

Information behaviour of refugees in North Western Uganda

by

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ABSTRACT

Information behaviour attempts to understand how different categories of users respond to, and utilise information products. This study focussed on exploring the behaviour of refugees in North Western Uganda in relation to their need for information, the means by which they seek information, the ways in which they use information and the problems encountered in the processes of information interaction. Because refugees face different integration and sustenance difficulties in their host communities, this study offers insights that can ameliorate refugees' situations in host communities through information access and use. The study was qualitative in nature and adopted phenomenological design. Its population included refugees in North Western Uganda including youths above 18 years of age and adult women and men as well as refugee administrators from the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM) of Uganda at Bidi Bidi refugee settlement. A purposively selected sample of 60 participants was used in the study. Non participatory observation, group and individual interview techniques were espoused to gather data. Data collected were analysed thematically using Atlas.ti 24 version and presented and interpreted into meaningful information that depicted the lived experiences of refugees at Bidi Bidi settlement. Findings from the study revealed that refugees had various information needs including faith and spiritual, legal, economic, sociological, technological and others. Refugees utilised a multitude of information sources including persons, media based as well as community centres in their information seeking. Refugees possessed different information seeking patterns and behaviours. Based on the refugees' information seeking and use patterns, a model depicting refugees' information behaviour in pursuit of information needs satisfaction was developed. Refugees faced physiological, sociological, psychological and technological difficulties in their information seeking and use which generated recommendations that ensure information access and use among the refugee community. The study findings offer insights that help comprehend refugees' information behaviour and offer measures to overcome information seeking and use difficulties at Bidi Bidi settlement by modelling the refugees' information behaviour. The study was limited by language barrier resulting in more time in the field.

Key words/ Concepts: Information, Information behaviour, Information seeking, Uganda, Information use, Information needs, Information sources.

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DEDICATION

I commit this piece of work to my beloved family: my mother May Mukungu; my wife Kafuko Mariam; my children AbdulHakeem Murshid Mukungu, AbdulRahman Goodluck Ndifuna, and Rahmah Mysha Ndikuwa; sisters Mastullah, Maimuna, Bartoul, Rehema, Mariam, and my dear brother Juma.

DECLARATION

Name: Isaac Mukungu
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Information behaviour of refugees in North Western Uganda

I affirm that this thesis is my original work and that all sources used or cited have been properly acknowledged through complete references.

Additionally, I confirm that the thesis has been submitted to originality-checking software and meets the accepted standards for originality.

I also declare that I have not previously submitted this work, or any part of it, for any qualification at the University of South Africa (UNISA) or any other higher education institution.



Signature

11/11/2024

Date

LIST OF ACRONYM AND ABBREVIATIONS

AJOL	AFRICAN JOURNALS ONLINE
DRC	DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO
FGD	FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION
ICR	INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE RED CROSS
IRC	INTERNATIONAL RESCUE COMMITTEE
IUE	INFORMATION USE ENVIRONMENT
NDP	NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN
MoESP	MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND SPORTS
NCST	NATIONAL COUNCIL OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
NRC	NORWEGIAN REFUGEE COUNCIL
OPM	OFFICE OF THE PRIME MINISTER
RWC	REFUGEE WELFARE COUNCIL
SDGs	SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS
ULEARN	UGANDA LEARNING, EVIDENCE, ACCOUNTABILITY, AND RESEARCH NETWORK
UN	UNITED NATIONS
UNISA	UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AFRICA
UNHCR	UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSION FOR REFUGEES
USCRI	UNITED STATES COMMITTEE FOR REFUGEES AND IMMIGRANTS
WFP	WORLD FOOD PROGRAMME
WEEH	WOMEN'S ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT HUB

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

“To do successful research, you don’t need to know everything, you just need to know one thing that isn’t known”. – Arthur L. Schawlow (Chu & Townes 2003:201)

1.1 Introduction and background

Information is an essential tool that reduces uncertainty and aids in making informed decisions in all walks of life. Okwu and Opurum (2021) note that information is a powerful resource that influences its bearer and is essential for development. People find information to support their decision making and often refer to a variety of sources in the process (Soroya, Farooq, Mahmood, Isoaho & Zara 2021). It is vital in ensuring equality, development and democracy, and as such, the United Nations (UN) promotes information access as a vital human right where universal and equal information access can foster dignity for all, democracy, poverty alleviation and as well nurture inclusiveness (United Nations 2023). Information is an essential instrument for competitive advantage at the different levels whether national, societal, organisational or at the individual level (Abdullahi, Igbinovia & Solanke 2015). Information access is rooted in the expression freedoms and is an essential aspect in trust building, rule of law as well as ensuring other rights are realised (Barata & UNESCO 2024).

The United Nations Sustainable Development Goal (UN SDG) number 16 and target 10 focusses on information accessibility as an avenue for development. The target aims at ensuring public access to information and protecting fundamental freedoms, in accordance with national legislation and international agreements (UNESCO 2019; United Nations 2019). It is therefore incumbent on different stakeholders such as government, local leaders, information professionals among others to ensure information accessibility to protect fundamental freedoms including those of the refugees. Information access by all in a society is a strong foundation for informed healthy, democratic and inclusive communities in which people are able to make choices based on evidence and participate in productive dialogue amongst themselves(UNDP 2024).

Calva-González (2021) argues that research on information behaviour is essential for people’s development. It is about a study aimed at investigating the why and how

questions in relation to peoples' needs, seeking, and utilisation of information (Yang & Yuan 2022). Understanding human information behaviour can help in designing systems that support information accessibility and use. It is important to intensify the involvement of vulnerable people like refugees in the information society and as well have their opinions received by policy makers and stakeholders at all levels (Morenets 2013). Stakeholders ought to listen to all voices including the vulnerable groups rather than paying attention to only those that shout the most, such that the voices of vulnerable people are never drowned by others (Hovik, Giannoumis, Reichborn-Kjennerud, Ruano, McShane, & Legard 2022). Information access and use influences the actions of people. However, how people relate with information varies depending on several factors such as access, ease of use, technology, location, among others. The lack of access to information negatively affects vulnerable people in the areas of health, social capital, wellbeing, social inclusion and participation (Kanobe, Ajigini, Ssebuggwawo, Nantogo, Mukosi & Moyane 2022).

Several efforts have been made to explain the concept information behaviour with some authors giving close accounts. Dlamini, Venter, Eloff, and Eloff (2020) posit that information behaviour is a term encompassing the different kinds of human dealings with information. Information behaviour, according to González-Teruel, Campos-Peláez and Fortea-Cabo (2021), involves a group's and or individual's habits in relation to the need, search, dissemination, use and management of information. Allen, Karanasios and Slavova (2011) note that the concept was previously referred to as information needs or user needs research until 1981, when the concept was coined as information seeking behaviour by Wilson. Wilson, later in 2000, propagated information behaviour as a more suitable and comprehensive concept. Wilson (2000) avers that information behaviour encompasses all human actions with reference to information sources and channels whether it involves active or passive information seeking and use. Information behaviour, largely involves the scrutiny of behaviour of people in regard to seeking information whether active or passive as well as their information utilization (Julien, Pecoskie & Reed 2011).

Information behaviour is about the ways in which one needs, discovers, manipulates and uses information (Ford 2018). Information behaviour attempts to explain the behaviour of people in their acquisition and processing of information (Browne, Cheung, Heinzl & Riedl 2017). In the general sense, information behaviour describes and expresses the ways in which people largely deal with information (Savolainen 2007). Oduntan (2017) describes information behaviour in the social realm as the manifestation and use of information in people's social lives to solve problems and the processes involved in information transfer. The examination of people's need for information, information seeking, giving and utilization in various situations including work environments and daily living form information behaviour (Pettigrew, Fidel & Bruce 2001). Fourie and Bakker (2009) note that identifying need for information, seeking and searching for information to act on the information need; information browsing, intentional and passive information seeking, intentionally not acting on a need for information, information avoidance as well as inability to recognise an information need all make up information behaviour. According to Bates (2009) research and study in information behaviour is a consequence of people's desires to understand the behaviour of different categories of people in regard to information.

Library staff want to understand their patrons. Government agencies, on the other hand, want to establish how information use by engineers and scientists promotes more research. Social scientists, however, are concerned with the social use of information in several situations. The concept information behaviour as seen in the literature whether from current or old sources has not had a major change in meaning and applicability. In this thesis, information behaviour implies the passive and active conduct of refugees in regard to information, and its channels including the identification and realisation of information needs, seeking in addition to use of information.

Understanding the information behaviour of refugees according to Martzoukou and Burnett (2018) is still fragmented. This calls for further research in this area of information science to understand better the information behaviour patterns of refugees. Information behaviour study can establish the red thread and underlying issues of information use patterns within social contexts of the lives of people (Bates 2009; Oduntan 2017) of which

refugees are inclusive. The current research examined the information behaviour of refugees in North Western Uganda. It focused on their information awareness and use patterns involving how they come to know about information, the way they seek information, their information use, as well as the type and nature of information sources accessible to them. In this study, Information behaviour encompassed all aspects related to information needs, information seeking and searching, information use whether individual or group use, information communication and sharing as well as information avoidance.

1.2 Definition of keywords

Information

Information refers to “all ideas, facts, and imaginative works of the mind which have been communicated, recorded, published and/or distributed formally or informally in any format” (Abdullahi et al. 2015:1). For purposes of this study, this definition suffices.

Information need

Information need is the gap that exists between what one knows and what one ought or should know (Fourie & Bakker 2009).

Information behaviour

For purposes of this study, information behaviour refers to all activities and habits exhibited by different people while engaging with information. These habits or activities range from the point of realising need for information, seeking information to using information.

Information seeking behaviour

Information seeking behaviour is the application of different tactics, approaches, and strategies by people to find information resources (Vu, Bennett & Ananthram 2023). Information seeking behaviour here denoted the ways refugees looked for and found information in their environment.

Information sources

An information source is an individual, a place or entity where information comes from, is obtained or arises (Aravinthan & Natarajan 2020; Suresh & Ravi 2020). For purposes of this study, information sources denote entities from which information can be got.

Refugee

A person, as a result of fear for being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, political opinion or social group, who is outside their nationality country and is unwilling or unable to avail him or herself for that country's protection (UNHCR 2010).

1.3 Context of the study

The United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) (2010), UNHCR (2019) and Watera, Seremba, Otim, Ojok, Mukhone, and Hoffman (2017) describe a refugee as a person who, owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of their nationality. The refugee is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself for protection by that country; or who, not having a nationality and being outside the country of his or her former habitual residence as a result of such events, is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it.

The refugee problem is one of the wicked problems in the world that needs some intervention. A wicked problem is a problem that is difficult to resolve and has several causes (Peters 2017). The wicked problems concept explains, and describes, several organisational and societal issues relating to social care, social exclusion, safety and protection, health and health care as well as environment (Raisio, Puustinen, & Vartiainen 2018). The world is seeing the worst refugee predicament of all times, as seen in the high numbers of people being displaced (Slewa-Younan, Yaser, Guajardo, Mannan, Smith, & Mond 2017). Conflict and food insecurity in the great lakes region and the Horn of Africa countries, as well as Yemen and South Sudan, add to the massive number of refugees in Uganda (Ruaudel & Morrison-Métois 2017). The UNHCR (2018) reports that over 70.8 million people world over were forcibly displaced as a result of persecution, conflict,

violence, or human rights violations. By the period ending the year 2022, 108.4 million people the world over were forcefully displaced as a result of violence, conflict, human rights violation, persecution or as a result of actions significantly hampering public order (UNHCR, 2023a). These figures indicate that the world's forcibly displaced population has remained high. These people are faced with different needs, of which information access and use is part.

Watera et al (2017) note that Uganda is a destination for asylum seekers and refugees who have been for decades affected by conflict from Congo, Kenya, Ethiopia, Burundi, Somalia, Rwanda, Mozambique, and Eritrea among others countries. Poole (2019) notes that the Ugandan government developed an unusually liberal legal and policy framework providing legal protection and access to assistance for refugees, and granting them freedom of movement, the right to work, and the right to access public services. These favourable and encouraging footsteps by the Ugandan government present hope for the refugees to seek better life options both within and outside refugee camps in Uganda.

The policy on refugees in Uganda welcomes refugees, and provides a friendly environment that encourages refugees to continue migrating into the country. They stipulate that although refugees are not granted Ugandan citizenship, they are given land for settlement and cultivation, allowed freedom of movement in addition to provision of basic amenities and aid through partners (Addaney 2017; Bohnet and Schmitz-Pranghe 2019; Valassopoulou 2024). Refugees in Uganda who are given land are expected to practice subsistence agriculture (Grzeškowiak 2024). With her partners, the Uganda government, through the Office of the Prime Minister, has continuously provided support services to ensure successful refugee management in the settlements. Refugees are provided with water, food items, protection and health services (Kyoziira, Kabahuma, & Mpiima 2021). Uganda offers refugees fundamental rights and services. Refugees are allowed to work and have their own businesses. They also have access to health care provided by government as well as access to primary level education (USCRI 2024). In addition, refugee partners like the International Rescue Committee (IRC), the World Food Programme (WFP), UNHCR, USCRI continue to support the OPM Uganda to reduce the

burden caused by the refugee influx in Uganda with support in health, education, legal services, as well as protection and empowerment of girls and women in the settlements (Brown, Kyeyune, Kibombo, Hudda & Ruddle 2020; IRC 2024; MoESP 2024).

Although Uganda revised its third National Development Plan (NDP III) with the view to support the achievement of its vision 2040, there has been no change in the country's policies for identifying, averting, and overcoming likely social strife and violence risks in communities hosting refugees. Law enforcement agencies and local councils are also actively present in refugee settlements to ensure peaceful co-existence (UNHCR 2024a). With such an open policy, the demand for amenities by refugees strains the policy implementation especially due to reduction in aid because of the Covid-19 pandemic. The unceasing influx and arrival of refugees no longer makes headlines, but rather the shortfalls in funding which significantly impact on the implementation of the refugee policy. This is done by putting pressure on assistance services and protection given to refugees as well as the communities that host them, thereby risking Uganda's response model for refugees (Atamanov, Hoogeveen & Reese 2024; Grześkowiak 2024; UNHCR 2024b). According to USCRI (2024), Uganda's refugee management programme is among the UNHCR's least funded globally. Such conditions and circumstances make the refugees' plight harder and put refugees in constant search for information so as to ameliorate their environment and living.

By 2018, Uganda had over 1,200,000 refugees from her neighbouring countries, particularly DRC, Eritrea, Ethiopia and South Sudan (UNHCR 2018). As of June 2018, 103,000 refugees in Uganda were identified as persons with special needs. Additionally, many more would require targeted protection services and support by the end of 2020. These included unaccompanied and separated children, women, children and older persons at risk, persons with disabilities and serious medical conditions, and persons carrying trauma (UNHCR 2019). As of August 2023, refugees in Uganda were recorded at over 1,578,661 located across different parts of the country (UNHCR 2023). In the settlement system adopted for refugees in Uganda, 13 settlements were earmarked to

receive refugees. Majority of the 13 settlements 6, were located in North Western Uganda. As of August 2024, Uganda had registered 1,693,311 refugees located across the settlements in the country with majority hosted in North Western Uganda. Yumbe, Isingiro, Adjumani and Madi Okollo districts as of August 2024 hosted more than 10% of the total refugees each, of which Yumbe, Adjumani and Madi Okollo were located in North western Uganda (UNHCR 2024c).

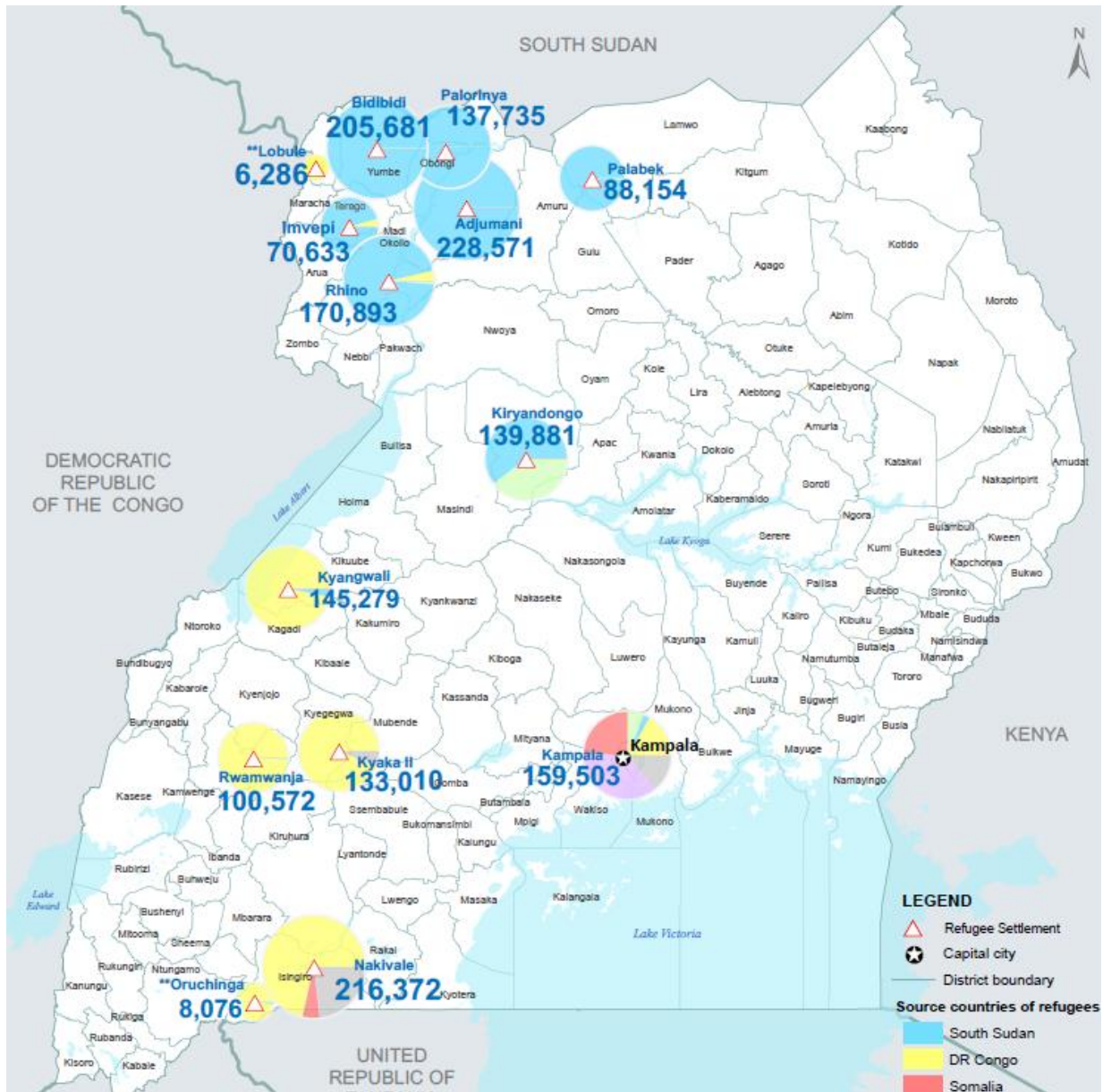


Figure 1: distribution of settlement camps in Uganda (UNHCR 2025)

Martzoukou and Burnett (2018) have opined that refugees are exposed to a wide range of obstacles regarding knowing and comprehending the landscape of information, especially due to a lack of literacy, an outstanding obstacle to information access that needs to be overcome. Bailey, Hannides and Kaoukji (2016) note that refugees try to make essential life choices, often without all the information they need. Questions without answers become major points of huge frustration for everyone; humanitarian actors, refugees and residents in host countries. Additionally, Poole (2019) argues that refugees are also active economic agents, engaging with markets, generating income and, in some cases, benefitting from transnational financial and economic networks. To have them succeed in these ventures, information accessibility and use behaviour are major factors of concern.

Uganda is one of the poor countries in the world with high figures of refugees. Despite being a poor country, Uganda is the chief refugee accepting and hosting nation in Africa (Momodu 2019). In a developing country like Uganda and her refugee landscape, it is pertinent to establish the information behaviour of refugees. Such a study can enable stakeholders to establish better means and mechanisms of information delivery. Tahir, Mahmood and Shafique (2008) have noted that information offers a momentous role in both private and professional lives. Given such persons and the nature of their wellbeing, it is important to establish their information behaviour. Refugees are exposed to a variety of factors and hindrances such as desire for protection, food security, education, health and nutrition, shelter and settlement, sexual exploitation, oppression, injustices, cultural integration difficulties, problems with integration and trauma (Javanbakht, Stenson, Nugent, Smith, Rosenberg, & Jovanovic 2021; Mendola & Pera 2022; Scharpf, Kaltenbach, Nickerson & Hecker 2021) . To navigate through these hurdles as a refugee, information becomes a very essential tool kit for survival. The different needs of refugees push them in search for information on how to gain access to their needs. The refugees' information behaviour study in North Western Uganda played a part in uncovering the information related aspects of refugees in Uganda, and as such ensuring and protecting their right to information.

1.4 Research problem statement

Information access and use greatly influence peoples' decision making (Alduais, Raoush, Samara & Sartawi 2023) regardless of their category or situation. It influences the way people respond to different situations as their decision-making is influenced by it, refugees inclusive. Refugees need information to aid their decision making on their actions, safety as well as meet their minimum survival needs (Bailey, Hannides & Kaoukji 2016). Many refugees live in a void of information with no information sources available to them and are often left in the dark on the occurrences in and around them in the refugee camps which hinders their ability to gain and access aid services thereby increasing their levels of frustration (Hassan & Wolfram 2020; Quintanilla 2012). Refugees are challenged with a vacuum of information and poor confidence in information sources (Bailey, Hannides & Kaoukji 2016). Although Uganda implements a fulsome policy framework on refugees, without adequate favourable and supporting interventions, Uganda can only offer little in achieving dignified and meaningful protection for refugee multitudes (Grzeškowiak 2024). Refugees in Uganda expressed a dearth of information resulting in difficulties for refugees to steer through health and employment grounds (Mathie 2024; Young, Kennedy, Dam, Nakyanjo, Ddaaki, Kiyingi, Mukwana, Edwards, Nalugoda, Chang, Wawer & Oaks 2023). The refugees in Uganda encounter inadequate access to official information and as a result refugees grapple with information which is inaccurate from informal sources leaving some refugees open to exploitation (ULEARN 2023). As a result, refugees are often incapable of steering through processes and systems established by host nations adequately for sustenance in these new territories which result in their marginalization (Oduntan 2017). With inadequate information access, refugees face uphill trajectories trying to meet most of their needs for survival. The information access and use challenges faced by refugees in Uganda exacerbate refugees' exposure to inequalities, exclusion, and exposure to risks (Sseviiri, Alencar & Kisira 2022).

If information and communication gaps are not addressed properly, there would be operational challenges for humanitarian bodies too (Abood, Green, Polonsky, Woodward, Tadjoeddin & Renzaho 2023; Quintanilla 2012). Addressing information related issues

around access, quality sources and use for refugees can help refugees settle in their fresh settings well and participate in the social and economic terrain of hosting nations. Additionally, refugee service organisations, institutions and the government can manage the refugees and their situations more effectively by facilitating adequate information access and use for all.

Several studies such as Martzoukou and Burnett (2018), Hassan and Wolfran (2020), Zimmerman and Beam (2020), Nekesa-Akullo and Odong (2017), di Giovanni, Fisher, Shajrawi, Madi, Nova and Tzatzev (2013), and Bailey, Hannides and Kaoukji (2016) have written on information needs of refugees. Oduntan (2017) and Mansour (2018) have also studied the information behaviour of refugees in the United Kingdom and Egypt respectively. However, these studies do not suggest a structure or a system that ensures protection of the right to information for refugees as well as a model that depicts the information behaviour of refugees based on satisfaction in their search and use of information. Lloyd (2017) opines that information behaviour of refugees is a new area of interest in research in library and information science field as there has not been efforts at deeper investigations of its information aspects which gap calls for more research on refugee support.

The current study developed and suggested a structure for the documentation of information needs of refugees in North Western Uganda as well as their information access and use processes. The study resulted in the development of a model which shows the information behaviour of refugees based on information needs satisfaction. Models enable the establishment of order and clarification of relationship (Greifeneder & Schlebbe 2022). Information behaviour models offer frameworks for comprehending how people find and use information which in turn enables practitioners and service providers to develop adequate information systems for information service delivery (Thindwa, Chawinga & Dube 2019; Wilson 1999). An information behaviour model for refugees can enable successful refugee integration in societies through adequate information systems development.

1.5 Purpose of the study

The study sought to investigate the information behaviour of refugees in North Western Uganda, with a focus on their information needs, information seeking behaviour, use patterns and challenges encountered in the processes of information interaction. Basing on the discoveries of the study, a model which shows the information behaviour of refugees based on information needs satisfaction was developed.

1.6 Research objectives

This study was guided by of the following objectives:

1. To determine the information needs of refugees in North Western Uganda.
2. To establish the sources of information for refugees in North Western Uganda.
3. To examine the information seeking behaviour of refugees in North Western Uganda.
4. To establish the information use behaviour of refugees in North Western Uganda.
5. To examine difficulties faced by refugees in the quest for information in North Western Uganda.

1.7 Research questions

From the objectives of the study, the following research questions were developed to guide the study.

1. What are the information needs of refugees in North Western Uganda?
2. What information sources are available for refugees in North Western Uganda?
3. How do refugees in North Western Uganda seek information?
4. How do refugees in North Western Uganda use information at their disposal?
5. What difficulties do refugees in North Western Uganda face in the quest and use of information?

1.8 Research dashboard

A research dashboard depicts the linkage and alignment of the elements of a research scheme or project. Alignment in research writing according to Ocholla (2022) involves

connecting different components of a research project for its harmony, readability, consistency, coherence, and excellence in scholarship. This research dashboard shows the connectivity and linkage of the research objectives, research questions, the theoretical framework, concepts and the data collection strategies that were adopted.

Table 1 Research dashboard

Research Objectives	Research question	Constructs from theoretical framework	Data Source
To determine the information needs of refugees in North Western Uganda	What are the information needs of refugees in North Western Uganda?	Information Use Environment (IUE): the problem, the people and the setting elements. Taylor (1991) Concepts: Information needs	Interview Focus group discussion
To establish the sources of information for refugees in North Western Uganda	What sources of information are accessible to refugees in North Western Uganda?	Information Use Environment (IUE): Information flow in the setting element. Taylor (1991) Concepts: Information Sources	Interview Focus group discussion Non participatory observation
To examine the information seeking behaviour of refugees in North Western Uganda.	How do refugees in North Western Uganda seek information?	Information Use Environment (IUE): The problem, the People and the setting elements. Taylor (1991) Concept: Information seeking methods, patterns, behaviour	Interview Focus group discussion Non participatory observation

<p>To establish the information use behaviour of refugees in North Western Uganda.</p>	<p>How do refugees in North Western Uganda use information?</p>	<p>Information Use Environment (IUE): The problem, the problem resolution, the people and the setting elements. Taylor (1991)</p>	<p>Interview Focus group discussion</p>
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		Concepts: Information use, user judgement for quality.	
To examine difficulties faced by refugees in the quest for information in North Western Uganda	What difficulties do refugees in North western Uganda face in their quest for information?	Information Use Environment (IUE): The people, the setting, the problems and Problem resolution elements. Taylor (1991) Concepts: Impediments, difficulties, challenges.	Interview Focus group discussion Non participatory observation

Source: Researcher (2024)

1.9 Justification of the study

Given (2008) avers that justification in research denotes a research rationale or reasons for conducting a research. It is an essential part of any research paper which expounds the significance and novelty of a study as well as justifying the idea behind the research paper (Chetty 2022). Information accessibility is a major ingredient in making life choices the world over. It impacts on how people respond to different stimuli. With the availability of information, refugees can have a positive turn in their lives as refugees.

The refugee crisis requires intervention from different stakeholders. The futility and chaos of such refugee crisis according to Conklin (2001) is often accepted as unavoidable. However, Peters (2017) opines that wicked problems have to be resolved and certainly can be resolved through establishing suitable strategies. Savolainen (2021) notes that despite the importance of information in incorporating refugees in new societies, there exists little empirical research to investigate their information behaviour. Studying and investigating information behaviour of refugees in North Western Uganda is a step in establishing strategies in protecting the right to information for refugees.

Uganda is a top hosting nation for refugee in Africa and makes the top 5 the world over with over 1.5 million refugees from different countries with South Sudan contributing over 60% of the total (UNHCR 2021). This position necessitates an investigation and examination of the information behaviour of this throng of disadvantaged people whose plight is wanting. It is important to establish the information behaviour of refugees in North western Uganda to help stakeholders in Uganda to make informed decisions on the best ways in which information can be used to improve the lives of refugees.

1.10 Originality of the study

Originality according to Shaheen (2021) and Shibayama and Wang (2020) involves unique new knowledge obtained through study such as research to tackle existing world problems and is not existent in previous works. Several studies on refugees and their information behaviour aspects have been carried out. However, comprehending the behaviour of refugees in regard to information remains fragmented (Martzoukou & Burnett 2018). According to Agarwal (2023), there is need for future research on the role of information in migration. Even with the undoubtable relevance of information in integrating refugees in new communities, diminutive empirical research on refugees' information behaviour exists (Savolainen 2021). There exists miniature research and investigation on information behaviour of refugees in Uganda and East Africa at large.

This study adds to, and backs, the existing literature on the information behaviour of refugees, but its originality is viewed in two-fold. Most studies on the information behaviour of refugees do not address all the aspects of information behaviour but rather discusses particular elements of information behaviour. The current study addressed all elements involved in information behaviour from identifying refugees' information needs to satisfaction. The study was the first to be conducted in Uganda looking at all information behaviour aspects from information needs identification through seeking and use to satisfaction achievement.

Previous research has been linked more to information seeking behaviour of refugees especially in Europe and middle east leaving out aspects of information needs and use in detail. In addition, research on the information behaviour of refugees in Uganda is rare

and limited. In the process of studying refugees of North Western Uganda and their information behaviour, the current study resulted in an information behaviour model for refugees based on satisfaction in their search and use of information. The refugees Information satisfaction model depicts all the processes involved in attaining information satisfaction across all categories of refugee information seekers.

1.11 Scope and limitation of the study

This section presents the content, geographical and time scope of the study. The study limitations are as well discussed here.

1.11.1 Content scope

The study investigated the information behaviour of refugees specifically focusing on their information needs, information sources, information seeking behaviour, information use patterns both as individuals and groups. It investigated the challenges encountered by refugees in information seeking and use. It was also open to all refugees in North Western Uganda regardless of their home countries or places of origin.

1.11.2 Geographical scope

The study was conducted at Bidi Bidi refugee settlement in North Western Uganda in Yumbe District. The settlement camp covers over 250sq kilometres stretching from the South Sudan Border into Moyo District. Established in 2016 as a result of an influx of refugees from South Sudan (OPM 2018), Bidi Bidi refugee settlement is now one of the largest refugee camp in the world, hosting over 270,000 refugees largely from South Sudan (UNHCR 2021). The district of Yumbe is located in the northern part of Uganda. It is bordered by Moyo district to the east, Adjumani district to the south east, Maracha district to the South west, Koboko district to the west, Terego and Madi Okollo districts to the south and South Sudan to the north.

1.11.3 Time scope

Approximately three years was required for conducting this study from January 2022 to December 2024. This time was adequate for the researcher to get substantial data about the study and enough for both proposal and report writing.

1.11.4 Age of the participants.

The study considered participants of different age brackets. However, participants under the age of 18 were not included in the study. Only participants above the age of 18 were part of the study.

1.11.5 Limitations of the study

The study was limited by language. There were over 10 different languages spoken amongst the refugees and refugee providers in the settlement which presented a problem in communication. The researcher used interpreters to help simplify the flow of information during the investigation. Translated instruments were used to ensure consistence and accuracy in the interview process. Additionally, because of the use of interpreters, more time than anticipated was spent on the interviews.

1.12 Overview of the methodology adopted

This part presents the study strategy applied to and for the study highlighting the study design, approach, paradigm as well as ethical considerations of the study. A detailed exposition of this section is presented in chapter 3 of this books discussing the research methodology.

1.12.1 Research paradigm

There are several research paradigms that guide researchers in their research journeys and pursuit. A research paradigm as specified by Creswell and Creswell (2018) is a series and group of beliefs which guide action. It is a set of plans which expound on how the world is seen (Sarantakos 2013). According to Kivunja and Kuyini (2017), a conceptual lens that enables a researcher to examine and scrutinise the methodological facets of research in order to establish applicable methods for the research as well as establish data analysis strategies is a research paradigm. It is a basic belief system and theoretical framework with assumptions about ontology, epistemology, methodology and methods (Rehman & Alharthi 2016:51). It is a way of comprehending the reality of the world and studying it.

This study used an interpretivism research paradigm in investigating and interpreting the human information behaviour of refugees. Interpretivism paradigm takes a naturalist, humanistic, constructivist, and anti-positivist approach in comprehending and interpreting human and social reality (Shah & Al-Bargi 2013). Creswell and Creswell (2018) opine that the constructivism paradigm is typically a qualitative research approach. It involves viewing the world as it is from a subjective point of view of individuals and often adopts meaning oriented methods such as participant observation or interviews based on the researchers' subjective relationships with the subjects in sense making (Antwi & Hamza, 2015). Interpretive research paradigm focusses on subjective meanings as it aims at recognising an individual's interpretation and comprehension of phenomena (Antwi & Hamza 2015). The goal of interpretivism research paradigm according to Rehman and Alharthi (2016) is to understand and establish the interpretations and explanations of individuals on given social phenomena which they interact with. The aim is to depend as largely as possible on participants' views about the study phenomenon (Creswell 2014; Creswell & Creswell 2018).

1.12.2 Research approach

The study used a qualitative research approach aimed at tapping the depth of meaning and the subjective experiences of the subjects or people under study as well as their meaning making processes (Leavy 2017).

1.12.3 Research design

The researcher employed phenomenology for the study. Phenomenology focusses on viewing things from the view point of participants and is concerned with description, analysis and understanding the life world and the way members of a given society experience it, as well as the behavioural and social meanings such experiences offer them (Ngulube & Ngulube 2017). It takes into account the experiences of different people and draws attention on what all subjects have in common as they experience a given social phenomenon (Shah & Al-Bargi 2013; Khaldi 2017). The experiences of refugees in their pursuit for information as a way of understanding their information behaviour was considered.

1.13. Ethical issues

Research ethics encompasses the daily work requirements on safeguarding the dignity of participants and information publication in research (Fouka & Mantzourou 2011; Akaranga & Makau 2016). According to Resnik (2020), ethics in research is important as it advances the goals of research including truth, knowledge, and error avoidance in research; it upholds vital collaborative work tenets like accountability, mutual respect, fairness, and trust. The researcher was keen on ensuring ethics in the study both during and after. From UNISA's ethics committee, ethical approval was sought by the researcher. As well an application of ethical approval prior to data collection was sought from the National Council of Science and Technology (NCST) in Uganda, a body responsible for approving all research involving human subjects in the country.

1.14 Organisation of the thesis

A preliminaries section and a body of six chapters make up the thesis. The preliminaries section constitutes the first pages of the thesis including a declaration page, dedication page, an acknowledgements page, an abstract, Table of contents, list of figures and a list of tables. The body section comprises:

Chapter One: Introduction and background

The current chapter gives the ground for the topic clearly highlighting the rationale for the study. It discusses the background to the study, the problem statement, the objectives of the study. The research questions, the significance of the study, scope of the study as well as the theoretical framework adopted.

Chapter Two: Literature review

Chapter Two presents a review of literature on the topic of the study. Past studies pertaining to the study were review. This aims to achieve a thorough comprehension of the study and as well identify gaps in the areas of study.

Chapter Three: Research methodology

Chapter Three discusses the research methods and methodology adopted for the study. The research design, research approach, population, sample and sampling techniques,

methods for data collection, instruments, and considerations of ethics for research are discussed.

Chapter Four: Data presentation and analysis

This chapter provides a presentation of the findings of the study from the various data collection methods used for the study. Findings are presented here in line with study objectives.

Chapter Five: Interpretation and discussion of findings

This chapter presents an analysis of data as well as discussions based on study objectives and the findings. Findings were analysed and implications made of the findings. Discussions provide an inner breakdown of the findings of the study involving making study interpretations and implications.

Chapter Six: Summary, Conclusion and Recommendations

Chapter six illuminates the study findings and conclusions from the findings. From the findings, recommendations are made and areas for further research are established.

1.15 Chapter summary

This chapter has highlighted the context of the study showing the intended research outcome through the stated objectives and research question. The study was qualitative and based on a theoretical framework. Taylor's Information Use Environment (IUE) theory provided guidance and footings for the study. The problem of refugees in North Western Uganda has also been highlighted as one that calls for different stakeholder interventions in order to circumvent this crisis. Investigating information behaviour of refugees in North Western Uganda is a step in establishing strategies for ensuring the right to information for refugees. This study focused on all information behaviour elements from establishing refugees' information needs to determining their walk through in achieving information satisfaction. The chapter has also highlighted an impression of the methodology of the research espoused as well as the organisation of the thesis.

CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE ON THE INFORMATION BEHAVIOUR OF REFUGEES IN NORTH WESTERN UGANDA.

“Literature is strewn with the wreckage of those who have minded beyond reason the opinion of others” – Virginia Woolf 1929 (Ratcliffe 2018)

“Literature can remind us that not all life is already written down: there are still so many stories to be told” (McCann 2009:351)

2.1 Introduction

A literature review according to Chigbu, Atiku and Du Plessis (2023), and Kraus, Breier, Lim, Dabić, Kumar, Kanbach, Mukherjee, Corvello, Piñeiro-Chousa and Liguori (2022) is an evaluation of present works of research on a particular academic subject, topic, or theme so as to establish gaps and suggest future agendas of research. It is an outline or summary of the scholarly research falling in a definite area of study which is either empirical or conceptual (Lim, Kumar & Ali 2022). It shows a representation of knowledge and comprehension of academic literature on a particular topic. The literature review is a summarised set of research papers related to a topic and it identifies information from research papers, organises them and integrates them into rational justification for an author's research (Jaidka, Khoo & Na 2013). Literature reviews provide a basis for researchers to establish gaps in their research areas (Dwivedi 2023). The literature review is also a basis for future research and makes researchers more productive and efficient in their research work (Kraus, Mahto & Walsh 2021).

This chapter examines available literature on the information behaviour of refugees in North Western Uganda and was prudently written addressing study objectives. The review addresses and examines information needs of refugees, sources of information for refugees, information seeking and use behaviour of refugees, difficulties faced by refugees in the quest for information, overcoming difficulties faced by refugees in the quest for information as well as the position of literature review in research. Various sources including journal articles, conference proceedings, theses and dissertations, books, newsletters, refugee reports and manuals, among other internet-based sites like websites, encyclopaedias and dictionaries were reviewed. The chapter also examines the role of literature in academic research as well as the map of literature review.

2.1.1 The role of literature review in phenomenological studies

Researchers ought to demonstrate and analyse critically their comprehension of literature of the field of study selected (Boumerag 2022). The literature review is crucial in academic research as a means to gathering existing knowledge and as well examining a field's state (Kraus, Mahto & Walsh 2021; Linnenluecke, Marrone & Singh 2020). It creates an academic inquiry foundation since advancement of knowledge should be built on previous knowledge (Paul & Criado 2020; Xiao & Watson 2019). According to Kraus, Mahto and Walsh (2021), literature represents knowledge advancement and a thorough comprehension of factors, context and associated phenomena in a discipline. Conducting a literature review in qualitative and phenomenological studies is necessary for researchers because it helps in ascertaining not only the academic requirement in investigating a research area but as well the agenda and interest of the researcher (Fry, Scammell & Barker 2017). In qualitative studies, reviews of literature help in capturing evidence, give new insights, and support theory development thereby contributing to creation of new knowledge (Tufa, Kant & Dinber 2023). In qualitative approaches like phenomenology, review of literature facilitates the researcher's synthesis of earlier research into comprehensive narratives which inform current studies (Kalpokas & Radivojevic 2021).

Findings from previous studies aid in logically advancing and building academic research as they establish gaps in research, settle conflicting findings, and as well recommend new pathways in a given research field as per theory, context and methodology (Chigbu, Atiku & Du Plessis 2023; Pittaway, Holt & Broad 2014). Conducting a literature review therefore help in building familiarity with the topic of investigation by developing an understanding of the current research through establishing what has been done already and thereby determine what is yet to be done or investigated. Literature reviews aim at achieving a deeper and detailed understanding of a topic by providing an opportunity for evaluation and synthesis of the available literature on a specific topic (Leite, Padilha & Cecatti 2019; Lexis, Julien, Bliss, Derrington, Dooley, Kauter, McGregor, Myer, Salmeron, & Suraweera 2022).

Kraus, Mahto and Walsh (2021) emphasise that it's important to have an outstanding grip on the present research status in a given field for nearly all career landmarks, including completing a doctoral dissertation successfully as well as having a research paper published. Such an understanding of previous literature not only helps in developing research sections but as well minimises wastage of effort on novelty lacking projects.

Literature was reviewed to clearly comprehend and underpin the issues around information behaviour of refugees specifically in North Western Uganda to give direction of this study in terms of context, theory and methodology based on previous studies. Several literature sources similar to the study topic were reviewed with the aim of establishing what has been established about the study, theories on information behaviour, methodologies adopted and identifying study gaps. Xiao and Watson (2019) emphasise this when they opine that relevant literature review helps in comprehending the depth and breadth of existing literature and as well establishes research gaps for exploration.

Literature reviews exist in different forms and types depending on the type and purpose of the study being carried out (Chigbu, Atiku & Plessis 2023; Lim et al., 2022). Snyder (2019) notes that different types of literature review can be essential and suitable to achieve a particular goal in research. Paré and Kitsiou (2017) opine that researchers have several methods and approaches to literature review at their disposal for sense making with the aim of moulding recent findings of research into past contexts or expounding on inconsistencies that likely exist in a series of primary research carried out on a specific topic. Reviews of literature may take the form of scoping reviews, systematic reviews, narrative reviews, descriptive reviews, critical reviews and realistic reviews as presented by several scholars (Mitchell & Rich 2022; Paré & Kitsiou 2017; Paul & Criado 2020; Snyder 2019). This study used a narrative approach of literature review in which detailed descriptions were made about the study topic. Mitchell and Rich (2022) show that narrative reviews are often detailed and address a broad range of matters on a specific topic. It involves the traditional approach to reviewing large amounts of literature and is often bent towards qualitative sense making of previous knowledge (Paré & Kitsiou 2017). Narrative reviews aim at creating a critical and detailed analysis of present state of affairs

on a particular issue or phenomenon (Chigbu et al., 2023).

2.1.2 Sources of literature

According to Oliver (2012), a wealth of likely literature is often available for a literature review in which choices ought to be made on the type of materials to be included or even discarded. Reviewing the literature requires that a researcher identifies and evaluates several source types of information including books, professional and academic journal articles as well information resources based on the web (Rowley & Slack 2004). The current study draws from several sources of information for the literature evaluation and synthesis. This is so because reviewing literature is essential for researchers in clearly understanding the topic of study and thereby drawing lines and foundations for research. The concept of information behaviour has been researched before by a number of scholars which offers a good body of knowledge to help the researcher merit the study. This body of knowledge on information behaviour is available in both print and electronic resources while the specific topic of information behaviour of refugees has a small presence of literature.

Most times, according to Paul and Criado (2020), academics and researchers select possibly bibliographic database that are well known. This literature review chooses from both most known to unfamiliar sources of information. Most of the literature used for this study came from electronic resources including journal articles, books, dictionaries, encyclopaedias, newsletters as well as conference proceeding. The use of dictionaries and encyclopaedias greatly helped with providing an understanding of the concepts especially the refugees conundrum. Journal articles were largely helpful in providing current literature that has been researched about the refugee status and their information behaviour. Dissertations and theses were also used to inform the study as they provided data that was useful on topics of the study. This is emphasised by Oliver(2012) who points out that dissertations which often can be part of literature reviews are very important information sources for students of research as they allow scrutiny of passed and accepted students' research.

As indicated by Xiao and Watson (2019), no single database has a complete and full

listing of published information resources which makes it necessary for researchers to search the literature from multiple databases. The information resources were largely got from both subscribed and full text databases that were accessible to me including the Wiley online library, ProQuest databases, Emerald publishing database, EBSCOhost database, Sage journals, Sabinet journals, AJOL database as well as university institutional repositories accessed through OpenDOAR (Directory of Open Access Repositories). Corporate websites, especially the United Nations portal, were used to establish statistical data and current status of refugees in the world. To clearly get a picture of the refugees' status in Uganda, publications on the refugee plight in Uganda were accessed from the UNHCR portal of the United Nations. These literature sources were reached through direct database searches as well as through Google Scholar and Google Searches.

2.1.3 Map of literature review

A literature map according to Creswell (2014b) is a graphic representation of literature of your research topic which shows the way a specific study adds to literature and aligns your study in the bigger research body. It involves making links between different concepts of the study by drawing arrows. A literature map, according to Dwivedi (2023), helps in comprehending issues that are critical in a research, research findings and good methodologies in the literature; shaping ideas flow with the help of a structured document as well as understanding existing relations among different studies. Based on the different presentations about literature maps and their roles, the researcher developed a visual picture of study to provide an overview of the available literature and the links between the different concepts. This literature map illustrates the different concepts that are discussed in this literature review on the information behaviour of refugees in North Western Uganda as seen in Figure 1.

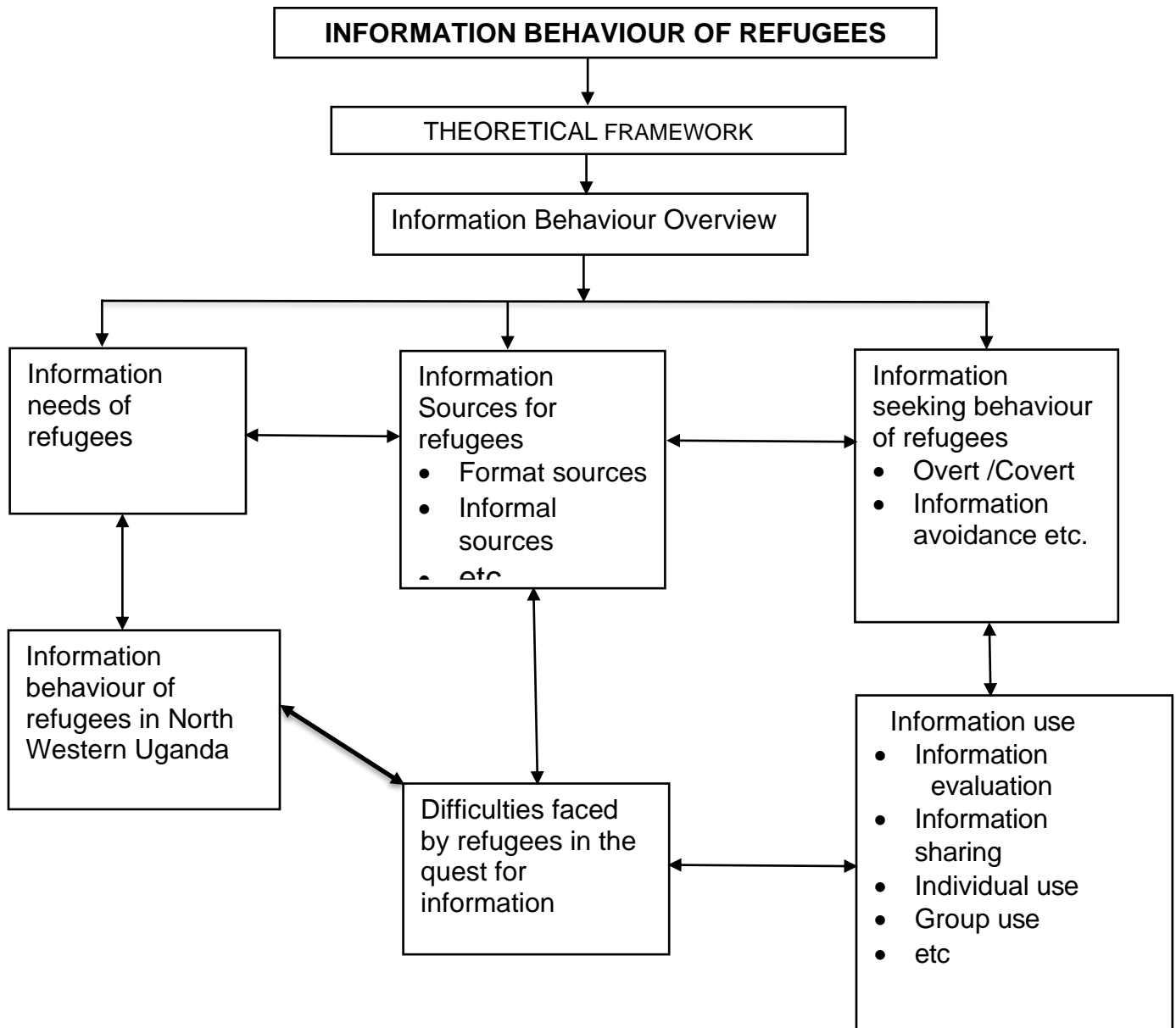


Figure 2 Literature map (Researcher 2024)

2.2 Theoretical Framework

Ngulube (2020) avers that theory makes part of the major research pillars. This is echoed by Mavodza (2020) who avers that as part of the main research pillars, theory helps in expounding on reality. Theory is seen as a basis for research and often offers meaning and discipline identity (Niemand & Bwalya 2020). These authors further emphasise that comprehending theory trends allows scholars to add to the development of intellectual discourse of their fields of research which permit their views on present theory heard. The basis of production of knowledge is a theoretical framework (Ngulube 2020). Ngulube

opines that a conceptual and theoretical framework directs the investigator on the nature of variables that should be considered and measured. Wilson (2016a) explains the need for theory in information behaviour as a means to establish explanations that justify people's behaviour with hope that we can establish ways to help them perform better and or develop better ways of serving them. Implementing a theoretical framework offers research results wide significance and pertinence and gives valuable assumptions in guiding an investigation (Ngulube & Mosha 2023). The authors further opine that theories facilitate the generation of knowledge and the development of a logical and consistent knowledge body in a field.

As illustrated in figure 2, information behaviour theories are critical to information behaviour research. Several information behaviour theories exist and have been expounded on by different scholars over the years. Such theories include Dervin's sense making theory, Taylor's Information Use Environments (IUE) theory, Information Grounds (IG) theory by Karen E. Fisher, theory of Information Horizons (IH) by Diane H. Sonnenwald, information intents theory by Ross J. Todd, theory of information encountering by Sanda Erdelez, information acquiring-and-sharing theory by Kevin Rioux, Chatman's Information Poverty theory as well as the imposed query theory by Melissa Gross.

Several models have been developed in the course of study of information behaviour to bring forth an understanding of the steps involved in the elements of information behaviour. Several human information behaviour models encompass both graphic and textual representation used to show theoretical or actual relationships and ideal information interactions (Savolainen 2017). An information behaviour model applies drawings to convey clarity and comprehension of the information seeking concept, diagrammatically illustrating users' engagement stages from the time of feeling a need to the point of need satisfaction thereby enhancing information access by way of providing varied perceptions and viewpoints on information access (Igbinovia & Omehia 2024). Such models include Krikelas model of information seeking behaviour, Wilson's 1999 model of information behaviour, Kulthau's Information Search Process (ISP) and Ellis's model of information seeking behaviour (Agarwal 2023; Godbold 2006; Oza & Patel 2021;

Yang & Yuan 2022). Some of these theories and models are expounded further to ascertain their applicability for adoption in this study.

Brenda Dervin's Sense-making theory

Brenda Dervin's Sense-making theory is influential in information science as it focusses on people's information seeking, use and how beneficial the information is to people (Chabot 2019; Naumer, Fisher & Dervin 2008). It aims at understanding in better ways how we make sense of information to come up with healthier information and communication systems (Naumer et al. 2008). The sense-making theory and methodology as propagated by Brenda Dervin is an essential set of convictions that aid in understanding a user in different contexts of information use (Agarwal, 2018). The model portrays that a user or information seeker makes sense of circumstances that are uncertain through information access by describing the ways in which an information seeker or user interprets information for decisions based on the information (Oza & Patel 2021). Dervin's theory postulates a gap metaphor in information needs study. The gap in the knowledge of people as a result of specific situations or moments leads them into information seeking and the gap is thereby bridged by finding helps and uses (Liu 2013). People are faced with sense-making moments in a time space when they experience information gaps as they navigate through their time spaces. Bridges of ideas in the moment are then constructed by the person as they experience confusion, questions, and uncertainty and the constructed bridges may include emotions, thoughts, ideas, hunches, feelings, memories and thoughts (Naumer et al. 2008). As people move through time space moments, gap-bridging is viewed as both potentially receptive and resistant to changing conditions as every new time space moment needs another gap-bridging strategy whether that strategy is seen as unconscious and habitual; accidental and capricious; or planned and invented (Agarwal 2023 2012).

Sense-making according to Dervin's theory is realised using four elements in the model; a situation, a gap, an out outcome and a bridge. The situation in time space signifies the context of the information problem, the gap establishes the variation between a desired situation and the contextual situation (the different that exists between a current condition and the ideal condition), the outcome signifies the result of process of sense-making while

the bridge is the means by which the gap between outcome and situation is closed (Agarwal 2018; Esew, Makarfi, Goshie, & Jimada 2014; Sualman & Jaafar 2011). The theory has been criticised for not expounding much detail on information seeking in different settings or context. The terminology used in the theory are individualistic by nature thereby demonstrating linguistic dexterities (Ingwersen & Järvelin 2005; Savolainen, 2021).

The Information Grounds (IG) theory

Karen Fisher propagated the information grounds theory in a way to elucidate the role of social spaces in people's information access and sharing. The theory elaborates on the role of social interactions in stimulating information sharing as a key activity in the information grounds where the flow of information becomes a by-product (Agarwal 2018; Talip, Narayan, Edwards & Watson 2016). Information grounds can temporarily arise anytime anywhere when people come together for a particular task that can result in serendipitous and spontaneous information sharing as a byproduct of the social engagement. Information obtained from information grounds is used by people in different ways to their benefit in social, affective, physical and cognitive dimensions (Agarwal 2018; Fisher, Durrance & Hinton 2004; Talip et al. 2016). The information grounds theory was used by Fisher to study immigrants at a public library so as to establish whether the public library would fit as an information ground. It highlighted that as immigrants converged at the public library for purposes of second language acquisition, the public library became an information ground where through engagement with fellow immigrants, different information was shared as a byproduct of second language acquisition task (Fisher et al. 2004).

Although the information grounds allows social interactions that result in information sharing serendipitously, the theory suggests that the chief sources of information in this temporary environment are the people found in a specific setting in a particular time instance in the information ground. The theory suggests that information acquisition and uptake is a byproduct and not the main objective of the people in the information ground. This may leave out the purposeful seeking of information from formal and or official information sources in the environment by some users yet information behaviour extends

beyond information grounds. The theory does not explicitly address all information behaviour aspects but rather hints specifically on information seeking.

The Information Horizons (IH) theory

The information horizons theory as propagated by Diane H. Sonnenwald in 1999 is an impactful theory adopted in information behaviour studies. Information horizons theory depicts social, cognitive and behavioural aspects of information behaviour including, seeking, use and sharing (Greenberg, Sonnenwald, Hartel, Montague & Fourie 2023). Information horizons according to Sonnenwald comprise several resources of information such as documents, tools for information retrieval, social networks, observation and experimentation in the world (Agarwal 2018; Hartel, Oh & Nguyen 2018; Sonnenwald 1999). It can be seen as the available channels and sources for a person seeking information (Agarwal 2018). According to Sonnenwald (1999), information horizons comprises diversity of information resources and are determined individually or in social groups and can be viewed as solution spaces that are densely populated. An individual's information horizon can be viewed as network of resources and people which the individual may reference in case they are faced by information seeking situations (Agarwal 2018). Individuals in different situations or contexts may notice an information horizon in which acting on information occurs (Hartel et al. 2018). The information horizon is affected by both individual and social factors that influence or affect individual's information seeking (Agarwal 2018; Sonnenwald 1999).

Although the theory appears adequate in studying the information behaviour of people in different contexts through mapping information sources, the information horizons theory has been used to study the information behaviour of people in vulnerable settings including refugees, migrants and immigrants (Greenberg et al. 2023) which this study is about. The theory does not explicitly address information behaviour in totality but rather focusses more on information sources paradigm of information behaviour.

The Information Encountering (IE) theory

The information encountering theory which was coined and propagated by Sandra Erdelez in 1997 depicts a serendipitous information behaviour in which people

accidentally or by chance come across useful information whether in the process of finding other information or not at all looking for any information (Agarwal, Huang & Erdelez 2021). Information encountering is a notable experience of unexpected and unplanned finding of useful and interesting information (Chen, Gong, Huang & Lu 2024; Erdelez & Makri 2020; Makri & Buckley 2020). Information encountering always happens in the course of actively seeking information yet unsought and unexpected information is passively found in the process and often the information encountered is subjectively deemed useful, interesting or possibly useful (Makri & Buckley 2020).

Information encountering is an indispensable element of the information behaviour of people, and having information literacy and practical skills to support the management of unanticipated and unexpected information are essential (Agarwal et al. 2021; Erdelez, Basic & Levitov 2011; Stewart & Basic 2014). This theory has been applied to different studies and contexts. The Theory has largely been applied to academia involving the study of students as well as other categories of people in different spheres such as diarists and consumers (Chen et al. 2024; Erdelez et al. 2011; Jiang et al. 2022). The theory is applicable in studying people in both physical and digital environments including social media platforms, libraries, the internet or interaction with other persons where information that meets different information needs is realized in the different settings (Agarwal et al. 2021; Erdelez 2004; Panahi, Watson & Partridge 2016). Because the information encountering theory is based on finding information by chance, the theory does not effectively represent the constructs of this study. It is however noted that information encountering is a central part of the information behaviour of people of diverse settings including refugees.

Krikela's Model of Information Seeking

The 1983 Krikela's model to information seeking behaviour is one of the first formulated models in the study of information seeking behaviour in the field of library and information science and is among the most referenced models (Bukhari et al. 2016; Mahindaratne & Min 2018). The model comprises of 13 elements that depict and illustrate the activities and events involved in information seeking espoused from the top to bottom (Erlianti & Fatmawati 2020; Gunasekera & Balasubramani 2021; Mahindaratne & Min 2018).

Information gathering and information giving at the top of the model manifests the information seeking behaviour according to Krikela (Erlianti & Fatmawati 2020; Savolainen 2019, 2017). Krikela's model illustrates that people's information needs are borne from their environment and or their events and such needs can either be immediate or differed (Igbinovia & Omehia 2024). Krikela categorised users' needs from the environment as immediate and differed needs which influence the behaviour of the user in seeking information (Igbinovia & Omehia 2024; Savolainen 2017). In this model, the information events allied to satisfying and meeting the immediate needs are labelled under information giving while the information events linked to meeting deferred needs comprise information gathering (Savolainen 2017 2017). Urgent attention is often given to immediate needs by way of referring to sources of information which can be either external or internal (Igbinovia & Omehia 2024).

Krikela's model illustrates that a person's mind is the first point of reference in meeting their information need implying that information seeking begins internally within a person since people are a knowledge repository to an extent through their creativity and past experiences to problems (Fitzgerald 2020; Igbinovia & Omehia, 2024). Information giving is based on external and internal sources (Agarwal 2018; Erlianti & Fatmawati 2020). When internal sources of information seem insufficient to meet information needs, users switch to external sources which can be direct interpersonal contacts with experts or refer to recorded sources or literature such as journals and books (Erlianti & Fatmawati 2020; Fitzgerald 2020).

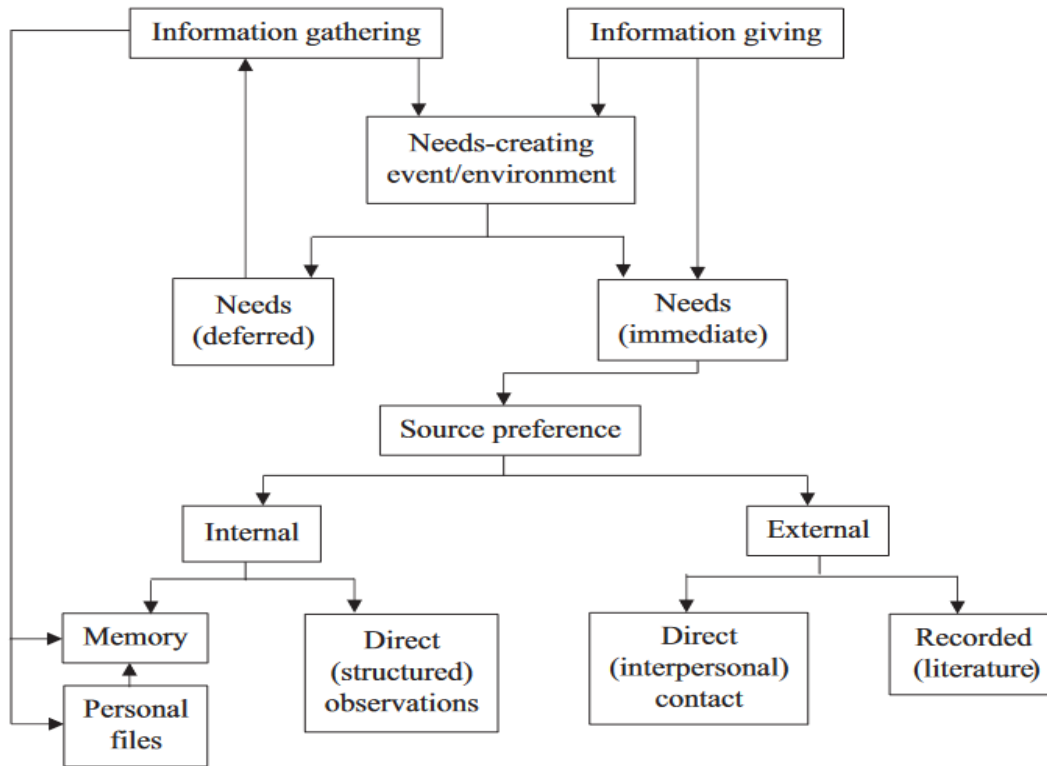


Figure 3 Krikela's 1983 model of information seeking (Savolainen 2019)

Krikela's model has been criticized for the one direction flow chart where all its arrows move in the one direction without indication of interplay between its elements (Savolainen, 2021). The model has been greatly criticised for its over simplicity and bent towards traditional library settings (Oza & Patel 2021; Savolainen 2021). Although the model illustrates approaches in information behaviour including information needs, information sources, information seeking and sharing, the model may not explicitly guide the study because of the lack of clarity on the interplay of the different information behaviour elements.

Ellis' model of information seeking behaviour

Ellis's 1989 model of information seeking was proposed and developed based on the seeking behaviour of academic through a series of six elements of information seeking actions including "starting, chaining, browsing, differentiating, monitoring and extracting" (Esew et al. 2014:12; Rusli, Indah & Syam 2023).

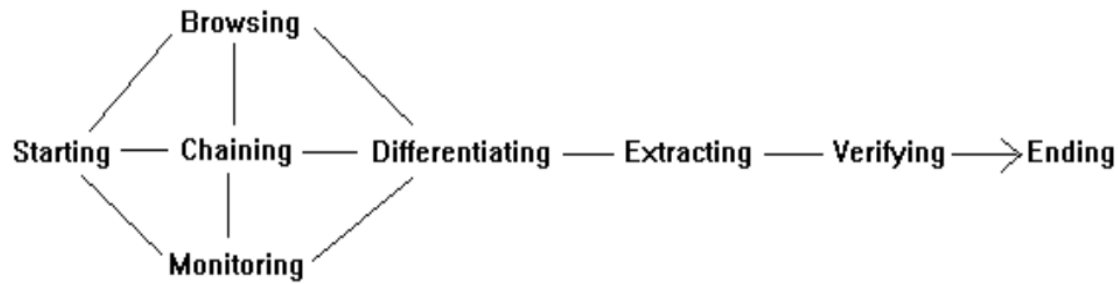


Figure 4 Ellis's process model of information seeking behaviour (Wilson 1999)

According to Ellis, the starting element involves initiating the information seeking process through asking colleagues. Starting can include looking for and gathering preliminary pertinent information on a new subjects including actions that make up preliminary information search. In the second element chaining, an information seeker uses reference links for identification of suitable information sources in known and unknown sources through forward and backwards chaining. Users are then involved in browsing information sources by looking through title lists, subject heading or tables of contents, and abstracts. The fourth element of the model differentiating involves users determining specific information sources to use in meeting their information needs. Put differently, differentiating involves filtering through the available information sources for the most suitable ones. In monitoring, the user keeps themselves updated with current information sources through current awareness. The seeker concentrates on a smaller number of sources that are presumed most relevant. In extracting, the seeker carefully identifies and selects pertinent information from particular selected sources. The six-stage behaviour model ends after successful extraction. Ellis later added two additional element to the behaviour model including verifying which focusses on ascertaining accuracy in information and lastly ending which depicts taking care of loose ends' through conducting a final search (Bukhari et al. 2016; Garg 2016; Kundu 2017; Rusli et al. 2023).

Ellis 1989 Model is often used to illustrate and espouse the information seeking behaviour of academic engineers, scientists, and social scientists (Gunasekera & Balasubramani 2021). Ellis' model offers an exceptional explanation of scholars' information seeking (Fitzgerald 2020). Although Ellis' model depicts a simplified approach to information seeking, its focus on scholars and academics is not in tandem with this study on the

information behaviour of refugees in North Western Uganda in which the refugees are a mass of people with different backgrounds, abilities, needs, social stature but brought together due to strife and civil unrest. The elements of chaining, differentiating, and extracting as explained on the model, makes it difficult for refugees most of whom have low levels of information literacy.

Wilson's 1999 information behaviour model

Although most information behaviour models have focused on the information seeking behaviour conundrum, there are limited models that present a comprehensive human information behaviour model. T.D. Wilson formulated and propagated an information behaviour model which is regarded the most favoured and prominent model in information behaviour. The model illustrates all the active and passive user behaviour sequencies and activities that relate to information sources and channel (Gunasekera & Balasubramani 2021). The model established twelve component elements making up the information behaviour activities (Garg 2016).

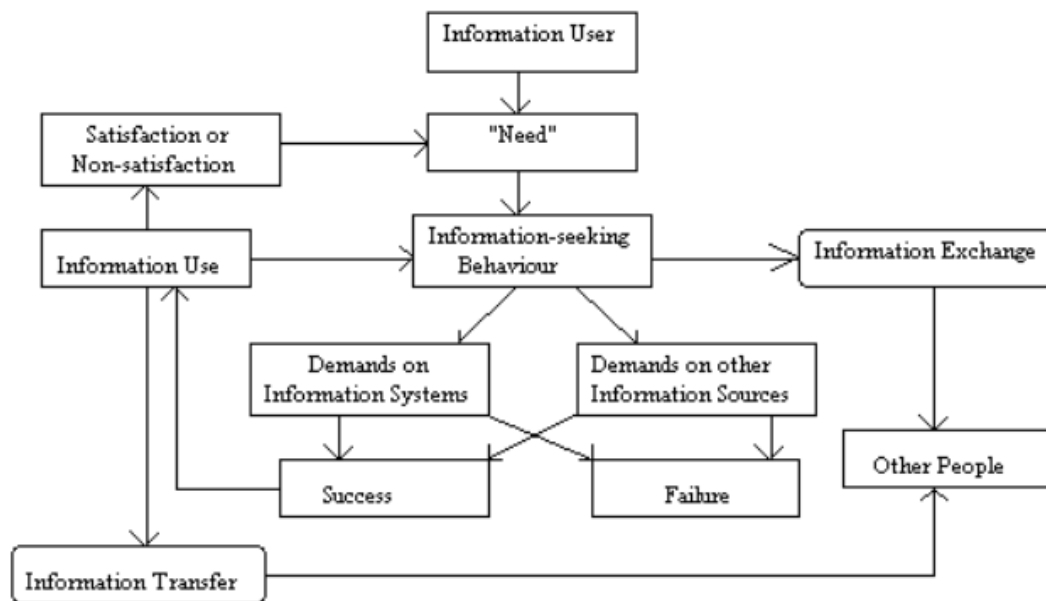


Figure 5 Wilson's information behaviour model (Wilson 1999)

In this model, people or users are seen to have perceived information needs which trigger an information seeking behaviour aimed at enabling the user to meet the information need

by making and contacting information systems and sources which may culminate in failure or success in finding appropriate information. Successful users can then consume the information found to either partial or full satisfaction of the perceived information need whereas failure to meet the perceived need may result in repeating the process. Information seekers here also have an opportunity to share information through information exchange and transfer. Information deemed useful can be transferred to other people (Erlianti & Fatmawati 2020; Wilson 1999). Wilson espoused that the desire to satisfy an information need is the mortar behind the activities of the information seeker (Garg 2016).

Wilson model of information behaviour unlike earlier models discussed, explicitly highlights elements typical in human information behaviour extending to information use, exchange and satisfaction. The model presents a simplified and extensive explanation of information behaviour elements including information needs, seeking behaviour, sources of information, and use (Ugbala, Lawal, Olawale & Oloniruha 2022). As a model it has been applied to many studies in information science (Agarwal 2018).

Taylor's Information Use Environment (IUE) theory

The Information Use Environment (IUE) theory was postulated by Robert Taylor in 1986 and was further developed in 1991 (Francis 1998; Khan 2018; Taylor 1991). According to Taylor (1991), IUE denotes a series of factors, issues, or elements that affect the stream or flow and application of information and determines the criteria by which the value of information is assessed. Taylor's theory of IUE was used to establish the relationship between the information users and their environments, as well as the information providers and the existing information systems (Khan 2018; Taylor 1991; Walker & William 2001). Francis (1998) opines that Taylor's IUE theory provides a context for comprehending the elements within which information enters or leaves specific clients or users as well as standards clients or users assess that information. Khan (2018) argues that the IUE is essential in the processes of information behaviour. Taylor's IUE analytical framework comprises four elements. The setting; kinds of problems; sets of people; and problem resolution (Agarwal 2018; Kazmer, Glueckauf, Ma & Burnett 2013; Khan 2018; Taylor 1991). Taylor's IUE framework considers people, information uses, and the

setting in which people make decisions about what kind of information is relevant for them in specific times (Agarwal 2018; Kazmer, Glueckauf et al 2013; Khan 2018; Taylor 1991). Taylor developed this theory by studying professionals and their information use. Taylor examined the theory among professionals including physicians, engineers and legislators (Agarwal 2018; Folb, Detlefsen, Quinn, Barron & Trauth 2010; Khan 2018).

Taylor's IUE theory offers a strong framework upon which understanding of the way information is used in a community is realised. The model not only focusses on the users of information but also the context in which the information is used (Durrance, Souden, Walker & Fisher 2006) which made it ideal for this study. This model is made up of elements that influence the use and flow of information messages and also gives and suggest the criteria upon which information value is measured. The model is a link between the environment and the information users (Khan 2018). According to Taylor (1991), the main strength of the IUE model is the emphasis on the user as well as the need and scope of the information environment. He endeavoured to comprehend the kinds of information needed by different groups, their ideal or desired access modes to information and how use could be enriched through improved systems. Francis (1998) opines that Taylor's IUE theory provides context for understanding the elements within which information flow enters or leaves definable clients or users as well as the standard by which such clients or users judge that information. Taylor's IUE theory and model elements of setting; kinds of problems; sets of people; and problem resolution (Francis 1998; Khan 2018) were critical to this study. The use environment for information as portrayed by Taylor plays a vital role in the seeking, retrieval and use of information (Khan 2018).

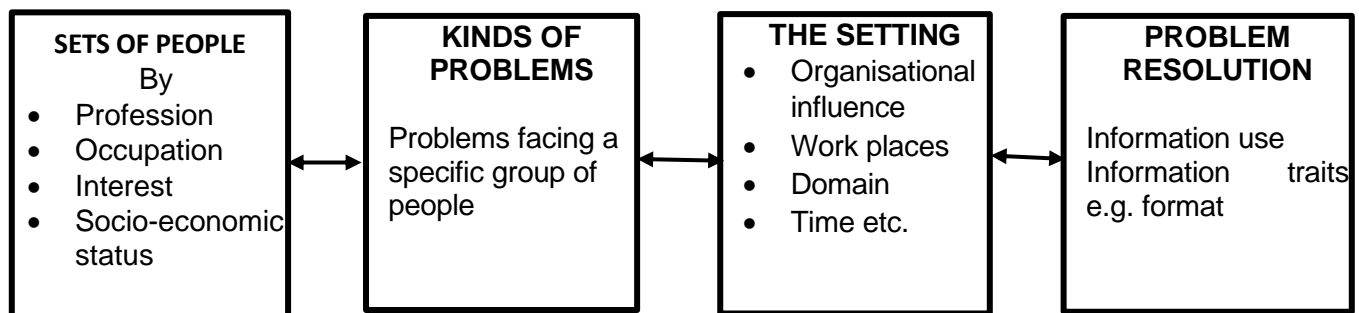


Figure 6: Taylor's IUE framework

The IUE theory with its elements of setting; kinds of problems; sets of people; and problem resolution guided this study in determining the North Western Uganda refugees' information behaviour by expounding on the factors that influence information flow as well as determine the value of information to the refugees in North Western Uganda. All the elements of the theory were used in guiding this study since they directly resonated with the study. The study considered "the Set of People" element which focused on the refugees and other stakeholder like information providers as well as leaders; "the kinds of problems" element which addressed difficulties in the information seeking and use among refugees; "the Setting" element which looked at the environment in which refugees sought and used information; as well as "the Problem resolution" element which identified assumptions on solutions and recommendations to overcome difficulties faced by refugees and their providers in information seeking and use.

In the current study, the information use environment theory of Taylor was adopted because its elements explicitly accommodate the key components of information behaviour of individuals in different situations including refugees. The set of people element is applied to people as a group that utilise information and possess unique features that identify them (Francis 1998). In this study, although refugees are not a homogeneous group of people, they uniquely live in settlements as a result of conflict in their home countries and have unique features from other groups of people. This group of people is expected to involve or engage themselves in information seeking and use to meet their need. It is opined that the characteristics and features of these people affect the information flow in their information use environment thereby influencing their information behaviour (Francis 1998; Khan 2018; Rutter et al. 2019). The kind of problem element denotes the problematic events, situations, and issues that people experience and must overcome through information access and use (Hersberger et al. 2006; Rutter et al. 2019). Refugees are exposed to a series of problematic events and situations that require information. This theory also puts into consideration the context and setting of information seeking, generation, acquisition, evaluation, dissemination and use (Kazmer et al. 2013). The setting element of this theory emphasises that the physical, institutional, or social setting in which people are affects their information behaviour (Francis, 1998; Hersberger et al. 2006; Kazmer et al. 2013; Olatokun & Ajagbe 2010). Setting is the

physical context within which people live and work and influences their information seeking behaviour (Dankasa 2015; Hersberger et al. 2006; Olatokun & Ajagbe 2010). Settings can include people's homes, community gathering, care facilities, religious centres (Kazmer et al. 2013). Refugees' settings may include the settlements in which they live, their homes, neighbourhoods and community spaces which have a bearing on their information behaviour. The problem resolution element is applied to how people in a setting solve identified information challenges and problems and how the approaches to problem solving influences people's seeking and use.

Taylor's information use environment theory has been applied to different groups of people, settings and contexts in different studies. Such studies include the use of the IUE theory on catholic clergy in Nigeria by Dankasa (2015), children in English primary schools by Rutter et al (2019), agriculturalists in Trinidad and Tobago by Francis (1998), abused and neglected children by Hersberger et al (2006), traditional medical practitioners by Olatokun and Ajagbe (2010) as well as African-American dementia caregivers by Kazmer et al (2013). It is therefore important to apply the IUE theory to refugees studies especially given the refugees' heterogeneity. As opined by Khan (2018) and Onye (2024), information use environments are crucial in information behaviour processes. Emphasis is drawn on the need for further research involving non-professional users of information while applying the IUE theory and framework (Kazmer et al. 2013; Taylor 1991). The IUE theory focusses on the user and information uses and the settings in which choices are made by users on the information deemed useful and relevant for them in given times (Hersberger, Murray & Sokoloff 2006; Kazmer et al. 2013; Rutter, Clough & Toms 2019; Taylor, 1991). Refugees in their different environment and setting explicitly fit in the IUE theory as a way to understand their preferences for information available to them and how they behave in pursuit for this information.

2.3 Overview of information behaviour

Information behaviour depicts how different people react in different scenarios of information need. As seen in figure 1 above, information behaviour entails the elements of information needs, information seeking behaviour and information sources used. The concept involves studying or examining people in relation to their information needs, how

the seek for information, how they use information including sharing it, as well as managing it. González-Teruel, Campos-Peláez and Fortea-Cabo (2021) state that information behaviour involves a group's and or individual's experience in relation to the need, search, dissemination, use and management of information. This is highlighted by Fisher and Julien (2009) who note that information behaviour concentrates on information needs of people, their seeking, managing, giving, and using information whether passively or purposefully in their daily lives.

Several scholars have built on the field of human information behaviour suggesting different models that guide and describe the area. As an area of study and research, information behaviour is and has been of concern to different stakeholders in library information materials utilization over the years prompting researchers' focus on the relationship between people and information resources and systems. Gorichanaz and Venkatagiri (2022) emphasise this when they argue that information behaviour is an area of research in the provision of library services which developed as a result of research in library offerings early in the 1900s. Soheili, Khasseh, Chelak, and Tavakolizadeh-Ravari (2018) note that the history of Information behaviour which is an element of information science and library study dates over five decades back. Reading from these scholars, it can be seen that Information behaviour research has existed for some good time now. Although several scholars have studied human information behaviour over the years, the field is dynamic and keeps changing as noted by Fisher and Julien (2009) that information behaviour research is expanding and maturing transcending scientist and academic studies to situation unrelated to work. This is especially as a result of technology advances and societal changes and problems prompting a study on the information behaviour of refugees especially with a focus on their satisfaction in information search and utilization.

2.4 Information needs of refugees

Comprehending information needs and information behaviour, despite its intricacies, is important for offering dynamic services and is essential for successful information services (Tahir, Mahmood & Shafique 2008; Fourie & Bakker 2009). As illustrated in figure 2, the information needs facet makes a central part of information behaviour of any group

of people. Therefore, knowing refugees' information needs is important to ensure effective information services to them.

2.4.1 Information needs determinants

Oduntan (2017) notes that the circumstances in which refugees find themselves defines their circumstantial need and eventually their information needs. This is further emphasised by Oduntan and Ruthven (2020) who argue that situations have an influence on refugees information needs and sources. It is as such necessary to always comprehend the situation of the information need that resulted into information seeking by an individual or group (Agarwal 2017).

Context is another important determinant of information needs. Yeon and Lee (2021) note that the context, time, and space within which the information needs appear are important determinants for information needs of refugees. This can be drawn from Wilson (2000) who opined that an information need's occurrence is influenced by the context. Therefore, the situations and circumstances in which the refugees find themselves largely influences the nature of their information needs. In line with context, Hassan and Wolfram (2020) opine that being part of a new environment as well as psychological and physical state of a person are determinants of information needs and information seeking.

Abood et al. (2023) note that refugees' information needs may be determined by several factors including age, country of origin, gender, traditions and culture, mental health, as well displacement and re-migration experiences of the refugees. The stages in settlement for the refugee have also been identified by Beretta, Sayyad Abdi and Bruce (2018), Martzoukou and Burnett (2018) and Oduntan (2018) as important in determining refugees' information needs as the stages offer a framework that helps in understanding the evolution of refugees' information needs. Notably, new refugees would most likely have different information needs from those that have been in that status for quite longer periods. Information often given to refugees in their initial stages of refugee status is more individualised or based on individual situation (Beretta, Sayyad Abdi & Bruce 2018) than information given to refugees that have stayed in that status for longer periods. Refugees' information needs often vary for each refugee. This is especially so because refugees are

often not a homogeneous group, but rather characterised by individual based information needs (Ruokolainen 2022).

2.4.2 Specific information needs of refugees

No matter how familiar one is in a profession or field, one requires a range of information to succeed in this current era (Tahir, Mahmood & Shafique 2008; Abdullahi, Igbinovia & Solanke 2015). Therefore, everyone in their different capacities have information needs. As a medical doctor needs right and accurate information to be able to provide the right diagnosis and or treatment, refugees need the right information to enable them make informed decisions about their plight. It is pointed out in Le Louvier and Innocenti (2022) that starting a new life and settling as a refugee is a tough course which always encompasses dealing with several challenges like steering through difficult administrative processes, economic and social difficulties and therefore presents several information needs. Refugees' information needs vary and may involve an array of viewpoints.

Refugees request for news, and information on how to access basic services especially food, water and shelter as well as information about their situation in camps in general (Di Giovanni *et al.* 2013; Quintanilla 2012). In a study conducted on Syrian refugees, Mansour (2018) has opined that the prioritised information needs for these refugees was the desire for awareness on their home country situation, information about services offered for their children, information about shelter, information about aid in general, and obligations and rights associated to their refugee status. Refugees needed information about getting work in their host country.

Furthermore, a study by Yeon and Lee (2021) shows that the information on career, vocational education and job posting were the common information needs among refugees of North Korea. They further note that the most common information needs involved important daily life information on education, health, their homelands' state of affairs and legal processes for gaining refugee status. In their study on refugees from North Korea, information needs included information on how to pick up the language, culture and norms of new a society, information on finances and jobs as well as information on how to realise a level of belonging in a new society(Koo 2016). Beretta,

Sayyad Abdi and Bruce (2018) identify employment, housing, health and education as ways in which refugees identify their information needs. Salzano, Hall, Webster and Brazier (2022) add that information needs of refugees are often discussed in respect to Language, education, literacy and health. Oduntan and Ruthven (2021), as well, establish that information needs of refugees are related to legal, health, housing, employment, social, and educational needs. Lloyd and Wilkinson (2019) in their study with youth refugees, established that the refugee youth had information needs on moral, faith and spiritual being, employment as well as cultural connections.

Additionally, in a study carried out among African refugees in the United States, Hassan and Wolfram (2020) identified several information needs of refugees including living circumstances, employment, housing, transportation, schools, English language, insurance and financial information needs, social security number, the legal system of America as well as religious institutions to meet spiritual desires. Specific information needs for women, according to Nekesa Akullo and Odong (2017), involve the desire for information on health, domestic violence, gender persecution, employment, claims on asylum, welfare benefits and sexual health. In their study on Syrian refugees, Martzoukou and Burnett (2018) established that refugees sought information on how to learn English, information on domestic matters and health such as getting access to health services as well as comprehending elementary domestic matters for management so as to meet their wellbeing, health and engagement in the new community.

In line with information needs on health, Mårtensson, Lytsy, Westerling and Wångdahlu (2020) show that refugees sought information on how to realise reliable information on health such as where to go for it and how to evaluate its reliability based on sources used. They further opine that refugees sought information regarding dealing with signs and symptoms of disease, test results, screening as well as other medical examination forms, prevention of sickness, where to get health help and ways of continuing and navigating the health delivery structure if required. In their study on Ukrainian refugees in Germany, Rolke, Walter, Weckbecker, Münster and Tillmann (2024) noted that refugees in Germany had needs for health information on insurance for health in Germany and what it covered access to medication, how to navigate the health system and communication on the need

of interpreters and how to cover medical costs, location of interpreters, how to find doctors, securing medical arrangements or appointments. In terms of health, Zimmerman and Beam (2020) found that refugees sought information on general health, health care structure navigation, dental care, reproductive health, nutrition, child health and illnesses. Health information needs appeared more common in the literature as is information need on second language acquisition. Refugees possess several information needs given their situational circumstances which necessitates a concerted effort from different players including humanitarian agencies, governments, information providers to help ease their lives. However, the literature seems to suggest a broad picture of the information needs of refugees especially in regard to life's spheres of legal, economic, sociological, technological, and other dimensions of refugees' information needs without major focus on what comprises information needs within each sphere which this study expounded on. The literature is also scarce on the information needs of refugees in Africa, especially Uganda in general.

2.5 Sources of information for refugees

Information seeking, which is a very important element of information behaviour greatly influences the way people navigate and utilise information. There exists a large source base of information in this era. Gaining access and using appropriate information enables refugees to have a good understanding of their current environment, relate and participate in its cultural, economic, social and political dimensions (Beretta, Sayyad Abdi & Bruce 2018). Refugees seeking information often come in contact with information through interface with persons directly or indirectly using social interfaces available (Oduntan & Ruthven 2021) to them. They use different sources of information to try to navigate their ways through different situations.

Quintanilla (2012) states that having good knowledge and or understanding of the local ecology of information are essential for multi-channel approaches involving local media use as well as channels of non-mass communication like using community volunteers, traditional channels like religious leaders or mobile technology and social media. It is reported in studies carried out by Yeon and Lee (2021) and Oduntan and Ruthven (2021) that interpersonal sources, the internet and institution of public nature like religious

centres, councils for refugees, schools, charity organisations, detention centres and community centres as well as leisure centres were common and likely information sources for refugees. As such both informal sources and formal information sources are essential aspects of the social integration of refugees in society (Martzoukou & Burnett 2018; Oduntan & Ruthven 2021; Abood *et al.* 2023) with different level of preference among the refugees.

Mansour (2018) in a study carried out among refugees from Syria exiled in Egypt noted that they opted for informal sources of information as opposed to formal sources to meet their everyday information needs. Similarly, Beretta, Sayyad Abdi and Bruce (2018) note that refugees favour social networks such as friends and families as their sources for information as well as the internet. With a high dependence on digital information on forums, internet access and access to a smart phone significantly advances the chances of a refugee meeting their information needs (Internews & UNHCR 2023). Friends and families as seen in the literature are common informal sources of information for refugees in which some of the informal information sources are viewed as a result of relationships built during integration journeys of refugees and often involved family and friends (Hassan & Wolfram 2020; Oduntan & Ruthven 2021). Basing on relations built during integration, refugees in early settlements stages according to Lloyd (2013) often get information from immigrants that settled earlier as they adapt to the landscape of information their host countries. Most refugees from Syria, for instance, reported that they communicated verbally with family and friends and this study revealed that this was the most prominent informal information source they used (Mansour 2018). Indeed Bailey, Hannides and Kaoukji (2016) note that friends, relatives, internet when available as well as refugee smugglers were major sources of information for refugees seeking asylum to Greece. Additionally, personal pages for instance for Syrian refugees were created on Social media platforms like Facebook (Mansour 2018). Information from colleagues and friends who were able to move around places (Nekesa Akullo & Odong 2017) were as well identified as sources of information for women refugees in Uganda. Cultural landscapes offer avenues for information searching, finding, accessing, using and sharing among refugees through socialization with community members partaking in their social, religious and cultural beliefs (Khan & Eskola 2020).

Refugees use several technologies for communication purpose with others, especially mobile phones, computers and the internet. Television, Internet, and mobile phones are common sources of information (Quintanilla 2012; Mansour 2018) for refugee with television as the most trusted yet Police inside the camps is regarded as untrusted source of information (Quintanilla 2012). Bailey, Hannides and Kaoukji (2016) suggest that refugee camps ought to be connected with internet to enable refugees gain access to information and as well communicate with friends and family. A smartphone with internet access is an important device for refugees since it offers access to an array of news and information resources (Martzoukou & Burnett 2018). ICT use and social media helps refugees with a window for sharing and learning across cultures which subdues the differences in culture as well as help them overcome emotions attached to refugee constraints (Berg 2022). IRC (2017) contends that Facebook, blogs and websites are adopted by the International Rescue Committee (IRC) to provide information for refugees depending and basing on the context and event. According to Kosciejew (2019), ICTs and public libraries are critical in the lives of refugees as they support refugees in awareness of their information right, building social trust, facilitate their adaption and comprehension of information terrains and as well as help them in settling in their new societies.

Official sources of information, according to Oduntan and Ruthven (2021), came as a result of support and professional workers' "social intercourse". Sources from government, relevant ministries including international cooperation, interior or internal affairs, foreign affairs, social solidarity ministry as well as public action bodies whether internal or foreign seemed very crucial for Syrian refugees in Egypt in information seeking and use (Mansour 2018). Similarly, local authorities, refugees organisations, television and radio were common sources of information even though the information on radio and TV seemed not specific for refugees and as well in English and Luganda languages that others couldn't understand (Nekesa Akullo & Odong 2017). Interpreters, solicitors, caseworkers, teachers, and social workers, were the support workers provided in host countries for refugees' integration and were major formal sources of information for refugees (Oduntan & Ruthven 2021). Social services providers are also sources of

information for refugees and according to Abood *et al.* (2023), they often employ “word of mouth” approach in disseminating information to meet the refugees’ information needs. In their study on refugees’ access to family planning in North western Uganda, Achola, Atuyambe, Nabiwemba, Fredrick and Orach (2024) opined that the chief information sources for refugees on family planning services were health practitioners. Similarly, charity workers and volunteers boost refugees in society integration and in their information quest (Hassan & Wolfram 2020; Ruokolainen 2022). In their study, Hassan and Wolfram (2020) opine that refugees used libraries as well in their search for information in addition to employees in hospitals, school teachers, and personnel workers.

Several sources of information exist for refugees . Notably, trust in information sources influences the nature of information sources used by the refugees and as stated by Mårtensson, Lytsy, Westerling and Wångdahlu (2020), individuals may find it difficult to know a reliable information source so as to determine what source to rely on and what source not to be relied upon. For instance, Yeon and Lee (2021) show that some refugees would not use information from public institutions as they lacked comfort and trust in the employees of such public institutions. Although several sources of information exist for refugees to tap, it is important to note that their relevance may be up for questioning by the refugees and providers.

As noted by Ruokolainen (2022) the relevance of information and or sources of information for refugees is not guaranteed. It is indeed worth noting as cited in the body of literature that informal sources play a very critical part in the information behaviour of refugees at their different levels from departure from their home countries to processing and integration into communities in their host countries. The literature broadly explores sources of information for refugees. However, there is a dearth of literature about sources of information for refugees in the African context with particular reference to Uganda. The categorization of information sources for refugees in the literature is blur with some studies presenting formal and informal sources as the common categories. It is imperative that such categorization for information sources is explored more which this current study discusses. As such, the nature of information sources for refugees in North western Uganda were explored and their level of trust and suitability of use determined. Answering

questions on when informal and formal sources are desired among the refugees of North Western Uganda was important.

2.6 Information seeking behaviour of refugees

It has been pointed out in Yeon and Lee (2021) that five accessibility grounds and or levels on which information seeking can be measured and monitored exist including societal accessibility where suitable information sources are made available society wide; institutional accessibility where agencies providing services should have the willingness and ability to offer essential information; physical accessibility where there should exist the capability of physical contact made with information sources; psychological accessibility concerned with hardships in utilizing sources of information owing to psychological distress or refusal of seeking information itself; and the intellectual accessibility where knowledge to attain information by individuals is crucial and that if any of the accessibilities is affected, then there will be a barrier in the seeking of information.

Wilson (2000) sees information seeking behaviour as the goal-directed looking for information as a result of a desire to meet goals. In the process of looking for information, the person may use manual systems like libraries and periodicals or with Information Technology (IT) systems like the World Wide Web. Information seeking according to Case, Andrews, Johnson and Allard (2005) helps to reduce uncertainty but also guards against emotional stress. Refugees' access to information through seeking can improve their uncertainty and emotional stress. According to Wilson (2000a) and Yusuf (2012) several factors influence information needs and use including the characteristics of the user, the available information sources, purpose of the information, economic, socio-political and legal systems surrounding the users. Abood et al. (2023) also note that language proficiencies, writing, reading and numeracy skills are key determinants for refugees' success in acquiring information and as well uncertainties and ambiguities motivate information seeking(Case 2010).

A number of studies like Carey, McKechnie and McKenzie (2001), Huotari and Chatman (2001), Savolainen (2005), Agosto and Hughes-Hassell (2005), Savolainen (2010), Martzoukou and Burnett (2018) and Shuva (2018) have been conducted on the everyday

life way of looking for information as a different direction to the often researched field of information seeking behaviour in education and work to establish how individuals navigate the information landscape in their daily dealings away from workplaces, education and libraries to social groups that are often excluded (Le Louvier & Innocenti 2022) because of their incapability to partake fully in the daily life issues like education, employment, and health which can lead to social elimination of such groups like new refugees according to Bronstein (2019) and Kainat, Eskola and Widén (2022). The everyday information seeking behaviour of refugees according to Mansour (2018) was about meeting daily basic needs with a preference for informal sources.

The manner and way in which an individual gathers information for development, personal use and the updating of knowledge as stated in Abdullahi, Solanke and Igbinovia (2015) is what constitutes information seeking behaviour. According to Wilson (2006) in his model of information behaviour, information seeking is an element of information behaviour and involves demands on information systems as well as demands on other information sources. He further points out that the different search strategies adopted in searching for information make up Information seeking behaviour and as noted by Hurdeman, Wilson and Kamps (2016), it involves seeking or searching for information by interacting with sources of information and their retrieval systems. Carol Kuhlthau also describes information seeking with the grounds of uncertainty at decreasing and increasing levels as the seeker relates with information sources (Case 2010) in which seeker's uncertainty will decrease as they gain access to information thereby driving learning and problem solving (Hassan and Wolfram 2020).

Approaches to information seeking

Information seeking behaviour can be either active or passive (Wilson 2000; Fisher & Julien, 2009; Yeon & Lee 2021) in which active seeking involves seekers with clear information needs intentionally seeking for information to fill the information gap while passive seeking involves the unintended information acquisition with no clear information needs (Yeon & Lee 2021). Seeking information passively is often as a result of absence of mental discomfort. When individuals feel comfortable and unbothered with an issue, their seeking is often passive as opposed to when there is a need to restore comfort and

normality which results in active information seeking (Savolainen 2010). For instance, seekers might be looking for something different and they unintentionally land on information that might be of relevance to them (Gilbert, White & Tallman 2022).

Namuleme (2015) in her study on HIV/AIDS-related stigma and information behaviour in the UK, pointed out that information is sometimes sought and used covertly for the fear of Stigma. Refugees as a disadvantaged group are likely to possess different modes of information seeking. As pointed out by Muhambe (2018), the behaviour of using information involves mental and physical acts of fitting the found information into the existing knowledge base of a person. People seek information by directly engaging information providers such as midwives, nurses, or pharmacist for information pertaining to their health. Others browse websites dedicated by organizations as well as search engines in their pursuit of information (Kostagiolas, Platis, Belitsas, Psomiadi & Niakas 2024). It is seen in Abdullahi et al (2015) as well as Humbhi and Tareen (2022) that students seek information by directly browsing internet websites, browsing library shelves, library catalogues and indexes for their education and research information resources. For student in schools, engaging in seminars, discussions in class, participating in conferences and workshop depict active information seeking behaviour (Jan & Khan 2022). In a study on information-seeking within Negative Affect among North Korean Refugees' everyday information practices within Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), Koo (2016) opines that refugees sought information both passively and actively. It is seen in the study that refugees with high PTSD often sought information passively as compared to those that had low PTSD who sought information actively. Refugees passively came across information by listening to advertisements. Refugees actively sought information by directly engaging interpersonal networks including talking to fellow refugees, browsing internet sites and local newspapers. This therefore implies that the mental state of refugees influences their information seeking behaviour.

During information seeking, an element of information avoidance is visible in the literature where seekers tend to avoid some information. Sweeny, Melnyk, Miller, and Shepperd (2010) argue that information avoidance involves behaviour patterns aimed at delaying or preventing acquisition and attainment of information deemed unwanted although available. Similarly, Kainat, Ghorbanian Zolbin, Widén, and Nikou (2021) note that

information avoidance involves situations in which people disregard certain information on purpose so as to save energy, time and as well minimise stress. Information avoidance may involve requesting to conceal information, practically leaving a place to evade getting across information or basically not taking relevant steps towards getting access to information (Agarwal 2017). Garinther, Mayorga, Västfjäll, and Slovic (2021) opine that information avoidance can either be active or passive where passive information avoidance involves neglecting information seeking on undesirable topic while active avoidance involves behaviour patterns such as switching off television due to undesirable topics. Information avoidance according to Sweeny et al (2010) is as a result of information being odd to someone's present beliefs, information that may result in unwanted actions and as well information that may result in emotional experiences that are negative. Golman, Hagmann, and Loewenstein (2017) also opine that information avoidance happens where there is a deliberate reason for it as well as where people's beliefs affect the utilization of certain information. In the current era, where active connectivity amongst people by means of social media, messaging apps and smartphones is common, manifestations of information avoidance are seen among people by way of not responding to phone calls, messages or delayed feedback (Agarwal 2017). Koo (2016), in a study on refugees in North Korea, has opined that refugees especially those suffering from Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) disregarded information needs and gave up on seeking information. The refugees avoided information due to their information illiteracy while some avoided information because of the negative emotions attached to the effect of information on their penurious information environment.

As seen in the literature, information seeking behaviour is often discussed in the broad sense including the identification and utilization of information sources. The literature deals more with the "where" question as opposed to the "How" question in terms of meeting information needs. There is little information in the literature that addresses the actual behaviour involved in finding information sources. These may include concepts around individual, collaborative or group activity in finding sources as well as overt versus covert means of seeking.

Although information sources have a strong and direct link to information seeking behaviour, most studies on information seeking behaviour of refugees do not explore the behaviour adopted in engaging information sources whether passively or actively. Indeed, some studies have tried to explore the ways in which people seek information but most studies fail to explicitly demonstrate the information seeking behaviour adopted by refugees in engaging information sources. This current study picks from these gaps to explore in detail the ways in which refugees of North Western Uganda engage with information sources. This study sought to establish the North Western Uganda refugees' information behaviour which comprises refugees' behaviour in finding and using information. The question of how the refugees find information sources is explored.

2.7 Information use behaviour of refugees

Information use denotes all the activities involved in utilising information and illustrates why and how people engage with information (Greifeneder & Schlebbe 2022). In a study about refugees' use of public libraries in Lisbon, Serra and Revez (2024) opine that refugees use information found in libraries to improve their ICT skills, develop second languages as well as information literacy. The authors further opine that refugees use information found in public libraries to help them build social relationships in the new environment. As they sought information, they used the information they found in seeking jobs and housing. Refugees used information on language acquisition to learn the language in the new country and used it to communicate effectively whenever possible (Martzoukou 2021). Students use information sought for examination preparation, meet and address difficulties at hand, find entertainments as well as finishing tasks and assignments (Hashmi et al. 2014; Humbhi & Tareen 2022; Tella, Bode-Obanla & Sulyman 2020). Refugees use the information they seek to support their integration efforts in the new communities by addressing integration aspects around employments, health, education, housing and comprehending rights and community connections (Lloyd 2017).

In their study on whether ICTs support self-reliance for refugees in Kuala Lumpur and Penang, Malaysia, Martin-Shields and Munir-Asen (2024) noted that refugees shared information about employers amongst themselves to support those that were looking for jobs and also help them minimise the exploitation risk. In their study, it is seen that

refugees shared information on many aspects including experiences with non-paying employers that did not pay them for the work tasks they had finished as well as the use of ICTs in their day businesses such as marketing their products and merchandise. In a study on social media information use in migration decision-making, Dekker, Engbersen, Klaver and Vonk (2018) opine that Syrian asylum seekers used the information shared on social media especially Facebook to understand and as well validate the asylum-seeking journey. Probable asylum seekers would use the information on face book to seek for clarity and validation form refugees and migrants already living in the Netherlands. Refugees used the number of comments conveying the same message as a way of establishing truthfulness of messages. Information form one sources was compared with information from other sources to establish its correctness. According to Mansour (2018), Syrian refugees shared information with other on issues of mutual interest using their personal social media created pages which pages were checked by people interested in Syrian refugee issues as well as other refugees in the world. It is further opined by Martin-Shields and Munir-Asen (2024) that refugees use the information they access to achieve language acquisition which is regarded key in attaining self-reliance. In a study on Understanding Refugee Experiences and Gender Dynamics in Uganda, Mathie (2024) highlights that refugees used information they accessed for legal assistance especially when confronted with legal battles with police.

In a study on bridging distance in refugees' social support networks, Heidinger (2024) notes that refugees use the information found to address healthcare, employment, education, and housing challenges. Refugees used the information to penetrate labour markets on their arrival in a new country. It is further opined that refugees shared information they came across amongst themselves as a means of reducing loneliness and discovering a sense of belonging through social support. It is noted that sharing information enables refugees to feel comfortable getting support from each other and also ease post-migration stress. Refugees use information to respond to climate changes and as well ensure their food security. Refugees use information they get about their home countries to feel closer to home (Casswell 2019).

Although information use is seen and depicted in some studies in form of information sharing and using the sought information for particular purposes, there is a paucity of information on refugees information use behaviour in the literature. There seems to be little literature on the aspect of information use by refugees especially in answering the how question of using information. There are limited in-depth studies that go beyond information seeking to address the information use modalities by refugees which this current study explored.

2.8 Difficulties faced by refugees in their quest for information

Navigating the information landscape is not a flat smooth terrain, but one that is open with bumps, and ditches that make the navigation difficult among all groups and categories of users regardless of location. The bumpiness is more when it comes to groups of people in difficult situation and circumstances like refugees. Studies that have been carried out among refugees have identified several difficulties that refugees encounter in their quest for information.

According to Quintanilla (2012) in a study carried out among refugees in Zaatari camp in Jordan, refugees complained of the absence of electricity, clean water, quality food and the unawareness of times for distribution as well as lack of knowledge on how to access new shelter and medical services. They indicate a lack of information to facilitate their access to social services and according to Mansour (2018) the situation is further complicated as refugees may be unable to clearly describe the kind of information they need. Hassan and Wolfram (2020) also indicate that refugees sometimes had to struggle to gain access to information and sometimes they lacked knowledge of what exactly they were searching for and often found a hard time explaining and articulating exactly what their need were using the correct words even when the refugees believed they understood what exactly they needed. Di Giovanni *et al.* (2013), and Martzoukou and Burnett (2018) have also noted that refugees experienced a dearth of timely, accurate, regular, and actionable information for their protection, decision making and survival. Time deficit and inadequate resources access encumber their information seeking (Flynn & McGuinness 2011). Steering through racial barriers and the American negative view of Africans involving discrimination on racial grounds are huddle faced by African refugees in the

United States (Hassan & Wolfram 2020).

The lack of adequate language and literacy skills to comprehend local systems was a major difficult that faced women refugees in Sweden according to Kainat, Eskola and Widén (2022). The authors have further noted that the women refugees in Sweden lacked information on the culture of local health which hindered their access to refugees' essential services like healthcare services. Language is identified over as one of the most common issues in the refugees' access to information. Similarly, Abood *et al.* (2023) note that the lack of proficiency in the languages of the host country is an accessing, seeking and using barrier to available Information and services and is constantly being seen as a negative factor affecting all settlement aspects. The challenge of language according to Mårtensson *et al.* (2020) is even made worse by the poor skill and abilities of language interpreters and translators which affects refugees' comprehension of the information landscape.

Refugees, according to Yeon and Lee (2021) and Shuva (2018), lack good IT and language skills that are essential in seeking information. They also do not have information literacy especially so, as they experience difficulties enunciating their information needs or determining sources of information. Refugees suffer from information illiteracy, digital and computer illiteracy which as a result of unfamiliarity with the IT and computer-based provision of information, confines their capability to comprehend and improve their time in responding (Lloyd *et al.* 2013; Hicks & Lloyd 2016; Beretta, Sayyad Abdi & Bruce 2018). Hassan and Wolfram (2020) have also noted that African refugees in the United States encountered and found difficulties in expressing their language, largely with the accent of American English.

In his study among Syrian refugees, Obodoruku (2019) notes that refugees lacked the essential educational and information needs for their own wellbeing. He also highlights the absence of information access as well as access to the UNHCR offices as a result of inflexible boundaries posed on accessing the office. The refugees, as such, felt a deprivation to access freely, information so as to be up to date with existing information and as well discover information types that would be useful to their plight and is available

with UNHCR. The absence of suitable sources of information and networks, information overload and problems in knowing the new culture of communication were some of the challenges refugees encountered according to Le Louvier and Innocenti (2022) in a study conducted about approaches in integration of refugees and asylum seekers as well as Abood *et al.* (2023) in a study on the role of information acquisition to settlement services literacy for humanitarian migrants in Australia. A lot of information provided often overburdened and confused the refugees (Kainat, Eskola & Widén 2022). This is further emphasised by Oduntan (2017) who opines that the absence of information is not the problem facing refugees but rather the inappropriateness and inadequacy of information resulting in unmet information needs.

Psychological difficulties have also been presented as affecting information quest and behaviour of refugees. Yeon and Lee (2021) explain that refugees may end up abandoning some information sources or even refuse to seek for information as a result of psychological issues like discomfort or reluctance. Refugees had trust issue which hindered their access to information and as well had cultural beliefs that greatly affected them in their seeking of information (Beretta, Sayyad Abdi & Bruce 2018; Kainat, Eskola & Widén 2022). Refugees are also challenged with misinformation, an issue affecting both host and refugee populations. Its propagated, especially, by community members and other players that want to take advantage of the disadvantaged group specifically in providing information on sources of funds for response, distribution of aid and refugee status (Internews & UNHCR 2023).

Refugees in Uganda encounter inadequate access to official information that is necessary in setting up and formalising businesses which leaves refugees to depend on word-of-mouth information which in turn results in hesitation and confusion of refugees as they try to participate in formal business ventures. They grapple with information which is inaccurate leaving some refugees open to exploitation (ULEARN 2023). A report by Mathie (2024) on refugees inclusive protection in Uganda shows that refugees often expressed a dearth of information about laws relating to employment which compounded the hurdles of navigating and steering through the employment terrain. Refugees in Uganda are faced with inadequate knowledge to support their navigation of health

systems at the local level (Young, Kennedy, Dam, Nakyanjo, Ddaaki, Kiyingi, Mukwana, Edwards, Nalugoda, Chang, Wawer & Oaks 2023). Refugees in Uganda are also affected by limited access to information. In their study on refugees' access to family planning in North western Uganda, Achola et al. (2024) intimated that refugees' access to family planning services was hindered by limited access and availability of information. Urban refugees in Uganda lacked linguistically and culturally available information, something which exacerbated their inequalities, exclusion, and exposure to risks (Sseviiri, Alencar & Kisira 2022).

Several studies identify the difficulties refugees go through in their information behaviour with language barrier, both computer and information illiteracy, mistrust, lack of support, information overload, financial constraints, psychological barriers prominently appearing. If there is inadequate access to information as a result of impediments met in the course of the way, refugees' full involvement in a country's dimensions and opportunities are reduced yet less involvement brings higher chances of poverty and marginalization (Beretta, Sayyad Abdi & Bruce 2018). However, there is a need to expand on these difficulties especially with understanding the psychological, technological, and sociological difficulties experienced by the refugees in North Western Uganda in their navigation of the information land scape.

2.8.1 Overcoming difficulties faced by refugees in the quest for information

Since there are impediments in the different exploits of human life, suggestions on how to overcome them are always suggested. Information behaviour difficulties as well have received mentions and actions that can be fireplaces in the winter cold. This section presents literature on how difficulties faced by refugees in the quest for information are overcome.

In their study about Syrian refugees, Martzoukou and Burnett (2018) have recommended interventions of public service that can help Syrian refugees to overcome the first line barriers specifically health literacy and English language so as to have then settle and integrate in communities successfully. They further suggest that refugees' cultural and socio differences ought to be understood in order to achieve continuous social

convergence in the host nations. Literature shows that this intervention would address language issues affecting refugees and as well facilitate integration that eases community participation and sharing.

Relatedly, Mansour (2018) emphasises that refugees ought to be building community and ethnic belonging feelings as they live with family members that are supportive. Because of the language difficulties experience by refugees and service providers, suggestions for allocating more time to the refugees during contact with service providers is highlighted (Mårtensson *et al.* 2020) as well as refugees relying on their experienced counterparts with longer lives as refugees to help with local knowledge and content interpretation connected to life in a particular environment (Hicks & Lloyd 2016). They further suggest the need for refugees to change their seeking behaviour for information and as such adopt online information source other than analogue. In their study, Lloyd *et al.* (2013) point out that Information should be offered in different formats and that service providers in some instances apply visual sources as an important dissemination source to mitigate against language complications.

Quintanilla (2012), on difficulties encountered by Jordanian refugees, suggests that Community mobilisers ought to be positioned at reception of refugee bodies and camps to attend to refugees as they start on a journey in a new environment so as to ensure that refugees' information needs are addressed. Similarly, Di Giovanni *et al.* (2013) highlights the role played by "Information stewards" that he noted comprised social workers and community mobilisers that need to be placed at centres of registration for refugees, receptions, as well as any other key place or location that concern critical response to refugees' information needs. The role of the social worker goes beyond offering real-world answers to problems but guaranteeing the custody of information resources and materials meant for special needs consumers and as such social workers ought to be equipped to carry out these roles and functions (Oduntan & Ruthven 2021). Di Giovanni *et al.* (2013) further recommended extensive refugees' assessments for information needs within populaces of refugees so as to understand the information and media research landscape. Additionally, making sure and being certain that information resources are made accessible in formats that the community or refugee populace can use is very

critical (Abood *et al.* 2023).

Information literacy plans which address basic skills in computer and thereby help refugees access internet-based information and resources can be offered by public libraries (Yeon & Lee 2021). This is because public libraries can offer valuable information sources lists as well as training on specific methods of search and provide spaces where to use computers and IT equipment. According to Mansour (2018), appropriate approaches that allow the application of commonly used and traditional channels of disseminating information ought to be planned and designed. He further suggests that refugees' information needs awareness should be exploited by conduction awareness campaigns which allow refugees to see and value the importance and role of information in their lives as refugees whether during the course of their journeys and travel to host countries or with stability and integration in their host countries.

Although different suggestions to overcome difficulties in information engagements are discussed, they are largely pointed to the effort of the provider. What are the refugees'-based initiatives to overcome the huddles in this information landscape that they can control? As well, the question on whether refugees in North Western Uganda had access to public libraries was explored.

2.9 Research methods and methodology

Several studies have been conducted among vulnerable communities while adopting different methodological approaches. In the study on North Korean refugees information seeking behaviour, Koo (2016) adopted a mixed methods approach. Similarly, Johnston et al (2024) in their study on the role of public libraries for Ukrainian refugees adopted a mixed methods approach. In a study by Mansour (2018) among Syrian refugees on profiling their behaviour and information needs, a qualitative research approach was espoused for the study using snow ball sampling for FGDs so as to study the phenomenon profoundly. Similarly, Berg (2022) in a study about the use of media among women refugees adopted the use of open-ended and semi-structured interviews. Yeon and Lee (2021) espoused a qualitative approach to their study on North Korean refugees' education information behaviour using semi structured interviews. In another study by

Martzoukou and Burnett 2018) on everyday life Syrian refugees' information needs and barriers, an exploratory design applying a qualitative approach was used in the study adopting face to face interviews. Hassan and Wolfram (2020) in their study on African refugee's information needs and seeking behaviour, opine that qualitative research approach favours interviewing and observation techniques. Khan and Eskola (2020) adopted Sem structured interviews, participatory observation as well as informal discussions. It is seen in the literature that studies on refugees' information behaviour have adopted a qualitative approach using observation, individual interviews and FGDs.

2.10 Chapter summary

This chapter has presented a discussion of reviewed literature on the topic of the study information behaviour of refugees in North western Uganda. This chapter started by presenting the role of literature review. It went ahead to provide an overview of information behaviour, the map of literature review and the elements of the topic that were reviewed including an overview of Information behaviour, information needs of refugees, sources of information for refugees, information seeking and use behaviour of refugees, difficulties faced by refugees in their quest for information and overcoming difficulties faced by refugees in the quest for information. The review considered studies conducted in refugee environments, both in the aspects of information seeking behaviour of refugees as well as everyday life refugees' environments to establish gaps for emphasis in the current study. The literature portrays a number of theories and models presented to espouse information behaviour in all its elements. It can be seen in the literature that most of the theories and models focus more on information seeking as an aspect of information behaviour rather than general information behaviour processes. Although several models have been developed to depict the information behaviour of people in different professions and field or context, there is a dearth in the literature on a model that depicts the information behaviour of refugees.

The literature provides a wide coverage of information needs of refugees in different contexts. The information needs range from everyday life information needs to other information needs that may not depict an everyday situation or context. It is however seen in the literature that information needs of refugees in Uganda is lacking. Although active

and passive information seeking practices are identified in the literature, the literature does not adequately espouse the seeking patterns and processes adopted by refugees in their quest for information. The information behaviour element of information use among refugees remains unearthed. There is little literature that expounds on the information use behaviour of refugees. As difficulties and hinderances in information behaviour are discussed in the literature, there is need to explore these difficulties from lived experience in the Ugandan context. Focusing on the different aspects of information behaviour, the review has identified several aspects about the landscape of refugees in the world with some studies on refugees in Africa particularly Egypt, as well as other places of the world including Jordan, Sweden, Syria, United Kingdom, United States, North Korea, Germany and Moldova. There exists scarce literature on information behaviour of refugees. Most studies are concerned with information needs and seeking without focus on other information behaviour elements. Based on these revelations, it is important to explore the information behaviour of refugees in settlements in Uganda. The subsequent section explains how this was done in the context of the current study.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

“Nothing has such power to broaden the mind as the ability to investigate systematically and truly all that comes under thy observation in life.”- Marcus Aurelius (Sanz López 2015:1)

3.1 Introduction

Research denotes a solutions finding process to a problem involving comprehensive study and scrutiny or breakdown of issues or phenomena (Sekaran & Bougie 2016). It involves a pursuit for knowledge (Patel & Patel 2019). Research is an ordered or organised investigation in which a suitable scientific methodology is espoused to resolve problems or issues so as to cause the generation of applicable novel knowledge (Alele & Malau-Aduli 2023; Pandey & Pandey 2021). Research as pointed out in Shah and Al-Bargi (2013), is a methodical and systematic course that explores a phenomenon, answers issues, responds to specific queries and resolves problems, which in turn support current knowledge growth. Research according to Kothari and Garg (2019) involves looking for truth by means of study, comparison, observation and experiment. It includes problem definition, hypothesis formulation, data, collection as well as organisation and data evaluation, coming up with deductions and conclusions and lastly testing findings or conclusions to establish their relationships with the formulated hypothesis.

According to Patel and Patel (2019) research methodology denotes a means through which a research problem is systematically solved by way of adopting and implementing several steps and procedures. It involves the different stages researchers adopt in investigating their research problem together with their underlying logic. It is the means by which research problems are solved systematically (Fuyane 2021; Pandey & Pandey 2021). Writing research involves a course of action that is built and developed basing on the intended direction and destiny of the researcher. This chapter discusses a sequence of elements that elucidate the research journey of the current study by giving a detailed account of how it was conducted.

The chapter expounds on the research paradigm espoused, the research approach adopted by the researcher, the research design, population and the sampling procedure adopted, methods and procedures for data collection used, the data quality considerations and tenets and data analysis procedures. The chapter also discusses the ethical standard considered. Therefore, the research strategy adopted for the information behaviour of refugees in North Western Uganda study is discussed in this chapter. The study was a basic as well as applied research as it focussed on finding solutions to the information behaviour problem of refugees in North Western Uganda as well as developing new knowledge.

Basic research involves tasking our comprehension of phenomena and developing knowledge yet applied research is about problem solving through applying specific solutions (McHugh, Baumann, Hayes, Reen, Ryan, Tiana & Whelanno 2021). This research was both basic and applied. It was also qualitative in nature. It adopted the epistemological interpretivism approach in which individuals' perception about phenomena was viewed as unique since they were seen to exist in unique realities and therefore made their own deductions as they interacted with the world they lived in (Lapan, Quartaroli & Riemer 2012).

3.2 Chapter road map and flow

The figure 7, illustrates the components and flow of this chapter and how its elements are presented. As basic research, the study creates new knowledge and as well use data collected to devise solution and strategies to the impediments (applied research) in the information behaviour of refugees in North Western Uganda. As illustrated in the figure 7, the study was qualitative in nature and guided by a phenomenological design, in which the subjective views of participants were considered and captured so as to come up with new knowledge about the phenomenon and further suggest possible interventions.

The data were collected with the help of semi structured individual interviews, group interviews and non-participatory observation approaches. The interpretivism epistemological research paradigm guided the study in determining the nature of data

collected through establishing appropriate samples cognizant of the research approach. All research activities emphasised the research ethics of establishing acceptable standards for research involving human beings with an elaborate development of ethical considerations for the study.

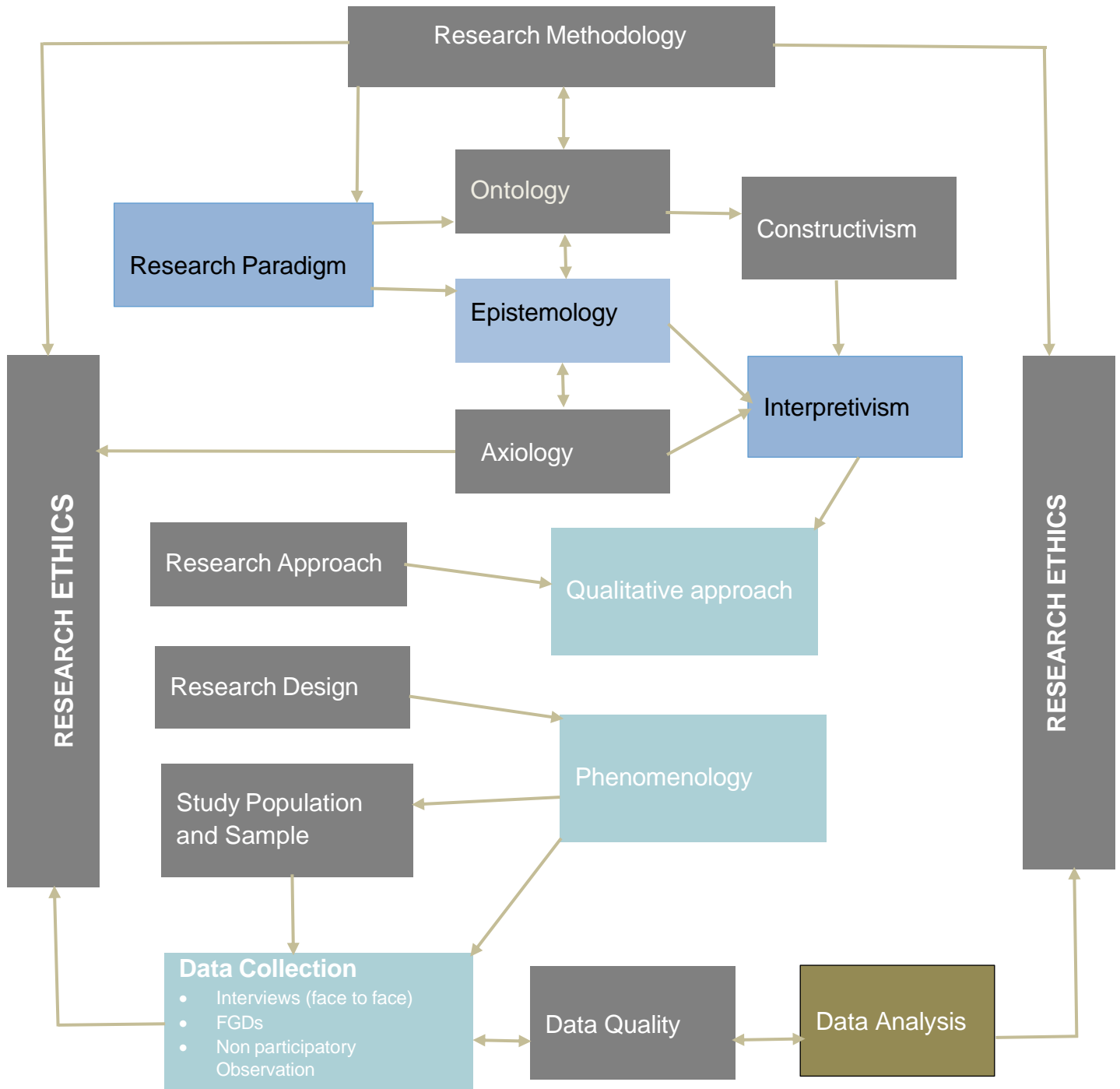


Figure 7 Chapter Three direction and flow (*Researcher 2024*)

3.3 Research paradigm

Research paradigm is an important part of research that guides researchers in their philosophical research journey. The researcher's research paradigm choice is critical and pertinent in shaping and guiding the research methodology adopted as well the study outcomes (William 2024). It is a research's hallmark whether declared by the researcher or not (Masuku 2024). First presented by Kuhn in the publication, *The Structure of Scientific Revolution*, paradigm is "an integrated cluster of substantive concepts, variables and problems attached with corresponding methodological approaches and tools" (Shah and Al-Bargi 2013:253). It is a sequency for investigation which tries to comprehend knowledge, reality and the means in which they can be achieved (Khatri 2023). A research paradigm is a series of values, theories and beliefs which guide investigation and conceptualization of knowledge (Allemang, Sitter & Dimitropoulos 2022; Creswell & Creswell 2018). It is a conceptual lens that enables a researcher to examine and scrutinise the methodological facets of research in order to establish applicable methods for the research as well as establish data analysis strategies. It is a way of comprehending the reality of the world and studying it (Kivunja & Kuyini 2017).

A research paradigm comprises the beliefs and principles which guide the way a researcher views the world, and how the researcher deduces and acts in that world. It is a straight forward and comprehensive belief system to see the research phenomena (Khatri 2020). It is a basic belief system and theoretical framework with assumptions about ontology, epistemology, methodology and methods (Rehman & Alharthi 2016:51). Ontology, epistemology, axiology and methodology together constitute a research paradigm (Aldawod & Day 2017; Alharahsheh & Pius 2020; Ngulube & Ngulube 2017). Ontology has been described to mean beliefs and underpinnings about the kind of reality. It defines what researchers believe can or exist(s) and can be or is known. It is a "philosophical study of being" whereas epistemology relates to nature, theory or form of knowledge which informs research. Axiology denotes the purpose of ethics and values in research and methodology is viewed as an element of paradigms that posits the how of knowledge acquisition (Al-Ababneh 2020; Aldawod & Day 2017; Berryman 2019; Ngulube & Ngulube 2017; Shah & Al-Bargi 2013).

Table 2: Comparison of common research paradigms

	Ontology	Epistemology	Methodology
Positivism	Objective reality	Knowledge is real and objective, obtainable via measurement and statistics (reductionism)	Surveys, experiments, statistical analysis
Interpretivism	Subjective reality	Knowledge is dependent on beliefs, values, and lived experience (constructivism)	Field studies, case studies, hermeneutics, phenomenology
Pragmatism	Objective/subjective	Knowledge is obtained by doing and acting	Mixed-methods research, action research, design science

Source: McBride, Misnikov and Draheim (2022)

The researcher has to be clear on the direction of research regarding the reality of the phenomenon under study and what methods to adopt to gain knowledge about the phenomenon following a clear research paradigm. As seen in table 2, several research paradigms do exist that guide researchers in their research journeys and pursuit and choosing a research paradigm should be done carefully since the paradigm selected steers the research. In an attempt to understand and apply paradigm to the study, the different paradigms of research are discussed in the subsequent subsections.

3.3.1 Positivist view paradigm

Positivism was promulgated by Auguste Comte a French philosopher who presented it as a set of beliefs that describe reason and observation as an approach to comprehending behaviour (Alharahsheh and Pius 2020; Rehman and Alharthi 2016; Shah and Al-Bargi, 2013). This paradigm is common in natural science in which focus is on the reality as seen in the data in a society and often leads to generalization. Its premised on the purpose of data as given without inclination to the bias interpretation by humans (Alharahsheh and Pius 2020; Belharar, Laamrani & Chakor 2023). Positivism argues that comprehension of phenomena is through true variable explanations which are not influenced by the

researcher's views and opinions (Sanchez, Bonache, Paz-Aparicio, & Oberty 2023). The positivism paradigm is dependent on objectivity of reality (Khatri 2023) and works on assumption that existence of reality is without humans and is not moderated or intervened through our senses but overseen and governed through absolute laws (Rehman & Alharthi 2016). It uses realism for its ontological bearing and positivists always endeavour to recognise the social and natural worlds as alike (Shah & Al-Bargi 2013; Rehman & Alharthi 2016). Ontologically, positivism emphasises that reality or realism and truth are autonomous and free of the spectator or researcher (Kankam, 2019).

As illustrated in table 2, from the epistemological point, positivism focusses on objectivism and dualism. The researcher often comes in to investigate a phenomenon which occurs independently of the researchers who do not disturb or affect the phenomena being observed. The researcher and the research problem exist as independent objects, with the researcher having the ability to investigate the problem or object minus influence on either party. The researchers are objective observers and often ask quantifiable research questions (Guba & Lincoln 1994; Rehman & Alharthi 2016) and also talk about validity, objectivity, bias and generalizability (Berryman 2019). Research, using the positivism paradigm, according to Kivunja and Kuyini (2017), bases on logic of deduction, hypotheses formulation, hypotheses testing, identifying and giving definitions of operational terms and concepts as well as calculations, expressions, extrapolations and mathematical equations to obtain conclusions.

3.3.2 Interpretivism research paradigm

Interpretivism paradigm came as a result of criticism of the positivism paradigm (Alharahsheh & Pius 2020). It is based on relativist ontology as well as epistemologically guided by transactional and subjective epistemology. Interpretivists hold the view that truth is discovered through language, social constructions, social interactions and shared consciousness and often design and ask questions that try to comprehend and interrogate the why and how. Interpretivists deliberate about dependability, transferability, confirmability, and credibility (Berryman 2019; Kivunja & Kuyini 2017; Rehman & Alharthi 2016). Table 3 shows that the interpretivism paradigm is based on subjective realities and that new knowledge is dependent on the values, beliefs and lived experiences of research

participants and as such adopts phenomenology.

3.3.3 Pragmatism research paradigm

This research paradigm is built on the foundations of applying and employing the finest methods to examine and explore actual problems of the world while accepting usage of numerous knowledge and data sources to respond to research queries or questions (Morgan 2014; Allemang, Sitter & Dimitropoulos 2022). Pragmatists, according to Zhu (2022), believe that dictionaries do not fix concept meanings but rather concepts are shaped by their usage during particular time periods as well as space. The researcher in a pragmatic paradigm can often achieve both subjectivity as they make reflections about a study and objectivity in collecting data and analysing it (Shannon-Baker 2016). Pragmatism is unfaithful to any one philosophical system. It allows a researcher to navigate between quantitative and qualitative data, thereby enabling an investigator to use different methodologies in the same study by adopting techniques appropriate for the phenomenon (Kankam 2019). It is a multi-strategy approach to research aimed at creating knowledge and is suitable for mixed methods (Allemang et al. 2022 & Khatri 2023). Pragmatism can be a social science philosophical research program whether quantitative, qualitative or mixed methods research is used. Pursuing pragmatism warrants probing works done by researchers as well as why researchers perform tasks in the ways in which they perform them (Morgan 2014).

3.3.4 Interpretivism paradigm and qualitative research

The current study adopted an interpretivism/constructivism research paradigm in investigating and interpreting the human information behaviour of refugees in North Western Uganda as I singled it out as the most appropriate to talk about the study problem in the research context. Interpretivism paradigm takes a naturalist, humanistic, constructivist, and anti-positivist approach in comprehending and interpreting human and social reality (Shah & Al-Bargi 2013). Interpretivist researchers oppose the positivist notion of generation in research, objectivity and truth as they focus on the purpose of meaning in generating knowledge (William 2024). It involves viewing the world as it is from a subjective point of view of individuals and often adopts meaning oriented methods such as participant observation or interviews based on the researchers' subjective

relationships with the subjects in sense making (Antwi & Hamza, 2015). The interpretive research paradigm focusses on subjective meanings as it aims at recognizing an individual's interpretation and comprehension of phenomena (Antwi and Hamza 2015). Subjectivity helps as the way in which participants' mind creations as a result of the human conditions thrown upon us are given (Shah & Al-Bargi 2013). As an approach, it tries to enter the minds of study participants to comprehend and make sense of their thoughts and as well the meanings they are deducing out of the context (Kivunja & Kuyini 2017).

The goal of interpretivism research paradigm according to Rehman and Alharthi (2016) is to understand the interpretations of individuals on given social phenomena which they interact with. The aim is to depend as largely as possible on the views of participants on the phenomenon under study (Creswell 2014; Creswell & Creswell 2018). This paradigm scrutinises the engagement process of people in the construction and reconstruction of meaning in day-to-day interactions (Leavy 2017). The views of study participants in Bidi Bidi refugee settlement camp in North Western Uganda provided the basis of the research. Without influencing their views, The researcher built and developed from the participants' subjective understanding of the phenomenon as they interface with the world issues around them. In the attempt to study their behaviour, interpretivism sits steadily at it as it offers an unbiased means to which study subjects' views are recorded and captured as they are. The views, ideas and opinions of participants were taken, captured, processed and built or constructed to make new knowledge which is the basis of interpretivism/constructivism paradigm.

The study was qualitative in nature as supported by Creswell and Creswell (2018) who opine that the constructivism paradigm is typically a qualitative research approach. The researcher developed, adopted and exerted qualitative methods in the research context, picking and collecting qualitative data to analyse information behaviour of refugees in North Western Uganda.

3.4 Research approach

Various fields and disciplines such as social sciences and behavioural studies employ

qualitative research to comprehend experiences of people and their situations including values, cultures and beliefs of individuals (Kalu & Bwalya 2017). Qualitative studies serve several contexts and are conducted for their strength in research deepness and application. The researcher employed a qualitative research approach aimed at tapping the deepness of meaning and the subjective experiences of the subjects or people under study as well as their meaning making processes (Leavy 2017). The qualitative approach largely centres on the personal contact between the researcher and the study participant over some period of time which builds a partnership that can result in detailed comprehension of the issues under study thereby adding wealth and depth to the data (Antwi & Hamza 2015). Interpretivists employ qualitative research study approaches in their investigations (Fuyane 2021; Mattimoe, Hayden, Murphy & Ballantine 2021). The study was descriptive in nature with the view of observing and unfolding the information behaviour of refugees in North Western Uganda without influencing them in whatsoever way. This approach was taken because refugees in Uganda are exposed to a dearth of information yet they faced several challenges as highlighted in chapter 1 and chapter 2. Therefore, it is critical to comprehend with depth, the information behaviour of the refugees at Bidi Bidi settlement.

Qualitative research approaches, according to Leavy (2017), put value to the depth of meaning and the subjective experiences of people as well as their processes of making meaning. They enable us develop and construct a strong and vigorous comprehension of phenomena while dissecting meanings that people attach to own lives, situations, objects, circumstances, activities and people. They also involve subjective and interpretive exercises in which the researcher gets involved intimately in the course of research and not away from it (Creswell & Creswell 2018; Lacey & Luff 2009). As illustrated in figure 8, qualitative research is characterised by several features.

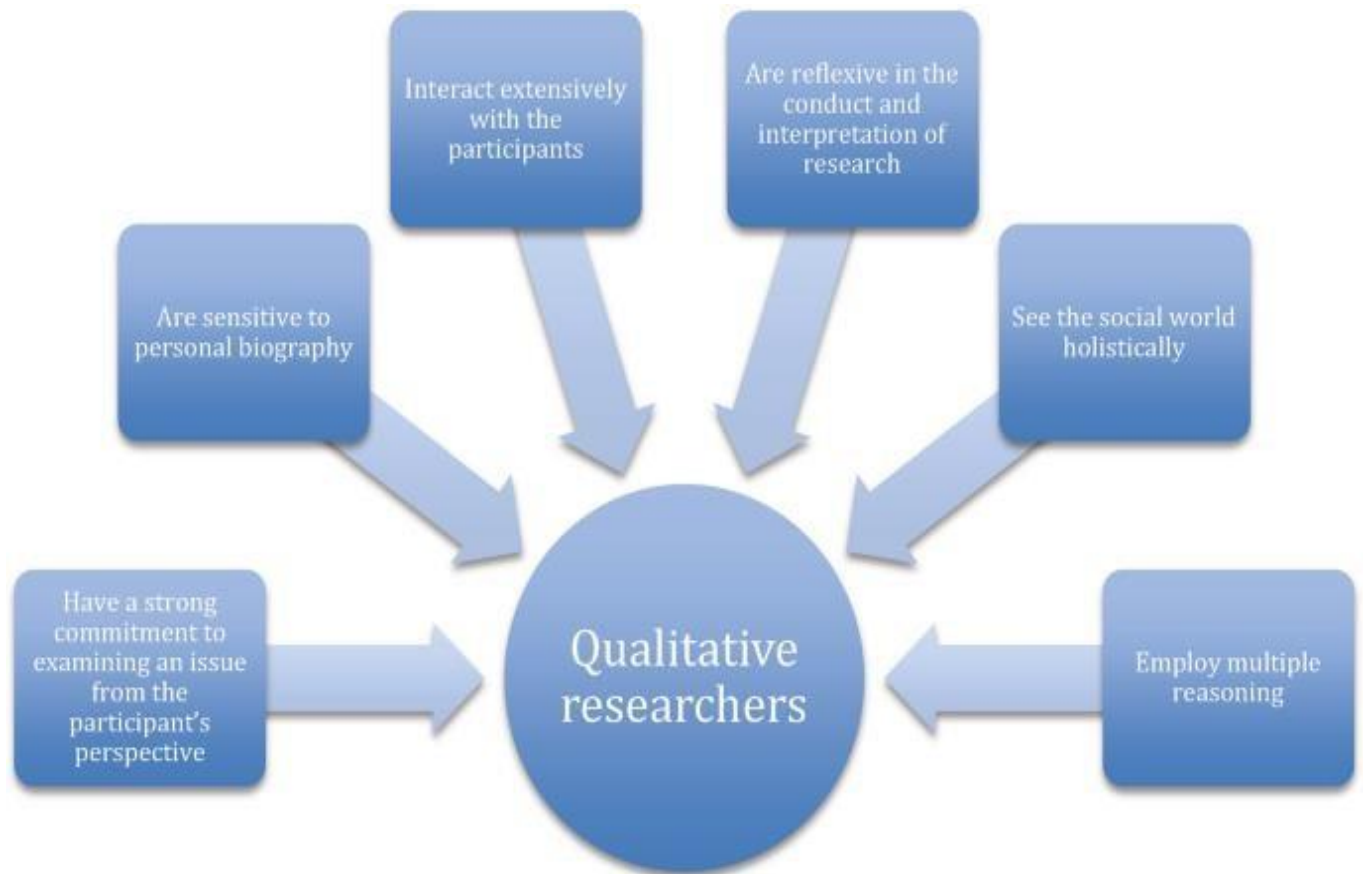


Figure 8 **Characteristics of qualitative research (Liamputtong 2019)**

As illustrated in figure 8, qualitative studies require extensive interaction in the field in order to interrogate the phenomenon in detail with a strong attachment to investigating a problem for the view of the participant there by allowing participants to give their full perception of the extent of the phenomenon under study. According to Groenland and Dana (2020), qualitative research entails describing a problem or phenomenon of the study from the study subjects' point of view with detailed descriptions of human context which is often done by studying participants from their normal setting. The approach emphasises the procedure for the collection of descriptive data by recording the behaviour of people and capturing people's words about phenomena (Taylor, Bogdan & DeVault 2015). Qualitative research rightly looks for answers by investigating several social settings and those individuals and groups occupying those setting. Qualitative researchers are, therefore, often absorbed most in the way persons organise themselves together with their contexts and the ways in which these settings' occupants create or

derive meaning of the environments they live in through rituals, symbols, social roles and so on (Lune & Berg 2017).

For this study, the researcher took interest in subjective sensemaking processes, investigating information behaviour from the participants point of view through extensive interactions with the participants as a holistic view of the social problem was considered in establishing the information behaviour of refugees in North Western Uganda. As shown in Figure 4, qualitative researchers often view the social world holistically and as such focus on all aspects of the lived experiences of the subjects of the study phenomenon while being cognizant of the diversity they hold.

Qualitative research is important in the contextual realm as it helps in unfolding the nature or form of what exists; in the explanatory realm by investigating the rationale for or links between what exists; in the evaluative realm by assessing the efficiency of what exists and in the generative realm by supporting creation of new ideas for social theory or formulation of policy solutions (Ritchie & Lewis 2003; Ritchie, Lewis, Nicholls, & Ormston 2013). Using qualitative methods is justified since the world that we investigate comprises of motivations of people, symbols and meanings attached to them, emotions, empathy as well as several subjective issues linked to lives of groups and individuals which may signify their behaviour practices, experiences and several circumstances affecting these natural or routine settings. Such elements require taking into account a person's perception of things or their subjective fears (Lune & Berg 2017). Compared to the quantitative approach, aligned most to this study on information behaviour of refugees in North Western Uganda is a qualitative approach.

Table 3: Qualitative and quantitative comparisons in merits and demerits

Qualitative Research	
Advantages	Disadvantages
Provides detailed perspectives of a few people Captures the voices of participants Allows participants' experiences to be understood in context Is based on the views of participants, not of the researcher Appeals to people's enjoyment of stories	Has limited generalizability Provides only soft data (not hard data, such as numbers) Studies few people Is highly subjective Minimizes use of researcher's expertise due to reliance on participants
Quantitative Research	
Advantages	Disadvantages
Draws conclusions for large numbers of people Analyzes data efficiently Investigates relationships within data Examines probable causes and effects Controls bias Appeals to people's preference for numbers	Is impersonal, dry Does not record the words of participants Provides limited understanding of the context of participants Is largely researcher driven

Source: Creswell (2021)

The main rationale of qualitative research according to Taylor, Bogdan and DeVault (2015) rests in the approach's flexible and open appeal as well as its dependence on theory which easily settles significant insights. Kalu and Bwalya (2017) argue that the approach is suitable for studies involving exploring difficult and complex research problems which are not easy to measure using quantitative approaches. Table 3 illustrates that qualitative studies enable researchers to gain detailed perspectives of phenomenon even from few individuals so as to inform a study, record participants' voices, is based on participants views and as well allow the study subjects' experiences to be captured and understood in the context of the study.

3.5 The study research design

A research design, according to Khanday and Khanam (2019), is a planned procedure implemented by an investigator or researcher to respond or give answers to research questions by giving direction to the study. It shows how the setting of the research is organised so as to achieve the requisite data for the study (Pandey & Pandey 2021). Research designs are inquiry types which give specific direction for procedures in a research study (Creswell & Creswell 2018). Creswell and Creswell (2018:309) further opine that a “research design is a set of formal procedures for collecting, analysing, and interpreting data”.

Several developments have been seen in the field of qualitative research in the 20th century. This has seen the emergence of several schools most notably grounded theory and symbolic interactionism, ethnomethodology and phenomenology, ethnography, critical theory and constructionism (Flick 2022; Ritchie et al. 2013). Phenomenology was adopted for the current study as it effectively supported understanding in detail the experience of refugees in their quest and use of information so as to paint a clear picture of refugees’ information behaviour at Bidi Bidi. Phenomenology is a descriptive investigation on how people experience a given phenomenon (Khaldi 2017). Phenomenology, as a discipline, was founded by the philosopher Edmund Husserl (1859–1938) according to Rodriguez and Smith (2018). Ngulube and Ngulube (2017) explain that phenomenology focuses on viewing things from the view point of participants and is concerned with description, analysis and understanding the life world and the way members of a given society experience it, as well as the behavioural and social meanings such experiences offer them. Phenomenology is central to qualitative research by guiding and steering what is studied by qualitative methodologists, the way they study and the way in which interpretations about data are made (Taylor, Bogdan & DeVault 2015). It takes into account the experiences of different people, and draws attention on what all subjects have in common as they experience a given social phenomenon (Khaldi 2017; Shah and Al-Bargi 2013; Tomaszewski, Zarestky and Gonzalez 2020).

Rodriguez and Smith (2018:96) opine that research based on phenomenology asks questions such as “What is this experience like? What does this experience mean? How

does the lived world present itself to the participant or to me as the researcher?”. The phenomenological design focusses on collecting deep perceptions and information by means of qualitative methods including participant observation, discussions, interviews and presenting it from the research participants’ perspective (Dangal & Joshi 2020; Qutoshi 2018).

Ndame (2023) and Padilla-Díaz (2015) note that there are basically three forms of phenomenological approaches which are applied in qualitative research and they include hermeneutical phenomenology, transcendental or eidetic (essence) phenomenology and “Egological”, constitutional or genetic phenomenology. It is noted in Ngulube and Ngulube (2017) that the phenomenological research design types most applied by social scientist are two and include the empirical transcendental phenomenology and hermeneutic phenomenology.

In transcendental phenomenology, the focus is in description of the study problem other than its explanation. It is about looking for an unbiased reality of the study problem which results in describing and analysing pure or untainted consciousness (Ngulube & Ngulube 2017). As stated by Bartholomew, Joy, Kang and Brown (2021) transcendental phenomenology describes the construction of a study problem as purely or untainted as possible while stressing the importance for researchers to put away their prior views. It involves analysing the perceived essences by consciousness regarding experiences of individuals (Ndame 2023). On the other hand, hermeneutical phenomenology involves the examination of individual experiences with interpretations or descriptions of phenomena meaning as experienced by study subjects in a study (Ndame 2023; Padilla-Díaz 2015). Hermeneutical phenomenology offers investigators a yardstick for interpretation of unique experiences lived by study participants. Referred to as interpretive phenomenology, hermeneutic phenomenology is concerned with comprehension of experience by looking for themes instead of looking for essence as is with transcendental phenomenology (Ngulube & Ngulube 2017).

In hermeneutic phenomenology, the researcher uses tactics, such as data analysis, to make interpretation of the meanings that are found present in relation to the study problem

as the focus lies on comprehension of what the experience of participant means by looking for and identifying themes as well as dealing interpretively with data (Sloan & Bowe 2014). As an approach, it allows the researcher to uncover hidden meanings by comprehending the lived experiences of participants (Dangal & Joshi 2020). The researcher adopted hermeneutical phenomenology since it offers me an opportunity to make meaning of the views of the participants so as to be able to clearly understand their circumstances and therefore make meaningful recommendations and models. This is emphasised by Ngulube and Ngulube (2017) who opine that hermeneutic phenomenology as opposed to transcendental phenomenology shifts to interpreting meaning of the views of participants other than just giving descriptions of the spirit of experience.

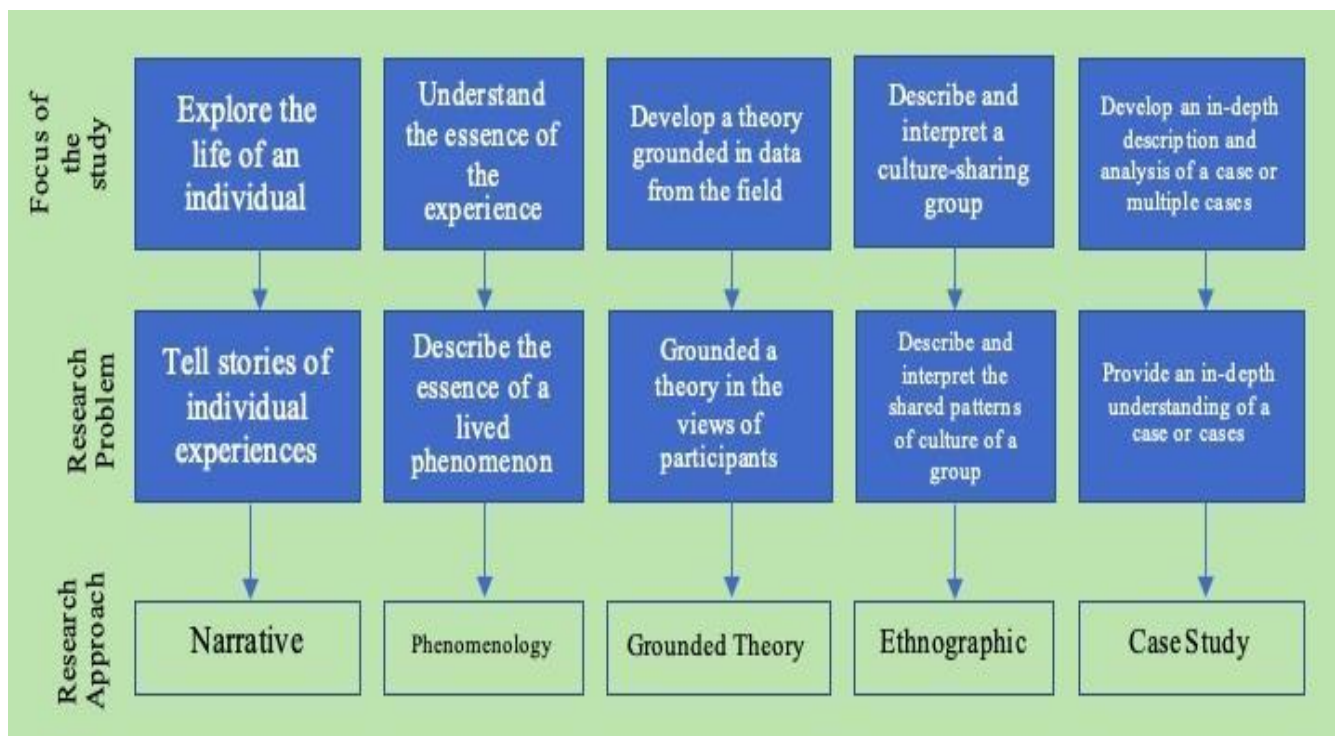


Figure 9 Different qualitative research designs (Creswell and Poth 2018)

As illustrated in figure 9, phenomenology involves investigating lived experience of a phenomenon in which the researcher should be in position to make study findings understandable. The researcher considered the experiences of refugees in their pursuit for information as a way of understanding their information behaviour. It is not an easy approach to research especially because it requires the researcher to stay apart and

interrogate the lived experiences of the participants without the researcher influencing the subjectivity of the participants. This is as well posited by Alhazmi and Kaufmann (2022) who argue that studying individuals' experiences is a complex problem as a result of the complex nature of people and that the experience of individuals is multidimensional and sits in the cultural, psychological and social realms.

To evade unsuited subjective judgement by the researcher through the research course, researchers ought to make significant judgment calls while deliberately removing and ignoring their own assumptions (Groenewald 2004; Qutoshi 2018). Conducting phenomenology studies according to Greening (2019) is guided by four stages including bracketing (Alhazmi & Kaufmann 2022; Greening 2019; Lester 1999; Qutoshi 2018) which involves putting the researchers' opinions and beliefs in abeyance; intuiting in which the researcher is focused on the study; analysing involving coding, categorisation and sense making and finally describing in which understanding of the phenomenon is realised.

3.6 Population

Population, according to Leavy (2017:76), is a “group of elements about which you might later make claims”. She further describes a study population as group of entities from which a sample is derived for the study. It is a whole set of individuals upholding or having features or characteristics which might be demographic, clinical or temporal (Thacker 2020). Establishing the demographic features of the population is a good means to understanding the population, the study setting and the criteria adopted for eligibility (Majid 2018). As such, common characteristics about age, gender, origin and ethnicity, education level, languages spoken were discussed about the refugees in North western Uganda through document review and literature analysis. Choosing a population involves identifying those who by the nature of their linkage to the study questions have ability to deliver and offer the most appropriate, rich and complete information (Ritchie & Lewis 2003). Notably, refugees of adult age (18 years and above) were targeted to make the target population regardless of other demographic characteristics.

Population, according to Thacker (2020), can be either a target or accessible population

and Ngulube (2019) opines that a population which is accessible makes collecting data possible. Similarly, as Leavy (2017) notes, it is always important to identify your population of interest and then select from it the population for study from whom a sample will be drawn. Asiamah, Mensah and Oteng-Abayie (2017) argue that researchers of qualitative studies can specify the general population by establishing the primary features seen in the study topic. An accessible population denotes part of the target population which a researcher can get in touch with to carry out a study. I therefore focused on the accessible population for consideration in subjects selection from the targeted population.

The study focussed on refugees in North Western Uganda and was centred to Bidi Bidi refugee resettlement. The study population included refugees of all walks of life including youths above 18 years of age and adult women and men regardless of their occupation, home countries or places of origin. The consideration of this scope of the targeted population was to enable the study establish the information behaviour aspects of the refugees from their different viewpoints as per categorisation. As already shown, Bidi Bidi refugee resettlement hosted over 246,310 refugees (UNHCR 2022) who formed the targeted population of the study.

3.7 Sampling procedure

Researchers can carry out data collection for their research studies by gathering data from either the entire population or from a sample considering the research methodology adopted, the population size and study purpose (Ngulube 2019). Leavy (2017) and Ritchie and Lewis (2003) opine that drawing a sample starts with clearly identifying a population of interest from which a population for the study is determined by clearly demarcating the population with its known and descriptive characteristics before the suitable strategy for sampling to get the sample of study participants is applied on that population. The current study involved collecting data from a determined sample.

Participant selection is viewed an essential task in research since the population in which the researcher is interested in is often made up of several people (Majid 2018). Contrary to quantitative researches where the target is to get a big randomly selected sample which is representative as compare to the study population, in qualitative studies, generalizing

is dependent on assumption. It is assumed that it is important to start understanding people or situation that are similar than showing representativeness (Agius 2013).

Asiamah, Mensah and Oteng-Abayie (2017) note that researchers conducting qualitative studies can pick their samples by adopting and applying methods of qualitative sampling basing on the complexity and size of the target population. The researchers adopt non probability sampling strategies to select samples for the study where samples are intentionally selected (Ritchie & Lewis 2003; Vanderstoep & Johnson 2008). Creswell (2021) notes that qualitative research sampling involves the researcher selecting purposefully a sample of participants that can best help comprehend the central phenomenon being explored.

Considering the nature of the study, the researcher adopted a purposive sampling strategy to establish and pick study participants. Qualitative researchers adopt and apply purposive sampling in which study subjects are deliberately selected to examine a specific phenomenon in order to establish a way that systematically identifies persons that have characteristics that are appropriate for the study (Agius 2013). Purposive sampling according to Patton (2015), as quoted by Leavy (2017), involves identifying information rich cases of a study so as to meet the research purpose and queries or questions. It is based on the premise that getting the best participants gives the best data and that findings directly result from the sampled participants. In this sampling strategy, the researcher purposely selects participants relevant to the study as per researcher's judgement (Sarantakos 2013). Purposive sampling according to Campbell *et al.* (2020) achieves better matching of the study aims and objectives to the sample thereby improving the study rigour as well as the credibility of data and results.

In the current study, the researcher adopted critical purposive sampling strategy which focuses on adopting a criteria for selecting individuals to establish their experience with the phenomenon (Creswell 2021). Flick (2014) states that critical sampling involves selecting participants in which the relation to be studied is clear. To be able to locate the subjects, the research adopted snowball sampling strategy. Snowball sampling strategy is a common way of reaching the participants. It is a technique in which the researcher

contacts a few potential subjects they intend to adopt in the study who in turn become pointers to other potential contacts for recruitment (Ritchie & Lewis 2003). This strategy, according to Etikan and Bala (2017), involves the use of networks especially where the researcher's knowledge about the study group is limited. It involves contacting a few individuals who point to other resourceful individuals. Indeed, snowball sampling was adopted since the researcher was not familiar with the setting of Bidi Bidi settlement.

Table 4 illustrates the sample size of study based on UNHCR (2022) statistical report on refugees at Bidi Bidi settlement camp. A sample of 60 participants was used to inform the study from a sample space of all adult refugees at Bidi Bidi refugee settlement regardless of occupation, origin or gender as well as refugees' administrators at the settlement. An inclusion and exclusion criteria was adopted for the study to ensure that the right participants are selected for the study (Patino & Ferreira 2018). The inclusion criteria adopted involved clarity on refugee status, resident of Bidi Bidi refugee settlement and adult refugee above 18 years for refugees. The exclusion criteria followed included sickness and inability to speak for whatever reasons. Several factors are responsible for sample size determination in qualitative studies and as a result, many researchers are cautious in suggesting sample sizes that are sufficient for different study types (Mason 2010). Creswell (2007) suggests that an ideal number of participants in phenomenological studies ranges between five to twenty-five. On the other hand, Korstjens and Moser (2018) opine that studies in phenomenology require less than 10 interviews. According to Sarfo, Debrah, Gbordzoe, Afful & Obeng (2021), a few individuals ranging from six to 10 individuals can be adopted for phenomenological studies. In the same vein, Creswell (2014) as well as Creswell and Creswell (2023) suggest that participants in a phenomenological study are between 3 and 10. On the other hand, Hennink and Kaiser (2022) aver that in studies that comprise of fairly homogenous participants, saturation may be realised with thin series of interviews between nine and seventeen (9-17) or four to eight (4-8) focus group discussion.

There are indeed divergent views on the sample sizes that should be adopted in phenomenology studies. However, using insufficient sample sizes has scientific and ethical challenges since study subjects may mirror an imperfect and narrow worldview

whose reflection on the larger populace of interest may not be adequate (Sarfo et al. 2021). According to Hennink and Kaiser (2022), realising saturation is regarded as the foundation and basis for rigor in deciding qualitative research sample sizes. sample sizes in phenomenology can better be understood to the researchers' benefit. A suitable number of participants in phenomenology is not specified (Bartholomew et al. 2021). In the same vein, Silvennoinen and Rantanen (2023) opine that sample size in qualitative studies is not very pertinent but rather the power of information it has. Given the heterogenous nature of participants, 60 participants for this study were adopted. The heterogenous nature of the participants is seen in different angles such as different age brackets, gender differences, school going as opposed to school drop outs, economically active as opposed to economically inactive, community leaders as opposed to those with no leadership responsibilities, educated versus uneducated, living as families as opposed to living alone among other differences. It was the researchers point of view that 60 participants would allow for adequate representation of different categories of study participants given the big number of recorded refugees at Bidi Bidi refugee settlement.

Table 4: Sample categories and size

SN	SAMPLE CATEGORY	SIZE		TOTAL
		Male	Female	
1.	Refugee administrators and service providers	5	5	10
2.	Refugees	25	25	50
	TOTAL	30	30	60

Source: Researcher (2024)

Refugee administrators and service providers as seen in table 5 included staff in the office of the prime minister responsible for refugees in Uganda as well as those administrators that provided services to the refugees such as health centre heads. These were selected for the study because of their positions that required them to engage with refugees as they navigated their information environments. They had deep knowledge about the refugee predicament and what the refugees always wanted. Refugee administrators also included some refugees that had taken up administrative roles in the settlement especially

as leaders in their community. These were the immediate contacts of fellow refugees and often acted as links between staff from the OPM and the refugees. These also were included in the study because in addition to being refugees themselves, they had deep knowledge about what the refugees' experiences and plight were in their community. The biggest sample was made up of refugees that did not hold any responsibility in the community but were "just refugees". These were important for the study because their lived experiences were the study's core goal.

3.8 Methods and procedures of data collection

Strictly qualitative data collection tactics were espoused for this study with analysis and interpretation guided by qualitative methodology. It involves steps for gathering data aimed at attaining insights about the topic of study (Taherdoost 2021). Steps in collecting data involve establishing study boundaries followed by collecting data using different methods (Creswell 2014; Creswell & Creswell 2023).

Qualitative research gives researchers the freedom to select and apply a suitable framework for research in investigating the social problem by deciding to use several and different techniques including documentary analysis, interview or Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) (Kalu & Bwalya 2017), thereby collecting a large amount of data necessary for the study and is about assessing opinions, attitudes, and behaviour subjectively (Kothari 2004). Qualitative methods, according to Dunwoodie, Macaulay & Newman (2023), are essential in knowledge development since they permit researchers to question assumptions on current theorising and as well allow inductive generation of theory. Qualitative methods, such as interviews, case studies, observations, and text interpretation according to Agius (2013), are more suited compared to quantitative methods in examining complex research problems and are therefore essential add-ins to methodology.

Qualitative researchers have a number of methods that can be adopted for collecting data including observation, interviews as well as visual and textual analysis (Islam and Aldaihani 2022). The researcher adopted a blend of different qualitative methods for data collection including individual interviews, FGDs as well as non-participatory observation.

This was influenced by Ngulube (2015) who opined that the application of FGDs, document analysis, semi structured and in-depth interviews, and observation are visible in qualitative studies.

The researcher started the data collection through the use of an interview schedule and later adopted FGDs with participants from the identified refugee categories. The researcher conducted 48 individual interviews and as well organised 4 focus groups with varying number of members each as elaborated in 3.8.2. Throughout the course of gathering data, the researcher observed the study elements and captured their behaviour.

3.8.1 Interview method

Edwards and Holland (2020) argue that the interview method is undoubtedly the most extensively adopted methodological research technique in the social science and is the chief of qualitative research. It is a vital data gathering techniques employed in a wide spectrum of disciplines and is largely depended on enormously by qualitative researchers. Interview method is the major type of data collection approach employed in qualitative studies and is always applied with other techniques of qualitative studies such as participant observation (Dunwoodie, Macaulay & Newman 2023). Interview, as a method for data collection, takes the context of verbal communication in the sense of “oral verbal stimuli” with replies in “oral verbal responses” whether in person or telephone based (Kothari 2004). Personal interviews for this study were the mode of collecting data as the major strategy employed for the study. As indicated in Denzin and Lincoln (2018:1000), an interview is “a face-to-face verbal exchange, in which one person, the interviewer, attempts to elicit information or expressions of opinion or belief from another person or persons”.

For several justifications, interviews as the first line of contact with the participants were adopted since they are interactive and flexible by nature and can help in realising depth in the data collected (Ritchie *et al.* 2013). The interview method offers participants an opportunity to share their opinions, attitudes, prejudices, desires, and feelings towards the different experienced phenomena or problems in organisational settings and workplaces (Dunwoodie *et al.* 2023). The method, according to Islam and Aldaihani (2022), has the

ability to explore and establish views, experiences, ideas, opinions, and beliefs on specific phenomena or issues and often offer deeper understanding or ideas about a phenomenon or social issue. The authors further emphasise that it is the most suitable approach to data collection when little is known about the phenomenon by the researchers.

Similarly, qualitative interviews are good when investigating sensitive issues, when there is little known on the study problem, and they offer deeper comprehension of social problems and issues than quantitative approaches (Gill, Stewart, Treasure, & Chadwick 2008). Bartholomew et al (2021) argue that participants in interviews are always asked or requested to explain statements made even citing examples and follow up questions asked by the interviewer. Respondents in interviews are always asked or requested to explain statements made even citing examples and follow up questions asked by the interviewer (Dunwoodie et al. 2023). If used effectively, probing during interviews is key to provoking deep rich data from participants as it attains access to an additional sense of depth and detail through the spoken prompts to illustrate, explain, elaborate, or clarify a previous response to a question by a participant (Robinson 2023).

Various types of interviews for data collection exist including the commonly cited three types. Interviews can be unstructured, structured or semi structured (Elhami & Khoshnevisan 2022; Taherdoost 2021). Unstructured interviews denote an open-ended situation during interviews involving more freedom and flexibility for both the interviewee and the interviewer (Alshenqeeti 2014). It is a form of interviewing that does not follow a predetermined series of questions (Elhami & Khoshnevisan 2022; Mazhar, Anjum, Anwar & Khan 2021). Unstructured interviews are considered informal approaches to data collection which do not adopt a particular structure (Taherdoost 2021). Unstructured interviews are common in qualitative studies and have their main strength as flexibility and freedom in which the researcher possesses almost full freedom in terms of question wording, content, structure and question order depending on the situation (Kumar 2014). Structured interviews are interview data collection approaches that employ a uniform system and sequence of questions for all study participants implying that questions for all are exact and have the same order of delivered (De La Croix, Barrett & Stenfors 2018).

The participants are exposed to the same standardized set of pre-prepared questions (Mazhar et al. 2021; Taherdoost 2021). Structured interviews have full control of the interviewer and give little room for flexibility (Mazhar et al. 2021). The third type of interviews is the semi structured interview which lies between structured and unstructured interviews using a pre-determined set of question but allowing more flexibility and freedom for the interviewer and the interviewees (De La Croix et al. 2018; Taherdoost 2021). The nature of qualitative research which is exploratory often adopts semi structured interviews which allow the researcher to gather rich data (Elhami & Khoshnevisan 2022).

A semi structured interview was used to allow flexibility in the discussion with participants so as to gather rich data on the phenomenon under investigation. Semi structured interviews are the commonest data gathering techniques in qualitative research since it permits flexibility in carrying out interviews depending on participants responses (Pyo, Lee, Choi, Jang & Ock 2023). Semi-structured interviews mirror normal discussions or conversations as opposed to written questionnaires since open ended questions are employed to explore a particular phenomenon in details because they permit the interviewer to gather data from participants in detail while capturing participants ideas, emotions and feelings with little censorship (Elhami & Khoshnevisan 2022). In semi structured interviews according to Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2007) , the researcher uses an itemised set of questions on different themes that were to be completed during the interview. The use of semi structured interviews permits flexibility in conducting interviews on the basis of participants' responses and characteristics (Pyo et al. 2023). Semi-structured interviews are flexible because they make it possible for the interviewer or researcher to probe and as such generate more responses about the phenomenon (Alshenqeeti 2014). Semi-structured interviews permit a level of divergence on part of the interviewee and interviewer so as to explore certain issues or responses in greater detail (Gill *et al.* 2008).

An interview schedule as seen in appendix A, was used in guiding the semi structured interview during every interview for purposes of ensuring uniformity in questions, as well as maintaining continuity for all the interviews. The interview guides used in qualitative studies are made up of open-ended broad questions (Groenland & Dana 2020). The

researcher asked questions that yielded data in detail to inform the study as per study objectives. To realise and achieve good results and positive outcomes in the interviews, the researcher was cognizant of the interview conditions for success including allowing participant time to respond, reading the nonverbal and body language of the participant to pick more insights, being mindful of the voice tone used, as well as briefing them on the purpose of the interview (Ritchie *et al.* 2013). Several techniques to enhance interviews were adopted. Rapport building was critical in ensuring that participants feel free to engage with the interviewers. Indeed, extended rapport aided learning more about participants' preferences and communication skills and created their trust and keep the interview environment relaxed (McFarland, Bryant, Wark, Morales-Boyce 2024).

Interviews are well poised for purposes of explaining, describing, expounding and interpreting research study problems or phenomena and is a vital technique for engaging participant who show unwillingness or reluctance in completing questionnaires and rather opt to explain their feelings on particular matters by word of mouth (Dunwoodie *et al.* 2023). Interviews were conducted in participants' usual settings including either their homes, community centres or workplaces for some.

3.8.2 Focus group discussions

Gundumogula (2020) define Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) as an extended means of interview technique involving detailed group interviews with discussion on a particular issue or topic. FGDs are a qualitative research approach to data collection which give researchers the opportunity of interviewing several and or different individuals efficiently at the same time (Yaakop 2023). In FGDs, people, who are part of small groups, come together and deliberate about an issue or problem of study and is always facilitated by the researcher who moderates the topic, asks and focusses the discussion (Dawson 2002; Gill *et al.* 2008; Stokes & Wall 2018). FGDs allow for group interaction in which issues on the study topic were discussed and thus provided an opportunity to capture novel ideas through exploration of ideas, clarification on ideas and expanding participants thoughts (Downs, Davidson, Haddad & Zisook 2024).

Focus groups compliment other data gathering techniques by providing detailed

information in relatively limited time period (Gundumogula 2020). Focus group discussions enhance individual interviews as they allow a more in-depth discussion on the phenomena (Geampana & Perrotta 2024). They are valuable attempts to having homogenous participants to examine and scrutinise a specific phenomenon together and can gather data from different categories of people (Akyıldız & Ahmed 2021). Akyıldız and Ahmed further opine that FGDs provide more reliable research environments where study subjects influence each other through group interactions which create synergies on them. FGDs are important as they enable a researcher to collect views and opinions from the participants concurrently and in a short time. The discussion is largely between participant and participant as the FGDs give participant opportunity to listen to each other and weigh in on several insights given by the group mates. The method gives confidence to participants to open up especially as they pick from their fellow participants' submissions (Adams & Cox 2008; Gill *et al.* 2008; Ritchie *et al.* 2013).

In this approach to data collection, a group of refugees were requested to join up in a meeting for a discussion about the phenomenon. Geampana and Perrotta (2024) note that FGDs are essential in probing and investigating issues that arise in individual interviews. Probing is critical to the intended impact in a study since it unlocks the detail and unspoken sheets of personal narrative and memory thereby making sure that interviews are not simple elicitations of opinions like questionnaire (Robinson 2023). Focus groups differ in duration and size often basing on the topic under study, objectives and the study population as they often involve between 6 and 8 participants whose meetings duration ranges was between 45 minutes and an hour (Gill *et al.* 2008; Ritchie *et al.* 2013). Pyo *et al.* (2023) argue that in FGDs, four to 8 participants deliberate on a research phenomenon in a researcher led interview session. The use of FGDs is effective if carrying out interviews with willing participants to open up when in a group as compared to when they are alone and therefore rich opinions and experiences can be realised through encouraging group interaction. Participants in FGDs are always selected with a view in mind that they would contribute to the discussion topic and often have alike socio-features and would freely engage with the researcher (Rabiee 2004; Taherdoost 2021; Yaakop 2023).

Four FGDs in this were conducted and each group comprised between four and ten refugees, administrators or refugee leaders and youths. Each focus group had a different composition in terms of membership and duration. Eight participants were involved in the FGD of refugee administrators, Four participants were involved in the FGD with religious leaders, ten participants were involved in the FGD with common refugee (just) who carried no status in the community while eight participants were involved in the FGD with youths. Participants in the Youth and religious leaders FGDs did not take part in the individual interviews as opposed to the rest of the participants in other FGDs. The duration for FGDs varied, but ranged between one hour and one and half hours. Each focus group was developed to be homogenous that is to say have participants with similar characteristics so as to ensure that interaction which is an important facet in FGDs was realised among the participants. An FGD guide was used to direct the flow of the discussion to keep in line with the set discussion points without getting lost in the views and opinions of the participants.

3.8.3 Non-participant observation

Observation involves gathering and collecting information directly through witnessing occurrences and events for purpose of accessing the problem or phenomenon thereby establishing the interactions and influences that exist in the research context, the participants, and the researcher(Dangal & Joshi 2020). Observation, as a method of data collection, is greatly adopted and used in behavioural sciences study and involves the researcher seeking information by directly observing participants without requesting from them information (Kothari & Garg 2019). Here, the researcher is seen from the outside (existing without involvement in the research setting) but looking in and ensuring that presence does not influence the context (Busetto, Wick & Gumbinger 2020;Morton, Hall, Fitzsimons, Hall, English, Forster, Lawton, Patel, Mead & Clarke 2022). Unlike participatory observation where the researcher gets involved in the activities of his or her subjects to records what he or she observes about them, “non participatory observation” involves observation of the subjects by the researcher without involving him or herself in the activities of the participant over a given period of time (Leavy 2017). As a qualitative method of data gathering, non-participant observation involves researchers and investigators taking part in the research field to comprehend the setting and as well

observe areas of interest without getting directly involved in participants' activities (Sreeram, Cross & Townsin 2023). Stokes and Wall (2018) aver that in this approach to data collection, researchers are involved in recording events and happenings in the environment but do not participate in the activities or events of the participant

If observation is carried correctly, elimination of subjective bias is achieved and the data captured and recorded is linked to occurrences in the current situation yet the approach is not dependent on the willingness of respondent to be observed (Kothari 2004). To illuminate the process of data collection using this approach, an observation checklist as seen in appendix C was used.

Interactions between refugees and refugees, refugees and service providers as well as refugees and refugee administrators were observed. The researcher walked around the refugee settlement observing and overtly taking down notes on specific issues around information sources, seeking, use and sharing. Parke and Griffiths (2008) note that this approach enables one to investigate a phenomenon within its natural confines or occurrence.

3.9 Data quality

Although reliability and validity are fully accepted and operationalised terminologies in quantitative studies, some scholars have deemed the terms not adequate for qualitative studies (Antwi & Hamza 2015; Cypress 2017) and as such alternative strategies for establishing rigour are necessary. It is important that qualitative researchers adopt measures to improve study rigour and credibility (Noble & Smith 2015). Quality in qualitative research has received a lot of debate, as it is sometimes questioned especially because of the different terminology used as compared to quantitative studies (Kalu & Bwalya 2017; Forero, Nahidi, De Costa, Mohsin, Fitzgerald, Gibson, McCarthy & Aboagye-Sarfo 2018; Tomaszewski, Zarestky & Gonzalez 2020). Credibility and trustworthiness matters are major issues of concern within the constructivist and interpretivist paradigm (Antwi & Hamza 2015). Ngulube (2019) opines that underpinning rigor and quality in research are necessary if a research is to generate relevant knowledge and proof that can back practice. As such, researchers of qualitative studies ought to

safeguard the quality of data in trustworthiness and credibility. Trustworthiness is essential in qualitative studies and transferability, confirmability, credibility and dependability are important elements in ensuring quality in qualitative research (Ngulube 2019; Stenfors, Kajamaa & Bennett 2020). Data trustworthiness involves authenticity, truthfulness, and quality of qualitative research findings (Cypress 2017). It focusses on the extent of confidence and or trust that readers will have in study results.

In qualitative research trustworthiness, a framework involving “credibility, dependability, confirmability and transferability” has been discussed (Guba & Lincoln 1994; Kalu & Bwalya 2017; Tomaszewski, Zarestky & Gonzalez 2020) in the literature as a way of ensuring rigour in qualitative studies. Ahmed (2024) opines that researchers often improve and ensure research quality in qualitative studies by guaranteeing confirmability, transferability, credibility, and dependability.

3.9.1 Credibility

Credibility denotes the confidence which is put in study findings. It tells if the study findings embody the original data obtained from participants and represents a precise and accurate interpretation of the original views of participants (Cope 2014; Korstjens & Moser 2018). According to Alele and Malau-Aduli (2023), credibility is the extent to which study findings are accurate, believable and trustworthy. Transparent and honest reporting, the researcher’s experience, training, contact with the study population as well as sources of funding are essential for ensuring credibility of the study (Johnson, Adkins, & Chauvin 2020). Several other approaches to achieving credibility in qualitative studies have been suggested by different authors. Such approaches include triangulation which can take the form of triangulation by data gathering technique, data triangulation as well as researcher triangulation. The researcher may also undertake prolonged engagements with the participants, peer debriefing, member checking to test the results as well as persistent observation (Korstjens & Moser 2018; Nowell, Norris, White & Moules 2017; Stahl & King 2020)

Credibility denotes the assurance of truth recorded in the findings of the study (Korstjens & Moser 2018). It is the extent to which study results reflect accurately the true picture

which study subjects experienced (Ahmed 2024). Credibility is about establishing that the findings reported are related to each other and therefore hang together (Stahl and King 2020). It is about the balance between the views of the participants and how they are presented by the researcher (Nowell, Norris, White & Moules 2017). To ensure credibility in this study, the researcher was thorough and exact in recording, spent prolonged time in the field to ensure a thorough understanding of the phenomenon, carried out Peer debriefing, ensured good records keeping, using rich and verbatim participants description and as well ensured clarity in the thought process of analysing and interpreting data (Sarantakos 2013; Creswell 2014; Flick 2014; Noble & Smith 2015).

3.9.2 Transferability

Transferability involves the application of study findings and results to different contexts by offering readers proof that study results can be applied to other populations, times, or situations (Connelly 2016; Nowell et al. 2017; Nyirenda et al. 2020; Stahl & King 2020). Ahmed (2024) opines that transferability is the extent at which extrapolation of research results can be applied to other situations. Transferability can simply be interpreted as generalisability. It is extent to which results from a study can be transferred to other settings or contexts involving different study participants (Anney 2014).

Transferability in qualitative studies is equated to generalisability or external validity in quantitative studies. However, there has been debate among qualitative researchers about the applicability of transferability in qualitative studies. Nyirenda et al. 2020) and Connelly (2016) argue that transferability in qualitative studies is contentious as it reduces the relevance of context. Arguably, although the investigator may not know the sites for desired transfer of study results, a thorough description should be given by the researcher to ensure that those that wish to transfer the study findings may evaluate transferability for their contexts (Alele & Malau-Aduli 2023; Makel, Meyer, Simonsen, Roberts & Plucker 2022; Nowell et al. 2017; Stahl & King 2020; Younasa, Fàbregues, Durante, Escalante, Inayat & Ali 2023).

The researcher ensured a thorough description and documentation of the research process including procedures for data collection and analysis to the benefit of the readers.

A thick description strategy which ensured collecting and documentation of rich data that portrayed detailed circumstances to aid application and transfer to other settings was adopted. The researcher as well detailed the field area of the study, the nature of participants, the setting of the study, methods for data collection as well as the time spent in the field (Stahl & King 2020). Additionally, the researcher focused on the richness, depth, and data appropriateness for quality such that analysis offers sufficient evidence in response to the study objectives (Stenfors, Kajamaa & Bennett 2020; Tomaszewski, Zarestky & Gonzalez 2020). Participants were purposively selected by the researcher so as to ensure that data was obtained from participants with knowledge about the phenomenon. Purposive selection also helps to decide why particular participants could be selected for a study which would also help in transferability (Anney 2014; Stahl & King 2020).

3.9.3 Dependability

Dependability denotes the stability and consistence of data in conditions that are similar (Connelly 2016; Cope 2014). It is the constancy of study findings overtime (Korstjens & Moser 2018). Dependability for qualitative studies is where consistency in results of a study is achievable over a period of time (Alele & Malau-Aduli 2023). Dependability tasks an investigator to describe the study process with adequate details such that repeating the work can be achieved (Johnson et al. 2020; Nowell et al. 2017). Connelly (2016) opines that dependability can be realised through peer debriefing, maintaining process logs which highlight the researcher's activities in the study as well as decisions on what should be observed and the interview participants.

Dependability in qualitative studies involves the extent to which research can be repeated or reproduced and that research team members can agree on what they observe (Nyirenda, Kumar, Theobald, Sarker, Simwinga, Kumwenda, Johnson, Hatzold, Corbett, Sibanda & Taegtmeyer 2020). It is the degree to which study results are steady over time. It communicates if the study results shall be repeatedly consistent when the study is repeated (Megheirkouni & Moir 2023). A common strategy to achieving dependability is audit trailing (Ahmed 2024; Kasirye 2021; Korstjens & Moser, 2018). The researcher focused on richness, depth, and data appropriateness for quality such that analysis offers

sufficient evidence in response to the study objectives (Stenfors, Kajamaa & Bennett 2020; Tomaszewski, Zarestky & Gonzalez 2020)

3.9.4 Confirmability

Confirmability denotes the researcher neutral position when it comes to interpretation of findings (Nyirenda, Kumar, Theobald, Sarker, Simwinga, Kumwenda, Johnson, Hatzold, Corbett, Sibanda & Taegtmeier 2020). Confirmability tells the degree to which study findings are free from the bias of the researcher and thus objective (Alele & Malau-Aduli 2023; Korstjens & Moser 2018). It is about attainment of objectivity in reality as much as qualitative studies can (Stahl & King 2020) . It assures the readers that study findings signify the gathered information from participants other than the researcher's interpretation bias (Johnson et al. 2020).

Confirmability in qualitative research relates to determining whether data from research and the researcher's interpretations of these data are not fabrications of the researcher or their imagination. It is about ensuring that data interpretations are made from participants' statements (Megheirkouni & Moir 2023). It is the extent to which confirmation of results of a study can be made by other investigators. Confirmability establishes that research findings and the interpretations are not the researcher's figments but clear deductions resulting from the data recorded from the study (Korstjens & Moser 2018; Nowell et al. 2017). Confirmability involves attaining objective genuineness of qualitative research. It is about the qualitative researcher's concern about objectivity (Stahl & King 2020). In the same vein, Ahmed (2024) avers that confirmability relates to the objectivity and fairness of research findings free from the researcher's preferences, influences or bias. According to Nowell (2017), confirmability is realised if dependability, transferability, credibility are all achieved.

Confirmability is assured by reducing or minimising the investigator's influence on the study results through application and meeting rigor standards like peer review, triangulation and member checking (Johnson et al. 2020). It can be achieved through data checking and rechecking in the data collection process and analysis. Carrying out a data audit to examine the collection and analysis procedures of data to establish bias potential

is as well essential for confirmability (Nowell et al. 2017; Stahl & King 2020). In phenomenological studies, reflexivity is a good approach for ensuring confirmability. Reflexivity involves acknowledging and bearing in mind how experience and beliefs of a researcher can impact the process of research including responses of participants, the process of collecting, analysing, interpreting and presenting data (Nyirenda et al. 2020). The researcher was mindful about the entire research process to be free of researcher bias.

Therefore, the researcher espoused strategies such as maintaining audit trails in the study, detailed and thorough documentations of processes involved in the study, carried out peer debriefing, as well as member checking in which the supervisor was able to look at the study results and patterns drawn in line with research questions. To ensure rigour and data quality, strategies such as checking instruments for obvious mistakes as well as test and retest of the research instrument prior to data collection were adopted. The researcher focused on the richness, depth, and data appropriateness for quality such that analysis offers sufficient evidence in response to the study objectives (Stenfors, Kajamaa & Bennett 2020; Tomaszewski, Zarestky & Gonzalez 2020). The researcher was also thorough and exact in recording, spent prolonged time in the field to ensure a thorough understanding of the phenomenon, carried out Peer debriefing, ensured good records keeping, using rich and verbatim participants description and as well ensured clarity in the thought process of analysing and interpreting data (Sarantakos 2013; Creswell 2014; Flick 2014; Noble & Smith 2015).

3.10 Data analysis

There is no single suitable method to carryout qualitative data analysis but rather a general agreement that data analysis is a continuous, iterative procedure which starts in the early stages of data collection all through the study(Bradley, Curry & Devers 2007; Johnson & Christensen 2019). Noble and Smith (2014) note that the approaches to analysing qualitative data are diverse with different purposes and epistemological and ontological footings despite qualitative data analysis being inductive and focused on meaning. As phenomenology points at examining the meaning and sense making of the lived experiences of people on a given phenomenon, data analysis in this design requires

the researcher to focus on participants views (Tomaszewski, Zarestky & Gonzalez 2020). Ritchie and Spencer as seen in Rabiee (2004) presented the “Framework analysis” approach which analytically considers qualitative data analysis in a sequence of five stages identified as “familiarisation; identifying a thematic framework; indexing; charting; mapping and interpretation” and allows the development of themes from both the participants’ narratives and research questions.

On the other hand, as pointed out in Islam and Aldaihani (2022), thematic analysis model involves data familiarization, coding, identification of themes, review of themes, defining themes and labelling as well as report writing. Similarly, according to Ngulube and Ngulube (2017), thematic analysis procedures or steps according to Braun and Clarke (2013) involve interview transcription, identifying items and elements of interest as well as entire data coding. This is followed by looking for and reviewing themes through mapping or plotting preliminary themes together with their relationships and finally theme naming and defining. Notably, Creswell and Poth (2018) opine that the researcher should undertake qualitative data analysis by developing comprehensive descriptions, followed by application of codes to them, developing dimension or themes and finally offer interpretations (Islam & Aldaihani 2022).

Kiger and Varpio (2020) show that thematic analysis is a flexible way of qualitative data analysis and a very powerful approach which is adoptable in several epistemological or paradigmatic orientations. Thematic analysis aims at producing thematic areas as opposed to creating core classes or categories as seen in theoretical coding (Ngulube 2015b). Thematic analysis focuses on themes identified through coding. It is an inductive tactic of qualitative data analysis in which themes are generated from the data and not pre-constructed by the researcher or analyst (Ngulube 2015b; Sarantakos 2013). Inductively analysing data thematically ensures that coding of data takes place or happens without the researcher’s preconceived views or themes on the phenomenon included in the coding frame (Dawadi 2021).

Naeem, Ozuem, Howell and Ranfagni (2023) argue that thematic analysis is employed to find and interpret themes or patterns in a given data set as a precursor to identification of

new ideas and understandings. Thematic analysis is not just as is viewed in its name but it is a collection of different forms of approaches. Thematic analysis can take on the forms of Reflexive thematic analysis, code book thematic analysis and coding reliability thematic analysis (Ayre & McCaffery 2022; Braun & Clarke 2023). Reflective thematic analysis was adopted because of its inclination to constructivism and interpretivism which guided the study. According to Braun and Clarke (2023), this approach emphasises the reflexivity of researcher and postulates that coding for data is a practice that is integrally interpretative as meaning of data can be interpreted differently. It presents described themes as shared meaning patterns whether the themes hold clear or implicit meanings, ideas and concepts. It acknowledges the innate part of the researcher in creating themes during engagement with data (Ayre and McCaffery 2022).

As presented in Ngulube and Ngulube (2017), analysing data thematically is generally appropriate for interpretive or hermeneutic phenomenology as shown by Langdrige (2007) as well as Madill and Gough (2008). Since the researcher espoused hermeneutical phenomenology, data were analysed thematically. Collected data were analysed qualitatively following a sequence of steps and or stages. Analysis of collected data begun with familiarization of the data through reviewing, watching video recordings, listening, reading and re-reading of the data. Data from interviews and focus group discussions were transcribed verbatim to avoid bias during transcription. Coding was then done to assign particular codes to specific key words or themes of the collected data. Categorisation of data was then done to identify different and similar themes or groups. Relationships between themes were identified and thereafter themes and categories were refined (Kiger & Varpio 2020; Lacey & Luff 2009; Lochmiller 2021; Naeem et al. 2023). Codes, according to Ngulube (2015b), denote labels or tags used to assign analysis units to the information collected in a study. Themes were developed from the data and then analysed thematically.

ATLAS.ti 24, a computer-based data analysis package was used to aid the data analysis. Computer supported qualitative data analysis can save the researchers effort and time in managing data through data tracking and organisation (Baugh, Hallcom & Harris 2010). It is beneficial to the researcher in the analysis process as it ensures dependable and

orderly management of data possible, elimination of manual operations and is capable of infusing various types of data, multimedia support as well as integrate online sources (Ngulube 2023). A report was then written based on the different categories and themes of data on the information behaviour of refugees in Uganda.

After data collection was completed, data were stored on a secure laptop in the form of interview recordings and observable notes captured by the researcher during data collection. All recordings were transcribed verbatim and kept safe in a separate folder on the secure laptop. ATLAS.ti version 24 was then installed on the secure laptop to facilitate data analysis. ATAS.ti 24 was then launched on the secure laptop to start the process of importing the transcripts into the software. Each transcribed recording was then imported to ATLAS.ti. Data transcription was done using Microsoft office word. Using ATLAS.ti functions under the “Add Documents” Menu, transcripts to the software package were added by either using the Add File function or the “Import Transcript” function. This process was done for all 52 transcripts including 48 individual interview transcripts and 4 FGDs transcripts. An observation notes file which was an amalgamation of all observed issues during data collection was as well added.

For each transcript that was added to the software, coding was done to completion before importing or adding another transcript in the sequence. Reading through the transcript one sentence after another, key words and key word phrases that resonated to the study were identified and added as codes. The researcher as well identified and highlighted stand out sentences and or phrases that would convey a participant’s thoughts or feeling for reporting purposes and captured them as quotations using the quotations function in the opened transcript in the software package. This process continued for all the transcripts and documents added or imported to the software package. A list of codes was generated with the software automatically summing up similar codes in such a way that codes already captured would reflect number of times the code had been captured. The relationship between codes was established and those codes that represented the same bearing or meaning were merged. Themes were developed by linking the relationship between codes as was highlighted and seen in the Software. Developed themes were then presented as study findings in chapter 4 of this book.

3.11 Ethical issues

Research ethics encompasses the daily work requirements on safeguarding the dignity of participants and information publication in research (Fouka & Mantzourou 2011; Akaranga & Makau 2016). Researcher ought to be mindful of the process of research as it may involve intrusion on the lives of people some of whom might be vulnerable as a result of age, health, powerlessness position or status in the social context (Dawson 2009). Resnik (2020) sees ethics in research as important because it advances the goals of research including truth, knowledge, and error avoidance in research; it upholds vital collaborative work tenets like accountability, mutual respect, fairness, and trust. As stated by Ritchie *et al.* (2013), research ethics requires that the researcher ensures that the research participants are selected on informed consent without coercion but on free will and voluntary participation. Notably, participants should not be exposed to unreasonable research demands, and that anonymity and confidentiality ought to be maintained.

The researcher was keen on ensuring ethics in the course and after the research process. The researcher clarified to the participants the purpose of the study, showing them that the study was purely for research purposes. Participants were informed of the selection process of the elements and why they were part of the study and not all the others. The privacy of participants was respected by ensuring confidentiality and anonymity in the research process. Findings of the study were kept confidential and not in any way would the participants' identity be disclosed in the course of and after the study.

Participants were as well assured that they would voluntarily involve themselves in the study and that also their consent to participate in the study would be sought. They were reminded that their participation in the study was not by coercion and that they had a right to withdraw from the study at any point in time when they felt uncomfortable to continue. Sensitive questions or any form of questions that would cause psychological and social harm to the participants were minimised. The researcher as well ensured that the research work was free from plagiarism and or research misconduct and that results were accurately presented (Akaranga & Makau 2016; Kivunja & Kuyini 2017; Arifin 2018; Creswell & Creswell 2018; Fleming & Zegwaard 2018).

The researcher as well solicited for ethical approval at the UNISA's ethics committee (see appendix D) to ensure that the ethical considerations are in tandem with the requirements for doctoral studies and as well with the National Council of Science and Technology (NCST) in Uganda, (see appendix E) a body mandated to guide and give clearance for research in Uganda.

3.12 Evaluation of the research methodology

The study employed a qualitative approach and used a series of data collection methods and techniques. The study purposively sought participants with the help of snowball selection or sampling in which data was collected in a short time from linked participants (Chan, 2020). The identification of gate keepers was key in reaching participants.

The use of interviews, both individual and group, together with non-participatory observation yielded a wealth on data that was sufficient to address the study objectives as all the methods supplemented each other. Qualitative research is about gathering data in an orderly manner through interviews, observation, and analysis of text so as to make interpretations of the collected data (Kasirye 2021). Non-participant observation was the first adopted technique to be used as the researcher got to the participants' community. Individual interviews yielded rich and desired data as it was a good way to start the in-person engagements with refugees and refugee administrators. FGDs also generated rich data to supplement data from individual interviews. For both individual and FGDs, the researcher ensured that the environment was calm and supportive of data collection in which participants were made to relax since most of the engagement occurred in the participants' homesteads. The use of both individual and group interviews in the research increased on the amount of collected data from the participant to inform the study. Downs et al. (2024) opines that collecting data from both individual interviews and FGDs enhances the wealth and depth of collected data. It can therefore be deduced that the adopted research methodology was adequate for this study.

Limitations in this study especially with regard to some participants in both individual interviews and FGDs were identified. Some participants failed to express themselves well and some were overshadowed by others during the FGDs. Due to the need for

interpreters during data collection, a lot more time was spent in the field than would have been in situation without language barrier. The methodology adopted was appropriate for the study especially with the use of interviews and non-participant observation. The low literacy levels in the settlement would make the adoption of questionnaires untenable. The methodology was therefore adequate to answer the objectives of the study that required meaning making from participants' lived experiences.

3.13 Chapter summary

The chapter has highlighted the methodology used for the study. The chapter has illuminated the procedure adopted so as to collect and gather data to address the research objectives by answering the research questions. The study adopted an interpretivist paradigm which focusses on subjective meanings as it aims at recognising an individual's interpretation and comprehension of phenomena. A qualitative approach to research was adopted aimed at tapping the deepness of meaning and the subjective experiences of the subjects. The study adopted a phenomenological study design which takes into account the experiences of different people and draws attention on what all subjects have in common as they experience a given social phenomenon. Using critical purposive sampling, non participatory observation, group and individual interview techniques were used to gather data from 60 participants at Bidi Bidi refugee settlement camp in North Western Uganda. Collected data was analysed thematically following a series of steps including data familiarization, transcription, categorisation, coding as well as generation of themes. The chapter has also highlighted the ethical consideration for the study before, during and after engagements with the participants.

CHAPTER FOUR: DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

“The power of statistics and the clean lines of quantitative research appealed to me, but I fell in love with the richness and depth of qualitative research.” Brené Brown (AWSC & WEEH 2023)

4.1 Introduction

Chapter Three has entailed the description of the methodology that was adopted for this study in order to facilitate the successful collection of data that would be sufficient to meet the research objectives by answering the set research questions. It has also highlighted the paradigm of the research that was adopted, the approach for research used, the adopted research design, the description of the population of the study, the sample and the techniques and approaches to data collection adopted. The chapter has set the road to gathering data about the information behaviour of refugees in North Western Uganda and therefore set the stage for analysing and presenting the data.

The current chapter analyses the data collected from the study participants based on the phenomenology design so as to meet the objectives of the study that were clearly portrayed in the research questions of the study. Data were analysed qualitatively using thematic analysis in which data was broken down into codes and themes that informed the presentation of results. Thematic analysis encompasses identification of repetitive statements which are reproduced by researchers as themes (Lochmiller 2021). The purpose of the thematic analysis, as opined by Ngulube (2015b), is to come up with domains as opposed to coming up with core categories as seen in theoretical coding. Researchers in qualitative studies now adopt the use of computer assisted software to help in the coding and development of themes other than relying on just their manual analysis (Akyıldız & Ahmed 2021). Atlas.ti 24 was used in developing codes and themes in data analysis the basis of which data were presented. As pointed out by Baugh et al. (2010) and Ngulube (2023), computer assisted data analysis in qualitative studies offers numerous advantages to the researcher in the analysis process as it ensures dependable and orderly management of data possible, saves time and effort in data management, eliminates manual operations and is capable of infusing various types of data, multimedia support as well as online integration.

The analysis of data progressed with familiarization of data, transcription of data, coding, categorisation of codes as well as development of themes. Since the study took a qualitative research approach, data obtained were analysed with Atlas.ti 24 to showcase the patterns, trends and themes in the data in relation to the study objectives and research questions. The study findings were presented in consonance with research questions the basis of which themes from data emerged to clarify the refugees' lived experience on information behaviour. The research questions included the following:

1. What are the information needs of refugees in North Western Uganda?
2. What Information sources are available for refugees in North Western Uganda?
3. How do refugees in North Western Uganda seek information?
4. How do refugees in North Western Uganda use information at their disposal?
5. What difficulties do refugees in North Western Uganda face in the quest and use of information?

To clearly realise the research questions, data were analysed thematically to develop clear patterns, trends and themes from the data that represented the lived experiences of refugees in North Western Uganda in relation to their information behaviour. Naeem et al. (2023) explain that thematic data analysis tramps through transcription of data, data familiarisation, the selection of key words and quotations, coding, the development of themes, the interpretation of themes, codes and key words as well model development. The data presented in this chapter were thematically analysed as illustrated in chapter 3 to come up with clear representation of the North Western Uganda refugees' lived experiences in using information. This chapter illuminates the study findings with use of tables and figures as visualised in the analysed data.

4.2 Response rate

As set out in the methodology, the anticipated participants of the study were 60 at the Bidi Bidi refugee settlement camp in North Western Uganda. Basing on the research design that was implemented, all 60 participants were realised for both individual interviews and group interviews in form of focussed group discussions. The participants included male and female refugees including youths as well as administrators in the camp. Out of the 60 participants, 38 participated in individual interviews, 12 participants took part in only FGDs and these

included youth and religious leaders while 18 participants were involved in both individual interviews and FGDs.

4.3. Setting of the study

The research study was carried out at Bidi Bidi refugee settlement in Yumbe district in North Western Uganda where refugees lived in households that were closely spaced. The study setting was a refugee camp with a designed settlement system in place to accommodate and manage refugees. The study was conducted in English, but the diversity of languages spoken by the refugees necessitated interpreters to facilitate the research flow through language translation during research engagements. The refugee settlement systems, administration, and languages used by the refugees are discussed further below. I interfaced with the participants in the period between January and April 2024.

4.3.1 Bidi Bidi refugee settlement system and administration

The refugee settlement at Bidi Bidi is directly under the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM) of Uganda, which works with over 100 partners in supporting the livelihood and experiences of the refugees in the settlement. It was established that the settlement system was based on zones, clusters, and villages. The settlement was divided into 5 zones and each zone further divided into clusters where villages were designated. Each cluster in a zone was made up of five villages. The settlement was governed by Refugee Welfare Councils (RWCs) which were elected democratically. The RWC3 was a council at the zone level followed by the RWC2 at the cluster levels and RWC1 at the Village levels. Each village was administered by a village council headed by a chairperson. All these leaders were refugees living in the settlement. In an interview with one of the administrators at the OPM, he noted that,

“They have refugee welfare councils (RWCs) which are democratically elected. They are our ears on the ground and we always tell them to tell us what is on ground and we want to tell refugees what is happening, sometimes we use RCWs” (Participant 23, 2024).

Another refugee who also served as an administrator emphasised the structure of the refugee settlement, showing how it was crucial in dissemination of information. He said,

“I am someone who oversees refugees and links them to the partners or

government of Uganda. I work in cluster 2 in zone 1. My cluster is hosting 5 villages, including village 4,5,10,13 and 15. All villages have chairpersons, but within these chairpersons, I am the chair of the 5 village chairpersons and I am the next person to the RWC3 who oversees the whole zone. The RWC2 oversees the cluster. RWC2 is a deputy to the RWC3” (Participant 1, 2024).

The administrative structure of the settlement had a bearing on the information behaviour of refugees in this settlement. As discussed later in this chapter, the administrative structure had a bearing on the sources of information for refugees, their information seeking patterns as well as difficulties they encountered in the seeking and use of information. The administrative structure allowed for the flow of information from top to bottom and vice versa which was instrumental in understanding the information behaviour of refugees in this settlement.

4.3.2 Languages used

The language distribution of refugees in Bidi Bidi settlement camp in North Western Uganda was diverse. Refugees spoke over ten languages between themselves, the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM) officials as well as partners to the OPM. The languages spoken by the refugees had a direct bearing on their information behaviour specifically as regard to the sources of information used to meet their information needs. Indeed, during one FGD with the refugee administrators, one of the participants pointed out the diversity of languages spoken amongst themselves as refugees as an important element in their communication amongst themselves and other providers.

As illustrated in figure 10, the languages used by refugees included but were not limited to English, Kakwa, Afua, Bari, Lango, Acholi, Madi, Kiswahili, Zande and Lugbara.

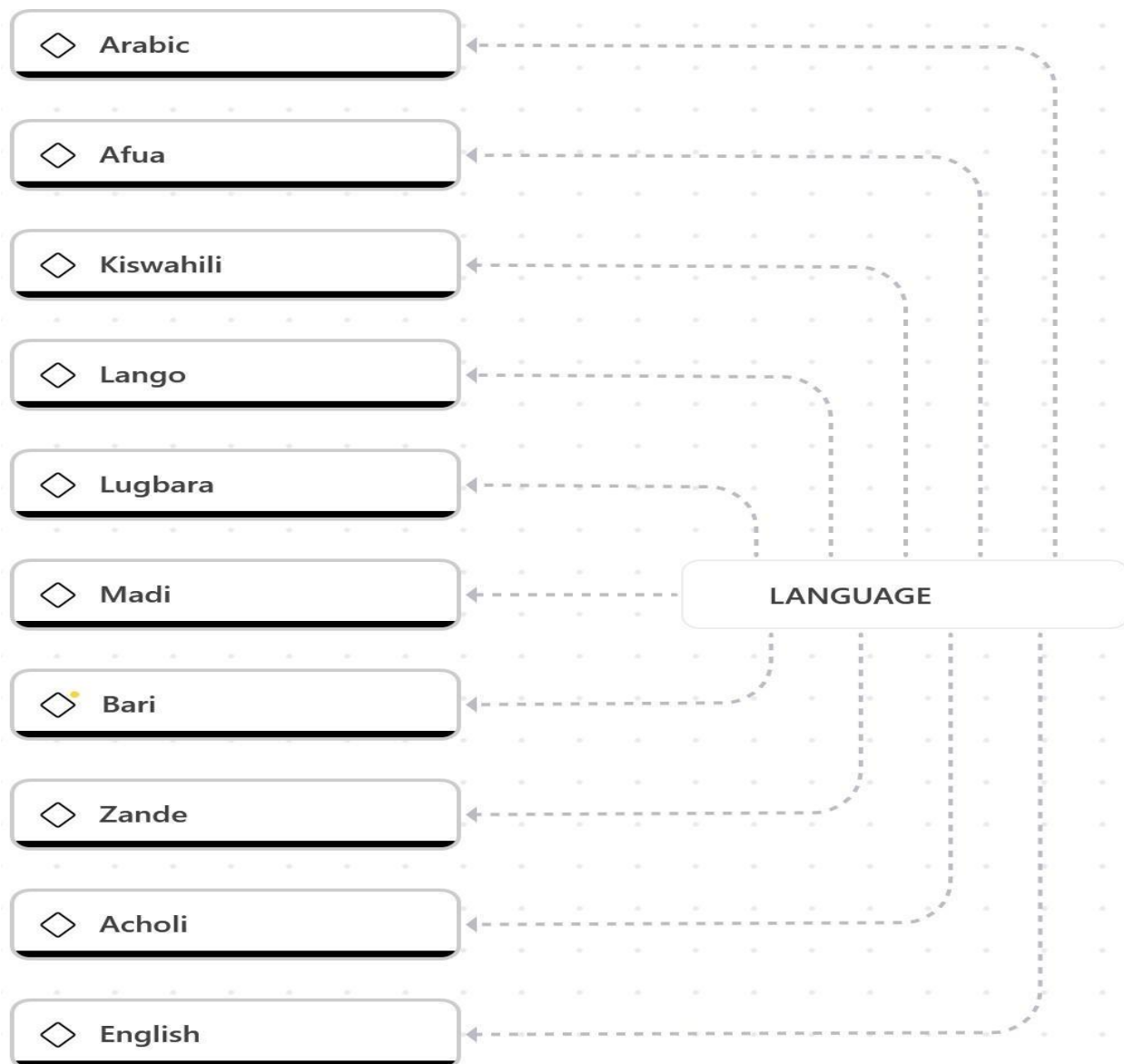


Figure 10 Languages spoken by refugees in North Western Uganda (Researcher 2024)

These languages were as a result of the different ethnic groups that are found in South Sudan where all the refugees in Bidi Bidi settlement camp came from. They had a diverse background with tribes speaking their dialect and other common languages like Arabic and Kakwa. In one of the FGDs with administrators who also were refugees, one participant noted,

“We have so many languages that are used here by the refugees, around 64 tribes in zone 1 and different languages that are ever used here. The main language that

people from South Sudan understand is Arabic. We normally speak Arabic, English, [together] with small Kiswahili although even the native small languages like Nuer are spoken by some people” (Participant 2, 2024).

Refugees used their local languages to seek and share information amongst themselves while they used English, Arabic and Kakwa as well especially with service providers or with fellow tribesmates. Interpreters were seen as a very important part of the information seeking cycle and system of refugees both amongst themselves as well as with service providers, OPM officials and partners. The interpretation quality in terms of correctness, specificity, and exactness of the interpretation of given had a bearing on the quality of information received by refugees from the different people. This linguistic diversity had both positives and negatives in the seeking and use behaviour of information by refugees. Positively, refugees had an opportunity to express their information needs in a number of local languages. Negatively, those refugees that were familiar with only one language found more difficulty in getting their information needs interpreted. Indeed, it was observed that most refugees had the ability to express themselves in more than one language mostly Arabic, Kakwa and basic English.

As seen in figure 11, Arabic, Kakwa, and English were the most used languages amongst the refugee community in the Bidi Bidi settlement camp. As a point of observation, although the English language is seen in the figure as one of the most spoken languages, its construction and fluency in use was low. Indeed, Arabic and Kakwa were the most spoken languages in this community.

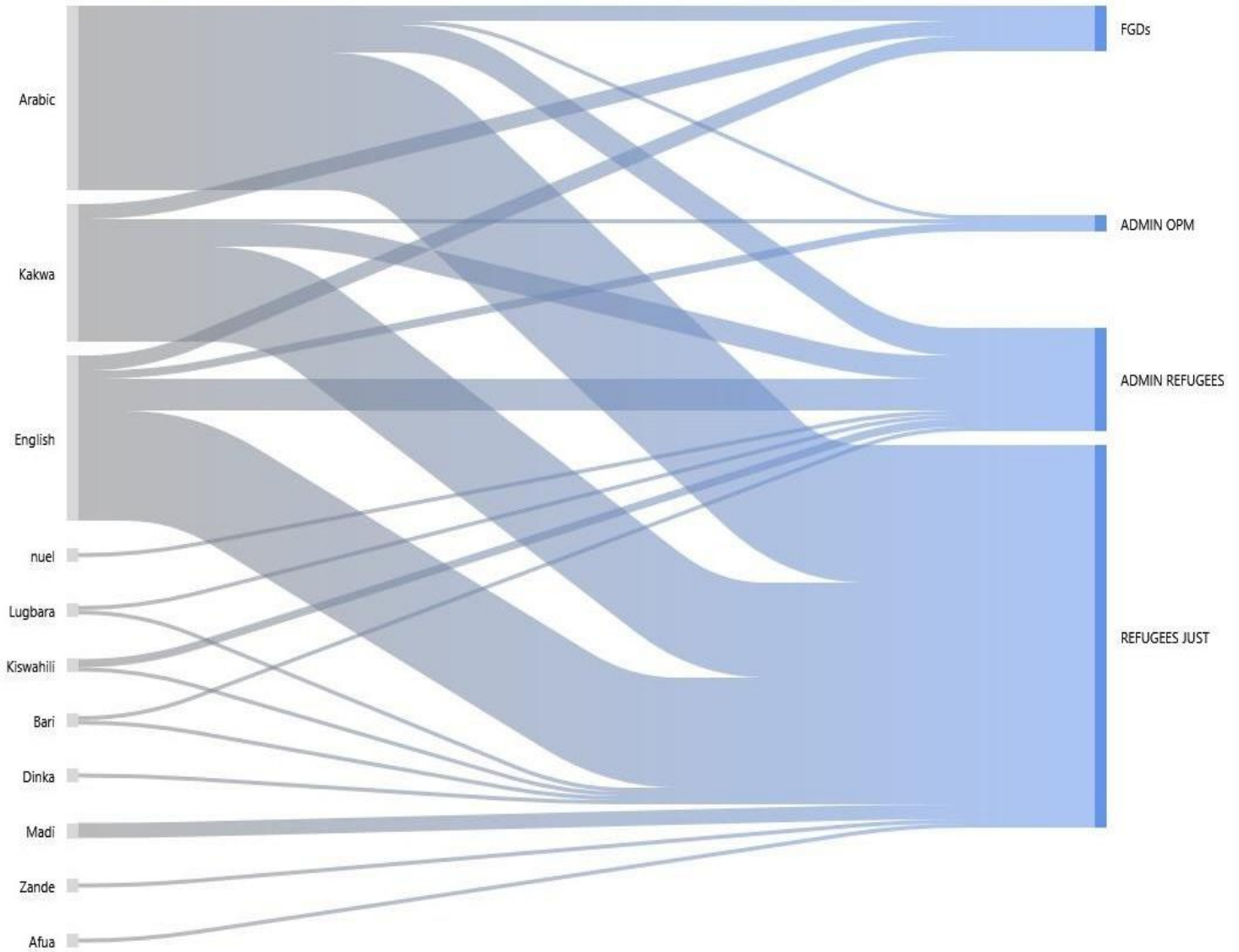


Figure 11 distribution of languages spoken amongst refugee categories in the settlement (Researcher 2024)

4.4 Information needs of refugees in North Western Uganda at Bidi Bidi refugee settlement camp

The first objective of this study was to determine the information needs of the refugees in North Western Uganda focusing on the Bidi Bidi refugee settlement camp. Through the methodology adopted, it was observed that refugees had a wide and extensive range of information needs. As is seen in this section, the diversity of refugees presented a wider base of information needs as compared to other elements of the refugees' information behaviour justifying wider coverage in presentation on information needs. The discovery of

these information needs indeed was a step in developing a structure for comprehending information needs as viewed and sought by the refugees in North Western Uganda.

4.4.1 Faith & spiritual information needs

In their plight, it was found out that refugees of Northern Western Uganda had faith-based information needs. Through individual and group interviews, it was found that refugees sought information about their relationship with their creator. As some asked themselves questions about God, others were seeking more ways of knowing God better and praising him. They were interested in information that brought them closer to God and the spiritual leaders because they believed their relationship with God determined their survival. Values in faith as refugees strengthened their daily practices which brought them closer to God and themselves as a whole for the spirit of worship and togetherness had an inclination in pushing people ahead even in times of hardship and difficulty. Indeed, one of the youths in a FGD pointed out,

“I want my church leader to give me information on how I can survive because I am not a believer. I want to know how do I follow God. How can I protect my life from evil? I want to know how I can make my faith strong and how can we fellowship together” (FGD 4, 2024).

Some women wanted to find out the requirements of having their children dedicated to God through sacraments. They wanted to know about baptism and confirmation requirements for their children. Some refugees sought information on how to pray to and praise God. They wanted to learn how to read the bible and praise their God. This relation and desire to know more about God took them to different places where they could find this kind of information. Bidi Bidi settlement camp was an open and free settlement where refugees had the freedoms and rights to worship which laid a smooth surface in their quest for information and enabled them to grow in faith and seek more about God their creator to the extent that even those that had turned away from God, returned and sought information on how they could get back to God and whether their baptism could be done for the second time if it had been done before. Figure 12 highlights the different kind of information based on faith and spiritual being that was sought by refugees in North

Western Uganda including information on how they could chase bad spirits especially by those who had been tormented by bad dreams.

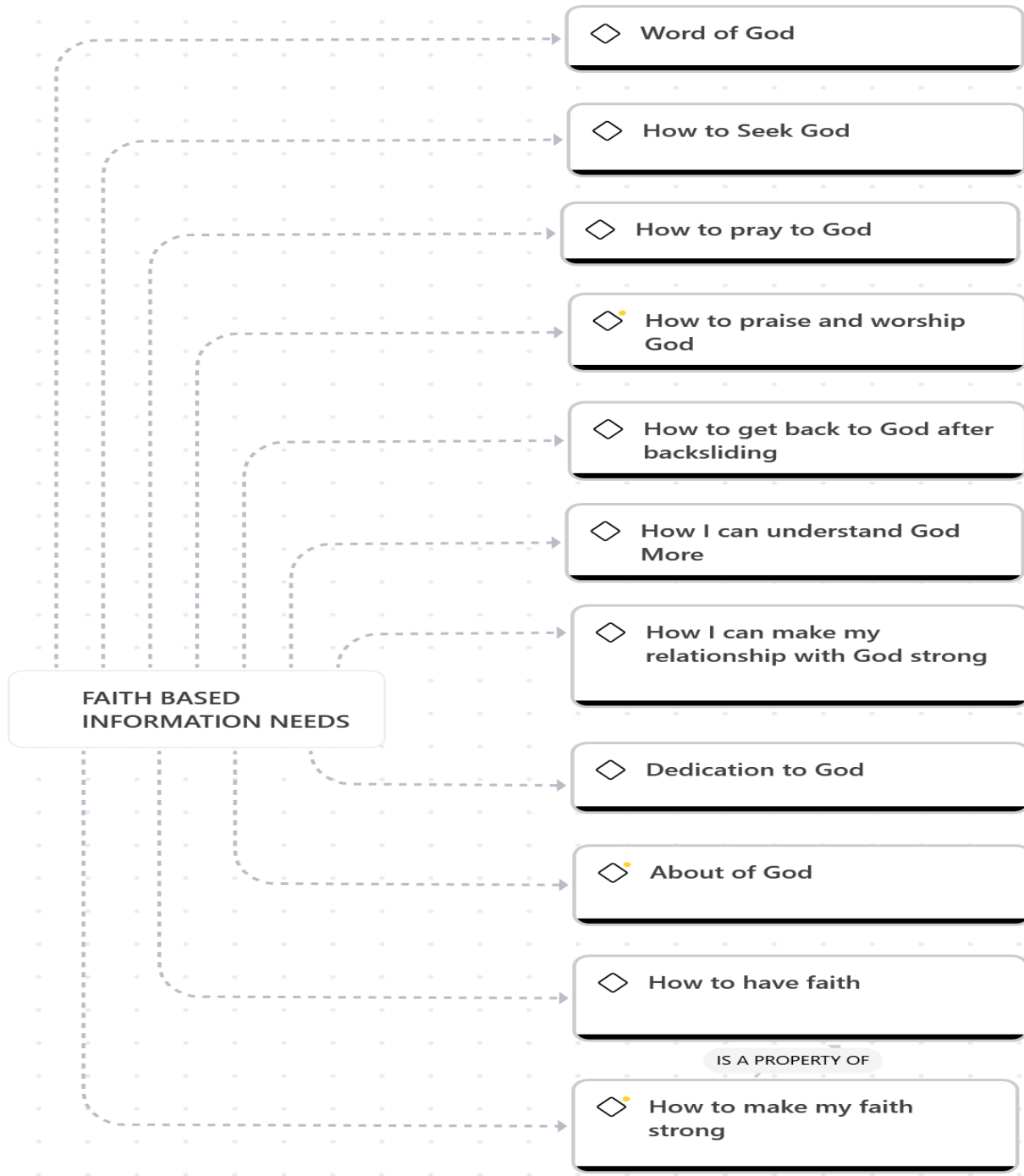


Figure 12 faith-based information needs of Refugees in North Western Uganda (Researcher 2024)

In one of the discussions with a participant who was part of a focus group discussion of religious leaders, it was pointed out that refugees went to religious leaders to seek and seal their relationship with God through knowing the word of God. In one of the interviews in a FGD with religious leaders, a pastor and refugee in the settlement pointed out,

“They want to find information on what is needed for baptism (dedication) so that they know the process so that they can know where to start from. Even adults who come to church for the first time ask about sacraments including holy communion, marriage, confirmation and baptism. So, you advise them about it. They want to know what is needed for baptism and confirmation. They want to know the laws and procedures that are involved in sacraments. For example, in the Anglican church where I am a religious leader, they want you to give them this information” (FGD 3, 2024).

Therefore, the desire to strengthen their faith in God made the refugees seek information which they believed held the glue that could get them closer to their God in their belief. Information on how to praise and worship, the word of God, how to seek God, how to pray, were examples of information needs of the refugees based on faith. In one of the interviews with a Muslim religious leader, a sheikh, it was noted that Muslim refugees go to community mosques to worship and find out more about their religion. The sheikh pointed out,

“We have so many spiritual needs as refugees here and we always pray in the community mosques around the settlement. Muslims especially youth and women go to these mosques for darasa on weekends to seek more about their religion and relation with Allah (God). I always teach in some of the darasas where I answer some questions about observing prayers, fasting and living in peace with our neighbours” (FGD 3, 2024).

4.4.2 Economic information needs

Economic information needs of refugees in North Western Uganda involved all aspect of information that improved their lives economically through livelihood especially with regard to making life ends meet and therefore make a living possible for self and dependents. Refugees sought different kinds of economic information as seen in the data

collected and analysed including information on employment and employability, information on agriculture and farming, information on saving groups as well as information on markets for their produce.

4.4.2.1 Employment and job-related information needs

In terms of employment and employability as seen in figure 13, refugees in North Western Uganda were interested in information on available employment opportunities and jobs for both adults and youth. Adults beyond youthful age sought information on the kind of jobs available for them in their category while some youth sought information on jobs they could do. For example, it was established that some youths looked for information on any available temporary daily short terms jobs that assured them of a daily earning and income. Such jobs involved hard labour such as lifting of luggage, cleaning people's homesteads and setting up temporary structures for people in the community. Refugees decried their current status in the refugee settlement in regards to employment as there were very few job opportunities and openings that refugees could fill even those that had academic papers. One of the administrators, who also was a refugee, in an interview pointed out that:

“We are interested in employment because in South Sudan we were civil servants but here we are equal, we all look for jobs the same way. Here we are not recognised no matter how supreme you were in South Sudan but here we are all at the same level. We don't get the information on how we can get employed” (Participant 3, 2024).

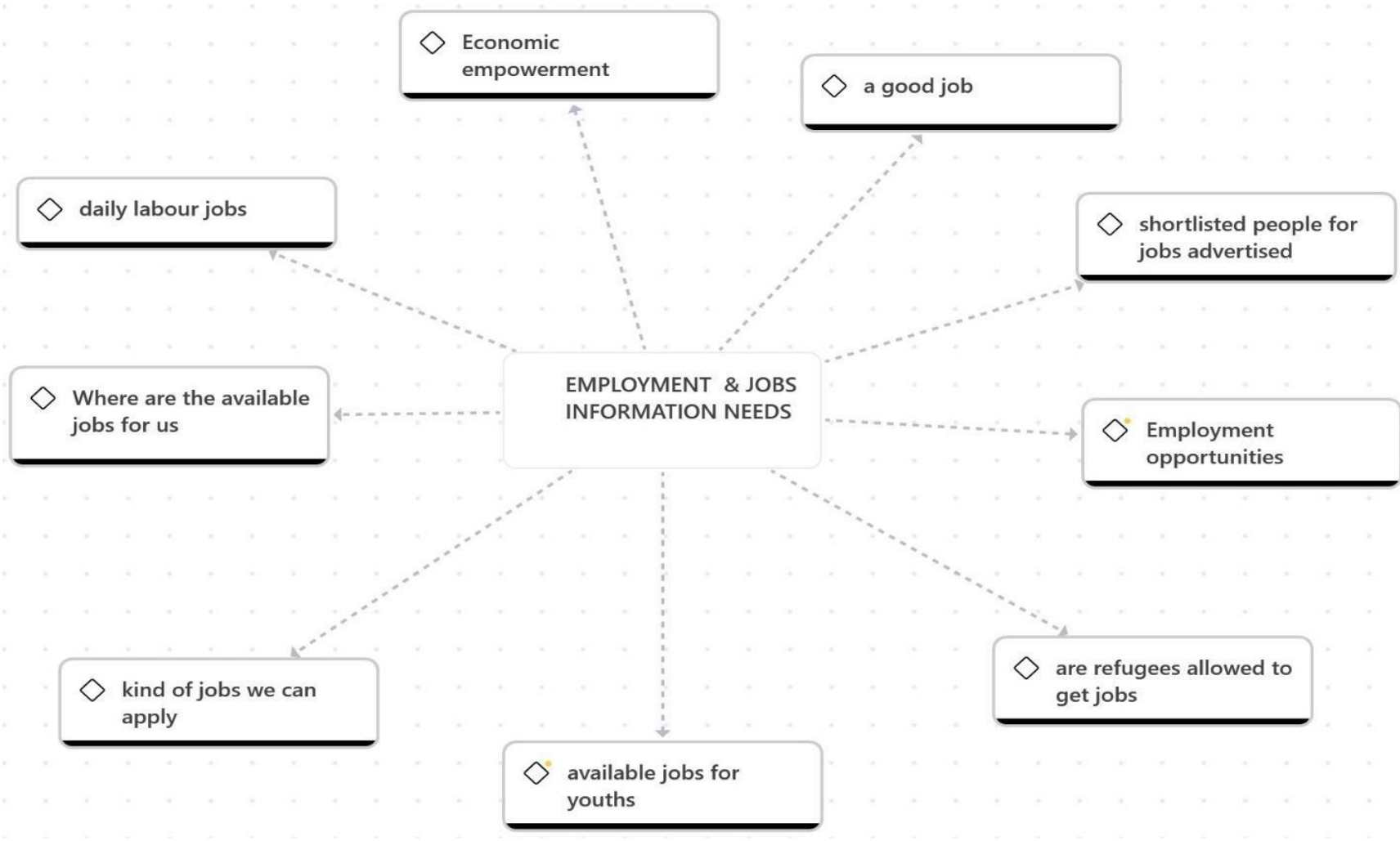


Figure 13 Employment information needs of refugees in North Western Uganda(Researcher 2024)

The refugees were interested in information about jobs to earn some money to take care of their other societal needs. Whether youth or adult, refugees were interested in work because they had needs that required money which was only available through work. They sought information in line with employment and job opportunities to meet their economic needs. Refugees sought information on their economic empowerment in the settlement. Their condition and plight required that they get empowered so as to survive in this situation as refugees. One of the refugee administrators in the OPM, which was responsible for refugees in Uganda opined:

“These people, the refugees have been relying mainly on relief aid for food coming from World Food Program (WFP) and this food doesn’t have guarantee because it comes from donors and because of the world terrain on conflict, there is a lot of demand from the UN. We have given refugees information on involving themselves in livelihood activities. We encourage them to participate in farming practices, by securing land so that they can engage in active production. We have also moved ahead to ensure that they are empowered with life skills such as tailoring, mechanics, welding, construction etc. to ensure that as they stay here, they are self-reliant and that even when they go back to South Sudan, they are self-reliant because we are not sure of the sustainability of the aid” (Participant 24, 2024).

4.4.2.2 Agricultural information needs

One of the commonest forms of livelihood in the Bidi Bidi refugee settlement camp was agriculture. This realm of information needs was particularly important for refugees especially due to the demand on refugees to become self-reliant given the high demand that was placed on the UN as a result of conflict world over. The refugees thus sought information to warrant their survival in this unfriendly environment and terrain. The refugees looked for information on land for cultivation and settlement, how to get fertilisers for their farm lands and crops, the weather patterns and seasons for planting as well as livelihood projects available in the camp. As seen in the figure 14, agricultural information needs formed a big part of their information needs.

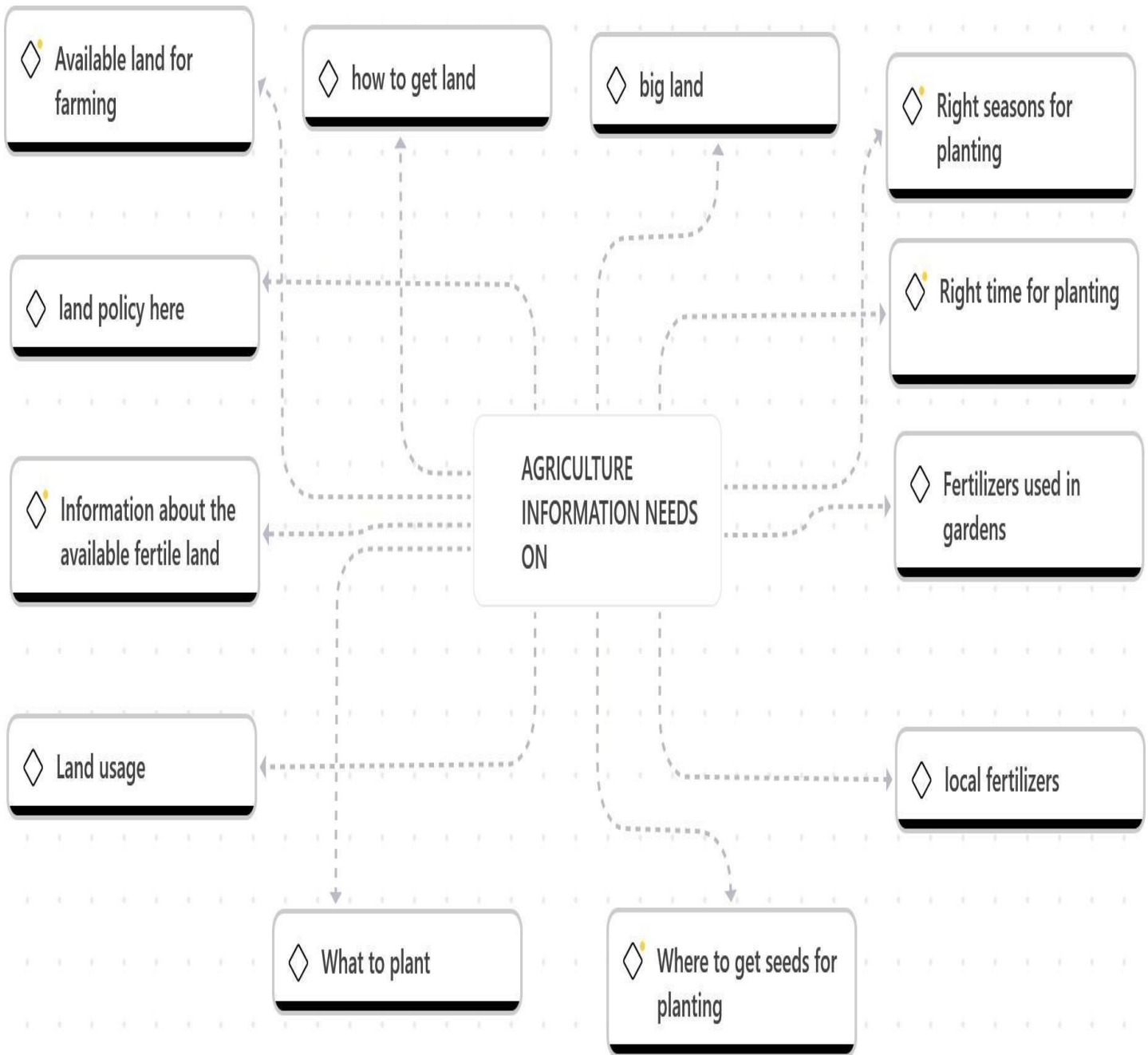


Figure 14 Agriculture information needs of refugees in North Western Uganda (Researcher 2024)

Information on the available land for farming and cultivation together with information on the right season to plant were the most sought kind of information by refugees in Bidi Bidi settlement as illustrated in figure14.

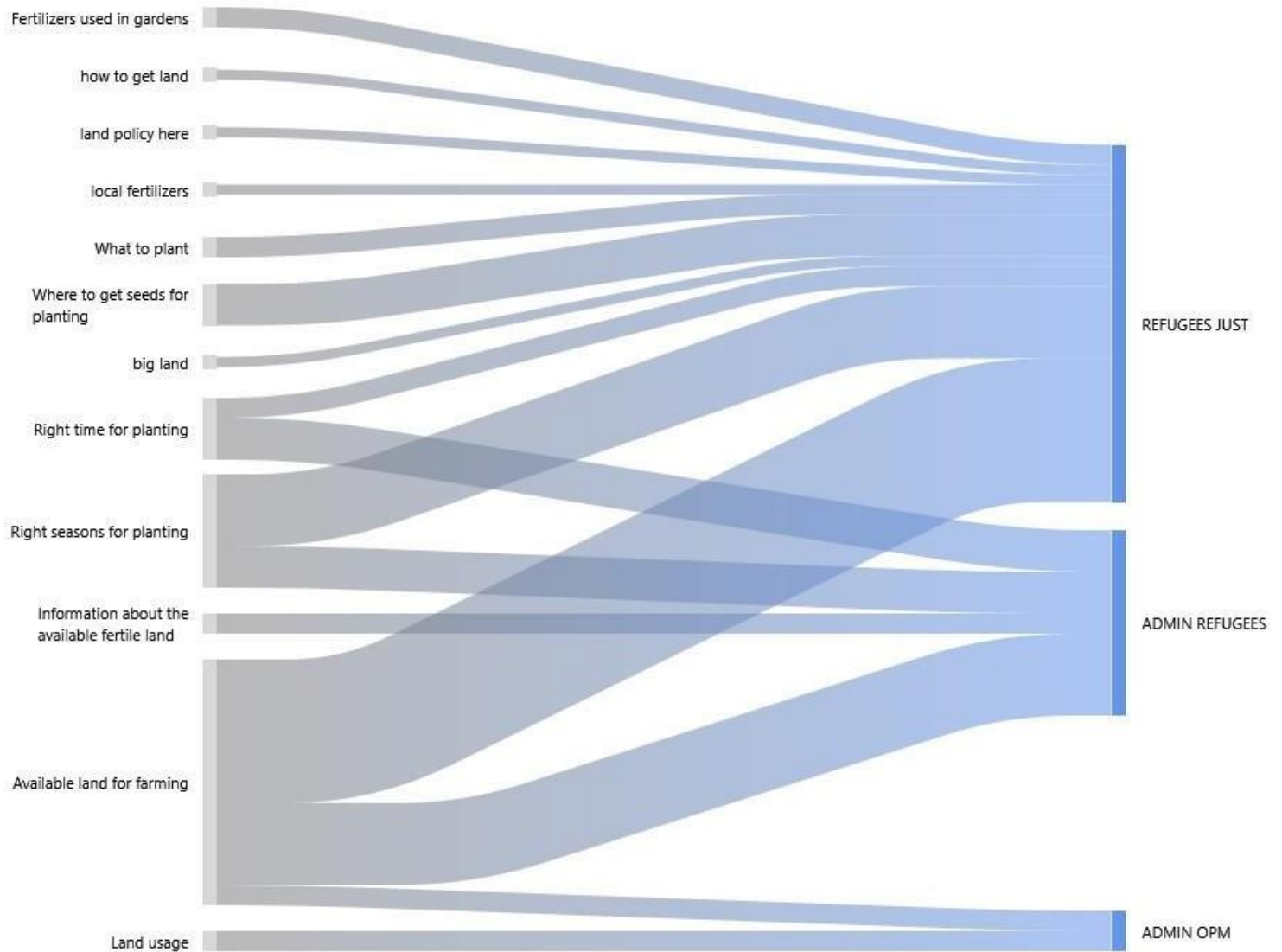


Figure 15 distribution of agriculture information needs of refugees among study participants (Researcher 2024)

Due to the limited available space for housing and farming in the settlement, refugees found difficulty in accessing land for farming as pointed out by one of them:

“I want clear information on land for agriculture. They said that they got land for us in another subcounty but when we go there, like me I have gone there myself

like four times but I did not get the land and so I came back. The land is very far and the fourth day they told us they will conclude and they will tell us but they have not given us this information” (Participant 49, 2024).

It was found that some of the refugees did not know the procedures to follow to secure land for settlement and agriculture. They needed information relating to the requirements, before acquiring land from a national such as who to involve in the agreement, and how to complete and sign the land user agreement. Information on agriculture was very crucial for refugees in Bidi Bidi settlement due to the call for them to become self-reliant. As such refugees looked for information on the weather patterns of the area, seasons to plant, where to get seeds for planting, what the right time for planting was, information on fertilisers to use in their gardens as well as understanding the land policy adopted in the host community.

4.4.2.3 Information on savings and Savings and Credit Co-operatives (SACCOs)

As a way of improving their livelihoods, refugees embarked on savings of their small earnings so as to make accumulations and profits on the saved money. This was reported in both individual and group interviews. It was found that some refugees were interested in information about savings. They sought information on available Savings and SACCOs that could support them in saving for future. Additionally, when some refugees wanted to set up saving groups, they asked for information regarding the procedures to follow in establishing groups and as well as investing their money. In one of the individual interviews, one of the participants said:

“We want to know about how to create saving groups and how to invest our money. There are some NGOs and CBOs which come to the settlement and give women money. They used to group them and then give them some money for saving” (Participant 3, 2024).

Refugees were interested in this information on saving groups and how they could be established. Although it was found that women had had support from NGOs on developing and running SACCOs for women, even men were looking for this particular information on accessing services offered by savings groups. Some men sought for information about organisations that could offer these services to them. In one interview, a male respondent

lamented:

“The information we need is what NGOs are doing to help men because resources were put in place to help women like saving groups. But we also want to know the organisations that can support men in saving. Because in the families, the men be the head of the family and women now days are competing with the men because we are all under refugee status and we all get free food” (Participant 3, 2024).

Refugees, regardless of gender, were interested in information about saving groups and SACCOs for purposes of improving their wellbeing through accessing money for investment and also improving status in the family. This was, especially, for the male refugees that were interested in this kind of information. The need for information on saving groups was re-echoed in FGDs in which participants observed that if they got adequate information on setting up and managing saving groups, their welfare would improve greatly.

4.4.2.3 Market Based Information Needs

To ensure their economic survival, the refugees involved themselves in trade and business activities in their community where they sold products and produces. Their involvement in such activities called for awareness of the terrain in which the refugees were ploughing through. Different information needs regarding market and business were found out in the study. It was established that refugees were in search for information pertaining the market prices for their products and produces, where to get the market as well as how to get the market. Refugees in the settlement were involved in agriculture in which they produced agricultural products such as sorghum, maize, chicken, goats which they sold both within the settlement and outside the settlement. These economic activities therefore justified their search for information on market for their products. In one individual interview, one participant pointed out:

“We want to know where we can get ready market for our produce. For example, this year we had produce which people just dumped inside the houses because there is no market and we just used for consumption yet these products can even generate for us some money so you end up getting very low prices. It is difficult if we cannot access the market for our produce. Therefore, we want to know who

are those that will come and buy our produces in our villages” (Participant 3, 2024).

Similarly, another participant pointed out:

“We need information on where a good market is for our produce because when you produce you cannot consume all because there are family needs where you can spend some, sell some to buy soap because there are basic needs. The produce is for both sale and consumption since you can’t eat it all when there are family needs like soap and other things” (Participant 43, 2024).

Economic information needs of refugees as established included the information required for employment and job opportunities, information on agriculture, and information on market for products. In one FGD with refugees, one participant emotionally pointed out the need for information on genuine buyers. The participant pointed out:

“We need information on good buyers of our produce. For me I do farming and also buy from my fellow refugees here but there is no clear market line. I want to know about good buyers for my things not these one who just come here from the city of Arua or Yumbe to cheat us yet life here is very difficult to produce what we produce” (FGD 4, 2024)

4.4.3 Legal information needs

In the legal horizon, the refugees in North western Uganda at Bidi Bidi settlement camp had a series of information needs. The information sought in legal terms was suitable for all categories of refugees including children as well as the elderly. The refugees were seeking information about the laws of Uganda and their operational framework. They wanted to understand the laws of Uganda and follow them so as to avoid stepping and living in illegality as per the laws. On issues of the law, they sought information on legal support services available for refugees, the legal procedures of Uganda, the partners and NGOs that handled legal issues of refugees as well as the laws, rules and regulations that were specific to the camp in which they lived and made home as illustrated in figure 16.

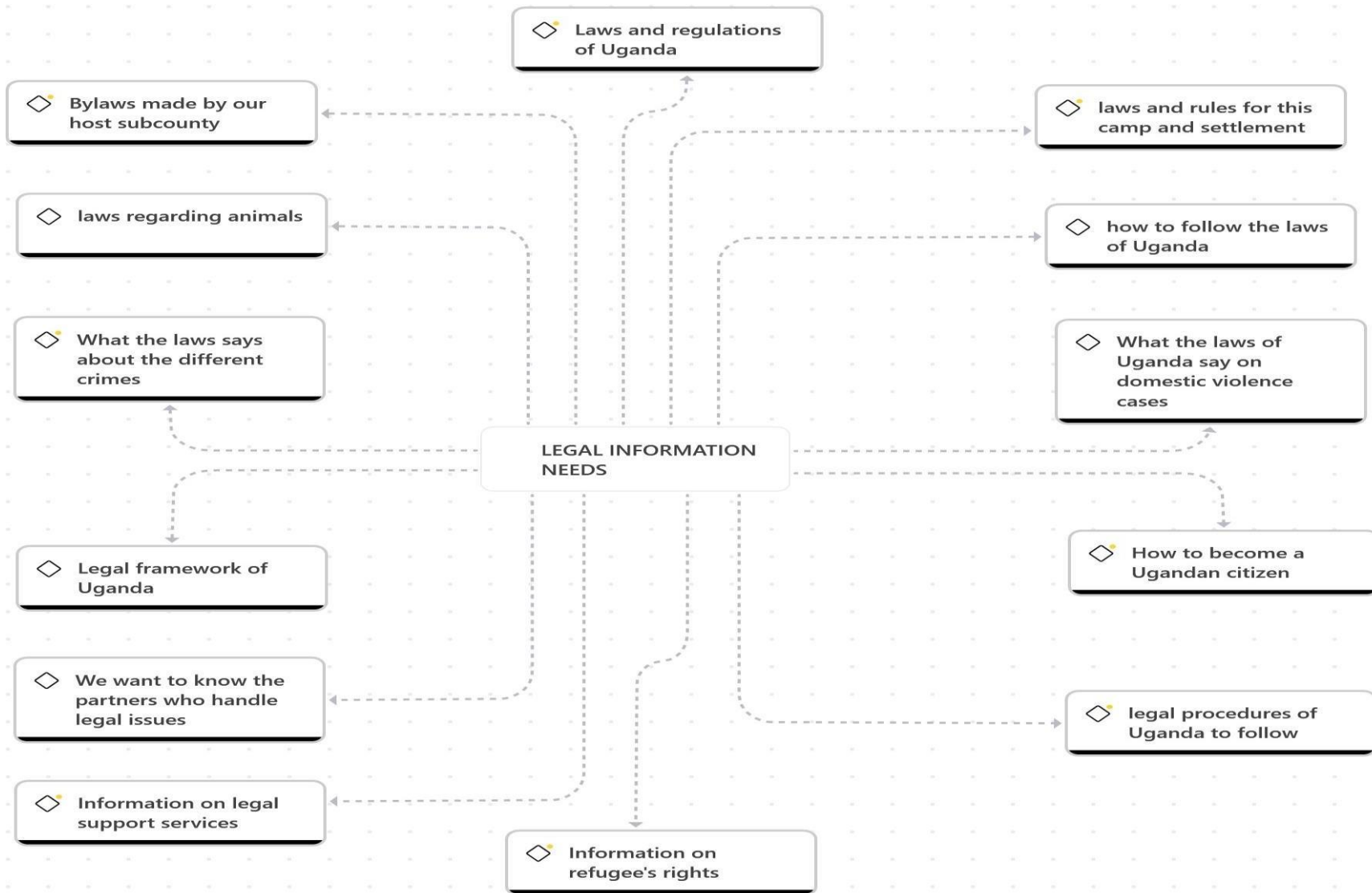


Figure 16 Legal information needs of refugees in North Western Uganda (Researcher 2024)

As illustrated in figure 16, refugees reported an array of information needs inclined to the legal realm during the individual and group interviews among which included the desire by some to understand the laws of Uganda especially since they claimed a distinction in the legal frameworks of their home country South Sudan and that of Uganda. In one of the interviews in a FGD with religious leaders, one participant asserted thus:

“Legal matters and policies in South Sudan where we come from are not the same as the laws in Uganda. Here for example issues of crime like rape and defilement are different because in our country girls get married at 15 or 16 but here it’s different and when you get a girl of 16, they say it is defilement. So, we need information on the laws of the country” (FGD 3, 2024).

Some of the refugees also sought information on citizenship registration in Uganda. They needed to know how they could legally become citizens of Uganda and some emphasised that they needed this information. They elaborated why they wanted to become citizens of Uganda. They cited the attractive peace in the country, the hospitality of the host community, as well as the desire to fully participate in livelihood as Ugandans. Additionally, some refugees wanted to become citizens of Uganda because of the refugee categories that had been created among them, the basis for which they received relief items. As such some of the refugees who had been placed in category 3 for Self-reliant refugees wanted this information on registering as citizens of Uganda. They wanted to understand whether their statuses would change if they registered and became Ugandan citizens. In one of the interviews, one participant said,

Many people ask information about how to register as citizens of the country. People are asking about the procedure for registering. They want to know when the registration will start. They also want to know what happens to their status when they register as citizens of Uganda. Do they remain as they are, or do they get support as Ugandans. Or do they give you just citizenships for a few years or it is permanent (Participant 28, 2024).

In the same spirit, another participant during an interview said:

I don't want to go back to South Sudan because the place is not peaceful at all and because our country is corrupt. I want information on how to become a Ugandan citizen because I want to be working and living here because there is peace and we are allowed to go anywhere in the country. I want to know about the opportunities that are here in Uganda and whether I can get a chance to work here (Participant 50, 2024).

Refugees had mixed feelings on registering as Uganda citizens. Although some refugees sought information on how to register to become Uganda citizens, others were surprised at the desire for their counterparts to register as Ugandan citizens. During an FGD with refugees, one elderly refugee emphatically insisted that they were all South Sudanese and that they would go back home one day. The refugees also sought information on their rights as refugees, information about partners that provided legal support services, information about what the law stipulated about domestic violence, and guidelines for following the laws in Uganda.

4.4.4 Education information needs

Refugees at Bidi Bidi settlement camp registered a wide range of information that they sought in line with education whether for self or child. They sought information on education to furnish themselves or dependents with the right strategies and approaches to their life while envisioning the brighter future when their lives as refugees ended and they returned to their home country South Sudan. Refugees that were parents had a number of information needs about the education for their children while in the settlement for the different levels of schooling from the Early Childhood Development (ECD) level normally referred to as nursery school or kindergarten, primary level, secondary education and later the university and tertiary level education. Some of the refugees were interested in information on the refugees' right to education. They sought this kind of information to gain assurance that their children had a right to education. In one of the interviews with administrators, an administrator in the OPM said,

"The refugees we host have the same rights as Ugandan citizens except for the rights of participating in the political activities of our country, land ownership, but

the other rights are the same” (Participant 24, 2024).

Some refugees sought information on where to access good education for their children, the benefits of education, how to get good education, information on education support services available for refugees as well as education opportunities for children since they knew the value of education in society as a key need in their lives to be in position to help their families. The education of children and youth was seen as the most important for some refugees because it laid a strong foundation for a better future if they returned to South Sudan with attained qualification that could benefit them and their relatives.

Refugees also sought information on scholarship and sponsorship opportunities available for them. It was observed that refugee parents and youths were more interested in information on available sponsorship and scholarship opportunities. They wanted to know the organisations that could offer scholarships for their children who performed well and passed in the first and second divisions in primary and secondary level education. It was noted in one of the interviews by one of the adult refugees who noted thus:

“In the education setting, you know people are behind and for us in South Sudan, we are behind in education but we want to know information on sponsorship and we want to know that the refugee children will not pay fees. Especially monthly payments. Here in the camp, they don’t pay school fees but they pay development fees like PTA. Now they say that donors are withdrawing from giving support, now people are looking for information on what is next after the donors have left. What is the way forward for the refugees in education” (Participant 24, 2024).

Seeking information on scholarships and sponsorship among refugees was one of the most sought kinds of information need in relation to education as explained in both individual and group interviews. Figure 17 highlights the different education information needs of refugees.

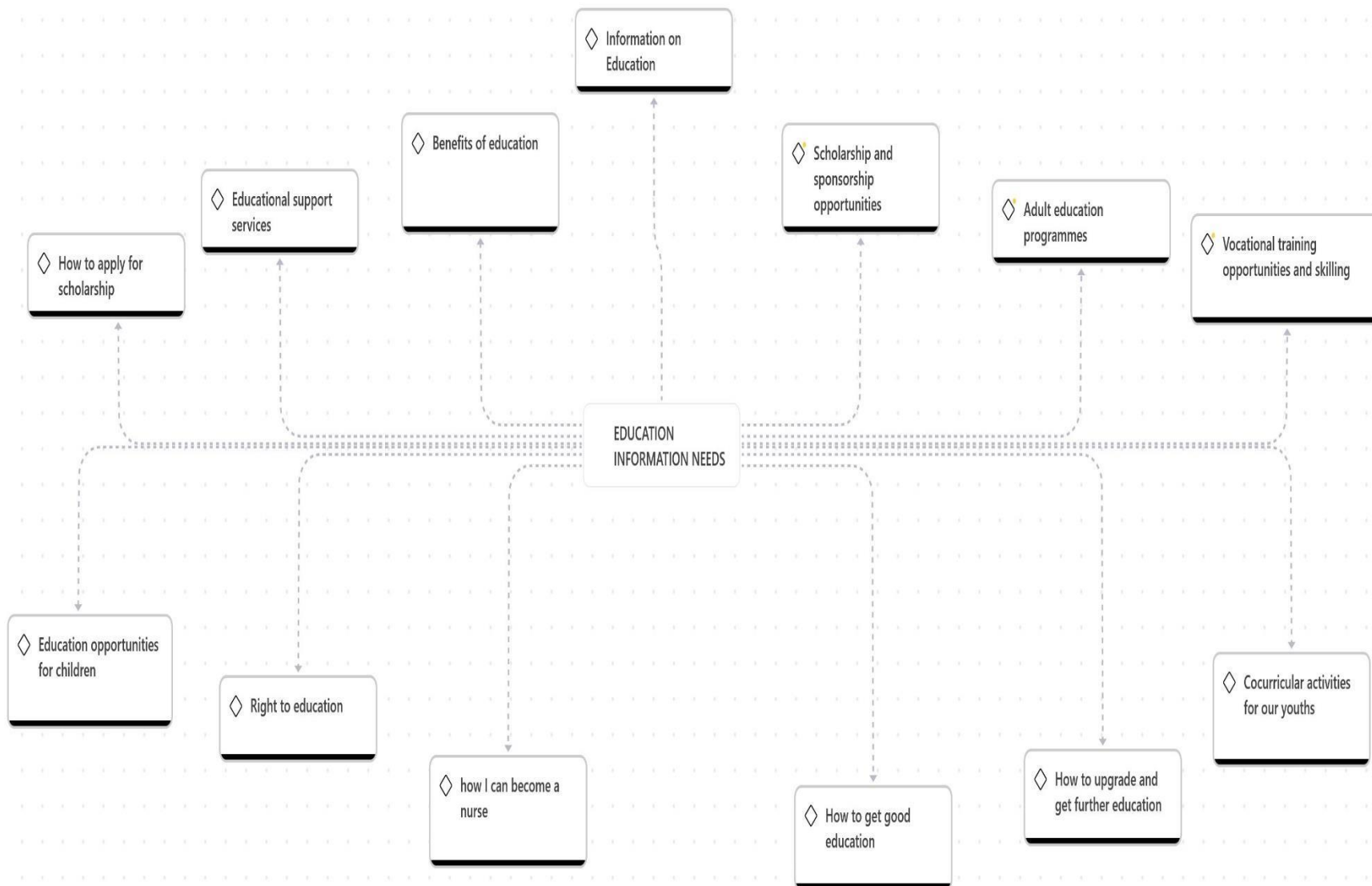


Figure 17 Education information needs of refugees in North Western Uganda (Researcher 2024)

As seen from figure 17, different information needs of refugees were associated to education. It was observed that both youth and refugees who were parents showed more seeking for information on education. Adults that had either dopped out of school or were just interested in school sought information on adult education. They wanted information on opportunities available for adult and continuing education so as to benefit from the opportunities and use the acquired skills in the future when they went back to South Sudan. It was pointed out by one of the adult refugees who was not in school at the moment that:

“We want information about adult literacy programmes because some of the people here dropped out of school early and they need this training because we have lost everything that when we go back, we shall start from zero. So, it requires us to go back there when at least we have some training, carpentry, you can drive a car, building and construction” (Participant 15, 2024).

Some adult refugees in the settlement reported the need for information on adult education programs available for them because they understood the value of education and that it did not know age or size, or tribe. This information need was registered across both male and female refugees. Indeed, one female refugee in the settlement lamented thus:

“I want to know how to get to school. I want to go to school and the education sector to be improved because there are people who came from South Sudan uneducated and need to go to school because even when you want to join adult education, they tell you to produce your primary seven slip which is a challenge because you don’t have it. I want to know how to go for adult education” (Participant 45, 2024).

Some refugees looked for information on vocational training and skilling opportunities while in the settlement. They identified the need for developing skills in carpentry, mechanics, baking as ways of helping them acquire skill in activities that could have a positive impact on their lives. The search for information on vocational skilling opportunities was visible in all the categories of refugees that participated in the study

including male, female, and youth. Indeed, in one of the FGDs with refugees' administrators who were also refugees, one participant said,

“We want information on vocational training opportunities for youth and women in Zone 1 such that even our girls and women can access” (FGD 2, 2024).

The refugees needed this information so that they would acquire skills which could be used as a source of income. They needed information on whether there were organisations that could start up vocational schools for them in the settlement. Information on vocational training and skilling was also sought because there were refugee students who had attended secondary school but could not further their studies because there were no vocational training opportunities in the settlement unless they went to other places away from the settlement like in Arua and Yumbe districts. This was only possible if they had money, something they lacked.

As illustrated in figure 18, the most sought information on education among all refugees that took part in the study was information on scholarships and sponsorship, followed by information on vocational training opportunities and skilling.

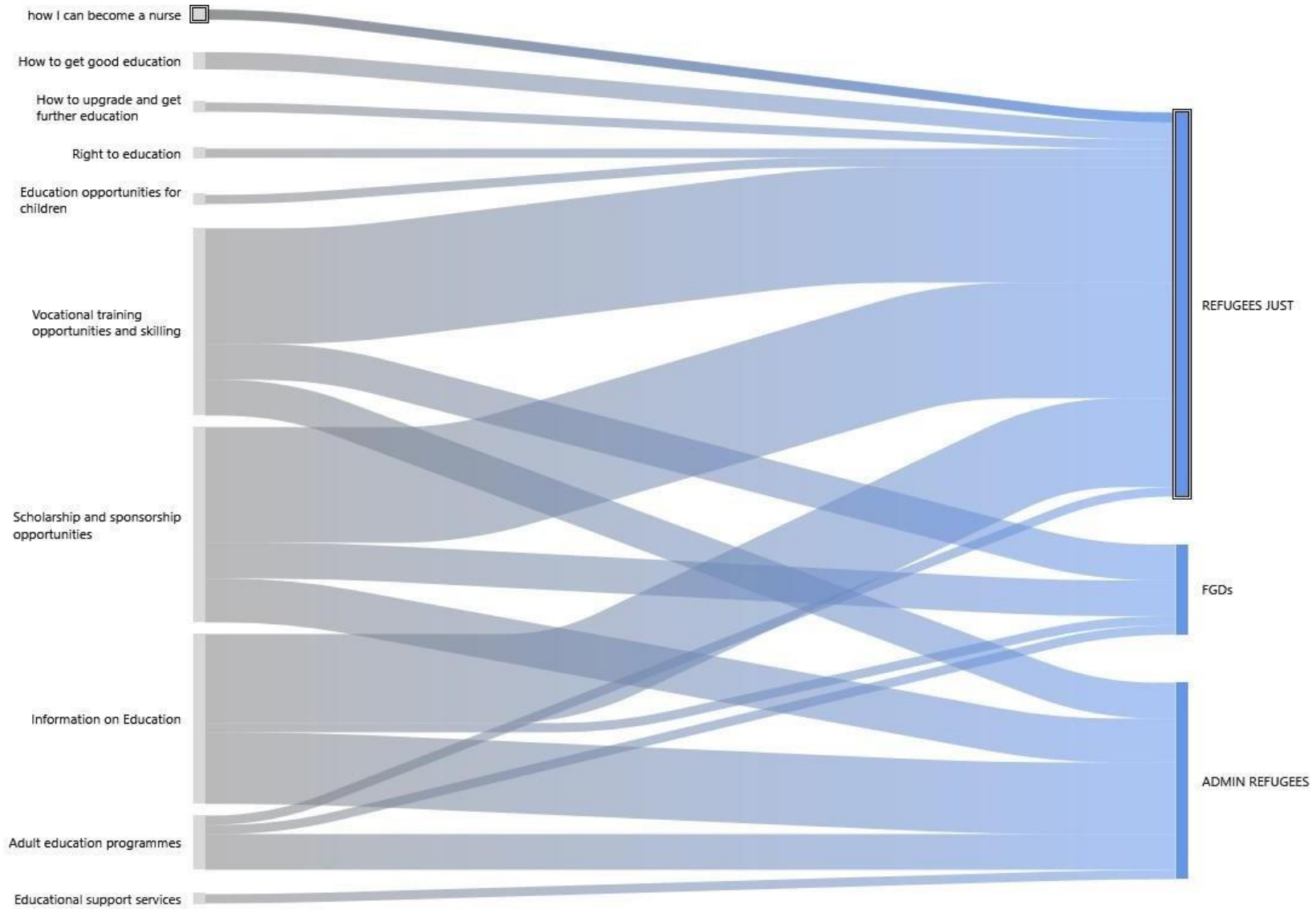


Figure 18 Education information needs across the categories of refugees in the study (Researcher 2024)

School going refugees also sought information on co-curricular activities such as athletics and football. They wanted to know about sports especially athletics and its rules to enable them participate in athletics competitions. One of the refugees in our interaction in a FGD with youth pointed out,

“I want information on how I can get involved in games like football which is good for us. I want to know which organisations are organizing competitions or talents and what is required of me to also participate in the tournament” (FGD 1, 2024).

4.4.5 Peace and security information needs

Refugees at Bidi Bidi settlement camp sought for information pertaining to their security and peaceful being and living in the community. They sought information that helped them to understand aspects of peace and security that would affect them both directly and indirectly. It was found that peace was a concern of all the refugee categories that were involved in the study whether youth, adult, male or female. Refugees in the settlement were faced with a number of dilemmas, conflicts, violence and future expectation of peace which made them seek information on peace and security in their community.

Living together as people from different backgrounds and cultures may not breed a good environment for peaceful living. It was reported that although refugees had been sensitised over and over on the need for peaceful living, the home root causes of the conflict protruded and extended their roots and branches into the settlement in which some cases resulted into conflict and violence amongst themselves. In one of the interviews, it was pointed out:

Information on how to maintain peace and security among each other in the settlement is looked for. It is difficult because here in Uganda it is okay but you may find some occasional fights as a result of tribalism in the settlement. Sometimes people here attack their colleagues in the camp because of what has happened back home. So, people want to know what has happened in their home countries to know whether they are safe from their colleagues. If back home in South Sudan one tribe attacks another village or tribe and kills them, when this information is got on social media here, you find that there can be infighting within

the camp here as a result of those killings back home. This affects the, harmony, cohesions, the peace among us here. People have been eating together, working together, staying together, but immediately this information start trickling in, you find people are not at peace with each other (Participant 13, 2024).

Due to the history between the refugees of Bidi Bidi settlement camp, many questions were asked by the refugees, and much information was sought by them. Refugees sought information on issues of domestic violence in their community on issues like rape, defilement and women abuse. They sought information on how to deal with domestic violence. The women, especially, wanted to know who to report to in secret, what was required of them when reporting a case of abuse and where to start from. Although domestic violence was part of communities, the refugees had been sensitised on domestic violence issues and its repercussions by the OPM which was responsible for the refugees. They sought this information on how to deal with domestic violence, which affected them and disturbed their peace.

Refugees also sought information on how to live peacefully in the community or camp which they currently called home. They sought information on how to live peacefully with the host communities and how to avoid altercations between them and the host community. They also sought information on protection issues especially with their children and how they would protect their children against violence and other crime in their settlement.

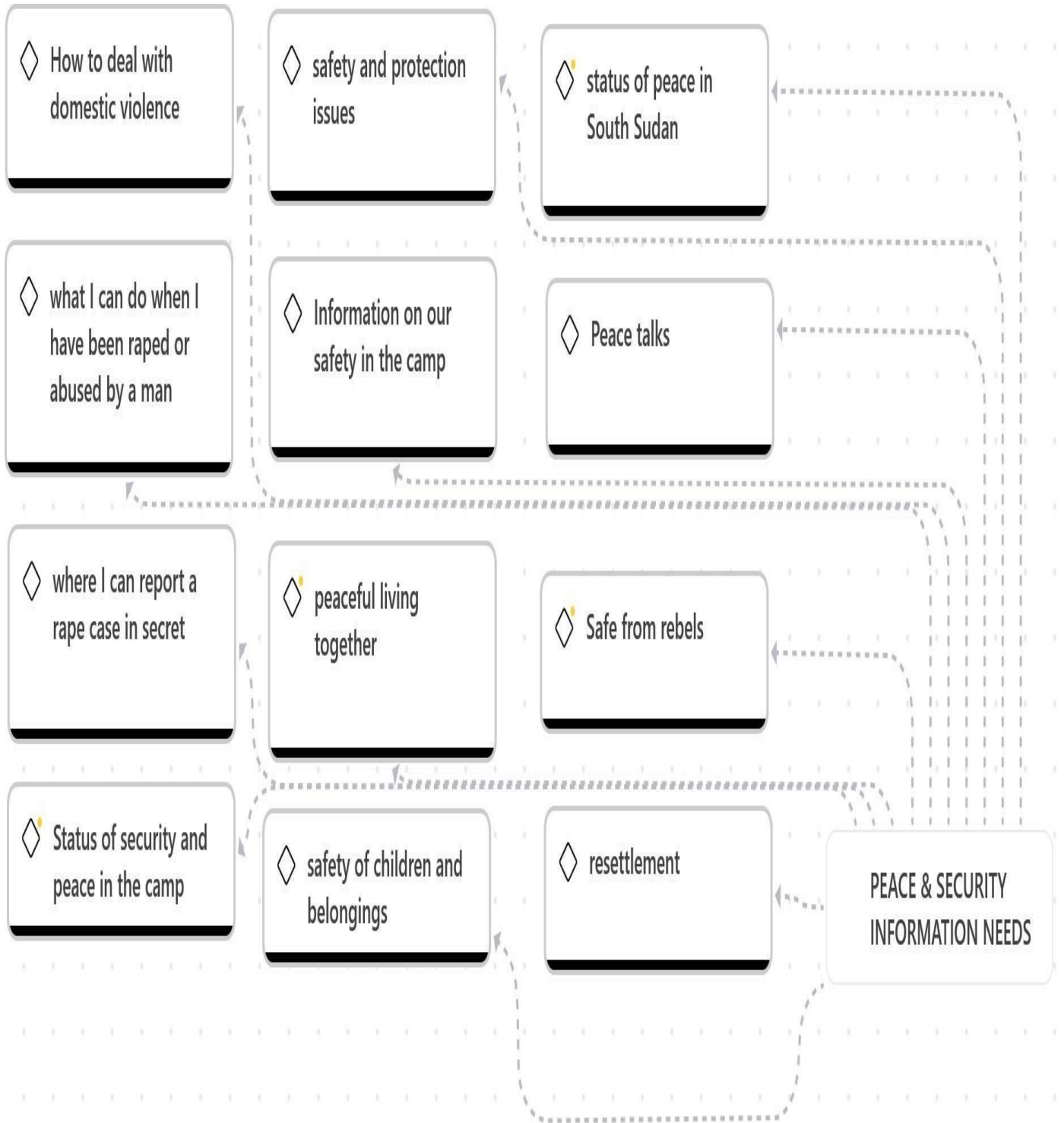


Figure 19 Peace and security information needs of refugees in North Western Uganda (Research 2024)

Information needs on peace and security cut across all categories of people who lived in the settlement. As seen in the figure 19, refugees also sought information on the status of peace in their home country South Sudan. They wanted to know about the peace talks that happen in South Sudan between the different rebel groups and the government in power. They wanted to know if peace talks took place or happened. They wanted to know the points of agreement reached during the peace talks. They wanted information on when the next peace talks would be taking place and the different parties involved. They also wanted to know whether the UN was taking part in the peace talks for the peace of their home country. Youths, men and women were all asking these questions and wanted information on the progress of peace talks. One of the refugees stressed that the UNHCR should do more to ensure that peace returned to their home country. This participant said,

“We need peace. I want UNHCR to talk to our country that we need peace. We need peace in our country because UNHCR can go anywhere and talk about peace. We need peace in our country so that we go back. Because here you want to dig but you cannot get a very good place to dig” (Participant 6, 2024).

On the issue of peace in their home country South Sudan, another female participant lamented thus:

“We just think and plan to go back to our country because maybe in your country, maybe you can get a school, and maybe you can work. Even the husband can work, and then you can get money and pay for children at school. But here you can pay money and the children some they do not perform well because there is a lot of hunger. I want to know whether there is peace back home so that I can go back home” (Participant 16, 2024).

Refugees sought information on the status of peace in their home country. They were cognizant of the fact that the peace processes in conflict affected areas took time to be resolved but continued to seek this information. They wanted to hear that the war was over and that people could return home.

There were refugees who also sought information on resettlement programmes of the UNHCR and the OPM especially if they were living in fear and hiding. There were categories of these refugees who served as soldiers and were being followed by either their country or rebel groups. This category of refugees sought information on resettlement for security and safety purposes. Although they sought information on resettlement for security purposes, some refugees sought this kind of information to search for better opportunities in their lives. They wanted to know the criteria that were followed for resettlement. They also wanted to know the procedure for changing from one refugee camp to another like from Bidi Bidi to Rhino camp.

Generally, in both individual and group interviews, some refugees sought information on security and peace so as to feel safe and free. They sought information on movement of rebels to be sure they were safe because it was reported that some people were killed by rebels from South Sudan. This happened when they went out of the settlement, and the rebels realised they were coming from a settlement. They also sought information on peaceful living in the settlement as well as information on child protection, protection of belongings and self while in the camp because they stayed near the borders of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and South Sudan which had many rebels.

4.4.6 Health Information Needs

The health issues of refugees in Bidi Bidi settlement camp gave rise to a number of questions and as a result, a series of information about health was sought. Given the structure and setting of the settlement in which refugees were settled in villages, clusters and zones, the settlement was very big but refugees' households were crowded in specific spaces. It was observed that there was overcrowding in the settlement which also had a bearing on the health aspect of the refugees in this settlement. As they dribbled through the life challenges brought by their plight, refugees were faced with a series of health issues including the status of the health centre, issues of hygiene, crowding, water scarcity, food scarcity, and disease. These issues in general were responsible for the health of the refugees. Their presence or absence influenced the nature of information the refugees sought in line with their health.

Refugees had a wide range of health information needs in the settlement. Through individual and groups interviews, it was found that refugees sought information about the different activities and services which were offered at the health centre in the community. The settlement had a health centre called Bidi Bidi health centre IV which was located in Zone 1 in the settlement. The health centre served both the host community and the refugees. Refugees sought information on what the health centre offered them in form of services and activities. For example, the refugees wanted information on the mobile clinic program and where they could find the mobile clinic. They looked for information on the kind of health support available for single mothers. They also wanted information about the means of transport available for emergencies. The refugees said that although the services at the health centre were free, they needed information on them.

Refugees looked for information on family planning. It was reported by one OPM administrator that Information on proper family planning was necessary for the refugees because of the situation and circumstance in which they lived was not good. They therefore needed to plan for their families better. They thus asked for information on family planning. They sought information on the available methods of family planning and which methods were safe. In an interview with one of the participants, he said,

“We need to know the safe family planning methods to use. You find that some organisations come here with just one or two methods and you have no choice because it is what they have. And they will want you to side with them and if you don’t side with them, it will appear as if you are backward or you are not well informed. So, I think we need more information here on family planning methods. The information should be given and it’s up to the person to choose what she wants. We want information about the advantages and disadvantages of the different methods or the choice you want to take for family planning so that the person can evaluate both sides and choose what is best for them” (Participant 13, 2024).

Refugees also sought information on maternal health in which they wanted to know about antenatal care during pregnancy. This information was essential for mothers or expecting mothers to ensure health and safe deliveries for self and baby respectively. One of the officers in OPM pointed out that refugees were sensitised about maternal health and were encouraged to always visit health centres. Refugees, because of the circumstances available with health centres where they have complained about absence of drugs, sought information on alternative means of treatment including the use of herbs. They sought information about herbs and herbalists. They wanted to know how to use herbs to treat their ailments for self or children. They wanted information on traditional medicine to use because the health centre lacked most drugs. Indeed, one respondent pointed out that they wanted information on the traditional medicine used to treat malaria and measles. They sought information on where to find local doctors (traditional herbalists) to get treatment for self and children. They sought information on the available private health centres that were cost friendly to them and could offer the treatment they needed.

Some female refugees sought information on how to make sanitary towels to use during menstruation. These were either mothers or female youth that looked for this kind of information. One female youth said that as a girl getting pads was not easy because the parents said they lacked money to buy sanitary towels and therefore she needed information on how to make sanitary pad. As seen in figure 20, health information needs were the most sought information as per the study findings.

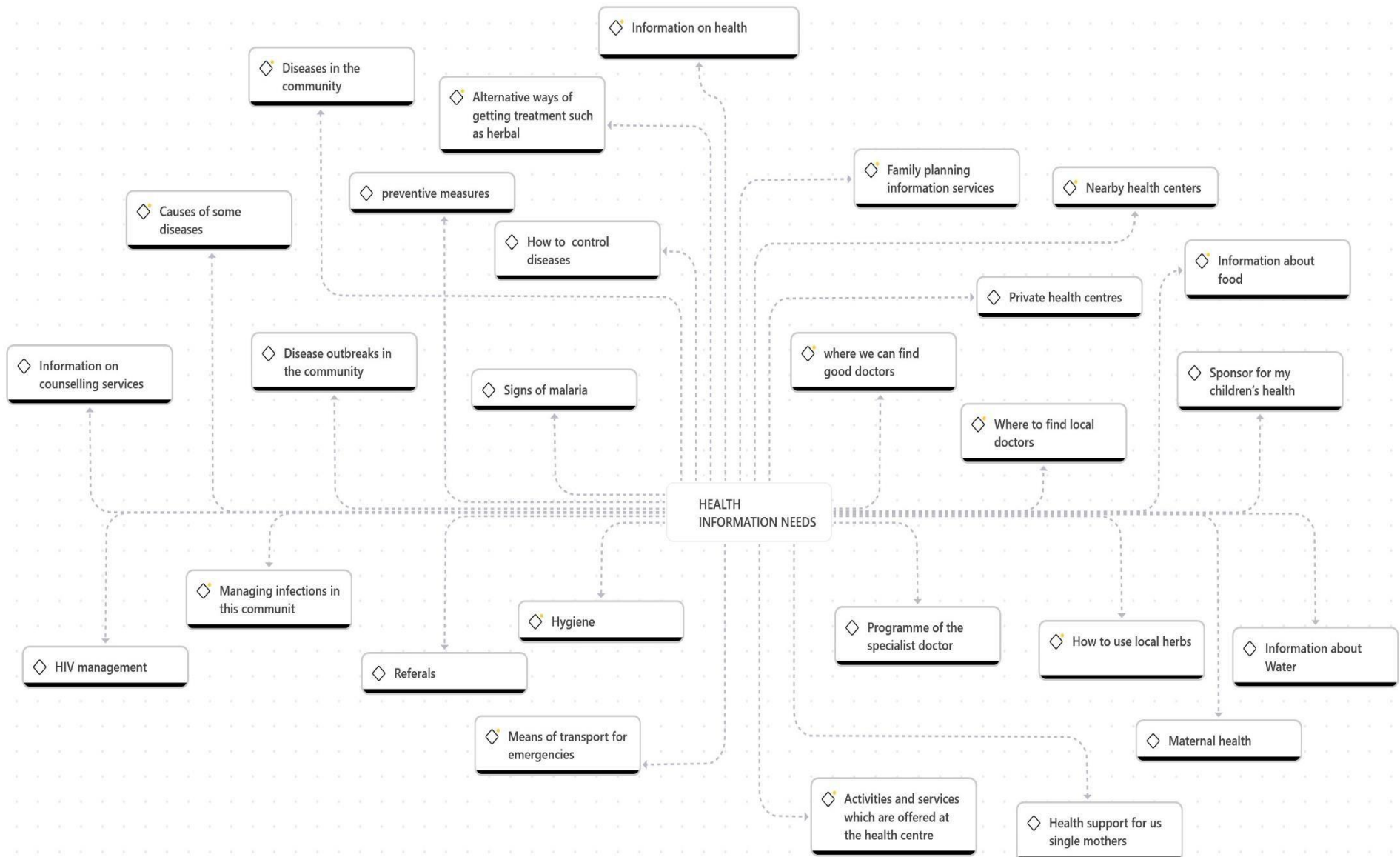


Figure 20 Health information needs of refugees in North Western Uganda (Researcher 2024)

In line with health, the refugees sought information on food and water. Food and water were essential ingredients in their health. However, it was noted that there were many questions asked by refugees regarding food and water. Food was very important for a healthy body but it was revealed during the study that relief aid in form of food from WFP had been reduced greatly and that some refugees were removed from the list of beneficiaries of food relief. In an interview with an officer with the OPM, it was found that there were reductions in the food basket especially as a result of the world terrain on peace and conflict which put a lot of strain and pressure on the UN. As such profiling of refugees was done to determine those that would benefit from the relief items and those that would be categorised as self-reliant. Food rations were also reduced per person per month as of this reporting period. This scenario kept the refugees on the lookout, and in constant seeking of information about food relief.

Refugees wanted information on whether the UN would add on the amount of food they got. Some sought information on whether they would be reconsidered for food relief especially refugees in category 3 who were profiled as self-reliant. They wanted information on the processes for registering for relief aid while some refugees were seeking information on whether food quantities given to refugees in relief aid would increase. They were also seeking information on alternative sources of food for their children. In one of the interviews, a participant pointed out thus:

“We want to know how to find and get enough food for our children. As child has a lot of needs like a child has to eat yet here, we only have one diet. We want to know information on supplementary foods which are supposed to be given to children” (Participant 3, 2024).

Similarly, access to water in the settlement was highlighted as one of the other challenges they faced which resulted in many questions and information seeking on water supplies. Notably, the absence of water was considered a health issue as water was seen to contribute to hygiene and wellbeing in homes. Refugees looked for information on the implementing partners who were responsible for water in the settlement, they asked for information on what the leaders were doing about the water problem in the community

and they wanted to know when technicians would come to fix the water problem. They looked for information on alternative sources of water in the settlement since the taps were not functioning. During interviews, one of the participants had this to say:

“We want to hear information about water because some of the villages have water but because of the funds they are saying they are reducing the taps and other boreholes have broken down. For example, most villages lack water. Here in this village, we had 2 boreholes and 7 taps, but 1 bore hole has broken down and all 7 taps are not working. We want to find out if there are people or other organisations that can come and help us with water” (Participant 15, 2024).

Regarding health, refugees also sought information on diseases out breaks, information on managing infections, information on HIV management, causes of disease and preventive measures that could be adopted by refugees, information on counselling services available and where to find them as well as signs and symptoms of malaria.

4.4.7 Other information needs

From the data in both individual and group interviews, there were other kinds of information that were sought by these refugees in the settlement. Some refugees especially youth were interested in information on recreational activities which were essential in their lives. The youth wanted information on recreational places in their community such that they could use these places to get together and share with fellow refugees in happiness. The youths also looked for information on entertainment which they could enjoy amongst themselves. It was found out that the information they wanted on entertainment was about the form of games and sports available for them as well as music and movies. In an interview with one of the youths at the settlement, it was noted thus:

“We want to know about places where we can come together as youth to discuss and interact and share our experiences. We need information about the existing recreational centres where we can meet and also play music and dance together. Even if we are refugees, we need some entertainment among us where we can listen and enjoy some peaceful songs and music. We need to know where these

places for use are located. If there is that place then we can come together and we also smile and rejoice together” (Participant 12, 2024).

Youthful refugees also sought information on the changes in their body and how to manage adolescence. They wanted information that could enable them get through the adolescence stage. They sought information on the measures they could adopt to prevent and control themselves from the dangers of adolescence.

Information on self-migration back to South Sudan was also sought by the refugees. They wanted to know how they could go back home given the predicament they found themselves in. One of the participants in a FGD with religious leaders pointed out,

“We want some information to aid our self-migration back home. Some partners have withdrawn which has left a big negative impact on us so you find some people self-migrating back home because most of us don’t have jobs. Since the road was opened people began to travel back to South Sudan and those who travelled back began telling people they left here that South Sudan is now good so some people began self-migration because of the situation here as a result of frustration. They quietly ask information on how they can go back home. Many are going back to South Sudan but leaving their children because they now compare this current situation where there is no support from partners and the rumours that South Sudan is now okay, so they say I better leave” (FGD 3, 2024).

Other information needs recorded from the refugees included seeking information on registration as refugees especially if there were changes in the procedures used in registration. They also looked for information on how they could go abroad or in “outside countries”. They wanted to know how they could be supported to go outside Uganda to another country like in Asia and Europe. In one of the FGD with refugee administrators who also doubled as refugees, one participant said,

“People want to know about how people have been taken outside of the camp and have gone to another country outside Uganda. People want information on how one can also go outside of the country Uganda. They want to know how they can

be supported to go outside countries. It happens in Rhino camp where they take people to Asia, UK but it does not happen here. So, people want to know how different Bidi Bidi is from other camps” (FGD 2, 2024).

The use of technology in the settlement raised information needs of refugees in this aspect. Although information needs on technology were not common, some youth and adult males wanted information on how to use technology. Information on how to use computers and technology in general was sought by some refugees. One adult refugee pointed out that they needed information on how to use technology and that most of the refugees didn't know how to use the technologies and that they needed this information in plenty because their initiation in the use of technologies was a problem. It was also found that most youths needed information on how to use tablets which were provided at the youth centres. Some of the refugees who owned smart phones or had access to a smart phone sought information on how to effectively use them to communicate. They sought information on how to get affordable or free internet connection. In an interview, a participant said,

“I need information on how to get free or cheap data bundles or wireless connection to go to the internet. There are a few people who own phones and majority don't own a smart phone although I do own one” (Participant 43, 2024).

Since the youth centres in the settlement had tablets connected to the internet, youth wanted information on how to utilize them to get information. They wanted to know how to utilise the tablets to find scholarships and how to apply for them. It was observed that tablets in the youth centres were made available to all youth that wanted to use them. Youth wanted to know how to use them to meet their information needs. In one of the interviews with one of the refugee administrators who was also a refugee, he said,

“The youth centres have tablets which are used by the youth who don't have smart phones to search the internet. There is Wi-Fi which is free for the refugees. We want to know how to use computers especially the youth want to learn how to use tablets to access the internet” (Participant 3, 2024).

Generally, the information needs of refugees in North Western Uganda were diverse and varied in some instances depending on the category of the refugee. However, most information needs identified were seen across the different categories of refugees whether youth, adult, female or male. The health information needs were more visible among the refugees compare to the other kinds of information needs. The predicament in which they lived and survived called for information both for survival and in some instances for enjoyment and fun through entertainments and sports.

4.5 Information sources for refugees in North Western Uganda.

The study sought to establish the information sources for refugees in North Western Uganda specifically at Bidi Bidi refugee settlement in which different sources were established and recorded. From the findings based on individual and group interviews as well as non participant observation techniques, different themes emerged in the aspect of formal and informal sources, individual or persons, community centres and media-based sources were established.

It was found that refugees referenced different sources of information ranging from media based to organisations and persons. As seen in figure 21, the sources of information used by refugees comprised individuals and or persons in the community who included leaders in the settlement like local leaders, religious leaders, friends and family members, relatives including those from South Sudan which was their country of origin, neighbours as well as children in schools. Children in school were seen as a source of information for parents who remained at home while children were in school. School going children captured the information shared at school through their teachers and visiting partners. In turn, they became sources of information for their parents especially on issues concerning education such as scholarship and sponsorship opportunities. For some refugee parents, they asked their children what transpired at school and if there was any information shared with them for their livelihood. In one of the individual interviews, one participant noted thus:

“Our children tell us what has been said at school that is important for us as refugees. sometimes when our children tell us this information, we can ask the chairman or RWC if they know something about it. sometimes information on scholarships and

sponsorship is shared at school to our children” (Participant 5, 2024)

Through observation, refugees were seen engaging different people in their quest for information to meet their needs. Visibly important in the observations was the constant visit of refugees to the homes of their village chairpersons and religious leaders in the settlements. Refugees continuously flocked the homes of their leaders in search for information on several issues.

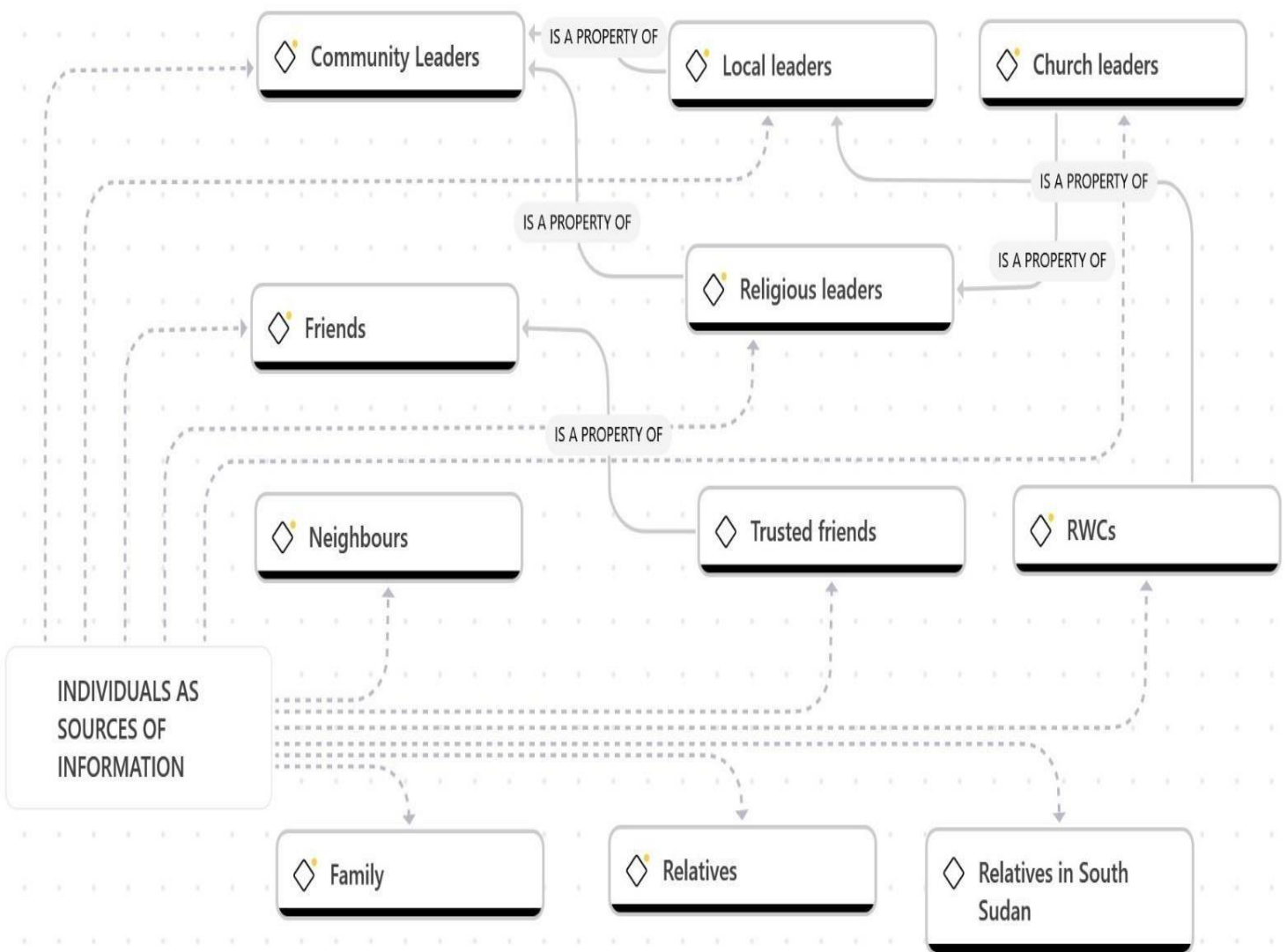


Figure 21 Persons as sources of information for refugees in North Western Uganda (Researcher 2024)

Refugees also sought information from media sources especially from radio stations, internet, social media, notices and posters as well as newspapers. The radio station Bidi Bidi FM was the main media source of information followed by internet for those that could access it either from the youth centre using tablets or those that had smart phones and could access wireless connections installed in the settlement as well as through subscription to internet data bundles. Bidi Bidi FM was instrumental for some refugees especially regarding information on current affairs and the state of peace in their home country South Sudan. The Radio aired in the community and was used by all categories of refugees whether they owned a radio or listening to those that belonged to their neighbours. Some of the refugees owned radios and were able to listen to the news whereas those without radio would listen to those of others. One of the administrators at the OPM, in an interview, pointed out,

“Bidi Bidi FM is now set up and it was put up to help refugees access information. So, they call in and get a lot of information. And when there is a program, many people call in to get information” (Participant 23, 2024).

Refugees with access to smart phones, tablets and the internet also used social media as a source of information especially for news about South Sudan. They used Facebook and WhatsApp to seek and share information although the level of trust in this information was low. Indeed, it was observed from the interviews that refugees were slow in trusting information they got from social media unless they trusted the person giving the information. Notices and posters were commonly used in the community on signpost, electricity poles, building and structures as well as notice boards at the community centres. Through observation, the presence of notices and posters was confirmed as a source of information for refugees especially for those that could read and interpret pictures. Posters were seen in different languages especially in Kakwa and English. Some posters had photographic illustrations of the messages being passed on to the refugees.

Newspapers were the least used media source of information as they were rare in the community except in some schools and women’s centre where newspapers surfaced once in a while. It was also noted that refugees who had smartphones and access to internet would access online newspapers. Newspapers like the “Street Talk” and “New

Vision” were once in a while got in the primary and secondary school. In an interview with one student, it was pointed out that the New Vision was accessible for them at school to read and then returned after. By means of observation, newspapers were not seen with anyone in the settlement except at the OPM refugees administrators’ offices.

As seen in figure 22, there were community centres and spaces in the settlement that refugees used as sources of information for their needs. The partners of OPM established a refugee support centre commonly referred to by the refugees as “the Complaints Desk” where refugees could pick information on different aspects of their life especially protection issues. Refugees also had youth centres for all youths and were set up in different clusters, Women’s centres for women to access information on different aspects of life as well as skilling, the health centre, Bidi Bidi Health centre IV for health information seeking as well as the Office of the prime Minister (OPM) where refugees sometimes though rarely moved directly to seek information on issues of registrations, resettlement and clarifications on their profiled statuses. In an interview with one of the refugee participants, who also was an administrator, it was pointed out that,

“Some refugees go to OPM to get information on how they can hide themselves or to take them for resettlement. How to get to safe place where they can be hidden” (Participant 1, 2024).

By means of observation, there was constant presence of refugees at youth centres as compared to women centres an indication that youth were more versatile in their information seeking and that the youth centre had on demand services. There was little activity seen at the women centre. In one of the group interviews, one of the participants expressed happiness about the youth centres as a source of information . The Participant pointed out,

“We use the youth centre for interactions as youth like meetings, discussions and internet access because they give us tablets. At the youth centre you can access the tablet and you can be given a tablet for at least 2 hours and you use the internet. We register for the tablets and then after using, we return them to the in-charge. There is a timetable that is followed to use tablets from 9.00am to 1 pm and then from 2pm to 4pm in cluster 2. And it is open from Monday to Sunday from 7.30am to 5pm at least in cluster one” (FGD 4, 2024)

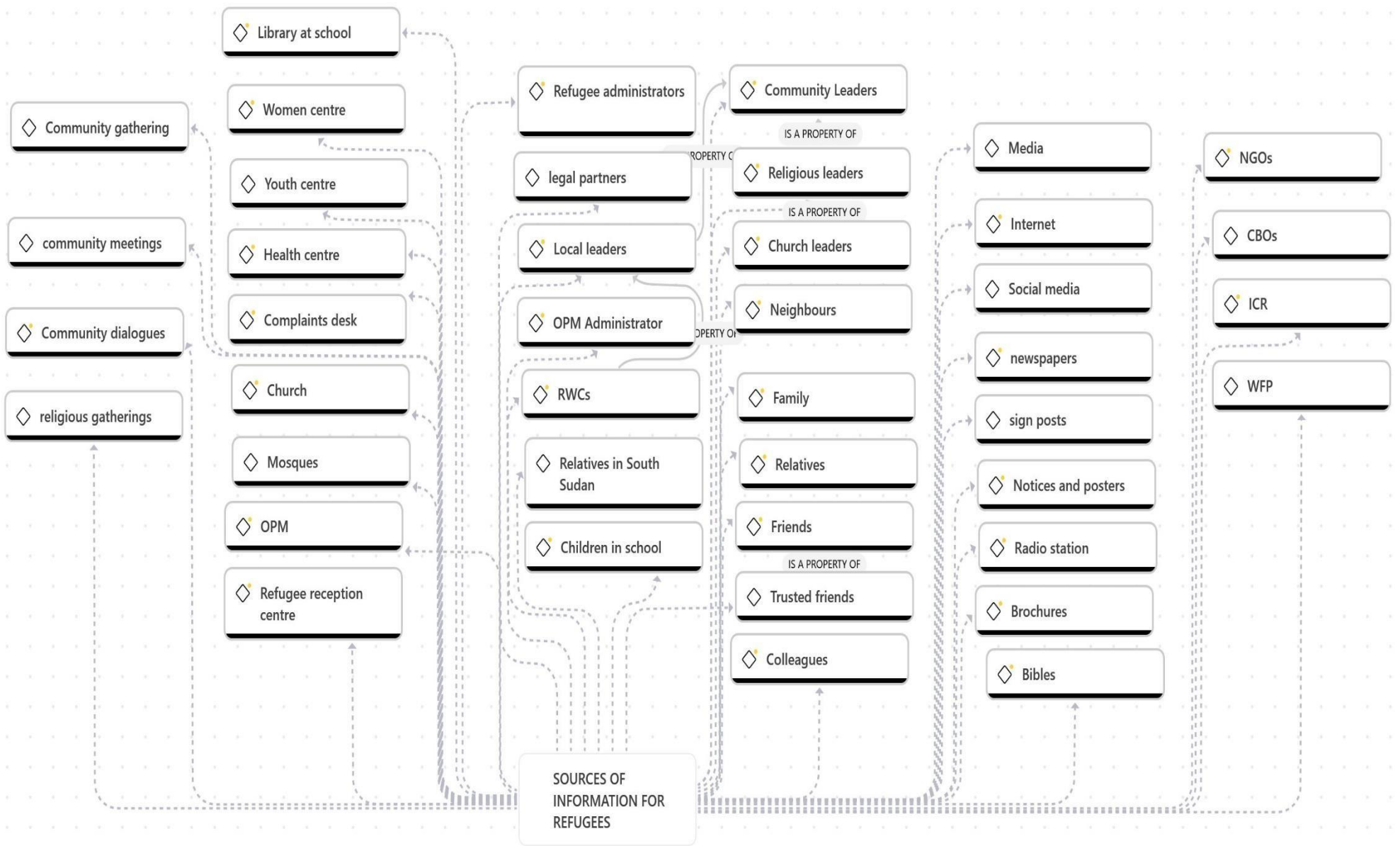


Figure 22 Sources of information for refugees in North Western Uganda (Researcher 2024)

Some refugees also relied on community gathering and functions where information is passed on to them by the leaders including OPM officials, partners, as well as local leaders. Community gatherings were the form of dialogue meetings, ceremonies, funerals as well as church services. The leaders use these gathering to pass on information to the community members while allowing the refugees to ask for information on their needs and wants. It was found that announcements were made in church at the end of every service as a source of information for the refugees. Although both individual and group interview data shows presence of community gatherings as sources of information, these were not seen or observed in the period of data collection.

As seen in figure 22, the word library, though not very visible in our discussions during data collection, was another source of information identified for some refugees. Libraries in schools were used by school going children and adults as a source of information specifically related to the school curriculum. It was found that one primary school and one secondary school in the community had libraries in which textbooks would be accessed for school and responding to take home assignments given by teachers. One of the school going refugee in an interview during a FGD with youths pointed out,

“We have a library at school. We have textbooks which you can use in the library. They can give you books like for two days and then you return the books to the library in school” (FGD 1, 2024).

The libraries were specific for school going refugees in which they could access books that supported the running curriculum. It was found out during the interviews that some schools did not have libraries and the community of refugees lacked a central library facility where they would pick some information on general awareness like newspapers. This was as well observed that the community lacked a public library facility for refugees. However, some children in school had the opportunity to access some text books to guide them in their class work and assignments. There was inclination seen among the refugees to their worship centres, complaint desk, local leaders and radio as the most used sources of information as seen in figure 23. Refugees adopted and used these sources of information more compared to the other sources in the settlement.

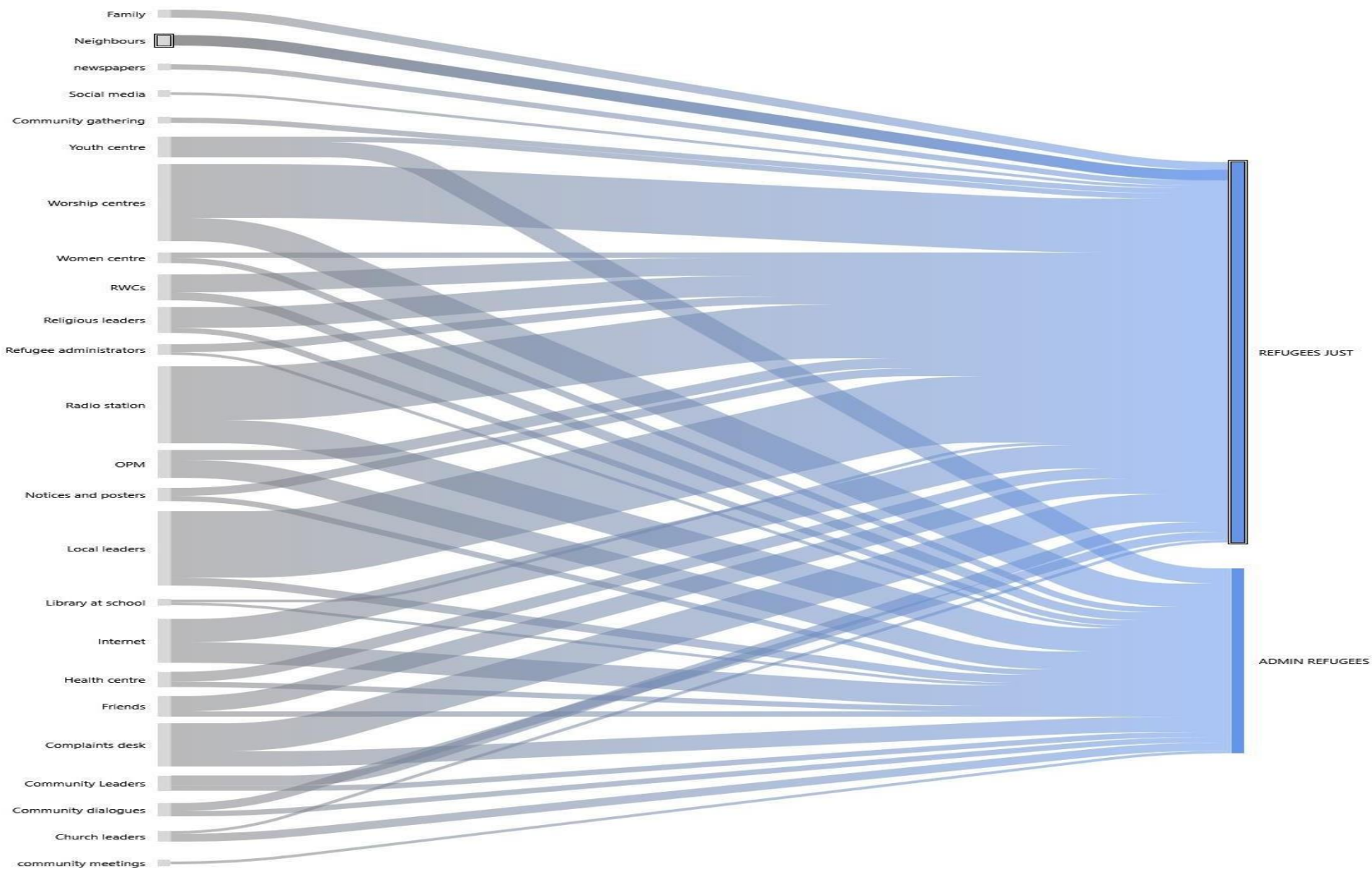


Figure 23 Distribution of information sources use among refugees in North Western Uganda (Researcher 2024)

In the process of seeking information and using different sources, refugees used tools such as tablets at the youth centre to access the internet, small button phones to communicate with each other and share information were possible. The leaders used public address systems and loud speaker mega phones to pass on information around the village. Smart phones were used for making calls to seek or share information and searching the internet. It was observed in the study that the use of smart phones among the refugee community was too low as most of them who owned phones had small button phones. The poor penetration of smart phones among these refugees affected their seeking and use of information. Another tool used in seeking and sharing information was the toll-free line phones that were installed by the OPM partners at refugee support centres to help refugees that wanted to make contact with their relatives in South Sudan or contact other partners directly especially with issues of protection and crime including reporting domestic violence cases in secret and privately. During interviews with participants, one participant said,

“Some refugees get the toll-free line for UNHCR, in case they wanted to ask something about food, they get a toll-free line of WFP. May be child protection, they get those toll-free lines from the complaints desk. Sometimes people just get those lines and, in most cases, they just communicate direct” (Participant 1, 2024).

Refugees had varying views on what they preferred as their trusted source of information as seen in the figure 24. Refugees held divergent opinions on the trust allocated to different sources of information. As seen in figure 24, radio, church, RWCs, and complaints desk were the most trusted sources of information respectively. However, it should be noted that in the interviews, some refugees indicated that they did not trust information from these sources as well.

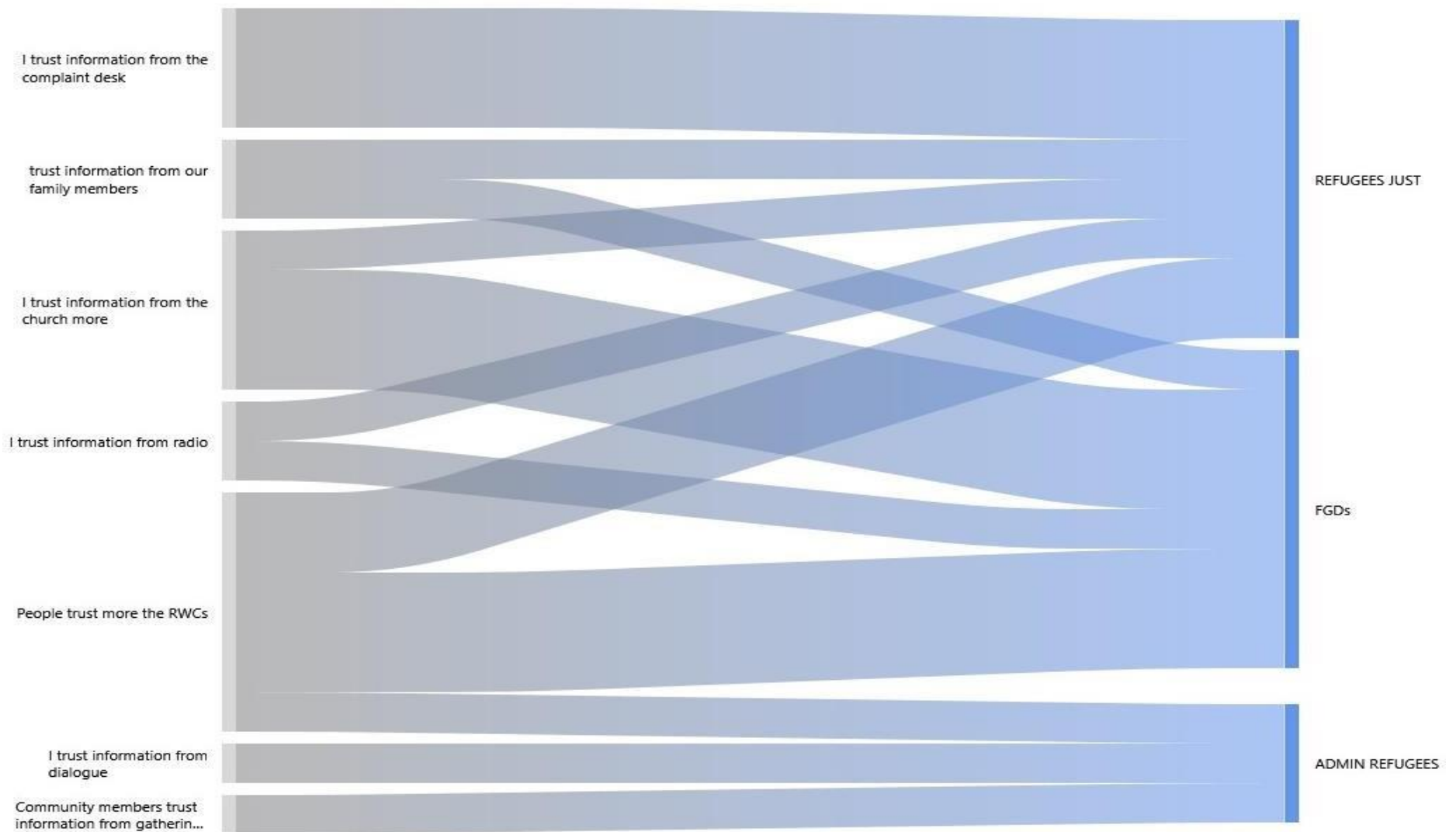


Figure 24 trusted information sources among refugees in North Western Uganda (Researcher 2024)

4.6 Information seeking behaviour of refugees in North Western Uganda

It was reported that access to information was a constitutional right for the refugees in Uganda as they enjoyed all rights enjoyed by Ugandans except for participation in political activities and land ownership. The refugees of Bidi Bidi settlement camp showed varying approaches to information access and the status or category of refugee had a big bearing on the information seeking behaviour that was exhibited in them. Refugees sought information from various information sources as explained in 4.5 including individuals, media, libraries, at community gatherings, and community centres while exhibiting different behaviour patterns.

Some refugees sought information passively without necessarily asking questions or asking the information they wanted. They passively acquired information even unconsciously especially during announcements in the villages as well as listening out to other people in the community speaking about different issues. They passively consumed information, and sometimes acted on it through responding to it such as when there were community meetings and gatherings. There were many refugees who accessed information passively especially as a result of frustration and fear to ask while others were naturally passive information seekers. In an interview with one of the participants, she pointed out,

“The information finds me here. I don’t go there looking for information unless it is a big problem like health issue if my child is sick. The neighbours and friends come here and I hear them talking about some things, or sometimes the people who move around with public address. I am tired, I am very tired. Because there is nothing” (Participant 6, 2024).

Some participants reported that they sought information passively because of frustration, fear, anger, or lacked hope while others sought information passively due to their nature being. Passive information seeking was also seen in situation where refugees were given flyers or brochures in church, passively listening to radio, or passively attending community gathering and dialogues. It was found out during interviews that some refugees never asked questions or asked for information during community meeting or at the complaints desk even in the face of personal problems.

On the contrary, it was found that most refugees were active in their information seeking behaviour. They actively engaged in asking questions and making requests for the information they needed. They went where they thought the information they needed was and actively participated in seeking it until they found it. In one of the interviews, a participant noted,

I ask the different people depending on the information I want. If I ask for information and you are not of help, I change to another source like ask somebody else (Participant 7, 2024).

Some refugees sought and used different sources of information until they got the information they needed. They persistently engaged the information sources until their information was obtained or they got satisfactions that the information they sought did not exist with the source contacted. When the first source contacted lacked the information they wanted, they moved to other sources until the information was got. It was found that the persistent seeking behaviour adopted was because of the urgency that was with a given need and that some information providers concealed good information and shared it with only their families, friends and tribesmates. In one of the interviews, a participant said thus:

For example, if a church leader knows about the scholarships but does not have good faith, he will not expose that information but only tell a friends and family and just a few are taken. Yet there are students who even completed A level but there is no way they can go further (Participant 3, 2024).

Some refugees had the habit of trying several and multiple sources of information to increase their chances of getting the information they sought. In case one source was not successful, there were chances that another source would be successful. Relying on more than one source of information was seen as advantageous in their seeking process. In an interview with one of the religious leaders in a FGD, it was noted that,

“Sometimes when I go to RWCs and the RWCs say they don’t have that information, I go to the fellow church leaders because sometimes the information

can reach someone and the church leader. If the church leader does not know, I can go to the neighbour and if he doesn't know, I ask the neighbour to direct me where I can go" (FGD 4, 2024).

Additionally, in the use and adoption of various sources of information to achieve the required information, another participant pointed out,

People always ask for information in open but when you don't get the information, you continue and look for it until you get it. For example, there is when I wanted information for the treatment for my child. So, I went to one organisation for health which I started with, they didn't even help me according to the information I wanted from them, so I looked for information further in other places on how my child will be taken for help. I continued looking until I found the right information and my child was helped (Participant 28, 2024).

It was indeed observed that there were several refugees that sought information on the same issue from different sources. Some refugees were encountered in different places with different sources of information. Two refugees were encountered with RWCs and later with a pastor seeking information on sponsorship opportunities. The same refugees were also encountered at the refugee youth centre browsing the internet for scholarships and sponsorships. The persistence in seeking was observed among some refugees in the settlement.

It was also found that even for some active seekers of information, if the first attempts to seeking failed to yield positive results, they withdrew and just watched the space. One of the participants noted that if they looked for information and a leader did not provide the required information, they would remain with their issue especially if the issue was sensitive. Withdrawal from the seeking process was another behaviour that was seen among the refugees. It involved refugees yielding to the pressures and difficulties they experienced in their pursuit of information and retiring from the seeking process. One of the participants, in an interview, pointed out,

"I often ask for information in village meetings and follow up with the chairpersons and RWCs for feedback but most times there is no feedback. So sometimes you

just give up” (Participant 49, 2024).

Withdrawal from the seeking process left the refugees in suspense without information to fill and satisfy their curiosity thereby keeping refugees with gaps in their knowledge. Indeed, in one of the FGDs with refugees, one participant said,

“For me I look for information from whoever they tell me can help me get what I want but if I don’t see any results after several attempts, I just leave it. Now what do you do. You can’t force things. As refugees we have so many problems here so you just leave and you don’t cause problems for yourself” (FGD 4, 2024).

Another information seeking behaviour that was found among refugees was covert and overt seeking. As some refugees openly sought information with the community, there were refugees that covertly sought information. They looked for information on their issues secretly and privately, making sure members in the community were not aware of what they were doing or looking for. In fact, one respondent said that they loved searching for information privately and quietly because there was no disadvantage in quiet and private searching. It was found that the motivations for the covert information seeking behaviour among the refugees were fear and sensitivity of the information sought. This seeking behaviour also extended to groups in which some refugees collaborated in seeking information secretly. Having the same sensitive information need made some people to come together and sought information quietly and secretly. Collaborative secret seeking was seen among women who had similar problems. For example, in one interview, a refugee woman noted,

“We went as a group of women secretly to ask information how we can go back home from the smugglers and some traders who go back to South Sudan (Participant 6, 2024).

The overt seeking behaviour was the most common among the refugees especially as it involved seeking information on everyday information needs relating to relief aid, education, employment, health services and livelihood services. Overt or Open seeking behaviour involved refugees seeking information without hiding and or doing it in secret. They sought their information needs without regard to who was watching or seeing them

in their seeking. By means of observation, most refugees were seen involved in overt information seeking at various points in the settlement.

Another pattern of behaviour observed and found among refugees was group information seeking. Group information seeking was seen among the refugees whether openly or in secret. It was noted that refugees had a practice and behaviour of getting in groups in their search for information. Group information seeking was as a result of common interest. Although refugees also sought information individually from different sources, sometimes they could find themselves seeking information in groups unconsciously. In an interview with an administrator at the OPM, it was found that on many occasions refugees went to seek information individually but ended up in groups collaborating depending on the nature of information they sought and the situation they found at the OPM offices. Refugees collaborated to meet their information needs in their pursuit of life aspiration, needs and demands. Group seeking was seen as a window for refugees that held traits of being afraid, nervous, or shy to partake of the information disseminated to the group. In one of the discussions in a FGD with refugees, on participant noted,

“Me I like it when we look for information with my friends together. If we want the same thing, my friends ask on my behalf. I also feel the courage to ask for my information if my friends are around. For me I am just a quiet person. When we go to the pastor with my friends and we want some information, it’s my friends who ask. I always have difficulties looking for information alone” (FGD 4, 2024)

By means of observation, collaborative information seeking behaviour was noticed particularly among youthful refugees and women in the settlement. These were observed collaborating at the youth centre and the health centre respectively. Collaborative information seeking behaviour was visible for refugees in different situations of information seeking.

Some refugees’ information seeking behaviour was also as a result of persuasion in which some refugees would persuade others to seek information on their behalf. This was seen among youth and families which sought information on the same subject. In the end in this pattern, one person actively sought information on behalf of others and then shared

the information with the entire group. Similar to this, refugees would also trust one person in a group to seek information on behalf of the bigger group. Persuasive information seeking among refugees in North Western Uganda helped a number of refugees that for some reason would not easily seek information by themselves. Such situation arose among refugees that had fear, were shy, struggled with language barrier, or felt uncomfortable seeking information from particular sources of information that involved direct contact with other persons or individuals.

Generally, the information seeking behaviour of refugees took different approaches including individual seeking, group seeking, secretly seeking, openly seeking and collaborating in secret seeking. Withdrawal or giving up from the seeking process was also seen among refugees. The refugees were either active or passive seekers of information depending on their situations and nature of information sought. Occurrences of persistent and persuaded information seeking were also visible among some refugees in the settlement.

4.7 Information use behaviour of refugees in North Western Uganda

Much of the information that was used among the refugees was received verbally through community gatherings and meetings, ceremonies, radio. This kind of information was received and acted upon by the different categories of refugees depending on the nature of information. Some information was also received through internet media especially on social media and other searches on the internet especially among youth who used the internet to find information on world trends as well as attending to school assignments and class work. Some school going students also got access to newspapers and textbooks at their schools.

Refugees used information they sought to meet their information needs. It was found out through interviews that school going children used the information they found in libraries at school to answer class assignment and take-home tasks given at school. Some of the refugee students used the information they found in preparation for school and national examination. In one of the interviews with a refugee teacher, it was pointed out thus,

“When students get books in the library, the books have examples which help the students to complete class assignments and homework we give them although the textbooks are very few compared to the number of students. sometimes but rarely, we allow the students to borrow the books and they go with them to their homes” (Participant 43, 2024).

Refugees involved in trade and commerce used the information they got on market trends in the area to negotiate and bargain for better deals when selling their produce and products to traders that went to the settlement camp for business. Refugees in trade highlighted that they got information about the market trends on social media and friends and as such had better bargaining power while disposing off their products in markets. The information they got was used to make informed decisions about the market and business ventures. In one of the FGDs with refugee administrators, it was noted thus,

“For me I used the information I got from a friend in Arua about the market price of goats, sorghum, and wheat to bargain for a better deal with the traders who come from Arua to our camp to buy our produce’ (FGD 2, 2024)

In general, the information successfully sought by refugees was used to meet their needs at hand because they sought different kinds of information to meet specific targets in their lives. The information in the refugees’ landscape was linked to particular needs that they had as individuals and as groups of individuals in their information use environment. Therefore, the information found was used for different purposes depending on the nature of information found. In one of the FGDs with religious leaders who also were refugees in the settlement, one participants noted thus,

“The information we get we use it for the different purposes for which we look for it. Each information serves a different purpose. For instance, when we get information about peace in South Sudan and that roads have been opened, then this information can help us in our self migration back home because we want to go back home when we hear that there is peace back at home” (FGD 3, 2024).

Refugees used information to build hope for better times in their life. Positive information received by refugees in their information environment added a positive spirit and strength

in their plight. For instance, positive information they received about the status of peace in South Sudan strengthened their resolve while information they received from religious leaders kept their hope for a better future alive. As a result, refugees involved themselves in different activities of life sustenance. It was pointed out that spiritual information from religious leaders was used by refugees to get closer to their God (Allah) and observe the religious demands of them. In one of the interviews with a pastor, a refugee in the settlement, it was pointed out thus,

“When we give information to people about their faith, we see that they get close to their God and some of them learn how to pray and start praying for better life. Spiritual information is important and we use it to get hope and keep our faith intact. We use this kind of information to keep us strong and hopeful to continue surviving in these hard times” (Participant 42, 2024).

Covert information use behaviour was reported among refugees especially those refugees that had sensitive information either individually or as small groups. It was found that most covert information seeking behaviour resulted in covert information use in the settlement due to fear and lack of trust in other refugees. The most common aspect in the use of information among refugees regardless of their categories or the nature of information and information source was information sharing amongst themselves. Information sharing was done across all refugees in which they were able to share the sought information with either friends, family, neighbours or even amongst leaders. Leaders would share information received from the OPM to the refugees in the community and the refugees would also share amongst each other. Also in some instances, students would get information from school and share it with their parents who would also share the information with fellow parents and leaders in the settlement. In one of the interviews, it was reported,

“We do share information because sometimes when you see someone getting support and the person was helped, you find that the person would go and tell friends how they were supported by the partners at the different centres very well. They give information to other members” (Participant 1, 2024).

In church gatherings, for example, refugees shared bibles and brochures with fellow

refugees during church functions. This was largely because the bibles and brochures were not adequate in number to accommodate individual access and use. In an interview with one of the church leaders, it was pointed out,

“We always get brochures and bibles from well-wishers and people share if they are not enough. Some churches have partners who share brochures, flyers, and bibles for the people. If they are not enough, people share with each other” (Participant 13, 2024).

Sharing of information, although common among the refugees, was dependent on the nature of the information shared. Sometimes, sharing would happen but to a very small and close group especially where the information sought was private and secretive in nature and as such information was used covertly among a few refugees. Some refugees would share this information with only close friends and relatives or a few people in their circles. In one of the interviews, it was reported thus,

“Private information especially if you have issues in South Sudan and the government is targeting you and is following you, to be on a safe side, you look for information quietly and you only tell your family and friends and the partners” (Participant 28, 2024).

Therefore, some information would only be shared amongst a few people due to its level of sensitivity. There were also situations where refugees would not share information due to fear and sensitivity of the information received. Some information was used privately and secretly amongst the refugees due to the level of confidentiality pegged with the information. It was established in the interviews that refugees were encouraged to use confidential information privately without sharing it with others. This can be seen with one participant who said,

“There are some scenarios that need confidentiality so we advise them to use information privately and not in groups” (Participant 26, 2024).

Information evaluation was seen as a factor of use among some refugees. The refugees were exposed to a wide range of information sources some of which were trustworthy while others would not be trusted. The information received therefore in some cases was

not believed right away and the information seekers had to do some evaluation of this information to determine its authenticity and truthfulness before it was shared or used. Some refugees especially leaders had to double check the information by consulting other sources so as to be certain of it. A participant in one interview said,

“Sometimes the social media, you can’t trust people with it, even the radio, you don’t trust people whether BBC. It is up to you to all people on the ground to find out whether what has been said happened or what is going around on social media is true such that you be able to be well informed for your own consumption and also consumption of people around you because as a leader, If you are fed with wrong information or false information, then as you stand before people, you find yourself also feeding people with false information which tarnishes your image and is very risky” (Participant 13, 2024).

4.8 Difficulties faced by refugees in the quest and use of information North Western Uganda.

In their seeking and use of information, refugees in the settlement grappled with several difficulties and challenges that made their seeking problematic and, in some cases, unsuccessful. The notable difficulties that were identified included the issue of language barrier, issues related to feed back as well as the long distances that refugees had to travel to get to information points and centres.

The diversity of languages in the settlement justified the high recognition of language barrier as a major challenge in their pursuit and use of information. Language barrier was reported in both individual and group interviews yet through observation, refugees were seen impeded by it. It was found that where a refugee could not speak Arabic, Kakwa, or some English, this was a big problem in navigating the information landscape in the settlement. It was found that most refugees did not understand the English language which made it difficult to communicate with partners and OPM officials directly. Arabic was identified as the most common Language in the settlement yet some refugees, officers of OPM, administrators as well as partners of the OPM didn’t understand the Language. The use of translators and interpreters was adopted to overcome this challenge but it was also found that the translators in the settlement and centres were few. By means of observation,

language barrier was seen in the health centre in the settlement. Some refugees were seen being assisted by interpreters to ensure communication took place. One of the refugees in an interview pointed out thus,

“Some leaders do not understand your language. They understand little English and If you don’t speak Arabic or Kakwa, then they may not understand you and you need to go with your parent to translate, but sometimes it is difficult depending on the information you want” (Participant 8, 2024).

In both individual and group interviews, feedback issues were also highly cited as drawbacks in the seeking and use of information by refugees. Feedback issues entailed the absence and lack of feedback on requests made, delayed feedback and, in some cases, wrong and unexpected feedback received in comparison to the information request made. One of the participants on the lack of feedback said,

“In our community village meetings which are held monthly, we communicate our issues to the chairpersons and the board so that our issues can be forwarded but at times these issues do not reach because we don’t get feedback. Because if we don’t get information on the issues we raise, it means that our issues did not reach” (Participant 49, 2024).

In cases where the feedback was received, the feedback delayed. It also cost some refugees as they had to travel the long distances to pick feedback multiple time. One of the refugee participants in an interview expressed,

“Sometimes it’s not easy to get information because like when you want to get information about the community issues you forwarded or needed feedback, it doesn’t come back in time. Sometimes when you have cases reported, feedback won’t come back soon so it’s difficult to get information” (Participant 43, 2024).

The long distance that had to be moved by refugees was an issue of discomfort to them in their quest for information. It was reported that the distance one would move to get the information they wanted was very long and one had to endure that long distance to find the information they wanted and yet in some cases they did not even find the information providers at their places. This problem was further compounded when it came to people

that were physically impaired and would not handle moving those long distances and yet they did not have supportive tools like wheel chairs to support their locomotion. Not only was the long-distance challenge highlighted during interviews but was also observed as a major setback in the information landscape given the wide coverage of the settlement camp.

Many refugees reported lack of phones especially smart phones as a challenge in their search and use of information. They expressed that having phones would ease communication and would enable them seek information using phones but only a few of them owned phones. The majority of refugees lacked smart phones which they wanted because it would enable them access internet sources of information especially social media. In the same line, those refugees that had phones whether small button phones or smartphones complained of the high costs for both airtime and internet data bundles which limited their use of these tools in their information seeking. Although there were reports that internet points in the settlement in which free internet was available through wireless connections, some refugees reported that the internet was in only one point in their zone and that the network was unstable.

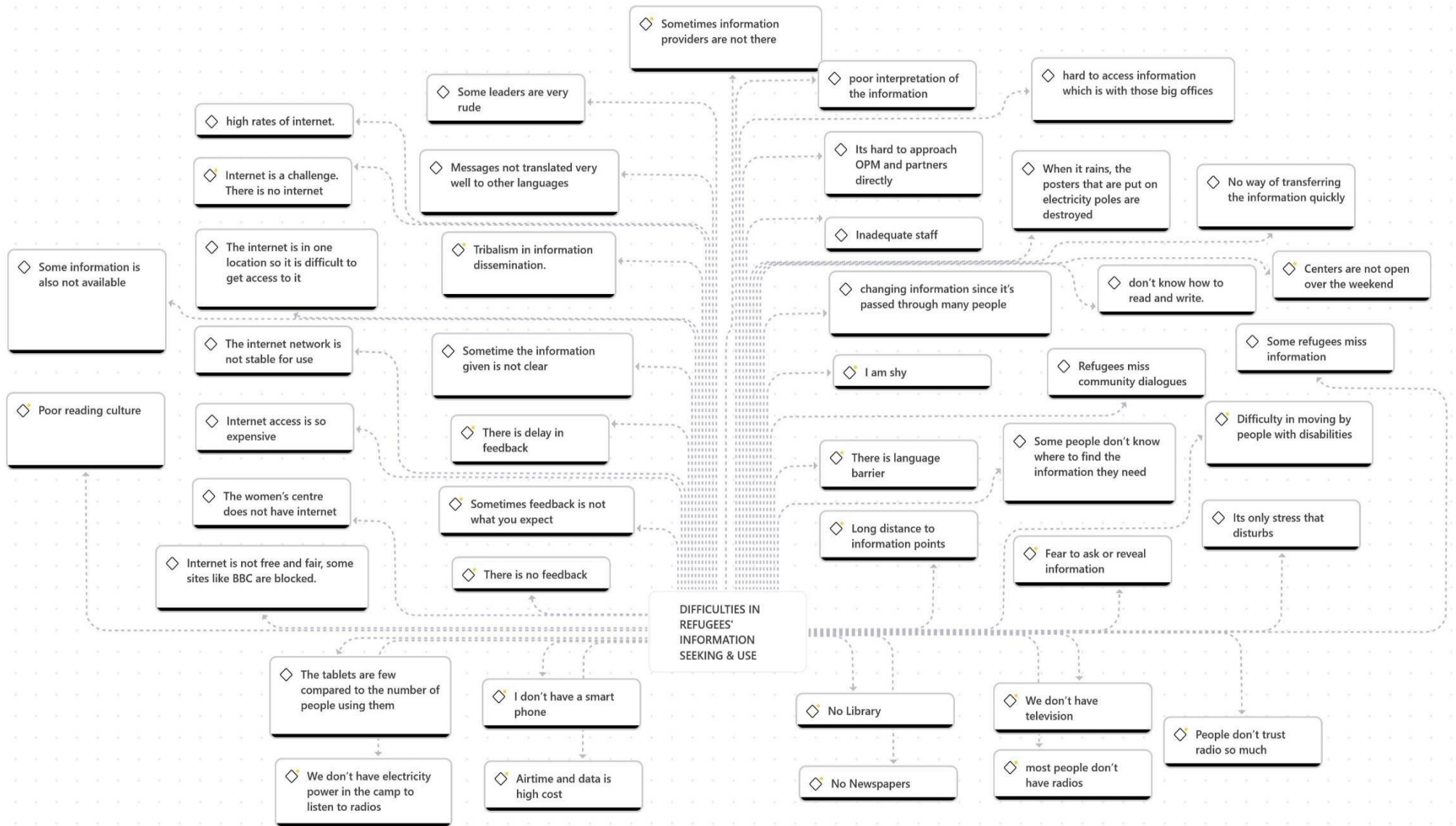


Figure 25 Difficulties faced by refugees of North Westen Uganda in their seeking and use of information (Researcher 2024)

As seen in figure 25, there were several difficulties reported by refugees and OPM administrators affecting the seeking and use of information by refugees at Bidi Bidi refugee settlement. Issues of internet access and its availability, the changing information in the process of transfer, absence of a community library, lack of television for news and newspapers were reported. Technological difficulties involved the lack of smart phones and other IT gadgets, dearth of know-how and skills in utilizing the gadgets, the limited distribution of internet as well as the high cost of mobile internet data bundles and airtime. Sociologically, the refugees faced difficulties including language barrier, long distances, feedback issues, absence of information providers, lack of translators and interpreters, lack of a library in the community, lack of television, inadequate staffing in centres, poor reading cultures among the refugees, and tribalism. Additionally, there was difficulty in accessing some leaders as well as weather patterns that destroy the posters and notices placed on electric poles. Physically, refugees complained of long distances and the lack of locomotion equipment like wheel chairs for the disabled refugees.

Electricity was only visible in a few centres and majority lacked gadgets that needed electricity to function. It was observed in the setup of the settlement that most refugees' households lacked electricity connection which made it difficult to have access to television which would provide current affairs and news as needed by the refugees. Solar systems were observed on a few households. Most of those that had solar connections used the solar for lighting.

4.9 Chapter Summary

This chapter has presented study findings based on objectives and research questions of the study. It has highlighted the different information needs of refugees, the structure of information needs of refugees, the sources of information used by refugees. Information needs found included themes and horizons of faith, legal, economic, sociological, and others. The findings provide a detailed account on the elements of the identified categories of information needs in the context of refugees in Uganda. The sources of information were individuals, community centre, community gatherings, and media-based sources providing a categorisation of information sources for refugees in the Ugandan context. The seeking and use behaviours of refugees were also presented in the chapter

clearly illustrating the behaviour patterns adopted by refugees in their search for information including persistent, collaborative, individualistic seeking as well as information search retraction. Refugees adopted both active and passive seeking behaviour as highlighted in the chapter. It was found that refugees used the information they sought in different ways to address the purposes for which the information was sought. Some refugees engaged in sharing and validating information in their information use behaviour. A multitude of difficulties that refugees faced in their quest for and use of information were also identified and viewed in categories including physiological, psychological, technological, and sociological. The chapter espouses all the information behaviour elements for refugees in North Western Uganda.

CHAPTER FIVE: INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

“Research is something that everyone can do, and everyone ought to do. It is simply collecting information and thinking systematically about it” - Raewyn Connell (Egan 2008) .

5.1 Introduction

In this chapter, data presented in Chapter Four on the presentation of results is discussed as a significant part of research reporting. Using codes and themes realised in the thematic analysis, interpretations were drawn to make more meaning to the collected data so as to clearly explain the phenomena of the study.

Willig (2017) argues that interpretation of data is central to qualitative research, and is about meaning as well as the way of making meaning because qualitative research's assumption is that the actions of people often are meaningful in a way and that greater insights can be achieved or realised through the course of working with the meanings. Anderson (2010) has opined that adequate data ought to be presented by the researcher so as to enable readers to visibly establish the link that exists between the collected data and data interpretation in such a way that the readers have data that allows them to view, or perceive the researcher's point of view. This chapter highlights the researcher's interpretation of the findings by giving a detailed illumination into the study findings.

The interpretation of data helped the researcher to convert data into relevant and valuable information which could easily be understood. This section not only interprets the findings and results of the study but also discusses them. The discussion of findings offers an opportunity to show the known of the topic through data interpretation and demonstrating what the data mean so as to give enlightenment and clarifications about the study findings (Alem 2020). The researcher provides a detailed account of the collected data in a way of giving the meaning that the data carried. As suggested by Anderson (2010), the study results were also presented in the context of prior studies as well as theories through reflection on literature and the way in which the current research backs the area of study. Similarly, Creswell (2014) suggests that findings interpretations encompass stating what was learnt in comparison with previous literature as well as theory. According to Berthet,

Gaweda, Kantola, Miller, Ahrens and Elomäki (2023), qualitative data interpretation is always guided by objectives of the study. Data is presented in line with the objectives of the study which aimed at describing the research.

5.2 Interpretation and Discussion of Findings

As seen from the literature in Chapter II, there are different studies that have been conducted in the areas of information behaviour with more focus on information needs and information sources of refugees as opposed to other elements of information behaviour, which this study expounded on in relation to refugees. The findings were also discussed in view of Taylor's Information Use Environment theory in which the use environment for information as portrayed by Taylor played a vital role in the seeking, retrieval and use of information (Khan 2018). Taylor (1991) notes that the IUE denotes the social setting or context where we work or live. Although Taylor's Information Use Environment theory was developed based on a study conducted among professionals' use of information and their environment (Folb, Detlefsen, Quinn, Barron & Trauth 2010; Khan 2018), this study applied the theory to diverse categories of people regardless of professionalism to explore its applicability in these diverse groups. For each of the patterns of data for each objective, the IUE theory element that suits the objective is discussed in more detail.

5.2.1 Information needs of refugees in North Western Uganda

To establish the different information needs of refugees in North Western Uganda, participants were asked during individual interviews and FGDs what kind of information they wanted and sought. Refugees' information needs as seen from the research dashboard in chapter one in 1.9, are presented in view of Taylor's IUE theory elements of the problem, the people and the setting. The problem element denoting the situations that made refugees to want information, the people element denoting the refugees and the setting element denoting the environment and context in which refugees lived not limited to the settlement. Different information needs were identified including: health information needs, agricultural information needs, savings-based information needs, market-based information needs, faith-based information needs, education information need, health

information needs, and legal information needs. The circumstances in which refugees found themselves often determined the nature of their needs and as well their information needs. The situations in which they lived and experienced determined the kind of information that they needed to overcome a given problem. This is in line with Agarwal (2017), Oduntan and Ruthven (2020), Oduntan (2017), Wilson (2000) and Yeon and Lee (2021) who noted in their studies that situations, circumstances and context in which refugees thrive determined their information needs.

From the different information needs of refugees identified and presented in the previous chapter, health information needs were the most sought as seen in 4.4.6. All participants in the study identified and reported on health in the interviews which underscores the level of need for health services in the settlement as well as the health situation and context that existed in the settlement. Health is an important aspect of life and good health is what people want to enable other aspects of life to happen with ease. Health in this case denoted the status of someone's body and mind functioning appropriately and efficiently. Refugees highlighted a number of areas in health in which they needed information to enable them navigate and get access to their health needs. They had quest for information on different health issues including HIV management, counselling services, disease outbreaks in the settlement, prevention and control of disease, programmes of the health centre, mobile clinics and their planned programmes, information on health support services for single mothers, and information on maternal health. Zimmerman and Beam (2020), in their study on immigrants and refugees, established that the refugees needed information about their nutrition, child and reproductive health, dental care and support in steering through health systems. This further underscores the need for information on health among refugees in their context. Mårtensson et al. (2020) establish that refugees sought information on how to realise reliable information on health such as where to go for it and how to evaluate its reliability based on sources used. The authors further opine that the refugees sought information regarding dealing with signs and symptoms of disease, test results, screening as well as other medical examination forms, prevention of sickness, where to get health help and ways of continuing and navigating the health delivery structure if required.

Although there are a few studies in the literature that tried to break down different health information needs of refugees, this study explored the detail of the components of health information needs of refugees in North Western Uganda. By asking and finding out about the different aspects of their health information needs, refugees showed a high level of concern and literacy to health. Mårtensson et al. (2020), in their study on newly arrived refugees in Sweden, shows the refugees' willingness and desire to make their own informed decisions about their health issues. In this study for instance, when asked about family planning issues, refugees wanted information about the options that were available for them with clear explanation of the merits and demerits of each so as to inform their decisions on which kind of method to adopt and take up. This showed the level of readiness and awareness by some refugees to make their own informed decisions regarding their health issues. Refugees were aware of the health terrain in the settlement and wanted more information on how to ensure healthy living. Indeed, some refugees were concerned about the hygiene in their premises asking and pointing out the need for sensitization amongst themselves to help improve hygiene in the settlement and households.

The seeking for information by refugees on alternative ways of getting treatment as seen in 4.4.6 such as where to find local doctors or traditional herbalists, local herbs also indicated the awareness level of refugees on alternatives ways of handling diseases. Given the circumstances, they needed information on these alternative ways so as to get through the health issues in their information use environment. This awareness about herbal medicines and their role as alternatives underscore the refugees desire to try other means to overcome their health-related challenges. Welz, Emberger-Klein and Menrad (2018) show that people adopt the use of herbal medicine for several reasons but in their study, dissatisfaction with modern medicine was the main reason for the switch to herbal medicines. The refugees at Bidi Bidi settlement complained about the absence of drugs in the health centre even after several attempts of visiting the health centre except for Panadol (paracetamol).

Refugees in North Western Uganda also had legal information needs as seen in 4.4.3 which included questions and seeking about their rights as citizens, the laws of Uganda and what they stipulate about different cases and provisions in comparison with laws of their home countries. Refugees by their status were entitled to all rights enjoyed by Ugandan citizens except for the right to participate in politics and the ownership of land. Refugees were interested in the laws of the areas so as to enable them live in peace and harmony without breaking the law. The awareness of the differences in the laws of their home country and those of the host country would enable them to live with the host communities amicably. This meant that their access to legal information was vital to and for their survival and stay in the host nation in which they would successfully steer their lives. In a report by the European Union Agency on Asylum (EUAA) (2023), it was important for international organisations to give guidance to asylum seekers on how to effectively access information and legal counselling while stressing the value of legal information and procedures. Legal information provided refugees with a better understanding and comprehension of the legal terrain of the country in which they were hosted and also guided their interventions and activities. This is in line with the requirement placed on refugees on respect of laws in host countries. As per the “1951 Refugee Convention and its 1967 Protocol”, refugees have an obligation to respect and abide by host countries’ laws and regulations for purposes of peace and public order (UNHCR 2024b).

Refugees sought information on peace and security as seen in 4.4.5, which are important elements in humanity. Peace brings the good living and societal harmony in which people are able to live without fear of conflict, disobedience, violence or even hostility amongst members of a given community. Given their background and the reasons for which the refugees of Bidi Bidi settlement were there, the refugees understood, firsthand, the meaning of peace since their plight was as a result of conflict in their home country. As long as people are free from fear and distress whether internal or external, people can realise harmony and cohesion in their survival environments or homes.

Refugees were aware of the need for peaceful living as this would ensure their social

livelihood with the host community and amongst the refugees themselves. The awareness of peace and security information helps refugees to be mindful about the consequences of breaking the law and causing animosity in the settlement. This awareness of laws and regulations makes refugees able to avoid wrong, monitor and remind themselves of the requirements of the laws and regulations for their peaceful living. Refugees' administrators would hold community dialogues in which they would sensitise and remind the refugees about their roles and responsibilities in all aspects of life including ensuring peace and safe living. This is in line with SDG 16 which emphasises promotion of just, peaceful and inclusive societies (United Nations 2019). Peace awareness among refugees pointed to their desire and clamour for peaceful living as well as a desire by some refugees to be able to go back to South Sudan. They needed to hear about peace in their home country and what the UN was doing about bringing peace in the region. In their studies, Mansour (2018) as well as Yeon and Lee (2021) have also reported that refugees sought information on the situations in their home countries. In this study, a breakdown of the information needs related to peace and security are expounded from the refugees' point of view as seen in 4.4.5. They were cognizant of what security and peace meant for them and thus wanted information on peace for their survival. Even with fear for their lives, it was found out that some refugees were going back to South Sudan through the porous borders where some would successfully make it while others would be killed by the rebels. Most of the refugees wanted to go back to their home country and therefore sought a lot of information about the prevailing peace conditions in their home country South Sudan. This recognition of the need for information on peace among all categories of the refugees paints a picture and underscores the importance of peace and security among the refugees' community in Bidi Bidi settlement camp.

Refugees sought information on education as espoused in 4.4.4 which stressed their awareness and the value they attached to education as a key pillar in their lives. Education, as an important social activity, offers opportunities for people to improve themselves through reduction in illiteracy levels and equipping one with knowledge and or skill to accomplish society demands and expectations. Youths sought information on

education as well as the adults. Regardless of the age distribution, the value of education to the refugees could be seen in the nature of information they sought about it. Knowing that education would increase their status in the community and help them get access to formal employment when they returned to their home country was one of the drivers to seeking information education.

Adults desired for information on available vocational training opportunities to help them gain skills that would help them in self-sustenance especially without relief aid from the UNHCR. This kind of information was sought to help refugees of all categories. Parents would seek this information for their children's education while youths and adults were also involved in seeking information of education. Education acquisition increases the chances of the refugees to get access to formal employment and therefore increase on their status in the community and as well support a better future. Most refugees sought information on scholarships and sponsorship for their children or by the students themselves. As seen in the literature, in their studies, Salzano, Hall, Webster and Brazier (2022), Yeon and Lee (2021), Beretta, Sayyad Abdi and Bruce (2018) as well as Oduntan and Ruthven (2021) all highlight education information needs for refugees. Education acquisition for refugees would therefore help them to increase their literacy and education levels even for their home country when they go back.

The quest for information on technological issues as illustrated in 4.4.8 by some of the youths also showed their desire to become techno savvy and be part of the technological world of information access and use. Some adult refugees also showed interest and asked for information on how they can learn to use computers, smartphones and tablets to access the world wide web. Loj (2016) argues that technology adoption by refugees supports social relationship as well as opening up and sharing on challenges they encounter through online and social media platforms. Technology is an evolving dimension which requires continuous use and practice so as to keep pace with the technological trends at whatever level a person would be. Refugees' need for information on how to use technology point to their willingness to be part of the technology evolution so as to access information on specific aspects of their life through internet searches. The

seeking of information by refugees on technology aspects can be explained as highlighted by Lloyd *et al.* (2013), Hicks and Lloyd (2016) and Beretta, Sayyad Abdi and Bruce (2018) who have shown in their studies that refugees suffered from information illiteracy, digital and computer illiteracy which as a result of unfamiliarity with the IT and computer-based provision of information, confined their capability to comprehend and improve their time in responding. The refugees in Bidi Bidi settlement were cognizant that getting access to information on how to use and apply technology would help them navigate the information terrain with the help of technologies with ease and successfully.

Refugees also sought information related to their faith as enumerated in 4.4.1, relief items and social services like food and water as explained in 4.4.6, information on agriculture, savings and investment, employment opportunities, markets, recreational activities as expounded in 4.4.2 and sports as well as information on resettlement as seen in 4.4.8. The need showed for information on faith among refugees illuminated on the awareness and need for belief in God despite the situation and circumstance under which they were. The desire for information on how to turn to God, praise God, become strong in faith as well as information on getting dedicated to God through sacraments for both adults and children showed that refugees despite their plight had time for God and wanted to praise and worship him. The literature cited does not reflect on information sought by refugees in relation to their faith. In this study, however, refugees sought information about aspects of their faith and belief in God. Refugees were aware of the existence of God and would turn to him in this settlement for their spiritual health.

The refugees' seeking of information related to agriculture and farming showed that they were aware of the need to self-sustain, especially because of the reduction in the food basket provided to them in form of relief aid. The categorisation of refugees in the way of prioritisation for relief had a big impact on refugees' seeking for agriculture and farming information. They wanted to attain information on where to get land for farming, the right seasons for planting, the right seeds to plant, where to get seeds for planting, where to get fertilisers as well as market for their produce. These questions represented a mindset that had interest in practicing agriculture for sustenance as a way of getting food but also

as a source of income. Refugees strongly desired information on how to get land for farming from the host communities and how they would meet agreements for land use including how long to use the land and at what cost. Indeed, sensitization was often done by the OPM to increase their awareness on the issues to consider before reaching agreements with the locals on the issue of land for agriculture. Muhangi, Ainamani and Opio (2022) argue that the favourable climate conditions for agriculture provide an opportunity to refugees to self sustain through embracing agriculture so as to achieve food security and also have house hold incomes realised and increased. Refugees' access to agricultural information therefore could have a strong bearing on the livelihood of the refugees. In Uganda, because of the settlement systems used for refugees in which refugees are entitled to a plot of land for housing and farming as per the refugee policy of Uganda, refugees sought information on agriculture and farming.

Relatedly, refugees were also aware of trade between themselves and outsiders from the community as seen in the information they sought about the market for their produce in 4.4.2. They wanted information on where to get market and the prices for the market. This showed their interest in engaging in income generating activities for their sustenance as this would provide them with some money to buy basic amenities like clothes and soap which were pointed out as the basic items they needed. This is also reported by Poole (2019) who has opined that refugees are active economic agents who engage with markets, generating income and, in some cases, benefitting from transnational financial and economic networks. Similarly, Koo (2016) notes that refugees in South Korea sought information on jobs and other sources of funds as they were financially incapacitated as a result of unemployment. Refugees in North Western Uganda sought information that would help them navigate markets that were available to them domestically but in some cases with partners that would later sell their produce to the nearby boarder countries of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and South Sudan.

Although not visible in the literature, refugees in North Western Uganda sought information on savings and investment as seen in 4.4.2. They wanted information on how they could save their little money and have it accumulated through profit. This kind of

information depicts a community with members that look at transformation through saving and investment. They wanted to improve their livelihood by saving the little they had and therefore wanted information on SACCOs available for them especially the women. This showed that refugees had a fair level of financial literacy and a business mind that they were interested in investment especially as groups. It was reported during the study that there was an NGO that asked women to group themselves so as to be able to borrow money that they could invest in income generating activities. This made women refugees seek information on how to form groups, how to register the groups, how to access the money and what the terms and conditions for accessing the money were. This in turn enabled women to engage in some income generating activities such as baking, selling food stuffs in the market or starting shops and restaurants for the refugees in the settlement.

Furthermore, refugees in North Western Uganda sought information on available employment opportunities highlighted in 4.4.2. Whether youths or adults, they sought information on how to find jobs, whether formal or informal, to improve their livelihoods. As seen in the literature, seeking for information related to jobs and employment is visible among refugees. In their study on refugees from North Korea, (Koo 2016) has alluded to the fact that refugees sought information on finances and jobs as well as information on how to realise a level of belonging in a new society. Notably, information on available jobs and employment was sought because of the need for self-sustenance as was communicated to refugees due to the demand on the resources of the UN at the world level. Information needs on jobs and employment for refugees has also been stressed by other scholars in the literature. Refugees seek information on careers employment, jobs and job posting (Hassan & Wolfram 2020; Oduntan & Ruthven 2021; Yeon & Lee 2021) to navigate their refugee status.

Refugees' desire for information on recreational activities and sports although not visible in the literature showed their need for activities that would make them relax, come together as a community and as well enjoy their lives even as refugees. The youth especially wanted this information as a way of getting together as people from the same

place and also increase on their health and physical fitness. They showed their desire to participate in competition of sports like football and athletics. If they got involved in these sports and recreational activities, refugees would be able to build the spirit of togetherness even more, to develop team spirit and group cohesions, leadership traits as well as abilities and skills to improve their social relationships which would turn out to be essential for survival in their lives. Information on recreational activities and sports could provide an avenue for refugees to get together more, improve the discipline of youths which was identified as a problem, participate in sports competitions, and also make them feel good about themselves. Keeping refugee youth occupied in such activities could help them focus more on their future, and curb youthful vices in the community.

Arguably, refugees in North Western Uganda exhibited a wide array of information needs ranging from faith based to legal, economic, technological, sociological in nature and others. Their information needs depicted their needs as a community and sought that information to help them meet their community or societal needs. Case and Given (2016) have indeed expressed that it is on the basis of needs that people's motivation for seeking information is got and that information needs are entrenched in elementary human needs. The areas of health and education registered the most information needs among the refugees at Bidi Bidi settlement which point to these sectors as the most important for refugees. It is therefore seen in line with Taylor's IUE theory that the setting in which refugees lived, the problems that refugees encountered influenced the information needs of refugees in North Western Uganda.

5.2.2 Sources of information for refugees in North Western Uganda

Information sources are essential in the information behaviour of persons regardless on settings and category. Refugees' source of information from the research dash board in chapter one in 1.9, are presented in view of Taylor's IUE theory element of the setting with implication that the setting in which refugees lived influenced the nature of information sources for their information needs. Sources of information were crucial in the information seeking given the administrative setup of the refugee settlement and the nature of refugees. Different sources of information were used as presented in 4.5 and

illustrated in figure 22. Refugees had a multitude of points from where information was derived depending on the kind of information sought. It can be seen that information sources were individuals, media-based information sources, centres in the community and community gatherings.

Refugees utilised more of the administratively established information channels as their sources of information. The use of the refugee support centre which they literally called the complaint desk was most visible followed by RWCs and the lower local council leaders like the village chairpersons. This implies that refugees used more of the formal sources of information as compared to the informal sources. This can be seen as contrary to the refugees from Syria according to the study by Mansour (2018) who found out that informal sources were the most prominent source of information used by refugees. It was also visible that both formal and informal sources of information were used by refugees in Bidi Bidi settlement camp. This is in line with Martzoukou and Burnett (2018), Oduntan and Ruthven (2021) as well as Abood *et al.* (2023) who opined that both informal and formal sources of information are essential aspects for the social integration of refugees in society.

Formal sources of information often provided information to refugees on formal positions of the refugee administration and governance which explains its high rating in use among the refugees. When there was official information to be passed on to the refugees, RWCs, the church and the radio were the points of information dissemination for all official communication from partners. With regard to this setting, Nekesa-Akullo and Odong (2017) in their study on women refugees have noted that local authorities, refugee organisations, television and radio were common sources of information. Refugees chose formal sources of information for information about their plight and relief in the settlement such as food distribution, health issues, resettlement issues, legal issues as well as peace and security in the community. This reflects on the consciousness of refugees about the role of formal sources of information as they navigate the refugees' landscape in Uganda.

Internet and friends were the most used informal sources of information across the

refugees as illustrated in the figure 23. Community centres including youth centres as well as the refugees support centre (complaint desk) were common sources of information for the refugees. This is also seen in studies by Yeon and Lee (2021) as well as Oduntan and Ruthven (2021) that the internet and institutions of public nature such as religious centres, councils for refugees, schools, charity organisations, detention centres and community centres as well as leisure centres were common and likely information sources for refugees. Refugees' adoption of different sources of information in their information seeking behaviour depicts the need to refer to different sources for information which could increase the chances of getting the information one needed. It could also be an opportunity to compare information from different sources on the same subject matter especially as it was noted that some sources of information were not trusted especially social media. It has been pointed out by Beretta, Sayyad Abdi and Bruce (2018) as well as Kainat, Eskola and Widén (2022) that refugees had trust issues. Trust in information sources builds confidence in the seeker and user because of its positive psychological bearing and effect on a person. Trust in information sources had an impact on the information seeking and use behaviour of the refugees in North Western Uganda.

Since both formal and informal sources were used, refugees utilised individuals or persons as points of information to meet their needs including family and friends. According to Nekesa Akullo and Odong (2017), information from colleagues and friends was a valuable source of information for women refugees. Friends and family offered an opportunity in which refugee sought information with ease and comfort as a result of the personal ties and bond that existed between them. In their study, Hannides and Kaoukji (2016) have shown that friends, relatives, internet when available as well as refugee smugglers were major sources of information for refugees seeking asylum to Greece. Koo, in his study about South Korean refugees established that refugees often got information from fellow refugees (Koo 2016). Refugees of North Western Uganda utilised fellow refugees, friend and relatives to get information that they could not get with ease from other sources of information. For instance, a refugee would feel comfortable if a brother asked for information on their behalf or family. Blood ties and bonds between the refugees played a role in the choice of information source.

Although technology was used in the seeking of information especially through social media and other internet sites like the search for news online, its use was limited to a few refugees as compared to other prominent information sources. Social media was also visible, but limited to only those that had access to smart phones although their number was very low. The use of smartphones and tablets at the youth centre allowed some refugees to gain access to real time news on the international and national level. The smartphone and tablet because of internet access played a very big role in the information seeking of refugees. Refugees in the settlement used mobile phones as tools for communication to seek information from different people in their setting and environment. From mobile phones to toll free line help line, refugees used these devices to facilitate their information seeking. Such devices simplified the process of information seeking from colleagues, friends, local leaders as well as partners. Eskola et al. (2020) in their study on integration of refugees opined that youthful refugees got in touch with information because they possessed information and digital skills. Quintanilla (2012) and Mansour (2018) in their studies on refugees note that refugees use several technologies for communication purposes with others, especially mobile phones, computers and the internet. Adoption of mobile devices among refugees in North Western Uganda greatly supported the information seeking for those that had access to ICT devices. According to Koscieljew (2019), ICTs and public libraries are critical in the lives of refugees as they support refugees in awareness of their information right, building social trust, facilitate their adaption and comprehension of information terrains and as well help them to settle in their new societies.

Information sources used by refugees in North Western Uganda as illustrated in figure 22 can be categorised as persons or individuals as source, media-based source of information as well as Community centres. Individual sources involved leaders, friends, colleagues and family. Media sources included radio, internet, notices and posters. The community centres included the youth and women centres, Complaint desk, health centre, church and community gatherings. The adoption of Notices was majorly applied in community centres and on electricity poles and sign posts in the community. Their use

was not well captured by the refugees although it was noted that they were used in the community. Posters and notices had a drawback that came with them especially as a result of the low literacy levels and language barrier that affected the uptake of information on notices and posters. The use of posters can be viewed as a soft way of sharing information amongst the refugees without much labour and effort.

5.2.3 Information seeking behaviour of refugees in North Western Uganda

Refugees' information seeking behaviour as illustrated in the research dash board in chapter one 1.9, is presented in view of Taylor's IUE theory elements of the sets of people, the problem and the setting which implied that the nature and characteristic features of refugees, the kind of problems that warranted information among refugees and the setting or environment in which they lived influenced their information seeking behaviour. Different information seeking patterns were reported and captured for the refugees at Bidi Bidi settlement. From the findings in 4.6, it can be seen that refugees sought information either individually or in groups. Individual seeking involved persons going to information points to ask or seek the information they wanted while group seeking involved different people teaming up for the sake of information seeking. The individual seeking was mainly associated with information needs associated to a single individual or information that was urgently needed by an individual. As opined by Kelly and Sharot (2021), the differences that individuals possess in information seeking could be a result of different weights assigned to reason or motivation for seeking by different people. As such this kind of difference in weight accorded to a motive could be responsible for individual seeking of information.

The urgency of need for information by a refugee compared to another can influence his or her individual seeking of information. In this way the individual seeker is, in most cases, an active seeker who follows the environment scents of information to meet his or her needs. Indeed, as pointed out by Borgstede (2021), when there is urgency, an individual is considered an active decision maker which makes up the internal depictions of the environment in which they are in. This therefore produces an active information seeker. It can be viewed that most refugees that sought information individually were active

seekers as opposed to the passive seekers of information. Active seeking involved refugees taking practical steps in their search and quest for information that they needed whether for themselves or for another person or group.

Active seekers had clear information needs to pursue whether for self or on behalf of others. This is in line with Wilson (2000) who has argued that active seeking involves seekers with clear information needs intentionally seeking for information to fill the information gap. These active refugee information seekers would encounter several sources of information as well as build social links with community members and other information providers including the OPM officers and partners. Active seeking exposed them to different people and information products especially where the seeking involved persistence. They engaged more with the environment and encountered different information scents that led them to different sources of information. Some active seekers though did not get exposed to several information sources especially where information sought was found on first attempt with a given source.

However, this does not imply that all refugees that sought information individually were active seekers as there were refugees that passively sought information in their environment both as group and as individuals. In passive seeking refugees would almost unconsciously partake of information in their environment without intention and motive. For example, some refugees passively attended community gatherings and picked some information there while there were those that would pick information communicated on a neighbour's radio without the intention and motive to. Some refugees reported over hearing neighbours and friends talking about some issues. It is opined by Savolainen (2010) that when individuals feel comfortable and unbothered with an issue, their seeking is often passive as opposed to when there is a need to restore the comfort and normality which results in active information seeking. Similarly, Yeon and Lee (2021), note that passive seeking involves the unintended information acquisition with no clear information needs. Clearly some refugees pointed out that they found out some information through overhearing others speak or almost accidentally. This signifies a seeking practice without clear information needs but the received information would turn out to be useful.

Another seeking practice and behaviour that was realised among the active seekers was the persistent information seeking. Refugees reported never giving up in the quest for information unless it was received or they found out it did not exist. It was reported that persistence in information seeking by some refugees resulted in neglect by some information providers especially if they did not have the information that was sought. Persistence in information seeking among the refugees was a result of urgency, the information needed or the value that was attached to the information. Since there were refugees that were persistent in their quest and search for information, some refugees lacked persistence and would yield to failure to gain access to information in the first attempts. These ended up being passive seekers. They would later get information on their needs by chance or accident or would remain without the information. The refugees that yielded failure in their first attempts, remained information poor.

Some refugees invested much time and effort in seeking the information they wanted especially if the motivation was an issue of urgency and or life threatening. This is also reflected by Kelly and Sharot (2021) who established that information seekers put a lot of time actively trailing and tracking information in which they may interact with reading materials, question asking or running internet-based searches. Some active refugee seekers reported using multiple sources of information including internet, local leaders, friends as well as notices in health centres. However, active refugee seekers who were sure of their sources of information did not spend a lot of time in getting the information they needed.

Some refugees reported that they sought information in open while other preferred seeking information in private and secretly. Seeking information in open often referred to as overt seeking was characterised by a lack of concern about others in the environment in the pursuit of information. The refugees did not care or mind about the other players or participants in the information landscape or terrain in their seeking. Regardless of who was present or watching, some refugees did not find any problem seeking information. On the contrary, there were refugees that sought information in secret and privately especially as a result of fear and or the nature of information being sought. Refugees

especially women reported preference for covert seeking behaviour in which they looked for information in confidence. In their seeking, they were very mindful about the environment in which they acted and the different players that were present in this information environment. This showed the refugees' recognition for their safety, privacy or secrecy when it came to information seeking.

Similarly, as an element of covert information seeking, it was found that refugees would seek information secretly but in groups. Group covert seeking involved refugees that had the same motive and or information need teaming up and secretly seeking information to fill and enrich their curiosity or get answers to their questions. This strategy, which I refer to as collaborative covert information seeking, was present in women who had issues of domestic violence and abuse as well as those groups of refugees both male and female that wanted to apply for resettlement due to fear for their lives. It is a seeking pattern which is an element of collaborative seeking reported among refugees. Although the literature is limited on covert and overt information seeking behaviour, the refugees in North Western Uganda would seek information both in open and in secret depending on the nature of information sought as well as the fear factor.

Collaborative information seeking whether done in the open or in secret involved groups of refugees seeking information together in which they had the same motive and the ground for them to search and seek information was the same. This practice and or behaviour showed the refugees' awareness of the role of group and team work in achieving a given goal. Collaborative information seeking for refugees meant that the refugees were faced with the same problem and need or had a relationship that warranted support and assistance for each other. Granikov, El Sherif, Bouthillier, Pluye (2022) have shown that collaborative or group information seeking involves an equally beneficial and cooperative process for information seeking with others in which the possible results of the collaboration can realise comprehensive information, group filtering, authentication of information. Refugees reported that this strategy in information seeking supported those who were shy or feared asking questions directly to the information providers. Group seeking also ensured the protection and realisation of information needs of passive

seekers. Although there is generally a wealth of literature on collaborative information behaviour, there is paucity of literature on the collaborative or group information seeking pattern or behaviour among refugees.

5.2.4 Information use behaviour of refugees in North Western Uganda

Refugees information use behaviour as illustrated in the research dashboard in chapter one 1.9, is discussed in view of Taylor's IUE theory elements of the sets of people, the problem and the setting denoting that information use by refugees in North Western Uganda is if influenced by the nature of the refugee, the kind of problems that warranted information for refugees and the setting or environment in which refugees lived. In respect to the nature of refugees at Bidi Bidi refugee settlement camp, most of the information that was sought was by word of mouth. There was a lot of verbal communication between the refugees and their sources of information except for the information that was disseminated in written form which included notices and posters as well as text books for some students in the community. This scenario was echoed by Mansour (2018) who has shown that most refugees from Syria reported that they communicated verbally with family and friends and that this was the most prominent informal information source they used. Similarly, Abood et al. (2023) has argued that the "word of mouth" approach was often adopted in disseminating information to meet the refugees' information needs.

With this nature of set up in which information was largely verbal, the information use practices that were reported and noticed among refugees involved using information to meet refugees' needs, information evaluation and sharing. Refugees used the information they came across in their seeking to attend to their needs in the community in different ways. It is seen that students who accessed information materials in school libraries utilized them to work out school assignments and in some cases prepare for school examinations as seen in 4.7. This information provide the students with chances to follow illustrations and example given school textbooks to answer class and take-home assignments. In the same light, Hashmi et al. (2014), Humbhi and Tareen (2022) as well as Tella, Bode-Obanla and Sulyman (2020) opined that students use the information they seek for examination preparation, meet and address difficulties at hand, find

entertainments as well as finishing tasks and assignments. It is was found that refugees that sought health information used the information to meet their health-related problems. Some refugees sought information about alternatives methods of treatment for their ailments because the health centre in the settlement lacked drugs to attend to their ailments. Such refugees used information they got about alternative means treatment such as using herbalist to seek and look for the herbalists to attend to their health problems.

Refugees used information on available jobs to get into the labour market within the settlement and ensure income flow for them. Information on employment opportunities was among the most sought among refugees in North Western Uganda. Refugees wanted to find information on jobs that could provide income to them. It was noted in the settlement that as some refugees sought information on official and formal employment opportunities, others looked for information on any available jobs. It was noted that some refugees looked for hard labour jobs that assured them of a daily earning including clearing gardens, ploughing, making house structures and cleaning services. This was highlighted by Heidinger (2024) who noted that refugees used information to penetrate labour markets on their arrival in a new country.

Some information was used by refugees to make informed decisions in their small business ventures especially in relation to market trends for products and produce. Refugees used information about market prices to negotiate better and get fair deal in their transaction with traders from out especially from urban areas that came to the camp to buy refugees' produce. This is as highlighted that refugees are economic agents that deal in trade and other economic activities that generate incomes (Poole 2019). As they gained access to information on how to use ICTs in the settlement, refugees used this information for several purposes by bettering their skills in navigating the internet and social media which kept them update with world trends and occurrences in other settlement camps. Refugees used information on ICT skills to promote and make their products known to traders and business people on social media platforms especially using Facebook. Facebook was used to indicate available products such as sorghum,

soya bean and goats. In the same line, Martin-Shields and Munir-Asen (2024) noted that refugees used ICTs in their day today businesses including marketing their products and merchandise.

Although not visible in the literature, refugees used the information they sought on faith to build hope amongst themselves that the future would be bright and better for them which strengthened their resolve and increased their social support for each other for sustenance while in the refugeehood. In the same line, Serra and Revez (2024) opined that refugees used information they came across in their seeking in public libraries to build social relationships in the new environment. Refugees in North Western Uganda got faith based information from religious leaders which increased their hope and faith. Muslim refugees attended lessons about their faith and belief and ultimately grew stronger in their faith and believe in Allah (God). They started observing mandatory prayers and fasting. In the same spirit, some Christian refugees who were the majority in the settlement as well came closer to their God, observed and worshiped him more.

In general, the information received by refugees was used to meet the purposes for which the information was sought as a way of meeting and addressing their needs in the settlement. This information enabled refugees to make informed decisions about their plight basing on the context in which they found themselves and the purpose for which they need information. It is observed by Heidinger (2024) that refugees used information to address healthcare, employment, education, and housing challenges.

Some refugees especially had the habit of evaluating the information they came across before sharing it with others especially if it did not come from partners. This highlights the awareness of some refugees for the need to disseminate authentic and reliable information. Sharing information that is unverified could cause discomfort and cause tension in the settlement if it was disturbing news. Chiu and Chan (2017), in their study on the roles of information seeking and information evaluation for decision-making behaviours, found out that information evaluation was an essential part in the behaviour of decision making about information depending on the nature task. Similarly, Mårtensson

et al. (2020) in their study on refugees found out that refugees sought information on how to realise reliable information on health such as where to go for it and how to evaluate its reliability based on sources used. Some refugees in North Western Uganda showed that it was important to guarantee and certify the information they obtained so as to establish its credibility, reliability and authenticity before consumption.

One important practice in the use of information among refugees was the aspect of sharing information. Refugees shared information they accessed with colleagues, neighbours, family and friends as long as the information was not private and secretive. Information sharing as a concept involved giving and receiving information for the benefit of all that got access to the information whether as an individual or group. This behaviour was common among the refugees. Their ability and desire to share information pointed to the spirit of togetherness and support for each other in the predicament that they faced together. According to Savolainen (2017), sharing information involves a process in which opinions, facts, documents, and ideas are shared from a group or individual to another and from a social angle, it is viewed as collaborative information behaviour involving information sharing processes that may stride from sharing information accidentally obtained to interpretations of information collaboratively. Koo (2016) has noted that refugees, through their social engagements and communication, naturally involve themselves in sharing information and occasionally come across substantial information in the process. The refugees in North Western Uganda shared the information they obtained either individually or as groups for the benefit of them all such as information on refugees' registration and profiling. Naturally, in their setting and living, information sharing was normal and part of their livelihood and often resulted in awareness on happenings and events in the settlement that affected them.

5.3 Difficulties faced by refugees in the quest for information in North Western Uganda

As earlier stated, navigating the information landscape is not a flat smooth terrain but one that is open with bumps, and ditches that make the navigation difficult among all groups and categories of users regardless of location. The bumpiness is more regarding groups

of people in difficult situations and circumstances like refugees. The refugees were faced with a rugged terrain, an even and full of downsides to the information seeker. A multitude of difficulties facing refugees in their quest for information were established in this study and it was found out that they greatly hampered the partaking of information in the settlement. Refugees at Bidi Bidi settlement were incumbered by psychological, economical, technological, and sociological snags which affected their steering through of the information landscape in their environments.

Among the most noted difficulties slapping the refugees in the seeking and use of information was feedback issues in which they complained of either delay in feedback, unclear feedback, unexpected feedback or even the absence of feedback. The feedback issues could give rise to other issues that could affect seeking and using behaviour of refugees including yielding and giving up on the search for information. Di Giovanni *et al.* (2013) and Martzoukou and Burnett (2018) in their studies on refugees have also reported similarly that refugees experienced a dearth of timely, accurate, regular, and actionable information for their protection, decision making and survival. In their information seeking, the refugees hoped and requested for timely feedback. Arguably, delayed feedback can become useless especially when the purpose for which the information was sought is no longer feasible. Timely feedback can positively influence the information seeking and use behaviour of refugees. It was, however, noted that the OPM and partners have put up a refugee support centre where complaints including the delayed feedback could be reported and followed up even using toll free lines to speak directly to the partners responsible for particular issues.

The different languages encountered by the refugees and refugee administrators and providers also made it difficult for refugees to smoothly sail through the information environment. The settlement had over 10 different languages spoken with Kakwa, Arabic and English being the most common. Refugees reported that language barrier complicated their search and use of information as they were sometimes not understood by the information providers and even with the presence of translators sometimes, they felt their information would be wrongly translated or interpreted because the feedback

they got in some cases was not what they expected. In their study, Abood *et al.* (2023) opined that the lack of proficiency in the languages of the host country is an information accessing, seeking and using barrier. Similarly, Kainat, Eskola and Widén (2022) in their study on women refugees stated that the lack of good language and literacy skills to comprehend local systems was a major difficulty that faced women refugees in Sweden.

Similarly, studies have intimated that language is one of the key barriers to accessing information by refugees (Johnston, Mierzecka, Tóth, Paul, Kisilowska-Szurmińska, Khosrowjerdi, Vårheim, Rydbeck, Jochumsen, Hvenegaard Rasmussen, Pálsdóttir, Olson, Skare & Mathiasson 2024). Language was one of the major challenges refugees of North Western Uganda reported, and yet according to Mårtensson *et al.* (2020), the language barrier is made worse by the poor skill and abilities of language interpreters and translators which affects refugees' comprehension of the information landscape.

The changing information as a result of its transit through different vessels was also pointed out by the OPM officers and that this greatly affected the quality of information consumed by the refugees. Given the structure and language diversity of the refugee community, information changed in the process of its transfer especially from the OPM and partners to the Refugee welfare and councils and finally to the refugees. As such in some cases refugees received altered messages or information as a result of the number of vessels through which it travelled. The unexpected feedback influenced the information seeking positively or negatively. Positive response would lead to further investigation and seeking which was earlier presented as "persistent information seeking behaviour" or would lead to yielding into passive seeking behaviour as a result of frustration. It was pointed out by Yeon and Lee (2021) that psychological issues constrained refugees' information behaviour and often resulted in passive information seeking.

It has also been reported that in some cases refugees directly went to seek information from the OPM even on issues that the RWCs had information about. In the same vein, refugees reported difficulty in accessing the OPM officers and partners directly without going through the structured system involving RWCs first. It was also reported by

Obodoruku (2019) that absence of information as well as access to the UNHCR offices as a result of inflexible boundaries posed on accessing the office was a difficulty for the refugees in their information seeking. He argued that refugees felt a deprivation to access freely, information so as to be up to date with existing information and as well discover information types available with UNHCR that would be useful to their plight. The administrative structure of the settlement as explained earlier had a refugee welfare council which was the local council for the refugees and operated as the conduit between the refugees, the OPM and partners.

Noteworthy is the fact that Bidi Bidi settlement is large and comprised of 5 zones and each zone was divided into clusters where each cluster had about 5 villages. As such some refugees' villages were located far from most information centres including the OPM, complain desk, health centre, women's and youth centres. Refugees faced a problem of the long distances they had to move to access these centres and, in some cases, multiple times especially when their feedback had not been returned. The distance in a way affected the information behaviour of the refugees especially where some felt reluctant and wary to move long distance to the centres. To the persistent seekers driven by urgency and value attached to information, they actively continued to seek the information they wanted while others yielded and gave up in the process. This was especially so for people with disabilities who did not have locomotion tools like wheelchairs to aid their movement. The literature cited has limited visibility of distance as a difficulty but the unique nature of Bidi Bidi settlement camp presented that difficulty. Yeon and Lee, (2021) have explained that refugees may end up abandoning some information sources or even refuse to seek for information as a result of psychological issues like discomfort or reluctance. The long distances created discomfort among some refugees in their quest for information.

The poor distribution of communication gadgets such as phones, radio, tablets, television, coupled with the lack of electricity and internet made it difficult for the refugees to obtain information. This clearly indicates that refugees were cognizant of information seeking and use through media. However, the internet distribution for instance in the settlement

was only in a few locations despite the size of the settlement yet the refugees complained about the high cost of data and airtime for those that had smartphones. It can be seen that the information seeking and use behaviour is influenced in a way that some refugees' sources of information would only be those that did not require internet or even electricity. Indeed, refugees with phones also noted that they would not use their phones to listen to radio because they needed to preserve their phone batteries for communication. Brown et al. (2020) notes that refugees in Uganda are constrained with poor infrastructure including electricity. In the same line, while studying the information seeking behaviour of refugees in Zaatari camp in Jordan, Quintanilla (2012) has reported that refugees complained of the absence of electricity. Access to electricity would enable refugees be assured of longevity of their phone batteries' lives.

Although some refugees were cognizant of the use of technologies in the seeking and use of information. It was found out that they had a dearth of knowledge and skills to adopt technologies in the quest and use of information. Adults reported the desire to use these technologies, but lacked the skill of using them and yet some youths noted the need for more training on how to use tablets available in the youth centre although they were very few. The desire for smart phones among the refugees was highly felt as many of them wanted to have smart phones for purposes of using social media and searching information online. Yeon and Lee (2021) and Shuva (2018) in their studies have shown that refugees lacked good IT and language skills that are essential in seeking information. Similarly, Lloyd *et al.* (2013), Hicks and Lloyd (2016) Beretta, Sayyad Abdi and Bruce (2018) have pointed out that refugees suffered from information illiteracy, digital and computer illiteracy which as a result of unfamiliarity with the IT and computer-based provision of information, confines their capability to comprehend and improve their time in responding in the information environment.

The lack of IT skills and the absences of adequate IT gadgets therefore affected the information seeking practices and behaviour of refugees at Bidi Bidi settlement. Important to note is the awareness of the refugees and their desire to use ICT gadgets in their seeking of information despite the constraints. This was exacerbated by the low-income

levels reported among refugees especially that they relied on aid and the few that had some income generating activities would only support their sustenance. The refugees, therefore, could not buy these gadgets to support their information seeking due to low-incomes. As reported by Nekesa Akullo and Odong (2017), Internews and UNHCR (2023), and Beretta, Sayyad Abdi and Bruce (2018), financial constraints could not permit refugees to buy communication gadgets like radios, mobile phones and television sets as well as lack of support which hindered refugees from achieving satisfaction in information needs. Most refugees in North western Uganda were financially constrained to afford television and radio sets as sources of information. Indeed in one of the studies on refugees in Uganda by Brown et al. (2020), it was discovered that refugees who had access to radio were below 25%.

Some refugees also faced discrimination in information seeking on tribal grounds given the diversity of tribes among the refugees. discrimination in information dissemination endangered the seeking practices of refugees a result of denial to available information by some leaders due to tribal differences in favour of tribesmates. This is similar to the research by Hassan and Wolfram (2020) who opined that steering through racial barriers and the American negative view of Africans involving discrimination on racial grounds were huddles faced by African refugees in the United States. Racial differences especially tribalism was seen among the refugees in North western Uganda and this had a negative impact on the seeking behaviour of some refugees.

Arguably, the refugees in North Western Uganda experienced technological, sociological, physical, and psychological difficulties in their information seeking and use behaviour. Psychologically, refugees felt stress, fear, trust issues, frustration, reluctance as a result of the environment in which they navigated information. The sociological, technological, physical and psychological difficulties affected the information behaviour of refugees. When the difficulties are established, solutions can be found to improve the refugees' circumstances.

5.4 Chapter summary

This chapter has highlighted and discussed the findings of the study as presented in the previous Chapter Four. It has focused on the interpretation and discussion of findings based on the objectives of the study while presenting the researcher's interpretation. The findings have also been discussed in relation to previous studies on the topic of the study so as to position the findings in line with previous studies. Refugees' information needs existed in the themes of Faith, Legal, Economic, Sociological, and Others. As seen in the chapter, several studies had discussed information needs of refugees. However, it can be highlighted that this study discussed a detailed account of these information needs including those that are very limited in the literature such as faith, legal, agricultural, and recreational information need of refugees. The chapter also discusses information sources used by refugees in relation to previous studies demonstrating categories of the information sources adopted in their information landscape. Information seeking patterns and behaviour of refugees have been expounded on in line with past studies with some behaviour pattern such as collaborative covert seeking, persistent seeking rarely visible in the literature. The information use behaviour patterns of refugees as well as the difficulties they encountered have also been discussed in this chapter.

CHAPTER SIX: SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

“The outcome of any serious research can only be to make two questions grow where only one grew before”. – Thorstein Veblen (Mitchell 2001:391)

6.1 Introduction

This study focussed on exploring the behaviour of refugees in North Western Uganda with regard to their information needs, the way they seek information, the ways in which they use information and the problems encountered in the processes of information interaction. Chapter One set the context and direction of the study. The second chapter highlighted the study in relation with previous research works on the study topic. Chapter Three explained the methodology used. Chapters Four and Five focused on the study findings through presentation, interpretation and discussions. The current chapter draws from the previous chapters to enunciate the research highlights with reflection on the research objectives and findings of the study by way of illuminating the research through a summary of findings, bring forth a conclusion as well as make and come up with recommendation deemed necessary for the study. Additionally, from the findings and their interpretations, areas of further study are suggested and expounded on with justification.

The journey for this study started with a lot of blurs in the ways in which refugees relate with information in their environment. As a summary and conclusion are drawn, there is clarity on the information behaviour of refugees in North Western Uganda based on the study findings and discussions which shine a light on their information needs, sources of information used, their seeking and use behaviour as well as the difficulties they experienced on their information navigation terrain.

6.1.1 Purpose of the study

The study's aim was to establish the information behaviour of refugees in North Western Uganda such that information needs categories could be established as well as patterns of seeking and using information. This would in turn support the documentation of information needs and also establish the sources of information for the refugees. Based on the information behaviour established, the study also purposed to develop an Information behaviour model based on information needs satisfaction.

6.2 Summary of findings

The study was guided by research question aimed at realising research objectives and as well meet the intended purpose of the study on the information behaviour of refugees in North Western Uganda. The summary of findings is therefore presented in consonance with research questions. Based on the study findings and discussions made about each research objective and or research questions, the findings summary is drawn.as per research question.

6.2.1 Information needs of refugees in North Western Uganda

The information needs of refugees in North Western Uganda as presented in chapter four and discussed in chapter five included legal information needs faith-based information needs, economic information needs, sociological information needs, Technological information needs and others.

All these identified categories of information needs entail a detailed specification of information need that refugee possessed. For example, the economic information needs included information on agriculture practices such as information on available land for farming, information on available seeds for planting, information on seasons for planting, information on weather patterns, information on the use of fertilisers, information on land use policies, as well as information on what to plant. All the categories, when broken down, had an array of different information needs particular to the category. Information needs of refugees in North Western Uganda therefore were established as the research question mandated.

These information needs represented the refugees' needs in their predicament and access to the information would enable them not only meet their needs as refugees but would also improve their plight. The sociological information needs address their social being in the settlement, the legal information need represented their relationship to laws and regulations pertinent to their being, the faith based information needs pointed to their belief in God, the economic information needs reflected their need on economic wellbeing

and sustainability, the technological information needs specifically covered their access and utilization of technologies including internet and mobile devices while the other information needs addressed the need for information in other elements of life such as adolescence, recreational activities, games and sports and well as entertainment.

6.2.2 Information sources for refugees in North Western Uganda

Sources of information were both formal and informal where formal represented information coming from recognised chains within the settlement and the opposite for informal sources. Information sources for refugees in North Western Uganda as found out in the study fell in the categories of persons or individuals, media based, community centres, as well as community events. The refugees utilised several information sources that were dependent on the nature and kind of information sought.

Refugees utilised people or individuals in their information seeking that included local leaders, family, friend, relatives as well as colleagues and community members. They also used media including radio especially Bid Bidi FM, notices and posters, some newspapers in secondary school, and internet where they would run google searches for news and well use social media sites like Facebook and WhatsApp. The refugees also utilised community centres in the community and settlement such as the health centre, the youth and women's centres, the refugees' information centre literally called the complaint desk, schools, library at school for some students as well as worship centres in the settlement and community. Community events and gatherings were also important sources of information for refugees and they took the form of community meetings, community dialogues, funerals, as well as church gatherings.

Given the multitude of information sources that were used by the refugees, there were trust issues reported among the refugees on the nature and source of information with mixed feelings on the most trusted source of information. As was established, RWCs who were part of the local leadership in the settlement were the most trusted yet there were some refugees that reported not trusting them. The church leaders and radio also were similar to RWCs in terms of trust. Several people trusted information from church leaders

and radio but there were yet others that reported their lack of trust in these sources of information.

Although libraries are central to quality information services in different contexts, the refugee community in North Western Uganda lacked a community library to help in filling the information void that was expressed by the refugees. Existing libraries belonged to schools to support school going children and students. The lack of a community library deprived the refugee community in North Western Uganda of an information centre that would offer quality information services for both livelihood and education information needs. Libraries have the advantage that they provide sources of information that can be trusted which would in a way improve the trust level of refugees in the information picked from a library. However, to achieve this, the OPM and partners would have to integrate the library in their information ecosystem.

6.2.3 Information seeking behaviour of refugees in North Western Uganda

The information seeking behaviour portrayed the ways in which refugees looked and searched for the information they wanted. Different patterns of behaviour in information seeking for refugees were identified in the study representing both passive and active seeking practice. Seeking patterns found out were both individuality as well as group dynamics in the pursuit of information. In passive seeking refugees did not take steps or actions in looking for information but rather came across information accidentally or by chance. Passive seeking was attributed to the nature of the refugee seeking information where some were shy, had fear and or were frustrated.

Active seeking was common among the refugees and was attributed to the nature of the person, the nature of information needed as well as the urgency of the information needed. Active seekers were seen both as individuals and as groups as these exposed more seeking patterns such as persistent seeking, covert and overt seeking practices including group covert seeking were groups of people secretly looked for information on specific topics. As opposed to persistent seeking in this aspect of active information seekers, there were aspects of information search retraction that involved withdrawal from

the search process after attempts of seeking had failed. Some of the refugees in this category of active seekers turned into passive seekers as a result of frustration and disappointment.

6.2.4 Information use by refugees in North Western Uganda

Refugees used the information they received and or came across to respond to their needs in the settlement such as finding jobs, applying for scholarships and sponsorship, finding alternative medicine. Some refugees used the information to positively position themselves in readiness for negotiations in the business trade. Some of the information sought and found was used by refugees in building social cohesion and hope in their predicament especially information sought on faith and spiritual being.

A common aspect of information use behaviour among refugees was sharing information amongst themselves. Refugees used the information they found either individually or in groups depending on the nature of information. Refugees shared information on aspects of common interest through common dialogues and conversations such as the registration of refugees, profiling of refugees or the distribution of relief aid items. Although sharing was seen among the refugees, there were aspects in which information did not permit sharing especially if it was confidential. Some issues of abuse and rape were not shared with others while information involving safety concerns of refugees such as resettlement aspects as a result of fear for self were also not shared. There were also rare aspects of information evaluation with some refugee leaders in which they sieved through the information received from untrusted sources like social media before sharing with other refugees in the settlement.

6.2.5 Difficulties faced by refugees in North Western Uganda in their quest and use of information

Several impediments were registered as stumbling blocks in the seeking and use behaviour of refugees in North Western Uganda. Refugees were faced with physical, psychological, sociological and technology-based difficulties in their seeking and use of information. Specifically, in seeking, physical barriers related to aspects that made

movement from one place to another in their search for information complicated. This largely was linked to the long distance between the refugees' households to the information point desired. Refugees with disability found this a bit difficult in their search and use of information.

Sociological difficulties pointed to the way the refugees related with others in the community especially on issues on language barrier, absence of feedback, poor reading culture among others as highlighted in chapter four and five. The technological difficulties were as a result of lack of know and skill in using available technologies in the quest and use of information as well as the absence of technological devices to ease the navigation of information sources on the internet. Refugees were also faced with psychological difficulties which hindered their seeking and use of information. They reported issues of stress, frustration and fear which affected their ability to fully participate in information seeking to meet their information needs.

6.3 Conclusion of the study

A conclusion presents the crucial aspects and implication of a research by highlighting the significance of the research to readers (Faryadi 2019; Zaid & Tsagem 2022). In PhD studies, a conclusion highlights the key aspects and themes stemming from the study so as to develop and shape recommendations (Murray, 2024). A conclusion in doctoral studies is built on the grounds of research outcome and originality in the research (Ahmad 2016). As highlighted by Cañado and Pennock-Speck (2015), conclusions point out the key issues established in analysis, assess the findings of the research and recommend areas for further research. It is presented as the last section of a dissertation or thesis to highlight what the study findings mean and positioning the study in perspective to reflect the addition of knowledge, create avenues for additional research in a particular area yet dependent on study findings and results (Murray 2024; Salman 2013). The conclusion was therefore written in line with the objectives of the study highlighting the key issues on the information behaviour of refugees in North Western Ugandan while trying to expound on areas of novelty in the study.

6.3.1 Conclusion on information needs of refugees in North Western Uganda

All people have information needs regardless of positions they hold in community. It is therefore right to reemphasise that everyone needs information which information falls to diverse spheres of life depending on a person's needs and desires. Refugees in North Western Uganda had different needs and desires which were portrayed in the nature of information that they sought. Information acquisition is essential for refugees to realise adequate utilisation of services in settlements (Abood et al. 2023; Johnston et al. 2024). This has been elaborated by Abdullahi, Igbinoia and Solanke (2015) that no matter how familiar one is in a profession or field, one requires information to succeed. Information needs of people always vary depending on environment and the context in which they live.

The diversity of the refugees and the context in which they lived presented a wide range of information needs for this group of people whose plight was determined as a result of conflict. As one of the wickedest problems in society, refugees in North Western Uganda had a wide range of information needs which portrayed the nature of needs that they had as a group. Refugees are therefore social and economic agents and technology adoption can be key in meeting refugees information needs.

6.3.2 Conclusion on information source available for refugees in North Western Uganda

Information sources depict the vessels with which people access the information that they seek or need. There was no single source of information that was deemed best in meeting the information needs of the refugees but rather a combination of different sources depending on the nature of information needed, trust in the source and convenience for the seeker. Whether informal or formal, information source used by refugees at Bidi Bidi settlement were adopted on the basis of convenience with the source and nature of information sought. Formal sources of information were used and adopted more compared to the informal sources of information. It can therefore be deduced that information sources for refugees were hinged on the nature of information desired, trust attached to the source and or convenience with a particular source but formal sources of information were more preferred in terms of trustworthiness. Trust in information sources as seen in the literature

is, indeed, a major determinant of the source of information for refugees.

Since the literacy levels of refugees from South Sudan were identified and observed as low, documentation and dissemination of information in local languages could ease messages uptake and consumption by more refugees. Refugees with basic literacy levels would then partake of the information written and documented in the local languages as compared to that written in English. A more informed mass of refugees could be realised and thus positively contribute to their lives and wellbeing. The role of local leaders and community centres like church cannot be over emphasised as they were central to meeting the information needs of the refugees in the settlement.

6.3.3 Conclusion on information seeking behaviour of refugees in North Western Uganda

Different patterns of seeking information among refugees existed in North Western Uganda. Refugees exhibited varying information seeking behaviour patterns which were attributed to the nature of the person seeking and the kind of information being sought. Most refugees were active seekers as compared to passive seekers. Where refugees exhibited the same information need, collaborative seeking was seen whereas individualistic seeking was largely as a result of information unique to specific persons and or level of urgency for information recognised.

The highlights of the information seeking behaviour patterns of refugees in North Western Uganda included persistent information seeking, an element of active seeking, covert collaborative seeking, and information search retraction, in which active refugee information seekers would yield to the seeking process after attempts in finding information but to no avail. Information search retraction involved withdraw from the seeking process by the active refugee information seekers. This pattern also sent some refugees into passive seeking as a result of frustration and anger.

Although group searching is a common aspect in information seeking patterns of people across the board, this study highlighted the covert collaborative seeking behaviour among

refugees that were affected by the same issue that was treated private and secret. Although covert seeking behaviour is slightly visible in the literature, collaborative covert seeking behaviour among refugees is not common.

The different information seeking behaviour patterns found point to the role of character, context, and nature of information in the refugees' information landscape. It was also found that the active seeking behaviour adopted by some refugees often resulted into realisation of satisfaction. Refugees' administrators, providers and partners ought to be cognizant of the different seeking behaviour of refugees so as to accommodate all the categories of refugees in the information landscape.

6.3.4 Conclusion on information use behaviour of refugees in North Western Uganda.

Information use behaviour depicted how refugees acted on the information they sought and found. Refugees used information they sought to meet their needs and wants in the settlement and out of the settlement. Refugees used the information they found on different life aspects to address and approach life needs and demands. Information was used in addressing their education, health, economic, technological and other social demands that refugees were exposed to. Information was used singularly as individuals but also through groups. Group information use addressed aspects that affected groups of people such as information on relief aid and disease outbreaks. Refugees shared information amongst themselves if the information was not seen as confidential. Information sharing was common among most refugees as they helped one another to navigate their living terrain both as individuals and groups. Basing on the nature of information, some information was used in secret and in private while most information was used in public. Information sharing among refugees in North Western Uganda showed refugees' desire to support each other. Individual and group covert information use portrayed the need for information systems that support privacy in the refugees' information landscape. There was a link between the information seeking behaviour adopted and the information use behaviour among refugees in some cases especially in line with collaborative information seeking which resulted into collaborative information use whether covertly or in open.

6.3.5 Conclusion on difficulties faced by refugees in North Western Uganda in their quest and use of information

Refugees in North Western Uganda faced difficulties in the quest for information to meet their information needs. Difficulties were either physical, psychological, economical, sociological or technological. Although most difficulties reported were beyond the personal orientation of the refugee and not under their control, some impediments were as a result of the person especially the psychological difficulties. Dealing with psychological issues of stress, frustration, trust and anger could help the refugees to improve and ameliorate their information seeking and use in the settlement. The most common difficulties of language barrier, feedback issues and long distance moved to centres or information providers highlighted the extent to which sociological and physical barriers affected the refugees in information seeking compared to technological and psychological factors. Difficulties in information seeking and use exist in all information use environments regardless of category of user. However, in their predicament, the refugees' navigation of the information terrain was slapped by physical, psychological, economical, sociological or technological impediments.

6.4 Recommendations

This study identified a number of issues as impediments in the information behaviour of refugees of North Western Uganda. As a way of responding to these factors that negated or affected the information behaviour of refugees, a series of recommendations are suggested to put straight and in line what could deter the smooth information behaviour of the refugees in North Western Uganda. The following recommendations based on the objectives of the study are made:

Objective 1:

Stakeholders in the refugee management in North Western Uganda including the OPM and other partners ought to view information needs of refugees in specificity to their needs and wants. These include economic, sociological, faith and spiritual, legal, and other information needs which were the identified themes and categories. This can aid in documentation of information, information products and responses that provide

appropriate and adequate information to refugees. On the basis of the diversity in the languages used among the refugee community in the settlement, documentation and dissemination of information products that address information needs of refugees ought to consistently be portrayed in the most spoken languages of Kakwa, Arabic and English so as to ease the flow of information between the refugees and the partners.

Documentation of information needs categories and their details by the refugee administrators and local councils in a structured way or with an electronic information system is essential in many aspects. Thate, Couture, Schnock and Rossetti (2021) argue that documenting information needs can facilitate the design and development of information systems which can enable effective communication. Such documentation can allow for shared access to the information needs of refugees by all providers including the OPM and partners. In turn, this can facilitate the indexing of the information needs into commonalities that can in turn facilitate timely feedback as responses to some information queries would have been captured. Future related information needs would therefore be easily responded to with the available information in the designed system.

Similarly, there is a need to extend devices that support the documentation and transfer of refugees' information needs to Refugee Welfare Council (RWCs) officers to support in the documentation and processing of information requests through a uniform designed system that warrants information sharing among different level of administrators. Devices such as work tablets can be extended to RWCs to support in the documentation of information needs and requests. Although it was found out that the RWCs were often trained and their capacities to handle settlements issues developed, this capacity development should stretch to include documentation and transfer of refugees' information needs, requests and queries. Being closest to the rest of the refugees, RWCs need more training and capacity development in the area of technology use to support refugees in forwarding their queries in time. This would help with the long distances to the refugees' information centre or complaint desk which the refugees complained about greatly.

Objective 2:

Information packaging and repackaging are critical for efficient information access and consumption by refugees. Information packaging and repackaging ventures could cultivate a fertile ground for adequate information use. Recognising that refugees in North western Uganda come from different backgrounds and have different literacy levels, information repackaging that suit the different categories of refugees ought to be undertaken by the OPM, partners and refugees' administrators in order to ensure that information dissemination meets utilization and uptake. Songs, poems, and drama in local languages have an impact in raising awareness and informing refugees of events and programmes of government and its partners in this refugee conundrum. Conversion of text to pictures and the adoption of infographics is another way to have information repackages to the benefit of refugees especially as a result of their low literacy levels. Refugees can pick messages from well-structured infographics to inform their decisions and actions and this ultimately has a positive bearing on their information uptake. Intertwined with a community library setting, information repackaging can play a great deal in protecting the rights of refugees in accessing information.

Continuous mentorship programmes for refugee leaders especially in dealing with people are essential. In the study, it was found that some leaders were rude and unapproachable. The nature of leader as a source of information greatly affects the seeking pattern of some refugees. Local leaders need mentorship programmes on a continuous basis with talks on how to handle people especially that the refugees may have high tempers and bad attitude as a result frustration and stress. The OPM and volunteers ought to extend the mentorship programmes to all leaders from the village level to the RWC3. The mentorship could also help deal with tribalism in dissemination of important information such as scholarship and funding opportunities as was reported in the study. To deal with tribalism and racial sentiment in the dissemination of information on available opportunities for youth, refugees' providers, administrators and partners ought to use all avenues for communicating and disseminating information including the use of radio, notices and posters, mega speaker phones, as well as community gatherings to spread such messages to all.

The introduction of computer tablets for use among the youths in the settlement was recognised as a big step in improving information access and as well improve digital literacy skills for the refugees. Refugees in different clusters have the opportunity to search the internet and furnish themselves with happenings around them. Partners are highly commended for this provision. To tap more into the use of tablets by youth, an online portal accessible to youth to send in their information needs or queries to the OPM or partners using these tablets could help on many grounds. As movement to and from different providers is reduced, youths will have an opportunity to ask questions or seek information directly on an online portal. This can also reduce on the complaints about absence of staff in centres, unapproachability of some leaders as well as long distances and other psychological issues like fear and shyness.

A community library in the settlement would be a good way to improve access to information and as well a centre for literacy training. A number of refugees hinted on the need for a library, television and newspapers in the settlement. With volunteers and partners, establishing a community library can play a big role in improving access to information for the refugees. The library can be a point for meetings and gatherings as well as reading and gaining access to current affairs in the world. The social connections between refugees and refugees, refugees and partners, refugees and the host community created and presented by existence of a community library are vital in the information landscape of refugees. Community libraries have the potential to link refugees to information through people and information products. Establishing a community library in the settlement or host community can assure refugees of spaces where they can gather to pick information, learn from each other and feel a sense of support and belonging because of the inclusive nature of community libraries. Such a community library would serve as a community hub for refugees, partners, the host community and volunteers where information sharing and use can be realised by all refugee young and old, men and women.

Objective 3:

From the psychological point of view as seen in the study, some refugees need to free

themselves from stress, anger and frustration so as to improve their information seeking practices and as well their social interactions which in the long run supports in their access to relevant information. However, freeing oneself from stress, frustration and anger may not be as straight forwards as stated. Refugee administrators, the local leaders, the health centre, the OPM and partners should consistently organise counselling services in which community members are talked to about their problems. Refugee counselling services can be extended to all refugees in which they can speak to counsellors or volunteers willing to listen. Sharp (2016) notes that talking is a therapy and is a practical treatment technique. Talking about their issues and problems can help relax and open their minds to the context reality and improve their interactions in society thereby converting them into active information seekers.

Objective 4:

Information use behaviour is essential for achieving information satisfaction in the refugees information landscape. Developing and strengthening information systems that support privacy in the refugees' information landscape can greatly help covert information seekers and users to feel safe in their information use environment. There is need to strengthen systems that protect sensitive information users in the settlement.

Training among refugees in effective information usage is critical in achieving appropriate information use. There is need to train refugees in basic information literacy skills to improve information uptake and use. Refugees need to know when to share information and with whom. Information validation should extend to all refugees in their information landscape in order to avoid falling victim as a result of acting on inaccurate and incomplete information. Information literacy training efforts for groups of refugees can greatly help improve the information use behaviour of refugees. As recommended by some refugees of old age, training in the use of ICTs and available digital platforms can improve their information use to the benefit of all the refugees.

Other recommendations

Language acquisition programmes for refugees are important to reduce on issues of

language barrier especially for RWCs who interfaced with refugees more frequently. Although it was found that the women's centre had a programme that aimed at teaching women English and Arabic languages, it is worth noting that this programme be extended to other centres like the youth centre and the refugees information centre or complaint desk. Second language acquisition, through the use of volunteers to train the refugees, can go a long way in reducing the communication difficulties experienced as a result of language barrier.

Extending services and service periods at community centres can be realised by adding on staff number through volunteers. Volunteers can help offer more time for refugees especially where there are many refugees with information needs compared to the number of staff present at a centre. Inadequate staff number at centres was reported by refugees as one of the difficulties they encountered in the information behaviour. The OPM and partners can consider extending the services to more seekers through volunteers' programmes. The use of student internship programmes and volunteer services can greatly improve on the response time in feedback to refugees' information needs and requests. A number of young refugees in the settlement were available and willing to be trained to provide voluntary services to fellow refugees in the settlement. Using refugee volunteers would quickly reduce the manpower gap that would be responsible for some delays in feedback to the information needs of refugees. Refugee volunteers are an advantage as they are familiar with the context in which they lived and can fairly navigate the information landscape of refugees in this settlement and community with the guidance of officials and administrators.

6.5 Study implications and contribution to Knowledge

The study implication and contribution to knowledge is presented to accommodate the implication of Taylor's IUE theory, an architecture and or structure for the documentation of information needs and the theoretical implication accounting for a model developed to denote the information behaviour of refugees in North Western Uganda. Theoretically Taylor's IUE was applied to a diverse group of people as opposed to only professionals to which the model was developed. The IUE theory on the basis of the study findings can be

used to study the information behaviour of diverse groups of people regardless of professionalism. The theory can also be applied to individuals that do not necessarily exist in groups. In practice, information systems can be designed that support the documentation and use of information among refugees in their information use environment.

6.5.1 Implication of Taylor's IUE theory in the study

As presented in chapter Two under the theoretical framework, the IUE theory and model as postulated by Taylor impacted and guided the study on many grounds. The theory was applicable to the heterogeneity of the participants in the study including professionals like teachers and medical practitioners together with unprofessional who were the majority reflected as refugees from diverse backgrounds. As seen in the figure 26 Taylor's IUE theory and model guided the study with all the elements applied.

The people were critical in investigating the information behaviour of refugees in North Western Uganda whether refugees or otherwise. Taylor's the set of people element was crucial in ensuring that the role of participants in the study was realised because the attitudes, experiences, views and opinions of the people were the study's focus. It was about the people and how they related with information from their realisation of information need all through their seeking and use. The sets of people were considered beyond occupation, interest, professionalism or social economic status in the society as postulated by Taylor. Refugees were considered a group of people as was viewed by the society.

The kind of problem element on the other hand signified or presented the nature of problems that are of interest to the people. For purposes of this study, information needs, information seeking and use behaviour were affected by a series of problems and difficulties which refugees experienced in their seeking and use of information. The problems that affected these people influenced their information behaviour. Refugees faced problems some of which were complex and familiar in the setting. Technological, sociological, physiological and psychological difficulties presented information problems for refugees thereby by affecting their information use. Establishing difficulties and

problems which are of concern for the refugees in their information landscape paves avenues for development of recommendations that could make information behaviour of refugees less challenging.

The settings element, as seen in the figure 26, depicted the physical makeup of the area where the study was carried out. Taylor explained the setting to comprise experience, time, the domain and organizational influence. The setting of this study, as seen in the figure, reflects the settlement and its physical attributes such as the community centres, the households, the community gathering and the footings in which the study was carried out. Falling in the domain of vulnerable people. The setting had an influence on the flow of information with regard to location of community centres, local leaders, and other information sources. The setting was important in the study since the participants were interviewed and observed in their setting. Considering setting as a natural information use environment influenced information navigation by refugees.

The problem resolution element according to Taylor's IUE theory model depicts ways in which the problems can be overcome. The element focussed on what refugees thought best to overcome the problems they faced in their information seeking and use. The problem resolution element in the study portrayed how refugees used information to overcome their problems as the anticipated outcomes of information use. A series of assumption on what could be done to overcome the problems is also seen in recommendations. Therefore, Taylor's IUE model and theory directly fitted and guided the study. The elements were in line with the study context and objectives to support a positive interplay between the IUE theory and the study purpose.

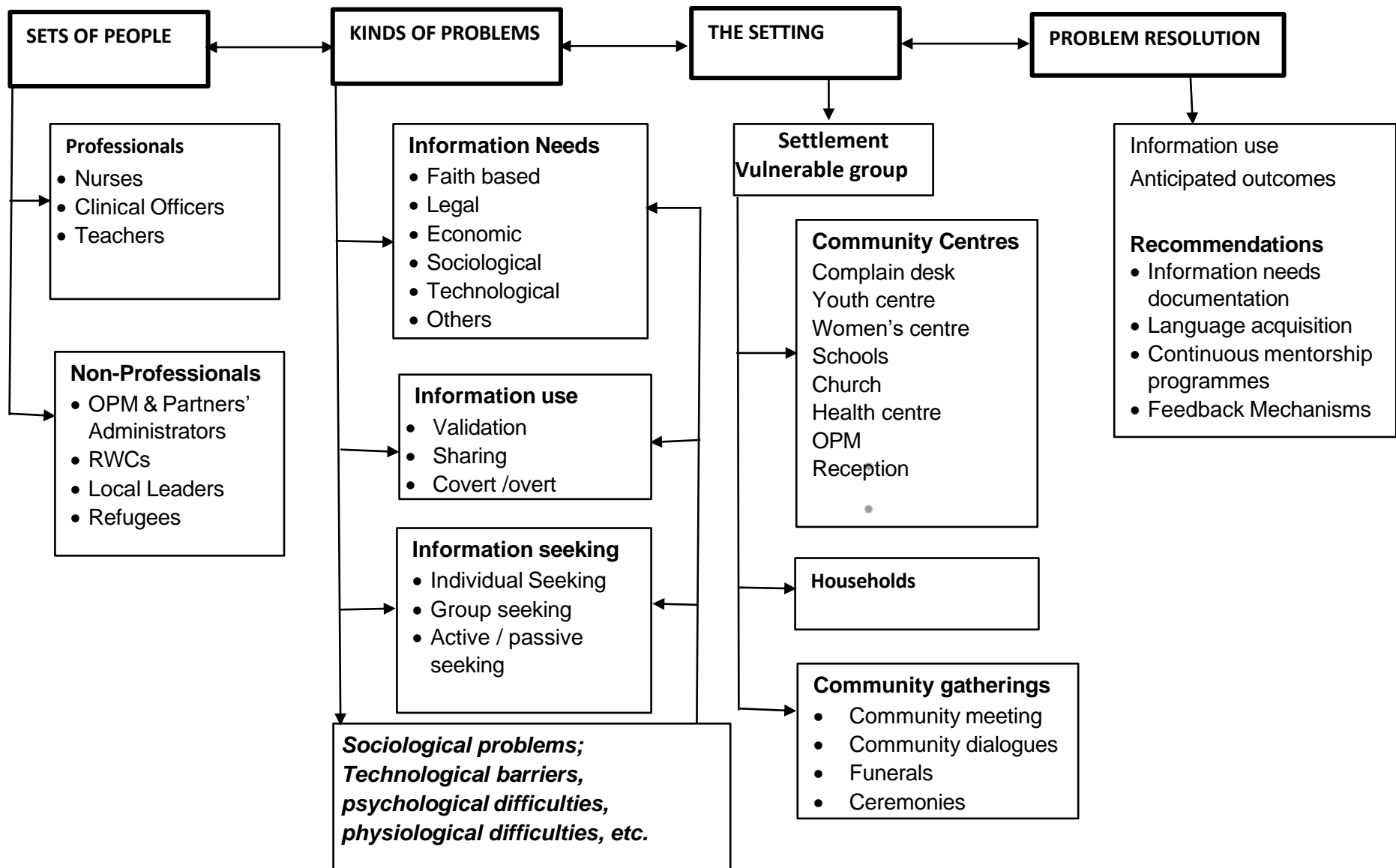


Figure 26 implication of Taylor's IUE theory and model on the study (Researcher 2024)

6.5.2 Architecture for the documentation of information needs of refugees in North Western Uganda.

Based on the information needs of refugees as highlighted in findings on research question one, a proposed structure that can facilitate the documentation of information needs of refugees was one of the key highlight for the study. In the practical sense, the architecture or structure developed can facilitate the documentation of refugees' information needs in North Western Uganda.

The architecture allows and facilitates the capture and documentation of information needs based on the themes realised from the data including faith and spiritual information needs, legal information needs, economic information needs, sociological information needs and other information needs. As seen in figure 27, sociological information needs encompass information on health, education as well as peace and security. This kind of information denotes information needed for the social wellbeing of refugees in the settlement. It is also seen in the figure 27 that economic information needs encompass information on jobs and employment, information on agriculture, markets as well as investment and savings. This information architecture support information needs documentation which in turn can support feedback mechanisms and communication for the benefit of refugees and refugees administrators. This documentation of refugees' information needs using the architecture could also facilitate information sharing and support collaborative use of information among refugees' service providers or partners, refugees' leaders and the refugees themselves.

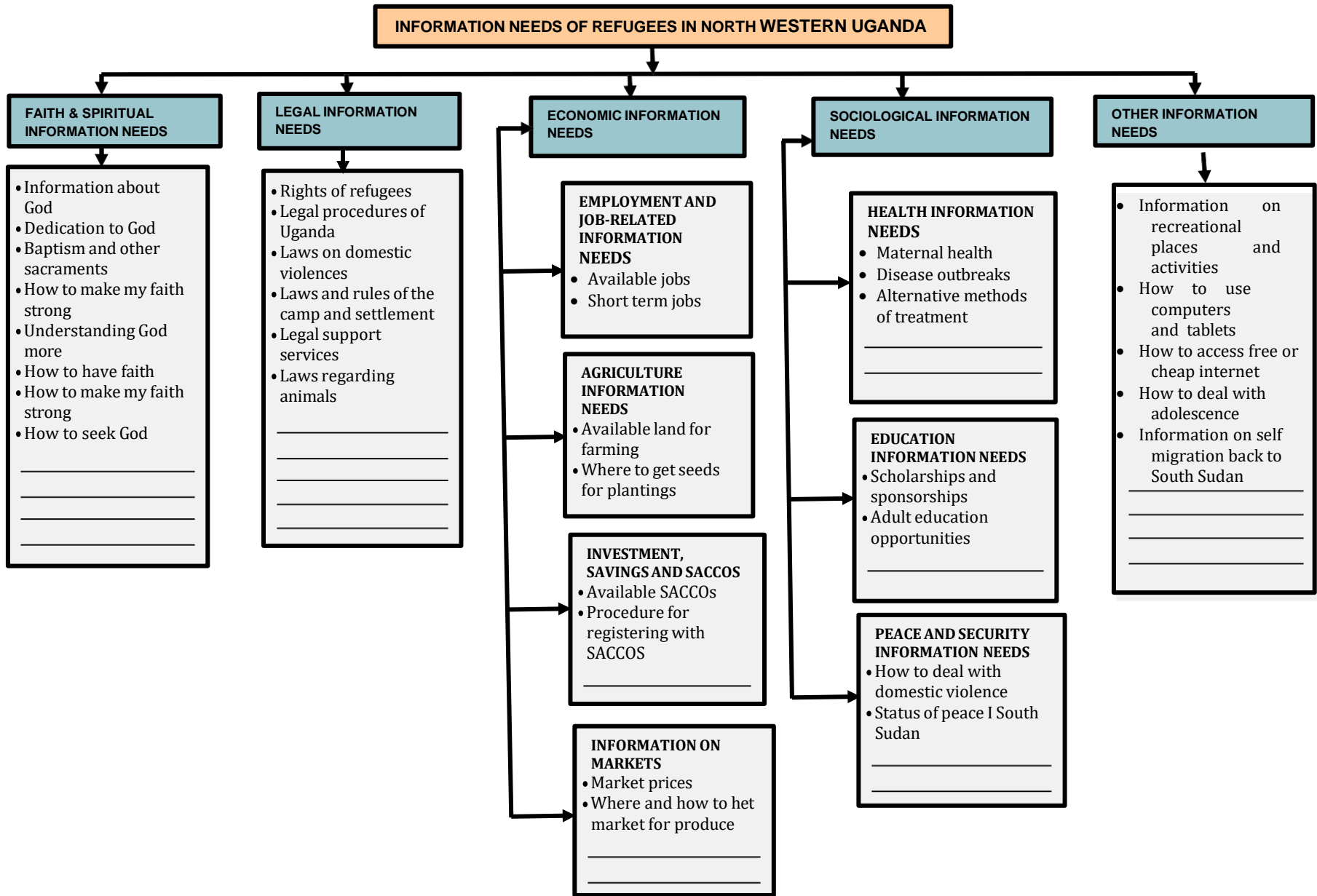


Figure 27 Architecture for documenting information needs of refugees in North Western Uganda (Researcher 2024)

6.5.3 Information behaviour model of refugees in North Western Uganda based on information needs satisfaction

Several researchers have developed different models of information behaviour to depict the interactions between people, information and the environment. According to Wilson (2016), a model is a figurative illustration of phenomena. It is a symbolic way of thinking about phenomenon and can develop into an account of relationships between the elements of the phenomenon. In this study, it was noted that refugees' needs in society gave birth to their information needs although some refugees were not aware that they had information needs even when they were aware that they had needs. Refugees reacted and related with information differently. The model presented here depicts the ways in which refugees related with information in their environments and particularly how they sought and used it. Theoretically and practically, modelling the information behaviour of refugees can support and guide information providers, refugees' administrators and managers to design information systems that facilitate information use among refugees. The designed model therefore offers an avenue to build strong mechanisms that support information seeking and use by all refugee categories which in turn ensures improved information dissemination and uptake among refugees to the benefit of both refugee providers, administrators, host nations and the refugees themselves.

Unlike passive refugee information seekers, active refugee information seekers followed different information scents in their environment to find and access information required to meet their needs in a manner that is described in the model. As seen in the literature, refugees utilised different information sources in their search for information and also applied persistence in seeking as well as validation of information in their behaviour pattern of information. González-Teruel, Campos-Peláez and Fortea- Cabo (2021) explained that information behaviour involves studying or examining people in relation to their information needs, how they seek for information, how they use information including sharing it, as well as managing it. The designed information behaviour model of refugees in North Western Uganda comprises elements that explain the process and behaviour followed by refugees in navigating information.

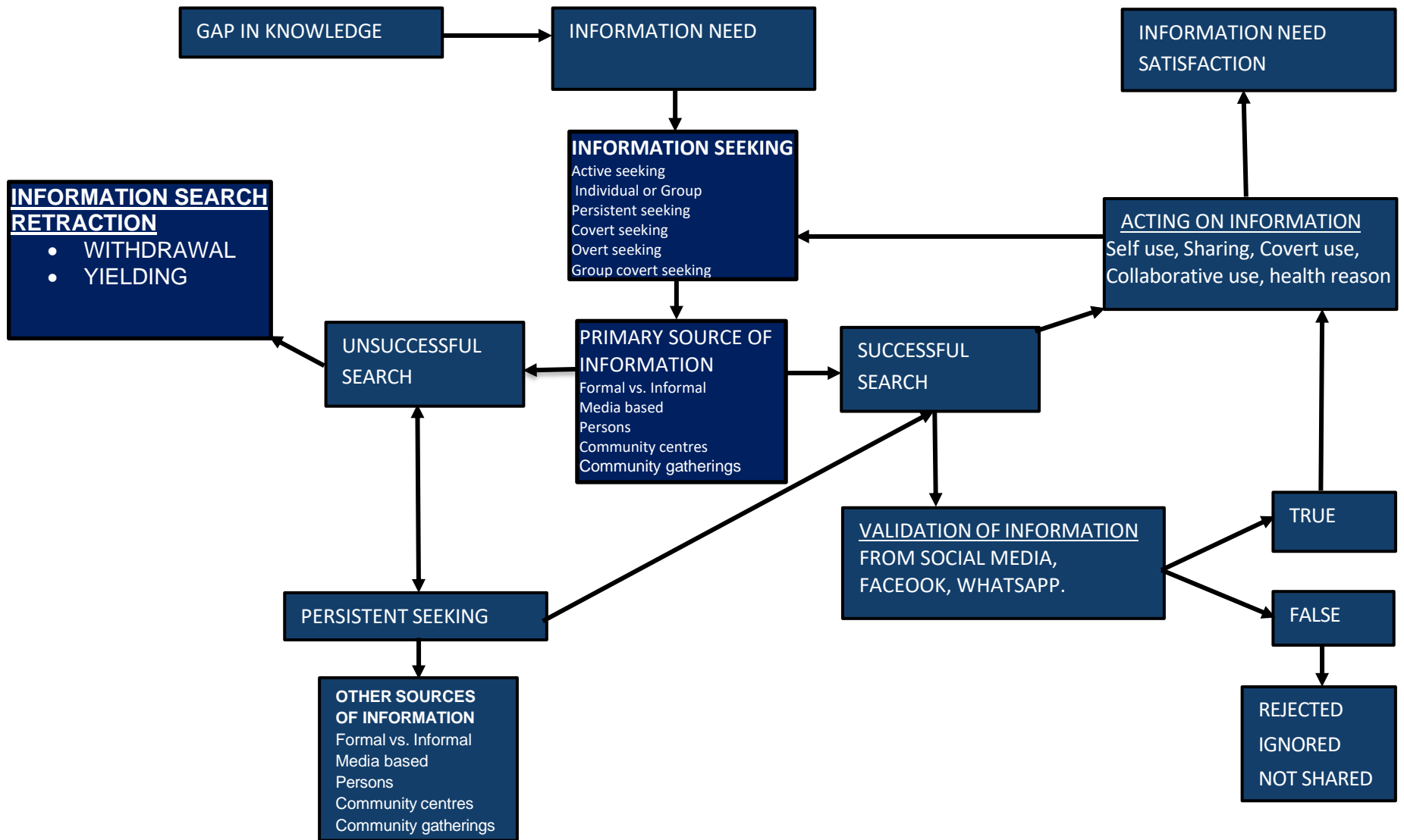


Figure 28 A model for information behaviour of refugees in North Western Uganda (Researcher 2024)

Gap in knowledge / lack of information

When the active refugees realised that they lacked information to meet their needs, they actively engaged the information environment by way of approaching different sources of information. This realisation of lack of information or recognition of a gap in knowledge triggered refugees into information seeking. As seen in the figure 28, gap in knowledge of refugees triggered an information need. The realisation of lack of information and the need for information was present in active refugees who showed the need for information by looking for it. As the first stage in information behaviour according to this model, gap in knowledge denotes a situation in which refugees lacked the requisite information to satisfy their information needs.

Information need

Information needs of refugees can be viewed as the outcome of the realisation of a lack of information to achieve or meet a particular need. Refugees had different societal needs some of which could be addressed if they had access to information. Information needs, for example, included where to find a local doctor, where to get land for farming, information about available scholarships and where or information on where to find a job to mention but a few. Information need denotes a condition in which refugees wanted information to address or satisfy their curiosity, need or want in their setting. The realisation of an information need, as per the model, triggered the refugees' search for information in order to meet their need.

Information seeking

Information seeking is seen as response to the realisation of information need. Refugees possessed different seeking behaviour patterns. Information seeking denotes the actions taken by refugees to locate and find information or information sources used in fulfilling their information needs or gaps in knowledge. The model illustrates active and passive information seeking, individual and group information seeking, persistent information seeking, overt and covert information seeking including group overt seeking.

Information sources

Refugees used different sources of information for their information needs. Information sources denote a body that held information needed by the refugees to satisfy their information needs. The model depicts information sources as bases upon which the information seekers (refugees) turned to find the information needed. Information sources included media, community centres, persons and community gatherings.

Information validation

In this element, some refugees did not trust some information from some sources of information. Information validation denotes the attempts and actions undertaken by refugees to prove the truthfulness and validity of the information they came into contact with. To ensure and ascertain that information received was reliable and trustworthy, some refugees validated the information. They confirmed the truthfulness of information before they acted on it. As seen in the model in figure 28 information validation was reported on information from social media.

Information search retraction

This element of the model illustrated yielding to the information seeking process in which refugees withdrew from information seeking especially as a result of frustration and failure in getting the information needed. For some refugees, information search retraction was met on the first unsuccessful search for information while others reached the phase after multiple attempts resulting in failure to access the information needed.

Using or acting on information

This element shows success in seeking information. Refugees that were successful in the seeking process acted on the information they received, or came across, until they realised positive satisfaction. In acting on this information, refugees used it to meet their needs and as well shared the same information with others that had the same information need. Positive satisfaction depicts a scenario in which useful information was got and was helpful in meeting the refugees' information needs.

Information needs satisfaction

The goal of the model was to show the behaviour of the refugees in their seeking and use of information until satisfaction was realised. Satisfaction is the last phase in the model and denotes success in tackling the information terrain. When refugees received the information they needed to meet their societal needs, information satisfaction was achieved

Description of the information behaviour model of refugees in North Western Uganda

Refugees in North Western Uganda were either active or passive information seekers meaning that they either realised and achieved access to information because of their own actions intended to get information or by chance that information came across them. The information behaviour model shows that refugees who realised a lack of information to meet their need and therefore had an information need proceeded to information seeking. Refugees' information seeking as seen in the model was either individually or as a group. Other aspects of seeking illustrated in the model involved persistent information seeking, covert seeking, overt seeking as well as group covert seeking. These seeking approaches were adopted by active information seekers who sought information from different sources. The diversity of information sources available to the refugees provided an opportunity for seeking from different points based on convenience, trust and nature of information required. In the process, seekers that contacted several information sources built more networks and became more social beings as compared to other that contacted only a few information sources. Notably, most information sources involved verbal exchange. Regardless of the pattern or behaviour of information seeking adopted by active refugee seekers, the result was either success or failure in getting the information desired. In some instances, as seen in the figure 28, some refugees were able to find information on first attempt in the seeking process.

It can be seen that some of the refugees acted on the information they got right away to achieve information needs satisfaction. In some cases, acting on information was after its validation especially if it came from untrusted sources of information like social media

handles including Facebook and WhatsApp. Furthermore, in some cases, acting on information encountered in the seeking process resulted in more need for information. It is seen that exposure to information either resulted in information needs satisfaction or more need for information which took the refugees back into seeking for additional information. However, where the refugee was unsuccessful in finding information relevant to the information need at hand, the gap in knowledge still existed and either resulted in what I considered **information search retraction** or triggered a **continued search for information**. The continued search for information despite unsuccessful attempts at first is presented in the model as **persistent information seeking behaviour**. Persistent information seeking behaviour in turn resulted in either success or failure. Unsuccessful seeking of information despite the persistence by some refugee was seen to lead to information search retraction. On the other hand, successful information seeking after persistence culminated into either **information validation** and **certifying the truthfulness** of information depending on the source or acting on the information to realise satisfaction or further seeking.

Successful searches that produced useful information either resulted in satisfaction or **created more uncertainty**. When action on information brought about more uncertainty, another gap in knowledge was realised and the refugee was triggered into continued seeking for information until **satisfaction was realised**. Some refugees reported giving up on the search for information after the first or second failure in attempt to find information which I considered information search retraction. Information search retraction, in this case, as seen in figure 28, depicted a situation or circumstance in which refugees withdrew effort in seeking information and thus yielded to the failure to find the information they wanted. In this behaviour model of information, refugees retracted from the seeking process and some turned into passive seekers a result of stress, frustration and anger while those that were successful in their searches were able to act on the information found. As seen in the model, throughout the process of information seeking and use, the passive seeker was part of the process. Passive refugee information seekers were present in the settlement and would pick up information either by chance or accidentally. These either got information by

overhearing group conversations, unconsciously listening to a neighbour's radio or even accidentally coming across information on posters in the community.

The model, if studied and considered by stakeholders, can have a positive bearing as a step in protecting and ensuring the right to information access for refugees. Based on the model, strategies and measures towards information services for refugees including its dissemination, protection, sharing can be devised to best fit the refugee community in North Western Uganda. Understanding the behaviour of refugees in steering the information terrain eases the load of care givers, local leaders, health practitioners, humanitarian agencies and staff of the OPM in providing information to refugees. This is especially so because information could then be packaged specially to meet information needs of specific refugees in tandem with the refugees' seeking behaviour whether active, passive, group or individual seekers and covert or overt seekers. Understanding the information behaviour of the refugees in North Western Uganda can ensure protection of the right to information. With the several information needs that the refugees had, the model portrays their ways of navigating the information terrain in the settlement.

6.6 Areas of further Study

The information behaviour field has attracted several studies in line with information seeking and information sources of refugees in different parts of the world where refugees exist whether in camps and settlements or in cities and towns. Suggested areas for further studies on information behaviour of refugees in distinct areas of information behaviour are presented below.

Collaborative information behaviour gives opportunity for groups of people to work in unity or togetherness to realize a mutual goal of achieving or satisfying an information need unique to a group. Studying collaborative information behaviour among women refugees is suggested to help understand the dynamics of this pattern especially given their context and as well uncover in detail the motivations for collaborative information behaviour whether overt or covert. "Collaborative information behaviour of women refugees in

Uganda”.

As seen from the study findings, information sources are a big part of and driver in information behaviour of refugees. Whether formal or informal, information sources are central to steering the information landscape. Given the different level of trust and factors associated to use of particular sources, a more detailed study on information sources as drivers of information behaviour could help open up and establish the underlying issues relating to choice of source of information in greater detail. A comparative analysis can also be drawn on information sources for refugees so as to establish the pertinent sources of information that refugees feel comfortable with in their predicament.

Faith and spiritual information needs were aspects realised in this study and yet not visible in the literature. Refugees reported seeking information for their spiritual being and faith. Given the context in which this study was carried out especially in a settlement system, investigating faith-based information needs of refugees in other contexts is an area that can be considered for further study.

A study on the designed model depicting the information behaviour of refugees in other contexts such as urban refugee environments could be conducted to ascertain the applicability of the behaviour model in such other contexts.

6.7 Final Conclusion

Generally, the current study's aim was to investigate the information behaviour of refugees in North Western Uganda. This was reflected in the objectives of the study. The study was able to meet the intended research outcomes through answering the research questions that had been set. The information needs of the refugees as were identified and documented indicated a level of awareness among the refugees for their needs and desire to find information to meet them. Information needs of refugees took a wide array and they varied depending on the need registered or recognised by the refugee. The different information needs of the refugees were established. A structure for documenting information needs was suggested and developed. The information seeking and use

behaviour patterns were reported, a model depicting the information behaviour of refugees was developed and difficulties encountered by the refugees detailed as well.

The information behaviour of refugees in North Western Uganda, as seen from the study findings, depicts a mixed pattern of behaviour in regard to information seeking behaviour. As seen in the literature, information behaviour of individuals is either passive or active and indeed this study found passive and active seeking patterns among the refugees. The study further found patterns of persistence in information seeking, information search retraction, and collaborative covert seeking behaviour patterns which are not commonly visible in the literature.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEW GUIDE

Research title: Information behaviour of refugees in North Western Uganda

Researcher: Isaac Mukungu

I take this opportunity to thank you for taking part of your time to participate in this study.

I particularly thank you for sparing time to have a discussion with me in this study.

This interview should take between 25 to 30 minutes. During the interview, you should feel free to ask for clarification in case it's needed and I would request you to be honest in your opinions and views.

This interview is will be recorded and I once again assure you that this is interview is specifically for research purposes and your identity will not be revealed at any stage and all information collected will be treated confidentially.

SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

Gender of respondent

Age of respondent

Category /status of respondent

Refugee

Administrator

Service provider

Nationality (Home country) of refugee

Language Spoken (Arabic, English, Kiswahili, Dinka, Nuba, Nuer, Others)

Preferred language (Arabic, English, Kiswahili, Dinka, Nuba, Nuer, Others)

SECTION B: INFORMATION NEEDS OF REFUGEES

What are your information needs as a refugee?

SECTION C: INFORMATION SOURCES FOR REFUGEES

What sources of information do you use in finding information.

Do you keep in touch with your family in your home country?

If yes, how do you get in touch with them?

How is general information delivered or communicated to refugees in the camp?

What is your favourite source of information?

SECTION D: INFORMATION SEEKING BEHAVIOR OF REFUGEES

How do you look for information you need?

Seeking procedure until satisfaction is realised

Covert versus overt seeking

Individual versus group or collaborative seeking

Tools used for information seeking such as mobile devices, databases,

What are the motivators behind the different information seeking habits?

SECTION E: INFORMATION USE BEHAVIOR OF REFUGEES

How do you use information?

Information organisation techniques

Information management techniques

Information disposition

What are the motivators behind the different information use habits?

SECTION F: DIFFICULTIES FACED BY REFUGEES IN THE QUEST FOR INFORMATION

What challenges do you face in your quest and use of information?

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME

APPENDIX B: GROUP INTERVIEW GUIDE

Research title: Information behaviour of refugees in North Western Uganda

Researcher: Isaac Mukungu

I take this opportunity to thank you for taking part of your time to participate in this study.

I particularly thank you for sparing time to have a discussion with me in this study.

This discussion should take between 30 and 45 minutes.

You should feel free to ask for clarification in case it's needed and I would request you to be honest in your opinions and views.

This discussion will be recorded and I once again assure you that this is discussion is specifically for research purposes and your identity will not be revealed at any stage and all information collected will be treated confidentially.

SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

Gender Composition of group

Age Composition of group

Category of group

Refugee

Administrator

Service provider

SECTION B: INFORMATION NEEDS OF REFUGEES

What are the information needs of refugees?

SECTION C: INFORMATION SOURCES FOR REFUGEES

What are the sources of information for refugees in north western Uganda?

Channels for information delivery

How is general information delivered or communicated to refugees in the camp?

What is your favourite source of information?

SECTION D: INFORMATION SEEKING BEHAVIOR OF REFUGEES

How do refugees in North Western Uganda seek information?

The information seeking process (start to End)

Tools used for information seeking such as mobile devices, databases,

What are the motivators behind the different information seeking habits?

SECTION E: INFORMATION USE BEHAVIOR OF REFUGEES

How do refugees in North Western Uganda use information?

What are the motivators behind the different information use habits?

SECTION F: DIFFICULTIES FACED BY REFUGEES IN THE QUEST FOR INFORMATION

Challenges refugees face in their quest and use of information?

APPENDIX C: OBSERVATION CHECKLIST

Research title: Information behaviour of refugees in North Western Uganda

Researcher: Isaac Mukungu

Key issues to observe

- Settlement appearance and set up
- Information sources
- Information centres
- Refugees' movements
- Behaviour in seeking
- Use of technology
- Key activities of refugees

APPENDIX D: UNISA ETHICAL CLEARANCE LETTER



COLLEGE OF HUMAN SCIENCES RESEARCH ETHICS REVIEW COMMITTEE

06 February 2024

Dear Mr Isaac Mukungu

NHREC Registration # :
Rec-240816-052
CREC Reference # :
18029426_CREC_CHS_2024

Decision:
Ethics Approval from 06 February
2024 to 06 February 2025

Researcher(s): Name: Mr. I. Mukungu
Contact details: 18029426@mylife.unisa.ac.za
Supervisor(s): Name: Prof. P. Ngulube
Contact details: ngulup@unisa.ac.za

Title: Information behaviour of refugees in North Western Uganda
Degree Purpose: PhD

Thank you for the application for research ethics clearance by the Unisa College of Human Science Ethics Committee. Ethics approval is granted for one year.

The *medium-risk application* was reviewed by College of Human Sciences Research Ethics Committee, in compliance with the Unisa Policy on Research Ethics and the Standard Operating Procedure on Research Ethics Risk Assessment.

The proposed research may now commence with the provisions that:

1. The researcher(s) will ensure that the research project adheres to the values and principles expressed in the UNISA Policy on Research Ethics.
2. Any adverse circumstance arising in the undertaking of the research project that is relevant to the ethicality of the study should be communicated in writing to the College Ethics Review Committee.
3. The researcher(s) will conduct the study according to the methods and procedures set out in the approved application.
4. Any changes that can affect the study-related risks for the research participants, particularly in terms of assurances made with regards to the protection of participants' privacy and the



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confidentiality of the data, should be reported to the Committee in writing, accompanied by a progress report.

5. The researcher will ensure that the research project adheres to any applicable national legislation, professional codes of conduct, institutional guidelines and scientific standards relevant to the specific field of study. Adherence to the following South African legislation is important, if applicable: Protection of Personal Information Act, no 4 of 2013; Children's act no 38 of 2005 and the National Health Act, no 61 of 2003.
6. Only de-identified research data may be used for secondary research purposes in future on condition that the research objectives are similar to those of the original research. Secondary use of identifiable human research data require additional ethics clearance.
7. No fieldwork activities may continue after the expiry date **(06 February 2025)**. Submission of a completed research ethics progress report will constitute an application for renewal of Ethics Research Committee approval.

Note:

*The reference number **18029426_CREC_CHS_2023** should be clearly indicated on all forms of communication with the intended research participants, as well as with the Committee.*

Yours sincerely,

Signature:



Prof. KB Khan
CHS Research Ethics Committee Chairperson
Email: khankb@unisa.ac.za
Tel: (012) 429 8210



Signature: PP

Prof ZZ Nkosi
Executive Dean: CHS
E-mail: nkosizz@unisa.ac.za
Tel: 012 429 6758



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APPENDIX E: UNCST ETHICAL CLEARANCE LETTER



Uganda National Council for Science and Technology *(Established by Act of Parliament of the Republic of Uganda)*

Our Ref: SS1997ES

14 November 2023

Mukungu Isaac
Busitema University
Tororo

Re: Research Approval: INFORMATION BEHAVIOUR OF REFUGEES IN NORTH WESTERN UGANDA

I am pleased to inform you that on 14/11/2023, the Uganda National Council for Science and Technology (UNCST) approved the above referenced research project. The Approval of the research project is for the period of 14/11/2023 to 14/11/2024.

Your research registration number with the UNCST is SS1997ES. Please, cite this number in all your future correspondences with UNCST in respect of the above research project. As the Principal Investigator of the research project, you are responsible for fulfilling the following requirements of approval:

1. Keeping all co-investigators informed of the status of the research.
2. Submitting all changes, amendments, and addenda to the research protocol or the consent form (where applicable) to the designated Research Ethics Committee (REC) or Lead Agency for re-review and approval prior to the activation of the changes. UNCST must be notified of the approved changes within five working days.
3. For clinical trials, all serious adverse events must be reported promptly to the designated local REC for review with copies to the National Drug Authority and a notification to the UNCST.
4. Unanticipated problems involving risks to research participants or others must be reported promptly to the UNCST. New information that becomes available which could change the risk/benefit ratio must be submitted promptly for UNCST notification after review by the REC.
5. Only approved study procedures are to be implemented. The UNCST may conduct impromptu audits of all study records.
6. An annual progress report and approval letter of continuation from the REC must be submitted electronically to UNCST. Failure to do so may result in termination of the research project.

Please note that this approval includes all study related tools submitted as part of the application as shown below:

No.	Document Title	Language	Version Number	Version Date
1	Informed Consent forms	English	1.0	16 October 2023
2	Informed consent form for the recruitment of research participants	English	1.0	16 October 2023
3	Data collection tools	English	1.0	16 October 2023
4	COVID-19 & EBOLA risk management plan for the study	English	1.0	16 October 2023
5	Project Proposal	English	1.0	
6	Approval Letter	English		
7	Administrative Clearance	English		

Yours sincerely,





Hellen Opolot

For: Executive Secretary

UGANDA NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

APPENDIX F: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN BIDI BIDI SETTLEMENT


THE REPUBLIC OF UGANDA


Uganda
Vision 2040

OFFICE OF THE PRIME MINISTER
PLOT 9-11 APOLLO KAGGWA ROAD. P.O. BOX 341, KAMPALA, UGANDA
TELEPHONES: General Line 0417 770500, Web: www.opm.go.ug, E-mail: ps@opm.go.ug

In any correspondence on this subject, please quote No: OPM/R/163

20th September 2022

Mr. Isaac Mukungu,
Principal Investigator,
University of South Africa.

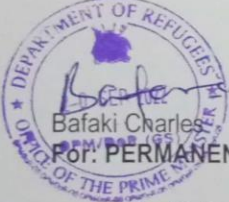
PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN BIDI BIDI REFUGEE SETTLEMENT

OPM is in receipt of your request dated 15th September 2022, in regard to the above subject matter.

Permission is hereby granted you and Professor Patrick Ngulube to conduct research on "*Information Behaviour of Refugees in North Western Uganda*", in Bidi Bidi Refugee Settlement between October and December 2023.

You are requested to observe the rules and regulations governing the settlement.

Office of the Prime Minister Authorities in the Settlement are hereby requested to accord you the necessary assistance.


Bafaki Charles
For: PERMANENT SECRETARY.

c.c.: The Refugee Desk Officer,
Arua Refugee Desk.

c.c.: The Settlement Commandant Bidi Bidi
Refugee Settlement

OPM Vision: A Public Sector that is responsive and accountable in steering Uganda towards rapid economic growth and development.

**APPENDIX G: REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH AT BIDI
BIDI REFUGEE SETTLEMENT**

15th September 2022

THE COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES

OFFICE THE PRIME MINISTER

P.O BOX 341

KAMPALA, UGANDA.

Dear Sir,

RE: Request for permission to conduct research at Bidi Bidi Refugee Settlement camp, Yumbe

I pray that this letter finds you in good health.

I am known by the names Isaac Mukungu a PhD student at the University of South Arica. I am together with Professor Patrick Ngulube, a professor in the Department of Information Science at the University of South Africa undertaking a study towards a Doctor of Philosophy in Information science. Our study is entitled “**Information behaviour of refugees in North Western Uganda**” with Bidi Bidi Refugee Settlement camp being our Case study.

The purpose of the study is to investigate the information behaviour of refugees in North Western Uganda with a focus on their information needs, information seeking behaviour, information use patterns and challenges encountered in the processes.

Uganda is the top refugee hosting nation in Africa and makes the top 5 the world over with over 1.5 million refugees from different countries with South Sudan contributing over 60% of the total (UNHCR, 2021). This position makes it necessary to study the information behaviour of this large group of disadvantaged people whose plight is wanting.

With availability of information, refugees can have a positive twist in the way they live their lives as refugees.

This study will help establish information access and use issues among Refugees and as such stakeholders in Uganda can as well use the study findings for refugee administration and management.

The study will be conducted using interviews and observation methodologies and will culminate into the production of a dissertation for the award of PhD in Information Science. There are no anticipated potential risks that will arise from participation in this study.

For purposes of Ethical clearance by the University of South Africa and progression to the next year of study, a permission letter to carry out research in any field involving people is required.

The purpose of this letter therefore is to request you for permission to carry out research at Bidi Bidi Refugee settlement camp if all the conditions are met by the Researcher. The anticipated period of engaging with the respondents is between October and December 2023.

Yours sincerely;

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Isaac Mukungu', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Isaac Mukungu Principal

Investigator

MOB: +256776671192 / +256701028847

Email: 18029426@mylife.unisa.ac.za

imukungu@busitema.ac.ug

isamukungu.im@gmail.com

APPENDIX H: CONSENT FORM

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS STUDY

Research title: Information behaviour of refugees in North Western Uganda

Researcher: Isaac Mukungu

I, _____ (participant name), confirm that the person asking my consent to take part in this research has told me about the nature, procedure, potential benefits and anticipated inconvenience of participation.

I have read (or had explained to me) and understood the study as explained in the information sheet.

I have had sufficient opportunity to ask questions and am prepared to participate in the study.

I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without penalty (if applicable).

I am aware that the findings of this study will be processed into a research report, journal publications and/or conference proceedings, but that my participation will be kept confidential unless otherwise specified.

I agree to the recording of the survey questionnaire.

I have received a signed copy of the informed consent agreement.

Participant Name & Surname (please print)

Participant Signature.....Date.....

Researcher's Name & Surname..... (please print)

Researcher's signature.....Date.....

APPENDIX I: PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

Research title: Information behaviour of refugees in North Western Uganda

Researcher: Isaac Mukungu

Dear Prospective Participant

My name is Isaac Mukungu and I am doing research with Professor Patrick Ngulube, a professor in the Department of Information Science and School of Interdisciplinary Research and Postgraduate Studies at the University of South Africa. We are carrying out research towards a Doctor of Philosophy at the University of South Africa. We are inviting you to participate in a study entitled **Information behaviour of refugees in North Western Uganda**.

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE STUDY?

We are conducting this research to research investigate the information behaviour of refugees in North Western Uganda with a focus on their information needs, information seeking behaviour, use patterns and challenges encountered in the processes of information interaction. This study will play a part in uncovering the information related aspects of refugee in Uganda and as such ensuring and protecting their right to information.

WHY AM I BEING INVITED TO PARTICIPATE?

This study will take into account views of 60 participants including 50 refugees as well as 5 administrators and 5 service providers.

You have been purposively selected because of knowledge and expected experience about the study topic. We therefore request you to give your unreserved opinions and views about the study.

WHAT IS THE NATURE OF MY PARTICIPATION IN THIS STUDY?

Your participation will rotate around the interviews and Focus group discussions. The researcher will conduct an interview with you in which you will be required to respond to a few questions by giving your opinions and views about the questions. You may also be contacted to participate in a focus group discussion where you will meet up in a group of 5 people to share opinions and views about the study.

The interview is expected to take between 20 and 30 minutes while the focus group discussion may take between 30 to 45 minutes.

CAN I WITHDRAW FROM THIS STUDY EVEN AFTER HAVING AGREED TO PARTICIPATE?

Participating in this study is voluntary and you are under no obligation to consent to participation. However, if you do decide to take part, you will be given this information sheet to keep and be asked to sign a written consent form. Please note, that you are free to withdraw at any time and without giving any reason.

The nature of this study will not require to mention your names or another identifiable data during the interview or focused group discussion.

WHAT ARE THE POTENTIAL BENEFITS OF TAKING PART IN THIS STUDY?

The findings of this study will play an essential role in establishing the information behaviour of refugees in North western Uganda which in turn will help stakeholders in Uganda to make informed decisions on the best ways in which information can be used to improve the lives of refugees. Your participation in the study will play a part in uncovering the information related aspects of refugee in Uganda and as such contribute in ensuring and protecting the refugees' right to information.

ARE THERE ANY NEGATIVE CONSEQUENCES FOR ME IF I PARTICIPATE IN THE RESEARCH PROJECT?

The study is seeking to investigate information behaviour and the questions that will be asked will really not pose a risk above the normal inconvenience of the time spent in the interview or focus group Discussion. There are no anticipated risk of harm to the participants whatsoever. However, if at any point there occurs harm as a result of this study, please reach out to the researchers at telephone - **+256776671192** and email isamukungu.im@gmail.com as well as my supervisor at ngulup@unisa.ac.za.

WILL THE INFORMATION THAT I CONVEY TO THE RESEARCHER AND MY IDENTITY BE KEPT CONFIDENTIAL?

Ensuring confidentiality and anonymity is a central and important consideration for the researcher. All gathered information although will be used in developing and publishing a dissertation as the end product or article publications and or conference proceeding, will in no way be linked to the participants in ways that identify the study participants. Your identity will not be disclosed during and after the study as it will be treated with utmost confidentiality.

Your answers may be reviewed by the members of the Research Ethics Review Committee of the University of South Africa. Otherwise, records that identify you will be available only to people working on the study, unless you give permission for other people to see the records.

HOW WILL THE RESEARCHER(S) PROTECT THE SECURITY OF DATA?

Hard copies of your answers will be stored by the researcher for a minimum period of five years in a locked cupboard/filing cabinet at the researcher's home for future research or academic purposes; Electronic information including audio recordings will be stored on the Researchers' password protected computer. Future use of the stored data will be subject to further Research Ethics Review and approval if applicable.

Once the useful period of this collected data comes to an end, hard copies will be shredded and the electronic copies will be permanently deleted from the hard drive of the computer through the use of a relevant software programme

WILL I RECEIVE PAYMENT OR ANY INCENTIVES FOR PARTICIPATING IN THIS STUDY?

This study does not attract any incentives in form of payment or reward for participating in it.

HAS THE STUDY RECEIVED ETHICS APPROVAL

This study has received written approval from the Research Ethics Review Committee of the University of South Africa and a copy of the approval letter can be obtained from the researcher if you so wish.

HOW WILL I BE INFORMED OF THE FINDINGS/RESULTS OF THE RESEARCH?

If you would like to be informed of the final research findings, please contact Isaac Mukungu on +256776671192 or email address 18029426@mylife.unisa.ac.za and or isamukungu.im@gmail.com.

Should you require any further information or want to contact the researcher about any aspect of this study, please contact Isaac Mukungu on +256776671192 or email address 18029426@mylife.unisa.ac.za and or isamukungu.im@gmail.com.

Should you have concerns about the way in which the research has been conducted, you may contact my supervisor Professor P. Ngulube at +27828527612 or ngulup@unisa.ac.za.

Thank you for taking time to read this information sheet and for participating in this study.

Thank you.



Isaac Mukungu

APPENDIX J: RESEARCHER ACKNOWLEDGEMENT



THE COLLEGE OF HUMAN SCIENCES

RESEARCHER ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Hereby, I **Isaac Mukungu**, ID number **18029426**, in my personal capacity as a researcher, acknowledge that I am aware of and familiar with the stipulations and contents of the

- Unisa Research Policy
- Unisa Ethics Policy
- Unisa IP Policy

And that I shall conform to and abide by these policy requirements

SIGNED:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Isaac Mukungu", is written over a horizontal line.

Date: 2022-11-21