ASSESSMENT OF THE EFFECTS OF VOCATIONAL TRAINING PROGRAMS ON EMPLOYMENT OUTCOMES FOR REFUGEES IN TEREGO DISTRICT: A CASE STUDY OF OMUGO ZONE REFUGEE SETTLEMENT

BY

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NOVEMBER, 2025

DECLARATION

I, **PONI JACINTA**, hereby declare that this research work is the result of my own original research and that no part of it has been presented by any student in this university or elsewhere.

Sign



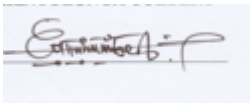
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APPROVAL

This is to certify that this research work compiled by **PONI JACINTA** under the topic "Assessment of the Effects of Vocational Training Programs on Employment Outcomes for Refugees in Terego District: A Case Study of Omugo Zone Refugee Settlement" has been under my supervision and guidance and ready for examination with my approval as the University Supervisor.

Name: **MR.NYOLONGA COLBERT**

Sign:



Date:11/12/2025

DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my mother **Viola Pita Viatore** and my loving husband **Emmanuel Modi Edmond** for having supported me financially, emotionally and spiritually and standing firm for me even when I thought I was alone. Without you I couldn't have made it this far. May the almighty God bless you abundantly.

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I would like to thank the almighty God for the graceful direction and strength that has he has given me in this substantial achievement of completing my research work. Appreciation goes to my mother Viola Pita Viatore for sacrificing your all to ensure i am educated even though you haven't attained any education yourself. In your words 'I haven't studied but you -Poni remember that you are studying for the both of us.' These words have kept me doing my best for us, my aunt Anna Utua for encouraging and motivating me to study hard, my father David Amin Lawrence because your painful and unintentional absence in my life and hearing stories of your success before nature took its cause have kept my hopes and zeal high and made me desire to do better, and special appreciation to my loving husband Emmanuel Modi Edmond for supporting me financially, emotionally, spiritually and encouraging me to add efforts towards attaining better grades and standing firm for and with me even when i thought i was alone and to thank you for sticking to your promise of empowering me with all that you have, the management and staff of Uganda Christian university for equipping me with knowledge most especially Mr. Nyolonga Colbert my academic supervisor for the guidance, support and close monitoring to ensure i understood what exactly i was doing. This has made the process easy to understand and the refugee stakeholders for making me have access to information that has made this work a success. My friends and colleagues for sharing ideas and all the support to ensure we completed as a team, to all who secretly prayed for me to succeed i am grateful and appreciate all your efforts and may the almighty God bless all your efforts.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AC	Abstract Conceptualization
AE	Active Experimentation
CE	Common Era
CVI	Content Validity Index
DV	Dependent Variable
ELT	Experiential Learning Theory
ELT	Experiential Learning Theory
IV	Independent Variable
LCIII	Local Council III
NRM	National Resistance Movement
NRM	National Resistance Movement
OPM	Office of the Prime Minister
RO	Reflective Observation
RO	Reflective Observation
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Scientists
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
USA	United States of America
VET	Vocational Education and Training
VET	Vocational Education and Training

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ABSTRACT

This study assessed the effect of vocational training programs on employment outcomes for refugees in Terego District, Uganda. The specific objectives were to assess the effectiveness of vocational training programs in enhancing employability skills of refugees, ascertain the level of employment outcomes for refugees, and find out the effect of vocational training programs on employment outcomes for refugees. A cross-sectional research design was employed, utilizing an explanatory sequential mixed-methods approach. Data was collected from 71 respondents, including vocational training program participants, instructors, Refugee Welfare Committee leaders, employers of refugees, UNHCR staff, and Local Government staff. The study found that vocational training programs have been effective in enhancing employability skills of refugees, with a high percentage of respondents reporting presence of various training programs and improvement in problem-solving skills. The programs have also encouraged self-employment among refugees, but significant barriers hinder employment outcomes. The study recommends that vocational training programs should be continued and expanded, targeted support should be provided to address barriers to employment, and partnerships between government, private sector, and humanitarian agencies should be encouraged to support refugee economic empowerment and job creation.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

This study assessed the effects of vocational training programs on employment outcomes for refugees: A case study of Omugo Zone Refugee Settlement in Terego District. This chapter presents the background to the study, statement of the problem, objectives, research questions, hypotheses, conceptual framework, significance, justification, scope, and operational definitions of terms.

1.1 Background to the Study

The background to this study was disaggregated into the historical, theoretical, conceptual, and contextual background as presented below:

1.1.1 Historical background

Globally, the history of youth employment has been shaped by diverse societal, economic, and cultural contexts (Flanagan et al., 2021). In the USA, the National Youth Employment Coalition has played a significant role in promoting youth employment, particularly during times of high unemployment, such as the Great Recession of 2008 (Bell & Blanchflower, 2011). In Europe, the Youth Guarantee scheme provides young people with offers of employment, education, or apprenticeships within four months of becoming unemployed or leaving formal education, in response to high youth unemployment rates in countries like Spain and Greece (Bell & Blanchflower, 2011). In Japan, vocational training programs and job placement services have been implemented to support young people, amidst a declining youth population and labor market shifts. Similarly, in South Korea, various initiatives have been launched to promote youth employment, including vocational training and entrepreneurship programs.

In Africa, youth employment is a significant challenge, with many countries facing high rates of unemployment and underemployment (Filmer & Fox, 2014). In South Africa, the unemployment rate among young people is over 50%, and initiatives like the National Youth Development Agency have been established to promote youth development and employment (Cloete, 2020). In other countries such as Somalia, youth unemployment is linked to crime and instability (Ali, 2018), while Ghana focuses on policy perspectives to address youth unemployment (Ampadu-Ameyaw et al., 2020), and Nigeria prioritizes youth employment initiatives (Ogunmefun & Okuneye, 2020). In East Africa, countries like Uganda have implemented policies such as the National Youth Policy and the Youth Livelihood Program to equip young people with skills and knowledge for employment (Mirembe et al., 2019; Tamayo, 2023; Egessa et al., 2021). Determinants of youth unemployment in Uganda include factors like gender, education, residence, and age (Egessa et al., 2021).

On the other hand, VET evolved from medieval apprenticeships in Europe (Wollschläger & Guggenheim, 2004) to the USA's focus on vocational education in the 20th century, and then to Asia's emphasis on practical skills and entrepreneurship education in the 1990s (Orenaiya et al., 2014), equipping individuals with practical skills for employment and economic growth. In Africa, traditional apprenticeships and crafts existed prior to the colonial era (Olotewo, 2017). These evolved to vocational training promoted by national frameworks and international organizations (Akpan et al., 2025). In East Africa, VET has also evolved significantly, with a current focus on promoting economic relevance and improving access (Musigwa & Andala, 2020; Kaula, 2022). In Uganda, VET transformed through pre-colonial apprenticeships, colonial-era vocational training, post-independence expansion, and current reforms under the National Resistance Movement (NRM) government aimed at promoting economic sustainability (Agole et al., 2022; Olotewo,

2017; Orenaiya et al., 2014). Throughout its history, VET has remained a vital tool for addressing youth employment challenges and promoting economic growth and development.

1.1.2 Theoretical Background

This study was grounded in Experiential Learning Theory (ELT), developed by David Kolb (1984). ELT posits that learning is a continuous process that involves direct experience, reflection, and application (Malik & Behera, 2024; U-senyang, 2024). According to Kolb, effective learning occurs when individuals engage in concrete experiences, reflect on those experiences, form abstract concepts, and apply them in new situations. The ELT model consists of four stages: Concrete Experience (CE), Reflective Observation (RO), Abstract Conceptualization (AC), and Active Experimentation (AE) (Kolb, 1984). These stages are cyclical, and learners may move through them in a non-linear fashion (Dillard et al., 2024). In vocational training programs, instructors can facilitate experiential learning by providing opportunities for hands-on practice (CE), encouraging reflection on experiences (RO), helping learners to conceptualize new skills and knowledge (AC), and supporting the application of new skills in real-world contexts (AE) (Wibowo et al., 2024; Mayombe, 2024).

In the context of vocational training programs for refugees, ELT provides a valuable framework for understanding how hands-on experience and reflection can enhance employability skills (Mayombe, 2024). By participating in vocational training programs, refugees engage in concrete experiences that allow them to develop practical skills and apply theoretical knowledge (Jonathan & Laik, 2024). Through reflection on these experiences, refugees can identify areas for improvement, solidify new skills, and develop a sense of confidence and competence (Chae, 2024; Rahmi, 2024). By applying ELT to the study of vocational training programs for refugees, this research aims to explore how experiential learning experiences influence employment outcomes.

The study examined the ways in which vocational training programs provided opportunities for concrete experience, reflection, and application, and how these experiences shape refugees' employability skills and confidence.

1.1.3 Conceptual Background

"Employment Outcomes for Refugees" have been defined variously in the literature (Egessa et al., 2021; Mirembe et al., 2019; Tamayo, 2023). This study adopted a definition that refers to the measurable results of vocational training interventions on refugees' ability to secure employment and improve their economic well-being. Employment outcomes for refugees were operationalized through three dimensions: employment rate, measured as the percentage of refugees who secured employment, including self-employment (Filmer & Fox, 2014); change in income levels, operationalized and measured as the increase or decrease in income among refugees after participating in vocational training programs (Mirembe et al., 2019); and labor market integration, operationalized and measured as the extent to which refugees were able to access employment opportunities and integrate into the labor market (Egessa et al., 2021). These constructs provided a comprehensive understanding of employment outcomes for refugees in this study.

On the other hand, "Vocational Training Programs" have been identified as a potential solution to address the employment challenges faced by refugees (Wollschläger & Fries Guggenheim, 2004; Olotewo, 2017; Agole et al., 2022). This study operationalized vocational training programs through three categories: Trades and Technical Skills, Service Industry Skills, and Business and Entrepreneurial Skills (Pair, 1994; Musigwa & Andala, 2020). Trades and Technical Skills included training programs in areas such as Building and Construction, Tailoring and Fashion Design and Automotive Repair and maintenance among others (Agole et al., 2022). Service Industry Skills encompassed training programs in areas such as Beauty and Cosmetology, Hotel

and Hospitality, and Technology and Computing among others (Ngure, 2013). Business and Entrepreneurial Skills included training programs in areas such as Entrepreneurship Development, Business Management, and Financial Management (Mohamed & Samatar, 2018). These categories of vocational training programs provided a comprehensive understanding of the skills and competencies that refugees can acquire to improve their employment outcomes.

1.1.4 Contextual Background

Uganda hosts over 1.9 million refugees, the majority of whom originate from South Sudan (53%) and the Democratic Republic of Congo (33%), with refugees settled in various locations across the country, including Nakivale (14%), Adjumani (12%), Bidibidi (11%), Rhino (10%), and Kampala (8%) (UNHCR, 2025; U-Learn, 2023). Despite progressive refugee policies granting freedom of movement and the right to work (U-Learn, 2023, 2024), many refugee households struggled to achieve self-reliance due to limited access to formal financial services, markets, and land (U-Learn, 2023; Nkiko & Ahimbisibwe, 2025). Refugees in Uganda faced challenges including limited market access, limited access to employment opportunities, land scarcity, food insecurity, and social barriers, affecting their livelihoods and well-being (Nkiko & Ahimbisibwe, 2025; Kabanda & Akampurira, 2025; Asire, 2024, U-Learn, 2023, 2024).

Omugo Zone is a refugee settlement in Terego District Uganda, home to over 190,000 refugees, comprising approximately 50.7% females and 49.3% males, with a significant youth population of 38,397 individuals between 18-35 years (UNHCR, 2025). These refugees faced numerous livelihood challenges, including limited access to formal employment (U-Learn, 2023; Egessa et al., 2021), skills mismatch (Tamayo, 2023; Mirembe et al., 2019), lack of job opportunities (U-Learn, 2023; Nkiko & Ahimbisibwe, 2025), and restricted access to markets (U-Learn, 2023; Asire, 2024). This resulted in widespread unemployment, underemployment, and informal work

(U-Learn, 2023; Tamayo, 2023; Egessa et al., 2021; Nkiko & Ahimbisibwe, 2025). Many refugee youth and women struggled to access stable and decent work opportunities, often engaging in precarious and low-paying activities (Tamayo, 2023; Egessa et al., 2021).

To address this situation, vocational training programs were explored, including skills training in tailoring, fashion design, bricklaying, solar installation, and entrepreneurship, aiming to equip refugee youth and women with in-demand skills and enhance their employability and self-employment prospects (Kabanda & Akampurira, 2025; Nkiko & Ahimbisibwe, 2025). However, despite these efforts, there was limited evidence on the effectiveness of these programs in addressing the specific employment challenges faced by refugees in Rhino Camp.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The government of Uganda had demonstrated commitment to improving the livelihoods of refugees through various initiatives (U-Learn, 2023; Nkiko & Ahimbisibwe, 2025). The Omugo Zone Refugee Settlement had been a focal point for these efforts (UNHCR, 2025). However, despite these efforts, refugees in Omugo Zone continued to face significant livelihood challenges, including limited access to formal employment, skills mismatch, lack of job opportunities, and restricted access to markets (U-Learn, 2023; Egessa et al., 2021; Tamayo, 2023). Studies had shown that these challenges resulted in widespread unemployment, underemployment, and informal work among refugees (U-Learn, 2023; Tamayo, 2023; Egessa et al., 2021; Nkiko & Ahimbisibwe, 2025). While various studies had explored the impact of vocational training programs on employment outcomes in other contexts (Kabanda & Akampurira, 2025; Nkiko & Ahimbisibwe, 2025), there was a knowledge gap regarding the specific challenges and opportunities in Rhino Camp. This study investigated the impact of vocational training programs on employment outcomes for refugees in Rhino Camp, providing valuable insights for

policymakers, practitioners, and stakeholders to inform future interventions. If this study was not conducted, interventions may have continued to be designed without fully understanding the unique challenges and opportunities in Rhino Camp, potentially limiting their effectiveness.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The general objective of this study was to assess the effect of vocational training programs on employment outcomes for refugees in Terego District, specifically in Omugo Zone.

1.3.1 Specific objectives

This study aimed to achieve the following objectives:

1. To assess the effectiveness of vocational training programs in enhancing employability skills of refugees in Terego District.
2. To ascertain the level of employment outcomes for refugees in Terego District.
3. To find out the effect of vocational training programs on employment outcomes for refugees in Terego District.

1.4 Research Questions

The study aimed to answer the following research questions:

1. Do vocational training programs improve the employability skills of refugees in Omugo Zone Refugee Settlement?
2. What is the current employment rate among refugees in Omugo Zone Refugee Settlement?
3. What is the effect of vocational training programs on employment outcomes for refugees in Omugo Zone Refuggee Settlement?

1.5 Scope of the Study

The scope of this study spanned the following:

1.5.1 Content Scope

This study investigated the impact of vocational training programs on employment outcomes for refugees in Omugo Zone Refugee Settlement, Uganda. Specifically, it examined how training in trades, service industries, and business skills influenced employment rates, income levels, and labor market integration among refugees, aiming to inform policies and practices that enhance refugee livelihoods and self-reliance.

1.5.2 Geographical Scope

This study was conducted in Omugo Zone Refugee Settlement, located in Terego District, Uganda. The sub-county is bordered by Odupi sub-county to the South, Oriama sub-county to the East, Aii-vu Sub County to the West and Tara to the North and is home to over 190,000 refugees. The choice of the sub-county was because a number of vocational training programs had been implemented in the district which provided a unique context for investigating the impact of vocational training programs on employment outcomes for refugees.

1.5.3 Time Scope

This study focused on vocational training programs that had been implemented in Omugo Zone Refugee Settlement over the past 5 years (2020-2025). The study investigated the impact of these programs on employment outcomes for refugees who had participated in them during this period.

1.6 Significance of the Study

This study will be of significance in many ways as discussed below:

This study will inform the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM) and other development and humanitarian actors about the impact of vocational training programs on employment outcomes for refugees in Omugo Zone Refuggee Settlement. This knowledge will enable them to design targeted interventions that enhance refugee livelihoods and self-reliance.

The study's findings will contribute to the development of policies and regulations that protect and support refugees, especially women and youth, promoting their economic empowerment and social well-being.

The study will serve as a valuable reference material for future researchers and scholars, adding to the body of knowledge on refugee livelihoods and employment outcomes in Uganda. Ultimately, the study's insights will help stakeholders develop more effective strategies to support refugees in achieving sustainable livelihoods and integrating into the labor market.

1.7 Justification of the Study

Omugo Zone Refugee Settlement in Uganda was characterized by widespread unemployment and underemployment among refugees, despite the implementation of a progressive refugee policy in Uganda (UNHCR, 2025; U-Learn, 2023; Tamayo, 2023). Furthermore, vocational training programs and interventions had been implemented with relative success, yet there was limited evidence on the effectiveness of these programs and how they could influence employment outcomes for refugees (Kabanda & Akampurira, 2025). Bridging this gap was critical, as vocational training could drive economic empowerment and self-reliance among refugees (Nkiko & Ahimbisibwe, 2025). Understanding the impact of vocational training programs on employment outcomes for refugees provided valuable insights for policymakers and practitioners seeking to support refugee livelihoods and integration in Omugo Zone Refugee Settlement.

1.8 Limitations of the Study

The researcher acknowledged the following limitations:

1. The study's findings could not be generalizable to other refugee settlements in Uganda or beyond, due to the unique context and characteristics of Omugo Zone Refugee Settlement.

2. The study's reliance on self-reported data from refugees has introduced biases and limitations, such as social desirability bias or recall bias, which could impact the accuracy of the findings.
3. The study's cross-sectional design could not have captured the long-term impact of vocational training programs on employment outcomes for refugees, and may not have accounted for changes in the labor market or other external factors that could influence the findings over time.

1.9 Delimitations of the Study

The researcher acknowledged the following challenges:

1. Difficulty in accessing and recruiting participants due to the refugee settlement's remote location or limited infrastructure.
2. Potential language barriers or literacy issues that impacted data collection and participant understanding.
3. Limited availability of resources, such as funding, transportation, or equipment, which affected data collection and analysis.

1.10 Conceptual Framework

This presents a graphical representation of the interplay between the independent and the dependent variable as shown below:

INDEPENDENT VARIABLE **DEPENDENT VARIABLE**

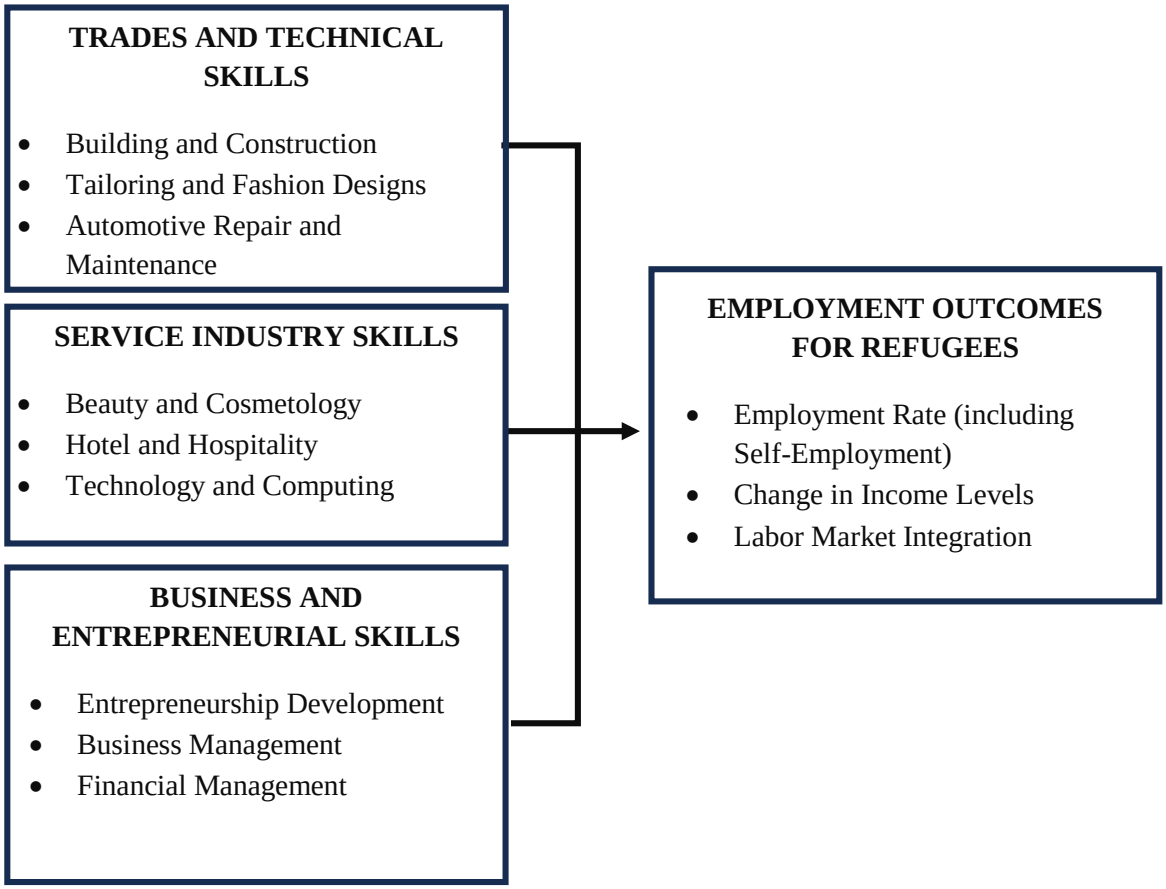


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

Modified and adapted from U-Learn (2024)

This conceptual framework examined the relationship between vocational training programs and employment outcomes for refugees. It posited that three independent variables (IVs): Trades and Technical Skills, Service Industry Skills, and Business and Entrepreneurial Skills - influenced employment outcomes (DV). Trades and Technical Skills encompassed Building and Construction, Tailoring, and Automotive Repair. Service Industry Skills included Beauty and Cosmetology, Hotel and Hospitality, and Technology and Computing. Business and Entrepreneurial Skills comprised Entrepreneurship Development, Business Management, and

Financial Management. The employment outcomes were measured by employment rate (including self-employment), change in income levels, and labor market integration.

1.11 Operational Definition of Terms

Business and Entrepreneurial Skills: Vocational training programs that equipped individuals with the knowledge and skills to start and manage their own businesses (Mohamed & Samatar, 2018). In this study, Business and Entrepreneurial Skills referred to entrepreneurship development, business management, and financial management training.

Employment Outcomes for Refugees: The measurable results of vocational training programs on refugees' ability to secure employment, increase income, and integrate into the labor market (Egessa et al., 2021). In this study, Employment Outcomes for Refugees referred to measurable employment results after vocational training.

Service Industry Skills: Vocational training programs that prepared individuals for employment in service-oriented industries (Musigwa & Andala, 2020). In this study, Service Industry Skills referred to training for service-oriented industries.

Trades and Technical Skills: Vocational training programs that equipped individuals with practical skills in specific trades (Agole et al., 2022). In this study, Trades and Technical Skills referred to practical skills training in specific trades.

Vocational Training Programme: A structured training program designed to equip individuals with specific skills, knowledge, and competencies required for employment or self-employment (Pair, 1994). In this study, Vocational Training Programme referred to structured training for employment or self-employment.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapter reviewed existing literature on the impact of vocational training programs on refugee employment outcomes, drawing from academic journals, books, and reputable online sources. The review aimed to identify key themes, trends, and gaps in the literature, informing the study's objectives and providing a foundation for understanding the relationship between vocational training and employment outcomes for refugees in Omugo Zone Refugee Settlement.

2.1 Effectiveness of vocational training programs in enhancing employability skills of refugees

Vocational training programs have been effective in enhancing employability skills among refugees, leading to improved job prospects and career advancement. These programs focus on developing key skills such as communication, teamwork, problem-solving, and technical skills. For instance, in Uganda, Kabanda and Akampurira (2024) found that vocational training programs improved youth employability, including communication and teamwork skills.

In terms of specific skills, vocational training programs have been shown to enhance problem-solving skills among refugees in Indonesia (Mustajab & Irawan, 2023) and technical skills in Rwanda (Musigwa & Andala, 2020). Sethi et al.'s (2024) systematic review also highlights the importance of technical skills in refugee employment. By acquiring these employability skills, refugees can increase their chances of success in the job market and achieve economic independence, which is critical for refugee and host youth integration in Uganda (Nkiko & Ahimbisibwe, 2025).

However, other studies have highlighted challenges and limitations in ensuring the effectiveness of vocational training programs. Tasli-Karabulut and Sancak (2024) noted that lack of recognition of prior learning and mismatch between training and labor market needs can hinder the employability of refugees. Sethi et al. (2024) also reported that vocational training programs may not always be tailored to the specific needs of the labor market, leading to limited job prospects for refugees.

The existing literature on vocational training programs for refugees suffers from several limitations. Many studies have small sample sizes (Kabanda & Akampurira, 2024; Musigwa & Andala, 2020), which may not be representative of the larger refugee population. Additionally, the reliance on quantitative methodologies (Kabanda & Akampurira, 2024; Mustajab & Irawan, 2023) may overlook qualitative insights into refugees' experiences and perceptions of vocational training programs. Future research should employ mixed-methods approaches, larger sample sizes, and context-specific designs to provide a more comprehensive understanding of vocational training effectiveness for refugees.

In the context of Terego District, where the current study is situated, there is a need for more research on the effectiveness of vocational training programs in enhancing employability skills of refugees. By exploring the specific challenges and opportunities in this context, this study aims to contribute to the existing literature and inform policy and practice in refugee education and employment.

2.2 The level of employment outcomes for refugees

The level of employment outcomes for refugees varies significantly across contexts. In developed countries, refugees often face challenges in accessing employment opportunities, but research suggests that targeted interventions can support their integration. For instance, a study by Ager

and Strang (2008) in the UK found that the refugees who received language training and job placement services were more likely to secure employment. Similarly, a study by Omata (2019) in Rwanda found that market-based interventions can promote refugee employment.

In contrast, refugees in developing countries, particularly in Africa, face significant barriers in accessing employment opportunities. According to the African Development Bank (2019), refugees in Africa often lack access to formal employment opportunities, leading to high rates of poverty and vulnerability. This is also found in other African contexts, such as in Kenya, where refugees struggle to access decent work and stable livelihoods (Betts et al., 2017). In Uganda, research indicates that refugees face significant challenges in accessing decent work and stable livelihoods (U-Learn, 2023). The West Nile region, a major refugee-hosting area, is characterized by limited job opportunities and poor working conditions, which perpetuate cycles of poverty and vulnerability (Asire, 2024; Mirembe et al., 2019).

Moreover, refugees in Uganda experience lower employment rates and poorer working conditions compared to their native counterparts (Mirembe et al., 2019). This disparity highlights the need for targeted interventions to support refugee employment and economic integration. Nkiko and Ahimbisibwe's (2025) assertion that employment is a strategic pathway for refugee and host youth integration in Uganda underscores the importance of addressing these challenges.

To address the employment challenges faced by refugees, policymakers and practitioners must prioritize evidence-based and context-specific interventions. This includes promoting entrepreneurship and self-employment opportunities, and fostering partnerships between government, private sector, and humanitarian agencies to support refugee economic empowerment. Research by Betts et al. (2017) highlights the potential of entrepreneurship

programs to support refugee economic integration, while a study by Omata (2019) emphasizes the importance of market-based interventions in promoting refugee employment.

In conclusion, the level of employment outcomes for refugees varies significantly across contexts, with refugees in developing countries facing significant barriers in accessing employment opportunities. Targeted interventions, including language training, job placement services, entrepreneurship programs, and market-based interventions, can support refugee employment and economic integration.

2.3 The effects of vocational training programs on employment outcomes for refugees

The effects of vocational training programs on employment outcomes for refugees have been studied across various contexts, with findings suggesting a generally positive impact. In Africa, research has shown that vocational training can increase employment rates among refugees. For instance, Kabanda and Akampurira (2024) found that vocational training programs increased employment rates among youth in Uganda, while Musigwa and Andala (2020) reported higher employment rates among vocational training graduates in Rwanda. Similar findings have been reported in other contexts, such as in Asia, where Mustajab and Irawan (2023) found a significant positive effect of vocational training on employment outcomes.

In terms of income levels, vocational training has also been linked to increased economic stability among refugees. Nkiko and Ahimbisibwe (2025) highlighted the role of employment in increasing income levels and economic stability among refugees in Uganda, while Mustajab and Irawan (2023) reported a significant positive effect of vocational training on income levels. However, Sethi et al. (2024) noted that the impact of vocational training on income levels can vary depending on the program design and labor market conditions.

Labor market integration is a critical aspect of refugee employment outcomes, and vocational training has had mixed effects in this regard. While Nkiko and Ahimbisibwe (2025) reported positive labor market integration outcomes among refugees in Uganda, Tasli-Karabulut and Sancak (2024) noted challenges in labor market integration among refugees in Turkey due to lack of recognition of prior learning and mismatch between training and labor market needs. These findings suggest that while vocational training can be beneficial, its effectiveness can vary depending on the context and program design.

The literature reviewed above on the effect of vocational training on employment outcomes for refugees also has limitations. Methodological limitations, such as small sample sizes (Kabanda & Akampurira, 2024; Musigwa & Andala, 2020) and lack of longitudinal studies, impact generalizability and reliability. Contextual dependence (Tasli-Karabulut & Sancak, 2024) and intersectional barriers also require further exploration. Additionally, the literature could benefit from more attention to employer engagement and partnerships (Sethi et al., 2024), as well as studies in diverse geographical contexts.

Future research should employ rigorous methodologies, investigate specific refugee populations, and examine program effectiveness in various settings. By doing so, researchers and policymakers can better understand the impact of vocational training on refugee employment outcomes and develop more effective programs to support refugee economic integration.

2.4 Summary of Identified Gaps

The existing literature on vocational training programs for refugees reveals several gaps that warrant further investigation. While studies have highlighted the importance of tailored training programs, active employer engagement, practical skills development, language training, job placement services, and securing funding (Kabanda & Akampurira, 2024; Musigwa & Andala,

2020; Nkiko & Ahimbisibwe, 2025; Sethi et al., 2024; U-Learn, 2023), there are limitations in terms of geographical scope, methodological rigor, and longitudinal design. Moreover, the literature lacks nuanced explorations of intersectional barriers and employer engagement, and there is inadequate examination of program sustainability. Most notably, the majority of existing studies have been conducted in specific contexts, with limited applicability to other refugee settings, such as the Omugo Zone Refuggee Settlement in Uganda, where contextual factors may differ significantly. This study aims to address these gaps by providing context-specific insights into the effectiveness of vocational training programs for refugees in this unique setting.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the methodology that was adopted in this study. The chapter includes research design, study population, determination of sample size, sampling techniques and procedures, data collection methods, data collection instruments, validity and reliability of data collection instruments, data analysis, and measurement of variables as discussed below.

3.1 Research Design

This study employed a cross-sectional research design, which involved collecting data from a population at a single point in time (Taherdoost, 2020). This design was chosen for its efficiency and feasibility, enabling the researcher to collect data from a large sample size within a limited timeframe. To gather comprehensive data, this study utilized an explanatory sequential mixed-methods approach, combining both quantitative and qualitative methods (Dawadi et al., 2021; Harrison et al., 2020). By integrating both approaches, this study aimed to capitalize on the strengths of each method, offset potential biases, and provide a more nuanced understanding of the research problem.

3.2 Area of Study

This study was conducted in Terego District, West Nile, specifically focusing on the Omugo Zone Cluster in Omugo Sub County. Omugo Sub County comprises 8 parishes and 76 villages.

3.3 Population of the Study

The target population for this study comprised refugees and stakeholders involved in vocational training programs in the Omugo Zone Cluster, including 80 vocational training program

participants, to include 80 vocational training program participants, 20 vocational training instructors, 20 Refugee Welfare Committee leaders, 20 employers of refugees, 20 UNHCR staff members, and 10 Local Government staff (including Community Development Officers, Sub County Chiefs, Chairpersons LCIII, and Parish Councillors), totaling 170 individuals. This diverse group provided a comprehensive understanding of the effects of vocational training programs on employment outcomes for refugees.

3.4 Sampling in the Study

The researcher used probability and non-probability sampling techniques to select respondents for this study as explained below:

3.4.1 Simple Random Sampling

In applying this technique, the researcher used the lottery method following (Taherdoost, 2020) which involved writing the names of all respondents in each category of respondents and assigning each of them numbers on a piece of paper in ascending order. These numbers were folded and rolled together to hide the numbers then put in a tin. The tin was then shaken to mix the contents and then poured onto a large table. The researcher then picked the required number of respondents randomly. This technique was chosen because it eliminated the personal bias and subjectivity of the researcher.

3.4.2 Purposive Sampling

According to Taherdoost (2020), purposive sampling involves selecting respondents based on their knowledge and expertise relevant to the study variables. This technique was used to select 5 vocational training instructors, 10 Refugee Welfare Committee leaders, 10 employers of refugees, 5 UNHCR staff members, and 5 Community Development Officers, as they possessed valuable insights and information pertinent to the research objectives. Purposive sampling was suitable for

this study because it enabled the researcher to target specific individuals who could provide rich and relevant data, thereby informing the study's findings.

3.5 Sample of the Study

According to Rahman (2023), determining an appropriate sample size is crucial for the validity of a study. The table below shows the sample size for this study:

Table 1: Sample Size showing the population of respondents

SNO	Category	Population	Sample Size
1.	Vocational training program participants	80	40
2.	Vocational training instructors	20	5
3.	Refugee Welfare Committee leaders	20	10
4.	Employers of refugees	20	10
5.	UNHCR staff members	20	5
6.	Local Government staff	10	5
	Total	**170**	**75**

Source: primary data (2025)

3.6 Procedures of the Study

The researcher presented a letter of introduction from Uganda Christian University to targeted respondents upon approval of the proposal to gain access to their premises, employees, and information. On acceptance, the researcher administered the questionnaires to the respondents and/or agreed with each respondent on a date and time to collect the filled questionnaire. The researcher pretested the research tools on 10% of respondents who did not participate in the study. The researcher made appointments with concerned staff for interviews during which qualitative data was collected.

3.7 Instruments of the Study

The researcher used the following data collection instruments to elicit desired data from respondents

3.7.1 Questionnaire

The researcher developed a semi-structured questionnaire containing questions on the variables which the respondents were asked to fill and return at an appropriate time as agreed with the respondent. Appropriate guidance on how to fill out the questionnaire was given by the researcher and also included in the questionnaires (usually at the beginning of each section). As also explained by Taherdoost (2020), the questionnaire enabled the researcher to collect large amounts of information from many respondents within a short period, easily and cost-effectively.

3.7.2 Interview Guide

Based on the information gap that the researcher wanted to be filled, an interview guide was developed from which questions were posed by the researcher to the respondents. With guidance by Taherdoost (2020), the questions were open-ended, and posed by the researcher consistently. The researcher prepared possible paraphrases which he used to rephrase the questions to respondents where necessary in order to maintain the consistency of questioning and ensure validity and reliability.

3.8 Quality Control

The researcher performed data quality control through the followings

3.8.1 Validity

According to Dawadi, Shrestha and Giri (2021), validity refers to the extent to which a research instrument accurately measures the concept it is supposed to measure. To ensure validity, the researcher employed the Content Validity Index (CVI). Specifically, this involved submitting the

questionnaire to the Research Supervisors who rated each statement on its relevance to the research objectives. The research instruments were adopted and used since the CVI exceeded the threshold of 0.7, as recommended by Amin (2005).

3.8.2 Reliability

According to Dawadi et al. (2021), reliability refers to the consistency of results obtained from a research instrument across different administrations. To establish reliability, the research instruments were pilot-tested on 10% of the respondents who were not part of the main study, and then subjected to a Cronbach alpha reliability test. This approach is consistent with Amin (2005), who suggests that pre-test reliability can be used to assess the internal consistency of the instrument. The results from the pre-test informed questionnaire design and development, and the instrument was considered reliable since it yielded a Cronbach alpha coefficient of 0.70 or higher, indicating acceptable internal consistency.

3.9 Data Analysis

Data analysis was done in the following manner:

3.9.1 Analysis of Quantitative Data

All questionnaires were checked for completeness upon collection from the respondents. The data was then entered into the Statistical Package for Social Scientists (SPSS) software for analysis. Descriptive statistics, including averages and percentages, were used to summarize and present the data. The Pearson Correlation Coefficient (r) and Coefficient of Determination (R) were used to examine the relationship between the independent and dependent variables, as outlined in the study objectives.

3.9.2 Analysis of Qualitative Data

During interviews, the researcher voice-recorded the discussions, which were later transcribed verbatim to facilitate data coding and analysis, as recommended by Nasir and Sukmawati (2023). The researcher identified emerging themes and codes from the transcribed data. Content comparisons, logical analysis, and expert judgment were employed to aid data interpretation. To ensure trustworthiness, the researcher engaged respondents for a sufficient period to capture their opinions and perceptions accurately, thereby ensuring credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability of the data.

3.10 Ethical Considerations

This study adhered to rigorous ethical standards throughout the data collection, analysis, and reporting phases, ensuring the well-being and rights of respondents were protected. The following principles were upheld:

Informed Consent: Respondents provided informed consent, ensuring they were fully aware of the study's purpose, procedures, potential risks, and benefits.

Confidentiality and Anonymity: Respondents' privacy and confidentiality were safeguarded by avoiding the collection of personal identification information, using anonymous responses, and maintaining the confidentiality of their responses, unless legally required to protect vulnerable individuals.

Honesty and Transparency: The researcher maintained honesty and transparency in all communications, accurately reporting data and findings without fabrication, falsification, or misrepresentation.

Academic Integrity: Proper citation and disclosure of all sources of information were ensured to acknowledge the academic community's contributions and avoid plagiarism.

Non-Discrimination: The study was conducted in a non-discriminatory manner, ensuring equal opportunities for participation regardless of age, sex, gender, ethnicity, color, religion, or other personal characteristics.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION OF FINDINGS

4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents and interprets the findings of the study, which assessed the effect of vocational training programs on employment outcomes for refugees in Terego District, specifically in Omugo Zone. The chapter is structured as follows: response rate overview, respondent demographics, and a detailed presentation of findings that address the research questions. The analysis explores the impact of vocational training programs on employment outcomes, including employability skills, employment rates, and labor market integration, providing insights into the study's core inquiries.

4.1 Questionnaire distribution

This describes the initial number of questionnaire a total of 75 distributed to the target respondents which included 40 vocational training program participants out of which 39 responded, 5 vocational training instructors, the 5 positively responded, 10 refugee welfare committee leaders, the 10 responded, 10 employers of refugees,9 responded, 5 UNHCR staff members, 3 responded, 5 local government staff ,5 positively responded. Out of the 75 forms distributed ,71 were able to give in their responses willingly,4 were unable to respond.

4.2 Response Rate

The study achieved a notable response rate, reflecting the engagement and participation of various stakeholders in Omugo Zone Refugee Settlement. The response rates are summarized in below:

Table 2: Showing response Rate of the targeted respondents

Category Of Respondent	Sample Size	Responses	Response Rate
Vocational training program participants/participants	40	39	52.0
Vocational training instructors	5	5	6.8
Refugee Welfare Committee leaders	10	10	13.7
Employers of refugees	10	9	12.3
UNHCR staff members	5	3	4.1
Local Government staff	5	5	6.8
Total	**75**	**71**	**95.8**

Source: Primary Data (2025)

The study achieved a 95.8% response rate, with 71 respondents out of a targeted 75, indicating strong engagement from stakeholders in Omugo Zone Refugee Settlement (Table 4.1). The response rates were high among vocational training instructors, Refugee Welfare Committee leaders, and Local Government staff (100%), and good among vocational training program participants (97.5%) and employers of refugees (90%). However, UNHCR staff members had a lower response rate (60%), potentially limiting the generalizability of findings related to this group. The high overall response rate suggests the study's findings are representative of the population, providing a reliable basis for analysis.

4.3. Background characteristics

This section presents an overview of the demographic characteristics of the respondents, providing context for the study's findings as below:

4.3.1. Sex of Respondents

Respondents indicated their sex which allowed examination of the representativeness of the sexes. This figure below presents an analysis of the sex distribution of the respondents.

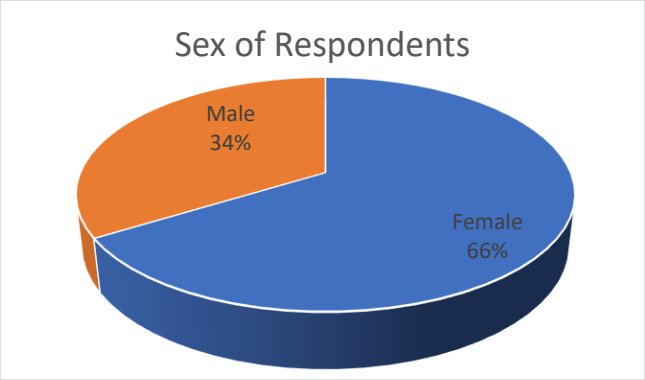


Figure 2: Sex of Respondents

Source: Primary Data (2025)

The study's respondents comprised 66.2% females and 33.8% males. The higher representation of females may indicate that the findings are more reflective of female refugees' experiences and perspectives on vocational training programs, potentially providing valuable insights into their employment outcomes and training needs. This could be due to the higher participation of women in vocational training programs or the sampling strategy employed. As a result, the study's conclusions may be more applicable to female refugees, and any gender-specific differences in employment outcomes or training effectiveness may be masked.

4.3.2. Age of Respondents

Respondents provided their age as it can influence their experiences, attitudes, and perspectives relevant to the research topic. The Figure below presents an analysis of the age distribution of the respondents.

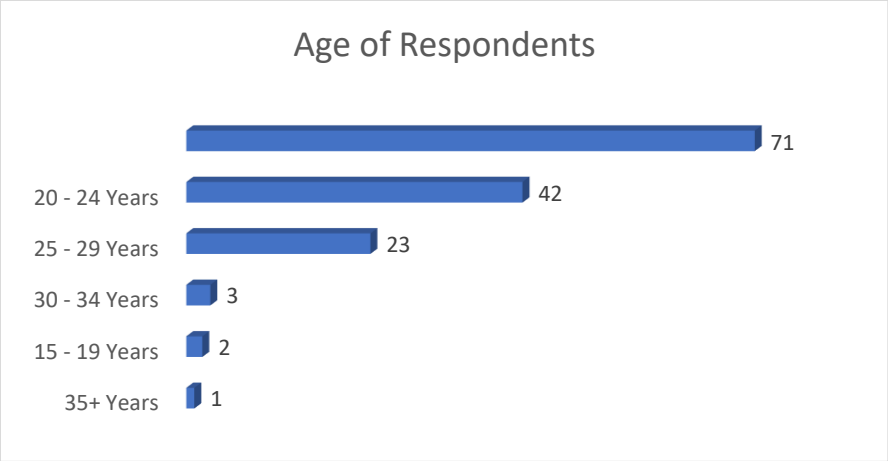


Figure 3: Age Group of Respondents

Source: Primary Data(2025)

The respondents' age distribution shows a predominance of young adults, with the majority (59.2%) falling within the 20-24 years age bracket, followed by 25-29 years (32.4%). This suggests that the study's findings are more representative of younger refugees' experiences and perspectives on vocational training programs. The low representation of older age groups (30-34 years: 4.2%, 35+ years: 1.4%) may indicate limited access or participation of older refugees in vocational training programs. The dominance of younger respondents could be attributed to the sampling strategy or the higher enrollment of youth in vocational training programs, potentially reflecting the target population's demographics.

4.3.3. Marital Status of Respondents

Respondents were also asked to indicate their marital status, providing further demographic context to the study's findings on vocational training programs and employment outcomes among refugees and the results are summarized in Table below:

Table 3: Showing marital Status of Respondents

Marital Status	Frequency	Percentage
Married	39	54.9
Single	22	31.0
Divorced	1	1.4
Separated	3	4.2
Widowed	6	8.5
Total	**71**	**100.0**

Source: Primary Data (2025)

The table above shows that the majority of respondents (54.9%) were married, indicating that the study's findings are largely representative of married refugees' experiences and perspectives on vocational training programs. Single respondents accounted for 31.0%, while a smaller proportion were widowed (8.5%), separated (4.2%), or divorced (1.4%). The high percentage of married respondents may suggest that vocational training programs are more accessible or appealing to married refugees, potentially reflecting their family responsibilities and economic needs.

4.3.4. Highest Level of Education of Respondents

Respondents' highest educational attainment levels were surveyed to assess potential influences on their awareness and understanding, with results presented in the following Figure.

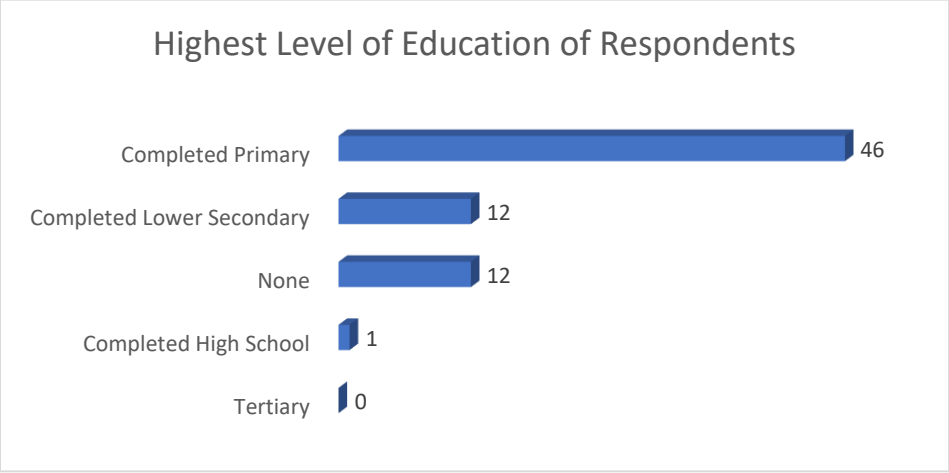


Figure 4: Highest Educational Level of Respondents

Source: Primary Data (2025)

The majority of respondents (64.8%) had completed primary education, indicating a relatively low level of formal education among the study participants. A significant proportion (16.9%) had completed lower secondary education, while an equal percentage (16.9%) had no formal education. Only 1 respondent (1.4%) had completed high school, and none had tertiary education. This suggests that the study's findings are representative of refugees with limited formal education, highlighting the importance of vocational training programs in providing alternative pathways for economic empowerment.

4.4. Empirical findings on the effect of vocational training programs on employment outcomes for refugees in Terego District, specifically in Omugo Zone

This section presents the empirical findings of the study, aligned with its specific objectives, providing a comprehensive analysis of the data collected on the effectiveness of vocational training programs on employment outcomes for refugees in Terego District, specifically in Omugo Zone. The findings are based on the analysis of quantitative data from questionnaires and qualitative data from interviews, following the data analysis procedures outlined in the methodology.

4.4.1. To assess the effectiveness of vocational training programs in enhancing employability skills of refugees in Terego District.

Respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement with statements related to the effectiveness of vocational training programs in enhancing employability skills of refugees in Terego District, using a scale of 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree).

Table 4: Effectiveness of vocational training programs

S/N	Statement	SA	A	N	D	SD
1	Through vocational training program, there are a number of Building and Construction training undertaken in Terego District	34 (47.9)	36 (50.7)	1 (1.4)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)
2	Through vocational training program, there are a number of tailoring and fashion design trainings undertaken in Terego District	30 (42.3)	38 (33.5)	1 (1.4)	1 (1.4)	1 (1.4)
3	Through vocational training program, there are a number of automotive maintenance and repair training undertaken in Terego District	23 (32.4)	33 (46.5)	3 (4.2)	7 (9.9)	5 (7.0)
4	There are several services offered under vocational training programs in Terego District	33 (46.5)	37 (52.1)	0 (0.0)	1 (1.4)	0 (0.0)
5	The vocational training program has improved my ability to analyze problems and develop solutions.	28 (39.4)	39 (54.9)	2 (2.8)	1 (1.4)	1 (1.4)
6	I can now think critically and creatively to solve problems.	31 (43.7)	40 (56.3)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)

Source: Primary Data (2025)

The survey results indicate a positive perception of vocational training programs in Terego District. Specifically, 70 respondents (47.9% strongly agreed and 50.7% agreed) reported presence of Building and Construction training, indicating that the program is available and accessible to refugees in the district. This suggests that the vocational training program is effective in providing training opportunities in the construction sector, which is a significant industry in Uganda. Similarly, 68 respondents (42.3% strongly agreed and 53.5% agreed) reported presence of tailoring and fashion design trainings, indicating that the program is also providing training opportunities in the tailoring and fashion design sector. This is a positive finding, as it suggests that refugees are being equipped with skills that are in demand in the local market.

Furthermore, 56 respondents (32.4% strongly agreed and 46.5% agreed) reported presence of automotive maintenance and repair training programs, indicating that the program is providing training opportunities in the automotive sector. This is a significant finding, as it suggests that

refugees are being equipped with skills that are essential for the local economy. The survey results also indicate that respondents perceive presence of services offered under vocational training programs, with 70 respondents (46.5% strongly agreed and 52.1% agreed) reporting presence of services. According to Taban a senior 4 dropout and a beneficiary of the automotive ‘ i am able to repair motorcycles, bicycles and vehicles with minor breakdowns because i have the basic knowledge’ and Bakhita a primary 6 dropout and a mother of one ‘I found my placement in the hair dressing is profitable especially during the festive season and i do not regret taking this training because i am now able to support the family’. This suggests that the program is providing a range of services, including training, counseling, and job placement support, which are essential for refugees to acquire employable skills.

More still, the results show a positive impact of vocational training programs on problem-solving skills, with 67 respondents (39.4% strongly agreed and 54.9% agreed) reporting improvement in analyzing problems, and 71 respondents (43.7% strongly agreed and 56.3% agreed) reporting improvement in thinking critically and creatively. This suggests that the program is effective in enhancing refugees' problem-solving skills, which are essential for employment and entrepreneurship.

Overall, the findings suggest that vocational training programs in Terego District are available, effective, and contributing to improved employability skills and employment outcomes for refugees. This implies that the programs are achieving their intended objectives, and stakeholders can build on this success to further improve the programs and support refugees' economic integration and self-sufficiency.

4.4.2. To ascertain the level of employment outcomes for refugees in Terego District

Respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement with statements related to the level of employment among refugees in Terego District, using a scale of 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree).

Table 5: The level of employment outcomes for refugees in Terego District

Employment Status	Frequency	Percent
Employed (salaried worker)	3	4.2
Self-employed (own business/trade)	36	50.7
Unemployed (looking for work)	22	31.0
Student (vocational training participant)	7	9.9
Not working (not looking for work)	2	2.8
Other (please specify)	1	1.4
	71	100.0

Source: Primary Data (2025)

The survey results show that the majority of respondents, 50.7%, are self-employed, running their own businesses or trades. This suggests that the vocational programs are encouraging entrepreneurship and self-employment among refugees, which is a positive outcome. However, a significant proportion, 31%, of respondents are unemployed and actively looking for work. This indicates that many refugees are still struggling to find employment, highlighting the challenges faced by the vocational training programs in placing graduates in jobs. Only 4.2% of respondents are employed as salaried workers, which is a relatively low percentage. Additionally, 9.9% of respondents are students participating in vocational training, indicating that some individuals are still in the process of acquiring skills. A small percentage, 2.8%, of respondents are not working and not looking for work, which may indicate a lack of engagement with the labor market or other underlying issues.

Overall, the findings suggest that while vocational training programs have been successful in promoting self-employment, there is still a need for support to help refugees secure salaried employment or improve their employability skills to increase their chances of finding work.

Further, respondents were asked to indicate the trade, skill or service area in which they were employed. The results are presented below:

Table 6: Trade, Skill or Service Area of Employment

Trade, Skill or Service Area of Employment	Frequency	Percentage
Trades and Technical Skills		
☐ Building and Construction	4	10.3
☐ Tailoring and Fashion Designs	19	48.7
☐ Automotive Repair and Maintenance	2	5.1
Service Industry Skills		0.0
☐ Beauty and Cosmetology	4	10.3
☐ Hotel and Hospitality	1	2.6
☐ Technology and Computing	1	2.6
Business and Entrepreneurial Skills		0.0
☐ Entrepreneurship Development	8	20.5
☐ Business Management	0	0.0
☐ Financial Management	0	0.0
Total	39	100.0

Source: Primary Data (2025)

The survey results show the distribution of respondents' skills and employment areas, providing insight into the types of trades and services that refugees are engaged in. The majority of respondents, 48.7%, are involved in tailoring and fashion designs, indicating that this is a popular and potentially lucrative trade among refugees. Building and construction, and beauty and cosmetology, follow with 10.3% each, suggesting that these are also significant areas of employment. Automotive repair and maintenance, hotel and hospitality, and technology and computing have relatively low representation, with 5.1%, 2.6%, and 2.6% respectively. This may

indicate that these areas require more training or investment to become viable employment options for refugees.

In terms of business and entrepreneurial skills, 20.5% of respondents are involved in entrepreneurship development, suggesting that some refugees are taking steps to start their own businesses. However, there is no representation in business management and financial management, which are crucial skills for entrepreneurial success. This highlights a potential gap in the training programs, which may need to focus on providing more comprehensive business skills training to support refugees in establishing and growing successful businesses.

Overall, the findings suggest that refugees are engaged in a range of trades and services, with tailoring and fashion designs being the most prominent. However, there may be opportunities to develop skills in other areas, such as technology and computing, and to provide more support for entrepreneurship and business development.

Owing to the employment levels and the trades, skills and service areas where the refugees were employed, the researcher sought to understand the barriers to access to employment and training opportunities. The results are presented below:

Table 7: Perceived Barriers to access to employment opportunities

Perceived Barriers	SA	A	N	D	SDA
My refugee status creates significant barriers to employment opportunities.	12 (16.9)	18 (25.4)	2 (2.8)	24 (33.8)	15 (21.1)
I face discrimination or bias in the job market due to my refugee status.	10 (14.1)	14 (19.7)	4 (5.6)	26 (36.6)	17 (23.9)
Limited access to job networks and contacts hinders my employment prospects.	22 (31.0)	29 (40.8)	2 (2.8)	11 (15.5)	7 (9.9)
Language barriers prevent me from effectively communicating with potential employers.	27 (38.0)	31 (43.7)	3 (4.2)	6 (8.5)	4 (5.6)
Lack of recognition of my foreign qualifications and experience limits my job opportunities.	25 (35.2)	33 (46.5)	1 (1.4)	7 (7.0)	5 (7.0)

Source: Primary Data (2025)

In terms of perceived barriers to employment, the survey results show that respondents face significant challenges in accessing job opportunities. Specifically, 30 respondents (16.9% strongly agreed and 25.4% agreed) reported that their refugee status creates significant barriers to employment opportunities, while 39 respondents (33.8% disagreed and 21.1% strongly disagreed) reported no significant barriers. Additionally, 24 respondents (14.1% strongly agreed and 19.7% agreed) reported facing discrimination or bias in the job market, while 43 respondents (36.6% disagreed and 23.9% strongly disagreed) reported no discrimination. Furthermore, 51 respondents (31.0% strongly agreed and 40.8% agreed) reported limited access to job networks and contacts as a hindrance, 58 respondents (38.0% strongly agreed and 43.7% agreed) reported language barriers, and 58 respondents (35.2% strongly agreed and 46.5% agreed) reported lack of recognition of foreign qualifications and experience as major obstacles.

4.4.3. To find out the effect of vocational training programs on employment outcomes for refugees in Terego District.

Respondents were asked to indicate the effect of vocational training programs on their employment outcomes, with a focus on whether the training had improved their chances of getting employed, increased their income, or enhanced their skills and confidence in the job market.

Table 8: Effect of vocational training programs on employment outcomes

Statement	SA	A	N	D	SDA
Employment Rate					
The vocational training program increased my chances of getting employed.	33 (46.5)	36 (50.7)	0 (0.0)	1 (1.4)	1 (1.4)
I was able to find employment in my field of training after completing the program.	12 (16.9)	14 (19.7)	0 (0.0)	31 (43.7)	14 (19.7)
The training program helped me secure a job that matches my skills and qualifications.	13 (18.3)	17 (23.9)	2 (2.8)	24 (33.8)	15 (21.1)
Change in Income Levels					
My income level has increased significantly since completing the vocational training program.	21 (29.6)	25 (35.2)	1 (1.4)	14 (19.7)	10 (14.1)

The vocational training program helped me secure a better-paying job.	13 (18.3)	16 (22.5)	2 (2.8)	22 (31.0)	18 (25.4)
I have experienced a noticeable improvement in my financial stability since completing the program.	22 (31.0)	28 (39.4)	1 (1.4)	12 (16.9)	8 (11.3)
Labor Market Integration					
The vocational training program helped me develop skills that are in demand in the labor market.	27 (38.0)	29 (40.8)	2 (2.8)	8 (11.3)	5 (7.0)
I feel confident in my ability to compete in the job market after completing the program.	17 (23.9)	20 (28.2)	2 (2.8)	18 (25.4)	14 (19.7)
The program provided me with adequate support to integrate into the labor market.	16 (22.5)	18 (25.4)	9 (12.7)	16 (22.5)	12 (16.9)

Source: Primary Data (2025)

The survey results show that respondents have a positive perception of the impact of vocational training programs on their employment outcomes. In terms of employment rate, 69 respondents (46.5% strongly agreed and 50.7% agreed) reported that the program increased their chances of getting employed, indicating a strong perceived benefit of the training. However, fewer respondents reported finding employment in their field of training (16.9% strongly agreed and 19.7% agreed) or securing a job that matches their skills and qualifications (18.3% strongly agreed and 23.9% agreed), suggesting that there may be challenges in translating training into relevant employment.

Regarding change in income levels, 46 respondents (29.6% strongly agreed and 35.2% agreed) reported a significant increase in income level, while 29 respondents (18.3% strongly agreed and 22.5% agreed) reported securing a better-paying job. Additionally, 50 respondents (31.0% strongly agreed and 39.4% agreed) reported a noticeable improvement in financial stability, indicating that the training has had a positive impact on respondents' financial situations.

In terms of labor market integration, 56 respondents (38.0% strongly agreed and 40.8% agreed) reported developing skills that are in demand, suggesting that the training is relevant to the needs of the labor market. Furthermore, 37 respondents (23.9% strongly agreed and 28.2% agreed)

reported feeling confident in their ability to compete in the job market, and 34 respondents (22.5% strongly agreed and 25.4% agreed) reported receiving adequate support for labor market integration, indicating that the training has helped build their confidence and preparedness for the job market.

In summary, the study on the effect of vocational training programs on employment outcomes for refugees in Terego District, Uganda, reveals several key findings. The survey of 71 respondents, comprising 66.2% females and 33.8% males, mostly young adults (59.2% aged 20-24), showed that vocational training programs have increased employability skills, with respondents reporting improvements in problem-solving, critical thinking, and creativity. The programs have also promoted self-employment, with 50.7% of respondents running their own businesses, mainly in tailoring and fashion design. However, challenges persist, including limited access to job networks, language barriers, and lack of recognition of foreign qualifications. The training has had a positive impact on employment outcomes, with 46.5% of respondents reporting increased chances of getting employed and 35.2% reporting significant income increases. Nevertheless, only 4.2% are employed as salaried workers, highlighting the need for further support to secure formal employment.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSIONS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

The chapter provides an integrated discussion of the research findings, conclusions, and recommendations, aligned with the study's objectives and building on the results presented earlier.

5.1 Summary of Findings

5.1.1 To assess the effectiveness of vocational training programs in enhancing employability skills of refugees in Terego District.

The study found that vocational training programs in Terego District, Uganda, have been effective in enhancing employability skills of refugees, with 98.6% of respondents reporting presence of Building and Construction training, 95.8% reporting presence of tailoring and fashion design trainings, and 78.9% reporting presence of automotive maintenance and repair training programs. The programs have also improved problem-solving skills, with 94.3% reporting improvement in analyzing problems and 100% reporting improvement in thinking critically and creatively. The majority of respondents (98.6%) reported presence of services offered under vocational training programs, indicating a range of support services are available. Overall, the programs are contributing to improved employability skills for refugees, with stakeholders able to build on this success to further improve the programs and support refugees' economic integration and self-sufficiency.

5.1.2 To ascertain the level of employment outcomes for refugees in Terego District

The study found that vocational training programs in Terego District, Uganda, have encouraged self-employment among refugees, with 50.7% running their own businesses in various trades and services, including tailoring and fashion design (48.7%), building and construction (10.3%), beauty and cosmetology (10.3%), and entrepreneurship development (20.5%). However, 31%

remain unemployed, and only 4.2% are salaried workers. Refugees face significant barriers, including limited job networks (71.8%), language barriers (81.7%), and lack of recognition of foreign qualifications (81.7%). To improve employment outcomes, targeted support is needed to address these challenges and provide more comprehensive training, particularly in areas like technology and computing, to enhance employability and job prospects.

5.1.3 To find out the effect of vocational training programs on employment outcomes for refugees in Terego District.

The study found that vocational training programs have had a positive impact on employment outcomes for refugees in Terego District, Uganda. A significant majority (97.2%) of respondents reported that the program increased their chances of getting employed, and 64.8% reported a significant increase in income level. Additionally, 70% reported a noticeable improvement in financial stability, and 78.8% reported developing skills that are in demand in the labor market. However, challenges persist, with only 36.6% finding employment in their field of training and 42.2% securing a job that matches their skills and qualifications. The programs have also promoted self-employment, with 50.7% of respondents running their own businesses, mainly in tailoring and fashion design. To further improve employment outcomes, targeted support is needed to address barriers such as limited job networks, language barriers, and lack of recognition of foreign qualifications.

5.2 Discussion

5.2.1 To assess the effectiveness of vocational training programs in enhancing employability skills of refugees in Terego District.

The study found that vocational training programs in Terego District, Uganda, have been effective in enhancing employability skills of refugees, with 98.6% of respondents reporting presence of Building and Construction training, 95.8% reporting presence of tailoring and fashion design

trainings, and 78.9% reporting presence of automotive maintenance and repair training programs. This finding is consistent with previous studies that have reported a positive impact of vocational training on employability skills among refugees (Kabanda & Akampurira, 2024; Mustajab & Irawan, 2023; Musigwa & Andala, 2020). For instance, Kabanda and Akampurira (2024) found that vocational training programs improved youth employability in Uganda, while Mustajab and Irawan (2023) highlighted the importance of problem-solving skills in enhancing employability among refugees in Indonesia. However, the findings of this study are contrary to those of Tasli-Karabulut and Sancak (2024), who reported that lack of recognition of prior learning and labor market mismatch can hinder employability among refugees.

Further analysis of the study's findings reveals that respondents have positive perceptions of the impact of vocational training programs on their employability skills, with 94.3% reporting improvement in analyzing problems and 100% reporting improvement in thinking critically and creatively. The availability of support services (98.6% reporting presence of services) is also crucial, as it addresses a key challenge often faced by refugees in accessing vocational training.

Moreover, the study found that vocational training programs have improved problem-solving skills, with respondents reporting improvements in analyzing problems (94.3%) and thinking critically and creatively (100%). This finding is supported by previous studies that have reported a positive impact of vocational training on problem-solving skills among refugees (Mustajab & Irawan, 2023; Musigwa & Andala, 2020).

The study's findings also suggest that vocational training programs can be effective in improving employment outcomes for refugees. This finding is consistent with previous studies that have reported a positive impact of vocational training on employment outcomes among refugees

(Kabanda & Akampurira, 2024; Sethi et al., 2021). However, the findings of this study are contrary to those of Tasli-Karabulut and Sancak (2024), who reported that vocational training programs may not always lead to improved employment outcomes.

Overall, the study's findings support the existing literature on the positive impact of vocational training programs on employability skills and employment outcomes among refugees. However, the study also highlights the need for further research on the effectiveness of these programs, particularly in addressing the specific needs and challenges of refugees in different contexts.

5.2.2 To ascertain the level of employment outcomes for refugees in Terego District

The study found that vocational training programs in Terego District, Uganda, have encouraged self-employment among refugees, with 50.7% running their own businesses in various trades and services. This finding is consistent with previous studies that have reported a positive impact of vocational training on self-employment among refugees (Betts et al., 2017; Omata, 2019; Ager & Strang, 2008). For instance, Betts et al. (2017) found that entrepreneurship programs can support refugee economic integration, while Omata (2019) highlighted the importance of market-based interventions in promoting refugee employment. Ager and Strang (2008) also found that refugees who received language training and job placement services were more likely to secure employment. However, the findings of this study are contrary to those of Mirembe et al. (2019), who reported that refugees in Uganda face significant barriers in accessing decent work and stable livelihoods.

Further analysis of the study's findings reveals that refugees face significant barriers to employment, including limited job networks (71.8%), language barriers (81.7%), and lack of recognition of foreign qualifications (81.7%). These barriers are consistent with previous studies that have reported similar challenges faced by refugees in Uganda and other developing countries

(Nkiko & Ahimbisibwe, 2025; African Development Bank, 2019). Moreover, the study found that respondents' skills, such as tailoring and fashion design, were also limited, with only 48.7% of respondents involved in this trade. This finding suggests that refugees in Terego District may benefit from targeted vocational training programs that address their specific skills gaps and employment needs.

The study also found that vocational training programs can be effective in improving employment outcomes for refugees. This finding is supported by previous studies that have reported a positive impact of vocational training on employment outcomes among refugees (Kabanda & Akampurira, 2024; Sethi et al., 2021). For example, Kabanda and Akampurira (2024) found that vocational training programs improved youth employability in Uganda. However, the findings of this study are contrary to those of Tasli-Karabulut and Sancak (2024), who reported that vocational training programs may not always lead to improved employment outcomes. Additionally, Mirembe et al. (2019) found that refugees in Uganda experience lower employment rates and poorer working conditions compared to their native counterparts, highlighting the need for further research on the effectiveness of vocational training programs.

The study's findings also suggest that policymakers and practitioners can support refugee employment and economic integration by providing targeted vocational training programs, promoting entrepreneurship and self-employment opportunities, and fostering partnerships between government, private sector, and humanitarian agencies. This finding is consistent with previous studies that have emphasized the importance of context-specific interventions in supporting refugee employment and economic integration (Ager & Strang, 2008; Betts et al., 2017).

5.2.3 To find out the effect of vocational training programs on employment outcomes for refugees in Terego District.

The study found that vocational training programs have had a positive impact on employment outcomes for refugees in Terego District, Uganda. This finding is consistent with previous studies that have reported a positive impact of vocational training on employment outcomes among refugees (Kabanda & Akampurira, 2024; Musigwa & Andala, 2020; Mustajab & Irawan, 2023). For instance, Kabanda and Akampurira (2024) found that vocational training programs increased employment rates among youth in Uganda, while Musigwa and Andala (2020) reported higher employment rates among vocational training graduates in Rwanda. Mustajab and Irawan (2023) also found a significant positive effect of vocational training on employment outcomes among refugees in Indonesia.

However, the findings of this study are contrary to those of Tasli-Karabulut and Sancak (2024), who reported that lack of recognition of prior learning and labor market mismatch can hinder labor market integration among refugees. Additionally, Sethi et al. (2024) noted that the impact of vocational training on income levels can vary depending on the program design and labor market conditions, suggesting that the relationship between vocational training and employment outcomes may be more complex than previously thought.

Further analysis of the study's findings reveals that respondents have mixed perceptions of their employment outcomes, which may influence the relationship between vocational training and employment outcomes. For example, only 36.6% of respondents found employment in their field of training, and 42.2% secured a job that matches their skills and qualifications. This finding is consistent with previous studies that have reported challenges in labor market integration among refugees (Tasli-Karabulut & Sancak, 2024; Nkiko & Ahimbisibwe, 2025). Moreover, the study

found that respondents' skills, such as tailoring and fashion design, were also limited, with only 48.7% of respondents involved in this trade. These findings suggest that refugees in Terego District may benefit from targeted vocational training programs that address their specific skills gaps and employment needs.

The study also found that vocational training programs can be effective in improving employment outcomes for refugees. This finding is supported by previous studies that have reported a positive impact of vocational training on employment outcomes among refugees (Kabanda & Akampurira, 2024; Musigwa & Andala, 2020; Mustajab & Irawan, 2023). For example, Kabanda and Akampurira (2024) found that vocational training programs can improve employment rates among youth in Uganda. However, the findings of this study are contrary to those of Kizyma et al. (2022), who reported that vocational training programs may not always lead to improved employment outcomes. Additionally, Namawejje et al. (2023) found that vocational training programs may not be effective in improving employment outcomes among rural women in Uganda, highlighting the need for further research on the effectiveness of these programs.

The study's findings also suggest that policymakers and practitioners can support refugee employment and economic integration by providing targeted vocational training programs that address the specific needs and contexts of refugees. This finding is consistent with previous studies that have emphasized the importance of tailoring vocational training programs to address the unique needs and challenges of specific populations (Sabri et al., 2021; Ansar et al., 2023). For instance, Sabri et al. (2021) found that vocational training programs can be more effective when they are designed to address the specific employment needs and goals of the target audience.

However, the findings of this study are contrary to those of Lutfi (2022), who reported that vocational training programs may not always be effective in improving employment outcomes, highlighting the need for further research on the design and implementation of these programs. Additionally, Namawejje et al. (2023) found that vocational training programs may not be effective in improving employment outcomes among rural women in Uganda, suggesting that the effectiveness of these programs may depend on various factors, including program design and cultural context.

5.3 Conclusions

5.3.1 To assess the effectiveness of vocational training programs in enhancing employability skills of refugees in Terego District.

The study concludes that the vocational training programs have been effective in enhancing employability skills of refugees, with a high percentage of respondents reporting presence of various training programs and improvement in problem-solving skills.

5.3.2 To ascertain the level of employment outcomes for refugees in Terego District.

The study concludes that the vocational training programs have encouraged self-employment among refugees, but significant barriers hinder employment outcomes. Despite these challenges, 50.7% of respondents are running their own businesses, indicating a positive impact of the programs on self-employment.

5.3.3 To find out the effect of vocational training programs on employment outcomes for refugees in Terego District.

The study concludes that the vocational training programs have had a positive impact on employment outcomes for refugees, with a significant majority reporting increased chances of getting employed and improved financial stability.

5.4 Recommendations

5.4.1 To assess the effectiveness of vocational training programs in enhancing employability skills of refugees in Terego District.

Based on the findings of the study, the researcher recommends that the vocational training programs should be continued and expanded to address the specific skills gaps and employment needs of refugees. The support services offered under the programs should be strengthened to ensure that refugees receive comprehensive assistance. Stakeholders should be encouraged to build on the success of the programs and further improve them to support refugees' economic integration and self-sufficiency.

5.4.2 To ascertain the level of employment outcomes for refugees in Terego District.

Based on the findings of the study, the researcher recommends that targeted support should be provided to address the barriers to employment, including language training, job placement services, and recognition of prior learning and foreign qualifications. Entrepreneurship and self-employment opportunities among refugees should be promoted, and support should be provided for business start-ups and growth. More comprehensive training programs, particularly in areas like technology and computing, should be offered to enhance employability and job prospects.

5.4.3 To find out the effect of vocational training programs on employment outcomes for refugees in Terego District.

Based on the findings of the study, the researcher recommends that the vocational training programs should be scaled up to reach more refugees and enhance their employment outcomes. Targeted support should be provided to address the challenges persisting in the labor market, including limited job networks and lack of recognition of foreign qualifications. Partnerships between government, private sector, and humanitarian agencies should be encouraged to support refugee economic empowerment and job creation.

5.5 Areas for Further Studies

The researcher suggests further areas of studies as follows:

1. The Effect of Partnerships between Government, Private Sector, and Humanitarian Agencies on Refugee Economic Empowerment and Job Creation in Uganda
2. Assessing the Impact of Language Barriers on Refugee Employment Outcomes in Uganda
3. Investigating the Influence of Cultural and Social Factors on Refugee Employment Outcomes in Uganda

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: QUESTIONNAIRE

My name is _____ and I am a student of Uganda Christian University collecting data for my research on the topic: ***"Assessment of the Effects of Vocational Training Programs on Employment Outcomes for Refugees in Terego District: A Case Study Of Omugo Zone Refugee Settlement"*** as part of the requirements for the award of the degree of Bachelor of Social Work and Social Administration of Uganda Christian University. The information you provide will be accorded maximum confidentiality and will only be used for academic research purposes.

SECTION A: BACKGROUND INFORMATION (Kindly tick appropriate box)

A1. Sex: ☐ Male ☐ Female

A2. Age (years): ☐ 15 - 19 ☐ 20 – 24 ☐ 25 – 29 ☐ 30 – 34 ☐ 35+

A3. Marital Status: ☐ Married ☐ Single ☐ Divorced ☐ Separated

A3. Highest Level of education: ☐ None ☐ Primary ☐ Secondary ☐ Tertiary ☐ University

A4. Occupation:_____

SECTION B: THE EFFECTIVENESS OF VOCATIONAL TRAINING PROGRAMS IN ENHANCING EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS OF REFUGEES IN TEREGO DISTRICT

Please rate the level of your agreement with the statements presented below with regards to the effectiveness of vocational training programs in enhancing employability skills of refugees in Terego District by **ticking (√)** in the corresponding cell.

Note: 5 - Strongly Agree (SA); 4 – Agree (A); 3 - Not Sure (NS); 2 – Disagree (DA); 1 - Strongly Disagree (SD)

Statement: The effectiveness of vocational training programs in enhancing employability skills of refugees in Terego District	**SA**	**A**	**NS**	**D**	**SDA**
1. Through vocational training program, there are a number of Building and Construction training undertaken in Terego District					
2. Through vocational training program, there are a number of tailoring and fashion design trainings undertaken in Terego District					
3. Through vocational training program, there are a number of automotive maintenance and repair training undertaken in Terego District					
4. There are several services offered under vocational training programs in Terego District					
5. The vocational training program has improved my ability to analyze problems and develop solutions.					
6. I can now think critically and creatively to solve problems.					

7. In your view, explain the effectiveness of vocational training programs in enhancing employability skills in Terego District?

_____

_____

_____

8. Please suggest ways to improve the effectiveness of vocational training programs in enhancing employability skills of youth in Terego District

_____

_____

SECTION C: **THE LEVEL OF EMPLOYMENT OUTCOMES FOR REFUGEES IN TEREGO DISTRICT**

Please rate the level of your agreement with the statements presented below with regards to the level of employment outcomes for refugees in Terego District by **ticking (√)** in the corresponding cell.

1. What is your current employment status?

☐ Employed full-time

☐ Employed part-time

☐ Unemployed

☐ Self-employed

☐ Other (please specify)_____

9. If employed or self-employed, in what trade or skill are you employed?

Trades and Technical Skills

☐ Building and Construction

☐ Tailoring and Fashion Designs

☐ Automotive Repair and Maintenance

Service Industry Skills

☐ Beauty and Cosmetology

☐ Hotel and Hospitality

☐ Technology and Computing

Business and Entrepreneurial Skills

☐ Entrepreneurship Development

☐ Business Management

☐ Financial Management

Other (Specify)_____

Note: 5 - Strongly Agree (SA); 4 – Agree (A); 3 - Not Sure (NS); 2 – Disagree (DA); 1 - Strongly Disagree (SD)

Statement	**SA**	**A**	**NS**	**D**	**SDA**
10. **Perceived Barriers**					
My refugee status creates significant barriers to employment opportunities.					
I face discrimination or bias in the job market due to my refugee status.					
Limited access to job networks and contacts hinders my employment prospects.					
Language barriers prevent me from effectively communicating with potential employers.					
Lack of recognition of my foreign qualifications and experience limits my job opportunities.					

What other barriers do you encounter in your access to employment opportunities

1_____

2_____

3_____

SECTION D: EFFECT OF **VOCATIONAL TRAINING PROGRAMS ON EMPLOYMENT OUTCOMES FOR REFUGEES IN TEREGO DISTRICT.**

Please rate the level of your agreement with the statements presented below with regards to the effect of vocational training programs on employment outcomes for refugees in Terego District by **ticking (√)** in the corresponding cell.

Note: 5 - Strongly Agree (SA); 4 – Agree (A); 3 - Not Sure (NS); 2 – Disagree (DA); 1 - Strongly Disagree (SD)

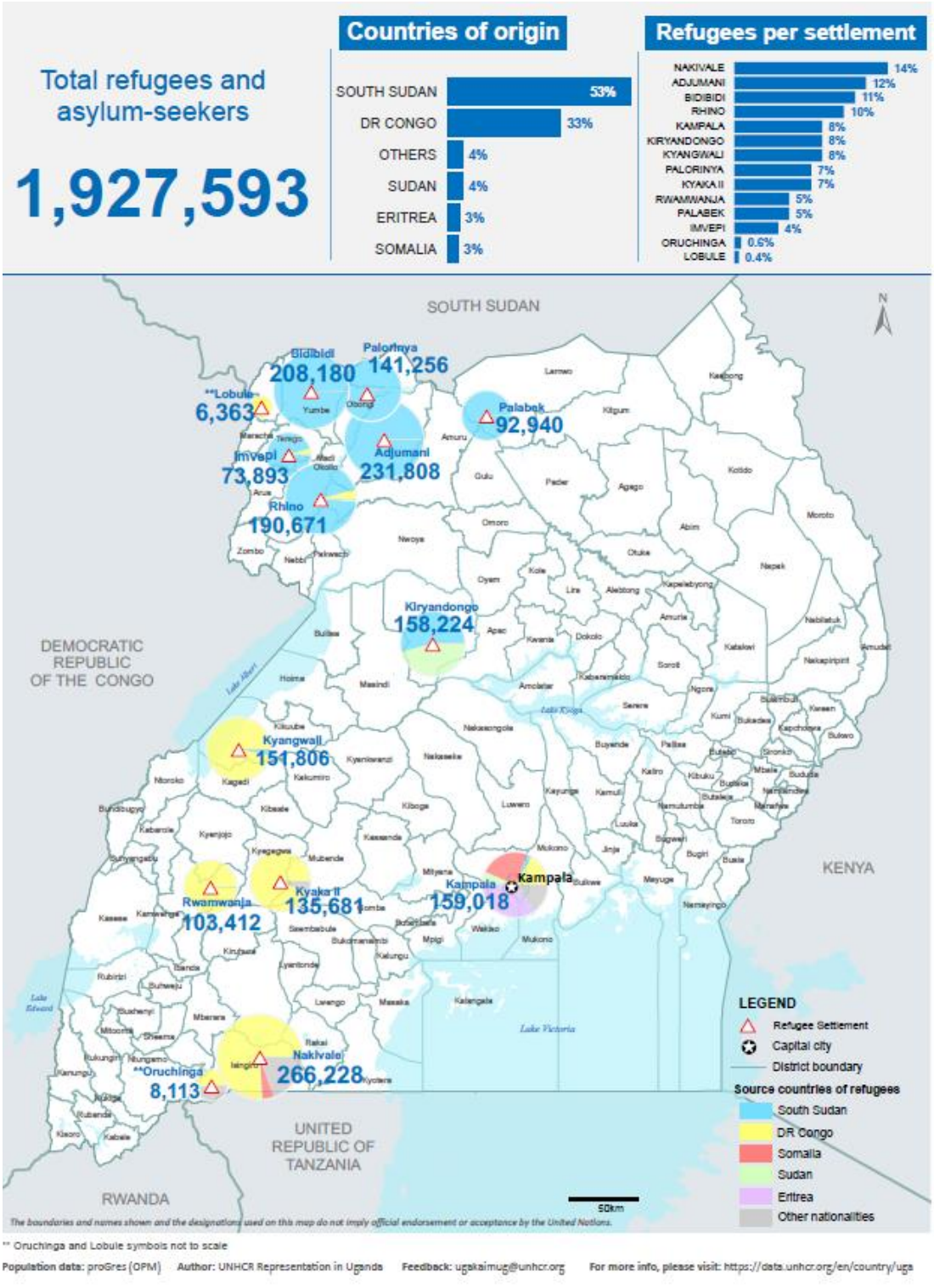
Statement	**SA**	**A**	**NS**	**D**	**SDA**
Employment Rate					
The vocational training program increased my chances of getting employed.					
I was able to find employment in my field of training after completing the program.					
The training program helped me secure a job that matches my skills and qualifications.					
Change in Income Levels					
My income level has increased significantly since completing the vocational training program.					
The vocational training program helped me secure a better-paying job.					
I have experienced a noticeable improvement in my financial stability since completing the program.					
Labor Market Integration					
The vocational training program helped me develop skills that are in demand in the labor market.					
I feel confident in my ability to compete in the job market after completing the program.					
The program provided me with adequate support to integrate into the labor market.					

APPENDIX 2: INTERVIEW GUIDE

My name is _____ and I am a student of Uganda Christian University collecting data for my research on the topic: ***"Assessment of the Effects of Vocational Training Programs on Employment Outcomes for Refugees in Terego District: A Case Study of Omugo Zone Refugee Settlement"*** as part of the requirements for the award of the degree of Bachelor of Social Work and Social Administration of Uganda Christian University. The information you provide will be accorded maximum confidentiality and will only be used for academic research purposes.

1. Can you tell me a bit about yourself, including your age, marital status, and level of education?
2. What is your current occupation, and how does it relate to your vocational training?
3. What specific skills or knowledge did you acquire from the vocational training program that you find most useful in your current job or daily life?
4. Can you tell me about your current employment status, and how it has changed since completing the vocational training program?
5. Do you think the vocational training program increased your chances of getting employed? Why or why not?
6. Are there any barriers or challenges that you face in accessing employment opportunities that were not addressed by the vocational training program? If so, what are they?
7. How do these programs ensure the integration of refugees into the local labor market?
8. What role do local businesses play in your training programs?
9. What specific skills do you find most valuable in your workforce that could be offered through these training programs?
10. Have you been able to apply the skills learned in the program to find employment?

APPENDIX 3: MAP OF OMUGO ZONE REFUGGEE SETTLEMENT



Source: UNHCR (2025)