

EFFECTS OF CULTURAL PRACTICES ON REFUGEE STUDENTS' ACCESS TO SECONDARY EDUCATION IN KAKUMA CAMP AND KALOBYEI INTEGRATED SETTLEMENT IN KENYA

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Abstract: Ensuring that refugees in camps receive a high-quality education is essential to ensuring both social and economic growth in the host nations after repatriation and resettlement. There have long been barriers to student enrollment at the Kakuma camp and Kalobeyei integrated settlement, despite tenacious efforts by state and non-state actors at the international and national levels as well as stakeholders like the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, among others. Several refugee students at Kakuma Camp and Kalobeyei Integrated Settlement do not enroll in secondary education. The purpose of this study is to determine the effects of cultural practices on refugee students' access to secondary education. To identify the barriers preventing refugee students in Kakuma camp and Kalobeyei integrated settlement from accessing secondary school, the research used an ex post facto design. The study was guided by the social justice theory which emphasizes the necessity of addressing systemic injustices and empowering marginalized groups in educational contexts. Nine (9) principals and 180 teachers from nine (9) refugee schools were the target population. The study employed census sampling to determine a sample size of 189, which were made up of 9 principals and 180 teachers. Questionnaires and an interview schedule were used to gather data. The validity and reliability of the tools were established through a pilot study that employed the test-retest methodology. A regression analysis was used to analyze the data. The study established that the cultural practices have statistically significant effects on refugee students' access to secondary education in Kakuma camp and Kalobeyei integrated settlement.

Keywords: Access, Cultural Practices, Effects, Refugees, Students.

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1.0. Introduction

As per the UNHCR's Global Trends 2016 report, over 45.2 million people globally were forced to flee their places of origin. The figure increased by over five million from the 40 million that the same refugee agency had anticipated only four years prior. Globally, about 9 million refugees are residing in camps, according to USCRI data from 2009. As of 2016, 15 million people were estimated to be living in camps worldwide. According to UNHCR, there is now a concern with refugee schooling. Tens of millions of refugees living in developing countries has serious repercussions. Everyone has the right to an education, according to UNESCO, which makes it essential for refugees to have access to education in

light of SDG #4 for Education 2030 and the unpredictable large number of refugee flows. Education is crucial to fostering a cohesive community free from conflict, bloodshed, and terror. In all honesty, civic rights and peaceful political conversation are made possible by education. It also boosts access to justice and legal protection, as well as the proportion of women and young people involved in politics. Through the enhancement of one's own capacities, education elevates understanding, tolerance, and a sense of citizenship in individuals. One important tool for combating terrorism, intolerance, discrimination against other religions, crimes against humanity, and war has been seen to be education. It can also be applied to support peace and stability, environmental preservation, gender equality, and community development.

1.1. Cross-Cultural Adaptation

The bigger picture that this study is looking at is cross-cultural adaptation. Researchers have been interested in cross-cultural adaptation since the early 1900s (Kim, 2000). According to Savicki (2010), a person has successfully adapted when ".....he or she knows how to behave according to the norms of the foreign culture in which they are living" (p. 205). As cited in Savicki (2010), Ward also says that "...sociocultural adaptation is based on learning the skills and knowledge necessary to reduce the difficulties with the being from a different culture" (p. 205). Besides that, acculturative stress, sociocultural stressors, drivers to sociocultural adaptation, and the variability of adaptation are some of the things that affect the adaptation process (Savicki, 2010). To understand intercultural adjustment, Matsumoto, Hirayama, and LeRoux (2005) use the main definition of adaptation, which is "(...) the process of changing one's behavior to fit in with a changed environment or circumstances, or as a response to social pressure" (pp. 383–384). Therefore, the idea of international adjustment refers to how people feel about adapting to new cultures and also about the idea of well-being (Matsumoto et al., 2005). This way of thinking about international adjustment is based on the idea that living in a new and different culture is hard. Intercultural contact and change can be stressful, so people need to know how to deal with them (Ward as quoted in Matsumoto et al., 2005). Therefore, Matsumoto et al. (2003) talk about a group of psychology skills that help people adapt to new cultural situations. These skills are controlling emotions, being open, being flexible, and thinking critically. To begin, emotion regulation is the most important skill because it helps people handle and control their responses in difficult and conflictual cross-cultural situations (Matsumoto et al., 2003). Acculturative stress is the confusion that comes with moving between cultures (Sandhu & Asrabadi, quoted in Yakunina et al., 2013). It is caused by a number of practical, cultural, and social issues (Yakunina et al., 2013). As students get used to their new societies, they may have to deal with experiences that are both confusing and exciting, as well as situations that help or hinder their adaptation (Savicki, 2010). Savicki also says that everything a person goes through has culture stressors like beliefs, social norms, and language problems. There are also factors that may make it easier to adapt to a new society on a sociocultural level. For example, having friends from different backgrounds or having traveled before may benefit this process (Bennett as cited in Savicki, 2010). According to Savicki, the ways that people change are not the same for everyone. In this way, the different ways that people adapt are based on their own experiences and tactics (2010).

In general, cross-cultural adaptation, which some people may call acculturation, is a broad term for how a person can react to a new cultural setting, running from fully adopting to completely rejecting the new social norms (Lian & Tsang, 2010). Cross-cultural adaptation usually refers to a wide range of possible responses that people can have to a new cultural setting, from accepting social norms wholeheartedly to refusing to do so (Lian & Tsang, 2010; Sullivan, 2008; Sullivan & Kashubeck-West, 2015). However, Ward et al. (2001) did an interesting study on how international students adjust and found that cross-cultural adaptation is the best way to improve psychological and sociocultural well-being and student happiness with study abroad. So, acculturation is when your values, beliefs, and behaviors change because you spend a lot of time with someone from a different society (Lee, 2008). Berry and Sam (1997) say that

acculturation has two parts: internal adaptation and sociocultural adaptation. In the same way, this study is mostly about how foreign students at a Malaysian college or university adjust to their new surroundings. Spencer-Oatey and Xiong (2006) say that sociocultural adaptation can be chosen by a social suitability or cultural learning plan. So, behavioral skills are used to describe sociocultural adaptation as the ability to fit in with the host culture or form a good relationship with people from that culture (Ward & Kennedy, 1999; Ward & Rana-Deuba, 1999). The factors connected to it determine how people learn about and become socially adept in the host society. Some examples are language skills, ways of integrating into a new culture, time spent living in a host culture, and how well you handle school or work-related issues (Ward & Kennedy, 1999; Ward & Rana-Deuba, 1999). Also, students may have physical and mental problems when they deal with others if they don't know how to adapt to different cultures (Shupe, 2007). Yusoff (2011a) cites Chirkov et al. (2008), who found that motivation to study abroad plays a big part in how quickly foreign students in Canada adapt to their new surroundings. He also found that social support plays a part in this process. Several researchers have also identified some important factors that affect how well foreign students adapt to their new culture. Some of these factors are gender, length of time spent in host country, language skills, changes in the environment, academic and social adaptation, and so on (Alavi & Mansor, 2011; de Araujo, 2011; Hendrickson et al., 2011; Lee, 2004; Mohd, 2010; Pedersen, 2010; Rajab et al., 2013; Wilson, 2011). Seeing how these things affect the adaptation of refugee students would help with changing the social support programs in refugee schools across the world.

2.0. Research Methodology

2.1. Sampling Procedure and Sample Size

According to Creswell (2014), a sample is a subset of the target population that is utilized to produce the data needed for the study. For this study, census sampling was adopted. According to Scheaffer et al. (2011), a census survey is the method when the population is the same as the sample. It involves collecting data from every member of the population under study. A Census survey is justified in this study because it offers a comprehensive, accurate, and inclusive approach to understanding the factors influencing refugee students' access to secondary education. While it is more resource-intensive than a descriptive survey, the benefits of complete data and the potential for more effective policy and intervention development make it the preferred choice in this context. As a result, 180 teachers from nine (9) refugee secondary schools and all nine (9) principals took part in the survey, according to the census. Orodho (2012) asserts that a researcher can sample the complete population when the target population is small. Bailey (1978) asserts that research findings are given greater weight when the full community is studied. Similarly, Mugenda and Mugenda (1999) suggested that a researcher should take as big a sample as possible to reproduce the salient features of the target population to an acceptable level. Since they act as these children's second parents in addition to being their teachers, the teachers are regarded as important informants. Teachers are in a better position to respond because they work with refugee students for the majority of their time and have some professional knowledge of their precarious circumstances. Table 1 displays the respondents' distribution.

Table 1. Sample Size of the Study

Respondent Category	Target Population	Sample	Sample proportion	Sampling Technique
School Principals	09	09	100%	Census
Teachers	180	180	100%	Census
Total	189	189	100%	

Source: Turkana West Education Office (2024)

3.0. Data Presentation, Analysis and Discussion of Findings

3.1. Descriptive Statistics Results of Cultural Practices

The objective of the study was to determine the effect of cultural practices on refugee students' access to secondary education in the Kakuma camp and Kalobeyi integrated settlement. Culture and education are two inseparable parameters and they are interdependent. Any education pattern gets its guidance from cultural patterns in society. For instance, in a society with a spiritual pattern of culture, the education focus would be on the achievement of moral and eternal values of life. On the contrary, if the culture of the society is materialistic, then its education pattern

will be shaped for the attainment of materialistic values and comforts. This calls for the study of how cultural practices affect access to education

This objective was assessed by soliciting and analyzing views from teachers and principals on various themes, aspects, and indicators. As such, various statements from the respondents related to cultural practices on refugee students' access to secondary education in Kakuma camp and Kalobeyi integrated settlement were presented in tables, statements, and on a five-point Likert scale. Cultural practices in the following scale: Strongly Agree (1.0-1.44), Agree (1.5-2.44), Undecided (2.5-3.44), Disagree (3.5-4.44), and Strongly Disagree (4.5-5.0) and results displayed in Table 2.

Table 2. Cultural Practices on Refugee Students' Access to Secondary Education

Statement	SA	A	U	D	SD	Mean	Std.
Most of refugee students engage in early marriages which hampers access to education	38	68	8	24	3	2.191	0.892
	27.0%	48.2%	5.7%	17.0%	2.1%		
Most of refugee students suffer teenage pregnancies which affect access to education	37	56	12	34	2	2.348	0.865
	26.2%	39.7%	8.5%	24.1%	1.4%		
Forced marriage among the refugee students affect access to education	42	49	13	36	1	2.326	1.235
	29.8%	34.8%	9.2%	25.5%	0.7%		
FGM hampers girls access to education in the camps	38	59	14	19	11	1.667	0.887
	27.0%	41.8%	9.9%	13.5%	7.8%		

Table 2 shows that three-quarters of the respondents (75.2%) agreed (strongly agreed and agreed) that most refugee students engage in early marriages which hampers access to education in Kakuma camp and Kalobeyi integrated settlement, Kenya (mean = 2.191, std=0.892). In this case, 38 (27.0%) teachers strongly agreed and 68 (48.2 %) teachers agreed respectively. only 27 (19.1 %) teachers disagreed that most refugee students engage in early marriages which hampers access to education. The results indicate that many young girls are pushed into marriage in these camps. This implies that these students drop out or face a high risk of dropping out of school.

At the same time, more than half (65.9%) of the teachers also agreed that most of refugee students suffer from teenage pregnancies which affect access to education in Kakuma camp and Kalobeyi integrated settlement, Kenya (mean = 2.348, std=0.865). 37 (26.2 %) teachers strongly agreed and 56 (39.7 %) teachers agreed respectively while 36 (25.5%) teachers disagreed that most refugee students suffer from teenage pregnancies which affect access to education. this indicated that cases of small girls

getting pregnant are on the increase. Similarly, Principal 3 interviewed stated that;

“Teenage pregnancy is becoming more prevalent these days in the camp. Girls should be made aware of this issue. Parents should be made for their children and needs to look after them “.

The study further noted that 63.6 % of the teachers agreed that forced marriage among the refugee students affect access to education in Kakuma camp and Kalobeyi integrated settlement (mean = 2.326, std=1.235), 42 (29.8 %) teachers strongly agreed and 49 (34.8 %) teachers agreed respectively. However, 37 (26.2 %) teachers disagreed that forced marriage among the refugee students affect access to education. This finding confirms to the fact that early marriages is prevalent in these camps. This finding tallies with interviewed responses. In this regard, Principals 7 said;

“girls education in Kakuma, consistently face various barriers and adverse experiences therefore posing risks to girls education. gender based violence, early pregnancy forced and early marriages are some of the barriers that risk the future of

refugee girls in these camps. The situation worsened during the emergence of COVID 19 period”

More than 85 % the respondents agreed that FGM hampers girls access to education in the camps in Kakuma camp and Kalobeyei integrated settlement (Mean =1.667, std.=0.887). 38 (27.0 %) teachers strongly agreed while 59 (41.8 %) teachers agreed. This implies that FGM was still being practiced by some communities in the camp.

3.1.1. Spearman correlation of Cultural practices and refugee students’ access to secondary education

The above survey on cultural practices and refugee students’ access to secondary education in Kakuma camp and Kalobeyei integrated

settlement showed variations. Some variables were aligned while others were not. It was imperative to determine whether cultural practices had any effect on refugee students’ access to secondary education. To achieve this, spearman’s correlation analysis was used to find out if there existed a relationship. A correlation is a number between -1 and +1 that measures the degree of relationship between two variables. The correlation coefficient value (r) that ranges from 0.10 to 0.29 would be considered weak, from 0.30 to 0.49 would be considered medium, and from 0.50 to 1.0 would be considered strong. Therefore, a positive value for the correlation would imply a positive relationship and a negative value for the correlation would imply an inverse or negative association. The study findings are shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Spearman Correlation of cultural practices and refugee students’ access to secondary education						
Statement	Spearman Correlation	1	2	3	4	5
1. Refugee students’ access to secondary education.	Correlation Sig.	1				
2. Most of refugee students engage in early marriages which hampers access to education	Correlation Sig.	.623** .000	1			
3. Most of refugee students suffer teenage pregnancies which affect access to education	Correlation Sig.	.563** .032	.452** .036	1		
4. Forced marriage among the refugee students affect access to education	Correlation Sig.	.668** .000	.596** .005	.412** .041	1	
5. FGM hampers girls access to education in the camps	Correlation Sig.	.102 .365	-.241 .682	.237 .124	.277 .085	1

****.** Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

Source: Author 2024

Based on this correlation matrix in Table 3, there exists a correlation between cultural practices and refugee students’ access to secondary education in Kakuma camp and Kalobeyei. Three out of the four factors of the independent variable correlated with the dependent variable (refugee students’ access to secondary education in Kakuma camp and Kalobeyei). The correlation coefficients were between the values 0.563 to 0.668; therefore, refugee students’ access to secondary education was likely affected by cultural practices. Indeed, cultural practices correlated with refugee students’ access to secondary education. Only one factor did not correlate and was therefore not used for further data analysis.

The Spearman’s correlation index obtained on the first variable “Most of refugee students engage in early marriages which hampers access to education” is $r = 0.623$. Being a positive value with $p < 0.001$ which is less than $\alpha = 0.05$ it means that early marriage affected refugee students’ access to secondary education.

The second variable “Most of refugee students suffer teenage pregnancies which affect access to education” is moderately correlated with refugee students’ access to secondary education. (r

$= 0.563$, $p = 0.032$) at $\alpha = 0.05$). Indicating that teenage pregnancies would likely affect access to education.

The third variable “Forced marriage among the refugee students affect access to education” strongly correlated with refugee students’ access to secondary education (($r = 0.456$, $p = 0.043$) at $\alpha = 0.05$)) Indicating that Forced marriage among the refugee students likely affects access to education.

The fourth variable “FGM hampers girls' access to education in the camps” did not correlate with refugee students’ access to secondary education (($r = 0.102$, $p = 0.365$) at $\alpha = 0.05$)) Indicating that the statistical relationship between FGM and girls' access to education in the camps was not significant.

3.1.2. Testing of the null hypothesis, H_{01}

With reference to the foregoing results and the discussion in section 3.1.1 on the adoption of a non-parametric test, ordinal logistic regression analysis was used to establish the relationship between the dependent variable and the independent variables in this study. Ordinal logistic regression analysis utilizes Chi-square in the computation. The Likert scale data set for each variable that was in ordinal form was first transformed (computed) using the

summated mean. This resulted to a composite variable that was in interval (scale form). The Chi-square goodness of fit test was carried to check whether the model was fit against the fitted model where the significant value was expected to be less than 0.05 ($p \leq 0.05$), while the Pearson value in the goodness of fit was expected to be greater than 0.05 ($p > 0.05$). In assessing the magnitude of the effects specifically, the Nagelkerke value was used to show the proportion of the variance that was explained by the independent variable on the dependent variable in the regression model.

Wald test statistic was used to test the hypotheses at a significant level of 5%. In this study, a decision was made where, if the p-value was less than or equal to 0.05 ($p \leq 0.05$), the null

hypothesis H_{01} , was rejected, However, if the p-value was greater than 0.05 ($p \geq 0.05$), then, there was enough evidence to fail to reject the null hypothesis.

The first null hypothesis, H_{01} stated

H_{01} : *There are no statistically significant effects of cultural practices on refugee students' access to secondary education in Kakuma camp and Kalobeyi integrated settlement*

Analyzed information from respondents on the fitness of the model and goodness-of-fit is presented in Tables 4.

Table 4. Model fitting information for cultural practice on refugee students' access to secondary education

Model	-2 Log Likelihood	Chi-Square	df	Sig.	Pseudo R-Square (Nagelkerke)
Intercept Only	423.635				.519
Final	368.237	55.398	179	.000	

Link function: Logit

Results in Table 4. show $p = 0.000$ from the teachers, which is less than 0.05, hence, rejection of the underlying null hypothesis that there is no significant difference between the baseline model and the final model. The baseline model (Intercept only) is the model without any independent variables (predictors) while the final model is the one with all possible independent variables.

The results in Table 4 show that the model has statistically significant predictive capacity, which means that, the variable cultural practice statistically and significantly explain the variations in the refugee students' access to secondary education in Kakuma camp and Kalobeyi integrated settlement.

Table 4 further shows that the cultural practice predicts 51.9 % as regards the variations in the refugee students' access to secondary education in Kakuma camp and Kalobeyi integrated settlement, as indicated by the Nagelkerke R square values. However, the results are based on one independent variable; that is, the cultural practice; hence, the inclusion of other predictors in the model may result in a high Nagelkerke R square value.

Having obtained a valid goodness of fit information, the study further sought to establish goodness of fit with the fitted model. In ordinal logistic regression, the Pearson Chi-square goodness-of-fit test is used to determine whether a model exhibit good fit of the data, that is, it tests whether the observed data is having goodness

of fit with the fitted model. The decision rule is to reject the underlying null hypothesis if p value is less than 0.05. The null hypothesis state that the observed data is having goodness of fit with the fitted model. Table 5 shows the result on goodness-of-fit based on responses from teachers.

Table 5. Goodness-of-Fit for cultural practice on refugee students' access to secondary education

	Chi-Square	Df	Sig.
Pearson	359.365	364	1.000
Deviance	163.251	364	1.000

Link function: Logit.

The results in Table 5 show χ^2 (df 364) = 359.365; $p = 1.000$. In this case, therefore, we fail to reject the null hypothesis, H_{01} , that, the observed data for teachers is having goodness of fit with the fitted model. This means that the model fits the data very well.

This further implies that the data from teachers on cultural practice is fit for predicting refugee students' access to secondary education. The estimates are critical in showing how this independent variable is influencing the dependent variable. The parameter estimates results are shown in Table 6.

Table 6. Cultural practice parameter estimates refugee students' access to secondary education

	Estimate	Std. Error	Wald	df	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
						Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Location X1	.356	.025	3.562	1	.000	1.265	3.256

Link function: Logit.

From Table 6 it can be observed that a marginal increase in cultural practice positively increases the logit of refugee students' access to secondary education. This indicates that as the scores of the independent variable increase, there is an increased probability of falling at a higher level on the dependent variable while holding all other factors constant. The result in Table 6 shows that cultural practice is a statistically significant predictor of refugee students' access to secondary education, where, for every one-unit increase in the cultural practice, there is a predicted statistically significant increase of 0.356 ($p = .000$) in the log odds likelihood (logit) of falling at a higher level on the refugee students' access to secondary education.

Since the p-value in Table 6 was less than the alpha level ($p < 0.05$), the first null hypothesis, H_{O1} of this study, which stated that "there are no statistically significant effects of cultural practices on refugee students' access to secondary education in Kakuma camp and Kalobeyei integrated settlement" was rejected. Implying that cultural practices had a statistically significant effect on refugee students' access to secondary education in Kakuma camp and Kalobeyei integrated settlement. Cultural practices on their own as an independent variable account for 51.9 % of variation in refugee students' access to secondary education in Kakuma camp and Kalobeyei integrated settlement (ref. Table 4).

Like Anderson (2020) said, Table 6's results show that cultural factors affect student refugees' school participation. In a similar regard, GulRaihan, et al., (2018) revealed that sociocultural adaptation is an important feature of foreign students' lives in a new environment where, cross-cultural communication plays a vital role to ensure the sociocultural adaptation of the students.

4.0. Conclusion

The study therefore concludes that the cultural practices have statistically significant effects on refugee students' access to secondary education in a host country, specifically Kakuma camp and Kalobeyei integrated settlement.

5.0. Recommendations

In view of the study findings and the conclusions arrived at, the study recommends that teachers and school administrators should be trained in cultural sensitivity to better understand and address the diverse backgrounds of refugee students. In addition, teachers should strive to create an inclusive classroom environment that respects and values the identities of all students.

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