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Policy Brief on Refugee Entrepreneurship and Skilling in Uganda

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May 2021

This Policy Brief is developed from the study on Refugee Entrepreneurship and Skilling for Self-Reliance (RESS-R). The brief focuses on the role of entrepreneurship in the economic integration of refugees. It discusses the nature of refugee entrepreneurship, the skill levels among refugees, entrepreneurial outcomes including mental health indicator, and the enabling personal factors. The brief discusses the policies that have supported refugee entrepreneurship in Uganda and makes further policy propositions for furthering refugee entrepreneurship development in the country. The study was supported by the Government of Uganda through the Makerere University Research and Innovation Fund (Mak-RIF).

Summary/ Key points

- The number of refugees in Uganda continues to grow, making the country the largest refugee hosting nation in Africa and fourth in the world. Given the already precarious unemployment situation and the relatively low levels of education of refugees arriving in Uganda, they have struggled in the labor market, hence difficulty in socio-economic integration. Evidence from around the world suggests that entrepreneurship could be an effective opportunity for economic integration and sustainable livelihoods.
- This study reveals that the levels of entrepreneurial intention and engagement are high. However, refugees face numerous challenges in the entrepreneurial process, most of which arise from their unique situation as refugees. Key barriers include acculturation dilemmas, limited access to capital and other vital resources, and poor psychological states chiefly due to the lived experiences of forced migration. Subsequently refugee owned businesses are small and mostly confined within the refugee settlements. A substantial number of refugees have lived in Uganda for long and some want to live in the country for the foreseeable future, calling for more sustainable and successful businesses or career support.
- The government and humanitarian aid actors have initiated support programmes in the form of entrepreneurship training, educational support, and startup capital. However, the amount of resources provided are small to allow for high impact innovations and startups with potential for growth. However, refugees arrive every other day, hence the need for continuous training.
- Our findings provide evidence that refugees evaluate their businesses as successful. This is an indication that even when the businesses are relatively small in size, they are able to fulfill the goals for which they are established; and that is chiefly subsistence purposes. However, the question is how to leverage the high intentions and entrepreneurial competence of refugees for high impact and high growth potential startups. Because of the goal of substance income for refugee families, refugee entrepreneurship in upcountry settlements is dominated by women. The challenge is how to motivate men to come to the fore of entrepreneurial activities.
- Entrepreneurship education generally has been found to be a key contributor to entrepreneurship intentions, entry, and success. Our findings indicated that entrepreneurial learning is an essential antecedent of entrepreneurial success among refugees. However, our findings suggest that education and training efforts should be expanded, first for continuous training of refugees even after they have established their businesses. And secondly to include a focus on soft skills and entrepreneurial mindset as these have strong effects on success.

Introduction

Uganda is one of the refugee hosting nations, ranking 4th in 2020¹ behind Turkey, Colombia, and Pakistan (UNHCR, 2021a). This situation is not new to Uganda. Emigration history indicates that Uganda has been a preferred destination for refugees since the 1940s (Mulumba, 2014). Since then, the number of refugees in Uganda has been gradually increasing. Currently, Uganda hosts over 1.48 million refugees and asylum seekers (UNHCR, 2021b) in about 11 locations

¹ UNHCR Refugee Data Finder - <https://www.unhcr.org/refugee-statistics/>

including Bidibidi, Adjumani, Kyangwali, Nakivale, Kyaka II, Rhino camp, Palorinya, Kampala, Imvepi, Kiryandongo, Rwamwanja, Palabek, Oruchinga, and Lobule². Whereas Uganda has in the past hosted refugees from different parts of the world including Europe (Mulumba, 2014), majority of the current refugee population come from neighboring countries including South Sudan, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Rwanda, and Somalia (UNHCR, 2021b; Hakiza, 2014) who flee from war, poverty, hunger, and other forms of misery. Uganda's attractiveness to refugees could be attributed to the country's policies and culture that is friendly to foreigners. The present influx of especially South Sudanese refugees into the country starting from 2013 has given rise to the complex challenge of how to integrate the increasing number of refugees and ignited debate on feasibility of refugee policy (Hovil, 2018). Despite the attractiveness of Uganda to refugees, they face a number of unique psychosocial challenges including crowding in settlements, trauma of forced migration, and acculturation among others.

Integration of refugees in the socio-economic setup of the host communities is a challenge for many countries (Lee et al., 2018; Nardon et al., 2017) given the current global refugee crisis. An earlier study indicated that foreigners constitute only about five (5) percent of workers in Uganda. This includes both refugees and other migrants (ILO, 2013). Yet refugees face a number of unique challenges that are not common to the host or other immigrant populations when it comes to obtaining employment. Critical barriers to their employment include bureaucracy in processing their refugee/ asylum status, language and culture, evaluating equivalence of educational attainment, and traumatic experiences (Nardon et al., 2017; Obschonka et al., 2018). Moreover, in less developed countries such as Uganda where high youth unemployment rate is a perennial challenge, refugees have to compete with the hosts for the few available job opening, hence limited chances of job search success (Lundborg & Skedinger, 2016). An additional challenge that has for a long time challenged meaningful employment of refugees in less developed countries is the lower educational attainment of refugees (Kabera, 1989) given that refugees are not admitted in a country for their professions or skill levels (Nardon, et al. 2017). When refugees succeed in obtaining employment, their performance may suffer given their unique underlying psychosocial challenges. Yet refugees arrive in a host country with a wide range of capital including cultural and skill diversity that can be harnessed for their participation in the economic processes of the host community.

Given these labor market dynamics that refugees face, refugee entrepreneurship seems to be the most feasible means for economic integration and participation. Indeed, before the COVID-19 pandemic, entrepreneurship was among the major approaches to foster economic integration of refugees in Uganda enabling them not only to participate in economic processes but also to enhance their livelihoods (Ahimbisibwe, 2019; Lavison & Halabisky, 2019). This is expressed in the policy guide on entrepreneurship for migrants and refugees (UNCTAD, 2018) suggesting that entrepreneurship could be a critical intervention for improving refugees' welfare and economic development. However, there should be concern for the nature and outcomes of refugee entrepreneurship in a developing country like Uganda. In addition, there have been calls for the inclusion of refugees in entrepreneurship education initiatives to improve their entrepreneurial ability, intention, and resilience of refugee entrepreneurial startups. Particularly,

² Uganda – Refugee Statistics April 2021 - <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/86495>

there is need to tailor entrepreneurship training for refugees to the local host context and needs of the refugee groups such as women, youths, rural versus urban; as well as development of curriculum that fosters the development of entrepreneurial mind-set among refugees (UNCTAD, 2018).

The Study

The study was conducted in response to the gaps identified in the Entrepreneurship policy guide for migrants and refugees, which highlights the need for entrepreneurship education to enable refugees to attain entrepreneurship skills (UNCTAD, 2018). The study focused identifying the entrepreneurship knowledge and skill gaps among refugees with the aim of translating these gaps into a specifically tailored entrepreneurship curricula for skilling refugees. The study emphasized a psychological focus in empowering refugees for entrepreneurial action given that psychological strengths and mindset tend to distinguish between successful and unsuccessful entrepreneurs (Baluku, 2017).

The main goal of the project was to promote entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial skills among refugees in Uganda for enhanced and sustainable livelihoods, self-reliance, economic participation, and psychological wellbeing. The specific objectives that guided the study include: assessing the entrepreneurial skills level among refugee groups; identifying the nature of entrepreneurship that refugees engage in; examining the psychological antecedents of entrepreneurial activity and outcomes; examining gender differences in entrepreneurial activity, skill levels; and outcomes. The study employed a mixed methods approach, specifically the explanatory sequential design to allow for cross-validation of the findings. A cross-sectional survey assessing the skill levels, entrepreneurial intention, and entrepreneurial outcomes and their psychological predictors was followed by in-depth interviews and focus group discussions to generate narratives that explain the most salient quantitative findings.

The study was conducted in three refugee settlement (Bidibidi, Kiryandongo, and Kampala) to represent the rural and urban refugees' contexts. Participants for the cross-sectional survey included 582 refugees (441 from South Sudan, 136 from Somalia, and 5 from other countries). Our sample included 182 refugees who are engaged in business (116 Females and 66 Males) and 400 refugees who are not engaged in business (142 Females and 258 Males). Regarding settlements, 327 participants were from Bidibidi, 139 were from Kampala metropolitan area, and 116 from Kiryandongo. The qualitative data involved four (4) focused group discussions and five (5) in-depth interviews. Overall, participants were relatively young ($M = 29.83$ years, $SD = 9.33$, Range = 17 - 76 years). Participants were refugees who have generally spent a long time in Uganda ($M = 4.64$, $SD = 4.16$, Range = Less 1 - 35 years). Moreover, about 15.3% reported intention to live in Uganda, hence not willing to return to their home countries. Extant literature shows that low educational attainment is a major constraint limiting economic integration of refugees given that it determines quality of employment (Bridekirk & Hynie, 2021; Codell et al., 2011). In our study, at least 16.8% reported that they have never been to school or stopped before completing primary or secondary school, 44.7% had only completed secondary school, only 5.7% had vocational certificates or diplomas, and only 3.6% had attended university.

Main Findings

The Skills Challenge

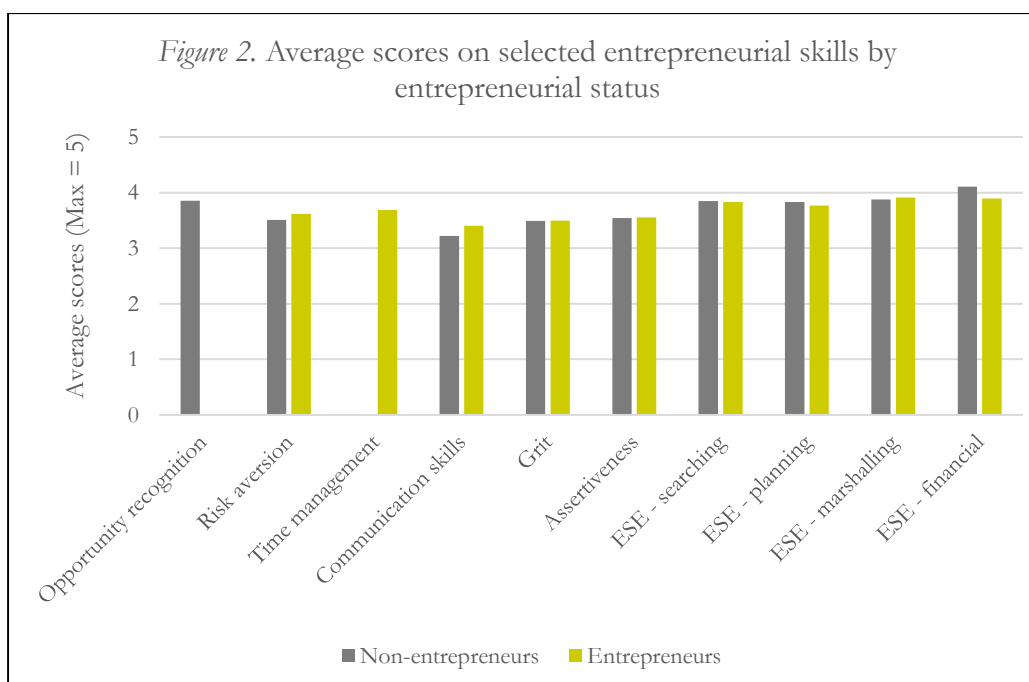
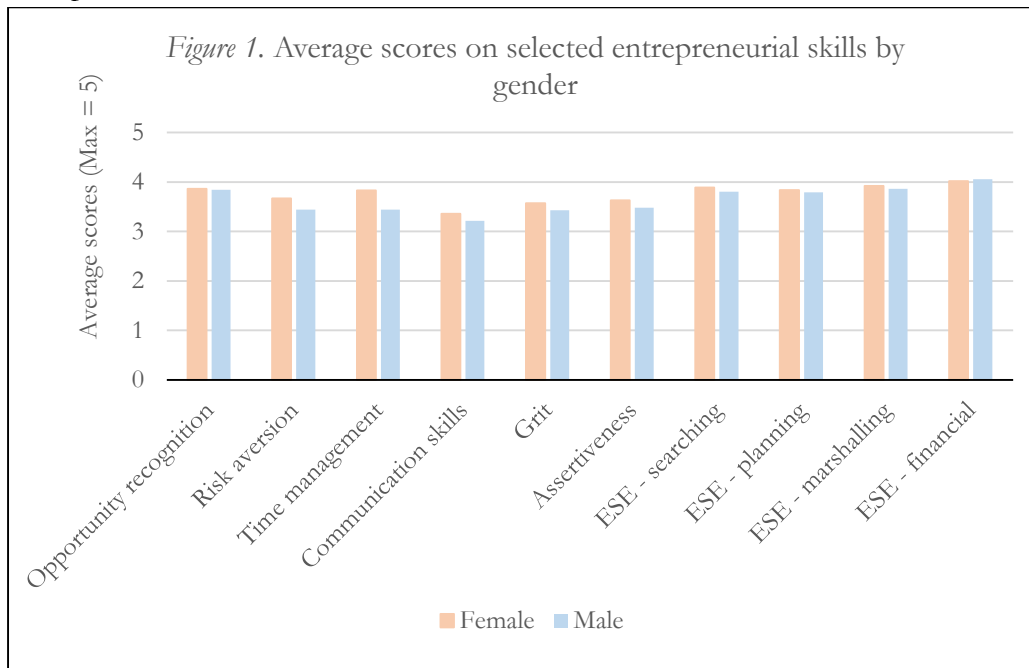
The knowledge and skills gap is one of the major challenges that refugee entrepreneurs generally face (Lavison & Halabisky, 2019), and therefore an important area where they need improvement. Many refugees have no prior entrepreneurship experience or training, yet these are critical for success among refugee entrepreneurs (Fong et al., 2007). We therefore assessed our sample on a wide range of entrepreneurially important skills. From an extensive literature review, we developed a list of entrepreneurial skills and grouped them into four skill-categorize using Phelan & Sharpley (2012) model as indicated in the Box 1.

Box 1: Entrepreneurial skills

<p><i>Technical skills</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Industry specific skills • Financial planning/ management • Legal skills • Analytical skills 	<p><i>Managerial skills</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning and organization skills • Visioning and strategizing • Goal setting • Leadership skills • Team work • Decision making • Resource mobilization • Networking
<p><i>Business skills</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marketing skills • Opportunity recognition • Opportunity development • Environmental scanning • Innovation • Problem analysis and solving • Accountability • Risk taking (assessing and accepting risks) • Guerrilla skills (e.g. intelligence, ambush, sabotage) 	<p><i>Personal/ soft skills</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time management • Communication skills • Negotiation skills • Self-awareness • Emotional maturity/ coping/ stress tolerance • Grit (perseverance combined with passion) • Integrity • Assertiveness

We investigated the level of some of these skills among refugee entrepreneurs and non-entrepreneurs; including opportunity recognition, risk aversion (reverse if risk tolerance), time management, communication skills, grit, and assertiveness. Skills including opportunity searching, resource mobilization, financial planning and management were assessed with the concept of entrepreneurial self-efficacy which measures entrepreneurial ability in relation to searching for opportunities, planning, marshalling resources, and implementation in relation to people and finances (Newman et al., 2019). As can be seen in Figure 1, the average scores on entrepreneurial skills was relatively high. However, there seems to be still room for improvement especially in relation to soft skills including communication skills, time management, grit and

assertiveness. Moreover, men scored relatively lower than women on these soft skills. The question therefore is how can refugee men be supported to improve their soft skills that are relevant for entrepreneurship. Similarly, and important to note, we found only few variations in scores on entrepreneurial skills between refugee entrepreneurs and non-entrepreneurs (See Figure 2). Remarkable differences were only observed in communication skills and financial planning and management skills. However, we did not compare the two samples in opportunity recognition and time management skills. The lack of differences in several entrepreneurial skills leads to a number of questions such as if the non-entrepreneurs have the same level of entrepreneurial competence as those already in business, why are they not engaged in entrepreneurial activities?



Entrepreneurial Intention

Given the high entrepreneurial competence among refugee communities in Uganda, it is interesting to understand whether those who are not yet engaged in entrepreneurial activities have the willingness to go into business. Entrepreneurial intention which is conceptualized as the conscious plan to engage entrepreneurial activity is a strong determinant of future entrepreneurial entry (Krueger, 2017). Entrepreneurial intentions is rooted in the theory of planned behavior - TPB (Ajzen, 1991), which emphasized that behavior is a perceived behavioral control (belief of easiness or difficulty in performing the target behavior), subjective norms (belief that significant other people will approve of the target behavior), at one's attitude towards the target behavior. Alongside this model, the emergence of entrepreneurial psychology as a field of study emphasizes a number of personal attributes that are useful to entrepreneurial intention and behavior including entrepreneurial alertness, entrepreneurial self-efficacy, entrepreneurial passion, and positive psychological resources (Baluku et al., 2018; Frese & Gielnik, 2014; Rauch et al., 2010; Rauch & Frese, 2007). Refugees feelings towards the environments in which they are hosted is also important to their behavior. We therefore further investigated the effects of refugees' perceptions of the host community.

Recently, researchers started focusing on the mechanisms for translating entrepreneurial intentions into entrepreneurial actions (e.g. Baluku et al., 2020; Neneh, 2019; van Gelderen et al., 2018). Towards this end, the concept implementation intention (Gollwitzer, 1993; Gollwitzer & Sheeran, 2006) is increasingly becoming popular in entrepreneurial intentions literature. We found that entrepreneurial intentions and corresponding implementation intentions were relatively high in the three refugee communities (See Figure 3). Similarly, the passion for going into entrepreneurial activities was high. An important observation is that women reported a stronger passion for entrepreneurship than their male counterparts. We found that TPB concepts (expect subjective norm) strongly predicted the entrepreneurial intentions of refugees. Since some refugees leave their close family and friends in the home country, the likelihood of them approving or disapproving engagement in entrepreneurship may therefore not apply. To some refugees, business a major way of obtaining household income, hence people may be willing to undertake some entrepreneurial activities with or without the approval of significant others. Concerning the readiness to implement entrepreneurial intentions, only perceived behavioral control seems important. Refugees intending to establish a business may ask themselves relating to the ability to maneuver the business environment in an unfamiliar host environment, the ability to harness the required resources for the target entrepreneurial activity, and the ability to compete favorably with the locals who are engaged in the same entrepreneurial activity. Our study also underscores the role of specific psychological attributes. However, not all psychological attributes that are essential for the development of entrepreneurial intention are important for implementation intentions. Only the belief in one's entrepreneurial abilities and attentiveness to entrepreneurial opportunities in one's environment seem to be strong predictors of implementation intention.

The follow-up interviews indicated that whereas the passion and intentions for entrepreneurship are high, majority of refugees are not able to start their own businesses due to lack of capital. Whereas there are support programmes by government and development partners, they tend to target only a few. It was observed that some people start their small businesses by selling part of

their monthly food rations. Surprisingly, the members of the host communities are among the customers. However, according to some refugees' narratives, this is necessary because they need to raise money for other basic necessities, such as medication, school fees, and clothing, that are hardly covered by the humanitarian assistance.

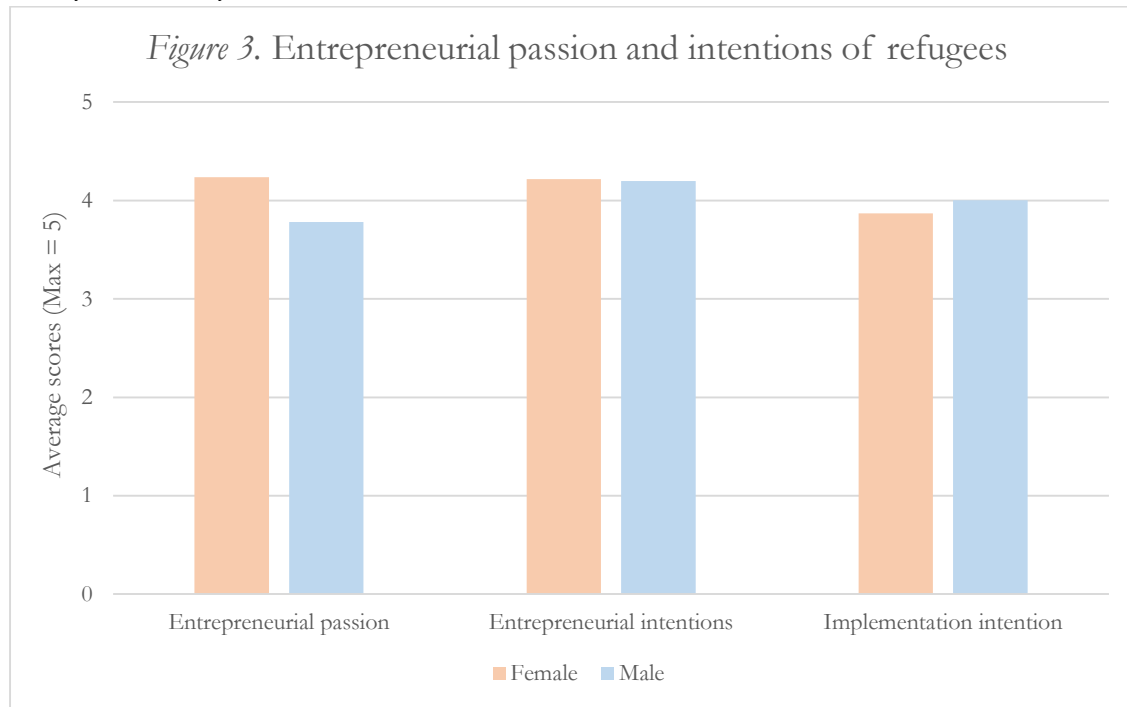


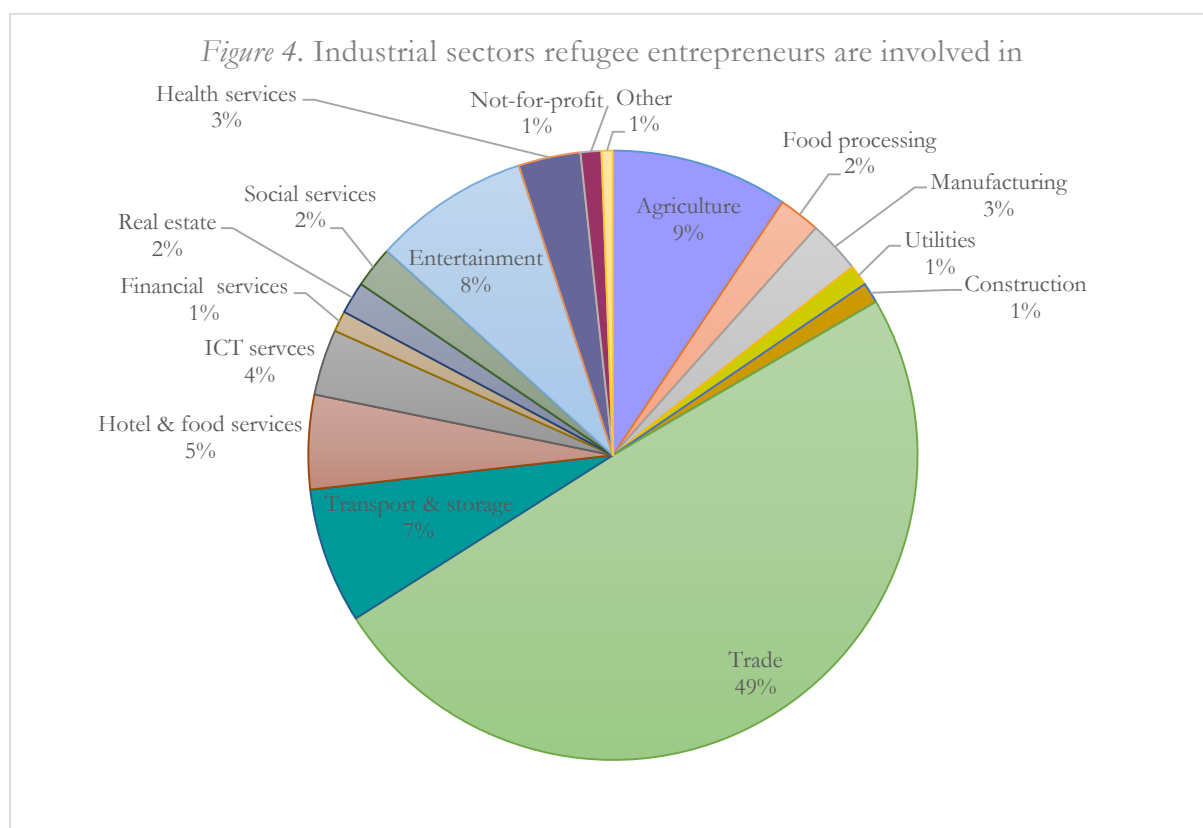
Table 1. Explaining the entrepreneurial and implementation intentions using the theory of planned behavior and psychological concepts

Antecedents	Entrepreneurial intention		Implementation intention	
	<i>Effect</i>	<i>Strength of effect</i>	<i>Effect</i>	<i>Strength of effect</i>
<i>Concepts in theory of planned behavior</i>				
Subjective norm	.033	Weak	.001	Weak
Attitudes	.299	Strong	.105	weak
Perceived behavioral control	.351	Strong	.439	Strong
<i>Other psychological concepts</i>				
Risk aversion	-.007	Weak	.018	weak
Entrepreneurial self-efficacy	.110	Strong	.261	Strong
Psychological capital (mental resources)	.405	Strong	.146	Weak
Personal initiative	.051	Weak	.044	Weak
Entrepreneurial alertness	.242	Strong	.580	Strong
Perception of the host community	.083	Strong	-.065	Weak

Nature of Businesses

Entrepreneurship is seen as an a feasible alternative for integrating refugees into the workforce of the host communities (Lavison & Halabisky, 2019). Therefore meaningful economic integration requires attention beyond simply support towards entry into entrepreneurship. The nature of businesses operated by refugees is equally important. We investigated the nature of refugee businesses by focusing on the industry sectors and income earned from the businesses.

As can be seen in Figure 4, nearly half of the participants (49%) were in trade, while nine percent were in agriculture, eight percent were in entertainment, recreation and personal services, seven percent were in transport and storage services; and five percent were in the sector of hotel/ accommodation and food services. In the follow-up interviews, participants indicated that refugees find it extremely difficult engaging businesses relating to cattle rearing and commercial farming due to lack of funds and access to sizeable land. They are also underrepresented in pharmacy/ health services, quarrying, and charcoal burning due to regulatory restrictions. Majority of those in trade tend to operate small market stalls and small shops within the refugee settlements. In terms of size, refugee businesses tend to be rather micro, given that the average monthly income is Uganda Shs. 411,755 and the average profit is Shs. 152,249. It should be noted however these average figures were derived from approximate figures reported by the participants. The challenges relating to self-reports cannot be ruled out. Whereas refugees tend to own micro businesses established mainly for the purpose of household income that supplements what is provided through humanitarian aid to refugee families, they dominate the entrepreneurial environment in terms of number of people participating in business activities. This is particularly in the rural settlements. Hence their participation in the economic activities in those places cannot be ignored.



Box 2: Income from entrepreneurial activities

Average monthly income = Shs 411,755
(Range = Shs 10,000 – Shs 7,000,000)

Average monthly profit = Shs 152,249
(Range = Shs 2,500 – Shs 2,000,000)

Entrepreneurial Success Levels Among Refugees

For refugee entrepreneurship to serve the purpose of effective integration into the socio-economic setup of the host communities and meaningful economic participation, then it has to be successful entrepreneurship. Refugee entrepreneurship has a lot to offer to the refugees in terms of their livelihoods, careers, and life after returning to their home countries. It is also essential for their continued stay in Uganda given that a significant number of refugees in our sample (15.3%) indicated that they wish to stay in Uganda for a very long time. Around the world, majority (15.7 million) of refugees are protracted situations (U.S. Department of State, 2019), hence their economic involvement has to be meaningful and sustainable. Whereas the income and profits point to some level of economic success, subjective success is equally important since it reflects the very reasons why people established their businesses (Baron et al., 2016; Dej & Gorgievski, 2012), hence more significant to the entrepreneurs (Staniewski & Awruk, 2019). We found that subjective success average scores were high. We did not find significant gender differences. However, there were substantial differences among the settlements, with participants from Kiryandongo settlements reporting higher levels of success than their counterparts in Kampala and Bidibidi. Geographical reasons could account for these differences. Kiryandongo settlement is along the highway and near several trading centers such as Bweyale, Kigumba, and Masindi. On the other hand, Bidibidi is located in a relatively rural and hard to reach area with limited economic activities. Refugees who reside in Kampala face even a bigger challenge. Given the expense of obtaining land and related resources, refugees find themselves limited only to a few entrepreneurial opportunities such as trade, food processing and food services (e.g. restaurants). Yet these very industry sectors have a high influx of local entrepreneurs, increasing the level of competition that they are confronted with. Among the personal success factors, soft skills and positive psychological attributes seem to be essential to successful refugee entrepreneurship. Surprisingly however, some important skills including risk aversion/ tolerance, time management, and grit were marginally associated with entrepreneurial success. This may be attributed to the nature of the businesses, since majority are very small and inform therefore not requiring the same skills as larger and formal businesses.

Figure 5. Entrepreneurial success scores by gender and settlement

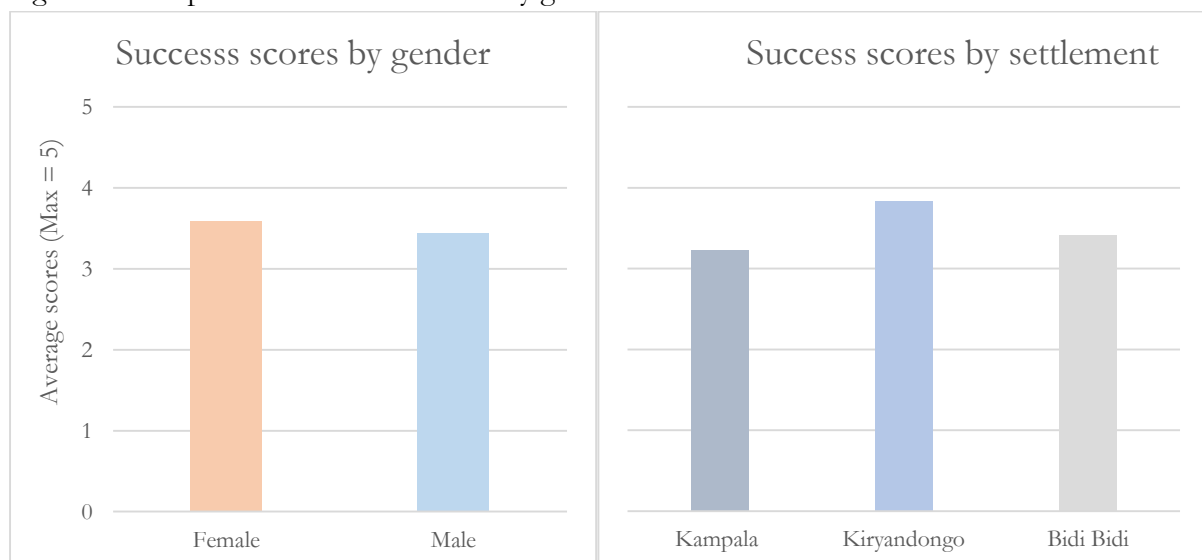


Table 2. Enabling Personal Factors for refugee entrepreneurial success

Entrepreneurial Skills			Other Psychological Antecedents		
<i>Skill</i>	<i>Effect</i>	<i>Strength of effects</i>	<i>Antecedent</i>	<i>Effect</i>	<i>Strength of effects</i>
Risk aversion	.044	Weak	Entrepreneurial passion	.12	Weak
Time management	-.045	Weak	Psychological capital (mental resources)	.55	Strong
Communication skills	.190	Strong	Personal initiative	.36	Strong
Assertiveness	.429	Strong	Entrepreneurial learning behavior	.32	Strong
Grit	.071	Weak	Entrepreneurial alertness	.19	Strong
Entrepreneurial self-efficacy - searching	-.016	Weak	Perception of the host community	.25	Strong
planning	.002	Weak			
marshalling	.149	Strong			
financial	.253	Strong			

Policy Recommendations

1. **Visibility of refugee entrepreneurship and its impact on the Ugandan economy.** In some communities, refugees are dominating the business platforms, hence are important contributors to the development and sustainability of economic activities in those places. It is therefore essential to make refugee entrepreneurship and its contributions known not only to the policy makers and implementers but also to the general public. This will increase the knowledge of the role of refugee entrepreneurship and increase acceptance and support for refugee entrepreneurs. Documenting their contributions and showcasing case stories of successful refugee entrepreneurs and how their enterprises have contributed to society can be useful. Government could also make priority of listing refugee entrepreneurs among eligible suppliers when procuring items for refugees. This will provide market, visibility, and stimulate further innovations among refugees.
2. **Widening the scope of opportunities and participation in different industry sectors.** Currently, for a number of reasons, participation of refugees in entrepreneurship is confined to a few industry sectors. Startup resources, support, and regulatory requirements are among the major barriers to entry into some sectors. Establishing support offices for refugee entrepreneurs in different districts that host refugees could be essential in this regard. Refugees have different forms of abilities and a variety of forms of capital. Confining their participation to small scale trade and subsistence agriculture as their main forms of entrepreneurial activities constrains maximization of refugee entrepreneurial potentials.
3. **Scaling of high potential refugee startups.** Whereas several refugees have been supported to start small businesses, there are those who are those operating businesses that have high growth and high impact potentials. Such refugee entrepreneurs should be supported to scale their business beyond the refugee settlements. This can be achieved through support in securing appropriate locations and premises, access to funding facilities/ institutions, access to appropriate markets, and promotion of the business/ products.
4. **The skills conundrum.** If refugee entrepreneurs and non-entrepreneurs are reporting a good level of entrepreneurial competence, then attention should focus not on improving the entrepreneurial skills of refugees but rather on leveraging their entrepreneurial competence

for increasing entrepreneurial activity among the refugee populations and fostering successful entrepreneurship. Skills improvement should focus on soft skills enhancement among refugee men.

5. ***The gender agenda.*** Our results reveal that entrepreneurial activities among refugee populations is dominated by women and young people are mainly engaged in small-scale trade. There should be mechanisms for motivating refugee men engage in entrepreneurial activities. Lack of opportunities in sectors they consider culturally appropriate for men and inadequate capital for relatively larger investments are some of the reasons for low engagement of refugee men in entrepreneurial activities. Therefore, widening the scope entrepreneurial opportunities and improved financing for noble entrepreneurial ideas among refugees can improve the participation of refugee men in business. Women are already setting the pace in refugee entrepreneurship. The challenge that policy can address is how this dominance and high entrepreneurial passion can be leveraged to support women to focus beyond just earning consumable income for the household. Interventions are needed to support refugee women entrepreneurs to move beyond business that is primarily for subsistence purposes. There is need to build a strong base of refugee women entrepreneurs who can serve as role models for development of micro, small, and medium businesses.
6. ***Refocusing entrepreneurship education.*** Core business skills such as financial planning, book keeping, and writing business plans are extremely important. However, business in collective cultural contexts is more interactional and requires skills such as resilience and persistence. Entrepreneurship education should therefore include a focus on soft skills and entrepreneurial mindset. Role models and mentors with refugee backgrounds or those that refugees can easily identify with can provide the motivation for entry and success. Our findings further indicate that how refugees feel about the host community is essential for entrepreneurial intentions, implementation, and success. This suggests that acculturation support is required.
7. ***Employment opportunities beyond self-employment.*** The current participation of refugees in entrepreneurial activities may suggest that self-employment is the most available employment opportunity. However, not everyone is attracted to or can be successful in entrepreneurship. Most of refugee entrepreneurship is actually crisis driven (entrepreneurs by necessity). Using the career development and personal agency lens, it is important to support refugees for different forms of employment. Given the challenge of low education levels and equivalence of academic qualifications, there should be educational mechanisms to support adult learning of refugees for salaried employment and integration in the main formal labor market. entrepreneurship education can also further focus on transferable skills to improve refugees' employability. It could also be important to establish education and employment bureau for refugees to support their educational goals and job search.

Conclusion

Refugees face unique challenges in their quest for participation in the economic platforms. However, entrepreneurship offers great hope for economic integration. In this direction, we observed that many refugees are engaged in entrepreneurial activities chiefly for the purpose of

earning income to improve their livelihoods beyond the food rations and other aid that they received from government and humanitarian agencies. As a consequence, and owing to several factors such as access to capital, refugees own small businesses that earn them on average small incomes. Since refugee entrepreneurship to a large extent has been relegated to serving subsistence purposes, it has been left mainly to women who are charged with the responsibility of caring for their families. Subjectively, entrepreneurial success was observed to be high; suggesting that refugee entrepreneurs are able to realize the small goals they set for their businesses. Refugees reported a good level of entrepreneurial competence that can be leveraged for engagement in businesses with high growth potential and for increasing the number of refugees engaged in entrepreneurial activities. The level of success is also partly explained by soft skills personal psychological attributes such as entrepreneurial self-efficacy, mental strength, personal initiative and learning behavior suggesting the need expand the focus of entrepreneurial training to include soft skills improvement and entrepreneurial mindset. Adoption of the policy recommendations can strengthen the potential of entrepreneurship as an effective mechanism for socio-economic integration of refugees in Uganda.

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