herself, to do whatever it takes to work and to move forward financially. So a man or anyone who does not work loses respect in the community automatically (Voice 024, Interview, 25 May 2017).

In the Congolese community, the expectation is that everyone should secure a job. Failure to do so means losing a sense of identity, as voice 024 explains:

> Work aligns with identity. So if you have no job then you have lost a part of your identity. Consequently, in the Congolese community, being unable to work generally implies losing your identity […] other men laugh at you while women think you are useless as you do not have what it takes to be a man and that is very disturbing for the involved individual (Voice 024, Interview, 25 May 2017).

The inability for Congolese refugees to secure a job as soon as they arrive here put them under pressure from both their own family members and the community. If you are a man, society expects you to provide for the family. If you are unable to do so, then you key aspect of masculinity, as voice 0023 explains:

> Voice 023: 6.08-7.08: Not being able to work, that means you cannot support your family. And that means you are not a man enough because the whole family is relying on you (Voice 023, Interview, 25 May 2017)

Joblessness does affect Congolese females and their personality as well. Society tends to judge and portray women who do not work as useless members of the
community. The situation is even worse for single mothers who are at risk of having to rely on the men they are dating for financial support, as voice 023 explains:

It is pretty significant because, as a young woman if you don’t really have work in the community you are almost considered like useless […] it plays a huge part because if you are not able to support yourself you will not be able to empower yourself […]. It affects them a lot because they are unable to support themselves and most of them have to rely on maybe the men they are dating to support them or maybe the government system which is getting a little bit worse at the moment […] Not having work, it kind of makes you almost useless. People start calling you of sorts of names- that you are prostitute and you don’t have anything to do with your life, so it has really a huge significance (Voice 023, Interview, 25 May 2017).

The cultural significance of work has a huge impact at all levels of society, regardless of the gender or social background. Congolese men and women are expected to generate income in one way or another, otherwise their status in the community will be compromised, as voice 025 explains:

In the Congolese culture, a person who does not work has no value in the society. They end up becoming robbers, they become thieves as you can understand […] A person has respect only when they can work. A person who does not work has no value in the society (Voice 025, Interview, 25 May 2017).
All the examples above indicate that employment is significant in the refugee community not only because it generates income but also because it boost the concerned individuals' self-image, confidence and their image in the society.

4.11 Conclusion

This chapter has explored the legacies of refugee camps for work market readiness within the Congolese refugee community. A number of underlying factors have been discussed as particularly pertinent for ongoing access to work. Ill health and poor wellbeing were identified as some one of the major contributors to poor access to employment within the Congolese community.

These traumatic experiences of refugee camp life reveal that the refugees' history of torture and trauma, as well as bad healthcare systems in the various refugee camps in Africa, physically incapacitated African refugees in the Australian labour market. Education was another significant factor, mainly caused by the camps' setting and encampment policy which put education, training and employment opportunities on hold for a very long time, making the refugee communities some of the least qualified groups in Australia. What refugees go through including oppression and adverse resettlement process were also discussed in the chapter. In addition to the pre-arrival conditions, and how they shape the refugees' prospects for employment, this chapter also identified a range of underlying factors that contribute to Congolese refugees' failure to access employment following their arrival in Australia. Social cohesion issues were identified as key factors including stereotypes, cultural intolerance and racism, and refugees' struggle to formulate trust in Australian society. Aggravating these issues were government policies that were based on neo-liberal approaches to welfare. Finally, this chapter has looked at the cultural significance of work within the Congolese refugees' community and its impact for their self-image and self-esteem.
Chapter 5

Conclusions and Recommendations

5.1 Introduction

The traumatic experiences of African refugees prior to their arrival in Australia, and the impact of these on their work market readiness in Australia, has received limited attention in recent literature regarding refugee settlement. This research was designed to close this information gap. The refugees’ attempts to integrate into Australian society, particularly their readiness to compete in the labour market, tested the existent literature which had guided the questions (appendix 5) and hypothesis (appendix 6) that I asked. A range of influencing factors were discussed including health and wellbeing, history of torture and trauma, prospects for education and training, resettlement process, social network, social cohesion, self-confidence, government policies and cultural significance of work. These themes were developed from a comprehensive literature review.

5.2 Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), a place plagued by war

This thesis briefly discussed the situation in DRC and why Congolese citizens decide to leave their home country to become refugees in Africa and beyond. DRC has been plagued by wars and conflicts since it secured its political independence from Belgium in the 1960s, experiencing one of the most complex conflicts in Africa for more than two decades (Edo & Adeyeri, 2013: 244). Congolese society has experienced gross violations of human rights beyond common understanding. There have been acts that, if tried before competent courts, could be declared as crimes of genocide (African Research Bulletin, 2010: 18536-18537A). These atrocities include using rape as a weapon of war, putting nearly every woman in some region at risk (Kirby, 2013: 93), in a country where authorities are unwilling and unable to protect their most vulnerable citizens (Kitharidis, 2015, 449).
5.3 Congolese complex refugee journeys

As atrocities became unbearable and large numbers of Congolese citizens decided to flee, they became refugees in the neighbouring countries and beyond (Moraru, 2015). Refugee journeys are unique. They involve incredible violence, oppression, torture, imprisonments, constant fear, tragedies and despair. Refugees might manage to escape from wars and seek safety outside their home countries, but sexual and gender-based violence remain continuous threats to their safety and wellbeing (Krause, 2015: 14-15). Congolese refugees have commonalities with other African refugees, particularly their common situation of belonging neither here nor there – a challenge to the assumed link between nation, state and citizenship. This experience of protracted displacement puts refugees’ life on hold indefinitely (Turner, 2016: 139-142).

Congolese refugees who succeed in being resettled from the refugee camps end up in Australia’s urban centres. In fact, 13,750 are resettled in different cities throughout Australia annually through the offshore humanitarian program (Refugee Council of Australia, 2015). This thesis has outlined critical issues and barriers to accessing meaningful employment within the African communities in hyper-diverse cities, raising awareness about complex needs of Congolese-Australians in the city of Logan. Upon arrival, refugees are eligible for tailored support to begin a new life in Australia. These programs are designed to strengthen refugees’ ability to fully participate in the economic and social life of Australia, provide them with skills and knowledge to independently access services beyond the HSS program, and to provide services in accordance with the program’s principles (Access Community Services, 2016). This thesis aimed to demonstrate why despite all policies and services available to humanitarian entrants to facilitate their settlement journey and integration, this population group remains with one of the highest unemployment rates nationally (Hebbani and Colic-Peisker, 2012: 530-531). This research focussed on Logan mainly because it is one of the most multicultural cities in Australia (Markus, 2015). Its findings in Logan may be re-applied in similar cities nationwide.
5.4 Existing literature

The literature review outlined the key findings in the existing literature and highlighted the questions they provoked. For example, Wachter, Heffron, Snynder, Nsonwu and Busch-Armendariz (2016: 875-878); Hale, Wood and Sheikh-Mohammed (2006: 589-590) and Obodoruku (2014: 19-20) emphasised the poor health services deliveries in the refugee camps and their adverse outcome on refugees’ health. The literature also indicates that most refugees are survivors of torture and trauma and need professional assistance upon arrival in Australia (QPASTT, 2017). It is also important to note that, while Congolese refugees generally experience gross violations of human rights, the Congolese women are the most affected (Wirtz et al., 2013:13). One of the questions this situation consequently provoked was “how does poor health impact on refugees’ work market readiness?” Others, such as Torezani, Colic-Peisker and Fozdar (2008: 135-152), provided a point of departure to explore the legacies of refugee camps and encampment policies for refugees’ education, training and employment. Thomson (2012:186-205) indicated that the resettlement process is long and uncertain. It affects refugees’ trust in any person with authority. The literature also highlights issues with social cohesion and racism that derives from this lack of trust (Collins, 2013: 160-177). Another factor that impacts refugees’ capacity to engage with local society is the fact that almost every Congolese refugee has left a valuable family member behind, and are consequently compelled to remit. This places almost every family in Australia in financial hardship. The methodology in this study allowed very painful and in-depth interviews from Congolese men and women who have experienced most of the issues covered in this literature review.

5.5 Methodological challenges and solutions

The methodology applied in this research helped the researcher gather the data necessary to respond to the main research question of “What are the key determinants of market readiness for Congolese refugees in hyper-diverse cities?” Snowballing techniques were used to access clients, although it was acknowledged that this involved a risk that interviews would repeatedly draw on people from the same ethnic
and linguistic backgrounds. Therefore, participants' backgrounds were identified prior to the invitation to participate. While the refusal by some participants to be audio-recorded slowed down the progress of this research, those who participated off-record contributed enormously as they were much freer and more open to discuss in a great detail. Ethical guidelines were always adhered to. This was particularly necessary generally because of my own ethnicity, but more specifically because interviewing refugees and other vulnerable groups is always ethically complex and challenging. It was culturally difficult for the researcher to ask sensitive questions to Congolese female participants. It was even more confronting for Congolese female refugees, many of whom struggled to answer some questions or to openly discuss culturally sensitive issues. This necessarily limited the amount of information received by the researcher. The research of this nature is high risk, particularly when involving people who might already be suffering from mental health as a consequence of their refugee journeys and experiences. As a consequence, the questions were not pressed on participants. The results in this research highlighted the relationship between participants’ pre-migration conditions in the camps and their ability to secure meaningful employment upon arrival in Australia.

5.6 Results

The results include evidence that ill-health and poor food conditions in the refugee camps directly influence Congolese refugees’ work market readiness in Australia. When refugees who have had extensive stays in the camps arrive in Australia, they quickly find out that their physical health does not allow them to work in the type of physically demanding jobs available to them. This is due to the refugees’ history of torture as well as the lack of access to proper healthcare services in the camps in Africa, causing chronic diseases such as asthma and diabetes. Also, the findings in this research prove that long stays in the refugee camps severely hamper refugees’ education and skills, causing a general lack of work experience, skills and qualifications within the refugee communities. This affects how refugees view the world, as well their performance at work in areas such as technology. A number of participants in this study indicated that they had never used a computer before and that they had to learn a number of things that are otherwise taken for granted.
This thesis has confirmed that the resettlement process is uncertain, complex and traumatising for refugees. Refugees do not know their destination. Consequently, they cannot plan the move accordingly, as they have no idea how long the process will take or if they would be accepted at all. Their life is limbo. This inability to plan is compounded by the consequences of torture and trauma. Together this makes it particularly difficult for them to be work market ready following their arrival in Australia. Female refugees are most at risk due to sexual and gender-based violence that has become a normalized part of everyday life in Congo, where sexually-based violence is both a weapon and a consequence of war. Congolese refugees would like to work as soon as practically possible post-arrival, but it is not an easy task for them. In addition to the effects of physical violence, many become mentally sick when they are in the camp and this prevents them from completing tertiary education and from gaining work experience. Together, these circumstances make Congolese refugees some of the most unqualified on their arrival in Australia and initial attempts to enter the labour market.

The lack of social capital is one of the most significant underlying factors in accessing work market within Congolese refugee communities. This thesis suggests that the type of social networks Congolese refugees are linked with translated into the type of the job they are able to secure. Most of the employed participants in this research secured their jobs through their friends who were already working in the factory. Their English levels and overseas qualifications did not matter. Social exclusion, including that caused by racism, is another major challenge that the Congolese refugee community faces daily and that decreases their chance to access employment. The evidence suggests that refugees are undermined because they are judged as having limited linguistic skills, aggravated by their obligations to remit. Consequently, many believed that they would not have any chance if they were to compete with white people in the job market. With social exclusion come issues of self-confidence. While 19 out of 20 interviewed refugees were satisfied with their life in Logan, each participant expressed issues with self-esteem and confidence. Issues with self-esteem hinder African refugees from even trying to compete in the work market and this has adverse outcomes on their and the next generations’ prospects for meaningful employment in Australia.
5.6 Neoliberalism does not help

The neoliberal approach to policymaking makes refugees the least desired population groups by employment agencies as they are much harder to place in jobs. Employment agencies are arguably not appropriate for population groups such as African refugees, who have complex needs. Agencies’ priority is given to those who are work ready in order to safeguard their activity-based funding. Furthermore, the government’s immigration policies make it harder for family reunion, keeping families apart. This has negative implication on refugee health and wellbeing, which adversely impacts on their performances and sustains heavy requirements to remit money overseas. Participants in this research argued that social networks are more effective than job agency networks. Regardless of whether they were in work or not, remitting was a very important part of refugees’ life. However, it has negative implications for those in Australia. Refugees’ long term plans including education and training that would result in meaningful employment are put on hold, as refugees in Australia are responsible for the survival of their beloved ones who remain in the refugee camps. Therefore, Congolese refugees are prepared to take any job for the sake of remitting, as well as pride given the significance of work in the Congolese culture.

5.7 Recommendations

Settlement services providers should assess every Congolese refugee individually and on-arrival assessments should be organised prior to any goals’ setting. Involving refugees in their own case management plan would make it easier for providers to understand the individuals’ pre-arrival conditions and the level of assistance they may need to become work ready. The check-list should include, but not limited to history of torture and trauma, mental health, possible chronic diseases, length of stay in the refugee camp, education levels, linguistic skills, community links, family split and the likelihood of excessive remitting.
5. 8 Future research direction

There is a number of things that I was unable to do and think would benefit from further research including:

- **Memories of refugee camps**

  All participants in this research discussed in great details their experiences and memories of the refugee camps. While their discussions would enrich the existing literature on refugee journeys, they unfortunately did not link directly with the project at hand (“the legacies of refugee camp for work market readiness in Hyper-diverse cities”), and were therefore excluded from findings. Despite this exclusion, the memories of the refugee camps continue to shape refugees' settlement and integration progress as well as their ability to navigate in different sectors.

- **The role of remittances**

  The role of remittances was carefully examined in relation to how they influence the Congolese refugees' job choice. Unfortunately some discussions around remittances though interesting are outside the bounds of this MA project and I will enjoy looking at them further when I write my PhD.
6. Appendices

6.1 Full list of interview questions

1. Could you please tell me about your life in Congo?
2. Which refugee camp(s) did you live in?
3. Could you please describe camp life to me?
4. How long did you stay in the camp?
5. Could you tell me about why and how you came to Australia?
6. How was your resettlement process?
7. What were your initial impressions of Logan?
8. How did these change?
9. What are the key challenges you face in your neighbourhood?
10. Do you have a lot of friends here in Logan?
11. Are you employed? How do you find it working in Australia?
12. If not employed, have you actively been looking for work?
13. How much support do you have? [Family, your own community links? Other Africans? Or your new Australian friends?]
14. Could you tell me a bit about your dream for the future?
15. What do you imagine your life will be like in 10 years’ time?
16. Do you send money back home or to your friends in the refugee camp you were resettled from? How often do you that and what are the financial implications for doing that?
17. Is your entire family in Australia? If not, are you planning to bring the rest of your family to Australia?
18. Have you always been living in Logan since you arrived in Australia?
19. Are you planning to move? If yes, why?
6.2 Participants Consent form

Men and Women of Good Hope: The Legacies of Refugee Camps for Work Readiness in Hyper-Diverse Cities.

GU Ref No: 2016/883

CONSENT FORM

Research Team

Dr Robert Mason (Chief Investigator)
Griffith University, Nathan Campus
Contact Phone: 0737538521
Contact Email: r.mason@griffith.edu.au

John Bosco Ngendakurio (Student researcher)
Griffith University, Nathan Campus
Contact Phone: 0400680663
Contact Email: john.bosco@ministerial.qld.gov.au

Prof Georgina Murray (Researching Team Member)
Griffith University, Nathan Campus
Contact Phone: 37357371
Contact Email: g.murray@griffith.edu.au

By signing below, I confirm that I have read and understood the information package and in particular have noted that:

- I understand that my involvement in this research will include (include a short summary of what their participation will involve – eg the completion of a set of four cognitive tests, on a weekly basis, for three weeks);
• I have had any questions answered to my satisfaction;

• I understand the risks involved;

• I understand that there will be no direct benefit to me from my participation in this research (this may need to be modified for some projects);

• I understand that my participation in this research is voluntary (depending upon the circumstances, there might also be a reference to their decision in no way impacting upon the service they receive from X or their grades);

• I understand that if I have any additional questions I can contact the research team;

• I understand that I am free to withdraw at any time, without explanation or penalty;

• I understand that I can contact the Manager, Research Ethics, at Griffith University Human Research Ethics Committee on 3735 4375 (or research-ethics@griffith.edu.au) if I have any concerns about the ethical conduct of the project; and

• I agree to participate in the project.

☐ I agree to participate in the project.
6.3 Recruitment letter/ Information sheet

Men and Women of Good Hope: The Legacies of Refugee Camps for Work Readiness in Hyper-Diverse Cities

GU Ref No: 2016/883

INFORMATION SHEET

Who is conducting the research

Chief Investigator: Dr Robert Mason
Griffith University, Nathan Campus
Contact Phone: 0737538521
Contact Email: r.mason@griffith.edu.au

Student Researcher: Mr John Bosco Ngendakurio
Griffith University, Nathan Campus
Contact Phone: 0400680663
Contact Email:
Dear Research Participant,

I am writing to invite you to participate in my research aiming to highlight critical issues and barriers to accessing meaningful employment within the African communities in hyper-diverse cities in Australia. This a component of my academic program, as a Higher Degree by Research (HDR) candidate in a Master of Arts Research program, Griffith University.

I am intending to ask you questions designed to interrogate ongoing legacies of refugee camps for work readiness, community trust and social cohesion in hyper-diverse cities such as your new home city. The expected duration of the interview is one hour. Some of the questions and discussion topics include:

20. Could you please tell me about your life in Congo?
21. Which refugee camp(s) did you live in?
22. Could you please describe camp life to me?
23. How long did you stay in the camp?
24. Could you tell me about why and how you came to Australia?
25. How was your resettlement process?
26. What were your initial impressions of Logan?
27. How did these change?
28. What are the key challenges you face in your neighbourhood?
29. Do you have a lot of friends here in Logan?
30. Are you employed? How do you find it working in Australia?
31. If not employed, have you actively been looking for work?
32. How much support do you have? [Family, your own community links? Other Africans? Or your new Australian friends?]
33. Could you tell me a bit about your dream for the future?
34. What do you imagine your life will be like in 10 years’ time?
35. Do you send money back home or to your friends in the refugee camp you were resettled from? How often do you that and what are the financial implications for doing that?
36. Is your entire family in Australia? If not, are you planning to bring the rest of your family to Australia?
37. Have you always been living in Logan since you arrived in Australia?
38. Are you planning to move? If yes, why?

You have been selected based on your background as a Congolese refugee who has spent a number of years in the refugee camp. This research aims to raise awareness about special needs of Congolese-Australians who have experienced long stays in the refugee camps.

This research will be an important resource for mainstream community members, government agencies and community organisations providing settlement and employment services to refugees of Congolese and African background, as the knowledge accumulated in relation to Congolese refugees can be applied on other African community groups in Queensland.

The risks associated with this research include the disclosure of personal and sensitive issues. By signing the attached consent, you are giving the research team the permission to ask you questions and to use your answers, which might contain your personal information and experience, in our research project. I am pleased to assure you that all the information and data collected in this research will be confidential and kept in a secure place. Moreover, your identifiable information such as names will be changed to safeguard your privacy. Interviews might be audio-recorded or filmed and later transcribed. Please note that audio and notes will be destroyed after the thesis submission and each interview will be assigned a number code to help ensure that personal identifiers are not revealed during the analysis and write up of findings. Any publication of quotes from the subjects will be anonymous and all identifiable clues
such as locations will be erased. However, other research data (interview transcripts and analysis) will be retained in a locked cabinet and/or a password protected electronic file at Griffith University for a period of five years before being destroyed.

Please note that you may experience distress as a consequence of reflecting on your time in the camps. Should this be the case, please ask the interviewer to stop and you will be free to withdraw from the project promptly. Additionally, should any other event of distress occur following the interview, I will make sure appropriate support, including counselling is provided promptly through *Culture In Mind* who have kindly agreed to provide counselling services for distressed interviewees.

Please be assured that your participation is voluntary and your decision in regards to this request will, in no way, impact upon your relationship with your settlement service provider or Griffith University. You are also free to withdraw from the study at any time throughout the process.

I will be more than happy to report back to you the overall findings and results of the research, should you desire that. I have attached the consent form for you to fill in and return to me, should you agree to participate in this research project.

The conduct of this research involves the collection, access and/or use of your identified personal information. The information collected is confidential and will not be disclosed to third parties without your consent, except to meet government, legal or other regulatory authority requirements. A de-identified copy of this data may be used for other research purposes. However, your anonymity will at all times be safeguarded. For further information consult the University’s Privacy Plan at [http://www.griffith.edu.au/about-griffith/plans-publications/griffith-university-privacy-plan](http://www.griffith.edu.au/about-griffith/plans-publications/griffith-university-privacy-plan) or telephone (07) 3735 4375.

Please note that Griffith University conducts research in accordance with the *National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research*. If you have any concerns or complaints about the ethical conduct of this research project, please contact the Manager, Research Ethics on 3735 4375 or research-ethics@griffith.edu.au
Participants will participate in a prize draw with a possibility to win a mini-iPad.

If you require further information in relation to this research, you are welcome to contact Mr John Bosco Ngendakurio through the details above.

Yours Sincerely
John Bosco Ngendakurio

6.4 Main Research Question
What are the key determinants of market readiness for Congolese refugees in hyper-diverse cities?

6.5 Research Sub-Questions

1. How do Congolese refugees believe the refugee camps influenced their work market readiness?
2. How do Congolese refugees resettled from the camps access the work market in Australia?
3. What is the cultural significance of work for Congolese refugees in Australia?
4. Which Government’s policies do Congolese refugees perceive as most important for their settlement?
5. What is the role of the remittance monies on job choices?
6. What role do refugees’ expectations of the job market play on influencing their job choices?
7. How does the current period of neoliberalism regulate refugees’ experience of the Australian society?
7. Bibliography


Brownmiller, S., (1975), *Against Our Will, Men, Women and Rape*, Simon & Schuster, np


Cadwallader, R., (2015), *We Are Better Than This: Essays and Poems on Australian Asylum Seeker Policy*, ATF Press, pp. 01


Refugee Migrant Men Living in Australia, International Migration, vol. 53, no. 2, pp. 332


McQuaid, K.R.V., (2016), We raise up the voice of the voiceless: voice, rights, and resistance amongst Congolese human rights defenders in Uganda, Centre for Refugee studies, Vol. 32, issue no. 1, (Spring), p50


Palitza, K., (2010), *Africa: Gender-based violence wrecks Malawi refugee camp*, Global Information Network, New York, (September), retrieved from:


Wright, L. & Plasterer, R., (2010), Beyond basic education: exploring opportunities for higher learning in Kenyan refugee camps, Centre for Refugee studies, vol. 27, no. 2, pp. 42- 56


- The End -