

**Kenyan National Teachers Teaching in Schools in a Long-term Refugee Camp:
Addressing Education Crisis in the Refugee Camp**

by

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the degree of Doctoral Philosophy

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Abstract

Access to schooling for children and youth in long-term refugee¹ is a right and necessity. Kenya is host to refugees living in Dadaab, one of world's largest long-term refugee camps. Although there are trained and untrained refugee teachers working in Dadaab camp schools, among them, are non-refugees Kenyan nationally trained teachers. Very little is known about these teachers' experience teaching in the complex context of a refugee camp. This study investigates and reports accounts conveyed in narratives of non-refugee Kenyan national teachers' pedagogical perspectives and living experiences in Dadaab refugee camp. Nine Kenyan national teachers participated in this study.

Principles of narrative methodology were applied to collect data, which involved in-depth and semi-structured interviews. The study employed an Afrocentric lens centering African humanistic philosophy of Utu/Ubuntu² as a framework to read and better understand the teachers' context and their stories.

The study investigated the following questions: i) What are the Kenyan national teachers' narratives of teaching experiences and implied meanings, understandings of the relationship between education in refugee camps and host communities? ii) What aspects of the narratives are in concert or conflict with the Afrocentric value of Utu/Ubuntu (you are because I am; I am because you are)? iii) What implications might the study's findings have on global conceptualization of refugee education?

A summary of the key study findings indicate that national teachers: 1) considered Dadaab as a non-family zone and risky place; 2) perceived Dadaab as place steeped in cultural and religious complexities; 3) appreciated Dadaab schools for offering noble

¹ I use the term long-term refugee to reference over thirty years this place has been in existence.

²Utu is a Swahili word while Ubuntu is a Zulu and Ndebele native language word. They both mean the same thing – being human. In Gikuyu my native language this is known as Umundu.

opportunities for instructional skill deployment, refinement and retooling expertise; 4) noticed the only educational incentives and scholarships slipping away due to students' low academic performance, manifested in panic and depression among students; and 5) considered teaching as a humane act. These results provide deep insights into how non-refugee teachers experience teaching in a refugee camp and the implications for the ways educational issues need to be addressed within refugee camps from national teachers' perspectives.

Lay Summary

There are trained Kenyan teachers, known as national teachers, who teach in schools within Kenyan hosted refugee camps. Little is known about the experiences and stories of these teachers working in a refugee camp. I conducted this study to learn more about how the national teachers storied their experiences of living and teaching in the Dadaab refugee camp in North Eastern Kenya. The study also sought to examine the role of national teachers in supporting students born in the refugee camps figure out their refugee ‘identity crisis’ while at the same time manifesting a sense of belongingness from an African perspective.

I employed an Afrocentric approach, which allowed for the use of African centered methods (narratives) and theories (Utu/Ubuntu) to interview the nine non-refugee Kenyan national teachers.

It was evident that very few national teachers worked in Dadaab refugee camps due to the risky nature of working for non-refugees.

Preface

The study reported in this dissertation was designed, conducted, and analyzed by the author with guidance from the supervisory committee. No part of this research has been published.

This research study has been approved by the University of British Columbia Behavioral Ethics Board (Certificate Number: H20-00664)

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List of Abbreviations

AU – African Union

BHER - Borderless Higher Education for Refugees

INEE - Inter-agency Network for education in Emergencies

KCPE- Kenya Certificate of Primary Education

KCSE- Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education

SDG - Sustainable Development Goals

UN- United Nations

UNCHS - United Nations Center for Human Settlement

UNESCO - United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

UNHCR- United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

WUSC - World University Service of Canada

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Dedication

This is a dedication to my late dad and grandma, Daniel Karangu Kimotho (DK) and Lucia Wangui Mungai respectively and to my future generations - wife and children.

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Background to the Study

Refugee camps are particularly challenging places to live and work. When doing my Masters of Arts (MA)³ research I travelled to the Dadaab refugee camp in Garissa County, North Eastern Kenya. Once I arrived at the Dadaab airstrip, I was picked up in company of other visitors, and we were driven to the government official's office – a nearby sub-county office within Dadaab to register our presence. Later, I was taken to the safe place – United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) compound, where I spent the next fourteen days as I conducted my research. The experience felt like entering a military barracks: heavy metallic, electric-driven gates on both sides, in and out, armed combat soldiers and uniformed Group 4 Securicor (G4S) guards on watch towers.

To check into the UNHCR Compound required that I deposit my Kenyan passport, and in return I was handed another identification label on a hard, laminated yellow paper (often called a pass) with the designation “VISITOR” I was informed that anytime I needed to walk out of the security gates, I had to exchange my passport for this yellow visitor's “pass”. Larger than my pants pockets, I slid it in my backpack. Although I was in my own country, it dawned on me that I was very much a stranger in this context.

When time came for me to visit the schools in the camps for data collection, I could not walk there freely because of security challenges. I had to be driven to the schools alone in a land cruiser while another vehicle (often a cruiser too) led the way with

³The MA project investigated the hidden curriculum in refugee camp schools.

armed security personnel. The vehicles followed each other in a larger convey, traversing through dusty and heavily scrubbed dry land snaking their way into the school camps at high speeds through routed sand. They travel at high speeds to escape any probable ambushing from members of al-Shabaab⁴ and other militant groups.

I had copies of a well-planned schedule of the fourteen days that I had provided with the driver and the person in charge of my daily school camp visiting plans. However, none of my plans went as scheduled. Depending on the security information security personnel had received and organizing vehicles to travel in convoys, on some days I was either picked up earlier or later than expected. Additionally, instead of heading west directly to the schools in camp, we changed directions, headed south or north. I remember one day we did not go beyond the security gates. The frustrations started to take a toll on me. I went to the driver Salim (pseudonym) and asked him what was happening. Why were there detours? He kindly informed me that everything was going on as “planned” due to security reasons. It dawned on me that indeed I was an outsider. I realized that this was the everyday experience of the refugees as movement in and out of the camps is strictly constrained. Any refugee resident needing to travel is required to obtain a ‘movements pass’—a written permission issued by camp authorities.

Every day after Salim dropped me off at the camp schools, he and security (armed police) left me in the school compound to conduct my research. They always returned to check on me at noon when the teachers and students went for their afternoon prayers and lunch. It took me a while to get used to such well-calculated “randomness” and plans. I

⁴al Shabaab is a jihadist military and political organisation based in Somalia and active elsewhere in East Africa. In 2013, al-Shabaab fighters claimed responsibility for an attack on a Nairobi shopping mall that killed 67 people, and in 2015 the group killed 148 in an attack on a university in the city of Garissa (<https://www.cfr.org/background/al-shabaab>).

have to admit that I did not understand what Salim meant by random plans, but over time I came to appreciate his sentiments around the term, especially after talking to the national teachers (hosts) who teach every single day in the refugee camp schools. As a former Kenyan teacher, in another jurisdiction, I was used to and appreciated a predictable routine for the day and never before had to worry about security in my workplace.

Unfortunately, there exists sparse literature explaining the working and living conditions for national or host teachers in refugee camps in Kenya, making this doctoral study of teacher narratives timely. Refugee schools are challenging places to work in both economically, socially, mentally and emotionally. That said, the schools remained long-term spaces where students went for academic, social and spiritual enrichment but also were challenging spaces for the students who experienced hardships as refugees, were traumatized by the experiences they have witnessed since childhood.

In this study, I interviewed nine host national teachers who taught in Dadaab refugee camp schools in Kenya. I used open-ended questions, which allowed flexibility for reflective dialogue and deep conversations. The use of use of narratives and story telling⁵ are not uncommon among Africans; in fact, we typically pass our knowledge/wisdom from one generation to another orally (Biakolo, 1999; Mushengyezi, 2003; Tuwe, 2016; Wiredu, 1999).

Today several African scholars have documented and expressed their own lived experiences narratively including Ngugi wa Thio'ngo (1965; 1981), Sultan Somjee (2020), Chinua Achebe (1958), Wole Soyinka (1963), Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie

⁵I use story telling as two words to indicate that someone is telling a story of someone else and storytelling to denote a person detailing their lived accounts.

(2009), Chigozie Obioma (2015) among others. Their use of narratives as African scholars inspired my utilization of narrative approaches in this study as a way of expressing or retelling lived experiences of the national teachers teaching in refugee camps in Kenya.

1.2 Refugee Education Crisis and Complexities

In this section, I introduce the refugee crisis in Africa that impacts the education sector and the educational experiences of refugees⁶. The crisis is characterised by the large growing number of refugees within the low-income countries, particularly long-term encampments (UNHCR, 2016) with competition for limited basic resources, and the imposition of unfriendly policies on refugees (Omata, 2017, 2020; Milner, 2014; Jacobsen & Fratzke, 2016; Aleinikoff, 2015).

Globally, the institutionalization and essentialization of refugees were initially manifested in the United Nations definition of 1951 with the establishment of the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR). This mandate addressed the needs of displaced Europeans during the world wars leading to the cold war (Degu, 2007). At that time, there were inconsequential numbers of refugees in Africa.

However, situations in Africa began to shift in the 1960s. Governments, politics, economics, social demographics, and education systems changed (Barman, 2020).

Africans witnessed a complete alteration in the wake of the “independent African nations/states/countries era,” commonly referred to as the “rebirth of Africa” (Somé,

⁶A refugee is a person who, owing to well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail him/herself of the protection of that country; or who, not having a nationality and being outside the country of his former habitual residence, is unable, or owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it (Ayouty, 1970) as explained in the 1951 UN convention internationally, (p. 226).

1998). Independent nations meant new boundaries dictated by the colonial powers, which created new countries, an occurrence that caused confusion and communities were divided leading to significant regional instabilities. Ethnic and/or clan conflicts intensified, which caused people to cross these new boundaries within their regions and becoming refugees themselves.

To address this global failure (refugees/refugee-ness created as a result of new borders) from an African perspective, the African Union (AU) Convention of 1969 established a more robust definition⁷ of a refugee, borrowing from the UN 1952 convention definition. In this definition, the AU focused more on contemporary challenges causing displacement. In response, scholars applauded its humanitarian approach and emphasis. However, Wood (2019) claimed that despite the scope of the AU refugee definition, the meaning of its terms “remains poorly understood in both literature and practice” (p. 290). Wood (2010) has continued to argue that the meanings derived and delivered from these conventions are not in touch with the reality on the ground, forcing countries such as Kenya to take a different trajectory toward the refugee intake, especially from Somali.

The newly created international borders in the post-independence era have continued to create more refugees. Moreover, some of those displaced from their country and land find refuge just a short distance from their homeland borders. For example, Dadaab, the world's largest refugee camp, is approximately 80 kilometres from the

⁷The term ‘refugee’ shall *also* apply to every person who, owing to external aggression, occupation, foreign domination or events seriously disturbing public order in either part or the whole of his country of origin or nationality, is compelled to leave his place of habitual residence in order to seek refuge in another place outside his country of origin or nationality (OAU, 1969).

Kenya-Somali border (UNHCR, 2015). From a Pan Africanist perspective and further exemplifying the new boundary concept, Kenya and Somali have a long common history. In both countries there is a tribe called the Somali (Kenya-Somali and Somali-Somali). They are ethnically the same people who share a common heritage, however, an arbitrary line keeps them separated. As Somalia continues to experience political challenges since the late 1980s, Kenya has received Somali refugees despite the potential economic, environmental and social strain it creates for citizens (hosts)⁸ (UNHCR & FAO, 1998).

Consequently, Dadaab refugee camp is not a simple story. The camp bespeaks of the complex consequences around the new colonial boundaries in Africa wherein African values still exist and are embraced by communities in spite of the intentions or the agenda perpetuated during the colonial era i.e the colonizers' desire to destroy the established African worldviews. As historians Westad (2005) claimed, the colonized were subjected to "relentless propaganda perpetuated in religious outfits to cloud them about the useless inferiority of their own ideals and beliefs" (p.74).

The legacy of colonization evidenced through borders and its economic structural plans over the years has resulted in forceful displacement of people from their homes (having crossed those border lines) (UNHCR, 2020). According to the UNHCR (2022), "at the end of 2021, the total number of people worldwide who were forced to flee their homes due to conflicts, violence, fear of persecution and human rights violations was 89.3 million" (p.1). These numbers are "more than double the 42.7 million people who remained forcibly displaced a decade ago and the most since World War II"(p.1).

⁸Given the Dadaab refugee camp in Kenya is an encampment situation, some believe it is "unAfrican" to hold human beings in such confinement. However, the act of saving lives can be seen as a "generosity" indigenous to African humanistic values, honouring the African belief that there is "always space for one more."

In Africa, the majority of people displaced into refugee status come from Somalia and South Sudan (South Sudan is the newest country in the world). Since 1990, Somali refugees have been offered refuge in Kenya in a camp located in Dadaab in the North Eastern part of Kenya. These camps were originally set up to accommodate 90,000 people. However, over the years the number of refugees has significantly grown due to persecutions, conflicts and drought, as well as new generations being born in the camps (Meyer et al., 2019; MacKinnon, 2014).

Nevertheless, the majority of the displaced populations in the world originate from and are housed in Africa (d'Orsi, 2016). Data indicate that more than half of those forcibly displaced are children below the age of eighteen years (UNHCR, 2019; 2021) and who are in dire need of a future through educational development. These are children who should be attending learning institutions, socializing and shaping their future dreams. Displacement and encampment conditions propagate further loss to the affected individuals who have already left their homeland-the loss of identity, social status, family, education opportunities, and freedom among many other livelihood essentials. Such radical losses linger for long periods of time while waiting for freedom from refugee situations.

Generally, in protracted refugee situations (five or more consecutive years) the host nation provides infrastructure (refugee camps), and some services to those seeking refuge, including the delivery of education (UNHCR, 2018, Crisp, 2003; Milner, 2014). These provisions offered in host nations offer employment for its citizens. In Kenya, for example, national teachers equipped with knowledge of a nationalistic curriculum have moved to the refugee camps to teach. These teachers bridge the gap between the host

government's education system including its curriculum and the refugee community. National teachers' presence in the refugee camp is an element well protected in the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) number 4⁹, which emphasizes inclusive, equitable and quality education for all. Thus, this consideration calls for the introduction of refugee education or education in emergency situations—refugee camp schools.

Nonetheless, in line with the realization of the SDG4 from a refugee perspective, a few questions linger. Is the curriculum delivered to refugee students relevant to them? How do the national teachers navigate through these nested and complicated situations to assist students in finding their identity and sense of belonging? How do national teachers deal with the tensions and fears of being in refugee camps while they (as hosts) deliver a foreign curriculum to the refugees? What are the African values are included and embedded in their teaching practices? While these questions are germane to this study they are not the mains drivers for the study but are critical to the background that positions the complexities around the refugee populations in the camps.

Arguably, understanding how education is delivered and its role to people in refugee situations remains paramount, especially if the SDG4 is to be achieved. During my MA research, I developed a keen interest in knowing how teaching refugees impacts the Kenyan national teachers working with students in the refugee camps. Their perspectives are relevant given their intimate understanding of the refugee camps they reside in during their teaching terms.

⁹SDG #4 aimed at delivering high quality education for all people around the world and promote lifelong and life-wide learning

Furthermore, in protracted refugee situations, national teachers teach some children born in the camp, which raises critical questions about conceptualizations of refugee encampment and education from the African perspective of Utu/Ubuntu (which I elaborate in Chapter 2). In addition, national teachers deal with maintaining their “national-ness” while residing in a camp. The irony here ensues from an Afrocentric perspective that children born in the camps would not be considered refugees (Barman, 2020). Moreover, as the term refugee has continued to be used in African contexts for decades, literature shows that ‘refugee’ was a non-existent terminology in African conceptualizations in reference to the displaced people (Some, 2008).

The UNHCR (2019; 2021) reports claimed that 86% of the world's forced displaced persons are hosted in developing countries where neighbouring nations have become the hosts to the people seeking refuge. In some cases a few neighbouring nations have continued to house the refugee communities for decades. Host countries offer land and security among other important basic needs. Hosting more humans in limited spaces has led to security and resource challenges resources between the refugee and the hosts. There doesn't appear to be a middle ground in treating refugees as they should be treated when hosting states views them as a security risk¹⁰.

For a long time, Kenya as an example has been a host to thousands of refugee seeking groups in East Africa largely originating from Somalia, South Sudan, Ethiopia Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi and Democratic Republic of Congo. Kenya has historically integrated refugees from other countries into its population, for instance, Dagoreti and Kibra towns, within the environs of Nairobi the capital city, where people from Uganda

¹⁰The Kenyan government has perpetuated inhumane and dangerous images of refugees and their dwellings characterized as criminal breeding areas, creating a binary between citizens and others (Degu, 2007).

and Sudan are habited since the early years of post independence, (Omata, 2020; Wamagatta, 2009). The converse has been true for more recent refugees from Somalia who are still trapped in the encampments in Dadaab and Kakuma.

The growing refugee population including those in Dadaab necessitates at least 12,000 additional classrooms and 20,000 additional teachers each year (Save the Children, 2017). There are budgetary gaps that lead to chronic teacher shortages, which eventually hamper access to education and the educational experiences of people living in refugee camps and the host communities surrounding the camps (UNHCR, 2017). Financing education for refugees is an indicator of larger issues calling for global education support. Increased financial support is needed from national governments and international partners. Global Refugee Forum (2019) indicated that as a consequence of low humanitarian aid, struggling underfunded national education systems, and strained national education budgets; refugee education received trifling support. For example, in 2016 the overall humanitarian financing provided to support refugee education responses was two per cent (2%) of the amount requested in humanitarian pleas (Global Education Monitoring Report, 2017a). Additionally, “only two of the ten” countries that host the most refugees received more than two per cent (2%) of the humanitarian bid requested (p. 41). Noticing the insignificant allocations towards refugee education, the Global Refugee Forum (2019) report indicated that a specific request was made to the donors and UNHCR to allocate more money on education spending, which the report claimed on an overall basis required to increase from \$1.2 trillion annually to \$3 trillion by 2030.

It goes without saying that this persistent budgetary/financial shortage within the educational set up, compromises quality of education in the camp schools, making it a

major educational development crisis in the refugee camps. Examining the underlying issues from an African perspective could provide some sustainable solutions. This would need a seamless integration of the refugee population into the communities and getting rid of the encampments that strip humans their dignity.

1.3 Issues in Refugee Education

The world today is experiencing some of the highest numbers of forced displaced persons (Brangham, 2016) and the majority of those displaced are Africans and residing as refugees in different African countries (d’Orsi, 2016). Although the refugee communities cross the international borders for several reasons, host communities or governments continue to perceive refugee¹¹ communities as threats to the well-being of their nation (Zembylas, 2001). Many Governments, including Kenya, have been reinforcing encampment policy¹² for decades (Omata, 2020). The camps have created fear and tension among the refugee and host communities, ‘normalizing’ the living conditions therein. This is not living but a survival tactic (Manzo & Manzo, 1993). In their chapter “Crossing Borders: A story of refugee education” Meyer et al., (2018) pointed out that “once inside the border of the camp, refugee communities meet with loss” (p. 130). Loss of familiarity, confidence, home, ‘life’, language, and even loved ones (Arendt, 1994). In other words, the certainty of their world around them takes a turn, which significantly affects their culture and whole self.

¹¹Although the literature on refugees is broad and varied, I reviewed pertinent literature that situates my study’s research questions guided by an Afrocentric perspective.

¹²The Government of Kenya enacted the Refugee Act in 2006; however, since early 1990s the country has been employing a de facto encampment policy, which requires all refugees to reside in camps located in the semi-arid northern part of the country (Kerubo, 2013, p.1).

Forced displacement leads refugees into situations where they deal with what I refer to as ‘refugee global issues’ such as statelessness, temporality, and scarcity of resources, encampment, conflict, insecurity, displacement, and human rights violation. These global issues continue to impact refugee lives in many ways including their education. Moreover, host countries have to deal with the added ‘burden’ to their overstretched resources. This burden causes what has been referred to as refugee-host tension, increased stigma surrounding refugee existence, and loss of identity and sense of belongingness (Okoth-Obbo, 2001).

According to Thomas et al. (2019), the future of the refugee children is quite uncertain, particularly because of the slow pace of things at the global level change. More so, there are concerns the UNHCR officials wonder about: what is next for the refugees? For example, Grandi (2016) asks why the UNHCR can provide basic needs to the refugees but fail in providing a formidable future for them (para. 10). A future for the refugee child lies in the quality and affordable education they may receive. However, education is not guaranteed in practice, enough even within the robust framework explained in the SDG4. It is not clear what constitutes quality education in the contexts specific to the refugees. It is also not clear how education should be delivered according to teachers’ practices and understanding of the quality of education they deliver.

Further, Sengupta and Blessinger (2019) have noted that some research conducted in the refugee education has ignored the refugees’ perspectives and other perspectives from those working in the camps. While conducting my research, one of my participants blamed researchers for showing up in the field to collect data and later disappearing never to come back with any improved agenda. In the participant’s own words he felt, “used

worse than a fishing bait” (Karangu, 2017). I disagree with Sengupta and Blessinger in part, since I was involved in a Canadian research project that focused on the lived experiences of former refugees in Africa. The majority of the participants/co-researchers in that project were recent refugees. For example, *Crossing Borders: A story of refugee education*’ is a book chapter co-authored by former refugees. This demonstrates that the scholarly work is increasingly centering the voices of refugees.

However, Sengupta and Blessinger (2019) noted that the kinds of studies that principally concentrate on the psychological perspective, fail to draw from the learner’s theory (the refugees perspective). This claim points to the fact that most information available on refugees could be drawing on experiential perspectives rather than actual fieldwork. In my research, I invited non-refugee teachers to speak to their understandings and experiences of contextual issues relating to school and learning in the camp.

1.4 Problem Statement, Purpose and Questions

The topic of refugee and education has been investigated by many scholars; ranging from refugee conditions to the experiences of “refugee-ness” and what constitute refugee situations (Siegfried, 2022; Dunmore, 2022; Somjee, 2020). Some studies have examined the effects of refugees on the host lands (Barman, 2020; OECD, 2017; UNHCR Standing Committee, 2004; Vas Dev, 2002). Implications of refugee lives have equally been investigated and written about from various perspectives, including refugee inquiry involving service providers within the refugee camp contexts (Dick, 2002; Whitaker, 2002; UNHCR, 2017; Loescher, 1992; Jacobsen 2005; Alix-Garcia, & Saah, 2009). However, there appears to be few investigations that have pursued non-refugee teachers’ experiences and the education they deliver in the refugee camp schools. Consequently,

these teachers have not received robust attention regarding their perspectives on the nature of education they offer with no conceptual frameworks posited for understanding their teaching experiences.

It is this gap in the literature on refugee education that my study sought to investigate. As such, to carry out this investigation I selected schools within Dadaab refugee camp, one of the world's largest refugee camps. Dadaab refugee camp became a suitable context for this investigation due to its decades-long duration. Here, I sought to investigate national teachers' (non-refugee) stories of their teaching experiences and understandings of education in both host and refugee communities.

Ample research has described gaps in refugee education. For instance, Save the Children (2017) noted and confirmed a previous report by the UNHCR that, quality education and "education for all" initiatives have overlooked the inclusion of refugee education including those who offer teaching services. I agree that although students in refugee situations are often left out of major budgetary planning, they deserve quality education. Qualified teachers who are knowledgeable in how they teach and what they teach should have the opportunity to deliver it (UNHCR 2017). However, we may never articulate these needs fully given the limited actual information we have at hand regarding the national teachers.

Further the Save the Children (2017) report groups trained and untrained teachers together as a homogenous group. The teachers' qualifications are not readily provided. This grouping makes it difficult to understand the actual figures of qualified teachers needed to teach in camp schools. Although premised on statistics, a differentiation between the qualified and non-qualified is needed so that researchers and practitioners

have a more realistic understanding of the actual reality in refugee schools. Nonetheless, literature has indicated that the number of qualified teachers teaching in refugee camps is noticeably small (UNHCR, 2019).

According to Duale et al., (2019) national teachers represent only 28% of the entire Dadaab teacher population. The majority (72%), are refugee teachers who have only high school education. This reality means that when the trained/national teachers teach alongside the untrained teachers, they (trained) have to teach and mentor the refugee teachers or the incentive colleagues (Karangu, 2017).

There is some research that highlights the general role of refugee teachers (Martin et al., 2018; Eliyahu-Levi & Ganz-Meishar, 2018; Long, & Kang, 2018; Sengupta & Blessinger, 2019; World Bank, 2013; Demirdjian, 2011). However, few studies focus on the role of national teachers (non-refugees)-articulated by those who teach in African refugee camps. It is critical for stakeholders and communities involved with hosting the refugee to understand how these teachers story or re-story education (Clandinin, 2013).

This study therefore sought to elicit the voices and narratives of the national teachers who are working or have worked in the protracted refugee camps. The narratives from the Kenyan participants in this study will give insights into the role education plays (or not) in refugee situations, and how it can be improved from the work of the national teachers. That is, from an African perspective, what role do national teachers play in helping students who are born in the refugee camps to not only become educated but also make sense of their refugee identity and sense of belonging? How can educational research, particularly in curriculum studies, inform policy and teaching practices best suited for this context? Africa has a growing number of refugees, many held captive in

the long-term refugee camps such as Dadaab, who do not ‘see themselves’ in the school curriculum or other educational systems. This study is timely (however belated), particularly as we consider the quality of life and productivity of increasing populations in crowded camps.

In the host country of Kenya, there is little integration of refugees from the Dadaab refugee camp (Omata, 2020). That is, refugee and native population remain mostly segregated geographically. In Dadaab schools, the Kenyan curriculum features the Kenyan language, culture and heritage (Karanja, 2010). These factors continue to pose much tension among the refugee students as well as national and incentive¹³ (refugee) teachers. Given the high number of refugees and the temporal nature of their situations, the lack of global attention to refugee education, especially in the African context, hinders effective implementation of context specific curricular and policies that advances the course of education among refugees residing in camps.

Furthermore, literature confirms a lack of information in the public spheres that comprehensively highlight and give voice to the national teachers who teach in the refugee camp schools (Richardson, MacEwen & Naylor, 2018). This study broadens our understanding (through national Kenyan teachers’ narratives) of what education in refugee camp contexts is like and means to an African living in a refugee camp.

I frame this inquiry with Afrocentric values while considering what it means to be a host country particularly from national teachers’ perspectives. I employed an Afrocentric framework (Asante, 2001) to investigate and understand the teachers’

¹³Refugees that are employed to teach in the refugee camps, as refugee teachers, they are not qualified in Kenya and so are paid as a volunteers 53EURO per month (FCA, 2022)

perspectives (see Chapter 2). Afrocentricity is an African worldview that is constitutive of humanistic values: compassion, reciprocity, dignity, humanity, mutuality, respect, love, concern, cooperation, care, and sharing (Bekker, 2006; Eze, 2006; Mangaliso, 2001; Mbigi, 2005; Nussbaum, 2003; Mandela, 2006; Moloketi, 2009). These values are characterised within the larger African context as Utu/Ubuntu (Tutu, 1990, Somjee, 2008, Chalise, 2016, Mandela, 2006). Nobel Prize winner Archbishop Desmond Tutu captured the concept of Utu/Ubuntu as follows:

A person is a person through other persons. None of us comes into the world fully formed. We would not know how to think, or walk, or speak, or behave as human beings unless we learned it from other human beings. We need other human beings in order to be human. (Tutu, 2004, p. 25)

When analysing and reviewing the participants' stories, I pursue expressions or act of humaneness or lack of and try to make sense of the Afrocentric framework that undergirds Utu/Ubuntu value system "I am because you are, and you are because I am." Considering this framing and the context of the research, my study sought to address the following questions:

- 1. What are the Kenyan national teachers' narratives of teaching experiences and implied meanings, understandings and the relationship between education in refugee camps and host communities?*
- 2. What aspects of the narratives are in concert or conflict with the Afrocentric value of Utu/Ubuntu (you are because I am; I am because you are)?*
- 3. What implications might the study's findings have on global conceptualization of Afrocentric Utu/Ubuntu-centred refugee education?*

1.5 Researcher's Identity and Positionality

I am a Kenyan nationally trained teacher. I have taught and headed a charitable organized school in Kenya, located in the heart of a semi-arid area within the larger coastal region of Kenya. Here, I witnessed firsthand the extreme conditions of poverty students live in, as well as teachers' unimaginable desire to support students under these conditions. As the school's principal and elected district Deputy Chair for the Head Teachers' Schools' Association, I sought and advocated for better education, equal rights and social justice for students, especially girls that were at risk of being married off at a young age or against their will. Moreover, as an elected Deputy Chair of the Primary School Sports Association in the district, I championed equal and fair pay.

My teacher-self as described above is fluid, and ever shifting. Similarly, my position within this study has elicited a multiplicity of identities (Sen, 2006). Although, there is complexity regarding my positionality with the participants in this study, there exists a commonality that brings unity to our identities: we are all former national teachers from Kenya. As Kenyan national teachers, we have what Merton (1972) refers to as a set of statuses as identities, echoing what Nashon, et al. (2007) refer to as "collective identity." As a researcher, I embodied and performed along my collective identity, working through the data collection, analysis and reporting.

My likeness and closeness to some of the national teachers in the camps offered an advantage in recruiting other participants (Creswell, 2013). However, as a doctoral student in a highly ranked university, the participants likely perceived me on a different level, one of power, despite my efforts to demystify this notion. I was conscious of this

possible distinction and consistently negotiated with my multiple identities during the research process (Nicol, 2006; Labaree, 2002).

When I traveled to the Dadaab refugee camp to collect data for my master thesis, I met several national teachers that taught alongside the refugee teachers. While a doctoral student in Canada, I worked on a research project related to refugee education in Dadaab. As a co-researcher, I had the opportunity to work hand-in-hand with former Dadaab refugees who were incentive teachers in the camp. Although these participants spoke highly of their national teachers when an opportunity arose, there was little focus in the research project on the role national teachers played in refugee education.

As a Kenyan national teacher, my engagement in the project inspired a desire in me to understand host national teachers' perspectives in education systems within refugee camps, particularly in Africa. However, I found very limited literature regarding these teachers. I was curious about how these teachers found their way into the refugee camps, how and when they received training while in the camps, how their presence in the camps informed their pedagogies, and most importantly, how they helped the refugees students (re)gain their identities and a sense of belonging away from their homeland.

Bach (2007) noted that to understand a person's experiences, we must consider the interconnected, nested stories and contexts of an individual's life. For example, I am living the story of a Kenyan, a former national teacher, a former head teacher, and an international PhD student analyzing an education system. These multiple layers inform the perspectives of my narrative experiences. As such, I acknowledge I have not taught in a refugee camp. Ajdukovic (2009), emphasized that all forms of displacements and separation from family and community have a devastating long-term impact on a child's

psychological well-being, particularly when a child experiences trauma immediately prior to displacement (p. 2). I do consider, however, my teaching experience in Kenya from poverty-stricken contexts where the children under my care required particular attention, care and understanding comparable to what refugee children require from their teachers (Sen, 2006).

1.6 Organization of the Dissertation

This dissertation is organized into six chapters. Chapter 1 introduced the study with a brief background. I presented some local and global issues related to refugee and education followed by a discussion of problem statement, research questions, and the purpose of the study. I also outlined contributions and significance of the study, and also acknowledged my identity and positionality as a researcher.

Chapter 2 is dedicated to the theoretical framework: the Afrocentric approach focusing on the idea of Utu/Ubuntu, which is an Afrocentric Philosophy of Being Human. Here, I lay bare some of the fundamentals around the different approaches to the understanding of a paradigm.

In Chapter 3 I position both classic and contemporary literature reviews on education systems and refugee education in Kenya. Further, I bring forth the role of education in refugee contexts and I introduce Dadaab and its history of schooling in finer details highlighting the cultural, linguistic and religious complexities as well as the challenges experienced thereof. The chapter concludes with a description of the emergence of a unique system of education now practised in Dadaab known as ‘the two schools in one’ model.

In Chapter 4, I focus on the narrative methodology of this study. The chapter presents a synopsis of the participants. I offer insights into the recruitment of study participants. I elaborate on the methods of collecting data and analysis.

In Chapter 5, I share the research findings presented in the form of five broad themes with sub themes as constructed from the data and in relation to the study's research questions.

In chapter 6, I discuss the findings and compare and contrast those findings with available literature. I also offer interpretations and where necessary create meaning as guided by the theoretical framework. I conclude the chapter and share implications for theory, research and practice in the field of refugee education and in relation to the host community and/or national teachers.

Chapter 2: Theoretical Framework

2.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses theoretical framework of the Afrocentric theory, which is an African worldview constitutive of humanistic values framing informing the study. The Afrocentric humanistic values are grounded in the African philosophy of Utu/Ubuntu (Tutu, 1990, Somjee, 2008, Chalise, 2016, Mazama, 2001).

2.2 Theoretical Framework

Afrocentric theory or worldviews stems from an African humanistic philosophy of Utu or Ubuntu, a perspective that characterizes an African approach to an unfolding situation that affects humanity (Somjee, 2008; Fox, 2010; Mnyaka & Motlhabi, 2005). Arguably, African American scholars have developed Afrocentricity into a paradigm and a valid field of study involving African people and people of African descent. The Afrocentric worldviews used to inform this study are those championed by Asante (1989; 2001; 2014); Mazama, (2001; 2003; 2005); Karenga (1988) and Chawane, 2016). Furthermore, I drew on Sultan Somjee's (2008; 2014; 2020) and Tutu's, (2008) writings and understanding of Utu/Ubuntu, as a lens to ground and interpret the claims made from the interviews and analyses. Utu/Ubuntu values revolve around wholeness, love, peace, oneness/unity, altruism, generosity, inclusiveness, kindness, respect, compassion and concern, which together translate into beauty in humanity (Somjee, 2021). In fact, Somjee (2020) claimed, "where there is beauty there is peace"(p. 215). Here, Somjee implies that beauty is an agent that appeals to the hearts of human beings to live in harmony, where they show care for one another.

The late Archbishop Desmond Tutu thoughtfully captured the concepts of Ubuntu stating that, “one cannot be a human on their own; one becomes a human through relationships and interdependence with others”(2008, p. 8). What Tutu elaborated here was the key responsibility bestowed in an individual within a community. This responsibility is geared towards value adding for the sole benefit of that community. Put it differently, it is the manifestation of communalism within the African society. Here I borrow Dixon’s (1997) understanding where he claimed that African communalism involves an “individual becoming conscious of his own being, duties, privileges and responsibilities towards himself and others” (p.129).

In this study, I used the Afrocentric approach, which encapsulates the values of oneness, collectivism and communalism, an indication for the “shared orientations” and further “distinguished by unity, harmony, spirituality, and organic interrelationship” (Richards, 1980, p. 9). This approach allowed me to gain key insight into the experiences of the national teachers (hosts) who teach refugee student as they shared through their narratives.

In the following section, I review literature on the Afrocentric approach that situates it as a paradigm underscored by key Afrocentric scholars. Later in the chapter, I introduce Utu/Ubuntu and explain its relationship with Afrocentric theory.

2.3 The Afrocentric Approach/Paradigm

Although different scholars have introduced and defined Afrocentricity in many ways, I employ Asante’s (2001) definition in which he described Afrocentricity as a “manner of thought and action in which the centrality of African interests, values and perspectives predominate” (p. 32). In other words Afrocentricity offers a new

philosophical perspective through which we can implement African knowledge, actions and intentions to inform others. Moreover, the Afrocentric approach advances the idea that both continental and diasporic Africans view knowledge from an African lens.

Asante (1991) asserted that Afrocentricity should be understood as a study of ideas and events from the standpoint of an African as a key player rather than a mere victim or spectator (p. 172). It is within this deft that other scholars have come to champion Afrocentrism as a discipline aimed at restoring the centrality of African knowledge and experience for a better understanding within the academic community.

Like other scholars (Mazama, 2003, Okofar, 1996), Asante's Afrocentric perspective helped me navigate the complexities and controversies underscored in the African context of the study. For instance, I asked myself, how can we understand the complexities found within the refugee camp schools in Africa based on the fact that Africa has some of the largest numbers of refugees who reside within its boundaries? This phenomenon can only be understood within the confines of an African perspective and context. I find the Afrocentric philosophical approach as best suited to begin this African centered analytic journey.

The Afrocentric approach consists of its unique African cultural and historical traits both in the African and diasporic contexts. For instance, in the United States these traits are studied under the Black Studies scholarship predominantly by African Americans dating back to the era of chattel enslavement and beyond (Karenga, 1998, Okofar, 1996). In the African continent, Africans live with the Afrocentric cultural and historical facts. Such traits, informed by beliefs and practices of Afrocentricity, ground its practitioners in engaging in inquiry, processing and interpreting their human interactions

within academia. It is imperative that a study such as this utilizes an approach that draws from these unique African knowledges as well as cultural and historical traits.

Maulana Karenga (1988) described Afrocentricity as, “essentially a quality of perspective or approach rooted in the cultural image and human interest of African people” (p. 404). Mazama (2003) suggested that Afrocentricity, within the academic context, would best be understood as a “paradigm” (p. 390). A focus on a paradigm according to Babbie (1989) is a fundamental model or scheme that organizes our view of something (p. 42). Kuhn (1962) claimed a paradigm comprises sets of beliefs, methods and standards of problem solving observed by a scientific community. Eckberg and Hill (1980) later extended this claim identifying two main arguments that form a paradigm: cognitive and structural aspects (p. 118). Mazama (2003) noted that while Kuhn may have laid a formidable ground for understanding a paradigm, this notion of paradigm was best understood within the Euro-centric realms. Therefore, Mazama (2003) concluded that Kuhn’s way of defining a paradigm was incomplete when analyzing it from an Afrocentric perspective. Considering the gaps in Kuhn’s conceptualization, Mazama added a third element, which she termed as “core” to Afrocentricity, and that is the “functional element”(p.393). Essentially, Mazama was implying that an Afrocentric paradigm is comprised of three central aspects: *the cognitive, the structural, and the functional*.

2.3.1 The Cognitive Aspect of Afrocentric Approach

Cognition has been defined as “all the activities and processes concerned with the acquisition, storage, retrieval and processing of information — regardless of whether these processes are explicit or conscious” (Brainard et al., 2019, p. 609) Masterman

(1970) argued that the cognitive aspect consists of three different levels: metaphysical, sociological and exemplars. Mazama advances Masterman's approaches by adding two Afrocentric levels, which she refers to as the conative "behavioral" and affective "feeling" (Mazama, 2003, p. 392). She supports the claims that the Africa-centered perspective or centrism facilitates a true understanding of African thought and behaviour (Okofar, 1996, p. 707). As Keto (1989) pointed out, centrism makes it easier to trace and understand the social patterns of the lives of Africans, the "institutional patterns of their actions, and the intellectual patterns of their thoughts" within the changing context of time. (p. 1)

The metaphysical or the symbolic generalization is termed as that which concerns the organizing principle that presents a set of beliefs. The organizing principle, according to Mazama (2003), locates the centrality and perception of all reality and whether that relates to the African experience for the African people (p. 393). In other words, it places African values and ideas at the center of African life. As Onuoha (2015) wrote:

Notable African values include large family practice, hard work, and respect for senior members of the society, extended family system, religion, value for private property, language and many others. The African family is the nucleus of existence, which places premium on children (p.1).

Premised on these values, an Afrocentric perspective, helps us to question the approach we take to carrying out daily routines such as "teaching, reading, writing, jogging, running, eating, keeping healthy, seeing, studying, loving, struggling, and working" (Asante, 1988, p. 45). Thus, Afrocentric behaviour questions an individual's approach to every conceivable human enterprise so that its values and ideas can be put to

task as to whether they would benefit the African community at large (Mazama, 2003). Further, Fox (2010) lists conceivable practical examples of behaviour according to Ubuntu/Utu, with these behaviours depicted: in the way one talks (good, positive words uttered in a relaxed, positive manner); the way one walks (relaxed, in an unstressed way); the way one smiles (in a friendly way, naturally, heartily and not by grinning); the way one treats others, (especially Elders, children and those in need); the way one greets (in a friendly way, and by hugging and inquiring extensively about the other's wellbeing); and the way one practises moral values (such as caring, sharing, respect and compassion in daily life)(p.125).

These African values and ideas that characterize African culture are a “shared orientation” (Karenga, 1993). The core African cultural characteristics as explained by Karenga (1988) revolve around the affective aspect to the centrality of the community-respect for tradition, harmony with nature, the sociality of selfhood, veneration of ancestors, unity of being, a high level of spirituality and ethical concern (p. 10). Mnyaka and Motlhabi (2005) make connections to Utu/Ubuntu, reminding us that Ubuntu/Utu deals with feelings of compassion, related to making life more humane for others, especially to care for the disadvantaged, “namely the sick, the bereaved, the poor and strangers” (p.228).

These tenets that define Afrocentricity's framework distinguish it from other schools of thought, particularly regarding the “cruciality” placed on the role of African social and cultural experiences. These core cultural characteristics are indicative of or exemplify the African value of oneness: “The African family is the nucleus of existence, which places premium on children”(Onouha, 2015, p. 3). This is a concept that goes

beyond close family relations, and is an important aspect in research as it helps to locate the role of individuals in a community and the role of the community to that individual. I argue these were critical for me to keep in mind, during my research involving host community members teaching in a refugee community. This notion of community delineates specific roles to each side that makes that community, while at the same time upholding key African values.

For example, I grew up in the countryside within a large community with people from different places. We (boys) took care of the cows and other livestock while others took care of different aspects of the community's welfare. Elders were respected and given their rightful position to teach, correct and even punish. Everyone had a responsibility to fulfill in society. Fast forward to the present, as a young teacher in the rural area, it was common for parents or even children to come to me for academic related advice even if I were to charge for my services. Now living in Canada, I see a similar trend where we have a community of Kenyans in Vancouver who have expectations that we support each other and therefore expect my assistance as a community member.

It is the communal responsibility to make the community better. As such, whether it is national teachers teaching in refugee camps or me teaching in a charity run school or at home offering guidance, there is a normalized expectation to care for others within the community. As humans, we can only be complete in the presence of others and it is up to each person to create a collective that experience a sense of community. This is how the African values outlined by Onuoha (2015) are protected. After establishing the symbolic

generalization – metaphysical concerned with the organizing principle or the presentation of set of beliefs - we turn to the sociological level in the cognition.

The sociological (models) comprises a set of scientific habits, also referred to as the “disciplinary matrix” (Kuhn, 1970, p. 182) or “the shared commitments of any disciplinary community” (Eckberg & Hill, 1980, p. 118), whether they are methods, conceptual apparatus, or even techniques. Mazama (2003) referred to sociological as

The dimension of a paradigm that deals with the establishment of a disciplinary matrix generated by a particular set of metaphysical principles [in this case] the unquestioned presuppositions characterized by a specific conceptual apparatus, methodology, and set of theories. (p. 395)

Mazama further highlights several of the many Afrocentric perspectives that exist to elaborate on the suitability of the Afrocentric sociological dimension: Asante’s Location Theory (2003), Clenora Hudson-Weems’ *Africana Womanism* (1998), and Welsh-Asante’s *Nzuri* model (2003). Everything affecting the African is positioned within the African context for us to be able to question and scrutinize it (Karenga, 1998). Refugee education in African contexts can be theorized within the lens as explained in Dove’s (1998) “*Defining African Womanist Theory*”. Nah Dove argued, “The fate encountered by African women who live in Western societies can only be understood within the context of White supremacy and its cultural underpinning (Mazama, 2003). In this study, I would locate the understanding of the refugee situation in African context through a colonial lens - of the colonized African.

The sociological dimension pushes scholars to situate their understanding within a particular context. For example, in this study, the experiences of national teachers

teaching in refugee camp schools located in their own country can only be understood within that context, requiring one to approach the topic from a perspective that centers their experiences on their cultural and historical beliefs and practices.

Afrocentricity holds high regard for African values and how such values are used in seeking knowledge. These values are again embedded in each culture and stored in the community as Africans live in more social complex communities where each individual has a part to play in the benefit of their community (Karenga, 1997). There is high regard for relationships whether blood or otherwise, and as such, the role and responsibility of each are redefined to make positive contributions in the community. Therefore, an Afrocentric worldview stands for that particular manner in which its people make sense of their surroundings, their lives, and the universe – the whole. This notion led Richards (1980) to claim that a “worldview grows out of a shared cultural experience” (p. 4). Thus, African philosophy or worldviews are founded on the assumption of the actuality herein referred to as a set of “shared orientations” of the African world (see Karenga, 1993, p. 49). Somjee (2020) concurs with what Richards (1980) claimed regarding the African worldview, it is “distinguished by unity, harmony, spirituality, and organic interrelationship” (p. 9).

This conceptualization expressed in Afrocentricity shares similar values with Utu/Ubuntu, thus making the relationship between Utu/Ubuntu and Afrocentricity strong and relevant in this study. In centering the African person, we must pay keen attention to how Africans relate to one another, the environment and the Supreme Being. That is, how does their culture inform or identify Africans in relation to other beings and nature? Several authors such as Schiele’s (2017) have indicated that Africans, though diverse,

have a common culture that helps them to trace their ancestral genealogy to a particular ancestry. For example, the diversity among the African people is expressed in their languages. In this study, the question of language was deeply problematized by the participants and its implications to the students and the researcher, as well as the role local and foreign languages played in informing their interaction with each other and nature.

In many ways, language among the people of Africa is key to socialization, education and transmitting cultural values and norms from one generation to the next. Further, language helps identify people and also to express their deep self-state and position as individuals in relationship with each other, nature and the wider community.

The exemplars are thus the concrete problem-solutions students mostly encounter from the start of their education (Mazama, 1970, p. 402). In line with Mazama, this dissertation would be considered as one component of concrete problem solving from a refugee education perspective. The dissertation will serve as an example or a point of reference that has African “continental” centered knowledge, experience and orientation. It is an attempt to give the Afrocentrism “discipline more definite boundaries” (Mazama 2003, p. 403).

2.3.2 The Structural Aspect of Afrocentric Approach

The structural aspect of the Afrocentric approach situates itself within the people, or within the community of scholars/practitioners (including participants of studies such as this) who delve into the tenets of the cognitive aspect. Eckbert and Hill (1980) elaborate on the importance of a community of practitioners, stating that

... a paradigm presupposes an integrated community of practitioners. Ongoing puzzle solving, in fact, occurs only when a group exists which shares a consistent body of beliefs such that a consensus emerges with regard to the phenomena one investigates, the methods one uses, and so forth (p. 122)

As noted earlier, there exists little to no literature drawing on Afrocentric perspectives to examine the experiences of national teachers teaching in refugee camps in the African context. Focusing on African values, the collectiveness or social way of life depicts that knowledge is collectively or socially constructed (Oyebade, 1990, Verharen, 2002).

Mkabela (2005) cautions Afrocentric researchers, and asks them to keep off the “alienated mode of consciousness,” and instead follow the “collective mode of consciousness” which emphasizes the interconnectedness of the self and the world or self and the other (p. 185). From an Afrocentric view, the knower cannot be a separate entity from the known.

James Conyers (2004) has consistently focused on the structure of Afrocentricity as a discipline within the academy. Conyers (2004) refers to Afrocentricity as a philosophy and method (p. 646). He does so in reference to what Asante (1987) refers to as the “most complete philosophical totalization of the African being-at-the center of his or her existence,” terming it as the “individual or collective quest for authenticity”, which goes beyond all the “total use of method to affect psychological, political, social, cultural, and economic change.” (p.130) Asante (1987) emphasizes that the “Afrocentric idea is beyond decolonizing the mind (p. 125). Thus, while the cognitive aspect focuses on the knowledge acquiring process, the structural aspect deals with the people who engage with the cognitive aspects.

Utilizing narrative methodology in this research is a response to the Afrocentric call prescribed in Mkabela's (2005) quest. I ensured that participants' voices are at the centre of this study. I hope that this study will contribute to African centered foundational work through which a stronger structure of refugee scholarship centering voices of African peoples will be launched.

2.3.3 The Functional Aspect of the Afrocentric Approach

The cognitive aspect paid attention to the knowledge acquiring process and the structural aspect dealt with the actors who engage with the cognitive aspect. The functional aspect looks into 'why' knowledge is created. This aspect proposes that knowledge is meant to serve a particular purpose or aims at solving a communal problem.

As Mazama (2003) stated, functionally, "knowledge can never be produced for the sake of it but always for the sake of our liberation"; therefore, "a paradigm must activate our consciousness to be of any use to us (Afro-centrists) (p. 380). Mazama further reminds us that activating an Afro centrist's consciousness is a requirement, which is "reminiscent of the tradition that existed in Ancient Kemet when the priests opened the mouth of the statues of the gods to insufflate life and consciousness in them, thus allowing them to serve the people who served them," (p. 392).

Applying an Afrocentric approach within a refugee camp context seeks to further act as a catalyst for our (African, refugees) own "African Liberation." Mazama's (2003) sentiments regarding the statues of the gods is fundamental - i.e. just as how without that "spiritual act the statues would have remained pieces of rock, without the right type of energy, any set of ideas and practices is unable to move us and, in any case, remains largely irrelevant to our lives" (p.393). I draw on these ideas to further understand the

work teachers in refugee camps accomplish. How is their work relevant to their lives and those of their students? What would happen if the teachers did not step up to support the learners?

Asante (2007a) explained that Mazama's position on the application of Afrocentricity was not proposing an "evolution but a revolution in our thinking" (p. 14). According to Asante (2007a), Mazama launched two critical paradigmatic shifts in the discourse on Afrocentricity to show how it is a revolutionary concept for the African world on one hand and on the other, she "infuses the older ideal of Afrocentricity with the functional, actionable, practical component that energizes the concept" (p. 14).

This approach is a response to Africa and Africans being misconstrued, particularly when Eurocentric frameworks are used to distort descriptions of Africa and Africans in their own context, their studies and histories. In fact, Chawane (2016) noted that, "when Africans view themselves as centered and central in their own history, they see themselves as agents, actors, and participants rather than as marginal and on the periphery of political or economic experience" (p. 78). Thus Oyebade's (1990) observation that, "the Afrocentric perspective seeks to liberate African Studies from the Eurocentric monopoly on scholarship" (p. 234). Nonetheless, the Afrocentric maturity journey has not been without serious obstacles, and Mazama (2003) acknowledges that Afrocentricity has encountered monumental challenges as noted by Akbar (2003):

Afrocentricity rests upon our [afro-centrists'] ability to systematically displace European ways of thinking, being, feeling, etc., and consciously replace them with ways that are germane to our own African cultural experience... Its aim is to give us our African, victorious, consciousness back. (p. 5)

Afrocentricity, like Utu, approaches knowledge creation in a collective manner, such that languages, stories, proverbs, folklores, material culture, and myths, among others, are all sources of knowledge that is socially constructed (Somjee, 2020; Asante, 1990; Some, 1998; Oyebade, 1990; Verharen, 2002). In other words, people and their nature co-create knowledge that guide their relationships as one. Mkabela (2005) refers to this as collective consciousness and emphasizes the interconnectedness of self and others in the world (p.185). In this way, the value of oneness evolves within the African communities respectfully and organically (Dei & Kempf, 2013).

Afrocentrism strives to shift Africans to the centre rendering the narrative within the academic spheres more unique by amplifying African people's voices and deconstruct the Eurocentric approaches that have been used to study Africa and Africans. Asante (1987) views Afrocentricity as a concept that does not necessarily come to replace what has traditionally been there—Eurocentric or Americentric—but gives room and adds an opportunity to view the world through a different lens. As such and as Chawane (2016) posits, Afrocentrism “is not the antithesis of Euro centrism” (p. 16).

2.4 Utu/ Ubuntu: Afrocentric Philosophy of Being Human

Utu/Ubuntu philosophy is grounded within the African's core belief that “ I am because we are; and since we are, therefore I am” (Mbiti, 1969) embodied and enacted through an Utu/Ubuntu which is believed to be enshrined in the heart (Somjee, 2020, Ogude, 2016, Tutu, 2008). Consequently, selflessness and taking responsibility and dependability are characteristics of Utu/Ubuntu (Sigauke, 2016).

There are many similarities between Utu/Ubuntu and Afrocentricity. As distinct fields of study they complement each other. In this study, I used Afrocentricity as the ‘big

picture’ to center the experiences of the African teachers while I employed Utu/Ubuntu principles to situate/locate those experiences within the narrative experiences and perspectives of the teachers and their work in the Dadaab context. Utu/Ubuntu differs with Afrocentricity in that the humanist approach in Utu/Ubuntu suggests a “broader epistemological view than the Afrocentric paradigm, which encompasses all humanity values such as altruism, generosity, inclusiveness, kindness, respect, compassion, concern and a challenge to attain the best possible universal benefits” (Sulamoyo, 2010, p. 46). This distinction is elaborated further in the works of Sultan Somjee (2021).

Sultan Somjee, an Africa ethnographer and author of *One Who Dreams is Called a Prophet* and *Bead Bai* examines the African humanist philosophy of Utu. Utu is a Kiswahili word that comes from *mtu*, which means a human being, and refers to a set of humanistic values (Somjee, 2014). Kiswahili is a major language within East African countries and has over 90 million speakers across the continent. The southern part of Africa, where Utu is similar to Ubuntu, began adopting the language in their learning institutions; Swahili is becoming a major subject of study in universities¹⁴ (Williams, 2022). As such, the concept of Utu is widely understood across East and Southern Africa.

Ubuntu is a word commonly used in South Africa among the Nguni people. Like Utu, Ubuntu seeks to address that which is common within humanity and interconnectedness as a way of teasing out the responsibility of each person that flows from our connections (with nature, gods, Elders, ancestors and family). Fox (2010) states that in Ubuntu, the emphasis is placed on the human aspect, and teaches that the value, dignity, safety, welfare, health, beauty, love and development of the human being are to

¹⁴York University has an introductory course while University of North Carolina (USA) Swahili taught in the College of Arts and Sciences as one of the African, African American and Diaspora Studies while in South Africa the University of Cape Town will start offering Swahili as a major in 2028

come first and should be prioritized before all other considerations; particularly in modern times, Ubuntu comes before economics, financial and political factors are taken into account (p. 123). In this study, I consider how the national teachers enact these human aspects in their work.

Utu is the essence of being human (Somjee, 2008) like Ubuntu is the art of being a human being (Nzimakwe, 2014). Utu and Ubuntu in this study are used interchangeably to emphasize African teachings and understandings. Ubuntu/Utu are all-inclusive, deep-rooted African worldviews that pursue the primary values of intense humanness, caring, sharing and compassion, and associated values, ensuring a happy and qualitative human community, life in a family, atmosphere and spirit (Fox 2010, p. 124).

Utu/Ubuntu is a call to serve humanity in a realistic way. As people serve, they also participate in improving their community through positive actions as the national teachers are doing. These actions ensure that one remains connected, linked and bound to others. For instance, from the Ubuntu/Utu perspective, the act of teaching in a refugee camp is deemed a realistic/practical communal action aimed at alleviating human suffering. The best way one can demonstrate one's contribution to society is offering what they have for the benefit of all. The teachers are offering their skills for the benefit of the refugee students and their communities in the refugee camp. In the African context, it is human and prudent that in society, those who are "stronger" help the weaker members (Nzimakwe, 2014; Sulamoyo, 2010)

Somjee (2021), further explained the relationship/connectedness/interconnectedness between humans, nature and their Supreme Being in regard to Utu as shown in the figure below which is presented in

English and my Indigenous language, Kikuyu. In the figure, Utu (*Umundu*) is relational embodiment of the Supreme Being, ancestors, nature, Elders and community (Somjee, 2021). The holistic nature explained in this diagram encompasses those perspectives expressed in Ubuntu. They show the complementary nature they bring to the Afrocentric paradigm in the sense that Utu/Ubuntu has an all-rounded view of a person (*Mtu*) and the relationship they have with the living, non-living and the unseen.

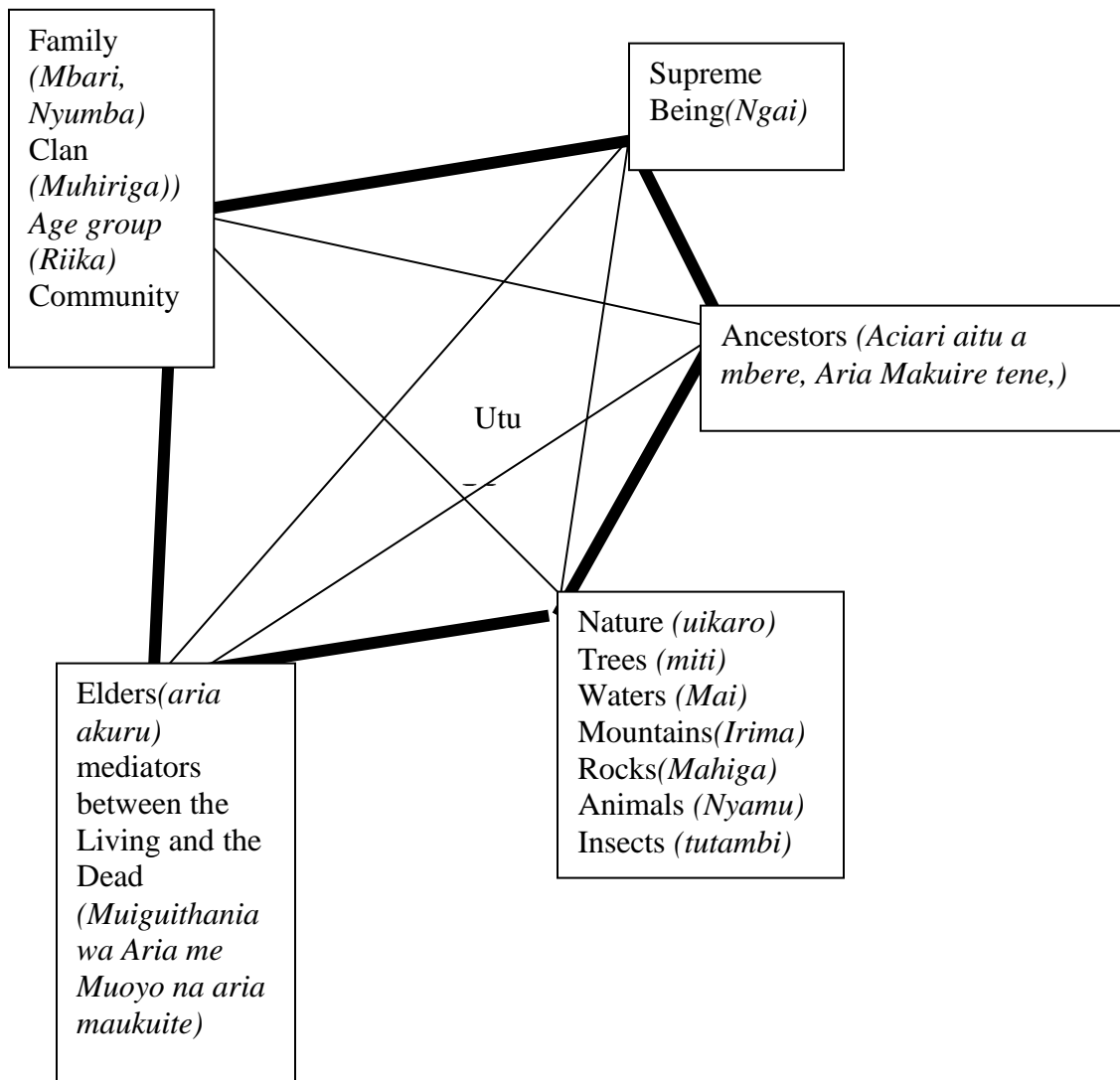


Figure 1:Utu (Umundu) is relational embodiment of the Supreme Being, ancestors, nature, Elders and community (Somjee, 2021).

Somjee (2014) explains that a holistic worldview of Utu creates harmony and well-being between human beings, the living, non-living, cosmos, and natural world (i.e. the relationships between Elders, ancestors, nature, family/clan/community, and the Supreme Being). Myers (1998) supports the view shared herein noting that “Africans

traditional culture apprehended a sense of self (Utu) extended in time to include all of the ancestors, the yet unborn, all of nature, and the entire community”(p. 76) [see also Nobles, 1976; Zahan, 1979].

Myers (1998) talks of “holonomy” (p.77), which is when one identifies self in such a way that it reflects the idea of a smooth manifold, which is a true characteristic of nature (Bohm, 1980; Chew, 1964; Capra, 1982). In other words, the whole being is contained in each of its parts:“Once the African begin to view themselves as one with nature, or as one with Infinite Consciousness and yet individually, a unique part of that consciousness manifesting” (Myers, 1998, p. 77). This consciousness is what Mkabela (2005) called the collective mode of consciousness that capitalizes on the interconnectedness of the self and the world and self and the other (p.185)

Subsequently, Utu as a philosophy teases out the role of culture in African peoples’ communities and relation to their universe, the metaphysical worlds of traditions like presence and respect for ancestors, gods and other beliefs. Furthermore, Utu values operate as an interconnected system of beliefs, which embraces all forms of life, resounding a common humanity, and confiding in a collective human effort to generate a more promising future geared towards resolving man-made problems that restores self-respect and dignity, in what I would consider to be shared prosperity. Myers (1987) gives this a rather interesting twist by claiming that from an Afrocentric conceptual system, life is meant to be carefree (free of worry, anxiety, fear, guilt, frustration, anger, hostility, and so on). The way the system is structured, we are one with the source of all things good, and, as such, infinite beings (p.78).

For me, Utu demonstrates that everyone has that inner humanity (Utu) and that we choose when to invoke it for the benefit of other beings. For instance, the Duruma people from the coastal region of Kenya use *utu* in their greetings; they greet as *Kuna utu* and the response would be *Tsina utu (Duruma)* to mean *Hunaneno-Sinaneno (Swahili)*. In English, this would loosely translate into “*Do you have any word - No I don’t have any word.*” While the English translation may sound inconsistent and vague, to locals these words carry an important meaning and significance pointing to how people relate to each other in the community. For instance, these greetings seek to know if the other person has any bad or ill motives against you. To them, Utu could easily mean the source of evil/good that dwells in humans.

The African humanist philosophy of Utu upholds the notion of life with the universe as a relational act (Mkhize, 2008). It is important to note that Sultan Somjee uses Utu as the center of humanity's peace. Within the contexts of this study, I will use Utu to refer to the good deeds/kindness offered to those in need in society. The participants in this study work with people who have experienced significant traumas due to war in their countries and are now refugees.

Utu/Ubuntu and Afrocentricity both utilize worldviews, material culture, myths, and motifs braided together in the African culture. All these reinforce the centrality of Afrocentricity and Utu/Ubuntu as frameworks for my study; to question, understand, and analyze challenges related to Africa and in the African context (Karenga, 1997; Somjee, 2020; Asante, 1990; Asante, 2005; Dei, 2012; Mazama, 2001; Schilele, 1994).

2.4.1 Refugee Education and the Afrocentric Perspective

As refugees and host African communities continue to live side by side in the camps, and as further research is conducted revolving around refugees, drawing upon an Afrocentric perspective can provide a fuller picture relating to the refugee environment. Degu (2007) claims that the problem with the Western conceptualization of the world, unlike the Afrocentric conceptualization, is that by its inherent definition the existence of a centre implies the existence of margins – it implies a sense of inclusion but also of exclusion, of the ‘I and the other’ (p. 98). Therefore, if you are on the margin, you become excluded from many forms of what is considered to be “normal life” and chances of taking flight from such exclusion may lead to adopting a new identity, as is the case of people residing and working in refugee camps.

If we were to look at the refugee-ness from non-African lens, one may claim a huge contradiction due to the high number of refugees that African countries house where values explained in Afrocentricity seem to be extinct. However, it is important to look at the deeper and broader factors leading to refugee-ness and the conceptualizations of refugees. Refugee, as we know the term, is well founded within the confines of the Eurocentric frame. Therefore, the need to search for an African definition becomes paramount. It is a lens that allows us to see ourselves in others, especially through the perception of the world as a common place for all of us. It is here that the idea of a community is strengthened since the individual thrives because others exist. Therefore, understanding refugees from an Afrocentric lens channels us back to the basic fundamentals of life in a community (inclusion), and where the African philosophy of Utu/Ubuntu “I am because you are...” comes into play.

Utu/Ubuntu values (tenets) share the relationship between the Elders, ancestor, family/community/clan, environment/nature, and the Supreme Being (Ngai) to complete an individual within a community or society. I argue that conceptualizations of Utu/Ubuntu should also include their residence in all of us. In my view, it is the ‘human-ness’ in us, but the way we choose to share it with others differs depends on the context.

The complementarity of Afrocentricity with Utu/Ubuntu worldviews is key in the sense that within the continental African scholarship, as well as social economies and politics, the concept of an African worldview is expressed in terms of ‘Utu/Ubuntu’. Brack et al. (2003) express that Utu/Ubuntu recognises the importance of the collective to an individual’s welfare by emphasising that the “individual’s whole existence is relative to that of the group” (p.319). Utu/Ubuntu is recognized beyond the African continent as a worldview that values the extended family, which is more communal than individualist, and more spiritual than materialist (Charles, 2007).

Utu/Ubuntu has been pivotal in solving challenges in Africa and internationally. Nzimakwe (2014) noted that Utu/Ubuntu-informed practices have been used to tackle cultural issues related to transition, strained relationships between young people and Elders, as well as youth crimes. In fact, beyond African boundaries, Jensen and Westoby (2008) did propose a restorative justice model for young Southern Sudanese offenders in Australia based on Utu/Ubuntu.

To sum up, the Afrocentric framework and Utu, both share worldviews that employ values practiced within African cultures, which underpin the centrality of the African perspective/philosophy as an acceptable framework to probe, comprehend and scrutinize problems related to Africans (Karenga, 1997; 1996; Asante, 2005; 1999; 1990;

Mazama, 2001; Schiele, 2017; 1994). Since Richards (1980) urges that a worldview grows out of a shared cultural experience (p. 4), these human experiences are thus born in cultures, spaces, beliefs and within a given time span. Therefore, worldviews established within these social cultural experiences of African people become a useful locational point to better decipher national (host) teachers and how they experience teaching refugee students in long-term refugee camp schools in Kenya.

Chapter 3: Literature Review

This chapter reviews relevant literature on refugee education and connects it to broader ideas on local education policies on education refugee education in Kenya. I elaborate the role of education in refugee contexts, by focusing on the historical journey of schools in Dadaab, the challenges faced by both the schools and teachers and the future of refugee education.

There is limited existing literature on non-refugee teachers teaching in refugee camp schools in Africa. Thus, there is a lack of adequate information about these teachers, their relationship with the refugee population and to a greater extent their role and contribution to academic empowerment of young people in the camps. There is not much critical information, which could act as a starting point to inform citizens “hosts” and their children about their potential strength to change things around refugee education, as far as hosting and teaching refugee children are concerned.

3.1 Somalia’s Refugee Crisis

I present Somalia here because it is the country from which majority of the refugees in Dadaab, Kenya, come from. Somalia experienced a graduate collapse of the state in the early 1990s. As a result, anarchy coupled with civil disobedience engulfed the once a great nation both socially and economically. Ethnic communities attacked each other despite the fact that the majority share the same language, culture and religion. Political power and leadership struggles forced most of the population to flee. Displacement occurred with a long lasting effect on those who feared persecution and were forced to leave. Schools and other social developments were targeted and destroyed

by warring groups. The country's democracy was put under immense pressure and trial and could not stand for long. As Chinua (1959) noted, the central government could not hold control the entire state, hence to date, the instability of Somalia continues to produce forced migration of its civilian population.

Some people sought refuge in Kenya while others camped in neighbouring countries such as southern Ethiopia. In Kenya, which is approximately 50 kilometres from the Somali border, a Somali population pitched tents there hoping for a better, calmer-non-violent return home one day. Today, over three decades and still counting, they are waiting for a better tomorrow. Unfortunately, hopes are dying. Lives lost. Now, a new generation born while '*on the move*' occupies the semi-arid areas of Northern Kenya – commonly known as Dadaab refugee camps.

Still with faint hopes of returning, long waits and false hopes, deep desire to have a better tomorrow, camp residents pooled together their meagre resources, established makeshift classrooms under the common trees of the desert 'the acacia.' Later, with financial aid from the UNHCR permanent structures were put up in the five camps¹⁵. Students learn and receive formal education from those schools. The permanent structures brought a beam of hope at some point, however, this beam has undergone serious threat of fading due to lack of adequate finances—five years ago the funding was at two percent in global refugee financial aid (MacKinnon, 2014).

The two percent financial aid may be a reminder that education for refugees is not a priority— it should facilitate survival and not development, as refugees wait for

¹⁵Ifo 1 & 2, Hagadera, Daghalay, and Kambios refugee camps

repatriation. What should be voluntary repatriation sounds like a mandatory return. Although, equipped with education, the learning and content learned favours the history of the host country. In fact, the majority of the trained teachers are from the host community, trained and equipped to teach in Kenyan schools, (the hosts teachers teach Kenyan cultural nationalist values to peoples on the run/move). Nonetheless, Dadaab has existed since the 1990s; therefore, referring to it as an emergency context is somehow misleading. Nonetheless, this is how we are to look at it for the sake of the people living in those conditions of ‘waiting for a better tomorrow.’

3.2 The Future of Refugee Education

Oh (2011) argued that refugee camps are situated in political, social, economic, and emotional ambiguous spaces, which cause a dilemma in the education provided in the refugee camps. Omata, (2020) added that these places are often “remote, underdeveloped and insecure” (p. 869). For instance Dadaab refugee camp is 50 km away from Somali border and in a harsh climatic and political environment. To the refugee communities this appears as a dilemma that may render education meaningless among them (Oh, 2011) because of the proximity of the perceived danger coupled with the remoteness, underdevelopment and insecurity.

According to Oh (2011) education is commonly used to proclaim familiar cultural, ethnic and ‘nationalist’ identities, and furthermore “preparing young people for a fairly certain employment future and for membership of a recognized nation-state” (p.71). While Oh was referring to cases experienced in the Karen refugee camp in Thailand, miles away from Africa, children born in the most refugee camps around the world, Dadaab included, silently suffer from the same hidden factors. Oh (2011) further

claims that the refugee education and its outcome revolve around the legitimized ambitions of the host country, which are often placed in geo-political compromise. What remains unclear is whether the international communities ever recognize the national teacher's role in shaping the refugee students' identities and sense of belongingness through their pedagogical endeavours and the curriculum they teach.

Quality education creates a path that leads refugees to greater prosperity; it is responsible for a stable and hopeful future and in many instances gives knowledge, which helps refugees to create an identity of themselves (Dryden-Peterson, 2011; MacKinnon, 2014). Furthermore, effective learning offers active training that drives refugees to become part of the economic progress in their communities and for the state that hosts them (Omata, 2020; Alloush et al., 2017; Kiragu, 2011; Jaji, 2009; Sanghi, et al., 2016, Vemuru, 2016). Schooling may also aid in refugee children having a sense of continuity, stability, and feeling safe, a key factor in their identity creation or 'recovery' from traumatic experiences.

Unfortunately, according to recent research, refugee education may be headed to a real bleak future, as it continues to lose its position among the donors priority ¹⁶ list (food, security, shelter), which is a crisis in itself (Cincurova, 2015; Thomas, Yao, Wright, Rutten-Tunner, 2019). This is despite the campaigns and programs put in place to support the call for the fulfilment of the sustainable development goals (SDG) including the SDG 4 (i.e. quality education). I agree there is an outcry, as Thomas et al., (2019), argued that "to meet the needs of the refugees, we must go beyond addressing only safety and security by including [refugee] education" (p. 79). The authors further noted the need

¹⁶Bureau of Population, Refugees & Migration, the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) and the UN Children's Fund and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Finland

to identify and develop best practices for supporting education in refugee camps. There exist few if any ways that would help to investigate the needs or even understanding the pedagogues' experiences mandated with the responsibility of helping achieve the United Nations SDG 4 within the literature reviewed. I trust that teachers' understanding of the need to provide quality education will keep at bay the looming danger of losing an entire generation to illiteracy (Blessinger & Sangupta 2018). However, adequate funds must be present to support this course (research, training and paying trained teachers) and giving education priority as one of the core basic needs.

The issue on “whose curriculum or education system” is to be used in most of these encampments or settlements has been a thorny one adding to the dilemma of refugee education. Oh (2011) acknowledges that most refugee communities, in hopes of overcoming the refugee camp conditions and livelihood, opt to use educational structures and curricula of the home country (Meyer et al, 2018). Others use language of instructions familiar to them especially in teaching their own history. For instance, refugees in Karen (Thailand) use their local languages as a symbol of culture and a shared history in reconstructing their original identity and sense of belonging (as Karen refugees) (Oh & Van Der Stouwe, 2008). However, in cases of long-term refugee camps like Dadaab in Kenya, where educational currency is so high and perceived to be the one and only way out of the camps (Karangu, 2017), teaching through refugees' language and cultures render such ambitions almost a futile currency. This view stems from the idea that the inherited Kenyan education system and curriculum does not give much room for local cultural languages to thrive. Other than the Swahili speakers of Kenya, the majority of other Indigenous languages are at the verge of extinction under the watch of the

nationalistic education system (Ouane, 2010). In fact, it has been documented that in early days when the initial refugees arrived from Somalia to Dadaab, CARE-Kenya used UNESCO material written in the Somali language to provide primary education (Ouna, 2010; Meyer et al., 2018; Dryden-Peterson, 2016). Unfortunately, this trend did not last long as the state of emergency in Somalia did not show any signs of ending.

As conditions in Somalia continued on a downward drift, it triggered debates between the residents and educators in the camp on the kind of education their children would receive. That debate favoured introduction of a more reliable system of education, which brought to an end the UNESCO tailored content in Somali language. The Kenyan curriculum was introduced in the refugee camp schools as early as 1997 (Dryden-Peterson, Dahya, & Adelman, 2017; Meyer et al, 2018). Although this change brought a ‘better’ currency to the students, there are student experiences that suffered a great loss such as language and culture. One may wonder how do the national teachers teaching in the refugee camps help? Or how do non-refugee researchers respond to their refugee encounters?

Later in this chapter, I address refugee students’ struggle with a number of educational issues including language. In Kenya, once students enrol in either ‘public’ or ‘private’ school, they are expected to study the Kenyan curriculum and learn curricular content in English and Kiswahili languages. Scholars documented this move as a “swift adoption of inclusion of refugees to national education systems” (Dryden-Peterson et al., 2018, p. 7). Although celebrated as positive step, in this study, I shed light on the challenges affecting both the students and teachers of the Kiswahili language. In some areas of Kenya, some aspects of the Swahili language can be ‘foreign’ to some people,

especially newcomers, who may not be familiar with its fundamentals as a teachable and examinable subject.

Research shows that due to these progressive developments, inclusion of refugees into national education systems has offered key opportunities for increased access to education for refugees, (Dryden-Peterson, 2016, 2017). However, countries in Africa and other developing countries face a huge shortage of trained teachers and are as a result forced to invite unqualified teachers to teach in classes that student-teacher ratios are very large (Karangu, 2017; Meyer, et al., 2018; UNESCO, 2015; Bird et al., 2013).

In light of these revelations, the future of refugee education seems bleak largely due to limited financial capacity from donors and the high numbers of refugees. According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the number of forcibly displaced people has reached 100 Million (UNHCR, 2022). Education budgetary allocation is at two percent (2%) equivalent to \$1.2 trillion annually (Global Refugee Forum, 2019, p. 41). Yet, the number of trained teachers teaching in the refugee schools is dwindling as a result of the continental shortage of trained teachers.

3.3 Refugees and the Right to Access Education in Kenya

Although refugee education and education in emergencies has received greater attention and support in recent years, the prolonged historical underfunding (budget cuts) and minimal prioritization of refugee education has affected the quality of education as well as the number of students enrolling in the schools (Duale et al., 2019). UNHCR (2016) reported that while only 8% of non-refugee children miss school globally, the number of refugee children missing school stands at 39%. The enrolment in secondary school raises serious concerns among the refugee population; only 23% of refugee

adolescents attend secondary school, compared to 84% of non refugee youths globally, and deeper concerns are that out of the 23% only 1% make it to university (UNHCR, 2016, 2017, 2018; Save the Children, 2019).

As noted earlier, Kenya has one of the largest refugee populations in the world. According to UNHCR (2014b) Kenya was host to over 607,223 registered refugees and asylum seekers, mainly from Somalia, South Sudan, Burundi, Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Ethiopia, Eritrea, and Uganda (p. 64). Dadaab refugee camp established in 1991 and Kakuma refugee camp in 1992 are the main homes to refugees in Kenya. Although Dadaab refugee camps were set up to house 90,000 people, there are more than 463,000 refugees in Dadaab (UNHCR 2014b) and over 180,000 in Kakuma. Other places in the urban centers are also said to be important sites where refugees are housed within the Kenyan boundaries and it is estimated that more than 50,000 refugees and asylum seekers live in those urban areas (UNHCR 2009b, Campbell 2006; Pavanello, Elhawary, and Pantuliano 2010, Omata, 2020).

In 2010 Kenyan parliamentarians ushered in a new constitution in which a few policies were introduced and safeguarded including rights to education for all children born and residing in Kenya. Consequently, two years later the new Kenya Education Bill of September 2012 was signed into law in January 2013, providing all children the right of access to basic education. This law defines basic education for pre-school, primary, and secondary education, equivalent of K-12 in the Canadian system (Constitution of Kenya, 2010).

According to the *Right to Education fact sheet* (2014) Kenya had ratified most international treaties that protect the right to education, which form part of the country's

laws. Article 53 (1) (b) of the *Constitution of Kenya*, states that every child has a right to free and compulsory basic education. Under Article 56 (b), minorities and marginalized groups have a right to be provided with special opportunities in the field of education. In general terms, Kenya recognises that education is the best key for empowering marginalised and vulnerable individuals in society. There have been progressive efforts made to enable those individuals to best exploit their life-chances alongside their other Kenyan peers through primary, secondary and tertiary education (Right to Education, 2014, p.1; Constitution of Kenya, 2010; Kenya Education Bill, 2012-2013). There is also evidence of ongoing national initiatives to protect the right to education in Kenya. However the ever-growing tension between Kenya and Somalia over the disputed maritime resources and violence in Kenya attributed to the militant group Al-Shabaab has fostered a hostile environment for refugees, particularly those from Somalia (Mendenhall et al, 2014). In 2015 the Government of Kenya issued threats to close the camps following attacks on Kenyan soils (Sieff, 2015; Government of Kenya, 2014). These threats do not help to develop educational opportunities or address educational issues in the camps.

In Dadaab children access education at different sites. As of 2017 there were 37 primary and 7 secondary schools while in Kakuma, there were 19 UNHCR funded primary schools and one *harambee* school – a community-based, supported entirely by the local community (Karangu, 2017). The majority of the refugee children attend these Kenyan education ‘public’ schools, while others attend ‘private’ schools set up in the blocks by refugee communities (Karanja, 2010; UNHCR, 2009b).

Between 2010-2012, the enrolment rate in these public schools was said to be below 50% for those school-going children in the camps (UNHCR 2014b; Omondi and Emanikor, 2012, p. viii). It was claimed that some refugee children were often out of school due to gender, poverty, disability, age, ethnicity and legal status, which are some of the social, cultural, economic and political factors that hindered them from attending schools (Almoshmosh, Bahloul, Barkil-Oteo, Hassan and Kirmayer, 2019; Flemming, 2017; Parker, Smith, Verdemato, Cooke, Webster and Carter, 2014).

3.4 Linguistic, Cultural and Religious Complexities of Dadaab

Africa is a community of differences consisting of diverse cultures, religions and languages (Dei, 2011, p.2). Dei was cautioning generalizing when engaging with African Indigenous knowledges. I too recognize the need to be cognizant of the internal struggles faced and the gains made by the Africans as far as language, culture and religion are concerned.

The linguistic, cultural and religious issues experienced in most refugee camps are complex. I will touch briefly on some issues outlining the complexity. Dadaab is a refugee camp endowed with cultural and religious complexities (Pyles, 2007). Over 90% of the population in Dadaab is made up of the Somali people. According to WorldAtlas (2017) Somalis mostly speak Arabic, which also happens to be the language of their religious (Islamic) faith. Given the shared and common language among the Somali people they also enjoy a shared cultural beliefs and norms, which are deeply rooted in their religious beliefs - Islam. According to some researchers, a majority of these people claim to have a common ancestry (Lewis, 1967; Cassanelli, 1982; Laitin & Samatar, 1987; Samatar, 1991b)

Given that the Somali community forms over 90% of the refugee camp's population, one may wonder why are the Somalis a dominant group in the camp? Samatar, (1991b) noted that Somalis lived in clan-based fiefdoms, which may have been the apparent reason for the discord witnessed within their country. Furthermore, history informs us that three European countries, France, Britain and the Italy, colonized Somalia. As with all colonized nations, Somalia also suffered the colonial legacy. Once united Somalia communities were left disintegrated and disfranchised. Abdi (1998) claimed that as a result of colonization the Somalis lost an important psychological bonding among the several major clans. This led to the current state in Dadaab following the fall of the government and other key institutions that forced the mass exodus from Somalia in the early 1990s.

3.5 Schools in Dadaab and the Subjects in Kenyan Education System

Dadaab was a small, isolated under-resourced center in the northern part of Kenya. There were no schools, security offices or health care facilities. People there lived a pastoralist life and were in dire need of key socio-economic developments. In 1991, refugees from Somali started flocking in and competition for resources began between the newcomers and the citizens (Duale, Munene & Njogu 2021; Kamau & Fox 2013; Milner 2009). In light of this crisis, humanitarian agencies prioritized providing most of the immediate basic needs (shelter, food, clothing and health care) while long-term needs such as education were not prioritized. The expectation that people will return to their homeland in a short time underlies decisions around education. Hence, education remains ancillary to other emergency aid Meyer, et al. (2019, p. 132). Like in many refugee

camps, students in Dadaab lack access to secondary education, which is largely due to budgetary constraints from the funding agencies (Local government and UNHCR).

Establishment of formal schools in refugee camps is often met with a myriad of challenges including a lack of adequate resources, trained teachers and physical structures, multiplicity of cultures and languages, and debates on which curriculum is to be followed (Meyer et al, 2019). Although there are mushrooming private schools within the blocks of Dadaab, which only serve those who can afford it (Dulae et al., 2021), the formal 37 primary and 7 secondary schools in Dadaab are indicative of bigger concern from an education point of view. A vast majority of students who may attend primary school in Dadaab may lack access to secondary school level of education. There is real concern as the majority are left with a bleak future (Abdi, 1998; Save the Children, 2018).

Since 1985 the Kenyan education system follows an 8-4-4, which means eight years of primary school education, four years of secondary school education and four years of post secondary (university). All grades are taught in English or sign language with one subject taught in Swahili language. It is expected that at the end of primary school, students sit for the Kenyan Certificate of Primary Education (KCPE) (MoE Kenya, 2015). This (KCPE) is a standardized exam that determines which secondary school students will attend for the next four years.

In Kenya there are almost thirty subjects currently being offered at the academic secondary school level, which are grouped into six learning areas: Languages, Sciences, Humanities, Applied Sciences, Creative Arts, and Technical Subjects. In Form 1 and 2 (Grades 9-10) students take as many as thirteen subjects. At the end of their second year

of secondary school education, students are required to select up to eight subjects. These eight subjects are completed in the final two years, and students need someone to consult with in order to make the best career match for them. This is because the final Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE) grade is generated based on an average of the eight subjects, meaning the best eight in cases where a student takes more than eight examinable subjects. In the eight subjects three are core courses that all students in Kenya must take: English, Kiswahili, and Mathematics.

Students must also take two science subjects: chemistry, physics, and biology, one humanities subject: history, geography, religious education, life skills, business studies, either one applied science: home science, agriculture, computer studies or one technical subject: drawing and design, building construction, power and mechanics, metalwork, aviation, woodwork, electronics. Importantly, the selected subjects are offered depending on individual schools and their capacity to facilitate them in terms of learning resources and availability of teachers. The national curriculum is heavily loaded with selective subjects. Some of these (despite the inclusion approach) are not taught in Dadaab schools: drawing and design, building construction, power and mechanics, metalwork, aviation, woodwork, electronics. The requirements of the KCSE show that curriculum requirements are varied and rigorous for students and require the guidance of skilled teachers (Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development, 2017).

Initial learning in Dadaab occurred under trees and makeshift classrooms, with cultural and religious learning in Madrassa (Arvisais, 2016; Taylor & Karanja, 2016; Flemming, 2017). The language of instruction was Somalia. From a global perspective, this kind of education was not in any way benefiting the students in Dadaab there were no

merits – a form of colonial legacy. After seven years away in a refugee camp and with no signs of peaceful return to Somalia, parents of Dadaab agreed to adopt the host's system of education, which invited the Kenyan Ministry of Education to permit the use of Kenyan National Curriculum in the camp schools. This move to formalization provided an opportunity for refugee students to receive a globally recognized, that of the Kenyan system.

The numbers of secondary schools in Dadaab are few. The first secondary school was established in 2000 following a steady growth in the number of students who were graduating from primary schools. Additional schools were built with meagre contributions from refugee parents and support of the UNHCR (Duale, Munene & Njogu 2021). Refugee students sat for the first KCSE in Dadaab in 2003 (UNHCR, 2015). As of 2015 over 90,000 learners attended 23 primary schools and seven secondary schools in Dadaab (UNHCR, 2015). There are still thousands of children who are not attending or enrolled in schools. In 2017 there were a total of 22 pre-schools, 22 primary schools, 6 secondary schools, 5 primary accelerated learning centers, 9 Alternative Basic Education (ABE) centers, and 6 vocational learning centers (TVET) in Dadaab refugee camps spread across 3 sites (Hagadera, Ifo and Dagahaley) [(UNHCR, 2018)]. The education system and curriculum used are from the host country, Kenya. These result allowed the refugee children enrolled in primary and secondary school to have access to the Kenyan national examinations as well as utilizing the services of national teachers and further providing key access to more job opportunities.

3.6 The Phenomenon of Teaching in Dadaab

There is no doubt that in refugee situations, students are affected by factors such as new language of instruction, emotional well-being, overcrowding lack of basic level education among the refugee students and exclusion from education, which often pity their current learning and future development (Dei & Kempf, 2013). However, students with the help of their teachers could potentially overcome some of these challenges if teachers are provided with the right support for professional development.

Unfortunately, and as Meyer et al, (2019) noted, the establishment of schools in refugee camps meets rugged obstacles, such as untrained teachers, scarce resources, culture and language diversity, curriculum debates, and the lack of physical structures (p. 132).

Duale, et al., (2021) reiterated that there is a huge shortage of trained teachers in the Northeastern region of Kenya due to the hardships and poor teaching conditions.

Consequently, majority of teaching force are sourced from the refugee community who are mostly uncertified.

3.7 Refugee Teachers (incentives) and the Overcrowded Classrooms

Historically, Dadaab has had a high number of students some of whom later become incentive or refugee teachers (meaning they themselves are refugees) teaching in both primary and secondary school within the camps. According to Duale, et al. (2019) refugee teachers make up 72% of the total teaching population in most camps including Dadaab due to opportunities for professional training available to them (UNHCR, 2018).

Incentive teachers who do not have much formal training draw on their personal learning and teaching methods. They often depend on their students' experiences to

inform their pedagogy and classroom management, which forces them to think deeply to invoke clear memories from their own experiences of schooling so that they can perform their teaching tasks (Karangu, 2017). They rely heavily on lecturing, rote memorisation and testing rather than inquiry-based learning (MacKinnon, 2014; Jeff, Christopher, & Daiana, 2001). This teacher-centred approach is also due to the scarcity of resources and time constraints. Teachers return to pedagogical tools that they find convenient for them especially when it comes to meeting the curriculum requirements.

Recent literature has indicated that a few NGOs running these refugee camp schools often deliver briefings on the organisational policies to these teachers with an aim to reduce the professional gap (Duale, et al., 2019, Save the Children, 2018). Inadequate funding has been cited as a major reason why teacher professional developments are not achieved. Likewise, some of the NGOs running these schools face similar financial problems and as a result they do not organise formal training or employ a sufficient number of refugee teachers (Duale, et al., 2019). Education is perceived as one of the best paths for leaving the camps, thus majority of the camp dwellers (parents and guardians) send their children to the schools with the hope that one day they would get an opportunity for a scholarship that would in turn facilitate their transition out of the camps.

Research shows that overcrowded classrooms are not healthy for the majority of students who may struggle in those spaces, leading them to feel less supported while there and hence lack interest to continue with school (Sinclair 2001; Sommers, 2001). Whether trained or not, dealing with overcrowded classrooms may lead to underperformance, which may have a reverse outcomes leading to student's lack of interest. For instance, if a trained national teachers (non-refugee) is equipped with

inadequate culturally relevant curricula and training teaching in a refugee overcrowded classroom may lack the knowledge on how to implement or even modify curriculum resources and pedagogy that would suit all learners (Sommers, 2001; Finn Church Aid, 2022).

There is also an important gender gap in learning. Female students are susceptible to cultural and religious practices that prohibit them from participating in activities that would lead to them sharing same places with male counterparts at close proximities. Most girls drop out of school after the second year of high school (Grade 10) (Lewin, 2009; Lloyd, Mete & Sathar, 2005; Save the Children, 2016).

Dagane and Aden, (2021) argued that cultural and familial attitudes in Dadaab exposes girls and women to excess vulnerability, subordinating them to their male counterparts. Cultural factors remain a huge a barrier to girls' academic achievement, these cultural systems are silent and allow ubiquitous control against a majority of the girls in the camps. Among the Somali people there is strong preference for male children (Noori, 2017). Such strong preferences inform some of the lessons taught in the society where these girls reside. As Noori (2017) explained this is an outright depiction of cultural “gender-based discrimination of the highest magnitude and no doubt fuels girls to quit learning” (p. 113). It also contributes to the mental health issues among the girls, which require special culturally sensitive training and attention.

The available resources in refugee camp schools are said to be insufficient, making it difficult to support the large numbers of learners and teachers within the school, which affect both the quality of instruction and student achievement (Duale, et al. 2019; Lyby, 2001). Confirming this position is a UNESCO's report, which stated that,

faced with the trauma and interrupted education of these children, teachers find themselves ill equipped to deal with the challenges – especially since many of them have little or no qualifications themselves (UNESCO, 2018).

3.8 Two Schools in One System: A Possibility Toward the Future

As a national teacher and an educator I am seriously concerned about the future of the refugee children. I acknowledge that refugee children are more likely to be out of school for a long period of time (UNHCR, 2011). According to UNHCR, (2011) this period could be between three to four years, long enough to create a significant gap and detachment to education. This makes it hard for the children catch up on lost learning. Save the Children (2019) affirmed this position noting that the majority of these students were more likely to drop out if they did not receive the right support (Sommers, 2001). Refugee children are five times more likely to be out of schools and also less likely to progress with their education compared to non-refugee children (Winthrop & Kirk, 2008; Reyes, 2013; Child Protection Working Group, 2013; Save the Children, 2016; Save the Children, 2015; Save the Children, 2018; Dryden-Peterson, 2011).

Following the tremendous influx of newcomers in 2011 and 2012, Dadaab's primary school attendance rate went up to 43%, with a corresponding 12% attendance rate at the secondary level (RefWorld, 2011; Buck & Silver 2013; Banki, 2013). This increase, further created significant barriers to quality education, for instance, lack of enough teaching and learning materials such as textbooks, stationery and teachers' manuals. Congested classrooms were witnessed (in 2016 average as teacher-to-student ratio stood at 1:100 while that of the desk-to-student was recorded at 1:7) (Meyer et al., 2018; Dulae et al., 2019).

This influx reality led to the 2016 ‘two-in-one school’ system concept, which was introduced in the two major refugee camps in Kenya (Dadaab and Kakuma). The method allowed for twice the number of enrolments; meaning one set of students attended classes in the morning while the other set used the afternoon hours. Teachers championed this creative idea, which came to life following the policy banning construction of new permanent structures in the camps. The ‘two schools in one’ concept is only practiced in the secondary schools given that there are more students qualifying from primary schools who deserve to access quality secondary education. It is documented that Dadaab’s 37 primary schools supply their graduates to only 7 available UNHCR funded secondary schools. To address the mass shortage of core infrastructure the ‘two schools in one’ concept was designed such that there were shared physical infrastructure including teaching-learning materials, while achieving a double enrolment (Murwanjama & Mureu, 2017). More so, the learning in this school system is standardized in that it was broken down into 40-minute lessons meeting the set Ministry of Education’s criteria, which demand students get five hours of curriculum instruction and two hours of co-curricular engagement every school day (Murwanjama and Mureu, 2017).

Although all physical infrastructures are shared between the morning and afternoon schools, there are critical features of the system that separate and identify the two systems. The different school uniforms, two sets of teachers, administrators such as two sets of Head of Departments, two Deputy Principals and one Chief Principal in charge of the schools, sets the two schools (morning and afternoon) apart or rather distinguishes their students (Murwanjama and Mureu, 2017; Dulae, et al., 2019; Duale, Munene and Njogu, 2021).

It is possible that the two schools in one system is futuristic. According to the reports, this system allowed a higher degree of flexibility that brought greater chances of more students going to school especially female students who chose to attend the afternoon schools. More so, those mature students who had to take care of their children found it convenient to attend school almost every day. In many ways the ‘two schools in one’ concept provided access to a number of students whose life circumstances would prevent them from achieving a secondary school education (Duale, et al., 2021).

While this concept seems to function seamlessly well for the schools in Dadaab, it does not in any way lower the need to address the educational needs of students and teachers in the refugee camps. It is one of the ways local players are finding creative solutions to whatever is at their disposal. Duale, et al., (2019) claimed that the vast majority of students attending primary school in Dadaab might never have the opportunity to achieve a secondary level of education (p. 12). Consequently, some of those students attending secondary schools might never fulfill their educational dreams past the secondary school largely due to cultural demands and the need to work to support their family.

For students who do have the opportunity and succeed in the Dadaab high schools, there is much to look forward to. The nationalized education system is nationally and globally recognised. More so, it appears to be a somewhat sustainable way to enable dislocated children to access accredited and certified learning opportunities, which is monitored for quality. Quality education is a promise to greatness and a key to future opportunities (UNHCR 2014b, 2014a; INEE 2010; UNHCR 2012; UNESCO 2004, 2005,

2014; Bulbul 2008; Dryden-Peterson 2010; Lambo 2005; Lindley 2011; Kirui & Mwaruvio 2012; Mendenhall et al, 2015).

According to Student Refugee Program (2022) a number of students who complete high school education from the refugee camp schools have the opportunity for resettlement as well as being provided with innovative pathways to integration for young refugees. Once students join this program, they have access to sponsorships and students who complete their post-secondary programs ninety seven percent (97%) tend to further their education while a number of them, eighty five percent (85 %), find employment in their chosen fields of study after they graduate (WUSC, 2022).

So far the literature has established that the non-refugee teachers depended on the salary earned; every end of the month courtesy of the refugee camp schools to support their livelihoods. However, there was no doubt that refugee camps conditions are hard to operate from thus there should be a great consideration by the government and the UNHCR to integrate refugees into the national education system be reflected in the teachings and texts acknowledging them and if possible mainstreamed.

This integration should as (Dei, 2019) explained, take into account “proper inclusion, which is about transformative practices and beginning a new” (p. 4). Although Dei, James-Wilson & Zine (2002) focused on inclusion within the Euro-American context, I find it fitting in this case. The refugee students find themselves in a different country following new curriculum on top of other education systems. I further find Dei, James-Wilson, Karumanchery & Zine’s (2000) seven domains [i) Representation, ii) Language, iii) Family, community and school interface, iv) Co-operative education, v) Equity and values education, vi) Indigenous/community/local cultural knowledge(s) and

vii) Spirituality and learning] of inclusive learning very informative and would be relevant to addressing the refugee educational issues (Dei & McDermott, 2019). Further, given the scale and duration of displacement some of these people have experienced, a more flexible system should be sought to allow them status in the country. Some of them were born in the camps anyway.

Kenya national teachers are trained in different institutions, for instance, primary/elementary teachers' preparation happens in the primary teacher colleges and takes a maximum of two years to complete. Secondary/high schoolteachers are trained at two institutions: University or/and diploma college. At the university they are trained on two major areas of specialization among other university common units for a period of four years while those training in diploma colleges takes three years. In addition to subject based learning these teachers are subjected to teaching practice, primary school teachers mandated to carry out three teaching practice sessions staggered during their two-year training. The secondary schoolteacher trainees immerse themselves into a two months first practicum and three months long teaching practice depending on the institution they are enrolled at. These practicals take place in schools approved by the ministry of education and must commensurate the level at which an individual will attain their certification (primary teachers practice in the primary school while secondary school teachers conduct theirs in the secondary schools) (Katitia, 2015).

To conclude, much of the existing literature on refugee education has not taken an 'Afrocentric' approach to study educational challenges and possibilities in refugee education in the African context. This void of knowledge and information leaves

generation to come who would teach in the refugee camp schools in a lacuna without much direction on ways to center African knowledges and experiences.

This dissertation may serve as a beginning exemplar (Mazama, 2003) to future scholars interested in the topic. . There has been deliberate omission of the knowledge involving hosts of the refugees and their experiences and perspectives. This study advances the idea that Afrocentricity is theory/paradigm/perspective or discipline dedicated not only to understanding self, society and the world but also to enriching and changing the teachers' and students' appreciation and in human history and experiences from an African perspective (Karenga, 1988).

Chapter 4: Methodology

4.1 Narrative Methodology

Narratives as a way of expressing or retelling lived experiences has been utilized by African scholars including Ngugi wa Thiong'o (1965, 1981), Sultan Somjee (2020), Chinua Achebe (1958), Wole Soyinka (1963), Chimamanda Ngozi (2009), and Chigozie Obioma (2015). Some of their notable narratives are presented in popular books including *The River Between* (wa Thiong'o), *One Who Dreams is Called a Prophet* (Somjee), *Things Fall Apart* (Achebe), *The Trials of Brother Jero* (Soyinka), *The Danger of a Single Story* (Adichie), and *The Fishermen* (Obioma). There are many other African notable writers like Wangari wa Maathai and Micere Mugo whose narratives present and center Afrocentric ways of doing in relaying critical messages about the environment, development, gender equity, politics, peace, stability and tranquility in Africa. Majority of these authors offer narratives of their lived experiences or declared (fictional) metaphorical writing to further share their knowledge and perspectives with the wider audience. Narratives invite readers to follow the authors along in learning the new and remembering the old.

This study employed narrative approach, informed by African perspectives and worldviews, to examine Kenyan national teachers' lived experiences of education in Dadaab (see Connelly & Clandinin, 1990). I also draw upon key African scholars who present different stories involving African lived experiences and whose narratives require us to shift our thinking so that we can start to re-tell or re-remember who we are through a process of 'decolonising our minds' (Thiong'o, 1981).

Connelly and Clandinin (1989) describe narrative approach as the “description and re-storying of the narrative structure of varieties of educational experiences” (p.10). Narratives are “a reflective process of re-storying” (p. 10). Similarly, Moen (2006) describes narrative as “a story that tells a sequence of events that is significant for the narrator or his/her audience” (p. 4). In fact, in her article, (Clandinin, 2019) clearly points out that narrative inquiry are an approach to the “study of human lives conceived as a way of honouring [marginalized] lived experience as a source of important knowledge and understanding” (p. 217).

According to Kim (2016), narratives are what make up a story and therefore, narrative inquiry is, then, a storytelling methodology through which we study narratives and stories of experience (p.118). Further, Clandinin (2013) notes that narrative inquiry is approached from two different starting places: Telling stories and living stories. ‘Telling stories’ refer to inquiries that start with researcher-participant conversations over a series of meetings, while ‘living stories’ involve walking alongside participants during their daily lives. A narrative researcher may pose questions to the participant, but the interview is conversational in nature with minimal structure (Patton, 2002; Chase, 1995; Atkinson 1996). In conceptualizing this study, I noticed that the voices of teachers in a refugee camp were missing. Drawing on narrative methodology I sought to elicit voices of those who “might otherwise go unheard” (Cortazzi & Jin 2001, p. 28).

Narrative methodology is appropriate for an interpretive framework, which employs an Afrocentric perspective and is rooted in an Utu/Ubuntu value system to understand participants’ implied meanings and understandings about their experiences. As I utilized the narrative a methodology I took into account Utu/Ubuntu principles of

respect and equality. In conversing with the teachers, I paid attention to the significance of attending to local ethical protocols of respect and honour. I took time to understand the teachers' schedule and work with that as I did my data collection. This allowed the teachers to do their work as scheduled without having to alter things significantly for my sake. This way, I considered how I could support their work and what they value as opposed to being a burden to their busy lives (see Mkabela, 2005).

Somjee (2020) in his book, *One Who Dreams is Called a Prophet*, narrates his lived experiences in thematic narratives where he uses material culture to symbolize his interactions with nature and other beings. Each theme he shares is supported by various interrelated sub-themes. All of the themes tell the story of his over forty years as an ethnographer and researcher. Borrowing from Somjee's thematic structure in sharing his story, I utilized this style in analyzing the stories shared by the national teachers teaching in refugee camps.

Narrative inquiry is "both a view of and a methodology for studying experience" (Clandinin, 2013, p. 9). It allows us to think about how we look at lived lives or what we actually seek to know about these lived encounters. Looking at how Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o's "*The River Between* (1965)" and Sultan Somjee's "*One who Dreams is Called a Prophet*" (2020) present their lived experiences in a way that make sense for Africans and which they can relate to, I sought to also discuss the teachers' narratives through an Utu/Ubuntu lens and in a manner that would center and make sense to the people in the context of the study. Furthermore, Somjee's (2020) methods involve drawing understandings from proverbs (see also Dei & McDermott, 2019) such as the proverb '*One Who Dreams is called a Prophet*' borrowed from the Turkana people of

North-western Kenya. Like in the writings of Thiong'o and Obioma, Somjee also uses stories, metaphors, satire, riddles, proverbs, allegories and songs in his writings, valuable and central forms of knowledge among the different Indigenous communities in Africa (Dei & McDermott, 2019). In my study, I also paid attention to wise sayings and proverbs that the teachers used and their significance to their work and lived experiences. It is important to understand the metaphors, parables and figurative language they use in order to make sense of their stories or experiences pertaining to the Dadaab refugee camp schools.

In Somjee's narrative, he tells his readers what he hopes for. For instance he sees a peaceful future for his country free of corruption and discrimination where all celebrate beauty and unity. In my interviews I seek to find what the teachers see and conceive of the future as presented through the emerging themes in their narratives.

In this study I use the terms narrative and stories interchangeably. Although, story exists as one of the many types of narratives told, it has in some instances received negative connotations. For example, growing up as a young boy, my understanding of a *story* was that of making up some ideas. In other words, if someone is lying they were said to be "giving stories". In academic circles, the concept can be coined as fabrication (Polkinghorne, 1995; Gubrium & Holsten, 2009). In fact, in the findings section, some study participants while explaining their experiences repeated a few times words like, "*this is not a story Kimani, I have first-hand experience with it.*" This was to let me know that his was not a "*story*" but a real lived experiences story.

Stories have largely shaped my life and have taught me a lot about African cultural values and respect. As an African I still believe that old age comes with immense

wisdom and that lived experiences over time provides one with an expanded understanding of the world (Dei, 1996). Ngujiri (2007) and other African scholars emphasize that Africans are still for the most part an oral people. In fact, storytelling (narrating) forms the bulk of cultural transmission. Kolawole (1997) and Likimani (1985) note that the primary storytellers are Elder-sage women and men, the mothers/fathers and grandmothers/grandfathers of the community, who told stories as a way of life, teaching, educating, warning, as well as entertaining throughout their lives (Dei & Kempf, 2013, Dei, 1996). Furthermore, as depicted in Afrocentrism, Elders are esteemed as role models and it is their responsibility within the community to guide in what would be termed as appropriate cultural teaching of the society morally, educationally and in other societal responsibilities. I consider the teachers' shared narratives educational and moral lessons that would help advance the educational experiences of refugee students as well as the working experiences of teachers working in refugee camps.

In conclusion, my adoption narrative methodology as articulated by Clandinin & Connelly (1989) and informed by Afrocentric theoretical framings helped shape data collection for this study. I sought to pay closer attention to the diversity of human experience shared by the teachers (see Connelly, Clandinin, & He, 1997) as I listened to the participants' stories. The narratives allowed me to make sense of the teachers' experiences and interpret them from an Afrocentric perspective. The flexibility in this methodology allowed me to connect the lessons from the teachers to my own lived experiences as a trained Kenyan teacher albeit not working in a refugee context. I took what participants shared with me not just as stories, but real everyday experiences that informed who they are and the work that they do and in the context that they are in. In

other words, narrative methodology allowed me to center stories as lived experiences (Connelly, et al., 1997) and center narratives or stories as an important method of sharing within the local, national and global community from an African perspective.

4.2 Inviting Participants

For this research I did purposive sampling (Patton, 2002) whereby I deliberately recruited Kenyan nationally trained teachers (host teachers) teaching in the Dadaab refugee camp. Purposeful sampling, according to Patton (2002), allows researchers to recruit individuals who are specifically chosen because they represent typical cases for the research. Moreover, Emmel (2014) argues that purposeful sampling provides the researcher with insights and confidence to speak to specific participants who become conscious that the stories from the research will be used in making appropriate recommendations beneficial to people immediate to them and or far away (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Additionally, and as Creswell (2013) argues, when one opts for a purposeful sampling, they emphasize “information rich” individuals or places.

I focused on the teachers who were currently teaching or those who had taught in camp schools for more than three years. I felt that three years in the school camps would have provided an individual some knowledge about the contexts they were working in and the unique professional needs of schooling in the camp. Furthermore, the rate of turnover within the teaching fraternity in the camp is very high and therefore three years was a good time frame to possibly gather rich data.

As a national teacher in Kenyan schools I have the advantage of familiarity and had some advantage as an insider which made it easier for me to contact and recruit participants (although an outside to some degree because I have not lived and taught in

the refugee camps). I collected my data during the Covid-19 pandemic and as such, I was not able to physically travel to the refugee camp schools to recruit and interview national teachers who were teaching there or had taught in the camp for three or more years.

For my recruitment process, I reached out to the teacher recruiting agencies in the refugee camps, which included the Cooperative for Assistance and Relief Everywhere (CARE) and the Kenya and Windle Trust Foundation. I contacted their coordinators through email and other social media platforms including Face book. These organizations were able to help me distribute the invitations to prospective teacher participants for my study. I considered this as the best path to utilize especially because these organizations had wider relevant contact information for those who taught in the camp three years or more but were no longer currently teaching in the camp schools. In the recruitment flyer, I included information about the study, the purpose/goal and how to contact me (email and WhatsApp) if they were interested in participating in the study.

A total of 10 national teachers reached out to me via email and WhatsApp short texts indicating their interest in taking part in the study. Once the interested teachers contacted me via WhatsApp messages, I sent them the formal introductory letters and had a few exchanges with each person to clarify any questions they might have had. I sent them electronic consent forms to sign and indicate their agreement to take part in the study. I also notified them that they were free to drop out of the study or decline to answer any interview questions without experiencing any negative consequences.

After receiving the consent forms from those interested in participating in the study, I organized one-on-one Zoom conversations. The narrative conversations were conducted as in-depth semi-structured interviews at a time participants chose and in their

comfort zones either home/school away from unintended listeners and loud disturbing noises or any other places where the teachers found it appropriate and safe to share their storied narratives (Boyce, & Neale, 2006). I was able to interview 9 participants. One participant contracted Covid-19, which made it difficult to continue with the study.

All participants volunteered their time and knowledge; there were no forms of payments made in return. Interviews happened on University of British Columbia (UBC) official Zoom and Microsoft Teams platforms and followed the online interview protocols provided by UBC's ethical review committee. The university had provided guidelines on how carry out and navigate online research following new Covid-19 research protocols (<https://ethics.research.ubc.ca/behavioural-research-ethics/behavioural-research-covid-19-guidance>). For instance, I made sure the participants were aware that they could turn off their videos and reach out to me through other means (Whats App text) if my screen froze or if there were other interruptions.

Following narrative methodology, I listened to the participants 'telling stories' two to three times (via Zoom) over the course of six months. I engaged teachers in their experiences of journeying through the relationship between education in refugee camps and host communities. Specifically, I explored teachers' experiences and how they navigated through their practice, their socio-cultural values, their understandings of school culture, and their roles in the identity construction of African refugees within the camps.

4.3 Participant Profiles

Nine national teachers (five female and four male) - Roki, Caku, Jeka, Juka, Josi, Jusi, Meke, Omi, and Beto - participated in this study. The names presented here are

pseudonyms to protect their identity and uphold their privacy. Each of these nine national teachers had been working in Dadaab for over three years, in fact, six of them mentioned that they had lived and worked there longer than three years. This revelation made me even more curious to engage in in-depth dialogues with the participants' regarding teaching and more so their experiences and the reasons for their long stay of teaching in the camp. In what follows I introduce each of the participant teachers.

Roki is a male teacher who had taught in the refugee camp for over five years. He shared that before arriving at the camp he was not very sure whether the 'camps' would accept him as a new arrival, but he was surprised to see how he was very well received upon arrival in the refugee camps. He noted that he had a young family and wife who inspired him to continue teaching in the refugee camp schools.

Caku is a female teacher, who started teaching at the camp as a regular classroom teacher. She then got an opportunity to lead several teams as a department head in one of the schools.. She was headed to greater leadership roles within the administration ranks. She did not suppress her appreciation for the opportunities she had interacting with both the national and refugee populations for more than three years.

Jeka, another female teacher had left the camps and was living with her family in the outskirts of the capital city, Nairobi. Her fond memories of Dadaab were nostalgic and at times full of horror but I noticed how she smiled all the way through our interviews until the small zoom screens went dark and silent on my end. Before she called it a day at the camps Jeka had taught the refugee students for eight years.

Juka, a female teacher narrated how her parents were adamant and never approved of her relocating to the refugee camps. She noted that she had bills to take care

of and as a first-born daughter a situation, which compelled her to take up the job. Juka spoke about having a huge responsibility to her younger siblings as well. She described her departure from home for the camps as a “sweet and sour one.” At the time of the interview Juka was heading to her fourth year of teaching in the camps.

Josi, a male teacher had lived and worked in Dadaab since 2015 during the time of the interview. He was so determined to make a change in a refugee child’s life; in a creative way. He often “dared” the camps’ security protocols to help his ambitious but worried students. Over the years this commitment earned him a reputation amongst his students and their parents. He made them what they “desired”.

Jusi, a male teacher had been in the Dadaab camps since the first secondary schools started in 2012. He considered himself a sage. The duration of his stay had facilitated such a professional growth in the field of teaching and strong resilience residing in the camps. Jusi was at the tail end of his Masters degree in a local university at the time of the interview an achievement that made him so proud and joyful.

Meke, a female teacher happily taught mathematics in the camp but noted that at times she was worried most about her family and her own children missing her while she stayed away teaching. She did all she could within her reach to motivate and guide female students in the camp whom she considered vulnerable and at risk. She was in her third year teaching in the camp.

Omi, a male teacher, was also in his third year of teaching in the camp. He vehemently disregarded encampment and the treatment incentive teachers received from their employing agencies. He worried that the education he and his colleagues were

offering was so nationalistic that it excluded the refugee students. His call for integration was loud and clear to me.

Beto, a male teacher had been teaching in the camp for six years at the time I was doing this research. Beto noted that he had witnessed significant changes at the camps, from students' 'go-slow' (protests) to full blown strikes. He was there when refugee parents started taking educational matters seriously and made positive contributions to help teachers teach their children.

All the above teachers identified as professing the Christian faith. They taught different subjects in the secondary schools within Dadaab refugee camp schools. They all came from different cultural groups and in different counties in Kenya. The teachers spoke different first languages but all understood and fluently spoke in Kiswahili and English. All the interviews were conducted in English.

The national teachers in this study noted that they were considered as the "Elders" considering their teaching and extensive lived experiences in the camp schools. Furthermore, as experts in the teaching field they explained that they took it upon themselves to not only teach the students but also to 'train' the incentive teacher colleagues who also happened to be their former students in the camp. This speaks to nurturing and apprenticeship relationships between the Elders and young community members in the camps.

As I listened to these national teachers, I considered them sages because the knowledges they shared and their practices had not been documented anywhere. Their employment contract did not stipulate that they would be 'training' incentive teachers, who were not their colleagues. They were conducting duties beyond what is expected of

them as teachers and in accordance to the stated duties of teachers in the Teachers' Service Commission¹⁷ including acting as humanitarian aid workers. As African "Elders" they took it as one of their core responsibilities to impart knowledge to effect positive cultural change in education by sharing critical experiences with their junior novice teachers and colleagues (Dei, 1996; Kolawole, 1997; Likimani, 1985; Ngujiri, 2007).

4.4 Interview as a Source of Data with Utu/Ubuntu Framing

The conversations I had with the participants allowed time for them to share stories that were so dear to their hearts as seen especially when they were describing a tough time in their daily routine. In describing their experiences participating teachers used different language styles, metaphors, riddles and proverbs, which helped to center their knowledge and experiences from an African perspective. Here, the importance of oral transmission of experience and knowledge working in the camp became more intimately relevant to an Afrocentric methodology of conducting interviews and collecting stories from the field as I relied entirely on the participants' observations and retelling of stories from their perspectives as national teachers.

I collected data over a period of eight months. I conducted nine online interviews, each interview lasting between 60-90 minutes long I used open-ended questions to gain insights into the teachers' experiences. I often used phrases such as "Tell me about your teaching..." which was a way of inviting the participants to the dialogue and keep the conversation going as they shared their stories.

All the conversational interviews were audio recorded and consequently transcribed verbatim. Although I am calling them interviews, they must be understood

¹⁷ Teachers Service Commission is the Kenyan national organization responsible for hiring and placement of school teachers across the country

from a point that they are different from the conventional research interviews where the emphasis is on the question/answer structure. Nonetheless, the element of ‘interview’ was evident as I found myself as the researcher inviting the participants to share their stories or tell their narratives during the interview. My ‘researcher’ involvement was also present during transitioning from one question to the next, which required flexibility as the participants provided unique personal responses and reflections.

I adopted Allen’s (2019) questioning style for narrative interviews by using an open-ended technique. For example, I started with, ‘*Tell me about how you prepare to go teach*’. These structures elicited a story from the participants. Given that as the researcher I was interested in understanding the lived experiences and voices of the participants, the narrative interviews became important as I did not only listen to the stories but also paid attention to the participants’ “emotions.”

After conducting the interviews with the first and second participants, I revisited my interviews (transcripts and audio) as the data process continued. This gave me a chance to draft key starting points before entering into the online interview meetings with the rest of the study participants. These prior reviews helped me probe for further information as well as seek deeper clarification of colloquial/slang phrases such as “*down Kenya*”- which basically referred to other areas away from Dadaab like Nairobi.

The transcribed data was later analysed, each generating a narrative. These single narratives were further analyzed thematically, which produced a list of broad ideas/themes. Every time I transcribed an interview I listened to the recorded audio conversations a few times. This helped me to create a thread of single narratives. After several times of advance listening I identified similar narrative cues that formed

functional themes for this dissertation. I keenly listened and compared narratives for accuracy. Corroboration was also emphasized to allow for authenticity. From this repeated listening and continuous corroboration, I realized that these teachers did not only share their experiences for the sake of the study but also indicators for a more nuanced analysis and understanding of data for me as a researcher. Some of the participants would often tell me, , “I know this is not related but it is to offer more insights for your own benefit.”

Participants shared their experiences with an intention of “helping” me understand further and make more wholistic connections with the context and the people involved. This tied into the concept of Utu/Ubuntu (I am because you are, and You are because I am”). Think beyond me as a researcher and getting me immersed in their world and to succeed delve deeper into their “forbidden” narratives (those that they requested me not to record). This Utu/Ubuntu understanding was expressed as the interconnectedness of each other, events and knowledge sharing during this.

Furthermore, the trust that had sprouted along the way (from our initial interaction), I could tell there was a sense of vulnerability on the part of the participants and with that came a responsibility for me to treat their shared experiences and stories with utmost respect, pay attention to their needs and desire and respect their privacy. As such, some participants asked me to stop the recording sometimes during the interview whenever wanted to share personal or sensitive information they did not want to be recorded. I fully acknowledged that as a representational (researcher) voice, one requires the trust of those being researched, and creating trust calls for pure attention, respect and authenticity (Kartch, 2019, p. 3) during and after the research process.

4.5 Data Analysis Procedures

Analysis in narrative inquiry, requires a researcher to constantly reflect as they translate the field to research texts. In this study I employed a functional narrative analysis (Labov & Waletzsky, 1967; Keoning-Kella, 2015; Holsten, & Gubrium, 2012; Baxter, 2011, Hogan, 2006). Traditionally, a functional narrative analysis approach examines the purpose of the narrative. Drawing on Clandinin and Connelly's (1989) approach of narrative to emphasize the participants' stories of experience in teaching and learning, I extended their question of what it means to "educate and be educated" to the African refugee context (p. 10).

In analysing the data, I listened to the audio recordings multiple times as well as read along the transcribed scripts checking for common ideas running through the narratives. Each transcript was manually analysed and coded a process that helped me to notice how the participants responded to the interview questions. I recorded these differences as important structures of the stories they opted to share. I too added my interpretation to help position myself as a researcher as this could have been hard to avoid (Riessman, 1993, p. 61). I thus approached the analysis in two ways: I first coded the data and analyzed it for initial categories. I then re-categorized and refined themes to better capture the sense of the data.

It has been claimed that narrative methods as an approach contrasts with thematic analysis in many other research traditions where findings are analysed and organised first by theme rather than by individual (Miles & Huberman, 1994). However, McAlpine (2016) pointed out that participants' narratives could also be analyzed using more traditional approaches such as thematic analysis (p. 33). As I went through the narratives

participants shared, I noticed that they used some common phrases, which in my interpretation must have carried significant meanings to the participant to warrant their sharing. I utilized some of these phrases to generate titles for the key themes in for the study.

4.6 Challenges of Conducting Qualitative Research Using Online Platforms during COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic undoubtedly had a significant impact on social science data collection procedures that previously allowed direct interaction between humans. The pandemic compelled me to reframe how I would safely collect data from my research participants through conversational interviews. Initially I had planned to travel to Kenya and specifically Dadaab refugee camps to talk with the face to face. Considering the challenges that the pandemic posed I adjusted my plans to ensure safety of the participants and myself as the researcher.

Conducting interviews from Canada presented its own unique challenges. For example, it was very expensive to hold any meaningful, substantive interviews via phone, Skype or FaceTime from Canada. Normally, Skype costs CAD \$30 for one hour to Kenya (a monthly plan) it is triple that amount if I were to use Telus, Bell, Freedom, Koodo phone service provides among others cellular credits. Phone calls were a last result option for both the participants and the researcher. If I were to conduct these interviews while within Kenya it would have been much cheaper and more reliable.

The time difference between Canada and Kenya is 10-11 hours. This time difference became a real challenge as I would schedule the meeting times but due to the fact that official online work and school life had not yet been rooted in many places in

Kenya, and with the time difference confusion, some participants joined the meeting at wrong time slots and then did not attend rescheduled meetings until later when sometimes I was not available.

Another challenge came as a result of a lack of reliable WIFI and affordable Internet connections on the side of the participants. The expensive and unstable Internet connectivity in North Easter Kenya was an impediment. I realized that often the long-distance calls and other related communication platforms (Skype, Zoom, WhatsApp) work best if all attendees are in Kenya. In some cases, we kept interrupting each other as we navigated the online challenges when screens went frozen or calls dropped. As a result some interviews took longer than expected due to these interferences, however, they became great lessons for my study. Often we had exchanges like the one below:

Interview: unmute, you are muted....

Participant: sorry, I can't hear you Kimani....

Interviewer: Can you hear me now?... I think I lost him

Participant: No, I'm here, sorry for the noise in the background....my colleagues are coming from the evening classes, can you see me?...

The above excerpt highlights some of the terrains the process had to navigate.

I sought consent to participate in the study via emails while still in Canada but consent to record our conversations were sought during initial telephone/Face Time/Skype/Zoom contact. Although I expressed to the participants that interviews would be held online in their private spaces of their choice (this could be at home or residence), I experienced some interactions from other “unavoidable” background noises. These noises occurred mostly due to the time differences, for example, while I

would be in an isolated space, my participants could not either avoid being with colleagues at school/residences or at home with family. Some also needed to attend to family and other home chores as parents.

To adapt to these technical and ethical challenges, as a researcher I considered my participant's privacy and would from time to time and when needed turn off the cameras as well as mute microphones to allow them to feel comfortable. I think this allowed us to build trust with each other. This experience reminded me what Carter, Shih, Williams, Degeling, and Mooney-Somers (2021) noted about their experience collecting data using online platforms. Carter et al. (2021) concluded that online research could be beneficial as well as affect the quality or the “richness of the data generated, as well as how much participants enjoy participating, if mindful choices are not taken” (p. 711).

To conclude, Covid-19 pandemic locked the world and caused unprecedented delays. For this study my intention was to involve a total of ten (10) Kenya national teachers currently teaching and/or those who had taught in refugee camp schools. Nine participated, as one became infected and therefore dropped from the study. Meetings happened online over Zoom, Microsoft Teams and WhatsApp. While some potential participants fell ill with Covid-19, others feared to stay late due to family involvements, and the government imposed dawn to dusk curfew (measures). There were also challenges with Internet connection failure as participants were located in different places (some were in Dadaab while others were in “Down Kenya”).

4.7 Caveat of the Study

Having highlighted the challenges posed by the pandemic, I will touch on an unprecedented revelation that came as I interacted with the data. All the participants were

national teachers who had taught in secondary school and as a result this study lacks experiences from pre-primary and primary national teachers. However, some of these teachers had experiences teaching in the primary levels. This last point validates the narratives offered as they all shared the same environments in their daily delivery of teaching services as a “humanitarian aid worker”. Furthermore, the study only involved 9 national teachers from a few parts of the nation. Given this small number of teachers, it may not give a fulsome picture that would be applied to other parts of the world. Nonetheless, the findings offer an important starting point to push forward conversations about education and teachers in refugee camps.

4.8 Summary

Novak (1975) once said, “a story once told, no longer belongs solely to the teller” (p. 19). This points to the fact that once the text is produced, we cannot control how it will be ‘reproduced’ for different purposes, hence appropriate representation of the story becomes one of the most important responsibilities of the researcher. Especially in a field such as refugee education, the quest for truth and how knowledge is constructed is paramount.

In this chapter, I have discussed the study design and methodology. I also described the context of the research, the study participants as well as data collection and analysis process. I explained the challenges faced during the study as well as offered a caveat statement for the study. The subsequent chapter discusses the study findings. These findings are analysed from an Afrocentric perspective. I attended to narratives that elucidate the ide encapsulated in the philosophical phrase of Utu/Ubuntu, “I am, because we are; and since we are therefore I am”. The analysis also captures

highlights of teachers' experiences that showed their care and keen interest in the success of their students as reflected in the ways that the teachers narrated their experiences of teaching in the camps.

Chapter 5: Results

In this chapter I recap my research questions, followed by a brief overview of how the themes presented herein were constructed. The key themes are informed by the Utu/Ubuntu philosophy and are briefly outlined. These themes were generated from qualitative data sources from separate individual semi-structured interviews of Kenyan trained national teachers teaching in camp schools. I have used sub-themes for each theme to drive further and amplify the voices of the national teachers. I have also provided some longer excerpts/elaboration to deepen readers' understanding of the teachers' stories.

This study centres the Kenyan teachers and their knowledge about the Dadaab camp, schooling opportunities and teaching practices. The following overarching research questions guided the study:

1. *What are Kenyan national teachers' narratives of teaching experiences and implied meanings and the relationship between education in refugee camps and host communities?*
2. *What aspects of the narratives are in concert or conflict with the Afrocentric value of Utu/Ubuntu (you are because I am; I am because you are)?*
3. *What implications might the study's findings have on global conceptualization of Afrocentric Utu/Ubuntu-centred refugee education?*

As described in the methodology chapter, the analysis of the data involved two main phases: coding the data, analyzing for initial categories, and re-categorizing and refining themes to better capture the sense of the data. This comprised of looking for common

threads or differences that were cutting through narratives in the form of patterns or themes that depicted Kenyan national teachers' transcribed interviews.

To honour the voices of my participants premised in narrative and Afrocentric value system, I present the five emergent themes with accompanying excerpts from the analysed data. These are: 1) Dadaab as a non-family zone and risky place; 2) Dadaab as place steeped in cultural and religious complexities; 3) Appreciation of Dadaab schools which offered noble opportunities for instructional skill deployment, refinement and retooling expertise; 4) possibility of only educational incentive scholarships slipping away due to poor class performance manifested in panic and depression among students; and 5) teaching as a humane act. These key finding demonstrated how host teachers navigate the refugee camp schools terrain to teach while unconsciously observing the Utu/Ubuntu value systems.

Kenyan teachers offer their teaching services in refugee camp schools where they are able to demonstrate their humanitarianism, which is consistent with the *Utu/Ubuntu* philosophy that states, “you are because I am and I am because you are”. These teachers understand that they cannot become teachers on their own or for their own sake, students make them teach and for them to reciprocate they facilitate students' dreams to come true. In this process of making other people's dreams a reality, teachers also realize their pedagogical dreams through teaching and interacting with their students. This is an example of what Tutu calls “an interdependence cycle” (Tutu, 2013). One could argue that teachers are teachers because students are presents and students are students because teachers are present within this educational environment and for a purpose but it was more than this for the teachers I talked to. Teachers get to learn and grow through this

experience as summed up by Jeka: “...*Although not by choice the national teachers get to experience some bits of the life refugees lived.*” (Jeka)

5.1 Theme 1. National Teachers Considered Dadaab Refugee Camp as Non-family Zone and Risky Place

... *No families would be allowed* (Roki)

Nationally and internationally, Dadaab is perceived as a highly insecure place for non-refugees (Chonghaile, 2013). However, for the national teachers this is where they work! The camps are far away from their homes and they are not allowed to bring their families due to the risky nature of the camps. Meke reiterated “*Dadaab is located in a security-compromised zone. So, you have to follow the security rules for you to survive in this place.*” Dadaab is remote and far from the major towns that the teachers are from (Omata, 2020). It would be convenient for the Kenyan teacher’s families to live close to, or in the camp. However, the UNHCR and the Kenyan government do not permit this because of security reasons. As such teachers live in the camps during the week and visit their families on the weekends. As Roki mentioned, “*When I reached out to the HR [human resource] person, he told me that I was supposed to work continuously for seven weeks, and then I get one week off.*” However, some national teacher deemed Dadaab as “...*Not a bad place as a no-family zone* (Beto)

Majority of the national teachers in Dadaab have families of their own, in fact, 90% of the participants talked fondly about their young families. They shared how difficult it was to be in Dadaab, as they were required to make tough decisions about their young families. Juka said, “...*Especially for the female teachers, you have to give birth, leave your children, and go back to Dadaab.*” The idea of how to survive in Dadaab resided mostly in the teachers’ imagination until they landed there and it became a reality. Meke was particularly taken aback when she realized how far away she was from

her children, “*very many miles away*” and parents. For their safety, she could not bring them to Dabaab as stipulated in the general security ‘code’ that declared Daadab *a no go zone* for Kenyan nationals.

The idea to making Dadaab a non-family zone for the workers (hosts and other nationals) did not emanate from the education sector but Kenya’s national security department. While the policy of *no go zone* for families is emotionally difficult for teachers and their family members, the teachers appreciated the rationale behind such caution. Following their long stay in Dadaab teachers had come to agree that it would not be appropriate to expose their young families to some of the harsh realities they had encountered in the refugee camps. Juka insisted, “*I’ve seen many things. I’ve seen some of the worst that I would never want my family to see.*”

Beto said that, teachers often witnessed unexpected evacuation from their stations of work or even from their secure residences in the middle of the night. Corroborating this claim, Juka remembered one of those ill-fated nights “*...it was at night one male national teacher was killed while in the compound. We had to be evacuated in the middle of the night.*” Most of these evacuations would be executed following security threats from the al-Shabaab militant group. The threat to life made the teachers’ survival harder while at the same time bringing to life to the lived realities of refugees living with these daily threats.

Participants made it clear that they lived and worked in Dadaab for many years and had come to terms with the living conditions of the camp. Omi narrated “*this place [Dadaab] has been home for over five years now*”. Further, they were well aware that they were not allowed to bring their families with them due to unspecified security issues,

the perceived temporary nature of the camps, among many other risks associated with being in a protracted refugee camp. This was emphasized when the teachers got their appointments as Roki noted, *“the email from the human resource was very clear. It stated that no families would be allowed.”*

Coming from very communal, connected and family oriented backgrounds, a core value in *Utu/Ubuntu*, some teachers found it hard to handle the “no-family” protocols. Remembering these experiences Juka who had move back to “Down Kenya” stated:

Although the experience is great, it's not easy to live there as a national teacher.

For example one has to forget about their immediate family and look for other “families” ...my major problem was my family and my three kids.

Meke the female teacher agreed noting: *“...It is kind of a sacrifice teachers make to be in Dadaab for a whole year because it means I have to miss witnessing a lot of changes in my kids.”* Other teachers had similar experiences regarding their families. Roki one of the male participants was worried that coming and staying in Dadaab without his family was a huge change:

It was a huge transformation ...I used to go home every weekend to be with my family. So I'm now transforming the one-week to seven. This got me worried especially when I thought about my emotional part.

Although these national teachers lived in the camps for more than 5 years, their living experience was not always easy. Meke pointed out that for someone to really survive in the camp, *“One has to compromise a few things for being in Dadaab.”* These sacrifices, which included being away from their families, were deemed necessary for the teachers’ security and survival.

Change can be hard to navigate especially if the change is a significant one. The national teachers who had dared to move to the camps found the need to adjust to the refugee setting and thus had to find means of survival for their social, emotional and work success. The teachers narrated that they had to live with each other in order to overcome those hard moments without their loved ones. They created community (the I am because you are) and connected through communal acts such as enjoying a meal together or a sport activity familiar to them cemented their co-existence even when such activities meant a threat of being seen as “outsiders.” Jeka explained when and how such activities took place and who were involved:

At least over the weekend national teachers and other people would organize parties and eat roasted goat, go to the canteen and just enjoy. All nationals like the policemen/women, health workers and teachers were like one thing. In fact, anybody who was from the up-country we used to call them ‘Nywele Ngumu’ [Afro haired] we used to take each other as brothers and sisters.

Jeka showed how the teachers created and embraced ‘homely’ groupings with other teachers as well as members (UN staff and security personnel) from the communities outside of the camp teachers. In these groupings, they organized and participated in activities that reminded them of home and family. I refer to these groupings as social support groups to lift each other up, which is in line with the Utu/Ubuntu philosophy of being a sister/brother’s keeper. These social groups were also emotionally healing. Jeka remarked that these groups and activities helped them to ‘*take a break from thinking about their families.*’ The support groups included Kenyan police, medical staff, drivers and others, “*we used to take each other as brothers and sisters.*”

However, these communal arrangements came with a few challenges and risks of being isolated or categorized as outsider, for instance they would be categorized according to the texture of their hairs, *those policemen and teachers were like one at the same thing, anybody who came from up country was referred to as “Nywele ngumu”* (hard hair, in other words Afro-textured hair), described by Jeka. It is human nature to develop strong ties with people with whom you may share common things or origin in ‘foreign’ places such as these Kenya nationals formed friendships with other nationals working in various post within the camps.

On the other hand, the national teachers had opportunities to leave the camp and briefly visit their families. This helped participants to cope with living in the camps without their loved ones. The teachers were often escorted from the camps to Nairobi and back whenever they needed to make these trips to see and be with family. It was also noted that these teachers lived in secured sites as part of the camps security protocol. However, these measure do not in any way remove the burden of the teachers not seeing their families for long stretches of time. Although not all the teachers elaborately said it, one could infer from their narratives a degree of strain on emotional and well-being as they shared their stories about being distant from their loved ones. For example, Roki talked about the impact and complications of being away from family:

I wondered how I would be able to accommodate that and transform my engagements from one to seven weeks, and still be okay... how about my wife? How do I explain this without creating another problem at home?

Roki described his familial relations and responsibility as a father and husband when it came to his family. He was afraid of the impact of lost quality time with the family. Utu values are cemented in human relations and especially the closest ones being family. The family ‘make’ him [in this case Roki] and he ‘makes’ them [the family] (see Tutu, 2008). It is the relationship of family and community, centering the family but understanding the responsibilities to make that relationship work for the benefit of those around does not need to create more layers of complexity. Roki signals the importance of having a deeper understanding as a family man and the notion of making deliberate but hard choices. For instance, he had to think carefully about leaving his family for a better paying job with reduced visitation and his personal well-being.

It is clear from the teachers’ narrative accounts that life in the refugee camps was never an easy one. I wondered how they managed to manoeuvre and balance this life for such a long time? In the next segment I present two key subthemes that will help us understand dynamics of their long stay.

5.1.1 Sub Theme i: Teaching as a Source of Income Influenced the National Teachers’ Desire to Stay

I really needed that money to continue with my Masters (Jusi)

Participants revealed that although life in the camps was hard and the experiences were different from what they were used to while working in other parts of Kenya, Dadaab remained a place to stay. It was deemed a place to offer teaching services while at the same time benefiting them financially, as they received a salary at the end of every month. Therefore, they tolerated being away from their families. As Jusi commented, “*I needed some more funds.*”

The participants remarked that they were really looking for a source of income and some indicated that they needed the money to advance their studies. Others noted that, although they had finished their studies, they had to repay the debts they accrued following their studies. Thus, for some participants, a well-paying job offer was irresistible albeit in a refugee camp. As Jusi put it:

I had to look for employment. Little did I know what was forthcoming would be employment in a refugee camp. I was not expecting that I would be teaching in a camp, and when it happened it was not so easy for me. But I needed some more funds; I really needed that money to continue with my Masters’.

Caku added: *“I had made up my mind that I wanted to go. You know when you are fresh from campus and trying to settle some bills, you find a job, which is somehow well paying.”* Roki reiterated that working in a place that would provide medical coverage for teachers and their significant others was attractive and a great premise for a calm mind.

So by the end of the day the terms of employment are better...Maybe they'll choose medical cover...I thought, why not, if it is this good, it was worth it. Then I decided to go to Dadaab.

Like many other people around the world seeking employment opportunities, the national teachers braved the risks of a camp in search of a job. For some novice teachers, a steady income was an incentive to begin their careers teaching in the camp schools. However for other teachers, their choices to go to the camps were seen as crucial opportunities for moving the pedagogical agenda in the education system within the refugee camp schools. Consequently, some noted that teaching was not all about the salary but rather, a way for them to give back to society. Altruism, connectedness and the commitment to do ‘good’

for the benefit of others are key pillars of *Utu*. For Roki, teaching was not just about salary, it was “*about giving back to the society and receiving those type of outcomes that I have set out as a teacher and being able to achieve*”.

Jeku and Meke are mothers who left their children with husbands and other family members. They knew what it meant to be in a camp and seemed to appreciate the no-family policy. But how were the families back home feeling about these transformations? I argue that the teachers had come to terms with the new conditions and had scaled new heights, which allowed them to sacrifice for the benefit of a disadvantaged population. *Utu/Ubuntu* and the Afrocentric worldview emphasize support and care for the less fortunate (Somjee, 2020, Some, 1998). In as much as there were debates among the teachers and their families about choosing camp schools, they eventually left the safe zones to “risky” places. For instance, Roki reflected on a discussion he had with his wife who noted the following shortly before Roki left for Dadaab: “*...there are people who live there and it's the plan of God, we prayed for a job and you have to go.*”

5.1.2 Sub Theme ii: In-security and Conflict were Key Influences on Participants' Affordances and Avoidances

...Not a bad place as a no-family zone (Beto)

Some teachers noted that Dadaab was not as bad as it was peddled in the media and other news outlets. Roki brought this up as he remembered what he had found out when he was searching more information about the place (Dadaab):

A weekend before coming here I was reading about Dadaab, the headline was prominent saying 'Daadab and scorpions' ... imagine the way the daily nation can

come up with a very nice story of course. I asked myself, am I going to go to Dadaab where there is a lot of stuff... I was imagining everywhere you walk there were a lot of scorpions. In the same news, the place was also seen as ground for those “guys”¹⁸ meaning terrorists [citing the terror attack on Garissa college students and Westgate Mall in Nairobi]

Media influences people’s perceptions of place, culture, a people and more. While Roki saw Dadaab as a good place to go alone without his family, other news outlets continued construct the space as a risky place. This media representation of Dadaab bothered Roki. The media or the government kept pointing fingers at the camps as a source of many evils, and especially as a breeding ground for terrorists.

However, according to some of the study participants, and despite what was featured in the news, they concluded that Dadaab was not a bad place after all as a no-family zone for Kenyan teachers. This recognition was essential given the temporality of the job and reality of the potential for a re-emergence of in-security and conflict.

Other teachers shared their perspectives of insecurity and living away from their families. Speaking of family Meke said, *“although teachers are adults above 18 years, most of us are family-people, we still feel that separation between family and us.”* Juka on the other hand reflected on questions of security noting:

Although the experience is great, it's not easy to live there as a national teacher.

For example, one has to forget about their immediate family and look for other

¹⁸Kenyans will never forget 3rd of April 2015. On this day four (4) gunmen stormed Kenya's Garissa University College and began firing haphazardly. Uniquely, the attackers singled out and shot dead those who identified as Christians. It was later reported that the beastly act had claimed 148 innocent lives, majority were students. This was the deadliest attack committed in Kenya but before that there were 67 people who had been killed following a similar attack in the Westgate mall in the capital Nairobi, September 21st 2013 (Feleke and Reuters, 2022, BBC 2019)

“families' ' there. It is not a secure place for non-locals, abductions have happened in the past that involved the national teachers.

The security concerns Juka told me about are convincing. Roki, Meke and Juka understand their position and the relationships they have with their families and negotiating physical presence or absence from them.

Given the security threats in the camp, survival becomes important. I asked the participants how they dealt with the uncertainties of the security situation in Dadaab. Participants explained that adhering to security protocol was not debatable and thus, teachers had to constantly be mindful, among other things, of the security measures in place and heed what they are advised to do by the security officers. The teachers learned to be safer as they engaged with the community members who acted as their *safe zones*. Meke said:

You know Dadaab is located in a security-compromised zone. So, you have to follow the security rules for you to survive in this place. One thing I realised and had to work hard to manoeuvre was how to interact with the local community. From time to time one has to do away with how they used to live their lives in other parts of Kenya.

Meke is pointing to ways Utu/Ubuntu could be experienced and enacted in different ways in the refugee camps due to safety concerns. Utu centers people; one learns to appreciate others in order to achieve cohesiveness, harmony and co-existence among diverse members. As Meke has alluded, the unspoken power of Utu can lead members to realize new ways of living in new environments. It also calls for reciprocity and respecting others and their way of handling life.

While pointing to the notion of the non-family zone, Juka was quick to highlight that it would be better to protect their families' innocence and safeguard them from life-long traumas:

I've seen many things. I've seen some of the worst that I would never want my family to see. I've seen a teacher die. Just like that. I've seen a policeman, who was escorting us blown up by a landmine, and then you are like, okay, they are gone and gone forever...

Teachers like Juka are in favour of keeping their families away and thus naming refugee-working context a no-family zone. Juka fears for the mental health consequences of their families if they were permitted to come into the camp. From her excerpt, Juka has traumatic memories of the things she experienced and it would be insensitive to expose family members to such experiences. Jeka added that:

...it was at night one male national teacher was killed while in the compound. So we had to move away from Dadaab. All the way at night people were crying others stressed, they were like, Oh no, and you know we are next to be killed.

The camps are very unstable and impacted by serious security challenges. The death of one of the national teachers damages and goes contrary with the values of *Utu—peace, love and unity*. This incident conflicts with the Utu value system and showcases the mental health stressors for teachers. In fact, one may argue that it is worse for the teachers than them not wanting their families to be living in the camp or them going to see their families.

In the African society, such matters get resolved differently. Somjee (2020) tells us that when one pours the blood of another person, the earth becomes hot and rituals

have to be conducted to calm mother earth: “violence dishonours the earth and has to be purified” (p. 283). In other jurisdictions, such as within the Somali, Elders must oversee a cleansing ritual that involves the perpetrators admitting their wrongs and offering animals whose blood is poured in a ceremony to counter that human blood previously poured (Schlee, 1985). In other situations, apologies are deemed *a must thing to do*: how does one beg for pardon from the dead? This complexity informed the Elders in Indigenous African societies and their commitment to Utu and often warned community members of the consequences of committing inhumane acts.

5.1.3 Sub Theme iii: Understanding Education’s Critical Role in Conflict Resolution Influenced National Teachers’ Resolve to Teach in Dadaab

Why must you go to Dadaab? (Jeku)

While national teachers appeared to seek permission from and blessings of their families, their personal understanding of the critical role of education to resolve conflict was the real motive for their determination to teach in Dadaab. Of course, they received the support from their families and coupled with their own intent to use education to help resolve conflict were all manifestations of the principle of Utu. Roki recalled his wife encouraging him, “*when you ask for an opportunity, and God gives you, it means that he has already prepared things for you.*” The participants narrated how they needed a convincing reason/purpose to be released by family to risk going to teach or participate in education’s role in conflict resolution in the refugee camps.

Teachers who want to go teach in refugee camp schools find it extremely challenging to explain their decisions to their families. Most Kenyans witnessed the terrorist activities within the country through the media broadcasts, believed that Dadaab

is a “war zone” and government perceives it as a breeding ground for terrorists. Some parents could not agree or outright allow their children to leave home for Dadaab. Others had minimal options and had to be creative while negotiating with their significant others. As they narrated their stories, I could tell that these teachers had to make hard decisions. They needed permission. Although the teachers did not explicitly state that they were looking for “blessings and good luck prayers,” they needed convincing reasons for their families to let them go and for a “better livelihood” or even to offer services in refugee camp schools. The teachers knew that their teaching services and pedagogical skills were geared towards an education with conflict resolution endeavours. As such, the teachers shared a variety of reasons as to why they chose to teach at the refugee schools. For example, Jusi highlighted his altruistic intentions to his wife:

I remember the time I was leaving home to go to Dadaab. I never told many people where I was really going. I just spoke to my family. I spoke with my wife and I told her that I had this job somewhere and was planning to go but it is not near Nairobi or near my own place... I told her that I was going to Dadaab, and I wanted to work with the refugees as a humanitarian aid worker. My wife was not happy with that decision, but because I never had another employment offer, she had to let me join this organization.

Jusi’s story shows that it was the lack of job opportunities that convinced his wife more than his personal desire to help the refugee children.

Participant Caku had a hard time convincing her parents noting: “...My father never wanted me to work far from home.” She continued to say:

I never told my parents at first... I just told them that I've been called for an interview and when I came back home from the interview in Nairobi, I broke the news to them that I was going to Dadaab and they were like, no, no, no, you cannot go there being a first born and the only daughter. No, no, you cannot go there. But I was so determined to go. I told them that everything happens for a reason and I just wanted to change someone's life.

Juka and Caku admitted their hesitancy to let their families know immediately of their intentions to teach at the camp. This hesitancy is likely because of the stereotypical constructions of Dadaab as a violent and unsafe place, which are created and perpetuated by the media. Jusi admitted that the media hugely influences the general Kenyan population's views about the refugee camps:

I remember when I was leaving for Dadaad and shared that with my grandmother, who never left her compound but always listened to her radio, grounded me and offered lengthy prayers for good luck because I was going to a "very bad place." I went and came back to her surprise.

Roki's story on the other hand was different. His wife put her trust in a higher power. The family saw his opportunity to teach at the camps as a long-awaited chance from the creator. He described his situation as follows:

I remember my wife telling me this, 'when you ask for an opportunity, and God gives you, it means that he has already prepared things for you. In this case an opportunity for you on the other side, right. So, you go there and take the opportunity. If it's not worth it, then you can come back.

Roki's wife was more open to her husband accepting the job offer. Roki's wife frames the job as a God given opportunity and one worth trying. She confidently stated that the option of coming back is there for Roki. She believes that higher and divine powers would protect Roki. One of the pillars of Utu is that of being connected with the Supreme one. Other Utu principles include community, ancestors, nature and Elders (Somjee, 2021, p.45).

While other teachers left home for Dadaab, their families had to come to terms with the realities and also factor in the desire to keep hope for the sake of maintaining their families together and connected. They had to let go and wished that all would go and respecting their loved one's decision to go to the camps. In African society, those people who are well travelled are respected, especially if they are able to maintain their relationships with their home community (Wahab, Odunsi & Ajiboye, 2012). In his book, Somjee (2020) elaborates how important his journey has been in search of peace within the diverse communities of Kenya opened his eyes and broadened his understanding of the people he met. Among the Waswahili people they say "kuishi kwingi ni kuona mengi"; extrapolating the idea of exploring beyond one's boundaries, one gets to experience and learn. It is a further elaboration on African relations of Utu and travel to build community/connections. Thus, like the national teachers, travelling to a "risky" place like Dadaab with a purpose to teach or job seeking would be perceived as a brave move and one worth trying. In fact, those who don't have the chance to travel, encourage people to be adventurous. One teacher, Jusi, emphasized this when he said, "*when I told my people I was likely to join the peacekeeping mission as peacekeeping educator in mission, they were happy even if they did not fully understand what it was to be a*

peacekeeping educator in mission.” From an Utu/Ubuntu perspective, community support, encouragement and well-wishers are key to building relations and supporting each other. The encouragement and support Jusi received from members of the community is a powerful reminder of one’s position and relationship with the community. It shows how the community values peace and education and when one travels with the goal of facilitating education for the less fortunate in society, it is seen as an opportunity to unite and contribute to justice and equity in other communities of the world.

5.1.4 Sub Theme iv: Education was Perceived as the Source of Individual and Community Respect

Education is a uniting and equalizing factor or like a “freedom” (Omi)

The participants’ narratives revealed that education was perceived as a unifying force. Education earned the national teachers and the refugee community respect. This realization was informed by teachers’ own experiences in the refugee camps as well as the experiences of the refugees that the teachers interacted with. For instance, participants shared the view that while interacting with refugees who had a better understanding of education’s impact and benefits, they (the refugees) were quick to acknowledge and appreciate the decision and risks these teachers had taken to go teach refugee students. These refugee members perceived the teachers as indirect re-builders of the collapsed neighbouring nations. This is because once the students graduated from the camp schools, majority of them relocated to Somalia, where they were able to take up government or non-government organization job opportunities that aimed at restoring peace in their country. As Josi noted: *“by giving knowledge to these learners I know by extension, I’m*

also building Somalia.” Roki added that one of his former students had “a company that he established that is based in Somalia doing some great work, but he has been operating from the refugee camp.”

Consequently, the national teachers expressed gratitude and were proud of their former students who opted to return to their countries of origin and use their gained knowledge in a meaningful way to better themselves and their communities. The teachers shared feeling of contentment and believed that they were also taking part in creating those opportunities that in return would contribute to the reconstruction of those collapsed countries or communities. The teachers not only taught the prescribed curriculum but also offered problem-solving skill through their teaching, a practice, which gained them immense trust and respect from the community and students. Omi remembered how some of his former students made him feel as teacher:

“...Another one calls you from Somalia. He tells you “Mwalimu” (teacher), after I finished, this is what I’m doing and I want to join university. So, as a teacher you get to feel something, you know that there is a lot of impact that you have made when the students call you from Somalia or further abroad to share their accomplishments.

Josi, Roki and Omi’s sentiments, exemplifies further how the students perceived their teachers as individuals with great potential to help them return to their countries with hopes of reviving the collapsed systems (Abdi, 1998). Furthermore, these national teachers reiterated that their jobs went beyond teaching the curriculum in the camps. Many were cognizant of the fact that the majority of their students worked smarter and hard to get out of the camp. Some of the refugee students who were lucky got resettled in

Kenya or abroad and they continued to further their studies and overall lives (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), 2019; World University Service of Canada (WUSC), 2020).

Omi, a high school teacher admitted going beyond the curriculum noting: *“Yeah, you know, as a teacher, the more I teach those students, the more I also guide and counsel them and equip them with different skills because I realize that they really want to go back to their country.”* Omi’s realization reinforces the findings of many scholars who have noted the deep desire for refugees to be repatriated (BBC News, 2017; UNHCR, 2019; Haigh, 2002). Going back to their native lands means that they will need skills beyond textbook teaching (Dryden-Peterson, 2010, Milton & Barakat, 2016; Giles & Dippo, 2019) in their efforts to contribute to rebuilding and reconstruction. The majority whose resettlement hopes had faded looked forward to returning to their home countries with the goal of making them better places and where freedom of movement would exist like they witnessed from their national teachers (see Abdi, 2016).

Some national teachers observed that the majority of the students perceived Dadaab as an “open jail.” This was largely due to their inability to move freely which drives the students’ yearning for freedom. Roki spoke to this desire for unrestricted movement, *“And given that they have already seen and felt the way it is in Kenya, and the sweetness of freedom, to be able to move freely from one place to another, that is what they are yearning for.”*

Indeed, the teachers acknowledged that they inspired their students. When the students saw their teachers coming to school consistently to teach them, they got so encouraged to do their best in the classroom, learn as much as they could with the idea

that one day they would go to those countries of their dreams - freely. There is a sense of reciprocity here – teachers sacrifice for their students, the students appreciate their teachers’ commitment and therefore work hard. Ubuntu emphasizes reciprocity as a way of building, strengthening and bettering communities.

According to Roki, the refugee students felt the need to belong to a country where they could play a positive role in steering its progress. Unfortunately, their “refugee” status does not give the students in the camps a chance to fulfill these desires. Roki, described his students’ wishes as follows:

They [the students] are yearning to go back to their country and in one way or another make an impact, as a person. To rebuild a nation requires joint efforts, but an individual’s efforts are also important in the group. Yeah, so the students realize that people have come from very far to contribute to their education. Like I transverse my country to come to teach them as a duty to build my nation. Some see this and become very encouraged and wish they could have that freedom so that they can be able to move from Kenya, go back to their country and still be able to move around in their country without fear, and those who want to run their businesses can do so like we do here in Kenya.. So, as a teacher you find that you inspire them to become like you. And so they become somehow dignified citizens back home because in Dadaab they may not have a lot of status, like, you know, they're just seen as refugees, right? But when they go back, they are proud of being citizens who can contribute to building their nations.

Roki and his fellow teachers play a vital role in education of the students and their practices encapsulate Utu/Ubuntu values. They inspire the students and arouse

possibilities for freedom, civic duties and political abilities in the learners. At the same time, Roki is inspired by the students' deep commitment, vision, feelings and hopes for freedom of mobility and political will.

The teachers were so proud to mention that some of their students graduated and returned to their countries of origin and that they had remained in contact. As Juka stated, *"we are good friends on Facebook and we talk often, some are even in Europe"*. For Roki's student who had started a business in Somalia, he was considered an 'international businessman' who provided his peers with a chance to change their own lives through employment opportunities. The interconnectedness central to Utu/Ubuntu is evident in the relationships teachers and students build with each other, which in return amplifies teachers' identity as well as working to build student's will-power to succeed.

Thinking of futurism in Afrocentricity and Utu/Ubuntu, all the national teachers I conversed with were more concerned about the students' fate and future than anything else. This futurism informed the teachers' considerations when it came to curriculum design and implementation as narrated by Jusi:

So, we thought, why don't we give them a better skill, which would be between form one and four (Grades 9 and 12)? By the time they are leaving [school] to go to the job market [seeking employment] or going back to Somalia, the computer skills we had offered would have a lot of impact, compared to the one that they were getting for a short period of time like six months.

As demonstrated by Jusi, teachers factored in skills that would go a long way in helping students beyond the camp.

In all the narratives above teachers shared their commitment and success in *building* formidable relationships with their students. This in turn inspired the students to work hard and think about life beyond the camps. The teachers saw it necessary to take care not only of the students' current educational needs and welfare but also their future. Utu emphasizes the now and the future as life is forever interlinked. The teachers' humanitarian acts garnered them respect in the camps and the wider community appreciated the role of education in the camps. This reciprocal relationships and co-existence made the national teachers feel at ease teaching students in the camps while their own children were being taken care of by other members of their families and the community. Indeed, interdependence among humans is inevitable; no human can be without the acts of others (see Tutu, 2013).

5.2 Theme 2. National Teachers Described Dadaab Refugee Camp as a Place Steeped in Cultural and Religious Complexities

The participants' narratives suggested that culture and religion are strongly interconnected. Somalia community members have strong ties to Islam, which is observed by almost 100% of the population (Abdi, 1998). Indeed, in the African context, one cannot fully understand the peoples and cultures without examining the links between culture and religion. Indigenous African people's religious practices and beliefs influence their worldviews and knowledge systems. Consequently, Utu/Ubuntu embraces religion and emphasizes the connection of all flora and fauna with the Supreme one (see also Somjee, 2021). This chapter teases out these cultural and religious complexities as explained by the national teachers. They shared their experiences working within a strongly influenced Islamic religious context in which the religion's values and customs hugely inform the daily running of educational and non-educational activities in the camps. It is no surprise then that these religious values and perceptions drove the activities in schools as well, and the teachers sometimes found it complicated. For example Caku said, "*We have issues of culture whereby to our students there is no line between culture and religion, and whatever matches their religion is their culture*".

The teachers' experiences and perceptions were evident in their descriptions of their own religious beliefs (as Christians), and their perception of the role that religion, culture and language played in teaching and learning in the refugee camp school (see Mbithi, 2008). Each participant shared their memories of experiences with culture and religion. They expressed how hard it was at the beginning to adapt to the different

religious norms practised in the camps and had find some middle ground as Meke explained, “*you have to compromise some things so that you can coexist.*”

The national teachers revealed that some of their students in most of the schools were mature students. This meant that the refugee students had their own families and at times it proved challenging to instruct them. Meke confirmed this,

We receive them when they're adults and removing those aspects at times becomes very tough. You know, if you come to our school currently, the average age of the students is between 23 – 24 years old in lower grades, normal upper grades age is between 17-18 years old. You can see there is a five years difference, a five-year difference!

Furthermore, some students were fathers or mothers and in many instances these parents found themselves in the same school with their children but in different grades or even sometimes in the same class. Juka voiced, “*...we have had many cases where a father is in the same class with their daughter and you have to handle them so you really need to stretch your cultural thinking as a teacher.*”

It was further noted that the majority of the students spent a significant amount of time in the madrassa¹⁹ before joining the formal schools. With some of them exhibiting some deep beliefs and even at times characteristics of indoctrination, the teachers explained the role they played in mitigating such complexities and how they respectively navigated the slippery religious terrain. Roki shared:

Now, when we educate them, we try to navigate and reduce that religious bias and indoctrination that has been there. We try to open them to see the world in a

¹⁹Madrassa, is an Islamic college, literally a "place of instruction," especially instruction in religious law (<https://www.encyclopedia.com/literature-and-arts/art-and-architecture/architecture/madrassa>).

broader perspective. And direct them to be open and diversify their limited view, or the religious isolation. We give them examples with ourselves who are not Muslims but we are working with them so they should also try to look for a compromise where a Christian and Muslim and other faiths can coexist without getting rid of who they are.

I noted that the teachers acknowledged that some of their students attended other forms of education that did not pay attention to their full academic growth either. Sometimes parents protested the introduction of western education, which they termed as secular. This may have denied them a chance to attend school earlier hence the reason for their enrolment in the school later in their lives as Caku noted;

You know, we receive the students when they're adults; they are already moulded... because time may have been wasted when these children were going through other systems of just teaching [teaching for the sake of teaching].

Jeku agreed with Caku's sentiments remarking: *"Sometimes not even handled by a professional, you can imagine someone who spent years of indoctrination. So that's what we are working with."*

Omi summarized this complexity noting that in many cases the national teachers had to carefully navigate the fine religious- cultural line. He noted that he had a responsibility to teach beyond his class subjects.

...So as teachers, it's an area that we tread cautiously so that if someone is coming from my class, they should come out with morals, dignity and a clear identity... I mean a person who can fit into any community in the world...someone

who is ready to embrace the diversity of not only their culture but also that of other people's culture.

These cultural and religious complexities may have come as a result of dual or multiple expectations set out by the two critical institutions in the camps: the school and religion (religious institution). Each side of these institutions seem to be demanding to fulfill their duties, hence causing confusion. However, the national teachers seemed to have learnt lessons as attributed in the subsequent sub-themes presented here. I extrapolate some reasons that hindered service delivery while at the same time indicate how the teachers got enlightened, and arrived at a new understanding, which they later came to honour and appreciate.

5.2.1 Sub Theme i: National Teachers Considered the Dadaab Refugee Camp as a Site of Apparent Cultural and Religious Contradictions with a Calling for Sensitivity and Deep Understanding

Dadaab is perceived to be a diverse place with individuals coming from more than five African countries and many ethnic and cultural backgrounds. However, the Somali culture dominates. Roki explains how unsuspecting national teachers are often vulnerable even to their own teaching. Expressing his fear (as a non-Muslim) of conflict between the content he is obligated to teach and how that may contradict what he termed as an “ignorant extremist” understanding. He pointed his blame to the lack of differentiation between culture and religion amongst his students,

...To them their religion is their culture. So, if you get an ill-informed extremist student, as a non-Muslim teacher you get into a dangerous conflict for even explaining a concept. For example, if you are teaching something like an eclipse

or about the astronauts, where a student believes that the moon is a holy place. And here you are talking about someone going there, so they wonder, how? Yeah, they're relating it with their religion and thus to them, you are overstating or devaluing the moon. Culturally, no one goes to the moon, the moon comes to them during the Holy months.

Roki's point here shows the need to engage with and understand the cultural as well as religious significance of various aspects such as the moon. The students see it as a sacred religious aspect but science might explain it otherwise. Having culturally responsive conversations to get the students to see another perspective is critical. Hence, as a national non-Muslim teacher whose knowledge and understanding is informed but a different set of religious beliefs and also the national Kenyan curriculum, one has to really understand how to handle such cases so that it does not bring a conflict between the teacher and the person they are teaching because from childhood cultural teachings the students learned that the moon is a holy place. According to all the participants, they had to be cautious and ready to learn. As Beto said, *“one needs to know and understand what they [students] know, where they are coming from, and most importantly, a teacher really needs to be very responsive and careful dealing with some cases or content.”*

Meke, while explaining almost a similar experience noted also how important it was to know her students and more so their needs, which were not obvious. According to her, getting to know or understand her students she learnt other core lessons that aided her smooth sailing as a female teacher. She had to be patient, a virtue that prompted an adoption of a slower pace in her teaching approach. She narrates,

When I came here, I learned to be patient with the students and understanding of every need of each student in my class. To at least give some extra time to some students, like those students who need accelerated learning or at least identifying a student who has a problem, and is not willing to say because maybe it is religious or culturally related. So I try to help students by the end of the day, which means I have to be kind and generous as well.

Explaining how he came to adjust to the camp schools' environment, Omi, like his fellow teachers, noted the differences he had identified in the students he had taught and those he was teaching in Dadaab. For him the notable differences were as a result of lack of enough exposure to happenings outside of their immediate environment. Omi identifies the heavy religious and cultural influence on his students,

You go to a new place, and you are trying to adjust and you are trying to compare things from where you've come from. As I taught, I saw there were quite some differences between the kind of students that I had seen on the other side of Kenya and the students that I met in the refugee camp. They were a bit different and their discipline was different, the mode of doing things was also different. And the understanding of things due to exposure was also different. Deeply rooted in their culture and religion. They were actually different but all the same I was able to cope and to adjust accordingly.

It is clear that understanding religious or cultural complexities is essential in teaching refugee students. Their own religious and cultural perspectives heavily influenced many students. The teachers' rootedness in Utu/Ubuntu values allowed them to unconsciously understand and learn from their students and this helped shape the teachers' work.

Teachers noted their students' discipline was different from what they expected or knew. They claimed it could have been so due to the heavy influence derived from their religion as Caku remembered:

One of the striking differences was on the part of discipline and performance...the discipline was not up to the level of the students that I was teaching back then in down Kenya, you know for the Christians they accept the idea, spare the rod spoil the child²⁰.

Jusi explained how he found challenges along the way when he arrived in a refugee camp classroom:

...And I remember we had a lot of struggles with the students, you know these sides are Muslims. Because of religion, there are things that we have to 'allow' because of their religion, which is different from what we are used to as Christians. And therefore, in terms of discipline I had to learn a lot and accept the students the way they were.

In the struggle to understand their students, some teachers had to look and intervene on the lack of discipline (how the student behaved overall) matters from a different perspective. Beto narrated that he had to adopt a lens that allowed him to see the students from their childhood struggles/trauma and how that may have contributed to creating rifts in how they appeared and take control of certain issues. Beto explained that this was an eye opener for him and fellow teachers within the camp schools:

I came to realize even some of them were not deliberately rude or were not actually lacking discipline, but because of their background and upbringing...

²⁰“Spare the rod, spoil the child” is a popular saying. It comes from the Bible, where the verse reads, “He who spares the rod hates his son, but he who loves him is diligent to discipline him” (Proverbs 13:24)

Some of them have gone through a lot and actually came from war torn countries like Somalia...they came here, the hard and difficult times they were going through in the camps and all that... So I came to understand that some of them were not rude because they wanted to but because of the difficult times they had experienced down there, which denied them a chance to be nice to themselves... They were also struggling.

From these teachers' narrative experiences, some of the students' behaviour was a coping strategy to the new experiences, life and school environment. Some of these students had never experienced firsthand refugee-ness, so like the national teachers they were trying to fit into the refugee society where they also had to struggle for acceptance.

Here we see *aspects of the narratives that are in concert or conflict with the Afrocentric value of Ubuntu/Utu (you are because I am; I am because you are).*

However, as teachers seemed to find ways around the challenges, it could be looked at as one of the many ways people try to appreciate other people first by understanding their needs and learning how they lived or what made sense in their lives. The more the challenges the teachers were exposed to, the better they became at resolving the challenges and working with the students. The teachers deployed their Utu/Ubuntu to its finest. Somejee (2021) wrote that, "many people know how to describe Utu but they have lost how to practice Utu" (p. 47). The teachers in this context upheld Utu in all their actions to support the learners.

5.2.2 Sub Theme ii: National Teachers Employed Supportive and Enhancing Strategies for Girl Child Education in Dadaab Schools

According to a survey, which was conducted with families within the refugee communities in 2013, only 1.7% of the families considered education to be an esteemed asset or a potential financial security for girls (UNHCR, 2014). Although school-age girls outnumber boys in the refugee population, UNHCR (2018) acknowledged that fewer girls enrol in secondary schools than their male counterparts in Dadaab. Despite the incentives put in place to motivate the girls into attending schools, there is a notable gender gap as retention becomes a significant challenge in secondary schools for refugee girls, “posing an overwhelming situation that needs increased attention” (Dagane & Aden 2021, p. 4)

It was critical for the national teachers to understand cultural differences and conflicts that affected girl child education in Dadaab schools. The teachers took it upon themselves to make sure they carefully identified barriers that prevented female students from equal access to education within the camps. For instance, Josi motioned that “...*at school we look for what bothers them.*”) Meke added: “...*when we go back to school we have to make sure that they are supported.*” Meke continued to say, “...*especially for girls we give them “Dignity Kits”. So that at least they don’t have an issue to complain about, or have an excuse to go back home.*” Meke’s voice echoed those of other national teachers who were concerned about girl child education. The teachers cautiously mitigated the barriers considering the conflicting nature they present to their service delivery. For example, those students who would otherwise miss school due to menstruation, lack of sanitary pads or even faced stigma due to this biological process were provided with fully packed kits, which they referred to as the ‘Dignity Kits’. Meke

elaborated, *“So if they are at school, they can ask for those dignity kits or sanitary pads and they are available to them. It was a game changer...as more girls now come to school.”*

According to the teachers, dignity kits were a major booster of self-esteem and helped the affected girls overcome their menstrual cycle experiences as a dignified process. In making sure this process remained meaningful and sustainable, the teachers in charge took it upon themselves to prepare an inventory that was matched with a budget. Caku explained, *“We made a budget and followed it to the latter”*. This proposed program was submitted to the concerned organization [Kenya Equity Education Project (KEEP)] requesting for adequate supplies for the Dignity Kits. The kits were meant to last the female students for a whole academic year. The availability of these kits made it possible for the girls to attend school without many problems. The program was left in the hands of female teachers and this way it was more appealing to the girls. In other places, it was noted that teachers instructed girls on how to make their own menstrual pads to increase their school attendance, and that providing girls with sanitary items was a practical way to keep them in school (Save the Children, 2018).

The support evident in this process points to the care and interdependence principle within the Utu value system (see Tutu, 2008). As Caku one of the female teachers explained, the national teachers *“often teamed up with the Parent Teacher Association (PTA) members at a classroom level in early detection of school dropout among the female population.”* This collaboration that between teachers and parents was another great opportunity that not only brought girls to school but also helped to retain them in the school.

Corroborating Caku's observations, Josi added that PTAs were similar to the community mobilizers in many ways only that PTAs were involved in the actual classroom teaching, in other words they are teachers. Josi said,

...Then we have also been using the Parent Teacher Association at classroom level, when the teacher notices that there is a drop out. They use the parent rep of that class, the Kenya Equity Education Program rep or to go to the blocks they have somebody called a community mobilizer. They keep track of the girls because they [girls] are the ones, who are troubled too much.

Further, while detailing the causes and means to alleviate the dropout rate among the girls, Juka revealed “*some girls faced tougher menstrual periods that left them in hospital beds for a few days.*” So, in the case that a girl went to school but felt sick due to the monthly cycle experiences, the girl would receive adequate attention from the teachers (Ibrahim, Abdalla, Jafer, Abdelgadir, & de Vries, N. 2018; Mooijman, Van den Berg, Jensen, & Bundy, 2005). This element of care and deep sympathy is well founded within the practices of Utu and Somjee (2021) calls this care the “beauty in humanity” (p.50).

The teachers detailed exceptional care to see to it that students returned to schools. For example, Meke explained,

If a student is sick or not feeling well we see how the student can be taken to the hospital and if it is a serious problem we reach out to the doctors to see what they can do but at the end of the day the school must follow up and see to it that student comes back to school. We just want to be there for them.

In contrast, it is worrying to note that in most of UNHCR's annual reports they have continued to indicate that millions of refugee children remain out of school and do not

have access. While there are many challenges linked to this reality, for instance, lack of enough national Kenyan teachers in Dadaab's 37 primary and 7 secondary schools, the schools here are also working with PTAs and the immediate school communities to ensure students' regular attendance.

National teachers' involvement with students' welfare went beyond discipline. They termed this involvement as 'going an extra mile' in their service delivery, which was critical in assuring their students that it was possible to navigate life while at school with ease and that there was great support. Further, these teachers in humanitarian contexts understand how education is a life-changing asset for refugee children and especially girls. This is not to imply that other basic needs (food, shelter clothing and health care) are not important to them (UNHCR, 2015).

5.2.3 Sub Theme iii: Longer Stay in Dadaab Refugee Camp Contributed to Teachers' Improved Teaching and Interpretation of Cultural and Religious Practices

The data also revealed that after teachers had spent time teaching in the refugee camp schools, they came to appreciate the differences in religious and cultural practices among their students. In supporting their students' learning and improving their own teaching, teachers had to make connections with their experiences from the two cultural and religious worlds (their host culture and religious and refugee one). Here, I share some of the strategies that the teachers used to improve their teaching and interpretation of cultural and religious matters.

Across the data set, each teacher shared that he/she employed less authoritative teaching strategies in their refugee context contrary to their own Kenyan experiences,

which were characterized as more firm. Teachers shared how they had to come to the level of their students so that there could be a meaningful learning and living. Roki stated:

You just have to put yourself in the context of the student to understand what they are saying. Like when you ask him, 'why didn't you do this? And the response is why not? Some of them don't like being questioned and instead of him telling you he doesn't like or feel like the way you're treating him is not okay. He will ask you if your head is okay. You see, if you don't have that grace of understanding this kind of student life here will be very difficult.

Teachers noted that at the beginning of their service delivery in the refugee camp schools they experienced cultural misunderstandings, which were largely informed by their 'national' understanding of the Kenyan education system. These cultural misunderstandings caused tension and to some extent conflict between the teachers and their students. Teachers like Omi explained that *it took them time to 'master' and "differentiate the camp culture that was highly intertwined within the refugee community from the school expectation and its culture"*.

Roki further shared that his students, as many others, in the camp schools did not differentiate between their culture and religion. There is no, or let's say, *"there is a very thin line between their culture and religion."* This lack of differentiation and teachers' cultural and religious differences may have caused some misunderstanding. For instance, teachers often questioned the students' behaviour. In many cases teachers compared the students in Dadaab with those they had taught in schools outside the camps, and they could tell they did not behave the same way when they thought of what they considered

“an ordinary student” (Juka), meaning a student in regular schools in other parts of Kenya.

As teachers needed to understand their new students’ behaviours and rule out cases of rudeness or misconduct, they realized that some students in camp school had English and/or Kiswahili language deficiency especially on vocabulary, which impacted their interactions in the school. The teachers became aware of these limitations in class while teaching or when interacting with the students during social breaks. Josi elaborated,

...You’ll find a student, answering you in a way that you might find rude if you don’t understand this. For example, you ask a student. Why didn’t you comb your hair? Then he tells you why not? Something like that...and some will ask you Mwalimu (teacher) is your head okay? Are you normal? Such responses. And mark you they are not rude responses; they’re not rude responses, it is a direct translation from their local language most of the time.

Although the interactions described above would sound inconsistent with the Utu teachings/values, the students were often doing direct translation from their local language and were only seeking clarification to improve their understanding on a topic such as the one in the narrative, WHY? “So as a teacher you must understand why and what the student is saying...” it takes time, (Roki) a factor that could be attributed to the exposure to a new language (English) and limitations in their vocabulary. Roki exemplifies the need to center the refugee experience for a better understanding of what maybe going on in their lives. In engaging with the students, the teachers found alternative ways of interacting with the students, which helped them become more innovative.

In the following section teachers appeared to mesh refugee and host ways of doing and thinking and sought better solutions to the challenges they faced as a means to improve their understanding on cultural and religious issues. For instance, often students would fail to go to school and the teachers would question this trend. Beto said, “...we always wondered why some were not coming to school and yet everything was paid for except the uniforms”. Further, it was noted that some of those students missing school were eventually dropping out. The teachers later came to realize that some of those students were actually facing other significant challenges. For example, the teachers came to learn that some of their students lived in the camps all by themselves. Their parents had left them behind to complete the Kenyan education and other important requirements. Caku, elaborated that they (teachers) would keep a keen eye on such individuals so that they would encourage them to come to school even when they were late for school as a way to make them feel included. Caku said, “*There are students who have been left in the refugee camp purposely to learn and acquire that education; we try to make every effort to bring them on board.*”

According to Josi and following those revelations of independent students, teachers had to develop a strong sense of empathy and tailor their teaching to the needs and situations of these students as they faced numerous challenges leading an independent life in the camp and all by themselves. Another teacher, Omi said,

So, they value education here. You find even there are learners who stay in the refugee camps alone with relatives; their parents have already been repatriated back to countries like Somalia.

Other national teachers confirmed family separation as commonplace in the camp. It was further narrated that some of these “single family” students went for days without some basic needs such as food. Beto detailed,

I was made to understand some of them could even come to school without having any meal [breakfast, lunch and/or dinner]. Imagine teaching somebody who hasn't had a single meal and you want that student to understand Chemistry, Biology, Physics, Kiswahili or any subject you are teaching? It is actually difficult for them and it is mostly reflected in their performance.

According to recent reports, the numbers of the lone children in the camps continues to grow (UNHCR, 2018). Teachers like Juka admit, “no one wants to be a refugee even for a day.” Teachers empathized with the parents who made the difficult decisions to repatriate leaving their children behind hoping to find a better country of origin or even new opportunities. Some parents found it crucial to stay put and wait to witness their children complete schooling in the Kenyan camp. Beto said,

I remember one of the Board of Management members (BoM) in my school who was the chairlady did not go to Somalia to join the husband, because she has been waiting for the two daughters and one son to complete their form four [Grade 12].

According to Josi, these parents or even students who choose to remain behind did so due to the high value attached to the Kenyan education, its merits and quality, which is said to be higher than that in Somalia. Josi elaborated,

...They stayed back so that they can acquire education from here because the curriculum in Somalia is not well designed, and also they don't have schools that offer quality education like in Kenya.

The national teachers shared various ways in which their teaching and general living in the refugee had changed or improved as they drew on both refugee and (host) prior cultural and religious experiences in supporting the refugee students' learning in the camp schools. Importantly, is how these national teachers found it necessary to adapt to culturally and religious ways of looking and interpreting their students' general welfare as was situated within the new contexts.

5.3 Theme 3: National Teachers Appreciated Dadaab Schools as Offering Noble Opportunities for Instructional Skill Deployment, Refinement and Retooling Expertise

The data revealed that teachers leveraged different approaches and forms of teaching in Dadaab refugee camp schools when supporting both their teaching and learning of their students. This leveraging offered the teachers noble opportunities for instructional skill deployment, sharpening and retooling expertise.

In Kenya, formal schooling begins at the age of six, with compulsory and free basic education running through and aimed to be completed when a student gets to the age of fourteen years (Clark, 2015, World Bank, 2020). This is after attending two (2) years of pre-primary (pre-elementary) school. Normally, a student is expected to complete their high school education at the age of 17/18 years old. However, the situation in Dadaab is different. Teachers considered students in Dadaab to be unique in many ways, for instance, while it is expected that a student in Form 4 (Grade 12) would be between 19 and 20 years at maximum, it was not unusual to find a student in Form 1 (Grade 9) who was 20 years old. According to teachers like Meke, the majority of these aged “*mature*” students “*did not start their basic education from standard 1 to 8 and Form 1-4*” (Grades 1-8 and 9-12). It therefore was considered a challenge for teachers who were being exposed to some of these realities. The teachers had to adjust their approach and teaching to accommodate the students while also addressing the needs of the younger students in the same classroom. Juka went on to say that the mature students “*presented a new range of challenges to teach*” as there were mothers and fathers learning in the same classes as their children.

Given the nature of the education system in Kenya, which is highly exam oriented, these new-aged students faced significant hurdles navigating the new systems; if this was to be compared to learning or with students in other parts of the country. Meke concluded, *“Consumption of education in Dadaab becomes a problem and as a teacher one must be ready to be creative.”* Roki agreed,

...Teaching in Dadaab really makes a teacher explore all his faculties because we meet all kinds of students here. You meet a class that has an age difference of almost 20 years...those boys and girls in Form 1 are supposed to be at the age of about 14 years but you find there are 30 - 35 years old students also there with them. So, the way you teach a-35 years old and a-14 years old, the way you handle a 40 years old, as opposed to a15 years old requires a lot of pedagogical skills.

On the same point, Beto revealed that some of those students were actually parents studying in the same classrooms with their own children, *“...this is a father whose child is in the same classroom.”* While Juka insisted that, *“...we have had many cases where a father is in the same class with their daughter and you have to handle them so you really need to stretch your thinking as a teacher.”* As illustrated, school age remains a huge factor for teachers to consider while planning and implementing their teaching.

The national curriculum is set to guide all teachers while at school including the introduction of new content to their classes. Meke explores, *“...so it becomes so difficult for the students to internalize or relate with a lot of content which was to be covered maybe 3 years down the line.”* This demonstrates that many students had learning gaps.

As teachers explained, most of that new content came as a challenge to the many students who may not be as Jeka described, *“psychologically stable”* or prepared to

learn, as they needed to “*unlearn their lived experiences*”. Majority of these students had other existing difficulties in life. Josi gave examples, “*they lacked basic needs at ‘home’ while others did not even have a place to call home.*” According to Josi, “*incoming refugee students entered schools with notable basic academic gaps.*” They are said to have spent long periods of time outside school while on the journey to the refugee camps. Others may have experienced “*multiple dislocations along the way,*” based on Roki’s understanding. Still, others may have witnessed loss of their family and friends.

Juka reiterated that in most cases and “*when all these factors come to play, learning falls back to a non-essential agenda*” to most of the students. While agreeing with Juka, Beto claimed, “*upon arrival in the camp schools, they are met with the Kenya education system that poses another challenge due to its rigor and heavy content, which is geared towards its national examination preparations.*” These students are disillusioned with the school situation, which becomes a challenge to the teacher as Roki explained, “*First of all you have to be in a position to be able to handle that trauma, and to bring them back to become human for you to be able to teach them.*”

‘Bringing them back’ requires a full set of special skills that one must have and be able to utilize in the most creative and possible way. It evokes the centrality of Utu/Ubuntu in this process. For example, Roki elaborates how he managed to ignite humanness within these students from his position as a national teacher

...A lesson is supposed to be 40 minutes long for secondary school. You have to make sure that even as you're teaching, you are also providing some general counselling for the students because somebody might have come with a lot of issues from home.

Corroborating on the same Beto insisted that

I better 'lose' five minutes, first of all to prepare them to fit in class for me to teach. It's better to teach for 35 or 30 minutes. At least, you have used 10 minutes to make sure that they are human, humanizing is very important.

Utu/Ubuntu makes us realize that there is a connection and interdependence among humans and that we depend on each other. This is about care, social awareness a consciousness of the others and our responsibility to serve them. Importantly, recognizing the most vulnerable around our environment and understanding that they are implicated in our lives and we are implicated in theirs.

Further, Juka explained that

You can't just assume you will follow what is laid for you all the time, a teacher in class understands the needs of those students...you think of going to class and pumping for 40 minutes, but the student has not gotten anything. It's a waste of time.

Getting to know the students one is working with is critical and foundational to the teachers. Although no teacher explicitly talked about Utu, all they did was well founded within the fundamental principles of Utu/Ubuntu (Somjee, 2020).

Over time, the teachers became aware of their students' academic gaps and, as explained by Meke, once the teachers realized there were core content that was not covered at the basic levels, they adjusted their schedules. Some teachers went to the extent of utilizing their own free time to (revisit) go back to those levels the student may have missed, *"teachers try to bring students to speed before they introduce new content."* So, it becomes so difficult for the students to be 'pumped' (taught heavily) with a lot of

content which was to be covered and to cover these teachers must sacrifice with whatever they have, including their free time. As Caku narrated

I have a daily schedule whereby those students that wish to learn more can come during this free time. They can come. I teach them something extra that helps them I tutor some of them. I engage them deeper to see what we could do, you know as a class they can say that everyone understood but sometimes we have those slow learners and Kiswahili is not easy for them. We go to the basics.

Omi explains a real situation in his class and how he addressed it

If I have a student who does not know how to read and write, and she/he is in Form Four [Grade 12] I dedicate to take him/her through the primary school syllabus on basic literacy and language skills before they can be able to catch up with others. So, that is one of the experiences that I have learned....

Likewise, Juka remembered how some students arrived in high school unprepared, terming their academic condition as ‘low’.

First, we get students who are very low. Yeah, dealing with secondary school we get students who are very low performing, maybe they were rushed through their primary schooling. So sometimes you get a student whose writing is supposed to be in class four [grade four] but he/she is in Form Four [Grade 12]. So, you really have to be patient with them. You do need to create more time for this student to be able to catch up.

Omi explained some successful experiences of how one his students started to prove his ways of dealing with ‘low’ students was actually working

We have a case of a student who joined our school when she was not able to read and write properly. After going through the system for I think one and a half years she started being part of top performers, began topping in her class. Right now she's in Form 3. She'll be doing national examinations in March next year we are very hopeful about her.

Omi sounded more hopeful than maybe his students, he had found means and ways that worked to help students that needed his services most. As you can tell performance in the national examination is determines or dictates the students' future majority of the time.

To impact these students Meke noted that being patient with students was a valuable and rewarding asset. In other words, she had come to terms with reality and learnt an important lesson. Meke explains, *“So, that is something I have learned; to be patient with the learner, who might have been rushed through a system.”* It is in the spirit of oneness that teachers found it important to constantly learn as much as possible from their students as this is in line with Utu/Ubuntu values - learning to be human in the midst of others. That is, they become better teachers as a result of their students' experiences. From the narrative excerpts above, the national teachers realized that being creative and understanding while teaching offered noble opportunities for instructional skill deployment, refinement and retooling their skills and expertise.

5.3.1 Sub Theme i: Teaching Feels Great and Rewarding as Characterized by Participants

The data indicated that despite the perceived temporality nature of the refugee camps, national teachers narrated that teaching experiences in Dadaab *“makes one feel great and it is rewarding,”* although it was Juka who explicitly laid this sentiment clearly

a number of participants alluded to it in other ways. Teachers explained that students grasped important skills from classes and quickly utilized them to benefit them and the society as well. For instance, as he narrated his coming to Dadaab, Roki remembered how he was received in the camps. He was perceived to be that person with the most needed skills and fit for the Dadaab market. Roki stated,

I think someone must have told the students that computer lessons were going to start, they had never been taught computers. Once arrived, I got a lot of friends from the students who would talk to me, they would tell me some things about the place, they would tell me how they were waiting for me, and how I was going to transform their lives, and I kept telling myself, I think this is the place I should be.

After teaching for a while, Roki found out that his students had turned around his classroom teachings into great innovations “...He has his online software company.” Other teachers including Josi found similar encounters and described the feeling as an “instant reward”.

In their usual teaching teachers learned that demand for hands-on content was in high demand and attracted more curious students to come to school. They considered these hands-on skills a great game changer, which experts ‘teachers’ validated in the classrooms. Beto expands,

When I went to Dadaab, teaching computer studies wasn’t ideally to be taught in secondary school. It was supposed to be a livelihood skill. But the more we taught the more the need for computer studies became important and the need to be implemented as one of the subjects in the secondary education became eminent. Within a very short time, we realized that, the students who were doing computer

studies, they were going to the market, and operating very small businesses and cyber cafes.

When these national teachers realized the students' potentials and how they were utilizing the knowledge in overcoming unemployment challenges, the teachers were motivated to even go beyond what was required of them. They aimed at equipping their students with relevant life-long skills, from a regular six months basic training to four years of comprehensive teaching and training. Roki wondered, “...*So we thought, why don't we give them now a better skill, which would be between form one and form four [4 years]*”. By the time the students left or completed school and were ready to go to the market or even back to Somalia, Omi described their computer skills as, “*impactful to them and their immediate community.*”

While the teachers in computer studies applauded their students' creativity and efforts on one hand, those teaching business studies were surprised to see how students conceptualized learning and converted it into unimaginable and relevant ventures. Jeka remarked:

There are others who are venturing even into the stock market. I know there are some who do a bit of Bitcoin. And there are others who do side hustles of online content writing, I think there is a lot of Somali-English translation.

Beto further noted:

...There's a student who finished last year, he is now a certified and an accomplished programmer. He can come up with, with any application that you want, starting with apps.

Teachers were constantly challenging themselves to match up with the speed of their students on many fronts. However, they were also cognizant of the fact that student populations and abilities were diverse and learning or actualizing what was taught would take time. These realizations made them strive with an aim to better their pedagogical skills to benefit students at all times. As Caku explained

I think teaching them [students] has made me become a 'student' in class. Because you find that as a teacher I do as much as what they're doing. In teaching you have to find all the resources, think of how you are going to make things to be very simple, so that they can understand. So you will find yourself reading a lot and becoming knowledgeable. It's all about being mindful of them and so I have to do extra research on easier and alternative ways for them.

It is very common for Utu/Ubuntu to encourage all beings to celebrate other people's achievement in life. It is a sign of reciprocity among the human beings and other beings (Somjee, 2008, Some, 1998). These teachers felt complete or complemented whenever they saw or witnessed their students achieving high in return from the education they were able to deliver. Thus, the need to make the students better made the teachers must better themselves. The teachers made deliberate efforts in their work to not only benefit themselves but also their students. In this way, teaching became enjoyable and made them feel great. I would only compare this feeling with when one discovers or solves a complex issue...the "eureka" moment!

5.3.2 Sub Theme ii: National Teachers Considered their Role in Dadaab Schools as “More than Just a Teacher”

...In Dadaab you just have to be a teacher plus something else! (Jeka).

The data analysis revealed that there were many things at stake for the national teachers and the students they taught. Beto admitted, “...*To survive as a national teacher [in the refugee camp school] one has to explore all his/her “faculties” and invoke a lot of pedagogical skills.* For the teachers to survive and feel at peace with self in Dadaab it required that one be “*more than just a teacher*” (Omi). Beto and Omi’s observations corroborate the UNHCR’s (2017) claim that “For refugee children, teachers are not only their academic tutors, but also their mentors, motivators, protectors and champions”(p. 36).

Teaching students that may not have had status, family or who were experiencing other life related challenges appeared to be a daunting task for teachers. The national teachers expressed that there were certain virtues they needed to possess first before becoming teachers in order to teach these students. That is to say, it took more than what is traditionally known or contracted of a teacher. When I asked the teacher, what kind of teachers they perceived or others perceived them to be Roki said that he was

Just an average teacher, I put myself there. I am usually very empathetic and I'm sympathetic to the situation. I feel before I'm a teacher, I am a parent. And the funny thing is that I'm a parent to so many children who don't have other parents. So, that is the first thing. I have to play the parenting role. If I'm able to fulfill it, then, I should also be able to fulfill my role as a teacher.

Others considered themselves as being supportive and mindful and that these are key values for their teaching success. This is how Caku described it

I'm understanding and considerate, I've been teaching students of all levels.

Imagine a student in form 4 [grade 12] and the only thing they know is writing their name. In that case you cannot afford to only be a teacher, you just have to be like a brother/sister to that person. I must intentionally seek ways of how I could help this student. I'm not just going to be a teacher because most of us teachers say, "teach and go".

Jeka reiterated Caku's point noting:

In Dadaab you just have to be a teacher plus something else, because we know the kind of people we are teaching. They have experienced so much in their lives. They don't have that patience, but you just have to come down, put your professionalism aside and say to them it's you and me how are we going to help one another?

These national teachers explain their dedication and creativity in handling their service delivery in the refugee camps. Their experiences are largely influenced by what I would call deep desires to do well as a human being; a core premise of Utu (see Gachanga & Walter 2015; Baker, 2019; Ogide, 2019).

5.3.3 Sub Theme iii: National Teachers Considered the Swahili Language as a Menace to Maneuver

Drawing on my own experiences and also the data, it is evident that learning a new language is challenging. Although Kiswahili is one of the national and official languages in Kenya and a *lingua franca* in the East African region, the students in

Dadaab struggled with the Kiswahili language as a subject that formed a major part of the Kenya national examination. All participants agreed with what Omi noted, “*Especially the Swahili language, they [student] have a very bad attitude.*” This attitude derailed their failure at the national exams; however, as a core subject in the Kenyan education system national teachers, as Josi reiterated, “*must deal with teaching of this core subject to avoid mass failure and shame*” Teachers explained that students’ failure at the national level in their subjects was not well received even by those who failed to perform. This is what Josi is referred to as “*shame.*”

Despite the tough measures and requirements for good grades in the compulsory subjects, students were reported to have had significant challenges handling Kiswahili subjects. According to the stories shared by the teachers, some students did not give enough attention to the subject due to its future usability. For instance, Omi claimed,

...Some of them are okay while some will say after all it's just Kenyan education I'll just get my certificate and go away. Especially the Swahili language, they don't want Swahili 'kabisa' (vehemently).

Another teacher claimed that students perceived the subject as difficult and foreign, to an extent that the teachers used a different language to relate and simplify their teaching. It thus meant that for a teacher to teach the subject, they must be knowledgeable in another language familiar to the students. Caku put it as “*They say it is very hard and it's a foreign language, you know.*”

For Caku, her style of teaching the language had to go beyond the expectation as she tried to incorporate ideas and ways that students would relate to.

I teach Swahili in English. If I tell them do you know the 'nomino,' [noun]?" I have to translate and ask them do you know the noun? What is a noun? Give me an example of a noun. So in "Swahili tunasema inaitwa nomino" [so in Swahili we say its called a noun]

Others who were supposed to teach Kiswahili literature "fasihi", poem "mashairi", long and short stories "riwaya" and play "tamthilia" reported to have faced uphill tasks as they endeavoured to help learners grasp the intended understanding. It was further noted that some Swahili words lacked proper and direct translation/meaning (Khapoya, 2013). Juka narrated that

Teaching a set book is very tricky because you have to read that set book, then translate it into English, so that they can understand. Some phrases don't even have direct words or exact meaning in English but you must find them. But because of that, and wanting to help, you have to do it at the end of the day you will be paid because of that.

For one to be admitted to Kenyan universities, one has to have performed and passed in the core subjects, unfortunately there was a catch, the "Swahili menace". Omi reminded how important it was for the students to have performed excellently in their grade 12 level exams including the dreaded Kiswahili.

Kiswahili is a requirement for them to join Kenyan universities. Yeah. Like, if you're going to take medicine in Kenya, you should have passed well in both English and Swahili. So, if we look at the bulk, we only send a very small fraction of learners in Canada. Yes. But those who perform well currently are under the

DAFI²¹ scholarship here in the country. We have over 240 learners in Kenyan universities.

Having experienced these linguistic challenges that had a stake in their job, national teachers had to be creative. The teachers shared that they introduced drama, music and other interesting artistic and entertaining ways of learning while also dedicating and mandating one of the days of the week as a Swahili speaking day. Participants further explained that the more they stayed in the camps the more they learnt new ways to navigate and promote the use of the Swahili language for the sole benefit of the students' examinations.

²¹Albert Einstein German Academic Refugee Initiative

5.4 Theme 4: Possibility of Only Educational Incentive – Scholarships Slipping Away Due to Poor Class Performance Manifested in Panic and Depression among Students

Analysis across the data set from the national teachers revealed that refugee students regarded highly scholarships to study outside of Dadaab refugee camp. However, the scholarships were extremely few. According to the teachers, the reality among the students that the opportunities to secure high premium scholarships were less, often created panic and depression among students as Beto explained, “...*you know the issue of scholarships is like trial and error, you are not assured that you will get it, it is a competitive thing.*”

There are a number of university entry scholarships available for students in Dadaab. However, KCSE remains a major gatekeeper to those opportunities “... *yes, they have to perform well in the KCSE*” (Josi). Roki noted that the majority of the DAFI (Albert Einstein German Academic Refugee Initiative) scholarships were offered to students who “*attended local universities.*” It was further explained that “*students were kept waiting for longer periods of time to know about their qualifications after sitting for their national examinations* (Jeka). Considering the anxiety involved in waiting for scholarship results, Omi shared that they had to keep the students calm by offering them work opportunities within the camps schools as incentive teachers.

So before they go for those positions we utilize them when they're still free. And as they wait they teach and learn how to teach and move on.

There are other notable gains found within the local and international competitive scholarships, which provided pathway out of the Camps. There are few and competitive

scholarships in Dadaab. For example, there is the international scholarship offered by the World University Services of Canada (WUSC). This scholarship targets students who perform well in their national exams; the scholars are taken to Canada for studies as permanent residents, who later become Canadian citizens. Thereafter they are able to relocate their families from the camps. As indicated in the narratives, *it therefore becomes a dream for every refugee students to obtain this scholarship*; (Roki) unfortunately there are only a “*handful of such opportunities*” (Jusi). The other popular scholarship is DAFI (Albert Einstein German Academic Refugee Initiative) and then there are those offered opportunities locally to attend Kenyan post-secondary institutions.

...WUSC and DAFI are some of the few scholarships available for a student who wants to get outside this circumference, or the walls of the Dadaab. They struggle as hard as they can so they can perform well to get those scholarships and then be out of this place (Omi).

The perspective of national examination as a gateway for students’ prosperity as an individual to become a productive member of the community appears to be consistent with the purpose of education in the African tradition (Khapoya, 2013). However, it is clear that the same exams serve as a gatekeeper for most of the students in the refugee camps. It is evident that these national teachers maintained these highly engaged students as one of their responsibilities. In what follows we see how these national teachers helped to maintain these bright students’ calmness as well as how the teachers lived experiences helped them attain high standards.

5.4.1 Sub Theme i: Kenya's National Examination was a Gatekeeper to their Students' Dreams of Leaving the Refugee Camp for Postsecondary Studies and Refugee-ness

National teachers explained how they helped students navigate the national examinations, which served as a gatekeeper to their future dreams. According to these national teachers, *“a promise of exiting the refugee camp to study in other lands of opportunities or for resettlement of their families rested on refugee students' outstanding performance in the Kenyan national examination* (Juka). As a result, the national examinations were seen as a gatekeeper to a perceived opportunity to secure premium scholarships to study outside of Dadaab refugee camp, which often, *“caused panic and depression within the student population”* (Josi). Having noted a trend and desire to perform well in the national exams, which in return caused panic and depression to student, teachers took it upon themselves to help address the students' anxieties. For instance, Jusi explained that upon realizing how some of his students were 'bothered' he arranged with them, which was *“against the camp's norm”* to teach them outside the normal teaching hours, he *“took a risk”*.

...So those times we would leave the compound as early as 6:30AM. Go to school.

I would meet this boy and some of his classmates, and I would teach them Chemistry.

Although this was perceived as good idea it only favoured one set of the student population: the boys. Elaborating further Jusi voiced *“it was easy for the boys to attend to such arrangements due to the fact that their culture allowed them to be out at such times, which was prohibitive for girls citing security reasons.”* From this explanation it

becomes clearer why boys tended to perform better in their national examinations as compared to the girls. As Meke reiterated, *“this was the reason why the boys who continued to excel.”* They were favoured by many odds.

Further, as the teachers became aware of the role the national examination played in their students’ lives, and as a result they identified and engaged those struggling but ambitious students to survive through.

Jeka narrated an encounter she had with one of her students

This boy was a student in the classroom and I have several of them, who have succeeded and have done so well. But what happened is this boy really wanted to go to university or have the DAFI. The boy would really cry, he would come and say Madam, I have to attain this one, what can I do? I would encourage him and also guide him, tell him of the many other opportunities that existed other than the DAFI and WUSC such as...Norwegian Refugee Council, Red Cross and other organizations that offered diploma courses, or even P1 (Primary school teaching certificate) courses. This made him less depressed. Because I had seen several students, after they failed to get the scholarship, fall into depression, deep depression. ...So this boy as we speak went ahead and got the DAFI scholarship and is almost finishing his studies at the university.

Juka narrates of a similar case where national teachers had to come in handy to help students navigate the coveted scholarship opportunities; a key factor to avoiding emotional distress is opportunity. The national teachers recognized this and showed the refugee students other choices that they had so that their futures do not look bleak. Jeka said

We also had a girl who is called Mwangazia (pseudonym). This girl was very interesting. She was very bright in our class, we used to support her in any way we could. She got a WUSC scholarship and she's doing nursing in Canada.

From what they explained, the national teachers perceived these (seeking help and being consistent) traits as indicators for a bright future in a student. As such these students were identified and considered for targeted academic and social support.

As explained in the literature review in Chapter 2, students' performance in secondary schools depends on a few things and one of those is subject clustering i.e. the subject combinations students select. Beto expressed that clustering of relevant subjects was key to realizing students' dreams and that this had to be done in company of an "experienced teacher" noting that "*there are a number of learners who don't land where they want to be in the future because they select a mismatch of subjects.*" Jusi hinted that the clustering had to happen after a series of meetings and analysing previous results/performance. Jusi said, "*So, after hours of engaging I encouraged him to keep the dream. Later, I called him and we analysed his performance where we did what we call clustering of subjects that he needed to work on for him to achieve his dreams.*

While explaining his experience with depressed students over the national exams, Josi narrated how he came to the rescue of a particular student in form 3 (grade 11). He was about to give up, especially in Swahili language.

...he had some problems in Kiswahili. He didn't like Swahili. I sort of helped him with the remedial work. I remember at one point I met with his father, the father was an old man, and he really wanted his son to excel. I really tried to help the learner. We even had to look and hire somebody to help him when I was not

around. I remember at times I would go down to my place. Get some past papers from the other side. I would come with them to Dadaab to make some photocopies for him. At times, he would even challenge me to prepare some Chemistry experiments in the lab, which I did with him. When he sat for the KCSE (National exam), he emerged with six (6) 'clean' A (A plain) he only got one A- (A minor). He got a WUSC scholarship and relocated to Canada, we often talk on FB.

It is clear that anxiety did not only reside with the students but also their parents. As championed in Utu/Ubuntu the essence of a community depends on each other's success and interdependence. In this context, the teachers are seen celebrating together with their students on these accomplishments. It is in the spirit of African oneness (Achebe, 1965).

While these large funded scholarships sounds great, the reality remained that not all qualified students got an opportunity to travel abroad to study (UNHCR, 2017). According to the national teachers and as espoused within the African way of doing things to support each other, teachers explained a very unique scholarship offered in the camps. They called it the "*relative and friends' scholarship*." (Meke) In other parts of Kenya this would loosely translate to what they call "Harambee" - pooling of community resources together for the benefit of all (Kenyatta, 1978).

The study findings showed that due to the high demand for the few scholarships in the camps some "*friends and relatives would often come together to support one or two bright students who may have missed the work opportunities in the camps or the scholarship*"(Roki). The teachers believed that these friends and relatives pooled their resources together in support of the students as they waited to hear from the external scholarship applications. Caku indicated that this kind of scholarship was regarded as

important as it “*helped reduce the panic and depression among the scholars.*” In fact, due to this community generosity, some students were able to enrol in double degrees in some local universities. As Beto explained

At first when they delayed getting a scholarship he enrolled himself in a degree in education, English literature. Relatives and friends sponsored him, you know Somalis... When you have a good grade they come together as a village, they put together some coins and you go to school to pursue whatever they want.... He was a third year student in first degree when he received his DAFI scholarship... So, he has done two degrees.

While here most teachers focused on their exiting students Josi narrated how a student was so desperate to join school. He further noted that everyone did their best to obtain the chance that could potentially elevate them to positions where they could see and imagine life outside of the camps. The excerpt below exemplifies ways how national teachers played vital role and believed in and advocated for the enrolment of students who were perceived as weak academically. It is a reflection of true Utu/Ubuntu values at work. Josi wanted me to understand that many of these students are very determined and that among the refugees there was a genuine desire to vacate the camps, even among those who did not secure a spot in the school.

Ok, this is not a story I've seen it myself. Yes, it is from a firsthand encounter. In the year 2012 there was this new school that was starting in Dadaab in Ifo 2, when there was an influx of refugees from Somalia, due to the drought. The new school was called Nasi (not real name). It opened its doors in April of 2012... Yes that was in second term. After all the other schools had done their intakes. I

happened to be one of the pioneer teachers there. For us to be able to get students, we were forced to lower the entry mark. Boys were to come in with about 200 marks out of 500, and girls were given a cut of about 180 out of 500, so that we could get some enrolment. There was a boy who missed the entry mark by about two marks, he came to school and demanded to be enrolled...

Pointing to the boy's sense of determination even when he did not meet the minimum admissions mark of 200 points, Josi continued to explain:

The boy instead of coming to seek enrolment, he came ready to be enrolled. He came in school uniform and books ready to go to class. You know when you're going to seek enrolment you go ask first. If you are allowed, you go buy a uniform but this fella came with every requirement for admission. And he was there requesting for admission, but he was not qualified. Imagine this boy sticking in school for a whole week. He could come in the morning, try to talk to the principal. The principal would tell him how his 'hands were tied' and that he could not get a place for him there. But the boy kept coming.

Driven by principles of Utu/Ubuntu, Josi sought to find out more about the student and eventually advocated for his enrolment:

At one point, I noticed the boy, I was just a mere teacher, and developed an interest in him. I talked to him and he told me that he was living with his grandmother alone. And that he saw education as the only way that could get him and his aged grandma out. He told me that if he'd be given a chance he would even become number one. I was so touched I went and talked to the principal who consulted the program manager. The, program manager, requested us to give him

some kind of entry exam to see whether he could write something or not. Being a teacher of mathematics, I was given a chance to give him a paper quiz, with which he did so well and he got I think about 80% put together and he was tested in 3 subjects, science, Mathematics and English. We compiled the three results and shared them with the program manager. And, the program manager allowed us to enrol the boy, on condition that he performs well during that term. To our surprise the boy was among the top 10 students in that class. During that first term, I was teaching them mathematics, by the time he was in form 2 he was leading the class... Yes, he was leading the class; he did his form 4 and scored a B+ in 2015. He got a scholarship, called DAFI. He was admitted at the University of Nairobi. I think he should have graduated last year or he's graduating this year. And that is the kind of a success story that will never leave my heart.

Josi let me understand that whatever he was sharing wasn't a 'story' or what could sometimes be perceived as just stories or exaggerations. This success story is one of the many other that were not told at such lengths but they exist. The story also amplifies the Utu/Ubuntu values of trust and care lived and actualized by the teachers.

Caku on the other hand had a very interesting way of looking at the national examination (KCSE). She perceived it as a form of scholarship. According to her, students who failed to land those prestigious scholarships but had managed to obtain a certificate from the Kenyan government (KCSE) stood great chances of getting lucrative jobs in Somalia. Many opted to go back to Somalia instead of staying in the camps with depression.

If someone scores a grade E (Fail) in the KCSE, when they go to Somalia they are counted among the learned people there. That's just because they have mastered the language and are able to communicate. So, I find it not so bad as this is a scholarship to other avenues in the rebuilding of a nation.

Understanding what was at stake for the students, the national teachers explained their desire of teaching in these schools citing that most of their students were very hard working and performed so well.

5.4.2 Sub Theme ii: National Teachers Considered a “Two Schools in One”

Approach an Expanded Opportunity for the Girl Child

As noted in Chapter 2, in the two largest refugee camps in Kenya, Dadaab and Kakuma, there exists a system known as ‘two schools in one’ (Duale, Munene & Njogu, 2021). From the narrative interviews, the national teachers appeared to suggest that this schooling system was one of the best as it granted a gateway for more students to access scholarship to local universities. Furthermore, its operation offered a *lot of flexibility to students who were willing to excel* (Caku) as well as allowing them to enjoy their right to education. The national teachers commended the inception of this system claiming that *it allowed more female students to attend school who would otherwise not come* (Juka). Jusi corroborated what Meke and Caku had earlier expressed concerning girls pointing that *“majority of those girls had been put into a point of desperation as they were culturally expected to perform certain homely tasks before they could head to the schools.”*

Although the *two in one* system was overwhelmingly praised it only catered for the lower (entrance) high school grades that is *“form one and two”* (grades 9 and 10) *“where the population is higher.”* (Caku) The data also indicated that the two schools in

one system encouraged and paved way for more female students to “*dream of better performance,*” which would bring them closer to winning the prestigious scholarships

School ‘two’ has a larger female population than school ‘one’. Most of the female students prefer school two, which begins at 11 am. They have time to deal with their household chores... Their performance has improved. (Jeka)

However, Caku noted that in upper grades Form three and four (Grades 11 and 12) they had only ‘one’ school citing the lower population that was mostly affected by cultural practices including marriage and that most students had realized that their academic capabilities were limited hence venturing into other local businesses

...but when you get to form three there is no school two. School two is only for form one and two because you find that when they are in form one and two the population is so high but as they go up, some of them drop once they get married. So they reduce in number and that is why you have one school for form 3 and 4.

This comment points to the barriers girls experienced in accessing education and is what I argue is in conflict with the basic fundamentals of Utu. Although informed by an African cultural belief, Somjee (2020) reminds us that people from time to time forget to practice Utu. Nonetheless, the idea that the system is geared towards opening more opportunities for teacher employment and more students’ attendance, school provides a lay of hope that systems could also be “*Utunized*” to cater for the less fortunate with the scholarships paving way out of the encampments.

5.5 Theme 5: Teaching as a Humane Act

Utu/Ubuntu teaches us about mutuality and conviviality thus Utu/Ubuntu is all about interdependence. More so, Utu/Ubuntu validates individuality as sense of freedom, independence and a level of development as a person. Similarly, Utu/Ubuntu recognizes individualism as a self-referential aspect about self (huge ego) that takes over the goodness in us. Utu/Ubuntu teaches us about the importance of living together as a community as opposed to in isolation. That is,, we live in a world of peers, and community, which has values and it is our duty to co-create a society of the future.

James Ogude (2021) reminded us that “compassion is useless without action” Ogude further notes that simple acts such as greetings in the human sphere means a lot because it is all about recognition and appreciation. In a bid to creating a formidable society we must therefore acknowledge others and help those in need.

Utilizing the Utu/Ubuntu lesson by Ogude and in connection to teaching, the teachers’ narratives and actions pointed to ways they sought and utilized different teaching approaches that made students’ learning experiences more positive and impactful. For instance, Beto, Jeka and Omi outlined approaches they used to capture learners’ imagination and involvement as they taught. Beto noted that

And the best way of doing it is to come to their level you explain, even a concept using the knowledge or the idea that they have, actually you be attentive to the approach because all the same this one has to be learner centered approach,

Jeka added: *Despite the bulkiness of the system I have to employ experiment and discussion.* Omi on the other hand was pleased that his use of role-play was aligned to his

teaching methods, “*or role-play using the available technology. Those are things that will enable them to grasp the concept in a better way.*”

Here, the national teachers heeded to what Freire (1998) elaborated on teaching as a ‘humane act’:

Teaching is a human act. It is the way through which the instructor transfers not only knowledge but also values and good habits in this context; every teaching act should be based on very advanced techniques and strategies so that students can learn easily the targeted knowledge and values. For instance group work is one of the effective strategies that attracts the attention of learners and assist their learning it allows them to work collaboratively and improve their communication skills as well as their ability to be leaders and convince each other (p.125).

It has been noted that due to the over crowdedness and voluminous syllabi in the schools, teachers are mostly tempted to use approaches that are teacher centered and convenient. Beto explained that “*because as I teach I might go for lecture. Remember, which is not suitable for them...*”

Beto and his colleagues are very considerate and passionate about what they do. For me, growing up and going to school to be taught was not always the most appealing activity. Some of my teachers taught by the book and caused harm to a number of us through punishments and ‘poor’ teaching methods. I never understood this until I got older enough to reflect and looking back through the national teachers teaching refugee students lens, some of my teachers may not have necessarily enacted or upheld Utu/Ubuntu values. Some failed to recognize most of us as deserving learners and at that time, unfortunately, to us this was discipline.

Further as a way to advance the humane act, the teacher delved into using available personal tools and technology, which they were familiar or perceived to be knowledgeable. They used their competences to leverage on their teaching, learning, guidance and counselling roles in Dadaab refugee camp schools and community at large.

Teachers were largely aware that the majority of their learners lacked exposure to most of academic experiences. In a bid to implement and deliver on the curriculum mandated to them, teachers made use of their available technological skills to not only fulfill that mandate but also to simplify the content as well as demystifying some of the concepts students encountered as Jusi narrated “...*you know from experience there are some [students] who think or have been told by their colleagues that a certain concept or a certain chapter is difficult.* According to some teachers, the majority of their students held strong beliefs that certain topics were difficult to grasp and that they needed extra support in making sense of those topics. The use of technology came in handy amidst Internet (Wi-Fi) challenges as they navigated other daily teaching issues.

Further, Omi narrated that the “*use of a simple language while teaching was critical for their students' understanding of complex concepts,*” citing that “*refugee students' general experiences were slightly different from the learner in other parts of the country*” (Roki). Similarly, Juka shared what living in the restricted refugee camps was like in Dadaab. She noted that it made students' movement to other places a challenge, pointing at those restrictions “*left the majority of them less exposed to alternative means of learning used elsewhere.*” Omi explained that this lack of exposure to other parts of the country forced most students to capitalize on the power of imagination as a way of learning those complex topics or subjects. However, he was quick to mention that they

utilized, where possible, available online resources that helped to break down the ideas in a familiar context and language.

When you are explaining something like in geography about a river, they've never seen a river flowing, especially those who have not been to Garissa or other parts of the nation. To make it easy and comprehensible one uses the Internet. Because some schools have Wi-Fi you need to use your soft copy notes or slides, you have to demonstrate it and display something from the Internet for them to understand.

The students depended on their limited imagination on some of these key ideas and educational experiences. To a larger extent Beto mentioned that as a result of lack of the exposure and enough learning tools, students declined to take geography as a subject.

We are having problems teaching, for example, geography, because for these students, as I told you, Dadaab is an open prison to them with a very large diameter. It might sound funny but the truth is some students have never seen a river, an ocean or even a lake.

Beto went on to explain that “*students in other parts of the country continued to enjoy field trips that added value to their learning and improved their imagination unlike those in Dadaab.*” In such circumstances where teachers were concerned with exposing the students, they brought in their basic technological knowledge to help reduce the gaps. It was well noted that this lack of exposure was well founded within the camp restrictive systems (as indicated in chapter one). Although it is understandable, teachers expressed their frustrations that came with the idea to take students to any place. Beto further narrated that this was as “*...as a result of the huge paperwork needed*” before any student or group of students would be allowed to travel outside of the refugee camps.

According to these teachers the lack of this experiential learning (needed exposure) impacted their teaching; to an extent they were perceived as the only beings with knowledge to even overcome the living in the camps as compared to other parts of the country. The national teachers were perceived to hold important knowledge to resources key to facilitate students manage to vacate the camp life. As Caku put it, sometimes teachers are overwhelmed.

...it really affects us because you become the sole source of information if you were to compare with those in the normal Kenyan schools.

Teachers, including Caku noted that schools in Kenya had “*exchange programs where if you identify a school with a good tradition, you can take your students there. They see for themselves, come back to try and implement certain traditions,*” unlike in Dadaab where a teacher “*can’t move with them, it is just an uphill task. Being refugees with no documentation, it’s not easy. In fact, if they [students] have to go to Nairobi, they have to be escorted.*” What Caku is alluding to, as a ‘good tradition’ is the ability of a particular school to have access to learning resources, equipment and enough teaching staff.

Not every lesson is learnt in the four walls of the classroom, field trips are as important as in class learning. Unfortunately, the restrictions put in Dadaab limits the mobility of teachers and their students out of the camps. For those subjects like geography or history that would benefit from such field trips students are left at the mercies of imagination and no doubt this adds pressure on the teachers who must improvise means to deliver the content albeit limited resources.

Teachers’ intentions to take students to such learning excursion would be perceived as caring and sharing from an Utu/Ubuntu lens. As a national teacher I often

took my students to such trips and I could tell how much they appreciated those efforts. They were able to see and learn from nature away from their local environments and applied knowledge learnt once they returned. Teachers in Dadaab have a real reason to feel the overwhelming impact due to such movement restricts on their students. While the human rights acknowledge the freedom to movement, it is hard to locate this restriction from an African perspective.

5.5.1 Sub Theme i: Education Understood as Human Right and Fodder for Freedom that Deserved a Sacrifice

Transforming lives of refugee children at the expense of their own (Meke)

Participants agreed that education was a fundamental human right that often lead humans to freedom (UNHCR, 2011). Including freedom to movement, which is highly restricted in Dadaab. Once the students attain good grades they are certain sure that life outside the camps was possible as explained in the Student Refugee Program (2021). However, this is not to ignore that fact that in the refugee camps life and access to quality education can be a challenge therefore undermining some basics for the human rights and the sustainable development goal (SDG goal 4). In fact, United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN-DESA) indicated that call for human rights not only impacted the refugee students but also teachers and their immediate families (UN-DESA, 2016).

It is in this light that the national teachers taught as they did to makes sure majority of their students gained that needed education which in turn facilitated mobility outside the camps. National teachers knew what they were doing and while this was a form of response to a critical call, they also left voids in their own families. A child has a

right to be raised by both parents. As they explain below, the intertwined cry for human right brought by education's quest is key for our understanding.

To the national teachers, camps are places for displaced people who have sacrificed their family lives in search of a place with protected human rights and free from conflicts. As indicated in previous excerpts, teachers' own children grew up without their parents because they were away in the school camps trying to respond to the human right call on education. In other words the teachers 'parents' were busy transforming the lives of the refugee children in the camp schools while their own were at home in care of other people. This phenomenon is not unique among the African communities where a child can be taken care of by other members of the community (Some, 2008). However, Juka faced a challenge, *"my major problem was my family and my three kids"*. Others mentioned that while it was a huge conflict within them they knew whatever they were doing for the refugee children was worthwhile. Betosays, *"...for sure I tell you it is a good thing to do Kimani"* (Beto). However, they went on to explain that it came at a greater emotional expense for their immediate families who could not join them in the camps. Especially, the female teachers who narrated how their young families had to survive without them while still infants. Juka remembered that

...my major problem was my family and my three kids. You can imagine during that period, I had two kids when I was in Dadaab. And what happened is I would give birth to my child and after three months go back. We are given three months of maternity leave. So, after three months that child stops suckling as you head back to Dadaab.

While smiling back at her fond memories, Jeka went on to elaborate how her own infants grew without her daily presence, which gave her significant worries. She praised her husband who took care of their children while she was away helping other needy children in the refugee camps, some of whom had no parents or even close relatives to take care of them.

I used to leave my children with my husband, I always worried that these children were growing up and I didn't have much connection with them.

Later, Jeka pointed out that she felt she had done her part when the students she was teaching started to graduate with some of them landing good jobs within the camps while others got lucrative scholarships locally and abroad “...when I was about to leave I felt I had accomplished a mission that I came for in the camps, I went up from classroom teacher becoming an administrator.” She had done her part and time came to be with her family.

Corroborating with Jeka, Juka narrated how teachers facilitated the growth of their infants while away in Dadaab in a special teaching ‘mission’. Pointing out the collaboration between the female teachers and their husbands in the “online” upbringing. Husbands supported their families and indicated that

...Especially for the female teachers, you have to give birth, leave your children, and go back to Dadaab. We even had some of the female teachers like expressing the milk, sending it by flight, every Friday to the husbands in Nairobi for the children.

Despite the challenges Jeka, Juka revealed they also acknowledged lactating mothers sending milk to their children was important as it provided those children with deserved nutritious “food”. This act is falls under the human right category.

For those whose children were big enough and in schools, the teachers explained how they made sacrifices at their expense. They could not visit the schools where their children attended and more so during the important school events like parents or academic day. Meke lamented that

So it's really a big challenge. By the end of the day, it is kind of a sacrifice teachers make to be in Dadaab for a whole year because it means I have to miss witnessing a lot of changes in my kids. For example, I miss many academic meetings at my kids' school; I do not have time to attend even parent day meetings for my kids where they go to school. Other teachers in down Kenya have an easy time managing and staying freely with their families but not so easy for us however we try to balance and negotiate with our kids back home on learning as we teach the refugees here in Dadaab. So, it is not easy.

Although Meke lamented she was fully aware that her action and being in Dadaab was not in vain, she knew her presence filled a void that was key to the refugee students' academic upward mobility while her relatives took good care of her children back home

While relating his children's parental absenteeism Roki clearly demonstrated how his understanding of his students had deepened. And this elaborates why he kept teaching in the refugee camps school. Some of his students had told him of the reasons why they did not show up at school on a daily basis or as required.

That's why you find some girls not coming to school and when I asked why, they told me of how their parents went to Somalia, and were told that they should stay with the children.

These are cases of unaccompanied children who lived all by themselves with the older ones taking care of the younger siblings. It is in such circumstances where minors are burdened with unimaginable responsibilities their chances of missing school are highly inevitable. So there is a shared experience between national teachers and their students in such instances in that national teachers who let other relatives stay with their children relate that to the students that they teach. In many ways I see the national teachers taking up the parental slot for those unaccompanied children at a school level

Driving this point home, Beto explained that these children that survive in the camps all by themselves “*are vulnerable and the majority drop out of school due to lack of parental guidance.*” A child stepping up into an adult position is not easy; they are often overwhelmed with the many school and home demands leaving them thinly spread to even consider themselves hopeful of bright academic life.

Because you have realized some of them drop out because there's what we call the single families normally known as family size one where you are the elder son or daughter, you are the parent. You become the father and mother to your juniors.

Once they are out of school and continue with education teachers have no other means to directly transform their lives. Thus teachers find the need to be present for these students and this could be well done if such students were presents at schools. I see this relationship as one targeting to protect further damage on the sole students, teachers act as the guardians too.

In this theme and subthemes, the teachers explain their experiences of what it means to be in the refugee camp teaching students who faced trauma and displacement. They explain how they lived and performed their duties in places where their immediate family members were not welcome. Despite all that, teachers were able to tell those stories of the success from their students. Interesting is that these teachers put the stories of their students first before telling those of themselves. I find this to be very African and revolving around the values of Utu/Ubuntu especially on empathy and unity (Somjee, 2020).

Also, they explain how complex life could be in the camps for not only the teachers but also everyone involved. The lessons teachers found in the camps and stories of their students made them adapt living in the camp where they continued to appreciate the challenges and beauty of life. Importantly is how they individually grew as teachers, mothers, fathers and responsible people with a purpose to change their surroundings.

5.5.2 Sub Theme ii: Technology and the Dignity Kits' Impact on Education

Modern technology may not necessarily be a familiar phenomenon in refugee education, however the data set analysis from the national teachers reveals that technology was used in many ways that helped and supported students' education. For instance, it facilitated the disbursement of funds to buy items for the "dignity kits" for students and parents (Dhaya, 2017). According to the teachers' narratives like Juka's the use of mobile phone technology had aided in handling, *"female students' issues with dignity"*. In fact, Meke noted that this technology was perceived important because it *"reduced some stigma and trauma in educational experiences."*

Caku one of the female teachers expressed how challenging it was to handle menstrual hygiene issues among their student, terming it a “*major barrier to girls’ education*” (Caku). According to the World Bank, menstruation – and associated issues such as lack of access to clean water, sanitation and private toilets – leads girls in sub-Saharan Africa to miss four days of school every four weeks, adding up to a loss of 10-20% of school time (Ibrahim, Abdalla, Jafer, Abdelgadir, & de Vries, N. 2018; Mooijman, Van den Berg, Jensen, & Bundy, 2005). So, these important gadgets were claimed to have impacted the way female students experienced their monthly periods. Meke explained that parents to these girls were registered to receive some funds that would facilitate the purchase of sanitary pads among other important health-hygiene related items. This method was considered critical in that it helped the shy girls who would never go to request for the kits from schools. Caku thus perceived this as a “*dignified move.*” While explained the effectiveness of the said move

Nowadays, the girls would register with their phone number or their parents, then they would request for funds transfer and some cash would get them the sanitary towels.

Drawing on the narratives expressed in this sub theme it is clear that creativity and utilization of whatever resource available in the local environment considering its consumers could be beneficial. I believe, this could as well be considered humane as it helps alleviate human shame and sufferings among the female students. .

Although the teachers found it worthwhile to utilize the available technology, they also met some difficulties that slowed their pace in teaching. For instance, they from time to time according to Josi “*lacked sufficient Internet connection for*

uploading/downloading learning material.” Further, the situation worsened as the requirement to mitigate the Covid-19 came to effect, teachers had a better connection in the staffroom where the router was mounted and that the further they moved away from the router the weaker the signal became. However, some teachers reported to have used their smartphones to access some learning materials as well. Juka highlighted this saying that

And then also, the other challenge we had was the Wi-Fi, due to social distancing practices. I've never tried it... Sometimes you get back to your residential place and you're like, maybe you've even forgotten all about it and you just use the phone.

Since July 23 2008, following the national wide secondary schools unrest the ministry of education in Kenya prohibited students from bringing electronic gadgets to school more so the mobile phones. In the year 2021 nothing much had changed. The phenomenon remained the same despite the huge technological and digitalization shift.

Although students are not permitted to use such technology at school, they have a wide access to these gadgets and their smart applications due to their affordability. It was reported that the use of these mobile phones in accessing social media platforms skyrocketed during the pandemic and according to Beto he noted that during the pandemic they used platforms such as Facebook and WhatsApp to send and receive assignment from a number of students...*Yes we use FB and WhatsApps for assignments for form 3 and 4s* (grade 11 and 12). However, Roki, noted that not everything that shines is gold... for him, the “*social media contained a lot of misleading information that could potentially affect unsuspecting students.*”

What Roki explained is the responsibility teachers and students must own when it comes to technology use. As he posits these technological exposures on one hand are great but on the other they could negatively influence and impact education and living conditions of Dadaab. More so, when it comes to the access of un monitored adult content, cyber bullying, or even terrorist recruitments.

Kenyan Professor the late Wangari Wa Maathai the 2004 Nobel Peace Prize award winner told us that education is a “guaranteed ticket out of the perceived drudgery of subsistence farming or the cultivation of cash crops for little return” (Maathai, 2006, p. 71). In case of Dadaab it remains an assured pass out of the camps with great potential to liberate other family members. National teachers of Dadaab are aware of this consequence and they do all it takes to fulfil the dreams of their students including the female students. Furthermore, Freire (1998) noted how teaching was a humane act; it is in the same vein that he referred to teachers as cultural workers (Friere, 2005). In this study I liken his observation with the national teachers practices as elaborated in most of the themes in this study.

5.6 Summary

Although the national teachers’ experiences of teaching in long term refugee camp schools were challenging, they still stayed and worked there for over 5 years. For them seeing the ‘instant’ transformation within their student population was enough motivation, among other things, to keep working there. The teachers believed that their understanding of the value of education in the refugee camps helped them guide students in the most meaningful ways. This included counselling and sharing with students how to

cluster subjects based on their academic strengths and future dreams, helping students gain job opportunities as well as dreaded scholarships.

Furthermore, finding time to learn and understand their students brought to light the lessons of Utu/Ubuntu, which underscores the importance of taking care of each other even in unfortunate circumstances - the deep feeling of sympathy and empathy to each other in the spirit to co-create the beauty of peace, love and unity (Somjee 2020).

Importantly, cherishing that which is good in each human being as stipulated in the Afrocentric humanistic philosophy of being human. “You are because I am and I am because you are”. More so, Utu/Ubuntu urges us to dig deep within us to find and bring forth those values of care, forgiveness, and embracing simple acts such as greetings, which signals recognition of others. This is in a bid to acknowledge our interdependence in a holistic way, both humans and non-humans.

Findings in this study also revealed that national teachers' presence in the refugee camp schools motivated students to develop a deep desire to go back to their countries where they dared to rebuild as a way of giving back to the community. Education, no matter how little it was, was considered a major game changer not only among the students but also in the community. This was revealed as teachers explained how students and their parents worked hard to retain the national teacher especially after a dispute or how welcoming they were when a new national teacher arrived.

Further, teachers' understanding of the kind of students they were dealing with also helped ease the academic journey for most students. Although faced with cultural and religious differences, the teachers made decisions to stay in the camps. They acknowledged that transitioning into a new space with a different culture and religion

values could be challenging, however, they perceived most of these challenges as new learning opportunities. This also allowed them to see what meant to live and teach in a refugee camp while being surrounded with a number of uncertainties: insecurity, conflict, temporality, survival, displacement, and violation of human rights.

In most instances teachers used these new experiences to reflect on their prior teaching experiences as a way to compare their new journeys with students in refugee situations. That extra support they offered to their students is simply an act of Utu/Ubuntu. Teachers can't be teachers without their students and students can't be students without the involvement of their teachers (Somjee, 2021; Tutu, 2008).

The teachers relied on each other as human beings sharing the space given to them. It is this interdependence that makes them responsible human beings, allows them to see their weaknesses and correct them through the lens of each other. The challenges the teachers experienced in this study explain the dynamics of "*making each other*" as in I am because you are and you are because I am. Noting that no one is perfect, they all strive to make each other realize and see that which is good in them-Utu/Ubuntu.

Chapter 6: Discussion, Conclusion and Implications

6.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I discuss and further expand in detail using the study's theoretical framework and literature reviewed the themes that emerged in chapter 4. Here I ground themes in the literature and personal experience with a view to highlighting broadly and specifically the meanings conveyed by the themes, which characterize the study's findings. I further offer interpretations and where necessary create meaning as guided by the theoretical framework.

Given these themes in chapter 4 addresses study's question 1, and partially questions 2 and 3, the latter will be discussed in the context of study's broader framework as featured in chapter 2 where concepts of Utu/Ubuntu have been discussed. In this chapter I will elaborate and contextualize the study findings characterized by the 5 themes to show how the implied aspects are in concert or conflict with the notion of Utu/Ubuntu. I will begin the discussion with the implications the study's findings have on global conceptualization of Afro-centered refugee education.

This study was guided by three questions that were used to investigate the data corpus, which was later analyzed and generated five key themes as illustrated or demonstrated in chapter 4.

1. *What are Kenyan national teachers' narratives of teaching experiences and implied meanings, understandings and the relationship between education in refugee camps and host communities?*
2. *What aspects of the narratives are in concert or conflict with the Afrocentric value of Utu/Ubuntu (you are because I am; I am because you are)?*

3. *What implications might the study's findings have on global conceptualization of Afrocentric Utu/Ubuntu-centred refugee education?*

As a reminder of chapter 4, these are the 5 key themes that emerged

1. National teachers considered Dadaab refugee camp as non-family zone and risky place.
2. National teachers described Dadaab refugee camp as a place steeped in cultural and religious complexities.
3. National teachers appreciated Dadaab schools as offering noble opportunities for instructional skill deployment, refinement and retooling expertise.
4. Possibility of only educational incentive - scholarships slipping away due to poor class performance manifested in panic and depression among students.
5. Teaching as a humane act

As discussed previously, the experiences of national teachers teaching in Dadaab paints a picture of a context in which students are constantly threatened to return 'home'; homes that they have never seen, and those that are lucky only read about it in textbooks. It becomes such a hard reality to come to terms with. Or to put it differently, being born in a foreign country of refuge and inheriting the title of a refugee, getting education in a different country from childhood and that country cannot allow you citizenship and yet a host teacher is the one who delivers the curriculum.

As I put it, this could be challenging and overwhelming to comprehend in the current world. However, in the case that "a return home" would be possible, what kinds of people would likely be taking the journey to that home? What would be possibly done in that home that denied the parents or grandparents a stay? What humanistic values

would they bring along? What kind of future would they possibly make there? While all these are valid questions (not the main questions of the study) they remain quite complex without easy answers. However, the national teachers were aware of the implications these questions presented. Thus, in attending to the study's main questions, in this discussion I will tease out possible answers from the teachers' narrative through their experiences of teaching such students in refugee camp schools as demonstrated in prior chapters.

National teachers in Dadaab refugee camps offer their humanitarian services to a group of people with unique social cultural affiliations. Unique in the sense that the majority of these people follow a particular religious practice and social in the sense that the people they worked with belong to and are characterized as refugee camps dwellers (Dorai, 20017). In this case therefore, participants' views as expressed must be viewed in this social cultural context. However, participants' own social cultural experiences are also featured in their narratives, so the refugee context and their own home base contexts are the ones shaping the discussion and in the way they responded to the interview questions. For example, when I wanted to know what had kept them there for such a long time, some said that the *students' performance motivated them to stay*. So, when they say this I see it as a way of letting me know the extent to which they cared about their students and their academic welfare or maybe even future life in general. However, this same questioning made me wonder, what it would mean from a global conceptualization of Afrocentric Utu/Ubuntu-centred refugee education? I know if these same questions were prompted in a 'normal' discussion, responses would have been different. It is in this light that I would claim that some of the question I asked that were of this nature such as

...*tell me more about them* helped to tease out the question about Utu/Ubuntu, which is usually discerned from the way they characterize encounters in the refugee context (Chawane, 2016 & Mkabela, 2011, Asante, 1990).

Most languages in Africa share some commonalities and ideas. For example the idea of Ubuntu comes from a South African concept drawn from the *Nguni* languages, capitalizing on commonality within the humanity and exploring their interconnectedness (Fox, 2010). Thus Ubuntu resonates well with other similar concepts in other parts of Africa. For instance, in this study I use Utu and Ubuntu interchangeably and as earlier noted Utu (Swahili) and Ubuntu (*Nguni*) both originate from the Bantu language group hence Ubuntu is a variant of Utu from East Africa's major language, Swahili.

Kresse (2007) reminds us that Utu is captured through the axiom *Mtuni utu*; translated as "a human being is humanity"; or *Sifayamtuni utu*, meaning "what essentially defines a human being is his/her humanity" (p.139) Further, according to Ogude & Dyer (2019) Utu/Ubuntu becomes useful in understanding "relational forms of personhood because they are seen by many as the defining principle in numerous African societies, and that is the principle that our personhood depends on [for] our relationship with others" (p. 206).

According to Mkabela (2015) Utu/Ubuntu can be widely used as a philosophical or research base especially among the indigenous people. Given that Utu/Ubuntu is a philosophy expressed in different languages in Africa such as: *Utu* (Kenya/Tanzania); *gimuntu* (Angola); *umunthu* (Malawi); *vumutu* (Mozambique); *vumuntu*, *vhutu* (South Africa); *umuntu* (Uganda); *humhunu/ubuthosi* (Zimbabwe); *bomoto* (Congo) (Mupedziswa, 2019; Somjee, 2008; Gichaga, 2008) it can be easily

adopted to inform as many people as possible across the continent and globally. In the following section, I discuss the conceptual implications Utu/Ubuntu might have on a global scale in reference to my study's findings.

6.2 What Implications Might the Study's Findings Have on the Global

Conceptualization of Afrocentric Utu/Ubuntu-centered Refugee Education?

National teachers' voluntary involvement in refugee education and their role in the refugee camp schools have not attracted enough scholarly significance especially in the field of curriculum studies. This study has indicated that national teachers teaching as hosts in the refugee camps schools play a significant role in providing educational 'humanitarian' services to the refugee populations as they deploy the Utu/Ubuntu values.

As I discuss this important aspect of the refugee education, the dearth of literature on national teachers may become a barrier in how we perceive or understand the needs of both the national teachers and refugee students and how that might help in shaping up their educational mission in other areas of refuge. In this study I have acknowledged the existence of two categories of teachers who teach in the refugee camps (trained national and incentive teachers). However, in most literature studied the incentive or the refugee teachers are grouped together with the national teachers and are referred to as refugee teachers and studied as one entity (Richardson, MacEwen & Naylor, 2017). Thus making the national teachers invisible.

Although the pigeonholing of national and incentive teachers has lead national teachers into a state of perpetual silence, reports have shown that their numbers in the refugee camps are few. For instance as noted in Duale et al., (2019) national teachers in Dadaab is marked at 28% of the total teacher population within the camps. This number

may explain why these national teachers' information is seen to operate or exist in the background. This study's findings while applicable in Dadaab refugee camps context, resonates with earlier findings by Richardson, MacEwen & Naylor, (2017) which noted the "little research on national teachers who are teaching refugee children" (p. 12).

National teachers teaching in refugee camp in this study have informed that their work was perceived unique. In that they had never experienced refugee-ness before be it on cultural or in religion in fact, these two fronts differed in principle with those of their student. Furthermore, they taught students who were born in the camps or had experienced displacement resulting in trauma. For the teachers a major challenge was that they stayed away from home and their immediate families. So to an extent the teachers had a good insight into what it meant to be away from 'home'. Despite the above noted circumstances, these national teachers did not hesitate to show their inherent Afrocentric Utu/Ubuntu ways of handling refugee students in their deployment of teaching and learning: as one with care, passion, dedication, mindfulness, inclusion and kindness. This is what I would refer to as Afrocentric Utu/Ubuntu-centered refugee educational experience.

Utu/Ubuntu as explained in the earlier chapters is an African philosophy or a framework that is characterized by interconnectedness of all things and beings: Community, Supreme Being, Ancestor, Nature and Elders (Somjee, 2021, p.45). Other scholars characterize Utu/Ubuntu as the interconnections of all things in other words their collective/individual identity and the collective/inclusive nature of family structure, the spiritual nature of people, the value of interpersonal relationships and oneness of mind, body, and spirit (Zvomuya, 2020; Mungai, 2015; Mupedziswa, 2019).

Further and as expressed in the national teachers narratives in this study Utu/Ubuntu is premised on the values that are universally accepted as humane. That is an African philosophy framework of expressing humanness in the values of care, sympathy, compassion, unity, harmony, consent, generosity and sharing among others.

I would opine that in refugee conditions and elsewhere where education takes precedent, Afrocentric Utu/Ubuntu philosophy and its value system should be capitalized as core intervention basis for developing, implementing and evaluating education systems. In fact, it has been noted that Utu/Ubuntu has gained momentum in the social work fraternity (Chigangaidze, Matanga, & Katsuro, 2022). And scholars in other fields such as business (Chibvongodze, 2016), Social work (Chigangaidze, 2012), Nursing (Sambala, 2020), have called for Utu/Ubuntu philosophy to be considered for adoption in promoting African humanism in those fields.

National teachers narratives indicated that they had never experienced refugee-ness (displacement) the stood in the gap between the refugees and the Kenyan government representing a national agenda through the curriculum they followed. They, however, positioned themselves in the context and made sure education they offered to the refugee students had great potential that ignited high aspirations and expectations within the refugee communities. From what these teachers explained as captured in chapter 4, they went out of their “way” to make sure students felt listened to and their needs met. For example, the sentiments such as Beto and Meke’s, which stated, “a teacher must be more than just a teacher.” Or even narrative Josi shared about his struggling student and how he involved the parent of the student. Utu/Ubuntu is about taking care of those in dire need (Ogude, 2011). These potentials and aspirations became

fodder for teachers' motivation to stay and teach in these 'risky' places called refugee camps. So, what might this mean from an Afrocentric perspective?

According to Chuwa (2014) in Utu/Ubuntu, "ethically mature people" do not do things because they are asked to, but because it is the right thing to for themselves and the community (p.37). I find Chuwa's position agreeable in many ways as I refer to the narratives shared in this study. Participants narrated how they took upon themselves a number of things and initiatives, for example, they 'trained' the incentive teachers who taught alongside; these were their former students who had no teaching experience, despite the complexity of the training they mentored them. These participating teachers explained how they sought the whereabouts of their students who were at the verge of dropping out of school. They further, opted to offer better computer skills to the needy and ambitious student who later turned out to be good at entrepreneurial skills. Above all they also explained how approached complex social issues in an academic setting skilfully where they took care of female students' issues with dignity. These teachers effort facilitated better learning for refugee students while at the same time giving a second chance to those who were giving up on education. There was care and concern from the teachers and as a former teacher I know how such kind gestures directed to a student translates into their self-esteem and personhood.

Further, based on the understanding above I would also claims that Utu/Ubuntu is about bettering and safeguarding humanity and their interests within the community (Khoza, 2011). These findings as elucidated in the teachers' excerpts explain the teaching experiences in Dadaab refugee camp schools from a national teachers' perspective. Despite their 'national-ness' these teachers were able to consciously or unconsciously

invoke the element of Utu/Ubuntu to their refugee students. This is because Utu/Ubuntu value systems emphasises on relationality between individuals in a given community (Mabvurira, 2020). In the findings we saw how teachers went out of their way to find out what was bothering students in their academic setting and this is what led to the realization of how the national examination's gatekeeping role and what followed in solving that problem. It is through such act that we can claim that for sure, the axiom Utu denotes that a person is a person through other persons (Bidima, 2002).

Although the data analysis and literature has indicated that there is a shortage of trained teachers in refugee camps such as Dadaab, like in many other refugee camp school settings where the student population is high (overcrowded classrooms) (Moretti, 2021, Tosten, Toprak & Kayan, 2017), the teachers in Dadaab did not cease to show their generosity, sympathy, compassion, human dignity, stewardship, and altruism among other humanly virtues to their students.

At the time of this study, Covid-19 pandemic had devastated the camps more than other places. While other people including the teachers were able to go 'home' following the pandemic the refugees were also sent back to the blocks where there is significant scarcity of key resources and spaces. Teachers could only tell of the conditions through the students who were able to join their classes online or those who nevertheless showed up in schools to use the school infrastructure and spaces. When the Covid-19 restrictions in the country were eased and learning for students in upper grades was allowed, teachers noted that a majority of their boys had not shown up for studies. The teachers shared their concerns and here I turned to Ntibagirirwa (1999) on what needed to be done and I find that teachers reaction to the situation were deeply engrained with the author shared.

Ntibagirirwa (1999) told us that Utu/Ubuntu promotes the practice of the “village taking care of its people and ensuring their safety” (p.106). It is in the same vein that the national teachers put themselves in undertaking this societal responsibility, which not only promoted the welfare of the students but also their academic care.

Teachers’ endeavours and investigation showed that the schoolboys had found lucrative means of surviving in the “*market*”. Normally, in the Kenyan set up teachers are assumed to be responsible for the students’ school attendance. In this case of a pandemic where no clear instructions were offered students felt like they had been ‘offered’ enough time to think and act creatively. According to Jusi one of the male teachers, some students had started firewood businesses where they went to the bush lands to fetch this commodity used in most households. They had established a clear line of business with regular customers.

In fact, as noted in the findings some students stopped going to school so that they could either focus on starting their small business (fetching firewood) while others were said to have opted out to help their parents in making ends meet, and take care of their young siblings. As reported in other reports Fresia and von Kanel (2016) claimed that the majority of the refugee students are compelled to help their parents in their small businesses while at the same time attending school, a factor that contributed to their low performance. It is to be noted that in Africa, children are also delegated to complete some household tasks, some choose to complete the chores before schools while others deal with the given responsibilities after school. As a young boy growing up in the farmland, I had a responsibility to help in the farm not only as a household chore but also as part of ‘learning’. For example, I knew how to make a nursery bed and plant seed and later

transplant the seedlings to the lots, or even help a cow to give birth or even to slush and clear bushes around the home that were breeding grounds for mosquitoes. I call them safety set of life skills!

It must be noted that my experience does not in any way measure that experienced by the children in the refugee camps as narrated by the national teachers. I had many basic things taken care of such as food, shelter, clothes etc. (Mabokela & Mawila, 2004). What this meant is that in search of these basic needs and livelihoods, in Dadaab, national teachers had to deal with physically exhausted students who would turn up in school whenever possible. Although this practice was always there, the pandemic (covid-19) made it worse.

I will now pause here to bring your attention into some of the specific ways in which national teachers invoked lessons from Utu/Ubuntu that helped refugee students to step up to the global levels or in other words achieve their dreams.

6.2.1 Scholarships

Educational scholarships were reported to be extremely few and highly competitive in Dadaab for the refugee students. According to Giles, Miller, Misoy, Kariba & Oyat, (2021) among the refugee youths, “only 1 percent access scholarships for higher education, usually outside the country that hosts them” (p.1) (UNHCR, 2001). How did they overcome some of these hurdles? Utu/Ubuntu echoes the human characteristic of team spirit, generosity and sharing (Mhlaba, 2001). National teachers deploying their Utu/Ubuntu understanding mentioned how concerned they were when it came to facilitating students to make strides in their future lives, for instance the access to educational scholarships that were said to be extremely few and highly competitive.

Teachers were aware of this deficit and understood the implication thereafter; they took it upon themselves to teach extra hours (unpaid) for the sake of their students' future. They well knew that while it may not be possible to reach every student to benefit from the available scholarships, those who got them would definitely stand in the gap for those who were not so lucky. Here the Utu/Ubuntu notion is that “during hard times a community survives because of the help they receive from those with means to” (Molose& Thomas, 2018, p. 194). Through a collective and collaborative spirit, Africans have developed a shared will to survive, therefore the national teachers understood the need to share the little they had – time and knowledge (Molose et al., 2018).

Teachers had time and knowledge at their disposal and utilized it to offer life-changing lessons. The smiles these teachers put on as they shared these lived moments depicted the satisfactory feelings and the confidence one could gather to tell of real life changing ‘stories’. For example, teachers alluded that those students who went abroad through such scholarships not only helped their family financially but also other members of the community. They noted that some had organized private scholarships to sponsor those qualified and in need to the local institutions. In fact, Chigangaidze, et al., (2022) noted that Utu/Ubuntu principles are marked by their humanity and “advancement of team spirit” and sharing (p. 39). Sharing their banquet, when one gets all gets (Ogude, 2011).

Scholarships, as explained further, are seen as a means to freedom and becoming better where people come together and share knowledge for the sake of their survival. National teachers involved themselves in the true learning of their students.

National teachers also knew that their stay in the camp schools was limited and at times not guaranteed, to respond to the gap that they were likely to leave in the teaching stream they made sure to also utilize their time building good relationships with their former students. In this vein the national teachers made sure they ‘trained’ the incentive teachers who were immediate students in their classes. National teachers explain how well it felt to see some of their students being elevated to teaching status.

Although the majority of the incentive teachers stayed for a short time as teachers given that they took those teaching positions while waiting for their university or college admissions, others waited to relocate abroad as permanent residents, teachers were so proud of their achievement. What this may mean is that from an African set up people take it seriously when their efforts are sincerely recognized and appreciated, they are always ready to do it even without financial rewards compensation/payment. In fact, there is a Swahili saying that alludes to this, ‘*tenda wema nenda zako*’ loosely translated to mean (do good and go your way) (Chuwa, 2014). Although not with high standards, incentive teachers are said to have become teachers who would also be relied upon to drive the educational agenda in the refugee camps.

In contextualizing these teachers’ actions Paulo Freire’s (2005) teachings that noted, “there is no teaching without learning” and further explained that “the act of teaching demands the *existence* of those who teach and those who learn.” (p.31-32). I insist on the word existence to elucidate the imbedded Utu/Ubuntu values. National teachers understand well the scholarship challenges and to expand those opportunities for their students they train a few of them who potentially extend their services beyond the schools into the blocks where private tuition is normalized. From an Afrocentric view this

means that these teachers seeking to become involved in the their students' curiosity and paths informs their learning to become better teachers thus finding themselves continually ready to rethink what has been thought and to revise their positions (Freire, 2005)

6.2.2 Community Mobilizers

Utu/Ubuntu principles calls for practice of collaboration and with conscience (Murithi, 2007). As mentioned earlier, within the camp schools there were widespread cases of school dropouts, especially in the advanced levels. Collaboration was therefore considered essential among the teachers, community members including the contracted community workers who were commonly referred to as the community mobilizers. These community mobilizers were found core as they had high school qualifications, great understanding of local language and knowledge of the terrain. The teachers and community mobilizers' concerted efforts and collaborations were able to bring back a majority of the students to school and further discovering unimaginable challenges that faced the school dropouts. These challenges informed the teachers as they prepared to engage with their students in classrooms. They learnt from their students' experiences and their teachings and engagements were well tailored to make sure these students felt needed and included in the system (Freire, 2005). Utu/Ubuntu values emphasize that each person belongs to a social community. The teachers and community mobilizers did exactly that in bringing back those students to school and found ways to become strong participants in their camp, host, and home communities.

The community mobilizers were key partners in education and they were free to enter into the terrains that were prohibited for national teachers. However, one interesting

aspect of this mission was that while searching for these students from the blocks, national teachers opted to accompany the community mobilizers to the “homes” of the students. In principle, the national teachers were not allowed to take part in this duty due to their safety and security protocols. However, they saw the need to do so, and it ended up being a great success as they came to ‘replace’ the presence of armed security personnel.

Generally, there are negative connotations associated with dropping out of school. It becomes essential that within Utu/Ubuntu approach the call for human dignity is amplified in all spheres of interaction. It is within this understanding the teachers found the need for their involvement in seeking the students to return to school from the blocks/camps. Theirs was further informed by the fact that they had developed deep sense of respect, trust and relationship with these students and as a result they saw the need to support the community mobilizers in these endeavours. Roki also noted that the school dropout mission was often deemed a failed mission especially due to the involvement of security personnel and presence of guns, which scared those dropouts even further hence the massive failure over the time. Students were already traumatized due to the presence of men and women with guns and fighting in the blocks. So, teachers sought to walk to the blocks where they engaged with the Elders who would then relay the information to the students. This joint mission (between teachers and community mobilizers) was said to have generated great results, as a good number of students were able to return to school.

This collaboration is social and communal in nature, which are highly valued among the African communities. In fact, it is a demonstration of oneness and togetherness among the community members. It is the same way members of the

community would come together to work on a social or environmental problem such as grieving with a family of the deceased or even putting up a gabion where nature calls for one to control soil erosion. This is a sign of deep care and concern evoked in this joint mission on education, which demonstrate the value placed on community and caring among African people. Collaboration (collectivism or communalism) is central to African peoples (Achebe, 1994) and has inspired educational experience as demonstrated in this study.

In this study teachers like Meke, Caku and Roki noted that their involvement in this way and being with their students was...*being more than just a teacher*. Going back to the principles of Utu/Ubuntu, there are fundamental lessons to be drawn and for conceptualization of how African Utu/Ubuntu-centered refugee education can be utilized to inform educationist, curriculum theorists, and policy makers as far as refugee matters are concerned.

6.3 What Aspects of the Narratives are in Concert or Conflict with the Afrocentric Value of Utu/Ubuntu (“you are because I am; I am because you are”)?

Mkhize (2008) premises that Utu/Ubuntu teachings are candid “a person is a person through other persons.” Therefore to be human means to be through other persons. Any other way of being would be “inhuman” or “not human” and “disrespectful of or even cruel to others.” (p. 40). Consequently, Somjee, (2021) claimed, “many people know how to describe Utu/Ubuntu but they have lost how to practice Utu/Ubuntu” (p.45). This study captures some of the educational related stereotypes that often hurt the development of both the students and their teachers and the application of the African humanistic philosophy of Utu/Ubuntu.

Somjee's statement above has serious ramifications that Africans must deal with in order to reclaim the values outlined in Utu/Ubuntu philosophy: humanity dignity, collective, interdependence, belonging, inclusion, kindness, generosity, compassion, respect, care, concern, justice, fairness for others (Biraimah, 2016; Mahlo, 2017; Letseka, 2012). Although, I have demonstrated many promising direction teachers were taking within the education sector, as far as the refugee crisis stands I will submit that Africa will remain to be a complex, unique and contradictory continent (Nel, 2020). National teachers in this study have delved into some of the ways that point to the claim made by Somjee (2021). According to them Dadaab was a place coupled with many challenges. In their submission, national teachers appreciated the fact that it was non-family zone. It was *“better to be alone without family members as it would have been a toll task on their emotions and safety”* (Juka).

The teachers would have been constantly worried about their families being attacked by the militia groups like the al-Shabaab, as it happened to one them - a male teacher was brutally shot dead while in his room. There is news on media outlets that corroborated with teachers' narratives on national teachers (non-locals) being targeted and attacked, some of which explained the abduction and deaths of some teachers by the armed and outlawed militia group called al Shabab. Other teachers feared for their lives having been attacked by their own students in the classrooms.

To them this condition was a constant reminder that there was a potential re-emergence of insecurity and conflict despite the camps being secured for them, in return they appreciated the fact that they were not exposing their families to these unprecedented conditions. These opposite (contradictory) values of Utu/Ubuntu are

inhumane or animalistic in Swahili they are referred to as, “*unyama*” while in South African they are known as “*umhuka*” (being a beast) (Chigangaidze et al., 2022).

It is because of such potential of inhumane occurrences that made teachers’ families back home sit on the edge, they expressed fear and worry for their sons, daughters, mothers, fathers, wives and husbands concerned family members did not approve working in Dadaab. The teachers noted that their family members asked them often times to leave that environment as soon as they could and seek employment elsewhere safer. These are some of the complexities and that would allow us to wonder, how would the teachings of Utu/Ubuntu be explained? (Kresse, 2019)

This study extrapolated some narratives that are opposite and in great conflict with Utu/Ubuntu teachings. For instance, literature indicated that Kenya government had claimed and declared to close the Dadaab refugee camps accusing it as the ‘breeding sites for terrorist.’ These declarative statements from the government were as bad as they sound, creating a margin between communities of citizens and ‘suspects’. Although, I was affected and strongly condemn the terror attacks that claimed lives of innocent students in Garrissa College and the shoppers at the Westgate Mall in Nairobi, I fault the government for making a blanket statement that criminalized a whole generation in Dadaab.

Although Louw (2019) claimed that Utu/Ubuntu principles values and teachings seem “too good to be true”, and that Utu/Ubuntu is attended by “controversies that may disqualify it as a vehicle for the successful negotiation of challenges facing Africans today” (p. 114)’ literature shows that Utu/Ubuntu principles have been deployed successfully in reconciling the deadly conflicts in places like Rwanda (Ordóñez-

Carabaño, Prieto-Ursúa & Prieto-Ursúa, 2020; Beer, 2019). The former Chief Justice of Kenya Dr. Willy Mutunga noted that the African justice system, which is founded on Utu/Ubuntu principles successfully settles legal battles within the African context such as in Kenya at a rate of 95 percent leaving only 5 percent of the legal cases to head to the Western established legal systems (Mutunga, 2022).

I agree that there are examples of ‘undoing of the self’ where people due to internal and external forces driving conflicts intentionally inflict other people. For instance, in the cases of Rwanda, apartheid in South Africa and fall of Somali are ultimate examples of human-right violations that destroyed the traits of identity and solidarity furthermore breaking down interconnectedness among people and caused intergenerational trauma in human being. Brison, (1999) explained that trauma is a form of disintegration of personhood, self, and the self’s relation to others (p.48). From an Afrocentric perspective, and drawing on using Utu/Ubuntu, one can postulate that trauma is the breaking down of the relationship of the self and the other.

In what follows, I will draw on further literature review and narratives shared to show some of the traits that tend to taint (contravene) the spirit of African humanistic philosophy of Utu/Ubuntu.

In the last decade, the number of people fearing to be persecuted combined with natural calamities has increased forcing people to move from their homes and original environments (Hyndman & Giles, 2017). As they seek refuge into safety, refugee camps have surged worldwide. Narratives of the national teachers (hosts) who taught in the refugee camp schools indicated that their daily stations of work (classrooms) were the harshest spaces to work in the world. According to Hyndman and Giles (2017) Dadaab

has been considered as a site coupled with “deep rooted violence and insecurity” (p. 50) as earlier on indicated teachers walked into those classrooms with high expectations of changing someone's life academically but mostly students’ living ended transforming those of their teachers (Freire, 2005).

For instance, sometimes these national teachers would go to classrooms expecting to teach for a whole lesson (scheduled time) but instead they would only teach for a few minutes and receive security alerts asking them to evacuate. Although, the security alerts were meant to safeguard them, it was an indication that *another being* intended to hurt someone in the community. It is because of such eventualities that may lead us to agreeing that sometimes the refugee camps exist as a risky place for human transition (Agier, 2011).

Jusi narrated that in most of their classrooms, many learners come traumatized by things they had witnessed since childhood, for instance, fleeing from homes that were under attack. Further noting that some of their students may have witnessed destruction of their homes and worse enough relatives being injured or slaughtered. As he and other teachers explained, those students that came later in the camps might have been forced to run for their lives, and along the way could have met unimaginable inhumane treatment. Furthermore, noting how some students explained to them their experiences with multiple displacements/dislocations. These experiences harm the individual and leads into to the process of ‘undoing the self’ – creating sense of insecurity, mistrust, and general disconnection for other people. This has dire implications in an individual, as they may be tempted to doubt if ‘one could really be oneself in relation to others’ as established in the Utu/Ubuntu values.

As a result of these multiple violence in their home countries and the hardship of the journey to safety some students were said to have sustained ‘invisible’ injuries that left them ‘disabled’ – invisible in the sense that they injuries affected inner self and organs such as the brain and ‘broken’ hearts. So this leaves these individual in critical conditions needing medical attention and social institutions that would help them regain their normal-self and humanity as teachers indicated in classes they found it necessary and important to utilize some of their teaching time to “talk” to the students in what they called “humanizing” through guidance and counselling despite there being no prior training on this topic.

According to Roki some student continued to suffer from what they suspected could have been as a result of being former child soldiers or survivors of sexual abuse (UNHCR, 2018; Okello, 2006; Adventist News Network, 2006). Others exhibited extreme characters to harm, an indication of absent Utu/Ubuntu values in the upbringing in these students due to dislocations from their roots. These were especially those who left home as a ‘family but arrived in the refugee camps as individuals’. In other words, some of their family members may have died along the way leaving them to continue with the dangerous journey. Some of them arrived as unaccompanied minors/children. These children joined schools with torn and disoriented focus where their education may have been interrupted for extended periods (Arega, 202; Freud & Burlingham, 1943; Derluyn & Broekaert, 2008).

Roki’s experiences with refugee students are similar to what Frater-Mathieson (2004) had earlier stated, “displacement causes significant traumatic experiences to the displaced” (p. 14). Displacement is contrary to the teachings and values of Utu/Ubuntu,

as it makes one lose the sense of ‘belonging’ and identity. In fact, Frater-Mathieson, (2004) reminded us that displacement ‘dismantles the emotional, spiritual and physical connections with place’ (p.12). Koenig, McCullough & Larson (2001) noted that in Utu/Ubuntu, spirituality is conceptualised as a, “personal quest for understanding answers to ultimate questions about life, about meaning, and about relationship to the sacred and transcendent, which may (or may not) lead to or arise from the development of religious rituals and formation of community (p.60). Further Chigangaidze et al., (2022) pointed that within the Utu/Ubuntu value system spirituality manifests as a “source of hope, encouragement, and positive energy” (p. 19). In this case therefore I can only imagine what these teachers’ experiences teaching displaced student yet they are not well prepared to handle them. It proves difficult to come into terms with and especially viewing it from the Afrocentric Utu/Ubuntu-centered refugee education.

Utu/Ubuntu vehemently reject acts of violence terming those who perpetuate them “beasts”. Failure to observe or safeguard the humanity/Utu comes at a cost. For example, in the case of the national teachers targeted attacks as ‘outsiders,’ it affected and disrupted the teaching and learning programs. For instance, it was mentioned that when one of the male national teachers was brutally murdered while in the secure compound ‘home’, the rest of the team had to be evacuated to safety.

They were all ferried from the camp to Nairobi, capital city, where they received psychological counselling due to the experiences they had witnessed. From this incident the majority of the teachers refused to go back to teach. This was a *huge cost* to learning, which was left in the hands of untrained incentive teachers. This had a long lasting impact on the quality of education that was offered at such a time (Bellino & Dryden-

Peterson, 2018). Teachers' evacuations are done quite often and every evacuation dents the teaching fraternity, a few teachers do not return to their working stations. This explains some of the reasons why there is a high teacher turnover in the refugee camp schools and the huge teacher-student ratio gap (Agier, 2011; Hyndman & Giles, 2017; Dulae et al., 2019; Duale, Munene & Njogu, 2021; Hyndman, 2000; Crisp 2000).

Although there are schools for students with special needs set up in the camps, there are not enough teachers trained to handle such large number of students. According to UNHCR (2018) there exists an annual deficit of over 20,000 teachers' around the globe to teach displaced students only. This acknowledgment from the UNHCR corroborates with the challenges national teachers pointed out, unfortunately, they had to undergo, overcome and still remain focused on helping the refugee students. They understood that it was not for students making that they had to face such atrocities and as a result the teachers *must therefore do their best to help these students to overcome* some of those challenges through offering quality education (Omi).

Freire (2005) calls this "ethical struggle" and argues that teachers' commitment to justice, liberty and individual rights with a dedication to defend the weakest when they are subjected to the exploitation of the strongest. To him, teachers are dedicated to doing exactly this act of bravery and claimed that there is "beauty in showing students the importance of ethical struggle". Exemplifying the experiences of his wife from the slums of Sao Paulo, Freire (2005) argued that even in areas of "immense poverty or dire need, ethical struggle can be accomplished" (p.100).

6.3.1 Discipline

Utu/Ubuntu call for respect among the community members, in a school set up this would be viewed as discipline. However some cultural or religious practices may impede the realization of this important Utu/Ubuntu value. Utu/Ubuntu is about rendering to others what they deserve, respecting human dignity, and ensuring equality and equity (Chigangaidze, 20220). Disciplinary methods vary in most of African communities, however, the role to discipline the child is largely left in the hands of the Elders. In fact, Klerk&Rens (2003) noted that classroom discipline was important in improving children's education, however, there are many factors that affect students discipline and consequently varied ways this is approached.

National teachers explained that most of their students especially the mature students had indiscipline issues, and hid behind the religion. For instance, it was noted that female teachers experienced harder times than their male counterparts. Partly due to the fact that the Islamic culture-religion practiced by the students favours males. One teacher (Meke) explained that she had to let things slide by simply because the male students would not take a word from her because she was a woman. She further noted that even if she was to request support to reinforce a certain policy at school from her male colleagues that was likely to blast into a physical conflict with the said students. This was more likely because the students claimed to know their source of 'policy' as directed by their religion/culture. This is where the Utu/Ubuntu principles conflict with the set out practises within a particular religion or faith, which is engrained in a culture.

In Dadaab there is another layer added: teachers experienced cultural challenges with their students. The national teachers came in well prepared with their national

agenda as taught in the national institutions they attended. In other words they brought in Kenyan cultural norms, language and other ideas on how to do things. They also stepped in Dadaab with high expectations of their students, as explained in chapter 4, the majority experienced significant challenges in their starting days. For instance, students came to school late, others without their school uniforms, not even a pair of shoes and they used different languages to communicate as well.

This phenomenon did not align well with the teachers' expectation and presented a conflicting situation. Teachers expected students to utilize one of the national/official languages to communicate (English and Kiswahili) instead of the local languages (Kim, Dlamini, Ibrahim, Kimonyo & Reynolds, 2021; Chilisia, 2012; Smith, 2010; Duranti, 2009; Thiong'o, 1986; Dlamini, 2005).

I consider the national teachers' initial expectations especially on language use quite skewed and troubling. It, reminded me of my early days as a young schoolboy suffering at the hands of my own native teachers. My own teachers (some of whom were neighbours at home) expected a village boy who was barely learning how to communicate with his aged grandparents to articulate ideas in a foreign language (English).

Together with my fellow students, we may have lost our identity in the Kenya's post-colonial curriculum (Kim, Dlamini, Ibrahim, Kimonyo & Reynolds, 2021; Thiong'o, 1986). I struggled to understand why such atrocities occurred to us? It was after engaging with a Canadian scholar that I came close to an understanding. Cynthia Chambers (1994, 1999, 2003, 2006 and 2008) helped to shape and inform my linguistic, curriculum and identity struggle. Chambers made several arguments in her articles but I dwelled on two

of her themes, colonization and identity in education as they resonate well with my lived experiences and which articulates the initial expectations national teachers had in Dadaab refugee camp schools.

Unlike my teachers who followed the book to the latter, teachers in Dadaab, found it critical to let students express themselves in language familiar to them. Teachers had to search and depend on the translators to gain deeper understanding of their students, which came after a long standoff. Teachers own revelation indicated that they stood to lose more if they did not change their content and mode of delivery.

Lack of or inadequate vocabulary in English language among the students was another factor that seemed to cause cultural conflict between them and their teachers (Thiong'o, 1986; Bunyi, 1998; Norton & Toohey, 2011; Nabea, 2009). Teachers admitted that they took longer to understand their students' behaviour or some actions and utterances, they later came to realize it was due to the excess pressure mounted on the students to communicate in English that had led them to an underdeveloped language.

Further, the teachers had to continually shift from that assumption that teachers knew everything and students were just empty banks that needed to be filled (Freire, 1972). I find that in many cases where teachers are the custodian of all powers and knowledge there exist a perpetual misunderstanding and conflict between (national) teachers and their students. Teachers also needed to learn cultural differences and linguistic expression, which proved hard for both the teachers and their students. Teachers had to learn how to be patient and gather a deep understanding of what their students said or expressed.

In this case, the teacher needed to unlearn their own ways of perceiving ideas and processing them for example, they learnt that what would be perceived, as a misdemeanour in a Kenyan cultural school set up would not necessarily translate to be the case in Dadaab. Experience showed that students in Dadaab did not adhere the idea being in their designated school uniform, well groomed and shirts tucked, these were key discipline issues for teachers imported from the national training, the teachers (un) learnt that. Given the environmental nature of the place, which is hot and dry (semi-arid) it would make sense to keep clothes loose to allow conducive learning. Further the dressing code for the people in Dadaab region is somewhat different, they don on “khanzu” commonly used in the Islamic faith. Dadaabians also claimed that the national teachers’ way of dressing was quite colonized - suit and tie.

In summary, the experiences shared by the national teachers only highlight a few of the many successes and challenges teacher in refugee camp schools face in an attempt to get involved in the teaching activities in refugee schools as hosts. However, if Afrocentric Utu/Ubuntu-centered refugee education were to be developed and implemented in the camps and other schools most of the challenges explained in this study would become a thing of the past. This is because as has been established Utu/Ubuntu as a philosophy provides a framework or a worldview that allows human beings to see themselves through others.

6.4 Conclusion and Implications

Although this is the last chapter for this dissertation it only marks a beginning to future pathways with possibilities of solving a few challenges highlighted in the prior chapters. I will utilize this chapter to conclude and to highlight implications for theory,

research and practice in the Curriculum Studies field with specific attention on Afrocentric Utu/ Ubuntu refugee education where national or host community teachers may be involved from local and globalized contexts.

In this study, I demonstrated the role national teachers play in the learning institutions across the refugee camps, especially in Kenya. On top of the complex relationship they have to navigate their various roles as teachers, counsellors, hosts, and long-distance family relationships. I noted that these national teachers are often at the back banner within the refugee education studies making them less sought after or rather a group taken for granted from an educational players perspective within the refugee education. This gap has been explained in the expansive contexts and literature review from Africa, Asia and North America that pointed to the little or lack of national teachers' role and their voice in shaping the discourse, sense of identity and belongingness to the refugees and education at large (Richardson, MacEwen & Naylor, 2018). More so, literature has highlighted the educational crisis facing refugee camp residents and some of the measures put in place to mitigate the crisis.

Further this study has clearly illustrated the need to employ African friendly methodology in its data collection. As noted in the Afrocentric perspective, the methods suggested herein aspired to bring forth the voices of those that have been on the periphery for a long time, especially with the emphasis on Euro-American centered perspectives. All these were weaved together in the Utu/Ubuntu philosophy that was the lens through which most of this study was scrutinized.

Finally, the findings suggest that the host community teachers' involvement with the refugee education was met with a few social cultural complexities. The study revealed

the complex nature of the relationship between the host community teachers and teaching experiences working in a refugee camp as professionals. The narratives also indicated how national teachers deployed their Utu/Ubuntu values in teaching and navigating life in Dadaab, a long-term protracted refugee camp.

6.5 Implications

In this segment, I discuss some of the ways this research informs practice, future research and theory in refugee education that involves host or national teachers. I make this point fully aware of the fact that the capacity of international upkeep for long-term refugees is daunting and the interest among donor countries in supporting people living in a situation of protracted displacement is dwindling (Aleinikoff, 2015; Omata, 2017). More countries continue to produce refugees with the latest cases involving, Ethiopia, Ukraine and Russia.

Encampment is not the way to go especially with long-term nature currently witnessed and the dismaying scale of help available globally. Thus calling upon the global refugee regime to understand that there is a need to support better refugee educational and other social economic activities that would enhance smooth integration of refugees into countries of first asylum. I posit that by ensuring access to quality education and educational opportunities refugee communities would thrive as independent, productive and dignified people (Jacobsen & Fratzke, 2016 and Milner, 2014). National teachers would thus not worry travelling to teach in risky places, leaving their families in fear.

6.5.1 Implications for Practice

Teaching in a refugee camp school could be overwhelming. Therefore, teaching refugee camps population will demand a well-trained team of teachers who have the potential to transform the lives of the many “education thirsty” refugee populations. Thus, in many ways this study has hints to seal some of the knowledge gap or address that deficit discourse that has ignored the role-played by national teachers in shaping the educational agenda within refugee camps. The study promotes the narratives of the national teachers as key assets to building an inclusive education in the camps as well as de-stigmatizing the ‘presence’ of refugee camp schools in a given nation and instead ignite a discussion that will focus on dismantling the encampment ideology and favouring the integrations. This would mean freedom to move, think and dream for the refugee students.

In this study students were said to have favoured practical subjects that gave them “instant” avenues to brand new terrain as a source of livelihood like computer studies. It was claimed that computer studies offered skills that facilitated investment avenues such as online Bitcoin, ability to do translations (English - Somali), connecting to the rest of the world through the exposure to social media platforms. In this light then I wonder what would be the implications or what this really means for us as educators in practice who are already teaching or for somebody who is likely to start teaching in a future camp school?

From another angle it was argued that some students in the refugee camps were actually there not because they had experienced forced dislocation but had opted to arrive in the camp school where education was highly regarded for its quality and currency.

This may imply that educators in the field would need to be cognisant that people in the refugee camps are from diverse cultural, economic, social and political backgrounds, however the majority have unique needs. For example, those who live within the community with sustained unseen injuries and traumas. The training of national teachers does not necessitate the articulation of some of these special areas during the teacher preparations. National teachers who want to teach in the refugee camp should receive special training or individual preparedness while diving into the camp schools.

I have highlighted a few of the ways national teachers developed in overcoming some of the challenges posed in their classrooms in Dadaab. Meke elaborated,

When I came here I learnt to be patient with the students, to be understanding of every need of a student, to at least give extra time to some group of students like the students who need accelerated learning and at least identifying a student who has a problem, and is not willing to say. So I try and by the end of the day try and help such a student... I so kind and generous.

Although no one mentioned it by name this revelation highlights the centrality of *Utu/Ubuntu* values of being human among others. And this calls us as educators to investigate our pedagogical practices and how we may need to incorporate these Afrocentric aspects in creating educational experiences that are responsive to refugee students' social, cultural, economic, historical and political awareness. That is, those that will position students to attain a great level of self-identity and gain a meaningful sense of belongingness. To do this will require host teachers to deliberately take initiatives in learning more about refugees, forced immigration, inflicted trauma and education among many other refugee related issues and experiences.

Host community teachers being aware of the experiences refugees bring to class would be valuable in developing meaningful pedagogies that would attempt to respond to the diverse students' needs. For example, I found it key in areas where teachers went out of their way to teach Kiswahili language in English, others settled on code-switching while the rest decided to use translators.

Although some students had challenges with the language of communication within the schools, code-switching and use of translators helped them to smoothly adjust to the school environment as well as making clear their line of thoughts while communicating. Something I have found to work well in a similar set up is the use of translanguaging - encouraging the students to use symbols, gestures, texts (Maluleke, 2019; Barwell, 2012; Kim, et al., 2021; Chilisia, 2012; Smith, 2010; Duranti, 2009; Thiong'o, 1986; Dlamini, 2005).

Although Kenyan education is multilingual in its instruction, English language is emphasized and most preferred at the expense of other local languages. It is important for teacher education programs to cultivate and include more local languages in their teacher preparation considering that places like Dadaab are increasingly becoming diverse, and in fact, some classes are multinational. Teachers expressed their desire to incorporate different linguistic strategies in their classrooms so that they could help their students. Research has indicated that host teachers are more willing to step in, however, they are not well prepared to do so (Maluleke, 2019).

Finally, the study revealed that host teachers were willing to take a more active role in students' success, and many parents living in refugee camps deemed this act as critical to their children's future. However, there were a few institutional barriers that

hindered this progress such as the restricted time for being out of the “safe” zones. This implies that the camp's security protocol may need adjustment to guarantee safety to teachers who may want to extend their humanitarian services or even develop pedagogical materials and activities that will support the students in developing the sense of identity and belongingness emphasized within the Utu/Ubuntu philosophy.

6.5.2 Implications for Research

I found narrative methodology to be a useful approach for exploring these nested and complicated existential pedagogical practices from the national Kenyan teachers teaching in long-term refugee camps of Dadaab. This methodology permitted me to clearly map out individual backgrounds in a comprehensive manner (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Riessman, 2008). For example, in the local and global news Kenyan refugee camp schools featured as having students achieving the best scores in the national examinations. Such news of refugee students reported to have experienced successful learning and attained qualifying grades at the national examinations often do not get an audience let alone news of those who prepared the students. To get a deeper understanding of these successes, I engaged with the national teachers in listening to their narratives, the impact the students’ successful learning had on their pedagogies, socio-cultural values (*Utu/Ubuntu*) and put some emphasis on the Kenyan (African) school culture.

The findings from this study have varying implications for future research that involves host community teachers in a refugee camp. New questions that arise from this study are: how can researchers engage national teachers teaching in refugee camps? How can researchers delve into teacher’s preparation, training or professional development in

refugee education? How can researchers engage in teacher education programs in host states that have large asylum seeker populations with an aim to improve the quantity and quality of education in camps?

Host teachers demonstrated knowledge about what their refugee students do in schools with regard to obtaining scholarships and provided solid examples of what they did to support them, which is in contrast with the belief that majority of the refugee students don't work hard because of their unstandardized appearance at school (Republic of Kenya, 2012; Bellino & Dryden-Peterson, 2018). Future studies should examine ways host community teachers' voices may be elevated as well as positioning them as key drivers of the educational agenda within the refugee camp schools.

Host community teachers revealed some insecurity information of the camps that don't necessarily make it to the mainstream media and also hinted at some of the mechanisms or strategies they had developed to help them along the way. Since this study investigated teachers' narrative from an online platform (Zoom), future studies might need to be ethnographic in nature, conducted on the ground integrating narratives with observations of daily teaching and interactions with learners.

Further, as noted in this study the way the researchers recruit their participants, where the research is taking place from and the kind of trust a researcher develops with participants along the way could act as motivation for them to engage more, which would reveal ways in which one could involve them more as host teachers (participants). Furthermore, I note that the experiences of individual teachers may determine what they share during the interviews. For instance, this study focused on those teachers that had

stayed in the camps longer than 3 years. I noted that those that had extensive experiences (5 years and more) shared their narratives more confidently and clearly.

Their long stay had exposed them to more research projects to an extent that they even knew when to question or “negotiate” for their space and time during the narratives. In other words, they took full control of their narratives and directed ideas. Thus, future research may need to involve newly employed host teachers to gain insights of new perspectives of their teaching practices as well as their interest in teaching as humanitarian workers.

In my reflections an idea that came up a few times was what would happen if novice researchers were to meet new teachers in the field? How would they deal with the unexpected hard and traumatizing topics and still be able to carry on with the conversation, such as those shared herein, which also involved personal experiences. I hypothesise that this may have a big impact on the researcher more than it would be ‘expected’ on the participants.

Finally, future research may want to focus on the students who have been mentioned widely throughout the study so that they could also share the stories of their experiences with the host community teachers. I wonder if they would share or tell similar stories and with the excitement their national teachers told. I would also be interested in talking to former students who managed to leave the camp life and are now residing in other countries, as citizens are permanent residents; both on the African continent and in the diaspora.

6.5.3 Implications for Theory

Utu/Ubuntu is an African theoretical framework characterised by its interdependence and interconnectedness of all things (Somjee 2020, Gachanga and Walter 2015 and Baker, 2019; Ogide, 2019). As a theoretical perspective it has been used to study other field in education but less often on refugee education largely, because its fundamental teachings are perceived to be in great conflict with human actions that cause refugee-ness; the act of ‘undoing self’ (Louw, 2019).

Learning and teaching are very cultural activities and particular to individual settings (Freire, 2005). According to Mudimbe (1988) the idea of Utu/Ubuntu is a special gift from African modes of thought, thus by implication Utu/Ubuntu are well displayed from an Afrocentric sense where normally people learn values and in a certain manner. It is important that educational partners reflect and cultivate deep understanding of the Utu/Ubuntu philosophy with the aim of fostering acceptable policies and practices that will guide educational endeavours in the African context.

This study is framed in circumstance where things are not ‘normal’; within a refugee camp. Dadaab is a place with multiplicity of people, diversities, and hardships of encampment. However, there are lessons learnt in terms of supporting each other, which is very Afrocentric - the idea of a collective responsibility of “you are because I am and you are because I am.” This study shows that this theory of learning actually works in places that would also seem unpopular. It further reveals that people learn even in cultural settings where people involved share different backgrounds and beliefs.

Furthermore, guided by the Utu/Ubuntu as a concept, which advocates for shared humanity it shows possibilities of reconciliation in societies experiencing was as well as

in post conflict societies such as post genocide Rwanda (see Beer, 2019, p. 185). According to Staub (2006), Utu/Ubuntu is a concept that makes the link between communal and interdependent relationships and the role that can be played by the “creation of a shared history” in contexts of violent conflict (p. 867). For instance, at times both the perpetrators and victims may find themselves in the same refugee camps, it is at such times when Utu/Ubuntu would perfectly play out. This would be the Utu/Ubuntu value of forgiveness and embracing healing as humans.

It has been elaborated that national teachers employed Afrocentric Utu/Ubuntu philosophical values in teaching and helping their students overcome the hopelessness that comes with being in an encampment. Here, Utu/Ubuntu is centered on the idea that a person’s humanity is founded on a network of existing human relationships and further premised on the belief that the full development of personhood happens in specific circumstances of already established human conditions of mutual dependency (Masolo, 2010; Battle, 1997; Ogude, 2019; Louw 2019).

Nonetheless, in this study the interpretations of Utu/Ubuntu and experiences of the national teachers teaching in refugee camps schools were situated within the historical and cultural realities of the African. The participants’ experiences were intertwined with my own lived experiences as a nationally trained teacher, which provided deeper understandings and insights of the findings of the study therefore epitomizing the Afrocentric Utu/Ubuntu nature of knowledge. Thus, the study contributes to works redefining knowledge from an Afrocentric Utu/Ubuntu centred lens through shared experiences between participants and the researcher.

6.6 Contributions and Significance the Study

As mentioned, there is little literature available detailing the lived experiences of national teachers or how they impact education within the refugee camp schools. This study will contribute to the education, and specifically the Curriculum Studies field in many ways. The study will act as a crucial foundational work that will inform scholars in the field of refugee education.

Firstly, literature has indicated that the dearth of data and knowledge regarding the national teachers teaching in refugee camp schools is alarming (Dulae et al., 2019). This study contributes to addressing this literature gap from an Afrocentric perspective.

Secondly, national teachers' narratives, voices and experiences shared in this study act as examples that will provide the much needed information that highlights possible, desirable, and realistic changes necessary for refugee education. This will be particularly important to the educational sectors including policy makers, educators, curriculum developers and administrators to guide future educational decisions in refugee contexts.

Thirdly, media as well as the Kenyan government has perpetuated stereotypical and harmful images of refugees and their dwellings which are often characterized as criminal breeding spaces, creating a binary between citizens and others (Degu, 2007). These voices of national teachers teaching in the refugee camps will help counter these stereotypes. This will contribute toward facilitating, normalizing and promoting awareness about refugees and hence reduce stigma among the 'hosts' (citizens) associated with refugee-ness —allowing people like those born in the refugee camps feel equally belonging.

Fourthly, the study will allow a platform for the ‘forgotten’ national teachers to advocate for more opportunities globally—including attending and offering conferences to address the host-refugee educational needs.

Finally, as part of this beginning research on national teachers working in refugee camps, this study will act as a guide to help policy makers, curriculum developers, theorists, administrators and teachers nationally and internationally in understanding the important role national teachers play in shaping the academic narratives of those in need, refugees and asylum seekers on the move.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Sample Interview Protocol for National Teachers

- Tell me about your life and teaching experiences in Daadab refugee camp schools.
- What decisions did you make before becoming and continuing to be a teacher in Dadaab refugee camp schools?
- Can you talk about how in your view, the Dadaab refugee community including parents, students and community leaders understand education, as compared to your own Kenyan community?
- What kind of a teacher do you consider yourself to be, having taught or currently teaching in Dadaab refugee camp schools?
- Considering the educational experience you and other teachers provide to the refugee students, which aspects of those experiences do you consider to be of immense benefit, and why?
- Given that the Kenyan curriculum is framed around a Kenyan value system, what might be the broader Kenyan community's reactions to the fact that refugee camp schools have adopted the Kenyan curriculum? How might these reactions (views, attitudes, perceptions) affect the way you and other non-refugee teachers interpret and implement this curriculum in refugee schools?
- In your view, and based on your experience teaching in refugee camp schools, what would you like to be enacted so as to have a Kenyan educational system that is inclusive of all cultural groups' values and ethos including refugee

communities? What strategies could be employed to educate the broader Kenyan regarding this need?

Appendix B: Map of Dadaab Refugee Camps

