EXPLORING RELOCATION EXPERIENCES OF REFUGEES AND ASYLUM SEEKERS IN PORT ELIZABETH

BY

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ABSTRACT AND KEY CONCEPTS

Large numbers of migrants enter South Africa legally and illegally in search of a better life, personal safety and security (Pretorius, 2004:1). The research study explored and described experiences of refugees and asylum seekers in the host country, the challenges they encountered in the process of integration regarding families in their country of origin and their “new” families in the host country, the strategies they employed to get recognition even if it led to being involved in fraudulent activities. The research has also explored the impact of laws in the lives of refugees and asylum seekers for example the Refugee Act (Act 130 of 1998), the Immigration Act (Act 13 of 2002), the 1969 OAU Convention and the 1951 United Nations Convention. A qualitative research approach was used to frame the study, which employed an exploratory, descriptive and contextual research design so as to understand challenges experienced by refugees and asylum seekers.

The sample for the study was a purposively selected sample recruited using the snowball sampling technique. As a means of collecting data semi-structured interviews were utilized. The eight steps as stipulated by Tesch (in Creswell, 1994) were used to analyse data. To ensure trustworthiness the four criteria as suggested by Guba (in Krefting, 1991) were applied, namely truth-value, applicability, consistency and neutrality. The findings and recommendations are made available by means of a research report.

The research findings were centered on the following themes:
(1) Refugees and asylum seekers articulate a range of reasons behind the decision to leave their home country.
(2) Refugees and asylum seekers express negative experiences regarding leaving their country of origin.
(3) Refugees and asylum seekers experience a range of feelings as they enter the host country.
(4) Refugees and asylum seekers report that they and their families experience a number of challenges as a result of relocation.
(5) Refugees and asylum seekers employ negative and positive strategies to cope with challenges of relocation

(6) Suggestions made by refugees and asylum seekers concerning the involvement of Social Workers

(7) Suggestions made by refugees/asylum seekers to Home Affairs in terms of improving services to refugees and asylum seekers

Substance findings: the results emerged from the data collected through the themes and sub-themes identified during data analysis.

Conclusions and recommendations:
Based on the findings conclusions were drawn and recommendations proposed from the findings.

Key words: refugee, asylum seeker, experience, relocation
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THANK YOU
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# ABSTRACT AND KEY CONCEPTS

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CHAPTER 1

1.1 INTRODUCTION & PROBLEM FORMULATION

The problem of refugees and asylum seekers has been a worldwide phenomenon that has given rise to much controversy. This problem can be traced as far back as biblical times as evident in the years before Christ in Genesis chapter 42 verse 5 when Jacob’s sons arrived in Egypt from Israel. All countries have in some form or the other experienced the problem of refugees and asylum seekers and issues associated with what individuals resort to in order to obtain legal status in the host country. In earlier times asylum seekers were not considered as a real problem until the aftermath of World War II when the United Nations General Assembly created the office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

People fleeing persecution and civil strife have been part of the political landscape of the Southern African region as long as can be remembered. Until a decade ago the policies of the previous South African government caused countless numbers of people to flee the country as refugees into neighboring countries and further abroad (Handmaker, De la Hunt & Klaaren 2001:5). The protection of refugees in South Africa is a relatively new phenomenon. Refugee status, at the universal level, is governed by the 1951 Convention and the 1967 Protocol relating to the status of refugees. These two international legal instruments have been adopted within the framework of the United Nations (United Nations Handbook, 1999:1). The first instrument was the 1951 Convention relating to the status of refugees, which is the foundation of Refugee Law. It defines the term “Refugee” as “anyone who has fled his\her country of origin because of events occurring in Europe or elsewhere before 1 January 1951, having a well founded fear of being persecuted because of race, political affiliation, religion, nationality, and membership to a particular social group, is outside his\her country of nationality, and owing to such fear is unable or unwilling to return to his\her country of origin”.

A new refugee crisis emerged during the late 1950s and early 1960s and this necessitated widening both the temporal and geographical scope of Refugee Conventions and a 1967 Protocol to the Convention was drafted and adopted. The second instrument was the Organization of African Unity (OAU) Convention governing the specific aspects of refugee problems in Africa which was a regional treaty adopted in 1969. It added to the definition found in the 1951 Convention by including, “any person compelled to leave his/her country owing to external aggression, occupation, foreign domination or in either part or the whole country of origin or nationality”.

The third instrument was adopted in 1984 when a colloquium of Latin American government representatives and distinguished jurists adopted the Cartagena Declaration. The Declaration adds more objectivity based considerations to the 1951 Convention refugee definition to include “persons who flee their countries because their lives, safety or freedom has been threatened by generalized violence, foreign aggression, internal conflicts, massive violation of human rights or other circumstances which have seriously disrupted public order”.

The rapidly increasing numbers of refugees and asylum seekers has called for South Africa to adopt the Refugee Act (Act 130 of 1998) which is an instrument used to assess refugee and asylum seeker claims. The Act encompasses both the 1951 Convention and the OAU Convention definitions as defined above. The Refugee Act of 1998 defines an asylum seeker as “a person seeking recognition as a refugee in the Republic of South Africa”.

The plight of refugees and asylum seekers has stimulated significant research especially regarding the problem of resettlement and difficulties of adjustment. However, one area that has not received much attention is how the host government can more effectively respond to the challenges faced by refugees and asylum seekers as well as the role of the social worker in intervention to alleviate the problems encountered by refugees and asylum seekers that might lead them to fraudulent and or criminal acts.

One evidence that refugees and asylum seekers indeed do engage in criminal activities is when the Department of Home Affairs in 2004 to 2005 issued a statement that South Africans should visit the Home Affairs offices to their status after it was discovered that a lot of South Africans found themselves married to foreigners they have never seen. According to the
reports from the Department of Home Affairs Immigration section, most of these foreigners happened to be the ones who were holders of refugee status or asylum seekers permit.

In the Department of Home Affairs in the Refugee Affairs Section the first social worker was employed in 1997 and the second social worker was employed in 2000, but they were not employed in the conventional capacity of social workers as per their qualification. Instead they were employed as Refugee Status Determination Officers (RSDOs). Their job description as stated in the Refugee Act (Act 130 of 1998) is stated as follows:

1) To conduct a non-adversarial hearing to elicit information bearing the applicant’s eligibility for refugee status.
2) To consult with or invite United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) representatives to furnish information on specified matters and may with the permission of the asylum seeker provide UNHCR with such information as requested.

When considering the application the RSDO must have due regard for the rights set out in section 33 of the South African Constitution, and in particular, ensure that the applicant fully understands the procedures, his or her rights and responsibilities and the evidence presented.

The RSDO must at the conclusion of the hearing grand asylum or reject the application or refer any question of law to the Standing Committee.

Given that the roles outlined above are not generically defined roles in terms of traditional or conventional social work practice, it is important to understand how social workers in the Department of Home Affairs can effectively respond to the needs of refugees and asylum seekers. Asylum seekers are the product of states that do not take responsibility to protect their citizens. As a result individuals may suffer such serious violations of their human rights that they are forced to flee their homes and often, even their families to live safely in another country.

The study focused on the Refugees and Asylum seekers living in the Eastern Cape. The legislation used to regulate these individuals namely the Refugee Act 130 of 1998 and the
Immigration Act 13 of 2002 as well as the regulations of these two sets of legislation and policies thereof and lastly, the Constitution of South Africa Act no 108 of 1996.

2. PROBLEM STATEMENT

As previously indicated, social workers fulfill a non-traditional social work role in the context of the Department of Home Affairs. Furthermore, there have been no studies that were located in South Africa that focus on the social worker’s role in rendering services to refugees and asylum seekers. The problem of refugees is a relatively new but growing social phenomenon in South Africa which needs to be addressed also by the involvement of social workers in general and more specifically, by the relevant department which is the Department of Home Affairs.

The insights gained enabled the researcher to make recommendations about more effective social work services to refugees and asylum seekers.

3. RESEARCH QUESTION

Creswell (1994:70) states that a hypothesis is not written in qualitative studies. The author states that research questions assumes two forms namely, a grand tour question or guiding hypothesis followed by sub-questions.

The grand tour question is defined by Creswell (1994:70) as a statement or question being examined in the study in its most general form. The question is posed in general terms so as not to limit the inquiry.

The question that this study answered is:
What are the refugees/asylum seeker’s experiences of relocation and what are the specific challenges that face them and their families in relocation in the host country? In addition what recommendations that can be made to Social Workers to help refugees in the process of relocation.
4. RESEARCH GOAL AND OBJECTIVES

4.1 GOAL

De Vos et al. (2002:107) cite the Webster’s Third International Dictionary (1961) which defines both goals and objectives as “the end toward which effort or ambition are directed, aim, purpose”.

- AIM OF STUDY

This study aimed to gain an understanding of the experiences of refugees and asylum seekers in the process of relocation and explored the challenges they and their families face in the host country.

4.2 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the research are:

1) To explore and describe the refugees and asylum seekers experiences in relocating by means of interviews as data collection method.

2) To explore and describe the challenges encountered by refugees and their families in relocating. The two objectives will be achieved by utilizing the eight steps described by Tesch (in Creswell, 1994:155) for data analysis.

3) To interpretation data

4) Based on the findings, to make recommendations regarding the role social workers can fulfilled in assisting refugees to cope more effectively during the process of relocation.
5. RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

5.1 RESEARCH DESIGN

In executing this research, the researcher employed a **phenomenological**, explorative, descriptive and contextual research design. Rubin and Babbie (1997:376) state that phenomenology is used to emphasize a focus on people’s subjective experiences and interpretation of their world. For the purpose of this research, the researcher was seeking to understand and describe the experiences of relocation of refugees and asylum seekers and the challenges they face in this process. Creswell (1994:147) states that studies following a qualitative approach are interpretive research. The researcher will try to understand and interpret the meaning ascribed by refugees and asylum seekers to their relocation experiences.

Mouton and Marais (1990:43) state that the goal that is pursued in **exploratory** studies is the uncovering of the relatively unknown. The researcher wanted to understand the experiences of refugees and asylum seekers regarding their relocation given that this is an under-researched area in Port Elizabeth, in the Eastern Cape. Even if the relocation experiences in Port Elizabeth were somehow explored, this study differed as the researcher looked at the impact of these experiences to their families on one hand and the intervention Social Worker bringing about in trying to alleviate the problem.

Given the fact that there is a dearth of literature available about the proposed topic, the researcher also incorporated a **descriptive** design to describe the experiences of refugees and asylum seekers. According to Terreblance and Durrheim (1999:398) contextual research is less immediately concerned with discovering universal law-like patterns of human behaviors and is more concerned with making sense of human experiences.
5.2 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A qualitative research approach was used to actualize this study. Qualitative research according to De Vos (1998:240) is a multi-perspective approach to social interaction aimed at describing, making sense of, interpreting or constructing this interaction in terms of meanings that subjects attach to it. Denzin and Lincoln (in De Vos 1998:359) state that qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of or interpret phenomena in terms of meanings people bring to them.

5.3 RESEARCH POPULATION AND SAMPLING

Elmas, Kantowitz and Roedger (1994:444) and Graziano and Taulin (2000:429) describe the research population as a clearly defined set of potential objects or events from which a sample can be drawn. The population helped to define which people are included from a group to be studied. The population studied for this research was made up of all asylum seekers and refugees in the Port Elizabeth who were not illegal immigrants or undocumented migrants.

According to Arkava and Lane (1983:27) the concept sample is “an element of the population considered for actual inclusion in the study. Or it can be viewed as a subset of measurements drawn from a population in which we are interested”. For the purpose of this study, the sample consisted of refugees, asylum seekers that are from different countries and live in the Port Elizabeth area.

The sample size was determined by data saturation. Schurink (in De Vos 1998:262) states that data saturation occurs when no new information and insights are gained during the process of data collection. The researcher used purposive and snowball sampling to recruit a sample of fifteen voluntary participants from the refugee/ asylum seeker,s population.

Purposive sampling involved the conscious selection of subjects to be included in the study. Burns and Grove (1997:306) state that this type of sample is based entirely on the judgment of the researcher, in that such a sample is composed of elements which contain the most representative or typical attributes of the research population. The researcher included in the
research refugees, asylum seekers and from the age of 25 – 40 years. The researcher used gatekeepers such as refugee forums and refugee community leaders to enable her to recruit possible research participants.

Snowball sampling serves as a significant sampling technique in qualitative studies (De Vos et al. 2005:203). This involves approaching a single person who represents the phenomenon under investigation and after interviewing him/her, the individual is requested to identify other possible participants whom they know and who have experienced the phenomenon under investigation. This snowball sampling method was administered for this study.

The participants had to adhere to the following sampling criteria: able to communicate in English, males and females between the age of 25 years and 40 years, individuals who are refugees or asylum seekers and their partners, where possible, who reside in the Port Elizabeth area.

5.4 METHODS OF DATA COLLECTION

Interviewing is the predominant mode of data or information collection in qualitative research. Seidman (1998:1) states that one interviews because one is interested in other people’s stories. Tutty et al. (1996: 27) are of the opinion that interviewing is the most common method of data collection and it can be regarded as the universal mode of systematic inquiry. Interviewing participants involves not only the description of their experience, but also involves reflection on such description. Kvale (in Sewell, 2001:1) defines qualitative interviews as “attempts to understand the world from the participant’s point of view, to unfold the meaning of people’s experiences to uncover their lived world prior to scientific explanations”.

The researcher used semi-structured interviews with the aid of an interview schedule in order to gather data. Tutty et al. (1996: 56) ascertain that with semi-structured interviews there are usually some predetermined questions or key words used as a guide. The semi-structured interview according to Tutty et al. (1996:56) is sometimes called the “guided interview”. Questions are asked in an open-ended manner. Semi-structured interviews are appropriate when one wants to compare information between and among people, while at the same time
wishing to more fully understand each person’s unique experience. Tutty et al. (1996:56) state further that this type of interview is less restrictive than the more structured type enabling each participant to answer questions in any way that reflects their personal experiences.

The following questions were used to guide the semi–structured interview:

- Tell me about your decision to leave your home country.
- Tell me about your experience of leaving your home country.
- Tell me about your experience of being in Port Elizabeth as a refugee or asylum seeker.
- What challenges have you and your family encountered during relocation?
- What suggestions would you like to make to social workers about how they can help in the process of assisting asylum seekers?

The researcher first obtained participants’ consent to record interviews on tape. Smith et al. (1995: 17) mention that a tape recorder allows a much fuller record than notes taken during the interview and provides direction for where to go next.

Field and Morse (as quoted by De Vos et al. 1998: 318) maintain that field notes serve as a written account of the things the researcher hears sees experiences and thinks in the course of collecting or reflecting on the data obtained during the study. In this study field notes were used as a back up source to audiotapes and to record any observations made by the researcher during interviews of reactions of participants and the researcher which cannot be captured by the recording.

5.5 PILOT STUDY

De Vos et al. (2005:331) state that a pilot study usually involves one or two respondents possessing the same characteristics as those of the main investigation to ascertain trends. A pilot study also contributes to the establishment of relationships with the respondents or with the community and obtaining permission for the project from key gatekeepers.
The pilot study helps the researcher to determine whether the intended experience is explored (York 1998:244). The first two participants were interviewed and from these interviews, the researcher was then be able to improve the research questions where necessary. The participants were asked to comment on the wording of the questions, the sequence and if there were any confusing questions. When this process was finalized, the researcher evaluated the interview questions, thus added more questions or eliminated some questions in order to finalize questions for data collection.

5.6 METHOD OF DATA ANALYSIS

De Vos et al. (2002:318) state that analysis begins by going back to the purpose of the study. Kruger and Casey (2000:127) suggest that the key is that the depth and intensity of analysis are determined by the purpose of the study. Tutty et al. (1996:90) believe that the central purpose of data analysis is to sift, sort and organize the masses of information acquired during data collection in such a way that themes and interpretation that emerge from the process address the original problem. For the purpose of this research, the researcher utilized the eight steps described by Tesch (in Creswell, 1994:155) for data analysis. Themes, sub-themes and categories will be identified from the data. The eight steps are:

- The researcher read through all the transcripts carefully in order to get a sense of the whole.
- One interview is selected with more information that is interesting. Whilst reading it, one asks oneself what is it I am reading here and what is it all about and writes their thoughts in the margin.
- All the interviews will be read and topics with same ideas grouped together and labeled. For example if one comes across feelings the participants experience, a topic on “feelings experienced” could be labeled.
- The research will assign codes to various topics. Abbreviate the codes, for example, on feelings experienced the abbreviation may be f/exp.
- The various topics are then reduced to categories, in this study they will be reduced to sub-themes. The most appropriate words to describe topics in a certain category will be used, for example, experiences of refugees in relocating.
• A final decision about the topics, codes and categories will be made.
• Data of the same category will be cut and pasted together.
• Finally, the researcher recodes the data if necessary.

6. DATA VERIFICATION

Lincoln and Guba (1985) discuss establishing quality criteria such as “trustworthiness” and “authenticity” which are all viable stances on the question of validity and reliability. Guba in Krefting, (1991:215) proposes a model for assessing trustworthiness of qualitative data based on four criteria: truth-value, applicability, consistency and neutrality.

• TRUTH-VALUE

Truth-value is the criterion used to assess the confidence of the research design. Guba in Krefting (1991:215) states that truth-value usually is obtained from the discovery of human experiences as they are lived and seen by interviewees. The strategy to achieve truth-value will be credibility. In this study the researcher will use the following strategies to achieve credibility: triangulation of data sources, reflexivity, and member checking. One of the strategies to achieve truth-value will be the conducting of interviews until data is saturated. In this study the data was saturated as the participants

Sandelowski in Krefting (1999:216) asserts that a qualitative study is credible when it presents an accurate description or interpretation of human experiences that people who also share that experience would immediately recognize the descriptions. Credibility is to check if the findings are plausible. According to Krefting (1991:219) triangulation is a powerful strategy for enhancing the quality of research. The researcher for the purpose of this study will use triangulation of data sources as it is one of the four types of triangulation identified by Knafl and Breitmayer in Krefting 1991: 219)
• **APPLICABILITY**

The researcher ensured transferability by providing a detailed description of research methodology that is used in the study. A second strategy to ensure applicability was the implementation of a nominated sample.

• **CONSISTENCY**

The findings were checked for consistency by employing the services of an independent coder who encoded themes and sub-themes. In this manner the dependability of the research findings were ensured.

• **NEUTRALITY**

The above methods of data verification was complemented throughout with discussions with the supervisor, which also serves as one of the strategies to ensure data verification.

7. **LITERATURE CONTROL**

The researcher used literature as is consistent with qualitative studies to frame the study in the introductory chapter and then in the discussion of findings to support or contrast the findings that emanate (Creswell 1994).

8. **ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

Neuman (1994:428) defines ethics as what is or is not legitimate to do or what “moral” research procedures involve. Below is a list of ethical considerations for this research study, which the researcher committed to maintain.
• Harm to experimental subjects

According to Dane (1990:44) ethical obligations rest with the researcher to protect subjects against any form of discomfort that may emerge from the research project. Emotional harm to subjects is often more difficult to predict and to determine than physical discomfort. Participants should be thoroughly informed beforehand about the potential impact (risks and benefits) of the investigation.

• Informed consent

Obtaining informed consent implies that all possible or adequate information on the goal of the investigation, the procedure which will be followed during the investigation, the possible advantages, disadvantages and dangers to which the respondents may be exposed, as well as the credibility of the researcher, will be rendered to potential subjects or their legal representative (Williams et al. 1995:30) [Refer to Appendix B]. De Vos et al. (2005:59) state that emphasis must be placed on accurate and complete information, so that subjects will fully comprehend the investigation and consequently be able to make a voluntary, thoroughly reasoned decision about their participation. Nobody should ever be coerced into participating in a research project, because participation must always be voluntary (Neuman, 2003:124). The researcher undertakes to provide each participant with a written consent form in simple English. The consent form will inform participants about the purpose of the study, procedures and their rights as participants (Refer to Appendix C)

• Privacy and confidentiality

Sieber (1982:145) defines privacy as “that which normally is not intended for others to observe or analyze”. Singleton et al. (1988:454) further explain that “the right to privacy is the individual’s to decide when, where, to whom and to what extent his or her attitudes, beliefs, and behavior will be revealed”. Confidentiality indicates the handling of information in a confidential manner. Sieber (1982:145) views confidentiality as a continuation of privacy, “which refers to agreements between persons that limit others’ access to private information”. Confidential information is viewed by Robinson (1991:280) as privileged information. Information given anonymously ensures the privacy of subjects, and this is what the
researcher intends to do as actual names of participants will not be used. The researcher reassured the participants of the confidentiality of the information and the anonymity of their names. The researcher obtained participant’s permission to release the findings.

- Action and competence of researcher

De Vos et al. (2005:65) assert that researchers are ethically obliged to ensure that they are competent and adequately skilled to undertake the proposed investigation. They further state that where sensitive investigations are involved, such as research across cultural boundaries, the requirement is even more important. Furthermore, they add that no value judgments are to be made, under any circumstances whatsoever, on the cultural aspects of communities.

- Restoration of subjects

The respondents were debriefed. At the end of the interview the researcher conducted a debriefing with the participants as they were revisiting their experiences and there was potential for emotions to be triggered. The researcher also referred to appropriate organizations where this is indicated and provide the participants with information in the form of a pamphlet on service providers for refugees and asylum seekers.

9. DEFINITION OF CONCEPTS

The following definitions are offered to provide clarity on concepts used in the context of this study:

**REFUGEE**

The Refugee Act 130 of 1998 defines a refugee under section 3(a) as “any one who fled his/her country of origin because of events occurring in Europe or elsewhere before 1 January 1951, having a well founded fear of being persecuted because of race, political affiliation, religion, nationality and membership to a particular social group, is outside his/her country of nationality, and owing to such fear is unable or unwilling to return to his or her country of origin”.

The Refugee Act 130 of 1998 further defines refugee in section 3 (b) as “any people compelled to leave his/her country owing to extended aggression, occupation, foreign domination in either part or the whole country of origin or nationality”.

Gunn and Tal (2003:14) define a refugee as “…someone who is fleeing generalized human rights violations, armed conflict and or persecution in his or her native country.”

**ASYLUM SEEKER**

When an individual enters another country and appeals to state authorities to provide refugee status, he/she is known as an asylum seeker (UNHCR 1999:36).

Gunn and Tal (2003: 14) define an asylum seeker as “…a person who has left his or her country and seeks protection and whose application for refugee status is not yet determined.”

**EXPERIENCES**

Refers to direct personal participation or observation (Collins English Dictionary, 1998)

**RELOCATION**

Refers to moving or being moved to a new place or area (Collins English Dictionary, 1998)

**10. DISSEMINATION OF FINDINGS**

The research findings will be reported in the form of a treatise that will be placed in the library at the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University.

An article will also be submitted for publication in a professional journal. The researcher will also be willing to present the research findings at an appropriate scientific conference.
11. LAY OUT OF CHAPTERS

The envisaged layout of the research report is as follows:
Chapter 1 – General Introduction and Problem Formulation
Chapter 2 – Research Methodology
Chapter 3 – Discussion of Findings and Literature Verification
Chapter 4 – Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations
CHAPTER 2

2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Denzin and Lincoln (1998:3) state that qualitative research is multi-method in focus, involving an interpretive, naturalistic approach to its subject matter. This means that qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpret, a phenomenon in terms of meanings people bring to them. Qualitative research involves the studied use and collection of variety of empirical materials – case study, personal experience, introspective, life story, interview, observational, historical, interactional, and visual texts that describe routine and problematic moments and meanings in individuals’ lives. Accordingly, qualitative researchers deploy a wide range of interconnected methods, hoping always to get a better fix on the subject matter at hand.

Brewer and Hunter (1989) in Denzin and Lincoln (1998:4), state that qualitative research is inherently multi-method in focus. However, the use of multiple methods, or triangulation, reflects an attempt to secure an in-depth understanding of the phenomena in question. Denzin & Lincon (1998:5) further state that qualitative research as a set of interpretive practices, privileges no single method over any other. As a site of discussion or disclosure, qualitative research is difficult to define clearly. It has no theory or paradigm that is distinctly its own. Qualitative research does not have a distinct set of methods that are entirely its own.

Mark (1996:209) agrees with Denzin and Lincoln as he defines qualitative research as methods that assume that there is no single reality. Rather, the nature of reality is defined by interaction of researcher with the phenomenon under study. Schoeman and Botha (1988:49) define qualitative research as a process that relates to the characteristics, features and quality of human behaviour in the natural context.

From the above definitions, the researcher was able to conclude that qualitative research is all about to secure an in depth understanding of the phenomena in question, interpreting personal and historical events from the refugees’ and asylum seekers’ point of view, and
introspection as to the laws of both the country of their nationality and the host country. The qualitative research has allowed the researcher to observe, get impressions and interpret the refugee experiences in relocation.

This chapter focused on the research methodology implemented in the study. The purpose of the study was to explore and describe relocation experiences of refugees and asylum seekers in relocation. In terms of aforementioned aim, the qualitative research in this study could be concluded by the researcher as the way of focusing on the refugees’ human approach experiences in the host country.

2.2 THE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

De Vos et al. (1998:37) state that methodology refers to the way in which one proceeds to solve a problem. In other words, it means the process a researcher follows when conducting his/her research in an attempt to seek answers to the research problems. De Vos et al. (1998:47) mention that there are four basic types of data collection procedures in qualitative research which are observations, interviews, documents and visual images.

De Vos et al. (2005:89-113 & 261-299) suggest that five phases for managing the research process which were followed in this research project:

- Selection of a researchable topic/theme (identification of a researchable topic)
- Formal formulations (assess the suitability of research approach and formulate the problem)
- Planning (selection of paradigm and consider the place of the literature, select qualitative research design and select methods of information collection and analysis, then frame and develop a sample)
- Implementation consider applicability of elements of pilot study, collect materials, records and undertake a literature study (where applicable)
• Interpretation and presentation (process and analyse data and verify results with literature control, selection additional criteria for judging adequacy and plan narratives and write the report).

The phases above are discussed as they were followed in the research study.

2.2.1. PHASE 1: SELECTION OF A RESEARCHABLE TOPIC/THEME

❖ STEP 1: IDENTIFY A RESEARCHABLE PROBLEM

This phase is where the researcher must clearly define problem. The phase shows exactly what the researcher wants to achieve, therefore this is the basis of the research project.

De Vos et al. (2005:89) state that first, we need to define the research problem, and then ensure that it is researchable before we can select the most suitable research problem, and then ensure that it is researchable before we can select the most suitable problem and formulate it as such.

2.2.1.2 Phase 2: FORMAL FORMULATIONS

❖ STEP 2: ASSESS THE SUITABILITY OF THE RESEARCH APPROACH

Holiday (2002:5,7) points out that, rather than controlling variables, qualitative studies are open-ended and set up research opportunities designed to lead the researcher into unforeseen areas of discovery within the lives of the people he/she is investigating. This implies that we can explore, catch glimpses of, illuminate and then try to interpret bits of reality. Creswell (1998:16) offers the following reasons for understanding of when a qualitative study is appropriate:

• The nature of the research questions relates to “how” or “what”.
• A topic needs to be explored.
• There is no need to present a detailed view of that topic.
• It involves a study of individuals in their natural setting.
• The researcher has a preference for writing in a literary style and bringing him/herself into the study.
• Sufficient time and resources are available to spend on data collection and analysis.
• Audiences are receptive to the qualitative approach.
• The researcher can tell the story from the point of view of the participants rather than as an expert who passes judgment on participants.

Strauss & Corbin (1998:10) assert that qualitative research entails any type of research that produces findings not arrived at by statistical procedures or other means of quantification.

• STEP 3: FORMULATE THE PROBLEM /QUESTION/HYPOTHESIS

According to Mouton and Marais (1990: 38), Mouton (1996a: 47-50) and Mouton (2001: 4), three factors determine the manner in which research problems, questions or hypotheses are formulated: the unit of analysis; the research goals or the type of research questions; and the research approach. These are set out below.

• Selection of the unit of analysis
Bless and Higson-Smith (1995: 64) make it clearer by stating that the unit of analysis can be seen as “the person or object from which the social researcher collects data”. For the fulfilment of this study, the refugees and asylum seekers were the people from whom the researcher collected data as the researcher wished to explore their experiences of relocation and its challenges.

• Choices of the goal and objective of the research
The Webster Third International Dictionary (1961: 972; 1556) defines both “goals” and “objective” as “the end towards which effort or ambition is directed, aim or purpose”.

The Shorter Oxford Dictionary (1980: 865) uses these terms interchangeably, for example as synonyms for one another. Their meaning implies the broader, more abstract conception of “the end toward which effort or ambition is directed”, while “objective” denotes the more
concrete, measurable and more speedily attainable conception of such an “end towards which effort or ambition is directed’.

- **STEP 4: DRAFT THE RESEARCH PROPOSAL**

According to Neuman (2000: 477), a research proposal can be regarded as a document that presents a plan for a project to reviewers for evaluation. The primary purpose of writing a research proposal is to obtain the permission and/or the funds necessary to conduct the study.

### 2.2.1.3 PHASE 3: PLANNING

- **STEP 5: SELECT PARADIGM**

A paradigm, according to Babbie (2001:42), is a fundamental model or frame of reference we use to organise our observation and reasoning. Creswell (1998:74), states that all qualitative researchers approach their studies with a certain paradigm or world-view, a basic set of beliefs or assumptions that guides their inquiries. Creswell (1998:2) defines design in the qualitative context as “the entire process of research from conceptualizing a problem, to writing the narrative”.

Schurink and Schurink (1991:34) identify five characteristics of qualitative research. These will be briefly described and applied to the study. Qualitative research mainly makes use of data collecting methods such as participatory observation, in-depth interviews, or a study of individual documents. In this particular research endeavour, the participants were involved in the semi-structured interviews, in order to provide their personal accounts of the process. Qualitative research is inductive in nature. De Vos (in De Vos et al., 1998:46) states that in a qualitative methodology, inductive logic prevails and categories will emerge from informants, rather than be identified by the researcher, a priori. Therefore no extensive literature review is conducted beforehand.

Qualitative research is interpretive, meaning that “the aim of [qualitative research] is not to explain human behaviour in terms of universally valid rules or generalizations, but rather, to
understand and interpret the meaning and intention that underline everyday human action”, according to Mouton (in Schurink and Schurink 1988:30).

The researcher does not follow specific rules. Rather, he or she is guided by certain questions but the research process should be free flowing and the process is not bound by any fixed rules or structure.

Qualitative research emphasises the whole, rather than the sum, of its individual parts. Consequently, qualitative research methods seek to understand phenomena in their totality, by highlighting the importance of the social context for understanding the given phenomena (Rudestam and Newton, 1992:32 and Nueman, 1997:331).

Crabtree and Miller (1999:28) state that by the concept “phenomenology” one means seeking to understand the lived experiences of individuals and their intentions within their “life world”. It is the search for essences. It answers the questions, “What is it like to have certain experiences? What is the essence of this particular experience?”

• **STEP 6: RESEARCH DESIGN**

According to Wilkinson (2000:9) research design during the process of preparing a research proposal and decisions are made for example, regarding the method of data collection and analysis to be used. Creswell (1994:17) states that the characteristics of design should capture a definition of design, unit of analysis used, data collection process, reporting formats and any other special characteristics of the design. Neuman, (2000) as quoted in De Vos et al. (2005:105) discusses the goal of research as being exploratory, descriptive and explanatory. The researcher chose to use a qualitative, explorative, descriptive and contextual research design. The elements of qualitative, explorative and descriptive research design will be discussed below:

• **EXPLORATORY RESEARCH**

In De Vos et al, (2005:106), state that exploratory research is conducted to gain insight into a situation, phenomenon, community or individual. Neuman (2000) in De Vos et al. (2005:106), points out that, exploratory research may be the first stage in a sequence of studies. The
answer to a “what” question, would, according to Mouton (2001) in De Vos et al, (2005:106), constitute an exploratory study. Generally, exploratory research has a basic research goal, and researchers frequently use qualitative research. In this study the researcher wanted to answer the “what” question, which is, “What are the refugees and asylum seekers’ experiences in relocation?

- **DESCRIPTIVE RESEARCH**

Descriptive research presents a picture of the specific details of a situation, social setting or relationship, and focuses on “how” and “why” questions Neuman,(2000:22). In qualitative studies according to Rubin and Babbie (2001:125), description is more likely to refer to a more intensive examination of phenomenon and their deeper meanings, thus leading to thicker description. The researcher employed a descriptive approach as a research design for this study as she sought to describe the relocation experiences of refugees and asylum seekers.

- **QUALITATIVE RESEARCH DESIGN**

According to Creswell (1994:43) qualitative research provides a rich source of information leading to theories or patterns that help to explain the phenomenon. This research study was conducted using the qualitative research design in getting knowledge or understanding the relocation experiences of refugees and asylum seekers. Qualitative researchers will, during research process, create the research strategy best suited to their research, or even design their whole research project around the strategy selected.

Marshall and Rossman (1999:25-26) point out that in qualitative inquiry, initial curiosity for research often comes from real-world observations, emerging from the interplay of researcher’s direct experience, tactic theories, political commitments, interests in practice and growing scholarly interests. They might also reflect on the intersection of their issues capture their imagination. This latter statement and the observation of reality is what motivated the researcher to conduct this research study.
• CONTEXTUAL RESEARCH DESIGN

Creswell (1998:62) states that the contextual involves situating the objects of the study or phenomenon within the immediate setting. The research was contextual as relocation experiences of refugees and asylum seekers were explored specifically in the geographical area of Port Elizabeth.

• STEP 7: SELECT METHODS OF INFORMATION COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

There are different types of data collection methods, but for this study, the researcher chose the one-on-one interview method.

• INTERVIEW AS A DATA COLLECTION METHOD

Interviewing is the predominant mode of data or information collection in qualitative research. Seidman (1998:1), states that you interview because you are interested in other people's stories. All interviews are interactional events and interviewers are deeply and unavoidably implicated in creating meaning that ostensibly reside within participants (Manning, in Holstein & Gubrium 1995:3). Both parties, the researcher and the participant, are thus necessarily and unavoidably active and involved in meaning-making work (Holstein & Gubrium 1995:4). The participants involved in the description of the experience and in reflection on the description. Kvale in Sewell (2001:1) defines qualitative interviewing as “attempts to understand the world from the participant’s point of view, to unfold the meaning of people’s experiences, [and] to uncover their lived world prior to scientific explanation”.

During the interview process, the researcher, allowed the participants to do 90% of the talking. The researcher concluded the interviews with general questions such as, “Is there anything further that you feel is important?”
• **Types of one-to-one interview**

Qualitative studies typically employ unstructured or semi-structured interviews. According to May in Morse (1991:189), semi-structured interviews are defined as those organised around areas of particular interest, while still allowing considerable flexibility in scope and depth. Field & Morse (1995:67) refer to open-ended or guided interviews. In the first, new territory is explored with the participant. The latter is used when the information required is about a certain topic and while the structure of the topic is known, the answers can be anticipated. The guided interview is ideal for obtaining comprehensive and comparable data. Because all respondents have been asked the same questions, responses can be coded and tabulated, and descriptive statistics used to examine the data for relationships. In this study a guided semi-structured interview was employed for the purpose of data collection.

Seidman (1998:32) urges researchers to build into their proposals a pilot venture in which they try out their interviewing design with a small number of participants.

• **THE INTERVIEW SETTING**

The researcher arranged the time and followed up telephonically and confirm closer to the date. A quiet environment, where no interruptions occur, will facilitate the process. This could be at the participant's home, or in a more professional environment, or in a setting agreed upon by both parties.

• **THE INTERVIEW SCHEDULE**

A “questionnaire” written to guide interviews is called an interview schedule or guide. The questions were asked in a logical order from the time the refugee left his/her home to the sensitive area of his experience in Port Elizabeth and lastly his/her suggestions.
• **TAPE RECORDING OF INTERVIEW**

Smit et al. (1995:17), mention that a tape recorder allows a much fuller record than notes taken during the interview. It also means that the researcher can concentrate on how the interview is proceeding and where to go next. Consent was obtained from participants prior to use of the tape recorder as the interviews were recorded.

• **FIELD NOTES ON THE INTERVIEW**

These notes will help you to remember and explore the process of the interview. Field and Morse (1994:79-82) refer to some critical points to follow when writing field notes to minimise loss of data. These include getting right to task; not talking about the observation before it is recorded; finding a quiet place to write; setting aside adequate time to complete the notes; sequencing events in the order they occurred; and letting the events and conversation flow from the mind on to the paper.

Field notes are a written account of the things the researcher hears, sees, experiences and thinks about in the course of interviewing and field notes were taken during interviews as a back up as interviews were also recorded.

• **ANALYSING THE INTERVIEWS**

The researcher must transcribe and analyse the interviews while they are still fresh. Preliminary coding may be useful. Sometimes it can raise the credibility of the research to give a summary of the interview to the participant for approval.

• **STEP 8: FRAME AND DEVELOP SAMPLE**

Patton (2002:244) states that there are no rules for sample size in qualitative inquiry. Sample size depends on what you want to know, the purpose of the inquiry, what is at stake, what will be useful, what will have credibility, and what can be done with available time and resources. For these reasons qualitative studies normally employ snow probably purposive sampling techniques and use the criteria of data saturation to determine sample size (De Vos, 1998)
This is the point where the researcher begins to hear the same information repeatedly being reported and he/she no longer learns anything new (Seidman, 1998:47; 48).

In purposive sampling a particular case is chosen because it illustrates some feature or process that is of interest for a particular study (Silverman 2000:104). Clear identification and formulation of criteria for the selection of respondents is, therefore, of cardinal importance. As stated in chapter 1, the snowball sampling method was used to recruit a sample of fifteen refugees and asylum seekers.

In snowball sampling, the researcher collects data from the few members of the target population he/she can locate, and then seeks information from those individuals that enables him/her to locate other members of the population (Babbie, 2001:180). During the sampling the interviewees were wishing that more interviews would be conducted and most interviewees would be from their countries as they believed that they have a lot to tell.

2.2.1.4 Phase 4: IMPLEMENTATION

- **STEP 9: PILOT STUDY**

De Vos et al. (2005:331) state that in qualitative research the pilot study is usually informal, and a few respondents possessing the same characteristics as those of the main investigation can be involved in the study, merely to ascertain certain trends. Janesick (in Denzin & Lincoln 1994:213) state that the pilot study in qualitative research allows the researcher to focus on specific areas that may have been unclear previously only to test certain questions. By testing the nature of questions in an interview schedule for focus groups in a pilot study, the qualitative researcher is able to make modifications with a view to quality interview during the main investigation. A pilot study also contributes to establishment of relationships with respondents or with the community, and to obtain permission for the project (Monette et al.1998:93). According to Monette et al. (1997:93) effective communication patterns can also be established in this way.

De Vos (2005) refers to four aspects of pilot study: literature review, the experience of experts and feasibility of the study. The researcher discussed the proceedings of the research study with her supervisor, who is an experienced qualitative researcher.
At this stage of the pilot study the researcher forms an opinion on the openness of the refugee and asylum seekers’ community, their willingness to cooperate and the number of respondents likely to be involved until saturation of data was achieved. For this study the pilot study was conducted.

**REVIEWING THE LITERATURE**

In this study the researcher has followed the guidelines given by Creswell (1994) for the use of literature in qualitative studies. In chapter 1 literature was used to provide a frame for the research area. In chapter 3 a literature control was employed in order to verify findings. Consistent with Creswell’s view the researcher has not included a separate review chapter. Creswell (1994) advocates that researchers are then more able to enter the data-collection process with fewer preconceived ideas. The researcher contacted the first interviewee and had a preliminary interview in order to test the interview guide.

**2.2.1.5 PHASE 5: INTERPRETATION AND PRESENTATION**

Patton (2002:434) points out that researchers have an obligation to monitor and report their procedures. This means that they must observe their own processes, and analyse and report on the analytic process. For the purpose of this research, the researcher utilizes the eight steps described by Tesch (in Creswell, 1994:155) for data analysis. Themes, sub-themes and categories will be identified from the data. The eight steps suggested by Tesch are as follows:

(i) The researcher listened to all the recorded interviews. Then researcher read through all the transcripts carefully in order to get the sense of the whole.
(ii) The researcher selected one interview with more information that was interesting, whilst reading it, she asked herself, what is it I am reading here and what is it all about and wrote thoughts in the margin. She also read all the written interviews and made notes plighting the themes.
(iii) The researcher read all the interviews and grouped topics with the same idea and labeled and assigned themes to them. For example if one comes across feelings the participants experience, a topic on “feelings experienced” could be labeled.
(iv) The researcher assigned codes to various topics. Abbreviated the codes for example on feelings experienced the abbreviation used was f/exp.

(v) The various topics were reduced to categories. The most appropriate words to describe topics in a certain category were used and turned into sub-themes, for example, experiences of refugees in relocating.

(vi) A final decision about the topics, codes and categories was made and put into alphabetical order.

(vii) Data of the same category was cut and pasted together.

(viii) Finally, the researcher recoded the data as was necessary.

Step 11: Ensuring

- **Validity of the qualitative research**

Marshall & Rossman (1995:143-145) paraphrase validity as follows:

- How credible are the particular findings of the study? By what criteria can we judge them?
- How transferable and applicable are these findings to another setting or group of people?
- How could we be reasonably sure that the study would be replicable if the study were conducted with the same participants in the same context?
- How can we be sure that the findings are reflective of the subjects and the inquiry itself, rather than a creation of the researcher’s biases or prejudices?

Lincoln & Guba (1985:290) refer to these questions as establishing the “truth value” of the study, its applicability, consistency and neutrality. The authors propose four alternative constructs that more accurately reflect the assumptions of qualitative paradigm namely, credibility, transferability, dependability and conformability.

- **Applicability**

Kennedy in Marshall and Rossman, (1999:193) refers to this as “the second decision plan in generalizing”. In Krefting (1991:216) Guba refers to applicability as transferability which is a
criterion in qualitative research against which applicability of data is assessed. De Vos et al. (2002:349) state that applicability is the degree to which the findings can be applied to other context and settings, with other groups. Krefting (1991:216-217) states that applicability is obtained by using purposive sampling, working contextually, time sampling and dense descriptions. In this study the researcher has ensured transferability by providing a detailed description of research findings on the relocation experiences of refugees. A second strategy to ensure applicability was the implementation of a nominated sample. The sample for this study has been purposively selected according to specific sampling criteria as discussed in Chapter 1.

- CONSISTENCY

De Vos et al. (2002:349) state that consistency of data refers to whether the findings would be consistent if applied to the same subjects or in a similar context. Dependability was achieved by:

_The use of an independent coder;_

The findings were checked for consistency by the researcher and by employing the services of an independent coder who had encoded themes and sub-themes;

_Peer examination._

Peer examination was employed to enhance the trustworthiness of the research findings. After the pilot interview, the researcher discussed the findings with the supervisor.

- NEUTRALITY

Guba (in Krefting 1991:215) defines neutrality as the degree to which findings are a function solely of informants and conditions of the research and not of other biases, motivations and perspectives. The criterion used to evaluate neutrality is conformability. The above methods of data were complemented throughout with discussions with the supervisor also serves as one of the strategies to ensure data verification. Neutrality will be ensured through use of an independent coder as stated.
STEP 12 : REPORT WRITING

Darbyshire (in De Vos et al., 2005:251) states that the actual writing of the report is the final round-up of the process of careful study, thought and the systematic collection of data. In qualitative studies the report style takes on a narrative format.

2.3 Chapter Summary

In this chapter the researcher discussed research process followed to actualize the study. In describing the process the phases as stipulated by De Vos et al. (2005:87 & 259) were used as a framework for discussion. Phase I was about selecting a researchable topic which was identified. Phase 2 focused on formal formulations by assessing the suitability of research approach and formulation of the problem. Phase 3 dealt with planning where selecting the research paradigm and considering the place of literature, selecting qualitative research design and selecting methods of information collection and data analysis, then framing and developing a sample was decided upon. Phase 4 was about implementation in which a consideration was given to the applicability of elements of a pilot study; collection of materials and recordings. Lastly phases 5 which is the final stage of the research, discussed the process of data analysis and verification of results with literature control and the planning of report- writing was highlighted. The researcher utilized the eight steps described by Tesch in Creswell, (1994:155) for data analysis.
CHAPTER 3

3. DISCUSSION OF RESEARCH FINDINGS AND LITERATURE CONTROL

3.1 INTRODUCTION

As highlighted in chapter one there is a dearth in literature concerning the relocation experiences of refugees and asylum seekers. In light of the above, a qualitative research study was conducted so as to explore and describe the relocation experiences of refugees and asylum seekers. This qualitative study was conducted to gain insight into the relocation experiences of refugees and asylum seekers from the perspective of individuals who participated in the research.

In this chapter the findings of the study will be discussed based on the data collected by the use of semi-structured interviews in terms of themes and sub-themes that emanated from the process of data analysis. Fifteen interviews were conducted on refugees and asylum seekers from different countries and the number of interviews was determined by data saturation.

In the process of recruiting participants for the study, community leaders for refugees and asylum seekers’ communities were contacted. Some of the community leaders referred the prospective participants to the researcher and some of the participants later referred other participants to the researcher. A meeting was held with the purpose of explaining the researcher’s intentions to the community leaders and refugees and asylum seekers. When they agreed to participate, the research was then conducted. The grand tour question that guided the interviews was as follows: What are the relocation experiences of refugees and Asylum seekers? Six open-ended questions were framed as part of the interview schedule which guided the interview process:-

- Tell me about your decision to leave your home country?
- Tell me about your experiences of leaving your home country?
- Tell me about your experience of being in Port Elizabeth as a refugee or asylum seeker?
• What challenges have you and your family encountered in relocating?
• What suggestions would you like to make to social workers about how they can help in the process of seeking asylum?

Stein (1980:2) states that, “For social scientists the refugee category is defined by the trauma and stresses, persecution and danger, losses and isolation, uprooting and change of the refugee experience.” When themes and sub-themes are discussed, relevant quotations from the interviews will be included in order to verify the researcher’s interpretations and to illustrate the actual perspectives of participants.

3.2 Biographical profile of Participants

As previously stated fifteen semi-structured interviews were conducted. The participants were five females and ten males. While some were from same countries, the majority were from different countries. As discussed in Chapter One, the participants were recruited by purposive sampling from the refugees’ and asylum seekers’ community. In table 3.1 below an overview is provided reflecting the interviewee, age, gender, marital status, family composition, and status, country of origin, occupation and profession of the participants.

**TABLE 3.1 Biographical Profile of participants**
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Marital status</th>
<th>Family composition</th>
<th>Country of origin</th>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Current occupation</th>
<th>Past Profession/occupation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>Husband</td>
<td>Somalia</td>
<td>Refugee</td>
<td>Court interpreter</td>
<td>School leaving</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>Wife and two children</td>
<td>Somalia</td>
<td>Refugee</td>
<td>Court interpreter</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Single</td>
<td>Single</td>
<td>DRC</td>
<td>Refugee</td>
<td>Hawker</td>
<td>Sales representative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Single</td>
<td>Single</td>
<td>Somalia</td>
<td>Refugee</td>
<td>Taxi driver</td>
<td>Self-employed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>Husband</td>
<td>Ethiopia</td>
<td>Asylum seeker</td>
<td>Hawker</td>
<td>Officer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>Two wives</td>
<td>DRC</td>
<td>Refugee</td>
<td>Hawker</td>
<td>University student</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>Husband and four children</td>
<td>Burundi</td>
<td>Refugee</td>
<td>House wife</td>
<td>Lady teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Single</td>
<td>Single</td>
<td>Ethiopia</td>
<td>Asylum seeker</td>
<td>Sales man</td>
<td>Administrator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>Husband</td>
<td>Single</td>
<td>Ethiopia</td>
<td>Sales lady</td>
<td>Nurse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Single</td>
<td>Single</td>
<td>Eritrea</td>
<td>Asylum seeker</td>
<td>Hawker</td>
<td>University Student</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Single</td>
<td>Single</td>
<td>Sudan</td>
<td>Refugee</td>
<td>Student</td>
<td>Student</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>Wife and one child</td>
<td>Burundi</td>
<td>Refugee</td>
<td>Sales man</td>
<td>Sales man</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>Two wives and three children</td>
<td>Nigeria</td>
<td>Asylum seeker</td>
<td>Retailer owner</td>
<td>Self employed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>Two wives and six children</td>
<td>Ghana</td>
<td>Asylum seeker</td>
<td>Bar owner</td>
<td>Self employed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.2.1 Age

The participants’ ages varied between 25 and 40 years. These are the ages described by Papalia, Olds and Feldman (2002:503) as the achieving stage, when adults start their careers and families. The researcher noted that the participants according to their ages were people who were supposed to have advanced in career development as well as family life/setting but because they were forced to leaving their countries of origin these life tasks could not be effectively achieved.

3.2.2 Gender and marital status

Out of the fifteen participants, ten of them were married and five of them were single. Of the ten who were married, two were females and the rest were males. The unmarried participants expressed their frustration at not being married in accordance with the expectation in their culture.

3.2.3 Country of Origin

Refugees and asylum seekers from different countries as indicated in table 3.1 were interviewed. Refugees and asylum seekers in the Port Elizabeth are of the Eastern Cape were mostly from African countries thus they were all from the black ethnic group. The countries represented were Somalia, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Burundi, Uganda, Eritrea, Sudan, Nigeria, Ghana and Senegal.

3.2.4 Status

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Married</th>
<th>Two wives and two children</th>
<th>Senegal</th>
<th>Asylum seeker</th>
<th>Retailer</th>
<th>Teacher</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>O</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>Maried</td>
<td>Two wives and two children</td>
<td>Senegal</td>
<td>Asylum seeker</td>
<td>Retailer</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Eight of the participants were holders of refugee permits and this meant that they were recognized as refugees. One of the participants can be a holder of an accompanying spouse permit but the belief amongst them was that one’s own refugee permit carried more weight than the accompanying spouse permit. Seven are asylum seekers and this meant that they were still in the process of applying for refugee status.

### 3.2.5 Current and past occupation

As indicated in table 3.1 for most of the participants their current occupation in South Africa was not in line with the professional status in their countries of origin. This can also be associated with the fact that they have left their jobs in their countries of origin and they were trying to survive by accepting any job that comes their way and settled for positions that are available.

### 3.3 Presentation of Themes and Sub –Themes

Table 3.2 overleaf provides an overview of the seven themes which were identified during the process of data analysis. The seven themes identified are as follows:

1. Refugees and asylum seekers articulate a range of reasons behind the decision to leave their home country.
2. Refugees and asylum seekers express negative experiences regarding leaving their country of origin.
3. Refugees and asylum seekers experience a range of feelings as they enter the host country
4. Refugees and asylum seekers report that they and their families experience a number of challenges as a result of relocation
5. Refugees and asylum seekers employ negative and positive strategies to cope with challenges of relocation
6. Suggestions made by refugees and asylum seekers concerning the involvement of Social Workers
7. Suggestions made by refugees/asylum seekers to Home Affairs in terms of improving services to refugees and asylum seekers
Each theme is supported by a number of sub-themes, each accompanied by illustrative participant quotations and verified by relevant literature where possible.

Themes, a common thread that ran through the sub-themes were linked to emotions of refugees and asylum seekers as they reported their experiences in relocation. According to Kalat (1999:436) “An emotional state elicits a tendency toward vigorous action, even if we suppress that tendency”. The word ‘emotion’, however, came to refer only to feelings associated with vigorous motion of the body such as fear, anger and joy. We experience emotional arousal, or excitement, when we have a strong tendency either to approach or to avoid something, generally in an energetic way.

James Lange’s theory suggests that we have experiences, and as a result, our autonomic nervous system creates physiological events such as muscular tension, heart rate increases, perspiration, dryness of the mouth and so on (James-Lange). According to this theory, bodily changes follow directly the perception of the exciting fact and that our feeling of the same changes as they occur is the emotion. According to Hendricks and Hendricks (1993), primary emotions are sadness, anger, fear, sexual feelings, and joy. Other emotions and experiences are combinations of these primary emotions. For example, guilt is a combination of fear and anger in different proportions - you may feel primarily scared and a little angry, or primarily angry and a little scared. Shame is a combination of sadness and fear. And jealousy is a combination of sadness and anger. In psychology, coping is the process of managing taxing circumstances, expending effort to solve personal and interpersonal problems, and seeking to master, minimize, reduce or tolerate stress or conflict.

In coping with stress, people tend to use one of the three main coping strategies: either appraisal focused, problem focused, or emotion focused coping. Appraisal-focused strategies occur when the person modifies the way they think, (Weiten & Lloyd 2006) for example: employing denial, or distancing oneself from the problem. People may alter the way they think about a problem by altering their goals and values, such as by seeing the humour in a situation.
People using problem focused strategies try to deal with the cause of their problem. They do this by finding out information on the disease, learning new skills to manage their situation and rearranging their lives around the situation.

Emotion focused strategies involve releasing pent-up emotions, distracting one-self, managing hostile feelings, meditating, using systematic relaxation procedures, etc.

Table 3.2 themes, sub-themes and categories are discussed as means of providing an overview.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Themes</th>
<th>Sub-themes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Refugees and asylum seekers articulate a range of reasons behind the decision to leave their home countries and relocate to South Africa</td>
<td>1.1 Refugees and asylum seekers state the following reasons for relocation:&lt;br&gt;• Ethnic violence in home country&lt;br&gt;• Human rights abuses&lt;br&gt;• War / political violence&lt;br&gt;• Genocide&lt;br&gt;• Tribalism&lt;br&gt;• Expectations from family&lt;br&gt;1.2 Specific reasons for choosing South Africa as their host country included the following:&lt;br&gt;• Advised by other people that circumstances are good – hope for life a better life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Refugees and asylum seekers express negative experiences regarding leaving country of origin</td>
<td>2.1 Refugees and asylum seekers voice the following negative experiences in journeying to the host country:&lt;br&gt;• Being robbed and betrayed&lt;br&gt;• Selling possessions to buy air ticket&lt;br&gt;• Left in secrecy&lt;br&gt;• Spent some time in neighbouring countries&lt;br&gt;• Problems at the borders</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3. Refugees / asylum seekers experience a range of feelings as they enter the host country.

3.1 Refugees and asylum seekers experience both negative and positive feelings in the relocation experience. Negative feelings include:
- Depression/ Traumatized
- Humiliated / degraded
- Shame/ embarrassment
- Anxious
- Frustration
- Anger

Positive feelings include:
- Hope

4. Refugees and asylum seekers report that they and their families experienced a number of challenges as a result of relocation.

4.1 Refugees/asylum seekers report the following challenges:
- Discrimination and hostility from local people
- Loneliness
- Living in extreme poverty
- Imprisonment
- Culture shock
- Applying for asylum is a difficult process

5. Refugees/asylum seekers employ negative and positive strategies to cope with challenges of relocation.

5.1 Refugees and asylum seeker’s report the negative strategies of coping with challenges of relocation:
- Become involved in criminal activities
- Lowered moral values

Refugees and asylum seeker’s report the following positive strategies of coping with challenges of relocation:
- Accept new circumstances
- Seek counselling and social support from other refugees
- Reading (keep mind busy)
3.3.1 Theme 1: Refugees and asylum seekers articulate a range of reasons behind the decision to leave their home countries and relocate to South Africa

From this theme two sub-themes were identified namely: Refugees and asylum seekers mention the reasons for relocation and Specific reasons for choosing South Africa as their host country included the following

Refugees and asylum seekers articulate a number of reasons, to mention but a few, ethnic violence, human rights abuses, war/political violence, genocide and tribalism, expectations from family and government’s demands to take part in land reform programme.

“There is war in my country Somali since 1990 when President Siade Barra took over”
“I had a problem in Somalia as it was not safe as my parents were killed in front of me”
“There was too much violence in my country especially in the eastern parts”

| 6. Suggestions made by refugees/asylum seekers concerning the involvement of Social Workers | • Refugees and asylum seekers made the following suggestions regarding social worker’s involvement in refugee matters:  
• Social work offices next to Home Affairs  
• Visit refugee offices  
• Provide counselling & guidance to re refugee problems, advise on family problems, accompanied minors  
• Work together with other organizations Lawyers for Human Rights, UNHCR, government Department  
• Advocating for refugee matters |
|---|---|
| 7. Suggestions made by refugees/asylum seekers to Home Affairs in terms of improving services to refugees and asylum seekers. | Refugees/asylum seekers made the following suggestions to the Dept of Affairs:  
• Employ more qualified and competent staff  
• Employ interpreters from the refugee community to assist  
• Develop an Awareness / Education campaigns about problems & rights of refugees |
“I’m a Hutu by tribe and I left my country because the Tutsi tribe who are in government are killing Hutus as they say when Hutus were in government were mistreating the Tutsis.”

“From the time of the genocide in my country, millions of people and even to date hundreds are still dying because of tribalism”

The problems highlighted by refugees and asylum seekers are confirmed by Peltzer (1996:1) who states that “In Africa, Asia, and South America, repressive governments have sought to destroy the opposition to their policies by destroying the leaders of the opposing organization and movements. This problem is further corroborated as a common problem in many African countries, despite the holding of multiparty elections, has continued to be the lack of good governance, transparency and accountability (Norwegian Refugee Council 2002:28).

For the purpose of helping the reader to understand the plight of refugees a brief background of information from some of the countries where refugees and asylum seekers that were interviewed came from, is provided below to support this theme.

**Burundi:** Since its independence from Belgium in 1962, Burundi has succumbed to several waves of political and ethnic clashes (Norwegian Refugee Council 2002:36). Skonhoft (2000:5) states that the Burundian Hutu refugees constituted almost exclusively of group, both before and after the assassination of the Hutu President in October 1993. The aftermath caused a situation whereby people were supposed to have been especially vulnerable in the war-like situation that was created. This was because they were almost without any protection from either the Government or the army.

A great number of Hutus were killed, which resulted in a fearful and untenable situation. According to Lemarchand (1998:6) this is a sensitive issue, and political leaders in Burundi still argue over whether the Hutus were victims of genocide in 1972 (Vincent and Sorensen 2001:52). Norwegian Refugee Council (2002:75) reports that since the conflict escalated in 1983, there have been at least two million war-related deaths, while most sources have commonly estimated that four million have been internally displaced.

**DRC** (Democratic Republic of Congo); In 1998, a major rebellion against the new regime, supported by Kabila’s former allies, Rwanda and Uganda, started in the east and developed
into a new civil war. Continued hostilities between Kabila’s forces, armed contingents from several African nations, and three rebel factions resulted in large-scale massacres and massive displacement. At the same time, clashes between rebels and armed groups such as the Mai Mai traditional warriors also forced people to flee their homes. Competition for control of the DRC’s rich natural resources, including diamonds, gold and precious metals such as coltan, has sustained the war (Norwegian Refugee Council 2002:41). The human rights situation continues to be critical in the DRC. UN agencies and NGOs regularly report widespread killings, torture and other human rights abuses against civilians by armed groups on all sides. The rape of women and girls had been used extensively by all armed groups (Norwegian Refugee Council 2002:42).

**Ethiopia:** More than one million people were forced to flee their homes during a ferocious border conflict with Ethiopia that erupted in 1998 (Norwegian Refugee Council 2002:45). The war between Ethiopia and Eritrea, which ended in 2000, left a legacy of land mines that has hampered the return process in both countries (Norwegian Refugee Council 2002:28).

**Nigeria:** The conflict that has broken out since 1999 has been associated with five often interwoven factors: ethnic rivalry, religious tension, land disputes, new administrative boundaries and disputes linked to oil production. Rivalries between the 250 ethnic groups in the country have been a major cause of conflict and displacement in Nigeria. Religious tension has occurred mainly in the north between Muslims and Christians and has often been related to the introduction of Islamic legal system, Sharia, in northern states. (Norwegian Refugee Council (2002:58).

**Sudan:** More than 30 years of civil war and tribal conflict have caused tremendous suffering for the civilian Sudanese population and generated one of the worse IDP (Internally displaced person/people) situations in the world (Norwegian Refugee Council, 2002:74). The civil war in Sudan is commonly depicted as one of the Muslim north versus the Christian and Animist south. In reality, there are complicated factors, with several armed factions and militias, as well as various ethnic groups, partly at war, partly in alliance with the government.

**Somalia:** The Norwegian Refugee Council (2002:28) highlights that in Somalia, where malnutrition rates have been consistently alarming, chronic insecurity has rendered large
areas of country off-limits to humanitarian organization, and the limited movement they have enjoyed has been under the protection of heavily armed militia

**Senegal**: Land mines used in the conflict in the Casamance region of Senegal have, according to US Committee for Refugees (USCR), rendered 80 per cent of farmland in the region unusable (Norwegian Refugee Council 2002:28).

The above description provides a context for the two sub-themes which will be discussed in the next section.

### 3.3.1.1 Sub-theme 1: Refugees and asylum seekers state the following reasons for relocation:

- **Ethnic violence in home country**

Some refugees and asylum seekers articulated violence in their countries as the main reason for making the decision to relocate. The following quotations highlight participant’s views in this regard:

“The violence in my country has caused a lot of people to be internally displaced and to run away to other countries.”

“I lost contact with my family as we ran to difference direction.”

“My home was destroyed because of violence.”

“I was afraid to be killed in ethnic violence by other tribes as different tribes are fighting in my country.”

“My Father was a high ranking official in the Government and he was killed mysteriously. The way he was brutally killed made us suspect that his colleagues killed him for their hatred of Eritrians.”

“I was afraid that people who killed my father would come and also kill us.”

“It has been a trend in Ethiopia that if your parent dies like that the children will also be killed the same way.”

“Clashes between different tribes result in some family members being raped and killed.”

“Some were at home and the rebels came into their homes and shot some dead and left others injured. Some people were killed in cross fire between the government soldiers and the rebels.”
“Some of our family members and neighbours were killed during the fight between two tribes. I therefore was left with no option but to leave.”

- Human rights abuses

“My husband was taken by a mob of soldiers in front of me and my children, about four or five soldiers, I am not sure because I lost count”

“I was raped in front of my husband and children” said one of refugees from Uganda and this echoed by a participant from Burundi

”This degrading in front of my family made me fell like I have no value.”

“Most women and girls were raped in my country but this all happened because political parties are fighting about positions”

These statements are supported by UNHCR (1995:8) as it state that sexual violence in the country of origin may have a political motive. According to UNHCR (1995: 5) men, women and children may be targeted for abuse by police, the military or other officials in the country of origin. Individuals may be detained, which heightens the risk of sexual violence and torture. Sexual violence may also occur at the hands of irregular forces in situations of internal conflict.

As mentioned by UNHCR there is a relationship between human rights violations and political violence. This view is echoed in the opinions raised by participants. Below is a discussion representing their views about war/political violence.

- War / political violence

Most refugees and asylum seekers expressed the situation in their home countries as follows:

“My home area, the eastern part and the surrounding areas, was and still is a war zone area; in fact all of Democratic Republic of Congo was engulfed by war.”

“I had to leave my home country after my relatives were killed because of tribal factions “(said two refugees from Somali). My country is torn by war”, they said.
Corroborating these claims is a statement by Lindner (2000a:60) that says, after the UN forces left Somalia, the civil war drew to a close, but insecurity, lack of central government and localised wars, have still marked the area.

A refugee from Sudan reported “As you know because of the war you see some family members disappeared and in 1996 no in 1995 l lost my other family members and when the Sudanese government war air craft were bombard areas where a number of civilians were killed and because of that you can’t stabilise all the infrastructures of buildings that were destroyed. Only thing you do is to escape to the neighbouring countries. UN Military opening all those who are running or skipping via Somali as it is near to Sudan”.

In support of this claim by a Sudanese is the following statement:

Fighting in the Darfur region of Sudan forced more than 95,000 people to seek safety in the barren borders regions of eastern Chad. These refugees fled with little or no possessions when their villages came under fire from helicopters and local militias. (General Newsclips 7 January 2004). The later report adds that, the campaign in the eastern DRC, especially in the northeastern city of Bunia, received a fair amount of media attention this past spring. The relentless terror endured by tens of thousands of people in the surrounding areas barely registered. In these regions, rival armed groups backed by foreign interests vied for power in a war that inflamed local tensions and destabilised the country, mainly through organised violence against civilians. People trapped in this massive human catastrophe speak of nearly unimaginable scale of suffering, with massacres, rape, assault, and looting separating families and displacing large numbers of people.

Disruptions in countries take different forms. For the Burundian refugees and asylum seekers the explanation of this sub-theme is that, during the 10 years of civil war, Burundi’s civilians have been subject to systematic and unrelenting violence. Where rebel groups and government forces are at war, violence against civilians, including rape by armed combats is daily occurrence (General Newsclip, 7 January 2004).

Below is a different form of disruption in a form of genocide in countries like Burundi and Rwanda that was cited as reason motivating relocation.
• Genocide

Several of the participants reported that they had left their home countries due to genocide. “There was genocide where by millions of people died, my parents were included in the killed people”.

“So some of our neighbours were killed, so my husband and I decided to run for our lives together with our children.” These reports are supported by Lemarchand and Martin (1974:29-30) who state that in 1992, a Hutu rebellion, followed by violent repression by the Tutsi-dominated army, led to an unprecedented wave of violence. An estimated 80,000 to 100,000 people died during the violence. About 3.5 per cent of the population was physically eliminated either killed or exiled in the space of a few weeks. Some analysts have called this event “selective genocide” because, they argue, the ruling political elite planned the elimination of all Hutu political and economic leaders and the death of at least 250,000 people, the vast majority of them civilians.

Refugees and asylum seekers continue to report genocide as one of the reasons for leaving their countries as they link this to tribalism.

Vincent and Sorensen (2001:62) argue that as the massacres and looting started in 1993, individuals fled in search of refugee, either to administrative centres at the zone or commune levels, or to the provincial capital. Leaving in haste, they often became separated from members of their families: parents left children behind; husbands and wives were separated.

• Tribalism

Somalian refugees voiced the following views regarding tribalism:

“Tribes are fighting with each other in my country”

“My tribe is Darrod and the Hawaye tribe is killing my tribe”

In January 1991, the USC (United Somali Congress) pushed Said Barre out of Mogadishu, overthrowing his regime, the government of the Republick of Somali collapsed and has not been resurrected since (Grundel 2002: 257). Bitter faction fighting has continued between clans and has resulted in bloodshed and suffering for the civilian population, atrocities were carried out on all sides. For many Somali refugees the severe humiliation they experienced
in Somalia was an important factor in their decision to leave their home country (Lindner, 2000a: 60).

- **Expectations from family**

A participant from Nigeria highlighted that he was expected to give his daughter for ancestral worship.

“I was forced to let my daughter who was to be engaged to another man, to marry a spirit husband and this was against my Christian belief and I was threatened by my family that if I continue to refuse then my daughter will be accused of committing adultery”. Giving his daughter to ancestral worship “Knowing what the Sharia Laws in my country say about adultery, I decided to leave the whole problem instead of consenting to my daughter to marry a spirit husband.”

Another refugee mentioned that he was forced to lead as king and also attributes this act as ancestral worship in another form.

### 3.3.1.2 Sub-theme 2: Specific reasons for choosing South Africa as their host country

During the interview sessions, the researcher noticed that participants were unanimous in their reasons for choosing to come to South Africa to apply for asylum. Participants articulated the following:

“South Africans were once refugees so in my thinking, South Africa can accept and understand refugees and asylum seekers from their experiences.”

“South Africa is a developing country that promises to have things in order.”

Other reasons for choosing South Africa as their host country are discussed below:

- **Presence of friends or family in South Africa**

Some of the refugees stated their families had been in South Africa for a long time and this was their reason for choosing to seek asylum in South Africa.

“I had a friend here in Port Elizabeth. When I got to Joburg I was told that he was here in Port Elizabeth. When I found him we started staying together and he got me a job. That’s what made me come to Port Elizabeth.”
“I had a family member who has been staying in South Africa for a very long time.”

- **Prospects of a better life.**

Some of the participants said that they chose to relocate to South Africa because of the advice which they were given by others. People told them that the economic circumstances in the country held bright prospects for a better life than they had been experiencing in their countries of origin.

“I had heard that I can get employment in South Africa especially that I am a professional”
“I was told that the business in South Africa is doing well”
“I was told that life is better in South Africa”

### 3.3.2 Theme 2: Refugees and asylum seekers express negative experiences regarding leaving country of origin

This theme captures the perspective of participant’s experiences of leaving their home country. This theme is supported by one sub-theme namely; refugees and asylum seekers voice their negative experiences in the journey to the host country. First are the feelings they have as they leave their countries of origin for example feeling robbed/betrayed.

The sacrifices or compromises they make for example selling everything they have if at all they have time to do that in order for them to be able to buy a ticket. The way they leave their countries for example living in secrecy. Lastly, the problems they experience on the way to the host country, South Africa in their case. These problems include the time they spend in the neighboring countries or in the countries on the way to the host country and problems at the border of having to pay bribe for one to pass and or being robbed of the money he/she has.
• Feeling Robbed /betrayed

Fourteen out of the fifteen participants echoed the same feeling as reflected in the following quotations:

“I felt robbed of everything that I had worked for”

“I felt I was robbed of my life, my possessions, my good time, my family, my relatives and my progress when I left home, leaving all my achievements behind.”

“I felt everything that I had hope would work out for me was just a dream”

“I felt I wasted time by trying to be somebody and working hard to be some”

“I felt I had no future where I came from”

These claims are reflected by Vincent and Sorensen (2001:157) when they state that change threatens to invalidate this experience, robbing them of the skills they have learned and confusing their purposes, upsetting the subtle rationalisations and compensations by which they reconciled the different aspects of their situations.

• Selling possessions to buy air ticket

Refugees mention that irrespective of them feeling robbed, they still felt determined to leave because of the problems they have experienced in their countries. They reported that they told themselves that nothing could stop them once they had made up their minds about leaving their home countries.

"I drew all the money in the bank and I went and bought the ticket to come to South Africa, I had the phone number of my friend in Port Elizabeth so I contacted him before I had even made the arrangement to buy the ticket and he advised me to buy a ticket to connect from Joburg to Port Elizabeth.”

“I sold some of my things so that I could be able to have money for travelling.”

• Left in secrecy

Most refugees flee their countries for safety on foot. Others take tractors, cars, trucks and planes. Refugees often have little time to collect possessions before fleeing.
“One night we pack few clothes, food and took our passports and when there was a bit of silence, we walked through the night to town until the following morning, where we got a lift to Tanzania and we spent three days in Tanzania until another lift to Mozambique and from there we got a lift to Swaziland.”

“From there I got a lift to Durban, South Africa.” Participants tell similar stories of other countries they cross and towns in South Africa they passed or went to.

- **Spent some time in neighbouring countries**

Refugees and asylum seekers state that on their journey they experienced life in the neighbouring countries as being very difficult. Below is what they had to say:

“I came to South Africa via Mozambique Beira and I used these big trucks that carry goods.”

“I asked one of the drivers to help me and I gave him some money to the border of South Africa and when I was at the border I jumped over the bridge”.

“There are so many badgers that you pay them little money then they get you into South Africa and they brought me into Joburg and from Joburg I looked for transport from Somali people and friends but when you came to a place then you start asking people where the Somali people are in a community then I went in a restaurant for Somali people then I went to friends who helped me get to Port Elizabeth.

“They stole from me they took my money they took all the dollars in Tanzania Dar es Salaam you see I was about to be stranded but then I already I have a ticket to came to Malawi, now in Malawi I got job in European Union and I work there for about three months and then I was given $150. From there I started my journey also to Mozambique and then in Mozambique they don’t speak English they speak Portuguese and there you know those places like Tete There is a town that is called Tete those are this example and then there is river in Mozambique that river along the bridge river Zambezi is very big and then from there I was sleeping inside the bus because I cant go to the hotel because I do not have enough money.”

“When I was in Harare I entered Bulawayo, the eastern part of Zimbabwe where I go to Mutate eastern city and from there I came to Harare I spent one night there I went in motel they call it Holiday Inn Hotel I paid Z$26000 it was in 2002 that was 26 July 2002 then from there also I went to Beltway border Botswana then came to Zimbabwe. From there also you
can not come straight you have to take another bus which brought me up to Beit Bridge that long bridge between Zimbabwe and South Africa. There you also know it was hard to come, it is difficult have to pass money. You have to give them money because I didn’t have a passport you see in my country the government is still fighting for freedom.”

“When I left Kenya I had finished school and there was no employment, I had a Kenyan passport and I went to Tanzania and in Tanzania I stayed for two weeks. After that I went to Malawi and I stayed there for about three weeks of which I did not have enough money and I a South African visa but I had a passport, I did not come legally.”

- Problems at the borders

Refugees and asylum seekers mention that they have negative experiences things that happen to them at the border on entering the host country. This is highlighted by UNHCR (2000) as they note that, on arrival in the host country many refugees fall victim to theft by border military personnel, the police and customs officials who confiscate personal belongings under the pretext that it is illegal, or receive a fine for entering the country illegally or without documentation. This is in contravention of the 1951 convention of the UNHCR (2000:1), which states that refugees who escape from dangerous and life threatening conditions “should not be penalized for entering a country illegally”.

Refugees reported that they had to bribe officials at the border. The sentiments expressed by participants is extracted from the interviews as follows:

“They say you are not yet out of the country you must do something, now there some guys asking you, you must give them R400 I changed dollars into rands so that I can pay them then I was left with few money now when I came to the police talking to Zimbabwean Police who allowed me to pass then I go to South Africa, those two guys who were ascouting me were carrying my bags they went there to the charge of South Africa there also you know they went to somebody they know maybe a police woman saying that we have somebody going to the transport who is a Sudanese but now you have to do something that I should give them R500 now I see I don’t have the money those guys came to me asking what is you
name then they say pay R400 I give them R400 and they give it to the officer of that side of South Africa, also allowed me to enter.”

“When we got to the border we had to pay a bribe to the immigration officers both on the Zimbabwe side and as well as on the South Africa side because I did not have a visa to come to South Africa”. Pretorius (2004:1) states that the nature of forced migration – escape from war and persecution – is often of such a nature that refugees’ circumstances do not allow them to obtain or bring identification documents with them and consequently they are arrested on arrival in the host country. Human Rights Watch reports with reference to South Africa, states that “theft by officials during the arrest process seems disturbingly common” (HRW, 1998:3).

3.3.3 Theme 3: Refugees / asylum seekers experience a range of feelings as they enter the host country

This theme stemmed from the question: “Tell me about your experiences of entering the host country”. This theme captures both the negative and positive feelings of refugees and asylum seekers as they enter the host country. This theme is supported by two sub-themes that highlight negative feelings such depression/trauma, humiliation/feeling degraded, shame/embarrassment, anxiety, frustration, and anger. The second sub-theme that highlights positive feelings of refugees that include feelings of new hope when they enter the host country.

3.3.3.1 Sub-theme 1: Refugees and asylum seekers experience both negative and positive feelings in the relocation experience

When refugees and asylum seekers talked about their negative feelings the researcher could detect their pain in their responses. The participants reported that the negative feelings is not what they expected in the host country, especially in South Africa as they expected South Africans to be more compassionate to refugees as they were once in the same situation.
“In my own home I cared for a South African family as they were in exile.”
“South Africans were supported by our taxes when they were in our country”
“South Africans were never depressed by anything whilst they were in our country as all their needs were met”

In this sub-theme the refugees and asylum seekers voiced a range negative feelings and these negative feelings are discussed below.

- **Negative feelings include: Depression/ Traumatized**

The participants expressed their feelings of depression as being the worse they had not expected. They attributed their depression to many factors that they saw as stumbling blocks to their ability to make a decent living in South Africa.

“Before I had the permit, I was worried every day, thinking about meeting the police or the immigration officers and what they would do to me when they found out that I had no permit.”

“The thought of being deported to my home country overwhelmed me,”

“The frustration of not having a paper was too much.”

“The worrying factor was that I could not look for a job and I could not study and that made me feel very bad for I felt I was a burden to other people who I was staying with.”

“My source of survival was support from friends or family members who would give me something to eat in their on time.”

The participants stated that the depression had a serious impact and disturbance on their physical and emotional state. This state of depression is confirmed by McNeece and DiNitto (1994:356) when they state that: “Depression is characterized by physical, emotional, cognitive, behavioural and social disturbances. An individual suffering from depression might experience moods such as feelings of sadness, despondency and hopelessness”. Papalia and Olds (2002:507) contend that depression is a fatal illness for 15% of victims who, overwhelmed by feelings of helplessness and hopelessness, decide that their only way out is to end their lives. Some 30-70% of all suicides are believed to occur in people suffering from severe depression.

“When you have nothing you feel stressed.”
According to Lazarus (1977), a stressful situation is one that someone regards as threatening and as possibly exceeding his or her resources.

Refugees and asylum seekers mentioned that depression leads to trauma. Feeling of being traumatised.

“I had distressing experiences when I was asked about my permit by the police, I still see the expression their faces.”

“How I was treated at the border between South Africa and Zimbabwe left a permanent mark on my mind.”

From this sub-theme three main categories of feelings emerged namely, hopelessness which left the participants feeling devastated and lead to suicidal ideation. These views are explored in the section below:

Participants expressed that they hoped to get into South Africa where every thing was said to be working out for everybody living in South Africa. Seven out of the fifteen had read the South African constitution, Act 108 of 1996 which in its preamble states that the people of South Africa, “Believe that South Africa belongs to all those who live in it, united in our diversity.” For some the practical situation on the ground contradicts the word and the spirit of understanding in the preamble.

“Every person I knew left for South Africa was making progress”

“People were conducting their own business as I had”

“I asked myself, will I catch up with my peer group in terms of progress as I will be starting from scratch?”

“I started to wonder if I was fit enough to start something new that I had no clue what it was going to be.”

There is a tendency to dwell on refugee success stories which are not representative of the experiences of the group. Such stories set a standard of expectations that add to the refugee’s frustrations and feelings of hopelessness. In reality, lives torn apart are not easily repaired. Below are the points of the view that were discussed by participants.
Participants felt helpless and overwhelmed which they experienced as very stressful.

“I was worried already thinking about meeting the police or the immigration officers and what would they do when they find that I had no permit.”

“The thought of being deported to my home country overwhelmed me.”

According to Lazarus, a stressful situation is one that someone regards as threatening and as possibly exceeding his or her resources (Lazarus, 1977)

Refugees and asylum seekers highlighted that stress may lead to depression and finally, to suicidal thoughts, it was not surprising that some participants mentioned these thoughts. Some refugees cited the fact that when they entered South Africa and were treated badly, they started to ask themselves if they had done the right thing by leaving their countries of origin and finding themselves faced with many unexpected problems. They mentioned that they would prefer to go and die in their home countries as they could foresee that they might die even here in the host country. Some mentioned that they thought of committing suicide because they felt they were going to die any way and it was no use delaying the process of death.

“I wish I could just die and not face what I am going through right now, were raging thoughts in our hearts.”

“I felt I was not part of the community by looking at the way I was treated in South Africa, as if I was nobody”.

“Poverty that we were leaving in as a family made me think that it would be better if we could just die as hunger would kill us at the end.”

“When I was sleeping in the streets, in the cold weather of Port Elizabeth, the thoughts of suicide did cross my mind several times.”

“I should have died at home instead of dying in another country.”

Bohannan (1960:7) notes that Durkheim’s law of suicide highlights that suicide varies inversely with the degree of integration of the original groups of which the individual forms a part. The way refugees integrate in the host country, thus plays a very important role in
mitigating the feelings of hopelessness and hopelessness that might lead to thoughts of suicide.

Subramaney, and Spencer in S. A Psychiatry Rev (2006, 9:105-107) mentions that the transformation process in South Africa has been associated with an influx of refugees and asylum seekers from other African countries. Unpublished research by the author has shown that the refugee community in South Africa is particularly vulnerable to trauma due to experiences in their home countries, as well as experiences related to xenophobia in their host country. The provision of social networks and support structures are crucial protective factors which assist the individual in regaining his/her functioning after trauma. These are sadly lacking within refugee communities.

When a person is exposed to a traumatic experience he/she will attempt to create meanings in the events, in order to adjust to his/her perception of self and others. When these attempts are not successful, the person is overwhelmed by the sense of the meaning of life are several shaken. The traumatic events are extraordinary, not necessarily because they rarely occur, but rather because they overwhelm usual coping strategies. The event initiates a process characteristic by deep physiologic, emotional and cognitive changes. It can effect the division of these functions, such that the traumatized person may experience intense emotions without any clear recollection of the event, or he/she may remember every detail of the event without associating any emotional response with it Montgomery (1997:10) articulate.

- **Humiliated / degraded**

As refugees try to find their feet after they enter the host country, they continue to experience negative feelings.

“I tried to stand on my two feet by checking what I can do for a leaving.”

“I wanted to do everything and anything that I could help myself but I soon found out that wherever I go I was a laughing stock.”

“Communication was the most difficult experience as I am a French speaking so wherever I went and any help that I needed I could not get because of communication problem”
Other participants stated that they were not sure whether they were depressed or stressed as they were feeling both depression and stress sometimes.

“It was so humiliating for me to stay at home as old as I am and could not do anything”

“To wait for someone else to provide for my needs or to ask someone else for everything I need made me feel humiliated”.

The effects of humiliation are probably universal, where as means are culturally dependent. Some common reactions to depression are the use of drugs, flight into religion and aggression (Lindner 2000: 374 – 375). Depression and withdrawal is the more self-centred reaction to humiliation.

Fangen (2006:1) states that life as a refugee attempting to create a new life in an unfamiliar country is filled with uncertainties. Due to lack of language and cultural knowledge, misunderstandings occur. People in these circumstances are vulnerable to experiences of humiliation. The majority population’s prejudice against strangers also contributes to newly arrived refugees experiencing more humiliating situations than do degraded others. Refugees in a society vastly different from that of their home country might be vulnerable to intimidation, and might also be met in hurtful ways. Humiliation occurring in the home country might continue in the new country, and a new type of humiliation situation might develop between individuals from the home country of the new setting.

“I felt humiliated every time I was called a kwere-kwere”, commented most of the refugees.

“I felt like an animal because I was staying in the forest while I was waiting for the right time to escape because of war,” said the refugees and asylum seekers who left their countries because of war.”

Klein (1991) in Fangen (2006:2) contends that although the feelings associated with humiliation are intensely personal, the process itself exists in the relationship between the person and ‘the emotionally relevant human environment’.

Ex (1966) Lin et al. (1977) and Cohon (1977) state that refugees will also experience increased problems within family and the problem of mental dysfunction is likely to increase
Marris (1993:124) is of the opinion that the loss of attachments and disintegration of a predictable environment, the meaning of life may be threatened prospectively. These feelings lead refugees to questioning their own skills.

- **Questioning own skills**

Refugees and asylum seeker lose confidence in themselves and start to question their own skills and abilities. Participants felt their potential was under-utilized as they were not allowed to work or study yet they were qualified professionals in their own countries. They added that they felt disappointed. To feel disappointed is, according to Allen (1991), amongst other things, to “feel distressed”. Some participants spoke of disappointment as they could not work and live a decent life like they used to in their country of origin. Van Niekerk and Prins (2001: 73) explain that self-esteem is also related to self-worth. When we value ourselves highly, we acknowledge our skills and abilities and have the necessary confidence that we can accomplish our goals. Participants expressed the following views:

“I was a teacher but all of a sudden I was nobody”.
“I was a sales representative but now I had to stay home the whole day”.
“My business, as I was self-employed, was not giving me too much money but I was not begging or waiting for somebody to put food on the table”.
“When I was a student my family was providing for me as I am from a well-to-do family”.
“I would hear from the news that there is a shortage of nurses but here I was not being recognized as a nurse”.

Hayes and Nutman (1981:116) contend that loss of work involves a major change in the way an individual relates to the world. It produces a multitude of changes in the assumptions the individual makes about him/herself and the way of relating to the environment.

- **Negative feelings of Shame/embarrassment**

Refugees echoed that there were many embarrassing situations especially when they had just arrived in the host country. These embarrassing situations happen on a daily basis as
they carry on with their lives. More, subtle but nonetheless hurtful, forms of humiliation are the day-to-day experiences of 'some form of ridicule, scorn, contempt, or other degrading treatment at the hands of others' (Klein 1999:1).

“I was given a name “Kwerekwere” when I was walking in the streets”, some refugees said.

“This made me feel like a nobody for I had my name but hey chose to call me something else”

“I stayed with my South African wife and she was ridiculed for marring a kwere-kwere.”

- **Negative feeling of Anxiety**

Some participants verbalized feeling anxious about whether they would fit in and be accepted in their host communities.

“Everyone person I knew left for South Africa was making progress”

“People were conducting their own business.”

“I asked myself, Will I catch up with my peer group in terms of progress as I will be starting from scratch?”

“I started to wonder if I was fit enough to start something new that I had no clue what it was going to be.”

Furnham and Stephen (1971) and Oxford, (1982:161-198) emphasis that the experiences sojourners have and the treatment they receive from members of the host society have a strong influence on the adaptation process. Participants expressed that they felt that they were not part of the community as evident in the following quotes:

“I would go to a shop and people would look at me.”

“I would be walking with my wife and people would be passing remarks such as, It’s too hot, why is that woman covering herself?

“We would have to pretend as if we had not heard what they said.”

- **Negative feeling of Frustrated**

Participants expressed a number of frustrations stemming from situations they find themselves in the host country.

“My frustration was that I was also adding to this overcrowding”.
Witting and Belin (1990:164) mention that there are three basic types of emotion, such as fear, anger and pleasure. The emotional reaction of anger may vary from being modestly “worked up” to being bitter, enraged or infuriated. Such reactions are provoked by displeasing or frustrating stimuli. Frustration is rooted in doing something you do not really want to do or did not want to do in your past. Feeling frustrated can also come from hidden blocked memories that we may not be consciously aware of (Grossman K 2007).

“I would spend the first few hours of the night sitting outside, not knowing whether to go inside the house and sleep or sleep outside because in my culture and in my age, families do not share a room.”

According to Kalat (1999), frustration is the result of failure to obtain something that one is expected leads to aggressive behaviour. This supports the comments by some of the participants who mentioned the following:

“Because of the situation that I found myself in, I was angry and depressed because I was not sure of how to get out of it. The wife that had come from my country of origin was a prearranged marriage as our culture prescribed that your parents can choose a wife for you and the two families would agree. The wife that I married in South Africa was a ticket for me to stay in South Africa as long as I want because it meant that I would be a South African citizen. In both Scenarios, I found myself very depressed as they were both favourable to me.”

A further source of frustration was identified as resulting from interactions with police and immigration officers.

“The frustration was coming from the treatment when I got into contact with immigration officers and police and the way they would harass me about the permits,” the refugees said.

“I would meet the Police and they would roughly demand to see my permit.

Participants associated their frustration with feelings of isolation.

- Feeling of Anger

When refugees and asylum seekers expressed this feeling, you could sense anger and bitterness in their speech. To confirm this statement is Kate Grossman MD (2005:544) who
states that, “When something interferes with your achievement of a goal or desire, the developing frustration results in a feeling of tension and hostility. That feeling is referred to as anger.” Anger, according to The Family Services Association of Toronto, “is an emotional state that varies in intensity from mild irritation to intense fury or rage. It is also evoked when we feel helpless to solve a problem. We can also become angry with other people when they fail to meet our expectations or disappoint us in some way. When people feel they are not being valued and appreciated, feelings of anger also tend to arise.” According to Lamers in Bertman (1999:26), “Anger is a common feature in a response to loss, and this can include anger at oneself plus anger projected at anyone else perceived as being responsible for the loss.”

This following quotation is the view of a participant:

“I was angry with my countrymen that have been in South Africa for a long time that could not support me until I could stand on my own.”

Participants reported that their anger was towards themselves, God, their country of origin and the government of South Africa. They expressed their anger as follows:

- **Anger at self**

  “I was angry at myself and asked myself, “How could I have done such a thing?”
  “I was very angry and blaming myself for making such mistakes.”

- **Anger at God**

  “I was angry with God for letting me ending up in this situation that had resulted in me staying in a cold prison cell.”

- **Anger at country of origin**

  “I was angry at my country of origin, saying “I ended up in another country because of political differences in my country of origin”.”
“I was angry at my government because of what was happening to my country when the government could not protect its citizens. I was angry at the people of my country, specifically the soldiers and the rebels for letting the war tear our country. I was angry with the government because I lost contact with my family and I was not sure if I would ever see them again.”

These sentiments are congruent with the observation by Peltzer (1996:265) who mentions that refugees leave family members and relatives behind and contact with them is often only possible with difficulty.

- **At the South African government**

Some refugees believe that it is time for the South African government to do something for them.

“It is pay back time for the South African government to look after us as we also did”

“I was angry with the authorities of the host country for not having provisions such as refugee and asylum seeker camps in place.”

A phenomenon of particular importance regarding refugee behaviour during resettlement is the refugees’ strong belief that they are owed something by someone. Since their persecutors are unavailable, the refugees shift their demands to the host government and the helping agencies,” Stein (1979:12). Stein also notes that, “A last point regarding refugee resettlement behaviour is that the refugee is searching his way through a strange and frightening society. The patterns of behaviour that sustained life at home are no longer sufficient.” Gordon (1964) states that, “to the stresses and traumas inflicted on refugees before escape, during flight, and in refugee camps, one must add the difficulties and fears that face the refugees during resettlement.”

The anger of some of the participants directed at the South African Government is captured in comments such as the following:

“The people of South Africa were once refugees therefore their government should be able to take care of my problems.”
“South Africa is better developed than my country and the currency is stronger than our currency so they can afford to take care of my needs.”

Refugees tend to view the authorities as rigid, suspicious and lacking in understanding or empathy. On one hand, some experience that they are unfairly denied access to services. On the other hand, many situations experienced as humiliation are probably more due to unrealistic expectations of what or how much rightfully should they receive.

According to Fangen (2006:25) “Resignation and anger become some of the many possible reactions to long periods where they have done everything to attain success, in the educational system and/or the labour market, without finding any open doors. Neither the government nor the agencies are able to satisfy all the refugees' demands. As their requests are frustrated the refugees become suspicious and bitter Stein (1980:12).

- **Positive feelings included hope**

Refugees also voiced the following statement in relation to their positive feelings they experienced in relocation experiences:

“When I finally got to Port Elizabeth, my hopes began to rise again.”

“I saw some of my countrymen staying all around one another, and I thought to myself this is great.”

“I looked around and I found that they owned shops or at least they were shop managers.”

“I noticed that some of them were driving cars”.

“I noticed that some of them had families from their own countries, from their ethnic groups”

“I saw fathers accompanying their children to school and I thought to myself, this is great.”

“I had so much hope when I entered South Africa”

“I hope that I had reached the cherished destiny”.

“I hoped that the dreams would be achieved”.

Refugees and asylum seekers mentioned that their positive feelings were linked to hope and the absence of refugee camps. Refugees and asylum seekers in reaching the host country begin to have new hope. They compared their past to their future prospects in terms of progress/success. They state that they had so many hopes when they came to South
Africa. They thought that all the dreams they had back home would be fulfilled in Port Elizabeth.

On his way to the country offering him asylum, the refugee experiences his liberation from the troubles and cares which have driven him from his fatherland, the oppressions of the uncertain arrival which he was to face, the sorrow on account of all that was dear to him and left behind. Against the background of his experiences, he fosters undifferentiated and rosy-coloured expectations about things awaiting him in the country lying ahead. Participants expressed positive feelings about the absence of refugee camps.

When refugees and asylum seekers reported on the freedom of movement, they applauded the Constitution of South Africa, stating that it is the only Constitution throughout the whole world that is lenient. This positive view related to the freedom of movement is provided for by section 21 of The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, Act 108 of 1996.

“The fact that there are no refugee camps as is the case in many countries, gives us hope”.
“In South Africa refugees are not confined to camps”
“We can go where he wanted to go any time and any day”.

Participants expressed hope when they compare their past to their future in terms of progress/success and they begin to look forward to their future. For refugees when they enter a host country, their expectations are expressed and they see a brighter future. Refugees have high expectations about their new life, especially regarding their economic and occupational adjustment. They do not expect to have lost anything because of their migration. The refugees want to recover their lost status and are resistant to accepting jobs that represent under-employed Stein (1980:12).

“When I saw all that I thought it was great, I began to ask some questions to my fellow county men.”
“I said to myself the fact that other people are making it, meant that I could also make it, my dreams could come true.”
“I looked at the refugee businessmen and I saw a brighter future”
According to the UNHCR (2000:9): “In all this turbulence and change, a few fundamentals do remain the same - especially the appalling suffering and hardship of the people forced to flee their homes, and also their fortitude and resilience in forging new lives all over again.

3.3.4 Theme 4: Refugees and asylum seekers report they and their families experience a number of challenges as a result of relocation

Participants reported on a number of challenges experienced by them and their families in relocation experiences. The few problems they highlighted will be discussed below.

Many of the refugees were successful and prominent people in their home countries, and those qualities that led to their earlier success can facilitate upward mobility in the new land (Kent 1953; Davie 1947; Stein 1979; Rogg 1974). The refugee experience may make them more aggressive and innovative (Keller 1975). They will also experience increased problems within the family and the level of mental dysfunction is likely to shift and increase (Ex 1966; Lin et al., 1979; Cohen 1977).

“I was a professional at home and I would make ends met. I had to sell drugs for my survival because I could not get employment.”

“My experience and qualification did not help me to get a job that I trained for.”

3.3.4.1 Sub-theme: Refugees/asylum seekers report the following negative challenges

This sub-theme emanated from the question: What challenges did you and your family encounter in relocation. The following challenges were stated: discrimination, hostility from local people, loneliness, living in extreme poverty, imprisonment, cultural shock and the difficult process of applying for asylum.

- Discrimination as a challenging experience

The participants expressed the view that they were discriminated by South African employers because they were foreigners and because they did not have South African documents namely Identity Document.
Fangen, K. (2006: 2) states that in many instances refugees start at the bottom rung of the new social hierarchy. They find that their competence is not recognised, and they are instead reduced to being only this, a refugee.

“My skill was not recognized in recognized in by South African employers.”

Refugees and asylum seekers believe that local people got preference over them even if they qualify for the job.

“I do not understand how things work in this country, if the local person does not meet the requirement and the refugee does, they re-advertise the post”

“I believe that I passed the interview better than the South African but I did not get the post”

“I had the qualification but I was not even invited for an interview”

Journal of Adult Protection (2004:5) mentions that refugees are vulnerable to financial and material abuse from landlords, employers and others because of their limited funds, poor access to banking facilities and marginalized positions in job market. Lack of confidence, communication skills and knowledge of systems and processes can make it very difficult for refugees to negotiate on equal terms with landlords and others.

“I could not find work I could not get a decent job because I was not a holder of a South African identity document”

“I had no driver’s licence because the Traffic Department they refused to change my licence into an international licence, as I did not have a South African identity document”.

“I could not open a bank account because I had no South African identity document”.

- Hostility from local people was expressed as a challenge

Participants expressed that their worst experience was when the locals were hostile towards refugees and asylum seekers especially Somali business people. Their shops were looted when they were attacked by the local residents in 2002 and in 2007.

“After all the struggle that I had been through, now my shop was looted, I was devastated.”

“I made sacrifices, deprived myself of things that I wanted in order for me to start a business, now the looting, I was finished.”
“Oh God, I had made a loan from the Islam support system, how do I pay the money back? Where do I start again? My hopes were destroyed.”

“My cousin’s shop was looted by a mob of people in Port Elizabeth and she was never reimbursed by the government. Neither were these people arrested or punished. We were leaving in an overcrowded room and I felt I was the cause of us living in those conditions. I have been discriminated against by being called ‘kwere-kwere’ by the local people.”

- Loneliness was expressed as a challenge

Participants verbalised that they felt isolated, unwanted and lonely because their permits did not allowing them to work or study. Stein B N, (1979:17) states that, “some refugee groups are received warmly, some are tolerated with indifference, and others are the object of scorn and hostility.” Marx (1999:5) and Wagner (1996:13) state that a refugee will go through a “feeling of rejection, either because one feels rejected by or rejects members of the foreign culture. A sense of loss and feelings of deprivation, concerning friends, status, profession and possessions,” are some the emotion a refugee will experience in a host country. Participants expressed this:

“I felt alone.”

Participants report that in order to cope with their isolation, they engaged in multiple relationships

“I started being a womanizer just to puff up my manhood that I felt had been degraded by my hopelessness situation.”

“I started to have immoral behaviour by going out with more than one man as long as I had someone to take care of me”

“That is what led me getting married to a South African woman that I wasn’t sure if I loved or was under presser of being lonely.”

- Lowering of living standards was a challenging experience

In the initial period, the refugees will be confronted by reality of what has been lost. From a high occupational and social status at home they will plunge downward in their new land from professional to menial, from elite to impoverished minority (Weiermair 1971; Rogg 1974).
“I was living below the standard of a normal human being because I had nothing.”
According to Stein (1979) and Portes (1969) unemployed refugees, those on welfare, refugees with untransferable occupational skills, older refugees whose roles have been altered (e.g., women providing income, men who cannot) and those whose standard of living is markedly lower than it was at home form the high risk group. Moller (1992:8) mentions in that study conducted in 1989 that in spite of hardships many signs are evident that some individuals showed remarkable resilience.

“I was living in poverty, there were days that I would go hungry or have one meal a day.”
“I had to do anything for me to survive”.
“The food was another problem as I have a big family and the family I was staying with was a family of four and they were struggling financially”.
“The poverty that we experienced was something we had never experienced in our lives, and the fact that my husband could not just be a pastor even though he is a qualified pastor but we had to submit to the rules of the church that we joined, we could not just start a church as we were financially unstable”.

From a high occupational and social status at home they will plunge downward in their new land –from professional to menial, from elite to an impoverished minority (Wirehair 1971; Rogg 1974). “A highly educated person with professional competence becomes a non-entity overnight, Doheny (1981).

The vast majority of refugees live in poverty, in poor housing and in deprived areas. They are likely to be unemployed or under employed, earning low wages for long hours, their access to education is restricted by lack of knowledge of what is available, by the inappropriate nature of courses offered and by logistical problems such as lack of childcare, access to transport or fear of travelling to classes Journal of Adult Protection (2004:6). Some of the participants reported they resorted to crime in order to survive.

“I committed crime and was arrested because I used to work but now I had to find means to live and make ends meet in order for me to survive”
“The treatment by the prison wardens as well as the locals was very bad.”
This was reiterated by two refugees, who had experienced imprisonment for more than a year because of the acts of crime they had committed when they said, “I didn’t want to do it but I was forced to do it in order for me to survive because there was no-one supporting me.”

A refugee from the DRC said “I experienced harassment, especially from other cellmates. They would call me “kwerekwere” and others would pass comments like “dudlu” and hit my bums. I did not even know what that meant until now because I have learnt some Xhosa meanings”.

“Those prison cells were very cold and other inmates were not welcoming.”
“I experienced harassment, especially from other cellmates”.
“They would call me “kwerekwere” and others would pass comments like “dudlu” and hit my bums”.
“I did not even know what that meant until now because I have learnt some Xhosa meanings”.
“The treatment in the prison was very bad as foreigners were harassed”.
“At night I would hear people whispering and I would not even know what they are saying”.
“I was very angry at myself for doing what I did”.

Sheafor Horesji and Horesji (1994:287),states that rationalization involves the justification of inappropriate behaviour by raising logical or socially acceptable reasons for the behaviour. “Many of the refugees have levels of skill and education that produced prominence or success in their less developed homelands but which will not transfer well to an urban technological society” (Downing and Olney 1982). In the initial period, the refugees will be confronted by the reality of what has been lost.

Refugees who have been imprisoned expressed fear of rejection from family and friends, fear of deportation or harsh sentences, ad harsh treatment in prison.
• Fear of harsh punishment or deportation

Participants report fearing that the court sentences were going to be harsh because they are foreigners and their families would not even know what happened to them.

Victims are reluctant to speak out or report their abuse because of fear of repatriation or revenge by officials and further assault and abuse (Martin 1991:40, 80; Thema 1999:10-11).

“I feared discrimination when I’m sentenced as to whether I would be sentenced more because I’m a foreigner.”

“I feared the jail sentence as to how long would I have to serve the sentence.”

“At night I would be sleeping and I would hear people whispering and I wouldn’t even know what they are saying.”

“I was worried about coming across immigration officers and police before I got an asylum seeker’s permit”.

“I was worried thinking about being deported back to my country”.

Two participants had heard from the community that if you go to prison you are sexually abused by other prisoners.

“I feared a lot of things and one of them was other prisoners because I didn't know what they could do to me if they discovered I was from another country.”

“I had heard a lot of things about prisons all over the world and one of the things were prisoners being attacked and murdered, prisoners being raped by other prisoners of the same sex or by prison wardens.”

According to UNHCH (1995:5) refugees of all ages and both genders face a significant increased risk of sexual violence when in detention or detention like situations.

“I was asked if I have a girlfriend or if I would like any of the male prisoners to be my girlfriend.” “This embarrassed me as I have never thought of having a male as a partner.”

“I felt so embarrassed when women would come to me and pat my bums and say “dudlu.”

Participants experienced prison conditions as being harsh

“In the prison cells it was cold both in the cell itself and also the welcome of the other prisoners.”
“The food was not nice and not enough for an African man let alone for the fact that we would have our supper at four.”

The fear that featured in many of the participants’ stories was the fear of rejection by family and friends.

“What would my family say when they hear that I’ve been imprisoned for committing crime?”
“How could I do such a thing?”
“How could I be sitting with prisoners who have committed all sorts of crimes?”
“I feared the rejection from my own family members”
“I feared the stigma of being associated with jail birds.”
“I feared rejection by own friends.”

- **Sub-theme: The Culture shock was a challenging experience**

This sub-theme emanated from the question “What challenges did you and your family encountered in relocating?” Participants answered the question by saying the first thing was the shock they experienced cultural diversity. Refugees/asylum seekers reported some of their shock included different behaviors.

“The acute refugee makes the decision within a short time span; little thought will be given to the consequences of flight. Not until the place of asylum is reached, often in a state of shock, in a condition Kunz calls “midway to nowhere,” will the refugee ponder the three classic choices that face refugees: to return home, to remain in the place or first asylum or to accept a distant resettlement opportunity in a strange land,” Stein, (1979; 6).

According to the Oxford Dictionary (1988) defines a shock as “a sudden and disturbing impression on the mind or feeling, usually one produced by some unwelcome occurrence or perception, by pain, grief, or violent emotion, and tending to occasion lasting depression or loss of composure, in weaker sense, a thrill or start of surprise, or of suddenly excited feeling of any kind.”

Manz et al. (1999), describe “culture shock as feelings of distress and unease when being exposed to a foreign culture.” They continue to say that, “besides this narrow definition of the
actual shock the expression is also used in order to describe the whole process a sojourner goes through during an international encounter. This adaptation or adjustment process usually starts with an initial euphoria about the foreignness of the host culture. The individual feels isolated and misses the familiar symbols, attitudes and habits of the culture of origin area of concern to me. “It lessens the danger of social and personality disorganization, and it provides a group identity and a network of relationships, associations and institutions.

It allows the refugee to function while gradually assimilating,” (Pfister-Ammende 1960; Gordon 1964; Rogg 1974). Stein (1979) says that, “acculturation, language difficulties, identity confusion, loss of status, poverty, and concern for separated or lost family members, guilty, isolation, host hostility, and countless other factors add to the pressures on the refugee in a strange land.” The reader is reminded that a number of these experiences and challenges have featured in previous sub-themes.

Stein (1979; 17) adds that, “some refugees, often in defence of their identities are highly critical of the host culture, whereas other refugees may feel, either individually or collectively, inferior to the natives.” Culture shock according to Garza-Guerrero (1974) really encompasses all the others to a degree. It is main elements are the test it puts to the refugee’s personality and stability when he is placed in a strange and unpredictable environment; the lost culture – desocialization and resocialization; lost friends, family, food, values; the loss of all that is familiar may represent a threat to one’s identity, and can lead to the mourning, grief, despair and nostalgia the refugee feels for his gigantic loss. Culture shock will particularly affect those refugees who did not think about, intend, or prepare for exodus and were caught up in panic, hysteria, or even adventure. Oberg (1960), (as quoted in Gibson 2000, p.24) described the symptoms of culture shock as follows:

“… excessive washing of the hands; excessive concern over drinking water, food, dishes, and bedding; fear of physical contact with attendants or servants; the absent far- away stare; a feeling of helplessness and a desire for dependence on long-term residents of one’s nationality; fits of anger over delays and other minor frustrations; delay and out right refusal to learn the language of the host country; excessive fear of being cheated, robbed and injured; great concern over minor pains and eruptions of the skin; and finally that terrible longing to be back home”. There is likely to be a significant gulf between the culture and the
way of life in their countries of origin and resettlement. Cultural adaptation may be a more complex process for resettled refugees from developed countries and traditional societies owing to the large differences between their culture and country of origin and the receiving society. Form this sub-theme it emerged that the cultural shock related to participant’s shock at the behaviour of youth and sangomas mingling with normal life. These behaviours include sexual promiscuity, alcohol abuse, violent behaviour and parents who are perceived as not playing a role in youth’s lives.

- **Participants reported being shocked at the behaviour of local youth**

They were shocked culturally because they saw behaviours they had not known. Some of them mentioned that:

“I saw something that terrified me day after day, young boys and girls curdling, kissing and caressing each other on the streets, which in my culture is done by married people in a closed and locked bedroom at night only.”

“I saw a terrible behavior where I would see children speaking to their parents with disrespect that was an area of concern to me.

“In Central where I was staying, especially on Fridays and Saturdays or public holidays, I would witness violent behaviours on the streets where people would be fighting.”

“In Motherwell, people from my community were attacked on several occasions and their properties and businesses were looted.”

The perception of being part of sangomas normal life was expressed as a culture shock by refugees.

“It was a shock for me to see a Sangoma wearing her clothes in a taxi going to town and going to church.”

“In our culture he added Sangomas stay in a bush and don’t even get in conduct with the people.”
Applying for asylum is a challenging process

This sub-theme incorporated a range of factors that were reported to make the process of asylum seeking a challenge namely, permit excluded people from work / study’ it is a costly exercise, incompetent staff, long queues, no interpreters available, and have to renew permit every 3 months for period of 3 years. Each will be discussed below.

All the respondents said the one thing that was most challenging going to home affairs day after day maybe for three of four days without getting permits.

“I had to wake up very early every morning so that I could get a chance to be attended because the office closes at three o’clock in the afternoon.”

Some said they had to sleep outside the door of Home Affairs for them to be attended to the following day as they were staying three hundred to six hundred kilometers away from Port Elizabeth. “Then the following day we would be given first preference as long as we have someone to help us with the language.”

Some said before they even got the permit, they were given an appointment later to report to Home Affairs for them to be interviewed and get the permit.

“When I come first I was given a paper for the appointment these days they were giving people paper of appointment and they will address them and when come back for after about 2 – 3 weeks for 3 months they used to write cant take studies or employment in 3 months they were going to interview you several times, after interviewing they were going to give you a paper for 2 years status there is 1st 2nd and 3rd interview depending how lucky you are and you will get a 2 years permit, I had to go to home affairs on a monthly bases for about four months until my refugee status was approved and I was given two years refugee permit. “

“While I was in prison my permit expired. It was so difficult for me to renew it and it was required of me to have a valid permit before I could be released, so when I had finished serving my sentence, for two to three months I could not be released because my permit had expired and to renew it, was a nightmare because the immigration officers, the police men and the refugee office in Port Elizabeth were miss communicating”.
“I had to go to Home Affairs every three months for about three years before I got my rejection letter which was giving me a chance to appeal the rejection or that the appeal would be answered soon whether it’s positive or negative I would have the results in a short time.”

A participant expressed the following viewpoint:

“The biggest challenge was the permit that I received that was prohibiting me to work or to study.” This view was echoed by most refugees. According to Ndinda and Ndebayo (2006:4) in South Africa, reception policies are unclear, refugees are awarded ‘prohibited person’ permits before they are granted asylum. But currently the legislation has changed in the past seven years.

The cost of obtaining permits and the lack of interpreters was viewed as a challenge. Participants reported that they look for someone to help them with interpreting, who in turn, demanded payment before they could interpret. The money these people were asking, was more than the money that we could afford, so we had to go back and borrow the money so that we could pay for the interpretation.

Some people would even offer to take you to Home Affairs since you do not know where the office is, and they would also demand huge amounts of money.

“I had to go to home affairs on a monthly basis for about four months until my refugee status was approved and I was given two years refugee permit.”

Participants acknowledged that whilst they had firstly viewed staff incompetent at Home Affairs, later, they said they discovered that home affairs officials were too understaffed to cope with the huge demands of the refugees and asylum seekers.

“I got into the Home Affairs office and I joined in the very long queue and I was told by the official that I would not be attended to that day because they had already taken the number for the day so I should come back the next day and bring the interpreter. I asked the guys Somalis from the queue, and they referred me to the interpreter, who told me to bring some money for him to be able to help me because that is what he does for a living.”

When there was no interpreter available refugees mentioned that, even when their turn for help had come they had experienced language barriers as they could not speak English.
3.3.5 Theme 5: Refugees/asylum seekers negative and positive strategies to cope with challenges of relocation

Refugees and asylum seekers reported that they have different ways of coping with challenges of relocation. Some of these ways are positive but others are negative. Below both ways will be explored.

Some of the respondents reported that they were stressed with the situation to the extent that they kept on checking what they can do to help their stressful situation that they found themselves in. Others mentioned that they would rather pretend as if nothing is worrying them. This is supported by Kalat, (1999:467) who states that “people cope with stress in many ways, but we can group most of them into two major categories. In the style known as monitoring, one attends carefully to the stressful events and ones reaction to it and tries to take effective action. In blunting, one tries to avoid stressful events or at least avoiding thinking about it. Kleinke (1998:2) states that coping can be defined as the efforts we make to mange situations we have appraised as being potentially harmful or stressful.

Lazarus and Folkman (1984) as quoted in Kleinke (1998:3) identify two general forms of coping, problem focused coping and emotion focused coping. They further add that problem focused coping strategies can be outer directed or inner directed. “Outer directed coping strategies are oriented toward altering situation or the behaviours of others. Inner directed coping strategies include efforts we make to reconsider our attitudes and needs and to develop new skills and responses. Emotion focused coping strategies include physical exercise, meditation, expressing feelings and seeking support.

You are more likely to engage in problem-focused coping when you feel there is something you can do about a problem or a challenge.” (Pearlin & Schooler, 1978). “These coping responses included taking an active, self reliant, problem-solving approach.” In another survey of how people cope, married couples were questioned about their responses to four sources of stress: marriage, parenting, household finances, and work.
Mc Care and Costa (1986) highlight various coping responses when faced with loses, threats, and challenges. The most effective coping responses included seeking help, communicating feelings, taking rational action, drawing strength from adversity, using humour, and maintaining faith, self-confidence, and feelings of control.”

A number of participants reported using same responses as quoted by (Folkman & Lazarus 1988) (in Kleinke 1998:5): confrontive coping, distancing, self-control, seeking social support, accepting responsibility, escape–avoidance and playful problem solving.

O’Brien (1986) (in Moller 1992:8) highlights that a great deal of support is needed to create resilience and stress the role of getting support as a coping strategy. Participants reported 3 main sources as follows: support from church, support from my family at home, and support from other asylum seekers-refugees.

Journal of Adult Protection (2004:5) points out that immigration policy and asylum itself is central to any discussion of the vulnerability of refugees and asylum seekers. Despite this, refugees are not passive victims and actively organize and make use of their own support system when they can. Many refugees keep contact with friends and family across the world and make effective use of experiences of others from their ethnic, linguistic or cultural background and other refugees.

- Sub-theme: become involved in criminal activities

Some refugees are inevitably drawn into the criminal world because of the covert nature of human smuggling. They turned to drug dealing, prostitution and other crimes in order to pay for the debts incurred as a result of the often-exorbitant prices smugglers demands for services they needed. For this reason Laczko (2002:1-2) states that refugees are extremely vulnerable to victimization and exploitation.

“I was arrested for fraud but I cannot disclose what I was accused of.”
“I was working in my home country but now I was not working so I had to make ends meet in order for me to survive.”
“I was living below the standard of a normal human being.”
“I needed to have a South African identity document in order for me to apply for a loan and conduct business, so I collaborated with a Home Affairs official who is late now to get an identity document and he helped me to get it.”

“I was a student so my parents were meeting most of needs, I had to sell drugs for me to make money, tell me my sister, what you would do if you are poverty stricken like me.”

“I had to forget about my moral values and look for a man that would take care of my needs.”

“My sister, I lost contact with family that was supporting me; I thought stealing was the best.”

Such abuse is often linked to boredom, depression and stress (UNHCR 1995:9).

“I resorted to drowning my worries in beer and drug”.

Many people think that numbing their minds with drugs or alcohol will “quiet” the anger inside of them. This never works, because alcohol and drugs come with many problems of their own, and can often make people even angrier. Using drugs and alcohol to control emotions is just a way to avoid the problem, not face up to it.

- Sub-theme: Lowered moral values

“I was sleeping around and I only realized when I was sick that sleeping around was not a good idea as much as I had no place to stay and nothing to eat and I had not established a solid relationship where I would stick to one partner.”

Vincent and Sorensen (2001:68) state that sometimes, sexual services were not sold explicitly but were exchanged for food or protection.

“I felt guilty that I had disgraced myself, my family and my country of origin.”

“I was untrustworthy, I could not be trusted with anything by my family because in place of desperation I had made a wrong choice and I had failed to control myself.”

Another participant echoed that according to his Christian belief he is supposed a man of integrity thus a man of one wife. His family was very angry because they felt that he had committed a sin against their belief system.

Four of the respondents echoed similar things about what happened when their wives from their country of origin came and found out that they were married. Both their wives from their country of origin as well as their South African wives were shocked. Some of the respondents
also uttered that their wives were not only shocked; they also had mixed feelings of shock and denial.

“I had to go to Home Affairs every three months for about two years before I got my rejection letter which was giving me a chance to appeal the rejection or that the appeal would be answered soon whether it’s positive or negative I would have the results in a short time and that is then that I made a decision to marry a South African because there was no guarantee that the appeal would reverse my rejection letter and I would be approved as refugee.” said the participants that are married to South Africans citizens.

“My wife from my country of origin uttered these words, “It’s disgusting what I found in this house,” My wife from South Africa threatened my wife from my country of origin.”

“My wife from South Africa came from work and found me with my wife from my country of origin and she started insulting both of us.”

“The wife that I married in South Africa was a ticket for me to stay in South Africa as long as I want because it meant that I would be a South African citizen.”

“In both scenarios, I found myself very depressed as they were both favourable to me.”

“The wife that had come from my country of origin was a pre-arranged marriage as our culture prescribes that your parents can choose a wife for you and the two families can agree.”

According to Taylor and Frances group (2007:518) in arranged marriages individuals marry according to the family’s wishes and the focus is on accepting and adjusting to partners after marriage. For many parents arranged marriages represent an opportunity to strengthen connections with their communities and the kin that they have been separated from through migration.

Kubler-Ross (1995:72) mentions that bargaining, as a phase in grief the process, is not as prominent as the other phases inherent in this process. She elucidates that a grieving person turns to bargaining when he or she comes to the realization that he or she cannot change a situation by means of reacting with anger. To bargain is an attempt to avoid the reality one is being confronted with.
The participants reported that their first wives felt that they are worthless, due to the fact that their husbands went ahead and married other women. They also mentioned the lack of trust by their wives and how their ways of coping continued to affect their wives said the following to their husbands:

“I don’t think that you have ever loved me.”
“I feel I am worthless to you.”
“You never meant anything that you said to me.”
“You have used me while you were waiting for your wife to come to South Africa.”

- Marrying a South African for convenience

Some participants resorted to marrying South African women despite being married in their countries of origin.

“For me to be assured that I will have a permanent residence or a longer stay in South Africa, I had to marry a South African because that would improve my status from that of being an asylum seeker to that of being a resident, which carries more weight.”

“For the sake of convenience, I had to marry a South African although I had a wife in my home country.

- 3.3.5.1 Sub-theme : Refugees and asylum seekers report the following positive strategies of coping with challenges of relocation

Refugees and asylum seekers stated that it is the positive ways of coping with relocation experiences that helped them most significantly to survive in the challenging environment of their host country,

Become entrepreneurs is one of the ways refugees/asylum seeker sited as starting their own business. According to Vincent and Sorensen (2001:124) entrepreneurship deviates from expected behaviour to retrieve the purposes with which the entrepreneurs have come to identify themselves.

“I am a Hawker”.
“I am selling in the streets”.


“I have a small business to keep running to keep myself alive and to make myself independent, I am also a court interpreter”.

Participants state that they experienced it as being positive when they accept that this is a foreign country, different from what they had expected.

“I even thought at some stage of going home but I asked myself where is home when the whole country is engulfed by war, then I said to myself it is better that I sell drugs just to be able to raise money to pay rent and food, that is how I got arrested.”

- **Accept new circumstances**

When refugees accept their new circumstances, they experienced cope better during relocation. Three of the married women realized that it was time for them to stand, be strong and work for survival since they had no one to take care of their needs as it was in their country of origin where their husbands used to take care of them.

“I had to look for a job and work that is something that I never did in my life, in my country.”

“I got a job working as a maid for another family where I had to learn to cook things I never knew.”

“I started selling small items like dish towels and fruit as a hawker.”

“I tried to shift every experience into my sub conscious mind so that I can forget about all the experiences I had in Port Elizabeth.”

- **Seek counselling**

Another positive strategy employed by participants was seeking counseling. Counselling of refugees is essential for them to be able to cope and adapt to the host country’s culture and systems. Counselling of refugees also helps in dealing with the traumatic experiences the refugee would have experienced during and after leaving the country of origin. All the negative emotions such as anxiety, hopelessness, anger, shock, guilty that are aroused by the refugees’ experiences in their country of origin and in the hosting country, mostly, can be better dealt with through counselling. Counselling of refugees plays an important role in as far as the refugee has to understand his/her situation and adapt to it. Counselling of refugees will result in refugees avoiding experiences of unacceptable behaviour such as prostitution and stealing in the host country.
According to, Mr. Peter Mumba Permanent Secretary Ministry Of Home Affairs, Zambia in the book Refugees in Africa: The challenges of protection and solutions the author states “Counselling of refugees is an initiative also aimed at creating opportunities for refugees to become productive members of the community.”

“This would lead to peaceful co-existence and prevention of conflict amongst refugees and the hosting communities, resulting in greater regional stability and local integration.”

Through refugee counselling, Mr. Iain Hall Senior Refugee and Returnee Security Officer, Emergency and Security Service, UNHCR Headquarters: said, “Refugees should be informed and/or educated on their duties to the host community and other refugees, particularly their duty to refrain from military or other activities likely to jeopardize the safety of the refugee community or the host country, while they enjoy asylum.” Refugee rights and code of conduct is also disseminated during and after counselling of refugees.

“I also sought counselling from my Pastor’s wife”. “I was feeling empty without my family until I went for counselling to my church” “I was missing my family and I talked to someone I confide in”

• Seek social support from other refugees

Some participants mentioned that for their families to cope with this stressful situation, they had to seek support from friends and relatives who have been in South Africa longer than them.

Louw and Edwards (1997: 636) state that social support can lessen or totally eliminate the negative effects of stress. People with a good social support system believe that they are:

- Cared for and loved;
- Esteemed and valued; and
- Belong to a network of communication where others can be counted on to help.

“I was socialising too much with my country man to much and I was seeing social support for me and my family.”
“I also got support from the Muslim community and other support from asylum seekers and refugees.”
“I tried to shift every experience in to my subconscious mind so that I can forget about all the experienced I had in Port Elizabeth”.
“I started socializing so that I can get social support from socializing with other refugees and asylum seekers.”

- **Reading (keep mind busy)**

In order to cope, participants highlighted that they kept busy and engaged in self-talk.
“I kept my mind busy by reading novels and magazines.”
A. I tried to keep my mind busy by doing a lot of reading.
I had to tell myself that I did not choose to be a refugee.
I had to be realistic that I could not go back to my home country.

- **Become involved in religious activities**

Religion is what believing in a greater authority and meaning tends to be vested in religion. Religious leaders may play an important role in providing support and guidance.
“This helped me to accept that it is God’s will for me to be based in South Africa despite the challenges that I was facing.” uttered another participant.
One of the female participants declared that,
“God has got my number and I am worth more than many sparrows, therefore even these challenges shall come to pass and I will be the victor at the end.”
“I see at as Gods plan and purpose for me to be in South Africa.”
“I realized that I am not a refugee by choice.”
“I realized that I can’t go back to my country where I have no future.”
“I realized that I can cope with my situation rather than persecution in my home country.”

Saleebey (2002: 67) explains that “faith” refers to personal relationship and experience with divinity and the associated contents of beliefs in God. The spiritual dimension of a human being is brought to light, especially, where one is facing an uncertain situation. One of the refugees echoed that,
“As human beings we tend to go back to a Super human being, in this case God for protection, provision, hope and help. Most of the Christian refugees echoed Psalm 46 vs 1 which says,

“God is our refuge and strength, an ever present help in trouble in whom we trust.”

They also quoted Proverbs which says,

“The name of the Lord is a strong tower, the righteous run to it and are safe.”

This spiritual of coping expressed aspect by the refugees helped them to cope when they were overwhelmed by the negative conditions they experienced during and after arrival in the host country.

“The church played an important role in my life when I had nowhere to go they gave me shelter.”

“When I needed food, they fed me.”

“When I needed clothes, they clothed me before the host country could help me as an asylum seeker.” said one respondent.

“It is in God that we realize that the whole world belongs to all of us and men have just put boundaries and called each by a country name”.

In a study of Somali women in Australia, the same pattern was found, that Islam had become more important because of their experiences with persecution and violence during war, and the hardships of replacement. War and exile lead to increased importance of religious faith, and Islam sustains them during times of emotional distress McMichael (2002:173).

3.3.6 Theme 6: Suggestions made by refugees/asylum seekers concerning the involvement of Social Workers

This theme was an answer from refugees and asylum seekers when they were asked: who else do you think should be involved in a process of asylum in helping refugees/asylum seekers?

A range of answers were given and the emotions rose.

Encourage refugees and give them hope that things will be normal in their country of origin. Also encourage them to further your studies and advance your career. Help them to get bursaries from the United Nations High Commissioner for refugees.
Encourage refugees to read newspapers and government gazettes where they advertise post to foreigners. Intense job search support for resettled refugees affected by trauma and torture.

From this theme emanated one sub theme.

- **Sub theme Refugees and asylum seekers made some suggestions to social workers as how they can be involved in refugee matters.**

Refugees/asylum seekers sited a number of areas that they think social workers need to be involved in based on their experiences and difficulties that they themselves or their families encountered in South Africa, Port Elizabeth. They believed that some of the problems could have been eliminated if more officials including other relevant stakeholders would be involved. To give an insight of what they said, below the categories are presented.

- **Sub-theme: Need to develop an understanding of refugees / asylum seekers**

Social workers will be of great help to refugees and asylum seekers as we all know that refuges and asylum seekers have numerous surrounding social problems.

“I believe that refugee children are recognized by the South African government therefore they might qualify for social grants”.

All the refugees and asylum seekers echoed these sentiments.

- **Sub-theme: Social work offices next to Home Affairs**

One of the concerns expressed by participants was that they did not know how and where to get hold of the social workers when the need arises. The first step the social workers should have there offices next to the Home Affairs. There should be refugees that are willing to be referred to social workers with there problems and social workers should have easy access to Home Affairs officials that are dealing with refugee so as to discuss. Refugees had different needs where they feel social workers could have been involved. Refugees mention that a few of these needs by saying, in my culture your sister’s or your brother’s child is in the true sense your child. The problem refugees encounter when they entered the country and try to apply for asylum for these children they were denied access and told that these were
not their children. These children are termed by the refugee law as unaccompanied minors which therefore they need proof of legal document for adoption. A social worker has to be involved in the process, or intervention of a legal practitioner, who normally should be someone from UNHCR or Lawyers for Human Rights working hand in hand with UNHCR. Refugees did not have any proof of adoption documents from their country of origin as they believed that these were their children. The process of trying to get a social worker was a very long process and sometimes the children may end up with no legal documents at all. These unaccompanied minors because they have no documents could not access any of the basic needs like education health care and social grants.

The other concern was that access to health care is a difficult process especially by when you have no refugee or asylum permit. To support this concern Apalata Kibiribiri Knight & Lutge (2007:10) argue that there is anecdotal evidence from refugees and service providers that health services in South Africa are not responsive to refugees’ perceived needs. Problem areas include discrimination and xenophobic attitudes during service provision, language barriers (many refugees are French, Portuguese and Swahili speaking), inappropriate treatments due to misunderstanding, exclusion from public hospitals due to lack of valid permits or delay in the delivery of such permits.

Apalata Kibiribiri Knight and Lutge (2007:13) further state that in public hospitals, refugees felt that they are often prevented from seeing doctors and getting “proper” treatment. Language differences with black nurses, who act as "gatekeepers" to the doctors, are the starting point of non-acceptance. Public health care providers are also often reluctant to render the necessary services to foreigners and this creates additional stress and difficulties in an already intolerant society (Martin 1991:38, 94; Loescher and Loescher 1994:235).

“I was also very frustrated when I was sick as I could not get medical care treatment early because the officers in Livingstone Hospital had questions about my permit, but at the end they contacted Home Affairs to confirm about my permit and only then I got the medical care.” some refugees said.
• **Sub-theme: Visit refugee offices**

Participants suggested that in the interim, as they know that for social workers to have their offices next to Home Affairs may take some time, the social workers could visit the refugee offices to offer some services to refugees and asylum seekers.

• **Sub-theme: Provide counselling & guidance to refugee problems, advise on family problems, accompanied minors**

Counselling of refugees is essential for them to be able to cope and adapt to the host country's culture and systems. Counselling of refugees also helps in dealing with the traumatic experiences the refugee would have experienced during and after leaving the country of origin. All the negative emotions such as anxiety, hopelessness, anger, shock, guilty that are aroused by the refugees' experiences in their country of origin and in the hosting country, mostly, can be better dealt with through counselling. Counselling of refugees plays an important role in facilitating refugees understanding his/her situation and adapt to it. Counselling of refugees will result in refugees avoiding experiences of unacceptable behaviour such as prostitution and stealing in the host country by providing support and access to resources.

Mr. Peter Mumba Permanent Secretary, Ministry Of Home Affairs, Zambia in the book Refugees in Africa: “The challenges of Protection and solutions” states that, “Counselling of refugees is an initiative also aimed at creating opportunities for refugees to become productive members of the community.” “This would lead to peaceful co-existence and prevention of conflict amongst refugees and the hosting communities, resulting in greater regional stability and local integration.”

Mr. Iain Hall Senior Refugee and Returnee Security Officer, Emergency and Security Service, UNHCR Headquarters: said, “Refugees should be informed and/or educated on their duties to the host community and other refugees, particularly their duty to refrain from military or other activities likely to jeopardize the safety of the refugee community or the host country, while they enjoy asylum.”
Refugee rights and code of conduct is also disseminated during and after counselling of refugees.

- **Sub-theme: Work together with other organizations Lawyers for Human Rights, UNHCR, government Departments**

Their need for the involvement of other relevant stakeholders or organisations mentioned above was linked to specific problems that do include Home Affairs officials, but can be handled more effectively through collaboration with these organisations or department. For example the problem of changing their driver’s licence to the international driver’s licences is a difficult process which has been resolved. Social Workers can also assist in providing them with basic needs for example shelter, education, food and other through facilitating joint efforts of different organisation and government departments. Creating awareness about refugees also requires the involvement of all the relevant stakeholders.

As these relevant stakeholders work together, they could develop income support programmes for refugees especially unaccompanied minors, single women, widowed and separated woman. They could help women to access hospital based obstetric care and health care for refugee and asylum community as a whole. The relevant government departments and relevant stakeholders can foster partnership arrangement to tackle the problem of refugees and asylum seekers together.

“If relevant stakeholders can work together, refugees will not be a problem of one department.”

“In cases of unaccompanied minors, these children will not have to wait for a long process before they are attended to.”

Ndinda and Ndebayo (2006:37) state that South Africa appears to have no specific policy regarding the reception and accommodation of refugees. Refugee needs need a joint effort from different organizations and government departments. To support this view is, Peltzer (1996:284) when he adds and says, when attending to refugees their total life situation needs to be assessed, which can mean looking into legal status, social services, care, language courses, occupational aspects, accompanying the refugees to assist in administrative
matters, home/camp visits, physiotherapy especially following torture, activating natural support networks (family, friends, religious, leaders, community groups, exile groups).

“I would have appreciated if when I entered South Africa every basic need would met by the South African government.”

“As refugees we struggle with everything that is necessary for our survival for example shelter”

“We appreciate the fact that there are no refugee camps in South Africa, but there should be available accommodation even if there is a minimal fee to pay for rentals for a short time until a refugee can stand on his own”

The housing experiences of refugees in broad terms relate to access, location, quality of housing, and affordability, among other issues. First, their accent immediately gives them away as non-nationals, leading to their being dismissed without an opportunity to voice their concerns. Often, landlords are reluctant to let their houses to non-nationals receiving rent allowance. When refugees access housing, landlords are reluctant to fill out the paperwork required for rent allowance. There is also the added problem of navigating the city when looking for accommodation, which makes their task all the more difficult. Other problems include a housing shortage, discrimination by the receiving community, and housing that is located in places far from basic utilities such as schools and healthcare facilities, Ndindia and Ndibayo (2006:40).

Furthermore, Ndindia and Ndibayo (2006:40) state that refugees are considered prohibited migrants in South Africa and are therefore unlikely to find well-paying employment easily, and questions regarding their housing access and experiences arise. Although all refugees may generally be said to be vulnerable in terms of accommodation due to their low economic power, which means that few can afford decent accommodation. Single women and female headed households experience further disadvantage. Furthermore, the actual living conditions of refugees, particularly women, when living with strangers may subject them to cultural shock, sexual harassment, and abuse, factors that make their experience in qualitative terms rather worse than that of their male counterparts.

“There is a directory of services to assist refugees but in Port Elizabeth to get that assistance is a challenge.”
“In my understanding refugees are a burden of the host country but when you go to government hospitals we are still expected to pay whether we have money or not.”

“The little money that I earned for working as a maid I still had to pay for accommodation, hospital and so on.”

The organisation of seminars is advocated for health care professionals or law enforcement personnel on social-medical aspects of human rights violation, torture and its consequences as well as different ways of treatment and rehabilitation of victims Peltzer (1996:16). There is a need for coordination among concerned organizations and departments in government and civil society concerning torture and other human rights violation Peltzer (1996:10). Peltzer (1996:18) further adds that there is a need for initiation for training the trainers, for example the training and supervision of counsellors who will have two main functions, to attend to refugee suffering from the consequences of trauma and gradually start to train and supervise other aspiring counsellors such as health care workers, relief workers, and primary school teachers.

Apalata, Kibiribiri, Knight and Lutge (2007:22) mention that data show that lack of employment or inhumane conditions of work, lack of accommodation or living in unclean environment as well as poor nutritional conditions negatively affect the health status of refugees. Refugees are prone to develop physical illnesses and are under daily psychological pressure.

- **Sub-theme: Advocating for refugee matters**

Social workers should be responsible for placement of refugees in the receiving society. Social isolation and dependence of refugees may be further compounded by lack of access to or difficulties in using public transportation. They need to help them with available social support. They need to provide language programs. Refugees and asylum seekers who wish or need to work may require more intensive employment counselling and job placement support. This could be attributed to the xenophobic attacks that recently took place in our country.

“Problems about our social lives would be taken care off by Social Workers.”
“Social Workers would be in a better position help us with adoption matters when we arrive as refugees with our relatives children.”

“Social Workers would present our cases whenever we have a need.”

Ndinda and Ndebayo (2006:5) argue that upon arrival in South Africa, refugees are issued temporary permits to prohibited persons (TPPP) that allows them to stay in the country indefinitely. Although this Permit allows them to seek employment and education opportunities, it is not clear how their social welfare needs, such as access to housing, are addressed, and by whom.

“I have stayed in this country over seven years but I am still an asylum seeker.”

“The refugee Act allows us to apply for permanent residence after five years of being issued with refugee status but up to now after so many years I am still not a citizen.”

3.3.7 Theme 7: Suggestions made by refugees/asylum seekers to Home Affairs in terms of improving services

This theme was a refugees/asylum seeker's response to a question: Do you have any suggestions to Home Affairs as to how can they can improve their services to refugees/asylum seekers? Four main points raised by participants include employing more qualified and competent staff employee interpreters from the refugee community to assist in things like interpreting and developing an awareness / education campaign about problems and rights of refugees.

- **Sub-theme: Refugees/asylum seekers made the following suggestion to the Dept of Affairs:**

Refugees and asylum seekers mentioned that they are very grateful to the Department of Home Affairs as they can see that the Department is trying to help them. However, they raised few concerns though about the Department of Affairs. Their suggestions are discussed below.
• **Employ more qualified and competent staff**

The Department of Home Affairs need to employ more staff to enlarge the staff component to help refugees and asylum seekers in all the offices within a prescribed time according to the Refugee Act, Act 130 of 1998.

“And there is no specific thing that I tell when you came to Home Affairs, people may blame Home Affairs but is huge over crowds of people may be the office is under-staffed or no staff or not enough staff to carry to do the job but I encounter some problem that I had to stay for some weeks to come here to look for the permit because three o’clock they close and still there is huge you have to come very early in the morning and make sure you get the chance and if the Police or Home Affairs get hold of you without having documentations you will end up in Police custody if only they don’t work very efficient but only its not fast as many people would expect”.

“The Department of Home Affairs should employ more staff and also employ interpreters that will be paid by the department so that no one would take advantage of refugees” refugees said.

• **Sub-theme: Employ interpreters from the refugee community to assist**

There should be interpreters in full time employ of Home Affairs and that would help to eliminate language barriers refugees and asylum seekers in the asylum seeking process.

“They need to look at employing more people to deal with refugees because refugees and asylum seekers are suffering for example sometimes they can not be help because they cannot speak English and to ask for an interpreter is costly for them as they have no money”, the refugees responded.

Peltzer (1996:28) is of the view that with a professionally trained interpreter you have the greatest confidence of receiving a technically sound translation, but there are potential sacrifices. First, such persons are professionals and, unless they can be convinced to donate their services, their fees can strain service resources. In addition, they are trained to provide an accurate translation of spoken words and may be less likely than bicultural workers,
relatives or friends to interject comments about culturally prescribed behaviour patterns that may help clarify what is being said.

- **Sub-theme: Develop an Awareness / Education campaigns about problems & rights of refugees**

  “Well, I think many people are lacking what we call lack awareness I think our people should be educated especially South African people must be educated yah in terms of the refugees are nothing but people like them you know that many South African have been refugees in the past before independence and then I don’t see if they encountered the same problems I think the people must be educated that we are not wealthy we must not be looted because we start to become the victims of crime every now and then, I think its upon the department to give you the posters and to announce on the radio and television that the refugees have the same rights like any other South African, I suggest that social workers should provide counselling to refugees”.

  “In all these attempts, senior people or senior officials should be involved with refugee issues, for example mayors, ministers and others,” the refugees said.

  “They must extend their help to asylum seekers and refugees by being part of the” said the refugee from Somalia.

  Education and awareness initiatives at the national level involves addressing the following risk factors for refugees: negative public attitudes toward immigrants and refugees generally and toward some groups specifically, separation from family and community, unemployment (and underemployment, compared to with one’s level of education), being adolescent or elderly at the time of migration, and being a woman from cultures in which gender roles values differ from those in the host country  Peltzer (1996:10).

**3.4 Chapter Summary**

This chapter was devoted to presenting the perspectives of research participants as emerged from the process of data analysis. The participant perspectives were presented as the seven themes which were induced from the interviews conducted with refugees and asylum
seekers. In turn the themes were supported by a number of sub-themes and subjected to literature control. In the following chapter the researcher will summarise the main findings of the study, draw conclusions and make recommendations.
Chapter 4

Summary, conclusions and recommendations

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter constitutes the final phrase of this research endeavour. In this concluding chapter, summaries of chapters 1, 2, & 3 will be briefly highlighted. The research goal to explore relocated experiences of refugees and asylum seekers has been attached will be noted. Conclusions will be drawn from the main research findings and recommendation will be discussed.

Summaries will be presented as follows:

Chapter one: Introduction and problem formulation.
Chapter two: Research Methodology
Chapter three: Research Findings

4.2 Chapter one: Overview of study

- Chapter one guided the reader into understanding the plight of the refugee as a world wide problem. This chapter provided overview of the proposed research project. The research to cause the aimed to the relocation experiences of refugees and asylum seekers in Port Elizabeth area. The proposed research plan and procedure to be followed was also highlighted in this chapter.

4.3 Chapter two: Research Methods

Methods of data collection, method of data verification and method of data analysis were outlined in this chapter. Chapter two provided and in depth description of methodology followed when the research was employed in order to reach a goal of the research endeavour which was to explore relocation experiences of refugees and asylum seekers in
the Eastern Cape. Data was collected by use of semi-structured interviews and an interviews guided was used. Semi-structured interviews were used as means of data collection.

There were five main open-ended questions which guided data collection in the study namely,

- Tell me about your decision to leave your home country?
- Tell me about your experiences of leaving your home country?
- Tell me about your experience of being in Port Elizabeth as a refugee or asylum seeker?
- What challenges have you and your family encountered in relocating?
- What suggestions would you like to make to social workers about how they can help in the process of seeking asylum?

A qualitative research approach was employed in the study for its suitability in order to accomplish the goal of the research. The researcher in conducting the research process followed the phases as stipulated in De Vos et al. (2005: 89-113 & 261-299).

The phases were:-

- Selection of a researchable topic/theme
- Formal formulations
- Planning
- Implementation
- Interpretation

For the purpose of the research study, the research utilized the eight steps described by Teach (in Creswell, 1994:155) for data analysis.

4.4 Chapter three: The research findings

The results emerging from the data collected through the fifteen semi-structured interviews were discusses in the previous chapter as themes and sub-themes identified during data analysis. The seven themes and the main findings are presented below:
Refugees and asylum seekers were very emotional in talking about their experiences. All their experiences were worse but the experiences.

**Theme 1** Refugees and asylum seekers articulate a range of reasons behind the decision to leave their home countries and relocate to South Africa. Refugees and asylum seekers state the following reasons for relocation: ethnic violence in home country, human rights abuses, war / political violence, genocide, tribalism and expectations from family. From this theme emerged a sub-theme: Specific reasons for choosing South Africa as their host country included the following: advised by other people that circumstances are good – hope for life a better life.

**Theme: 2** Refugees and asylum seekers express negative experiences regarding leaving country of origin. The refugees highlighted the following negative experiences: being robbed and betrayed, selling possessions to buy air ticket, left in secrecy, spent some time in neighbouring countries and problems at the border.

**Theme: 3** Refugees / asylum seekers experience a range of feelings as they enter the host country. Refugees and asylum seekers experience both negative and positive feelings in the relocation experience.

Negative feelings they expressed: depression/traumatized, humiliated / degraded, shame/embarrassment, anxious, frustration and anger, Positive feelings include: hope.

**Theme: 4** Refugees and asylum seekers report that they and their families experienced a number of challenges as a result of relocation: Refugees/asylum seekers report the following challenges: discrimination and hostility from local people, loneliness, living in extreme poverty, imprisonment, culture shock, and applying for asylum is a difficult process.

**Theme: 5** Refugees/asylum seekers employ negative and positive strategies to cope with challenges of relocation: Refugees and asylum seeker’s report the negative strategies of coping with challenges of relocation: become involved in criminal activities, lowered moral values. Refugees and asylum seeker’s report the following positive strategies of coping with
challenges of relocation: accept new circumstances, seek counselling and social support from other refugees, reading (keep mind busy) and become involved in religious activities

**Theme: 6** Suggestions made by refugees/asylum seekers concerning the involvement of Social Workers: seek counselling and social support from other refugees, reading (keep mind busy) Become involved in religious activities Refugees and asylum seekers made the following suggestions regarding social worker’s involvement in refugee matters, Social work offices next to Home Affairs, visit refugee offices, provide counselling & guidance to refugee problems, advise on family problems, accompanied minors, work together with other organizations Lawyers for Human Rights, UNHCR government Department and advocating for refugee matters

**Theme: 7** Suggestions made by refugees/asylum seekers to Home Affairs in terms of improving services to refugees and asylum seekers: Refugees/asylum seekers made the following suggestions to the Dept of Affairs: Employ more qualified and competent staff, employ interpreters from the refugee community to assist and develop an awareness / education campaigns about problems & rights of refugees

4.5 Conclusions and recommendations

Based on the findings highlighted above conclusions will be drawn and recommendations proposed from the findings. The researcher reached the conclusion that for refugees and asylum seekers the relocation experience is associated with feelings of loss (Kubler-Ross, 1995) and on the other hand feelings of hope and optimism that suggest significant residence. The refugees and asylum seekers’ strength and belief in themselves and their decision helped them cope with challenges in their host environment.

The insights gained from the research endeavour will help the Department of Home Affairs and the relevant stakeholders to understand the plight of refugees and asylum seeker’s relocation experiences and they can provide more effective services in helping them face their specific challenges confronting them.
4.6 The researcher recommends that

The above conclusion suggests that the government and relevant stakeholder should intervene in the welfare of refugees especially when they have just arrived in the country. It is recommended that educators, health practitioners, social workers, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and Lawyers for Human Rights, should work together with the Department of Home Affairs as they are the departments that can meet the refugee’s basic needs.

To elaborate briefly on the role each government department and stake holder’s role can play in the life of a refugee or asylum seeker, the researcher suggests the following

- United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees can expand their offices to other provinces especially close to where most refugees and asylum seekers reside initially they should expand to the provinces where the five refugee reception offices are situated.

- Accommodation is and has always been a major basic need for refugees that also can be a responsibility of UNHCR. The Department of Home Affairs is already involved with the processing of documents for refugees and asylum seekers, and it’s also much appreciated but it also needs to extend it’s offices to other provinces for example in Free State where there is no refugee reception office. Furthermore given the vastness of the Eastern Cape access to the one reception office based in Port Elizabeth serving the whole of the Eastern Cape and the Free State is problematic. This means that some refugees have to travel 600 km to get access to Home Affairs services.

In line with the suggestions by participants themselves it is recommended that the Department of Home Affairs increase their staff complement, ensure adequate training for staff, and employ interpreters.

- The Department of Social Development: Refugees and asylum seekers face many challenges that need the intervention of social workers. To mention but a few, is the issue of unaccompanied minors, traumas that refugees and asylum seekers experience starting from their home country.
• It is recommended that Social Workers are more active in fulfilling the roles of broker and advocate on behalf of the refugee community.

The researcher recommends be that follow up research be undertaken as the research project was only focused in the Eastern Cape. Furthermore research can follow up focusing on the specific impact of the current law on refugees and asylum seekers.

It is further recommended that research and services target women refugees as specific vulnerable groups.

4.8 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The researcher previously worked with refugees and asylum seekers in the Department of Home Affairs. Although most of the refugees and asylum seekers were not people she had dealt with before, the mere mention of her name and the fact that she was well known by name presented a notion that she still is a Refugee Status Determination Officer in spite of the fact that at the time their study was conducted, she had since moved from the Eastern Cape two years ago. The other problem was that the data became saturated early by the time the researcher reached interview number fifteen and thus findings cannot be generalised.

• Future Research

It is recommended that a further study be conducted on how the government can met the refugees and asylum seeker’s needs with intervention of social workers in order to prevent or minimizing the refugees and asylum seekers relocation problems that may lead them to commit unnecessary acts.
4.9 CONCLUDING REMARKS

Refugees are successful individuals temporarily without funds and opportunities. The refugee is not pulled out, he is pushed out. Given the choice, he would stay in his or her country of origin. Most refugees are not poor people. They have not failed within their homeland, almost all were functional and independent, a great many were successful, prominent, well-integrated individuals who flee because of fear of persecution Stein, (1981 page 24).

It is vital thus in a democratic society, such as South Africa which stresses on ideology of human rights, social workers become more active in advocating for the needs of refugees and asylum seekers and also respond to their specific challenges with appropriate services.
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7 March 2007

The Director of Refugee Affairs
Department of Home Affairs
Pretoria, 0001

Dear Ms. Mkwebame-Setla

Re: Permission to conduct research – Ms. N Sibula

Ms. Sibula, who is an employee of the Department of Home Affairs, is a registered student pursuing Masters studies at this University. In fulfilment of the requirements for this degree she is expected to undertake a research study. Her desire is to undertake research that will enhance her service delivery to refugees and asylum seekers.

We hereby wish to support the candidate’s request to be granted permission to undertake the proposed research. Ms. Sibula will be expected to compile a research proposal which is subjected to scrutiny by the relevant structures within the University to ensure both methodological coherence and conformity to accepted ethical research standards.

Thanking you for your co-operation.

Yours sincerely

Nontutuzelo R. Sibula
Dear Madam,

I am a social worker currently studying at the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University in for the degree Magister Artium in Social Work. I would to invite you to participate in a research project about relocation experiences of refugees and asylum seekers.

The purpose of this study is to explore and describe experiences of refugees and asylum seekers in relocation. I am requesting you to participate in 2-3 interviews, which will be approximately one and half-hours long. You will be asked to discuss your experience as a refugee and/or asylum seeker in relocating from your home country to South Africa. With your permission, each interview will be tape-recorded in order to capture all details of the interview. These tapes will be destroyed at the end of this research study. Identifying information will be deleted or disguised in any publication of the research findings.

The interviews will take place in a private setting where you would feel most comfortable. This will be arranged with you prior to the interview. Should there be any areas that are unclear after the interview has been typed up from the tape, I would also need your permission to contact you in order to review the notes and check whether the information has been interpreted correctly.

Your responses to the interview as well as your identity will be kept strictly confidential and will only be shared with my research supervisor for guidance in the process. The tapes will be coded so that your name does not appear on any document and your privacy will thus
not be invaded. The tape will be locked away safely until the tapes can be destroyed, once the research has been completed.

You have the right to withdraw from the research project at any time and this will not affect our relationship in any way.

Should you be willing to participate in the study, please read and sign the attached consent form. For any queries you can contact me at (cell) 0727313159.
Your participation in this research project will be greatly appreciated and could make an important difference to other refugees and asylum seekers who are in similar situations.

Yours sincerely

Nontutuzelo Sibula
Masters Research Student
# NELSON MANDELA METROPOLITAN UNIVERSITY

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<th>EXPLORING RELOCATION EXPERIENCES OF REFUGEES AND ASYLUM SEEKERS</th>
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<td>Principal investigator</td>
<td>NONTUTUZELO SIBULA</td>
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<td>Address</td>
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## A. DECLARATION BY PARTICIPANT

I, the participant and the undersigned
I.D. number

OR

I, in my capacity as
A.1 I HEREBY CONFIRM AS FOLLOWS:

I, the participant, was invited to participate in the above-mentioned research project that is being undertaken by the Department of Health and Social Development of the Faculty of Health Sciences of the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University.

NONTUTUZELO SIBULA

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT PROFESSIONS

FACULTY OF HEALTH SCIENCES

The following aspects have been explained to me, the participant:

(2) Aim: The investigators are studying:

The relocation experiences of refugees and asylum seekers

The information will be used to:
### Assist social workers in planning more effective services for refugees and asylum seekers in the host country

### Procedures:
I understand that I will participate in a research interview of approximately 90 minutes. The interview will be recorded to ensure accuracy of information

### Risks:
I understand that talking about my relocation experiences can cause me to become emotional

### Possible benefits:
As a result of my participation in this study, recommendations will be made by the researcher in an attempt to improve services to refugees and asylum seekers

### Confidentiality:
My identity will not be revealed in any discussion, description or scientific publications by the investigator.

### Access to findings:
Any new information/or benefit that develops during the course of the study will be shared as follows: Feedback will be provided to the refugee community forum and the Department of Home Affairs

### Voluntary participation/refusal/discontinuation:
My participation is voluntary

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My decision whether or not to participate will in no way affect present or future services care/employment/lifestyle

|---|-----|----------|----|-----------|

The information above was explained to me/the participant by

Nontutuzelo Sibula


in

(1) I was given the opportunity to ask questions and all these questions were answered satisfactorily.

No pressure was exerted on me to consent to participation and I understand that I may withdraw at any stage without penalisation.

1. Participation in this study will not result in any additional cost to me.

A.2 I HEREBY VOLUNTARILY CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN THE ABOVE-MENTIONED PROJECT
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B. **STATEMENT BY OR ON BEHALF OF INVESTIGATOR(S)**
I, ………………………………………………………………………………………………………………

.............. declare that

- I have explained the information given in this document to

  (name of patient/participant)

and/or his/her representative

  (name of representative)

- he/she was encouraged and given ample time to ask me any questions;

- this conversation was conducted in

  Afrikaans  English  Xhosa  Other

30. And no translator was used / this conversation was translated into

  (language) by

I have detached Section D and handed it to the participant

31. Signed/confirmed at

32. 34. 35.

36. 38.

37. Signature of interviewer

39. Signature of witness

40. 41. Full name of witness
C. IMPORTANT MESSAGE TO PATIENT

Dear participant

Thank you for your participation in this study. Should, at any time during the study:

- an emergency arise as a result of the research, or
- you require any further information with regard to the study, or
- the following occur

If you experience emotional reactions as a result of the research that cause you concern

(indicate any circumstances which should be reported to the investigator)

44. Kindly contact 42. Nontutuzelo Sibula
45. At telephone number 43. (041) 504 2353