

LIFTING THE VEIL OF SILENCE: EXPLORING ACADEMIC EXPERIENCES OF MALE REFUGEE LEARNERS AT A HIGH SCHOOL IN JOHANNESBURG, SOUTH AFRICA

Mziwandile Sobantu, Ajwang' Warri

INTRODUCTION

Children who flee home face numerous challenges to their development and survival. A recent report by the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) (2012) stated that 46% of refugees are children under the age of 18. Political instability (Ong'ayo, 2008), climatic changes (Afifi, Govil, Sakdapolrak & Warner, 2012), ethnic cleansing and civil wars (De Jong, 2002), post-election violence (Adeagbo & Iyi, 2011), and socio-economic challenges (Adepoju, 2002) in Africa have forced many of these young people to leave their communities and countries to search for a better life, safety and security in other countries. It is apparent that being resettled as a refugee in another country does not in itself ensure stability or achievement of a sense of belonging, or that those psycho-emotional wounds will automatically disappear (Gomez & Christensen, 2011; Kimi & Mwaruvie, 2012). Certainly, special protection ought to be accorded to refugee children, because their growth and development have been hampered. Traumatic ordeals leave them vulnerable and they have to face additional challenges not experienced by other children in their age group.

Evidence from various studies indicates that there are large numbers of children who are crossing into South Africa (Chivagure, 2011; Palmary, 2009). Yet this population of children crossing the border into South Africa seems largely absent from mainstream debates on child protection, gender and migration studies. Thus this article discusses academic-related experiences of male refugee learners at a school in Johannesburg. Understanding refugee children's experiences is premised on understanding their context. Therefore, firstly, the background of refugee children in South Africa is briefly outlined, followed by a discussion on education as a right that refugee children can access in South Africa. Next, an anti-oppressive theoretical framework is used to understand the refugee children's rights regarding access to education in South Africa. The outline of the research methodology is followed by the presentation and discussion of the research findings. Finally, conclusions are drawn on how social workers can intervene in the lives of resettled refugee children within school settings by supporting positive outcomes and responding appropriately to the negative consequences.

REFUGEE CHILDREN IN SOUTH AFRICA

South Africa has been an attractive destination for refugees and job seekers because of the favourable conditions created by a new era of democracy since 1994, as well as its political and economic stability (Hadland, 2008). Although there is a big discrepancy in the estimates of adults and children seeking asylum in South Africa, the UNHCR (2011) reported that South Africa received more than 207,000 individual asylum applications in 2008 and a further 222,300 applications in 2009. A recent report by UNHCR (cited in Laughland & Evershed, 2013) indicates that South Africa had the highest number of

asylum seekers at 230,442, which accounts for 24.6% of the total number of people seeking asylum worldwide. This could be higher, as it is reported that South Africa is Africa's largest recipient of new individual asylum applications. With reference to children, 21,300 unaccompanied minors and separated children lodged new individual asylum applications in 72 countries in 2012. A large number of asylum seekers in South Africa are from the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), although there are significant groups from Somalia, Nigeria, Pakistan and Zimbabwe.

Research by Moser and Clarke (2001) and Sideris (2003) shows how crime, war, violence and refugees are gendered. According to the Livesey (2006) and Lawyers for Human Rights (LHR) (2007), a majority (70.6%) of refugees in South Africa are male. We live in societies which consider violence against women as normative, yet refugee-related violence has a negative impact on men and women, boys and girls. The politics of victimisation speaks to the sexualised refugee abuse and violence which depicts women as victims and men as perpetrators. Highly publicised atrocities committed on refugee girls and women during pre-migration, migration and resettlement have been highlighted to the exclusion of men's experiences (Abdi, 2006). This article acknowledges that refugee boys also suffer from psychosocial challenges and it calls for a shift in reaching out to them within social work interventions.

Sub-Saharan studies on children on the move report that children migrate because they are seeking better educational opportunities; they are escaping violence and abuse; migration is viewed as a transition to adulthood; parental death; fleeing conflict in their countries; and as a way avoiding rising poverty levels (Clarcherty, 2003; Clarcherty, the Suitcase Storytellers & Welvering, 2006; Palmary, 2009; Save the Children, 2008). The various stages of migration can have a detrimental impact on the development and survival of child migrants. Nevertheless, when this movement from their countries of origin into South Africa occurs in safe conditions, it can have positive influences on the lives of these children.

SOUTH AFRICAN LEGISLATION AND POLICY ON REFUGEES

South Africa is a signatory to the key international and regional frameworks which set out to protect the rights of refugee children. These include the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) (1989) and the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACRWC) (1990). These frameworks clearly outline that member states must observe the principle of the best interest of the child, and ensure that children are given care and assistance, understanding and support, and maximum protection to ensure their psycho-emotional, socio-cultural and physical development.

Refugee children in South Africa are protected by the Constitution (Act No. 108 of 1996), the Children's Act (No. 35 of 2005), the Refugees Act (No. 130 of 1998) and the Immigration Act (No. 13 of 2002). The South African Constitution sec. 9(3) clearly states that refugees should not be discriminated against. In addition, the Children's Act prescribes and endorses the best interest of the child as being paramount, whereas the Refugee Act mandates social workers to assist refugee children to apply for refugee status in the country as part of statutory intervention. Despite having a regime of legal

instruments and a framework dedicated to protecting the rights of refugees in South Africa, refugee children continue to be vulnerable, discriminated against and marginalised (Chivagure, 2011; Van Baalen, 2012).

In European countries refugee protection, resettlement and integration have been likened to a lottery because of the differences and the lack of uniformity that prevail in the different countries at various points of the asylum application (European Council on Refugees and Exiles (ECRE), 2013). The refugees who arrive in South Africa are not accommodated in designated camps as happens in most African countries such as Zambia, Namibia, Tanzania and Kenya. The South Africa Refugee Act allows refugees, including children, to resettle nationwide, with attempts to accommodate them in already existing institutional frameworks. The rights-based approach was adopted to promote local integration through free movement countrywide and access to public services; but this has not been realized in practice as a result of the improper execution of legislation and policies (Buckland, 2011; Stone & Winterstein, 2003; Van Baalen, 2012).

THE IMPACT OF MIGRATION ON ACADEMIC ADJUSTMENT

The problems endured by refugee children are enormous, ranging from hardships borne when seeking refuge and later in the bitter experiences encountered while trying to forge a new life in their countries of refuge (Fangen, 2006). According to Semple, Smyth, Burns, Darjee and McIntosh (2007), sudden and forced uprooting from one's comforts at home and the inability to settle legally and safely and adjust to life in a new environment can cause psychological disturbances later. Being an unaccompanied refugee minor produces stressors which the child needs to cope with. An example would include having to "alter existing world views in order to make sense out of their new realities" (Boothby, 1998:255). Other refugee stressors linked to mental health issues include guilt, withdrawal, anxiety, anger and aggression, depression, grief, fear, paranoia and suspicion, despair, hopelessness, somatisation, substance abuse and hostility (Clacherty *et al.*, 2006; Semple *et al.*, 2007). In addition to psychological disorders, other levels of functioning affected may relate to education, family, adjustment, acculturation and assimilation. Several studies have reported that education has a positive role in the physical, intellectual and social protection for refugee children (Stone & Winterstein, 2003, Landsberg, Kruger & Nel, 2005; Watters, 2008; Winterstein & Stone, 2006). The value and role of education for refugee children is discussed in this article within the context of psychosocial challenges and growth.

THE ROLE OF EDUCATION IN REFUGEE CHILDREN'S RESETTLEMENT

The school environment generally provides an opportunity for acculturation; it is an institution of social reproduction, homogeneity, socialisation and maintenance of social order (Watters, 2008). Education for refugee children "promotes self-reliance and social and economic development by building human capital ... it provides hope, stability and a better future" (Meda, Sookrajh & Maharaj, 2012:157). The school can protect the children from abuse and exploitation as well as from high probabilities of engaging in criminal activities and substance abuse, especially for boys (Landsberg *et al.*, 2005). The

normalising routines provided for in school settings can assist refugee children in their healing processes. The triadic relationship involving the parents/guardians, schools and refugee children, as suggested by Watters (2008), could be a further protective measure as this network of mutuality enhances the child's wellbeing and school performance.

Teachers can play a pivotal role in the integration of refugee children. Watters (2008) refers to teachers as custodians of good practice within the education system and they act as a link with the other stakeholders in the triadic relationship. Teachers' multiple roles can create inclusive and progressive learning environments for refugee learners (Landsberg *et al.*, 2005). Since children spend more time at school, teachers can provide quality education and act as human rights champions in communities when they assist refugee children by attending to their physical, cognitive and psychological needs. Teachers, as the heart of academic success, can develop both direct and indirect systems of assistance within the school environment such as in the classrooms, playground, auditorium and dining hall as settings where psycho-social healing, re-socialiation and hope can be instilled. Academic-related activities which are taught through music, play, story-telling and drama can help reduce refugee children's stress levels, as well as promote integration and cognitive development.

However, teachers working with refugee children face challenges related to interacting with children at their language level, curriculum design and tuning in to the culture and psycho-social needs of the learners (Landsberg *et al.*, 2005; Pausigere, 2010; Windle & Miller, 2012). Research by Joyce, Earnest, de Mori and Silvagni (2010) report that school-related challenges and language acquisition can predict poor adaptation during refugee children's resettlement. A study in Australia by Earnest, Joyce, de Mori and Silvagni (2010) indicates that academic institutions are not providing enough orientation and support to students from refugee backgrounds. Additional challenges that have been identified in the literature include some teachers who advance xenophobic attitudes, as well as discrimination against and prejudiced treatment of refugee children in school settings (Karanja, 2010).

THE CHALLENGES OF ACCESSING EDUCATION RIGHTS IN SOUTH AFRICA

According to UNHCR (2010), education is a right for every child. Although Sec. 5 of the South African Schools Act (No. 84 of 1996) stipulates that refugee children have a right to access education, they continue to face education-related challenges in South Africa. Refugee children in South Africa experience barriers when enrolling in schools as well as in supporting their education after enrolment (Meda *et al.*, 2012). There are difficulties with their admission, because they do not have the required legal documents such as birth certificates, immunisation cards and a transfer of reports/cards from previous schools. Numerous refugee children do not possess these documents because of the circumstances which lead to them leaving their homes, with documents being confiscated by immigration offices or police, or getting lost during the trip, or becoming illegible because of traveling conditions (Landau, 2006). Although the policy allows for provisional registration while the documents are being sourced, this is not usually the

case on the ground, resulting in more than 24% of refugee children not being in school (LHR, 2007; Stone & Winterstein, 2003). This subsequently perpetuates the cycle of deprivation in refugee children, since the right to education is “closely linked to the realization of all other human rights and that it is the vehicle by which economically and socially marginalized people can lift themselves out of poverty” (Bizimana, 2007:1). The challenges related to lack of resources may compromise the role of education in facilitating social capital and psycho-social healing for refugee children.

The effects of the xenophobic violence that broke out in 2008 and previous xenophobic incidents have continued to be felt to date. The outbreak of violence has created obstacles for refugee children accessing academic facilities as parents were scared of sending their children back to township schools and the refugee children were regularly subjected to xenophobic statements from teachers and fellow students or en route to school (Buckland, 2011; Livesey, 2006; Palmary, 2002). Although the government shows a lack of political will to create inclusive non-discriminatory environments, some local communities, organisations and schools are taking initiatives and championing the rights of refugee children towards the realisation of refugee children’s inclusion (Dominelli, 2002; Hadland, 2008; Save the Children, 2008).

ANTI-OPPRESSIVE PRACTICE WITH REFUGEE CHILDREN

Anti-oppressive practice, according to Dominelli (as cited in Dominelli, 2012:331), is:

“...a form of social work practice which addresses social divisions and structural inequalities in the work that is done with people whether they be users (‘clients’) or workers, and which aims to provide more appropriate and sensitive services which respond to people’s needs regardless of their social status. Anti-oppressive practice embodies a person-centred philosophy, an egalitarian value system concerned with reducing the deleterious effects of structural inequalities upon people’s lives; a methodology focusing on both process and outcome; and a way of structuring relationships between individuals that aim to empower users by reducing the negative effects of hierarchy.”

Anti-oppressive practice requires social workers to think differently and creatively about the dialectic of power and oppression. According to Hines (2012:23), anti-oppressive practice looks at “personal, institutional, cultural and economic issues and considers how these influence individuals’ behaviours and their opportunities to grow to their full potential as persons living within these oppressive contexts.” The anti-oppressive framework is applied in this study to consider and understand the experiences of male refugee children in relation to social work interventions. Refugee children have become excluded and marginalised in South African social contexts (Meda *et al.*, 2012) and integrating child rights and trauma-focused practice in social work may assist in the redress (Nelson, Price & Zubrzycki, 2013). The way that academic and psychosocial experiences are constructed and managed appears to be interlinked with the values of equity, inclusion and social justice (Dalrymple, 2006; Dominelli, 2002).

Berger and Luckman (2002, as cited in Hines, 2012:23) state that “social construction is the view that the ways which we think and talk about phenomena in our world and our experience reflect the dominant ideas and values of our society and culture”. The French philosopher Foucault maintained that all differences are socially constructed. Therefore, from a social constructivist approach, the refugee child is not a mere recipient of the experiences, but (s)he is an active constructor of events and responses to these experiences. This observation seems to suggest that refugee children can also actively impose or ascribe meanings on or to experiences.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study on which this paper draws on explored the academic experiences of refugee children in South Africa. The aim was to research real-life problems by hearing participants’ stories, focusing on the meanings attached to being a refugee student and the role played by teachers in their current schooling lives (Czarniawska, 2004). The central focus was on understanding the refugee children’s subjective experiences as they navigate the South African education system and refining school social work practice based on those subjective accounts. A narrative approach is “based on the assumption that the life world of a person can best be understood from his/her own account and perspective” (Fouché & Schurink, 2011:313) and it was used to understand refugee children’s experiences. This approach enabled the researchers to place themselves at the interface between refugee children, their stories and school, and to place the children in psycho-emotional, socio-cultural and educational contexts (Alderson, 1995; Alderson, 2008).

The sample consisted of 10 male refugee children from the DRC and Zimbabwe between 14-18 years of age attending a high school in Johannesburg. Thus purposive sampling was used and the high school was identified, approached and invited to participate in the study because of its policy of academic inclusivity with regards to refugee children. Five teachers were also interviewed. Participation was voluntary and participants were allowed to withdraw from the study at any time with no repercussions and that their data would be destroyed. Assent was obtained from the children and informed consent was obtained from their guardians in the alternative placement. The teachers also gave consent. Anonymity and confidentiality were ensured and any necessary debriefing sessions were made available. Ethics approval was obtained from the participating school as well as from the Gauteng Department of Education and the University of Witwatersrand Ethics Committee.

The aim to explore meanings ascribed by participants to educational experiences informed the choice of method and research instrument. The semi-structured interview schedule was created to ensure probing was done in a systematic and sensitive order (Greeff, 2011). The questions were designed to elicit reflections on educational experiences. The use of open questions enabled a degree of freedom and flexibility of interpretation by the participants. Probing and following up of questions was slightly different from one interview to another, although the same issues were covered. In-depth interviews lasting 45-60 minutes were used to encourage participants to reflect and tell

their stories. English was used during the interviews. The data-collection period lasted four weeks. The data were transcribed verbatim and were subsequently analysed using thematic analysis.

INTERGRATED DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The key themes arising from the refugee children's narratives were adapted to the anti-oppressive approach and they illustrated development as occurring through complex processes of interaction. The three key findings that will be discussed in this section are: academic resilience in refugee children, the critical role that the teachers in schools play in acculturation of refugee children, and the role of the social worker in refugee children's school adjustment. Pseudonyms and quotes from the interviews are used in outlining the key issues identified to ensure that the participants' voices and stories remain a central focus.

Academic resilience in refugee children

Resilience involves an individual's ability to endure and develop in spite of facing life's stressors (McAdam-Crisp, 2006). From this study it is evident that vulnerability does not preclude ability. The participants in the study were able to successfully adapt and adjust to their learning environment, despite the challenges experienced. The participants continued to progress positively, despite being stretched by numerous losses during migration and in subsequent resettlement in Johannesburg. The narratives shared mainly indicate language difficulties when they have to express themselves in English. The language-related challenges such as learning a second language, learning English in itself, and interacting with peers and teachers in English may have overwhelmed the participants and greatly undermined their development and academic coping ability, yet they were able to spring back (McAdam-Crisp, 2006; Warriá, 2008). Their resilience could have been sustained by a fragile structure and set of rules such as local language acquisition, their dedication, learning English and support from teachers at school.

"...they have difficulties when they first came and their participation was very low. I have always enjoyed working with the refugees because they are keen to learn the language and dedicated to their work...." (Mr Mabandla teacher)

"I had a lot of problems with English when I came to South Africa and here at the school. There are lots of things that took me time to understand ... I had to work hard to catch up after learning English." (Katutu, a refugee learner from Democratic Republic of Congo)

Although academic resilience depends on individual and group strengths, it is also highly influenced by supportive elements in the individual's wider community. Supports in the environment play a vital role and social workers, teachers and peers have been known to act as potential buffers for vulnerable refugee children in school settings (Windle & Miller, 2012). When social workers and teachers intervene effectively, they boost the refugee child's resilience and the child needs to feel secure, accepted and emotionally supported within the intervention process (Buckland, 2011).

The helping hand provided by teachers to refugees in school

Education continues to be one of the crucial avenues through which the refugee children are able to feel purposeful, develop aspirations for future, and have a sense of stability (Winterstein & Stone, 2006). However, it was quite evident how refugee learners are impacted on, and are constantly having to navigate and adapt within multiple social environments involving diverse multi-layered roles and responsibilities. In this research the school was identified as one of these social contexts where teachers may provide varying levels of care, support and/or protection in addition to their teaching roles. The teachers were able to assist in psycho-social healing processes and also give the much needed support.

“The teachers here know that we are not South Africans. They listen to us and we always go to them if we have some problems. I haven’t been to the principal’s office, but he should be approachable so that we can also talk to him whenever we need to.” (Tapuwa, refugee learner from Zimbabwe)

“I knew this was the right school for me with the way they helped me throughout. I wish I had started with this school because where I was previously, some teachers unfairly treated me and eventually dismissed me....” (Wa Mutumba, a refugee learner from DRC)

In addition, teaching and communicating with learners who had limited English language competency was a challenge to the teachers practising inclusive education, because they did not know the learners well enough. Therefore, although the guidance of learners into zones of proximal development and their inclusion were the perceived goals of the teachers interviewed, they reported that it was not easy because they somewhat felt detached from what was happening in the learners’ lives (Engelbrecht, Green & Naicker, 1999; Landsberg *et al.*, 2005; Pausigere, 2010).

“It is very difficult for the foreigners who have just come because they don’t know English ... they can’t mix well with others and they can’t understand in class because our curriculum is in English.” (Ms Sibanda, a teacher)

“I always make sure I treat them the same. I don’t classify.” (Ms Dube, a teacher)

Learners with language difficulties tend to become aggressive and are more likely to use short incorrect sentences and wrong words because of their limited vocabulary (Landsberg *et al.*, 2005; Pausigere, 2010). They tend to lack confidence and may develop lower self-esteem as they avoid discussions and/or further isolate themselves because they cannot contribute to discussions (Windle & Miller, 2012). Therefore teachers form an essential part of the school’s social system for refugee children when they continuously encourage them to participate in discussions, whilst dissuading other students from ridiculing them based on the pronunciation mistakes they make.

It is evident that the teachers interviewed for the study follow good practice standards, which assist refugee children to build trust, learn English and subsequently enhance their psycho-emotional healing (Watters, 2008). This was done by making all learners feel

welcomed and treating them fairly, avoiding discussions of sensitive issues, referring them to elementary school to learn basic language skills and, when conversing, speaking English slowly and using simple terms.

The role of the social worker in strengthening academic outcomes for refugee children

Adolescents who are refugees are particularly vulnerable and could be referred to as youths-at-risk because, apart from than experiencing displacement, trauma and adapting to new environments, they are also trying to navigate the conflictual teenage developmental period. Characteristics of this stage are the fundamental issues of sexuality, separation and identity (Cole & Cole, 2003). Refugee teenagers have to tackle these developmental issues, as relating to traumatic separation from countries of origin and experiences of loss, which subsequently may contribute to complex psychological, emotional, socio-cultural resettlement processes (Greyling, 2008; Holscher, Sathiparsad & Mujawamariya, 2012; Palmary, 2009; Twum-Danso, 2005; Warriia, 2008).

The kind of work a social worker engages with at a school setting with refugee children tends to vary and it might focus on the children's pre-migration, migration and resettlement challenges which may hinder their academic achievements, as illustrated below:

“Some male learners are very reserved ... sort of afraid to tell their problems and experiences ... they also tend to be emotional ... male refugee learners tend to personalise and bottle their problems.” (Mr Ndlovu, a teacher)

Social work is also deemed essential in providing psychosocial support to the refugee children as they cope with everyday challenges of growing up and navigating relationships, as shown in the extract below:

“...it was a beautiful soccer game, this boy from the opposite team just came and he tackled me very rough, I tripped and fell on my arm. I realized that it was the same boy I had quarrelled with before, he hated me.” (Milele, a refugee learner from Democratic Republic of Congo)

From the research findings, it seems like the support might also be necessary for teachers, because students tend to disclose confidential information and traumatic experiences to them first, thus there is potential for them to develop secondary traumatisation. The teachers who were interviewed shared that it was not easy to hear and come to terms with some of the personal traumatic stories shared by refugee students. The following comment emphasises this:

“...it's painful to listen to some of their experiences. Some would tell you how they witnessed their siblings or parents being beaten or murdered. Hearing how they struggled walking to South Africa is quite disturbing ... they talked about being raped, but I don't know how to talk to them about this. I'm not trained for that.” (Ms Dube, teacher)

Stress in refugee children in school settings as a result of lack of language proficiency, lack of social skills, having to navigate personal and cultural losses can lead to poor adaptation and academic performance (Joyce *et al.*, 2010; Livesey, 2006). Findings from this study show how the struggle to preserve a sense of stability and to achieve protection and self-reliance through education places these young people potentially at risk of developing learning difficulties, behavioural problems and psychological distress, if psychosocial support is lacking in school environments.

Refugees are characteristically seen as victims, with common discourses focusing on adversity and their misery; which presents a distorted picture. Though refugee children go through these hardships, it ought to be acknowledged that they are resilient and have mustered enormous strength to survive, thrive and prosper. Furthermore, teachers tend to be that important link with social workers in initiating school wellness and life-skills programmes as well as referral of cases.

CONCLUSION

The refugee children's experiences were found to have current attached meanings which had a profound mediating impact on past adversities experienced. Social workers in school environments ought to be attuned to those aspects to which refugee learners give meaning as well as to their definition of realities and experiences. School-based therapeutic interventions should focus on refugees' subjective experience of monumental losses, integration challenges and cultural vulnerabilities, and how these could potentially lead to growth.

The findings from the study show that schools play a vital role in the acculturation of refugee children, in addition to it being a resilience-boosting factor. Learning English was found to be crucial in the refugee children's integration and achievement of learning goals. Despite the fact that refugee children are entitled to the same education rights as South African children, the inadequacy of local learning institutions rejecting refugee children on the basis of language difficulties, subject and curriculum content was highlighted in this study. Without a doubt, there is need to incorporate holistic, rights-based interventions which acknowledge that power dynamics can influence both discrimination and oppression, on the one hand, and inclusive developmental learning environments, on the other. During joint interventions social workers and teachers should take into consideration the uniqueness of each child, irrespective of their refugee status, and be fully aware of, and recognise and respect, the differences but build on their similarities. The educational curriculum for refugee children should be highly participative to build positive personality traits and widen their social support systems to reduce the stresses they may have experienced. Thus, an effective supportive learning environment is fundamental for the integration of refugee children.

Refugee children continue to show strength and resilience in their ability to adapt and cope within unfamiliar educational environments in South Africa. It is recommended that schools in Gauteng make social work services available, similar to the system being adopted and implemented in Western Cape schools. This article supports the anti-oppressive stance that growth, development and learning cannot take place in isolation

but only within recreated supporting networks championing equality, protection and rights for all.

REFERENCES

- ABDI, A.M. 2006. Refugees, gender-based violence and resistance: A case study of Somali refugee women in Kenya. **In: TASTSOGLU, E. & DOBROWOLSKY, A. (eds) Women, migration and citizenship: Making local, national and transnational connections (Gender in a global/ local world).** Hampshire: Ashgate Publishers.
- ADEAGBO, O.A. & IYI, J. 2011. Post-election crisis in Kenya and IDPs: a critical appraisal. **Journal of Politics & Law**, 4(2):174-179.
- ADEPOJU, A. 2002. **Issues and recent trends in international migration in sub-Saharan Africa.** DOI: 10.1111/1468-2451.00267.
- AFIFI, T., GOVIL, R., SAKDAPOLRAK, P. & WARNER, K. 2012. **Climate change, vulnerability and human mobility: perspectives of refugees from the east and horn of Africa.** UN University Institute for Environmental and Human Security (UNU-EHS). Report No. 1. [Online] Available: www.whs.unu.edu/file/get/9951.pdf. [Accessed: 20/06/2013].
- ALDERSON, P. 1995. **Listening to children: children, ethics and social research.** Barking: Barnardo's.
- ALDERSON, P. 2008. Children as researchers: participation rights and research methods. **In: CHRISTENSEN, P. & JAMES, A. (eds) Research with Children: perspectives and practices (2nd ed).** New York: Routledge.
- BIZIMANA, S. 2007. **A critical analysis of the right to education for refugee children in great lakes region: a case study of Burundi.** Pretoria: University of Pretoria. (MA Thesis)
- BOOTHBY, N. 1998. Trauma and violence among refugee children. **In: MARSELLA, J.A., BORNEMAN, T., EKBALD, S. & ORLEY, J. (eds) Amidst peril and pain: the mental health and well-being of the world's refugees.** Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.
- BUCKLAND, S. 2011. From policy to practice: The challenges to educational access for non-nationals in South Africa. **International Journal of Educational Development**, 31(4):367-373.
- CHIVAGURE, B. 2011. **Children crossing borders: an evaluation of state response to migrant unaccompanied minors at Musina, Beitbridge border post, South Africa.** Johannesburg: University of Johannesburg. (MA Thesis)
- CLACHERTY, G., THE SUITCASE STORYTELLERS & WELVERING, D. 2006. **The suitcase stories: refugee children reclaim their identities.** Cape Town: Double Storey Books.

- CLACHERTY, G. 2003. **“Poverty made this decision for me”**: children in Musina: their experiences and needs. Save The Children UK.
- COLE, M. & COLE, S. 2003. **The development of children** (4th ed). San Diego: Worth Publishers.
- CZARNIAWSKA, B. 2004. The uses of narrative in social research. **In**: HARDY, M. & BRYMAN, A. (eds) **Handbook of data analysis**. London: Sage Publications.
- DALRYMPLE, J. 2006. **Anti-oppressive practice**. London: Beverly Burke.
- DE JONG, J. 2002. **Trauma, war and violence: public mental health in socio-cultural contexts**. New York: Plenum Publishers.
- DOMINELLI, L. 2002. **Anti-Oppressive social work theory and practice**. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- DOMINELLI, L. 2012. Anti-oppressive practice. **In**: GRAY, M., MIDGLEY, J. & WEBB, S.A. (eds) **The SAGE handbook of social work**. London: Sage Publications.
- EARNEST, J., JOYCE, A., DE MORI, G. & SILVAGNI, G. 2010. Are universities responding to the needs of students from refugee backgrounds? **Australian Journal of Education**, 54(2):Article 3. [Online] Available: <http://research.acer.edu.au/aje/vol54/iss2/3>. [Accessed: 20/06/2013].
- ENGELBRECHT, P., GREEN, L. & NAICKER, S. 1999. **Inclusive education in action in South Africa**. Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers.
- EUROPEAN COUNCIL ON REFUGEES AND EXILES (ECRE). 2013. **Protection in Europe**. [Online] Available: www.ecre.org/topics/areas-of-work/protection-in-Europe.html. [Accessed: 20/06/2013].
- FANGEN, K. 2006. Humiliation experienced by Somali refugees in Norway. **Journal of Refugee Studies**, 19(1):67-93.
- FOUCHÉ, C.B. & SCHURINK, W. 2011. Qualitative research designs. **In**: DE VOS, A.S., STRYDOM, H., FOUCHÉ, C.B. & DELPORT, C.S.L. (eds) **Research at grassroot: for the social service professions** (4th ed). Cape Town: Van Schaik Publishers.
- GREEFF, M. 2011. Information collection: interviewing. **In**: DE VOS, A.S., STRYDOM, H., FOUCHÉ, C.B. & DELPORT, C.S.L. (eds) **Research at grassroots: for the social service professions** (4th ed). Cape Town: Van Schaik Publishers.
- GOMEZ, M.P. & CHRISTENSEN, A. 2011. **The impacts of refugees on neighbouring countries: a development challenge**. World Development Report.
- GREYLING, T. 2008. **Refugees and forced migrants in South Africa’s urban areas: definitions, rights, levels of well-being and policy**. University of Johannesburg.
- HADLAND, A. 2008. **Violence and xenophobia in South Africa: developing consensus, moving to action**. Human Science Research Council.

- HINES, J.M. 2012. Using an anti-oppressive framework in social work practice with lesbians. **Journal of Gay and Lesbian Social Services**, 24:23-39.
- HOLSCHER, D., SATHIPARSAD, R. & MUJAWAMARIYA, C. 2012. Interpreting refugee women's life stories: towards a human capabilities framework for social work with cross-border migrants. **Social Work Practitioner-Researcher Journal**, 22(2):48-65.
- JOYCE, A., EARNEST, J., DE MORI, G. & SILVAGNI, G. 2010. The experiences of students from refugee backgrounds at universities in Australia: Reflections on the social, emotional and practical challenges. **Journal of Refugee Studies**, 23(1):82-97.
- KARANJA, L. 2010. The educational pursuits and obstacles for urban refugee students in Kenya. **International Journal for Cross-Disciplinary Subjects in Education (IJCDSE)**, 1(3):147-155.
- KIMI, P. & MWARUVIE, J. 2012. The dilemma of hosting refugees: a focus on the insecurity in the north-eastern Kenya. **International Journal of Business and Social Science**, 3(8):161-171.
- LANDSBERG, E., KRUGER, D. & NEL, N. 2005. **Addressing barriers to learning: a South African perspective**. Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers.
- LANDAU, L.B. 2006. Protection and dignity in Johannesburg: shortcomings of South Africa's urban refugee policy. **Journal of Refugee Studies**, 19(3):308-327.
- LAUGHLAND, O. & EVERSLED, N. 2013. **World refugee increase is highest since 1998, UN report shows**. [Online] Available: www.guardian.co.uk/world/2013/jun/19/world-refugee-numbers-1998-unhcr. [Accessed: 20/06/2013].
- LAWYERS FOR HUMAN RIGHTS (LHR). 2007. **The documented experiences of refugees, deportees and asylum seekers in South Africa: a Zimbabwean case study**. Johannesburg, South Africa.
- LIVESEY, K.C. 2006. **A survey on the extent of xenophobia towards refugee children**. Pretoria: University of South Africa. (MA Thesis)
- McADAM-CRISP, J. 2006. Factors that enhance and limit resilience for children of war. **Childhood**, 13(4):459-477.
- MEDA, L., SOOKRAJH, R. & MAHARAJ, B. 2012. Refugee children in South Africa: access and challenges to achieving universal primary education. **Africa Education Review**, 9(1):152-168.
- MOSER, C.O.N. & CLARKE, F.C. 2001. Introduction. In: MOSER, C.O.N. & CLARKE, F.C. (eds) **Victims, perpetrators or actors? Gender, armed conflict and political violence**. New York: Palgrave.
- NELSON, D., PRICE, E. & ZUBRZYCKI, J. 2013. Integrating human rights and trauma framework in social work with people from refugee backgrounds. **Australian Social Work**. [Online] Available: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/0312407X.2013.777968>. [Accessed: 26/05/2013].

- ONG'AYO, A. 2008. **Political instability in Africa: where the problem lies and alternative perspectives**. The African Diaspora Policy Centre. [Online] Available: www.diaspora-centre.org/DOCS/Political_Instabil.pdf [Accessed: 26/05/2013].
- PALMARY, I. 2002. **Refugees, safety and xenophobia in South African cities: the role of local government**. Johannesburg: Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation.
- PALMARY, I. 2009. **For better implementation of migrant children's rights in South Africa**. UNICEF.
- PAUSIGERE, P. 2010. **Curriculum development in an urban refugee centre in South Africa**. Johannesburg: University of Witwatersrand. (M Thesis)
- REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA. The Children's Act 38 of 2005. **Government Gazette**. Pretoria: Government Printers.
- REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA. The Constitution Act 180 of 1996. **Government Gazette**. Pretoria: Government Printers.
- REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA. The Immigration Act 13 of 2002. **Government Gazette**. Pretoria: Government Printers.
- REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA. The Refugee Act 130 of 1998. **Government Gazette**. Pretoria: Government Printers.
- REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA. The Schools Act 84 of 1996. **Government Gazette**. Pretoria: Government Printers.
- SAVE THE CHILDREN. 2008. **Children on the move: Protecting unaccompanied migrant children in South Africa and the region**. Save the Children.
- SEMPLE, D., SMYTH, R., BURNS, J., DARJEE, R. & McINTOSH, A. 2007. **Oxford Handbook of Psychiatry**. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- SIDERIS, T. 2003. War, gender and culture: Mozambican women refugees. **Social Service & Medicine**, 56(4):713-724.
- STONE, L. & WINTERSTEIN, S. 2003. **A right or a privilege? Access to basic education for refugee and asylum-seeker children in South Africa**. Research Report. National Consortium for Refugee Affairs.
- TWUM-DANSO, A. 2005. The political child. In: McINTYRE, A. (ed). **Invisible stakeholders: children and war in Africa**. Pretoria: Institute for Security Studies.
- UNHCR. 2011. **2010 Global Trends Report**. UNHCR. [Online] Available: <http://www.unhcr.org>. [Accessed: 14/09/2012].
- UNHCR. 2012. **2012 Global Trends Report. Displacement: the new 21st century challenge**. UNHCR. [Online] Available: <http://www.unhcr.org/51bacb0f9.html> [Accessed: 20/06/2013].
- VAN BAALEN, C.H. 2012. **The rights of refugee children in South Africa**. Potchefstroom: North West University. (MA Thesis)

WARRIA, A.R. 2008. **“Pot of gold at the end of the rainbow”**: experiences of teenage refugee girls in Cape Town, South Africa. Cape Town: University of Cape Town. (MA Thesis)

WATTERS, C. 2008. **Refugee children: towards the next horizon**. UK: T & F Books.

WINDLE, J. & MILLER, J. 2012. Approaches to teaching low literacy refugee-background learners. **Australian Journal of Language & Literacy**, 35(3):317-333.

WINTERSTEIN, S. & STONE, L. 2006. Forced migration and education in Johannesburg. **In**: LANDAU, L. (ed). **Forced migrants in the new Johannesburg: towards a local government response**. Forced Migration Studies Programme. Johannesburg: University of Witwatersrand.

Mr Mziwandile Sobantu, 4th year student; Ms Ajwang' Warria, Department of Social Work, University of Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa.