FOOD ACCESS AMONG CONGOLESE REFUGEES LIVING IN DURBAN: A MARKET APPROACH

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Declaration

I, Cumya Seraphin Zihalirwa, hereby certify that the content of this work is original to me and written in my own words. Any quotations from other writers used in it have been properly cited, and all sources used are listed.

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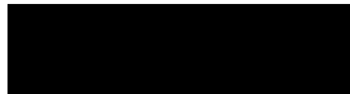
Signature:  **Date: November 2023**

Cumya Seraphin Zihalirwa

215079935

Dedication

Purity Zihalirwa Sorongane, my wonderful wife, and my future descendants are honoured by this effort. God Almighty, who brought you to me, has my gratitude. You were instrumental in helping me achieve my potential. May the Lord keep you and bless you for me. With all of my heart, I love you.

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My sincere gratitude and God's blessings go out to my biological family for the ongoing moral, spiritual, and financial support you provided me during my academic career.

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My gratitude goes to the Chris Pieterse family for treating me like one of their own and giving me all the support, I needed through the nine years I spent living under your roof to become the person I am today. You and I share more than just a biological connection. May God continue to bless you.

Abstract

A market-based method is used in the current study to examine food access among Congolese refugees in Durban. An ethnographic qualitative research design allows for the achievement of this goal. Twenty purposively chosen key informants participated in semi-structured interviews and participant observation to provide rich information. Participant observation involved participating in food shopping activities and observing how Congolese refugees can access food and which market venue is the most frequented.

The research findings show that refugee households have limited access to food choices despite the diversified food sources (formal and informal). Three factors influenced this limitation. First, the refugee's household financial capability (income) prevents the informants from formally purchasing local food. Secondly, most local foods were unfamiliar to the informants, and they needed to associate them with their home foodstuffs. Thirdly, due to affordable food costs, the informants prefer sourcing some of the local foodstuffs informally. Informal purchases demonstrate the possibility of obtaining local foods and the informants' home food for less than formal purchases. This appeal for home food resides in the physical and emotional well-being, and the lack of options to acquire it formally and regularly outside their social networks makes this an issue of inadequacy.

This ability to negotiate for food informally shows strong social connections and the ability to gather information related to food sourcing among Congolese refugees. A few techniques for adjusting to the formal market system to commercialise their culture. Congolese refugees (informants) also demonstrate a desire to obtain sustenance on the side through cash crops. This mechanism for food remains high in low-income refugees' households because of social ties and the possibility of getting credit for food choices. Thus, to whom the food cash or credits it is acquired matters for these Congolese refugees even though this advantage does not satisfy the households adequately. Besides cash crops, the informants approached the formal market by choosing cheap food, sometimes less referred ones, and cut off some meals for serving purposes. All those strategies were used to cope with poor income and high prices over certain service deliveries, such as housing costs, which appeared to stunt the informants' ability to access food.

Keywords: food access, market, social identity, capability, home food, Congolese refugees

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Acronyms and abbreviations

AFSUN	African Urban Food Security Network
AIDS	Acquired Immunodeficiency syndrome
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
COVID-19	Coronavirus Disease
CUP	Consuming Urban Poverty
DAFF	Department of Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
EU	European Union
FANTA	Food and Nutrition Technical Assistance
FAO	Food Agriculture Organisation
GDP	Gross Domestic Production
GMF	Genetically Modified Food
HACCP	Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points
HDD	Household Dietary Diversity
HFIAS	Household Food Insecurity Access Scale
HHS	Household Hunger Scale
IASFM	International Association for the Study of Forced Migration
Ibid	In the same source
IFSS	Integrated Food Security Strategy
ILO	International Labour Organisation
ISO	International Organisation for Standardization
KFC	Kentucky Fried Chicken
LDD	Low Dietary Diversity
LFCRH	Less Fortunate Congolese Refugee Households
NGO’S	Non-Government Organisations
NSLP	National School Lunch Programme
OCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs.
PHDD	Household dietary diversity
QFLS	Quarterly Labour force survey
SA	South Africa

SADC	Southern African Development Community
SNAP	Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Programme);
Stats SA	Statistics South Africa
UCRH	Unlucky Congolese refugee households
UKZN	University of KwaZulu Natal
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNHCR	United Nations Higher Committee for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
US	United States
USA	United States of America
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture
WFP	World Food Programme
WIC	Women, Infants, and Children
WIEGO	Women in Informal Employment: Globalising and Organising

CHAPTER ONE:

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Overview of the Study

Food inaccessibility is an urgent global issue that, in the absence of coordinated international action, will remain a major difficulty in the food system going forward (Anderson, 2024). Globally, 783 million people are chronically hungry and undernourished (World Food Programme WFP, 2023, Anderson, 2024). The world is hungrier than ever in 2023, with refugees in poverty among the most vulnerable. WFP (2023) indicates that more people go to bed hungry each night, and rising costs and conflict worsen the global food crisis. While hunger rates declined in Asia and Latin America in 2022, rates continued to rise in all sub-regions of Africa (Gustafson, 2023). Notably, food prices and the recession both exacerbate the crisis in food access (Gustafson, 2023).

This shows that the entire world's population is vulnerable to fluctuations in food prices, and there is a chance that these fluctuations will get worse (Gustafson, 2023). The greater rates of food access constraints identified among specific population categories, including refugees, are particularly alarming. Refugees are people who were compelled by security concerns to flee their nation of origin and move to another one, losing their source of income and other identities that were important to their well-being. Due to these vulnerabilities, low-income refugees (Black non-Hispanic, Hispanic, and single-parent households) in the US experience a higher rate of food access uncertainty than the country as a whole (Coleman-Jensen, et al, 2016).

Studies on the issue of food security in communities of refugees who have been resettled in other high-income than the US nations have identified similar significant problems with food access, with rates reaching as high as 85%. (Wang, et al, 2016; Wegerif, 2020; Larochelle & Alwang, 2022; Larochelle & Alwang, 2022; INDDEX Project, 2018). Cultural and economic opportunities are among the major restrictions (Kirkland, et al, 2022; Greenberg, 2015; Wegerif, 2020). For these refugees, the burden of unemployment and poor earnings make it difficult for them to withstand the inflation and skyrocketing food prices in those destinations (Mokgabudi, 2012; Barki & Parente, 2010; Terragni, et al, 2014; Wilson & Renzaho, 2015).

South Africa is concerned about this economic outbreak. It is a big refugee-hosting nation in Africa, and this phenomenon is likely to increase due to climate and related global conflicts that displace large numbers of people. This suggests that hosted refugees are a significant population to focus on for food access to propose policies and programmes at multiple scales. Thus, the current study is needed.

1.2 Background and Problem Statement of the Study

Although South Africa appears to be a secure food country nationally, access to healthy food remains a challenge facing many households (Chakona & Shackleton, 2017). Despite its social instabilities marked by significant poverty, unemployment and inequality leading to food insecurity in African countries, South Africa has promised social integration to refugees and asylum seekers. Surveys conducted by Stats SA (2012, 2008), updated by Bazirake (2017), indicated that 121,645 (nearly 5%) of the foreign immigrants in South Africa are refugees, and this number has probably grown today.

The DRC ranks fourth among refugee-sending countries to South Africa (UNHCR, 2018). This is against the backdrop of persistent chronic food insecurity caused by the war that the DRC has experienced over the 23 years, which are an important determinant of both the desire and the decision to migrate (Sadiddin, et al, 2019; Bapolisi, et al, 2021). These Congolese refugees, amongst other worldwide refugees, have one thing in common: being away from their homeland. This fact makes them vulnerable to access the basic socio-economic and cultural needs, including their own and the host country's.

Thus, the general exile life experiences show that refugees tend to have poorer food access than the rest of the population (Kavian, et al, 2020; Nutz, 2017; Msabah, 2019). The review attributes this fact to systemic market exclusion and marginalisation that affect refugees’ food access abilities. Refugees in South Africa, in this regard, are not exempted from this systemic market exclusion, which could be coupled with the issue of cultural marginalisation that could affect their ability to access food.

The particularity of refugees' living conditions in South Africa is that refugees and asylum seekers are integrated into local communities where their access to basic services, including food, is provided through the market. This market approach means that refugees must fend for themselves by working and earning an income to meet their basic needs (Nutz, 2017; Msabah, 2019; Amisi & Balade, 2005; Zihindula, et al, 2016).

Refugees' efforts to fend for themselves in this environment mean they compete directly with poor South Africans. As a result, refugees are perceived as a threat to local livelihoods, particularly in poor communities (Amisi, 2006; Amisi & Ballard, 2005; Lakika, 2011). Such sentiments have often degenerated into xenophobic attacks on African immigrants. Neocosmos (2010) mentions that xenophobic attacks further result in the loss of livelihoods among foreign nationals when their properties and businesses are looted and burned by locals during xenophobic attacks.

Due to the prejudice and xenophobia, immigrants, including refugees, have been forced to live in urban areas, where they are confronted with more expensive living conditions than in rural areas (Philip, 2010; Crush, et al, 2015). Refugees hosted in countries with social integration policies, such as Australia and Uganda, have access to income-generating activities such as agriculture and the food service value chain (Nutz, 2017; Harris, et al, 2014; Jinnah, 2013). Although South Africa technically offers similar economic opportunities, the reality remains hostile because of poverty, unemployment and connected prejudice against immigrants. This situation would not only frustrate the ideals of social integration for Congolese refugees but can also complicate their ability to access food in a market economy.

In addition to this, the cultural identity source of self-marginalisation and other problems of access related to the availability and affordability of food, particularly the type of food Congolese used to consume in their home country as informed by their original cultural environments, may not necessarily favour them on the market in Durban. This includes traditional and cultural food such as Cassava leaves, Yam, sweet potatoes, smoked and dried fish, rice with a good aroma while being cooked, etc. (Lakika, 2011; Naidu & Nzuza, 2014). This raises the question of market inefficiencies against host or home food access and how refugees, in particular, adopt or resist food regime change in their host countries within the market perspective.

Despite their poverty, the little attention to food insecurity experienced by immigrants in cities of the global south shows that most of the migrant households use various strategies, including receiving food transfers, obtaining food from informal markets, and other informal methods (Pendleton, et al, 2014; Sithole, et al, 2022). These issues remain undocumented in the context of refugees in South Africa. This study will contribute to the scholarship by investigating the opportunities and constraints navigated by Congolese refugees in their struggle for food access in the South African city of Durban.

1.3 Motivation for the Study

Discussions made by a group of foreigners about their life conditions in Durban catalysed the researcher to research this area. Some would have described themselves as economic migrants, while others might have done so as refugees. The discussions got more intriguing as everyone described how, before 2008, it was not socially challenging to identify people who were foreigners or South Africans to have access to basic needs. After the 2008, 2015, and early 2019 outbreaks of xenophobia, the situation started steadily deteriorating, and as a result, they could no longer live healthy lives in South Africa. The researcher assumed from the chats that these Congolese people in Durban were exaggerating.

The research findings from Amissi (2006, 2011) in Durban provided similar evidence on the socioe-conomic conditions of immigrants in general and Congolese migrants in particular in South Africa. Despite the influx of refugees into this province, little research has been done on refugees' food access. Moreover, being part of the community under study and having lived within for seven years helped me gain knowledge of the Congolese community in Durban.

Furthermore, the incentive statement by Mughal (2015) and Munthali (2011) stresses that conducting fieldwork in one's community is an asset by which the student becomes a professional Anthropologist. Mughal (2015) advances that fieldwork at home is advantageous because there is freedom, and according to van Ginkel (1998), there is easy access to one's community. Buzard (1997) emphasised that "*we must start by knowing ourselves first and only proceed to the more foreign, primitive or other societies*".

Thus, being part of the community under-study guarantees the researcher the chance to collect information as he will not face language barriers or unpleasant attitudes. Since the researcher belongs to the study community, his identity within is expected to influence the proposal's development strongly. Although the researcher is part of the community under study, the danger of bias linked to this subject is not excluded. Thus, possible measures will be taken to avoid the appearance, and the report will include no undocumented information.

1.4 Research Problems and Objectives: Key Questions Asked

The effects of market exclusion through various aspects in South Africa on refugee migrants are vital social science issues as they contribute to the individual inability to access food. It is therefore critical to investigate how the Congolese refugees in Durban have access to food in an exclusive marketplace nature and food regime change. The limited literature on this subject mainly focuses on social exclusion and livelihood strategies (Nutz, 2017; Amissi, 2006, 2011). Others have investigated factors seeking to improve food security among people from refugee backgrounds resettled in high-income countries and the risks they are exposed to (Gingell, et al, 2022; Maharaj, et al, 2017).

This literature has also focused mainly on the health implications of the food they consume rather than determining the pattern influencing their consumption. Refugees being exposed to market lived experiences, the literature has overlooked the access to food among refugees in Durban and the influence of cultural identity, another lever in renegotiating access to food of choices. Thus, this universe of knowledge has very limited information in South Africa. Given the increasing rate of refugees in South Africa, investigating food access among refugees remains an important research area in anthropology, especially within the under-researched populations like Congolese refugees in Durban.

The following questions were asked to attain the overall objective:

- How adequately do Congolese refugees have access to food in Durban?
- Where do they get access to food in Durban?
- What kind of food do they eat?

- What are the factors influencing Congolese refugees to access food in Durban?
- What coping mechanisms have Congolese refugees implemented in tandem with the current system for procuring food?

1.5 Research Problems and Objectives: Broader Issues Investigated

Being a refugee itself is a relevant factor of vulnerability. The individual or household sees its whole life affected by the refugee circumstance. These life circumstances can intersect and lead to entrenchment and exacerbate risks of inaccessibility to the households' basic needs. This includes the household's ability to cope with the external forces that display double standards according to the refugee host context. On one side, refugees feel marginalised because of the many elements of disparities with the new system, such as food regime changes but also eligibility towards economic opportunities on the ground.

So, refugee households being exposed to the market approach have to undergo these challenges related to food access. Such food access informs about several challenges and changes for Congolese refugee households. This includes erosion in what many Congolese refugee households would regard as cultural identity impacting food adequacy. Even though the refugee's socio-economic situation may be deplorable to such extent, a living poverty rate of change in the food regime is not easily acceptable due to their cultural understanding, especially since culture shapes the context in which food is accessed (Naidu & Nzuza, 2014).

In addition to the influence of cultural identity, this study brought on board the barriers and challenges these refugees face in trying to access the market for the food supply. The specific questions to be answered in this study concerned an explanation of food-seeking behaviours and accessibility to available market service deliveries. The current study also examined the reasons for food accessibility and inaccessibility in the marketplace and what alternatives were available. The study seeks to achieve four specific objectives:

- To provide ideas on how adequately Congolese refugees can access food in Durban, examining the food opportunities offered.
- To identify the kind of food the Congolese Refugees choose to eat. At this stage, emphasise how well-liked and satisfied the Congolese migrants are with their food choices.

- To address the way Congolese refugees access food. This point includes the procurement sources of food.
- To understand the Congolese refugees' challenges to afford food. This point offers aspects of financial capacity as a crucial component of the market-based strategy for ensuring food access and refugees' perceptions and attitudes to food.
- To explore potential alternatives and create culturally responsive approaches that facilitate the complexity of the Congolese refugees' access to food in the Durban marketplace. This means the Congolese refugees have access to systems that work with the current food distribution system.

1.6. Theoretical framework

1.6.1 Introduction

A theoretical framework is a basic review of existing theories that acts as a guide to support the arguments in this study (Vinz, 2022). It was under the researcher's prerogative to explain how the current study was relevant and grounded in appropriate established theories by drawing connections and making predictions. Thus, the following social science theories served as the foundation of this endeavour:

1.6.2 The Market theory to Food Access

The benefits of the market system were first properly expressed by Adam Smith, a philosopher. Smith argued in The Wealth of Nations (1776) cited in Smith (2019) that commerce was a more effective way to achieve self-sufficiency. Through commerce, individuals can specialize in their work and take use of a vast array of commodities and services. This theory allows for analysing the market limitations considering food demand and supply factors. The market approach has several complex limitations. Firstly, it requires income; if an individual do not have money, he cannot buy anything.

Even though he may have money, factors like food acceptability, accessibility to stores, consistent food availability, and transportation can still be a barrier, particularly for low-income groups like refugees. The demand factors that may determine food access include income, consumer behaviour, preference, knowledge (e.g. of the nutritional value of some food items), culture,

transport, etc. In this context, the market approach suggests that multiple perspectives of reality motivate individuals to access particular food in the marketplace. This not only considers the financial issues that facilitate exchanges but also consumers' perceptions and social behaviour inherent in their cultural values and backgrounds.

Scholars (Maxwell, 2010; Skinner, 2012; Laszlo, 2008) believe that cultural values and motives may only be substantially comprehended within an ethnographic research perspective, which takes its roots in anthropology. The supply factors include price, type of food, type of supplier (e.g. large stores may offer cheaper food), geographic location (higher costs of developing stores in underserved areas), etc. (USDA, 2009). Scholars such as (Butti, et al, 2018; Wilson, 1992; LeDoux & Vojnovic, 2021) are congruent with (USDA 2009) that refer to the realities of the city's living conditions, not everyone can secure its means of food production until a network of producers emerge at the crossroad or market approach at which point everyone is regarded as to be able to acquire food commodities in exchange for a price.

In relation to this, neither the government nor charity institutions can constantly sustain this approach to address food access of its most vulnerable consumers (which is the aim of this study). Rather, these institutions intervene in the case of shocks or natural disasters for food distribution or provide a legal framework that facilitates the smooth running of activities without direct interference between supply and demand (Clapp & Moseley, 2020; Mirindi, 2019).

One of the reasons these institutions may not be sustained is that the market is where consumers from all different dietary backgrounds fill in the gaps in various food consumption components (Usman & Callo-Concha, 2021). Then, this requires consumers to rely on market purchases to improve their household food diversity consumption (Usman & Callo-Concha, 2021; Kirsten, 2012; Brown, et al, 2020). In urban areas, access to the food market is a mechanism. Beyond food availability, market access involves enough income (dynamic), cultural motivation, and individual knowledge and all of these need to be considered prior to consumers purchases (Carter,2023; Smith & Morton, 2009; Stokes-Walters, et al, 2021; Chakona & Shackleton 2017).

South African food consumers are concerned with these factors prior to purchases. Joassart-Marcelli, et al. (2017) support Carter’s (2023) arguments when analysing ethnic markets that cultural suitability to food access is critical, especially when dealing with a group of people. Beyond cultural suitability, other factors, such as income, can affect people’s entitlement to purchase various wholesome foods.
A general breadwinner in South Africa is entitled to a national minimum wage of R3710 after 20 working days in order to sustain their household members (National Treasury, 2023; STATS SA, 2023; South African Reserve Bank, 2023; SASSA, 2023). In light of this financial constraint, the market approach's practical application is that low-income households find it difficult to pay for a basic, healthful food basket, which is projected to cost R3388 per month for a household with less than five members. Less than R1430 of the money left over after paying for accommodation, transportation, and electricity is used to buy food (STATS SA, 2023).

This is incongruent with Sen (1981) on food entitlement that involves an assemblage of all commodity bundles over which a person can exercise dominion, including traditional rights such as access to common resources. Given the legal, political, economic, and social structures of the community where a person or group reside, food entitlements can sometimes be compromised against food security (Sen, 1981; World Food Summit, 1996). This suggests that the market approach to food access theory alone may not comprehensively analyse food access. This study employed the capability approach to food access to supplement the market theory.

1.6.3 The Capability theory to Food Access

This theory was introduced nearly three decades ago in the book Hunger and Public Action by Sen & Drèze (1999). This theory entails three basic points related to food access. (1) analysis of food entitlements, (2) analysis of nutritional capabilities, and (3) analysis of the capability to secure food. It may, therefore, go beyond economic, entitlement, and livelihood paradigms to find the fundamental causes of food inaccessibility in a market context. Food insecurity can be the result of a lack of fundamental capacities such as education, health, or other aspects of people’s well-being. As a result, the study may be placed within the larger context of welfare and development.

The Capability Approach draws from and supplements Sen's entitlement approach, which focuses on command over commodities to analyse food security issues (Burchi & De Muro, 2016). The theory is premised on the idea that food availability on the market does not necessarily ensure access to it (Gombert ,et al, 2017). According to Gombert, et al. (2017), the question is not whether food is available but accessible.

However, food access also depends on whether the people who need it can access the food (Ibid). Such capabilities, according to Sen (Cited by Gombert, et al, 2017), depend on both personal and social circumstances (variations and instabilities), which may limit food security, as they influence "*relations between resources and wellbeing*". For example, Gombert, et al. (2017) indicate that vulnerable and poor people impacted by their financial situation and other related factors may find it "*difficult to utilise their psycho-social capabilities to access healthy foods*". This is because vulnerability and poverty may limit people's agency and choice. In this context, people's choices may result from "*restricted agency because of discrimination or disadvantageous socio-economic positions*".

Hence, according to Sen & Dreze (1999), "*a more reasoned goal would be to make it possible to have the capability to avoid undernourishment and escape deprivations associated with hunger*". The analysis of food access within the capability approach framework will help unpack the market constraints, particularly on the demand side, to food access in the context of Congolese refugees in South Africa. This analysis is underpinned by the assumption that food access rather than availability in the market is the problem. Access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food is contingent on the socioe-conomic condition of households, which determines whether they can purchase food from the market, especially when other food sources, such as own production, food donations, transfers or grants, and/or collecting wild foods are not viable options (Chakona & Shackleton 2017).

Food acquisition is typically market-oriented in urban areas -where purchasing power is required. Purchasing power means individuals dispose of the ability to buy food of choice that is being sold over the marketplaces or supermarkets. Thus, studies further distinguished the low-income and non-buyers of local foods, given their capabilities to procure food from the market. Low-income

households face food access challenges that extend well beyond a lack of adequate income to purchase food. More interaction with Sen's Capabilities theory, as Rai & Smucker (2016). has done, could support household-focused studies in the food access literature.

Sen's (1982) definitions of 'Entitlement Sets' and 'Capabilities' are useful for addressing the household asset base and its effect on food access. As previously noted, these assessments of a household's productive and material asset base cannot be conflated with food security for a Capabilities approach to evaluate food access; instead, they are examined in terms of how they affect the household's ability to obtain food.

Sen argues that a household's primary goods (financial, material, and social assets) should be viewed as a list of core capabilities which, in the context of food access, translates to the means through which an individual can obtain food. This approach to household assets allows for a shift away from focusing on a household's income and resources and instead on its degree of capabilities, which focuses on how these assets are used to achieve wellness (in this case, food access). This will allow for a more comprehensive examination of household assets regarding food access and a deeper understanding of how these assets affect how the household accesses food through its food environment and, thus, its vulnerability to food insecurity.

Sen (1982); Renzaho & Mello (2010) debate several barriers directly linked to the individual's ability to access food, such as biological utilisation, cultural and financial implications, food knowledge and food preference. Godrich, et al. (2017), Gibson (2012) & Rose (2010) denote that the barriers to food go beyond individual ability and incumbent external factors such as availability of food, stability, social support, financial resources, transport to food outlets, distance to food outlets and mobility.

Further, Matemilola (2017) identified other barriers when visiting underrepresented populations in farmer's markets, such as the inability to find desired or identifiable local foods, food prices, etc. Lack of product choices and limited access make local food more difficult for consumers to find satisfactory. As noted by (Dunne, et al, 2011), limited access to local food is driven by the

price. In this context, demographics are an important social support factor for food access in the low-income population.

Its justification is based on its capabilities to raise income to overcome the issue of price-based food access in middle and low-income populations, contrary to high-income consumers who are more likely to purchase diversified local food. Steptoe, et al. (1995) and Darmon & Drewnowski (2015) agree that income and price directly correlate to food acquisition, while gender and education have no negligible impact on food purchase.

In addition to economic and demographic variables, consumer behaviour influences purchasing goods. People with education perceive local food as healthier than imported, constituting their sine qua non-condition to local purchasing. It is also important to consider a person's aversion or attitude to a new food, as this has been measured through the computation of a food neophobia score (Verbeke, 2015; Choe & Cho, 2011). Proper attribution has not yet been determined, considering the food emergencies in Africa since the 1980s.

However, Sen (1981) acknowledged that the cause may be the fragmentation of families' qualifications for food access rather than the general availability. Sen (1981) refers to household qualifications for food access as "*a collection of diverse discretionary product bundles that the household can purchase through the various legitimate procurement channels available to the household in his position*" (Sen, 1987:2). This is referred to food entitlement of a household or to an individual (unique heap of proprietorship) free will to partake into the different groups of food without hindrance (Bishokarma & Amir, 2014; Sen, 1987).

It is interesting to look at entitlements related to food access in the context of migration and how families approach food from different sources, such as the right to produce their food either through gatherings of wild food varieties or the way families turn them into financial power through small-scale local supported trading (Bishokarma & Amir, 2014; Cooke, 2012). Additionally, Sen's (1987) perspective on food access for individuals or households calls upon understanding its capabilities. Wells (2012), congruent with Sen (1987), states that the ability to overcome factors adversely associated with one's food entitlements is referred to as one's capacity. This is why the

metrics to gauge access to food are complex (Unterhalter, 2007; Coke, 2012). Understanding that a family's ability to obtain food determines their ability to access food is deemed an acknowledgement of the role of the family's explicit characteristics.

Thus, the realities of the spatial food economy play a critical role in determining the household's ability to access. In South Africa, Chakona & Shackleton (2017) emphasise that food security depends more on household income to purchase food than food production or donation. The requirement of income as a prerequisite for food access can be a problem in the context of refugees living in South Africa. In South Africa, urbanisation and rising food prices have increased food insecurity, hunger and malnutrition, particularly in vulnerable and poor households (Chakona & Shackleton, 2017), including refugees whose vulnerability is defined by economic hardship due to discrimination, amongst other reasons (Amisi, 2006).

This study aimed to look into household assets related to food access. Those assets are used to gain access to food choices, whether in the formal, informal, or social food economies, by identifying which assets are essential in gaining access to food through these economies. This necessitates understanding how these assets are used to access food or how refugee households communicate with their food environment to gain access to food choices based on their assets.

1.6.4 Social Identity Theory

Tajfel & Turner (1978–1979), referenced in Mcleod (2023), developed the social identity theory in social psychology. Social identity is the perception of an individual based on their affiliations with particular groups (Mcleod, 2023).This study investigated the social relation between food that pushes Congolese refugees to perceive themselves as members of the Congolese nation and how this shared interest is a challenge, or an alternative means to food access in a Durban multi-cultural market context. Rabikowska (2010), cited in Misztal (2015), depicts that identity is always in progress, while its repetitiveness and collective performance ensure its ontological fixity.

This collective performance excludes individualism as identity is the reason for being of a group membership. Belonging to a particular group enables individuals collectively to share cultural food and thus maintain their identities. Bahugra (2004), cited in Nzuza (2012), argues that components

of cultural identity include religion, rites of passage, language, dietary habits and leisure activities. For McLeod (2019), it is crucial to remember that in-groups are groups you identify with, and out-groups are ones you do not identify with and may discriminate against. This theory will allow this study to probe whether Congolese refugees culturally marginalise themselves towards foreign foods and use group memberships as a source of bonds with home to access food that the local market does not offer them.

1.7 Structure of Dissertation

Chapter One:
In the study's introduction, food's socioe-conomic and cultural aspects are examined in relation to how the individuals under investigation obtain food in the city of Durban. This chapter also provides the main questions that guided the investigation and the research objectives. The theoretical framework is also discussed, focusing on the market approach to food access, capability approach and social identity theories.

Chapter Two:
The study population provides a detailed sociocultural, political and economic background of the subjects in the study.

Chapter Three:
The literature review shows gaps in the literature about the groups of people under study by reviewing the current survey of academic sources on food access among refugees in the international, regional and South African contexts.

Chapter Four:
This chapter discusses the methodological approaches which were employed for this study. It discusses the different qualitative tools used to gather rich qualitative data on how Congolese refugees in Durban renegotiate their food access as part of the market forces. Furthermore, it provides an overview of the sampling techniques, challenges of this study, and ethical issues, including informed consent, anonymity, and confidentiality.

Chapter Five:

Finding – Refugees have adequate food access: This chapter provides information about the informants' inadequate access to food, the capacity of their households to acquire information, and their notable food sourcing.

Chapter Six:

Finding – Congolese refugees' food choices: This section covers the informants' food choices, their perceptions about their choices, and the influence of household income on food choices.

Chapter Seven:

Finding – Food access constraints: This chapter provides the challenges the informants considered important barriers to food access.

Chapter Eight:

Finding – Refugees' coping strategies to food access constraints: This chapter provides different alternatives as coping strategies parallel to the existing system of acquiring food choices.

Chapter Nine:

This chapter provides the conclusion and makes suggestions.

CHAPTER TWO: STUDY POPULATION

2.1. Introduction

Regarding this study, the subject under research is Congolese people who were forced (refugees) to cross international borders to find safety in South Africa, fear of being persecuted (UNHCR, 2015; Lister, 2013; Eldredge, et al, 2014; Banerjee & Chaudhury, 2010). This chapter examines the economic and social circumstances of these Congolese refugees in Durban while considering their migration history to South Africa. An essential component of this study is the Congolese migration to South Africa since it sheds light on the variables that drove their movement to this country. Additionally, it is crucial to understand how refugees make a living in their host nation, particularly in terms of its social and economic facets. The social component emphasizes the various interactions that can occasionally be used as a resource to create cash, as well as other significant cultural resources that aid in adjusting to the new living circumstances.

2.2. Historical Background of Congolese (DRC) Refugees in South Africa

Following its commitment to the 1951 UN Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees, the South African government has protected refugees from the DRC and other people needing it (International IDEA, 2018; Amisi, 2006). Two factors appear to pull Congolese refugees from migrating to South Africa. First, the non-encampment strategy advocated by the 1998 Refugees Act contradicts other African countries' Refugees Act. This South African Refugee Act governs the treatment of refugees and asylum seekers and encourages the exercise of civil rights such as freedom of movement and the right to employment (International IDEA, 2018).

The second reason Congolese seek refuge in South Africa is due to the country's economic standing on the continent of Africa and how it is depicted in the mass media (Rukema & Khan, 2013; Dunia, 2014). South Africa is regarded as a place with a strong economy and a fully developed form of democracy. Despite South Africa's image as having high crime rate and low lenience for foreigners, Congolese people find the South African economy and its democracy worthy for the good of its citizens (Rukema & Khan, 2013; Amisi, 2006). This predilection is following three historical facets of social, economic, and human insecurity in the DRC (Dunia, 2019; Vircoulon, 2010; Matti, 2010; World Bank Group, 2018; Adetoba, et al, 2014; Lee, et al, 2019).

The political aspect demonstrates that Congolese people have been moving to South Africa daily since the outbreak of wars, rebellions, inter-ethnic conflicts, massive human rights violations, and social and political instability in the 1990s (International IDEA, 2018; Amisi,2006; Inaka, 2014; Gill, et al, 2016; Peter, 2013; Global Peace Index GPI, 2023). The number of Congolese refugees in South Africa is estimated to be over a hundred thousand people (Global Peace Index GPI, 2023). The dire economic facet that the Congolese refugees find in their country of origin causes their migration flows to seek safety in neighboring countries, including South Africa (Valavanidis, 2023; Adésínà, 2009).

In the DRC, unemployment is above 80%, and many Congolese are forced to leave their country in quest of better economic prospects (Global Peace Index GPI, 2023; Valavanidis, 2023; Adésínà, 2009; Okarah, et al, 2016; Kikasu, 2017). This high unemployment is due to a lack of infrastructure and the government's inability to foster an environment that promotes growth and production. The social facet unveils that, like other migrants, the desire to establish a new life for themselves and the family they leave behind drives Congolese refugees to move to South Africa. They anticipated support from the South African authorities when they arrived in the country (Inaka, 2014). Aside from that, they are "expected to be housed and cared for by the UN High Commission for Refugees" (UNCHR). This, however, turned out to be false, as evidenced by a study on Congolese refugees (Amisi, 2006).

2.3. Economic and Social Conditions of Congolese Refugees from DRC in Durban

This section looks at how Congolese migrants in Durban make a living. Their distinct livelihood methods are studied through the prism of Durban's economic and social circumstances. Amisi's (2006) research on the economic and social circumstances of Congolese refugees suggests that the community of Congolese refugees in Durban continues to be weak and vulnerable. These circumstances result from their inability to access formal employment, social protection, trading licenses, and proper access to trading venues in the informal economy where they are active (Amisi, 2006; Nutz, 2017). Refugees are forced to rely heavily on kinship and networks grounded on Congolese identities to survive, a powerful supportive weapon for those who share the same

identities with them to mitigate the exclusiveness of the formal local economy (Amisi, 2006; Rukema & Khan, 2013).

2.3.1. Economic Condition of Congolese Migrants in Durban

Economic circumstances are frequently linked, as they are in every human civilization, to one's ability to support oneself or one's home through a source of revenue. When it comes to migration, the presence or absence of economic opportunity may impact how a migrating individual or community adapts to the unfamiliar and shifting environment. In the case of Congolese refugees in Durban, they seem to require social and economic support. According to scholars, many distinct economic survival strategies are developed by migrants and refugees from the DRC who go to South Africa, especially those who reside in Durban (Amisi, 2006. Amisi, et al, 2011; Dunia, 2014).

As a means of survival, many refugees are observed working hard in several informal industries. This covers jobs like food delivery, automobile and security guards, street vendors, hairdressers, and auto maintenance (Amisi, 2006; Rukema & Khan, 2013). Most of these operations are concentrated in the Durban CBD (Central Business District), where they are tenants in large numbers. Most Congolese refugees had formal education when they left their native country, which is significant. This was confirmed during interviews, and since they have been in Durban, most have never gone to school other than for practical skills and self-learning. Some immigrants with advanced degrees in various professions could find official employment, and some became successful business people with a track record.

Nevertheless, it is generally true that most Congolese migrants must deal with various difficulties, such as institutional and social marginalization, due to their economic activities in informal and formal domains of business (Amisi, 2006; Rukema & Khan, 2013). Many of these refugees who are informally employed are scapegoats for not allowing low-income South African counterparts to access scarce resources, which cost them restrictions to obtain vending permits from the local government. In some instances, to obtain such legal authorisation, they must do it through intermediaries that may involve corruption (Rukema & Khan, 2013).

Otherwise, harassment is also a common experience for undocumented Congolese refugees working in the informal sector. The thriving informal activities of these refugees are also made the scapegoat of numerous claims of immoral behaviour that put their livelihood activities at peril by law enforcement officials (Amisi, 2006; Rukema & Khan, 2013). These refugees from the Democratic Republic of the Congo may find it challenging to make a living since they are more vulnerable to abuse or false accusations that they are participants in illegal activities (Rukema, 2023).

These Congolese refugees have faced numerous hardships, including financial difficulty back home and through their voyage to South Africa, before even experiencing South African living circumstances (Rugunanan & Smit, 2011; Amisi, 2006). It can be incredibly difficult to withstand recurring economic hardship, resulting from additional strain on how South Africa responds to necessities like food access. While this has yet to be discussed later on, the interview outcomes evidenced that socioe-conomic opportunities remain the primary reasons why the majority of the low-income population may not acquire food choices.

As a result of the difficult economic situation, hundreds of refugees, including Congolese refugees living in South Africa, have voluntarily been repatriated to either their country of origin or to other nations as part of a joint endeavour by the Department of Home Affairs and United Nations Refugee Agency (Masson, 2022). It is critical to pay close attention to the economic circumstances these refugees face in Durban to understand the potential future effects on individuals or households. This necessitates a reassessment of the laws and practices that prevent migrants, and Congolese in particular, from realizing their full potential and healing from the trauma brought on by decades of war they had to endure.

2.3.2. Conditions of Congolese Refugees in Durban

When arriving in South Africa, Congolese refugees face various difficulties (related to social identity). These difficulties begin as the country's linguistic landscape shifts from Swahili, French, and Lingala, which is most often spoken in the DRC (Lyana & Manimbulu, 2014; Mufwaya & Muchuru, 2016; BBC World Service Trust, 2010), to English and isiZulu, which is most

commonly spoken in South Africa. In contrast to the DRC, where basic daily activities like employment opportunities, eating habits, and food identity follow linguistic patterns, this new linguistic environment also introduces a new value structure (Kirkland, et al, 2022; Amisi, 2006).

As a result, they find it challenging to integrate effectively and rapidly. In addition to making, it difficult for them to integrate, language barriers can also affect their ability to find work and decide what to eat (as well as other aspects of their lives, such as their capacity to manage their finances). Informants admitted during the interview section of the study that their first action after arriving in Durban was to enrol in free English and IsiZulu classes at Cathedral or Diakonia refugee receiving centre. The main purpose of this programme is to help foreigners who are illiterate in the language of the country they are visiting so that it can facilitate their cultural acclimation to this new setting (Nutz, 2017).

Additionally, mentioned as obstacles to Congolese refugees' socio-economic acclimation are xenophobic views and actions toward foreign-born nationals. Xenophobic violence outbreaks seem to occur more frequently in townships where immigrants can afford the rent due to their financial status (Amisi, 2006; Amisi & Ballard, 2005; Amisi, et al, 2011). Due to xenophobic sentiments, people are compelled to relocate to cities with very expensive and unaffordable living conditions, which may add to the stress and strain of already challenging living situations (Amisi, 2006; Amisi & Ballard, 2005; Amisi, et al, 2011). Furthermore, a study of migrants and refugees from the DRC in South Africa, particularly in Durban, shows a high level of camaraderie among them (Amisi, 2006; Amisi, et al, 2011).

Those who have a chance to friends or relatives find themselves rapidly incorporated into South African society because they may be more likely to be directed where to go for jobs or access food that is culturally responsive to their needs. Those who cannot find relatives are in disarray, and it takes time to come out to something more sustainable if queries are not addressed to social networks among Congolese refugees. Most newcomers of this kind who arrived in South Africa sought housing with other Congolese migrants and refugees who came during earlier waves of migration. Nevertheless, individuals with an ethnic group or other close identities would be more receptive and quickly assimilated (Zihalirwa, 2017).

In the absence of kinship for immediate assistance and job search for survival, they must rely on humanitarian aid opened by kind-hearted people, religious institutions and other organisations. This was also made clear in the interviews when most informants indicated their gratitude for assistance from Diakonia. However, the transitional assistance can account for two months, including food and accommodation fees. Beyond big organisations such as Diakonia, Durban's Congolese refugees are organised into various associations for mutual support.

People form associations for mutual support from the same area or ethnic group (Amisi, 2006; Zihalirwa, 2017). The association requires members of a certain ethnic group to make contributions that will help other association members when necessary. The donations also aid in integrating newcomers and helping them locate employment and housing for a short time. Social networks among Congolese refugees extend beyond those who live in the same South African cities or provinces; they also touch worldwide corners (Amisi, 2006).

The purpose of social networks is not only to connect people in times of reinstallation and notify them of economic opportunities but also to give them information about potential home food sources in Durban. During their network meetings, such as churches or Tchinyabuguma gatherings, Congolese refugees can eat back-home food, a possibility to know where the actual food is sold and other home foods (Zihalirwa, 2017). Congolese refugees can enjoy cuisine from their homeland during network events like churches or Tchinyabuguma gatherings.

They also can learn about the whereabouts of the actual food stores. In their investigation of Congolese refugees in the US, Kirkland et al. (2022) findings further highlight the significance of social networks for refugees. Their study demonstrates the "sense of community" social networks foster through food. Different research among Congolese and Burundian refugees and asylum seekers, as well as Sierra-Leonian migrants in Durban, demonstrate the critical role that refugee and migrants' associations and social networks play in supporting members and restoring community cohesion through food support (Napier, et al, 2018; Nzuza, 2012). Social networks help people overcome social isolation in the host nation and adapt to economic and social challenges.

The researcher, congruent with Naidu & Nzuza (2013), concurs that social networks among Congolese refugees in Durban serve as a means of helping them establish themselves in South Africa and develop strategies for adjusting and adapting to the environment. In conclusion, there are numerous reasons to think that social networks are important and that Congolese refugees need to forge stronger social bonds to overcome their social and economic obstacles to access food of choice.

2.4. Conclusion

There are many different root causes and initiating factors for migration inside Africa and beyond. The primary driving forces behind the migration of Congolese refugees to South Africa in general and to Durban in particular were primarily economic and political instability brought on by long-running war in their home country. As a result, South Africa was seen by These refugees from the DRC as a place of safety where they might increase their chances of success and those of their families. Prior to coming to South Africa, these refugees thought life would be better with more socio-economic opportunities.

In contrast, life in the country was challenging and miserable for others. The locals, notably the Black South African community, have exhibited xenophobic sentiments, which has presented them with a lot of difficulties. The government offers them little assistance, immigrant documents, that allows them the right to stay in the country. Furthermore, it has been noted by numerous experts in this field that those Congolese refugees in Durban have had to create strong support systems due to the challenges of leaving their country of origin and the conditions present in South Africa. They have also been forced to create survival strategies and develop social networks that allow fair access to fundamental human needs, including food.

CHAPTER THREE: LITERATURE REVIEW

3.1 Introduction

This literature review section analyses and discusses scholarly publications on food access among refugees using a market approach. Insufficient food access is a problem many immigrants face as they acclimate to their new lives following resettlement, according to the literature. This challenge has been seen to be socially, culturally and economically related, and the latter is dynamic since individuals such as displaced people experience diverse realities along the way to the resettlement zone. Thus, this chapter is divided into two main parts. Part one focuses on literature on migration, and part two on existing literature on food and food access.

The literature provides important insight into migration trends and why people (refugees) choose South Africa. The second part focuses on existing food and food access literature and provides insight into refugees 'global experience with food access and the South African economy. This is important to acknowledge since anthropology is concerned with refugees and their resilience mechanisms in returning to normal life as they always carry their identities and preferences in addition to their lack of means of production. These factors conflict with market approach conditions (supply and demand) to food access. The literature provides little information in the case of refugees in this regard.

3.2 Part I: Understanding Migration

Human beings have always travelled and continue to do so for many reasons (Li & Bray, 2007). Razy & Rodet (2016) and Salazar & Schiller (2016) distinguished three important concepts: migration, circulation, and mobility. Razy & Rodet (2016) argue that the commonly recognised definition of migration, as it appears to be interpreted by many people, is beyond or broader than that of mobility. The latter effectively eliminates the potential of times of immobility or standstill along a migratory pathway and is frequently related to the concept of social mobility (Razy & Rodet, 2016:2).

It also leads to a scientific examination of migration's success or failure and whether it is emancipating or alienating, both of which are extremely subjective and often crucial elements (De

Genova, 2016; Razy & Rodet, 2016). The term circulation refers to a type of migration that involves multiple movements and returns, and it cannot be used as a generic term because it does not include one-time, permanent movement (Monsutti, 2016; Chapman & Prothero, 1983; Razy & Rodet, 2016).

As a result, this study accepts and addresses the wide concept of migration. The latter enables us to characterise the various types of migration that frequently have fluid boundaries among societies involving human beings. In an African context, migration is defined as any social shift in inhabitants that occurs outside of the barrier, or boundaries, of a given community's space, whether temporary or permanent (De Genova, 2016; Razy & Rodet, 2016; Wilson & Donnan, 2016; Monsutti, 2016).

In addition, both seasonal and long-term migrations are ingrained. Migration is defined by Rugunanan & Smit (2011) and Duque-Paramo (2014) as the movement of people from one place to another inside their own country or across borders. Two ideas come from the geographical space requirement. People move from one province to another inside a country's borders for various reasons, the most common of which is work or business (Husakouskaya, 2016).

International migration, on the other hand, is expanding in breadth, complexity, and influence. People frequently relocate to a country other than their customary location for more than a year for various reasons (Fike & Androff, 2016). The reason for migration may be either voluntary or coerced. When Ulla (2016) examined migrant labour in East Southeast Asia, he attempted to shed light on why individuals migrate. He stressed the movement caused by development. All people who are economically deprived and opt to migrate for better prospects to earn a living and a better socio-economic environment are included in this category (Parkins, 2010). Some migrants can return home if they are not properly greeted or placed in a favourable environment in their host nations.

Despite the unfavourable consequences, some migrants prefer to remain in the host country for some time or indefinitely. This usually occurs when people compare their salaries in their home nation and the host country. Unintentional migration, which refers to abiotic and biotic forces that

move people out of their territorial boundaries, can also be planned (Faist, et al, 2011; Laczko & Aghazarm, 2009; Hollifield, et al, 2014). Conquest, occupation, labour recruitment, shared culture, language, colonialism, and conflict are all major biotic patterns in the international political economy. These factors have an important influence on the start of migration procedures (De Haas, 2010). According to the International Association for the Study of Forced Migration (IASFM), there are three types of forced migration. Conflict, natural or environmental calamities, and starvation are examples of these.

People seem to live in a rapidly changing world in which refugee movement is inevitable and presumably significantly impacts scholars such as Reuveny (2007), Devkota & Teijilingen (2010), and Ayata (2011) examined conflict-induced movement of people and acknowledged the increased statistics of armed conflict and its consequences in the world. The conflicts started emerging at the end of the Cold War (Ayres & Garthoff, 2000). National struggles within countries were and continue to promote the movement of people across borders. Adhikari (2012) argued that in the present day, international warfare is reinforcing the potential mobility of people around the world, such as migrants (refugees) flows.

As a result, many displaced persons are crossing international borders for safety (Goodwin-Gill & McAdam, 2007). The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) protected and supported 11 million refugees and asylum seekers in 2010 (Phillips, 2013). This number has increased by 5.8 million over the previous year (UNHCR, 2015). By the end of 2015, global forced migration had grown, with 65.3 million individuals seeking protection and 16.1 million refugees under the UNHCR mission (UNHCR, 2015, cited in Bazirak, 2017).

According to Ullah (2016), there are over one billion migrants globally, including 740 million internal migrants and 200 million international migrants. According to Ostrand (2015), 3.7 million Syrians have been displaced since the start of the armed war. In the DRC, the movement is characterised by forced migration (refugee movement) due to some push and pull factors. Among the push factors, the political wars, food insecurity, poverty, climate change and ethnic conflicts are the most prevalent and have forced many Congolese outside of their country (Dijkzeul & Wakenge, 2010; Autessere, 2012; Turner, 2007; Mukwege & Nangini, 2009). The tense political

crisis was observed during the 1996 war with the democratic struggle for the liberation of Congo and continues to this day (Mukwege & Nangini, 2009).

The political crisis of its history has given birth to several armed rebel groups, particularly in the eastern half of the DRC (Autessere, 2012; Turner, 2007; Mukwege & Nangini, 2009). The United Nations (2015), as quoted in Karlsrud (2015), investigated conflict-induced movement in the Democratic Republic of Congo and discovered that the government plays a crucial role in the genesis and maintenance of conflicts in the country. Van Hear, et al. (2018) congruent with the latter, the number of people seeking protection has climbed dramatically over the previous two decades (Van Hear, et al, 2018).

Besides push factors, there are several pull factors as well. This includes economic and education opportunities, social and political security, and advanced democracy (Van Hear, et al, 2018; Karlsrud, 2015). These pull factors represented an incentive desire for economic change status for some Congolese from the western DRC who are not directly affected by the rebels' movement resurgence (personal research). Others may travel in search of socio-economic prospects such as education, health care, etc.

Thus, many Congolese migrants and refugees are crossing borders intending to travel to any area of Africa via the proximity of borders or beyond the African continent. The Congolese migrants' concentration gradient flows in the southern direction of the Sub-Saharan African region, such as South Africa, Zambia, Angola, and Botswana, are fueled by economic stability. Landau & Segatti (2009) and Landau & Freemantle (2010), for example, describe some of the ultimate Congolese migrants' routes to South Africa (SA). They stated that some Congolese migrants travel by road, air, and sea despite the challenges related to paperwork and transportation modes. Those who travel by ship arrive in South Africa via Namibia and are more likely to settle in Cape Town, but those who arrive via Mozambique are more likely to settle in Durban (Landau & Segatti, 2009).

On the other hand, those taking the Harare route are more likely to travel to Johannesburg or Pretoria. These routes, particularly vehicle travel, carry a greater danger of death, particularly for migrants illegally crossing borders. The DRC's eastern sector is known for sending more

individuals outside the country (Dijkzeul & Wakenge, 2010). South-Kivu and North-Kivu international population migration is primarily due to the continuance of war (Dijkzeul & Wakenge, 2010; Autessere, 2012; Turner, 2007; Mukwege & Nangini, 2009).

Congolese are concerned about abiotic phenomena such as climate change and biotic concerns. It's also a point of contention how climate change is fuelling the refugee movement because it affects millions of people's migratory patterns worldwide (Bettini & Andersson, 2014; Compton, 2014). Scholars like Cavanaugh et al. (2014) have studied climate change and concluded that persistent ecological deterioration continues to result in significant migration flows. These widespread revolutions occur in developing nations, and Cavanaugh et al. (2014) predict that these waves of migrants could exceed migratory flows in the northern block. Adepoju (2010) discusses the European Union (EU) mechanism for reducing irregular migration and refugee waves in the EU region.

As a result, the EU and several Northern block members have inked an accord to tighten border controls. However, some southern bloc nations, such as South Africa, have seen an increase in migratory industries due to this (Carrete, 2013; Harnisch, 2017; Adepoju, 2010). Bakewell (2009) looked at the concept of South-South migration and concentrated on migrant mobility inside Africa, including refugee movement and economic migration. As a result, migration levels are linked to the host country's level of development (Ozden & Schiff, 2007).

The current study focuses on migration, specifically refugee migration into South Africa, it does not overlook or dismiss the importance of social constraints in tying and bonding people together when they are away from home. As a result, the following point tries to understand better the motivations that drive Congolese refugees to use remittances to stay in touch with their families back home. The latter aims to illuminate migration's social and cultural implications for migrants and their families who remain behind.

3.2.1 South Africa Towards Migration Flux

Migrants typically move from low-income or low-human-development countries to high-income countries. The aggregate movement of people travelling between south-south countries is just as

important as that of persons migrating between South-North countries (Bakewell, 2009). From this perspective, the African continent's southern portion, particularly South Africa, is a hub for huge international migration (Nyamnjoh, 2014; Gebre, et al, 2011). This could be attributed to the country's emerging economy and social safety net. According to Bakewell (2009), South Africa is the economic powerhouse of Sub-Saharan Africa, and it has become a key crossroads for migrants from across the continent and beyond. International migrants with diverse skills and cultural backgrounds significantly contribute to constructing and transforming their new urban spaces.

However, more challenges related to socio-economic rearrangement, such as cultural change and economic opportunities in South Africa, are inevitable for migrants, especially displaced people (Inaka, 2014). This group of migrants embarking on an unplanned journey found themselves in submissive life circumstances in which they had to respond to their needs. The study focuses on Congolese refugees from this perspective.

Most Congolese migrants in this study are documented refugees with valid identification. According to Bukassa (2010), the legal status of all migrants in South Africa does not necessarily shield them from discrimination in the labour market, particularly for those who have forcibly left their countries of origin. Employers restrict refugee job options; nonetheless, compared to the DRC, South Africa provides a more accommodating climate regarding opportunities to work and start a business for qualified people (Crea, et al, 2017).

Despite the fierce competition between South African citizens and migrants in the labour market, refugees are primarily more vulnerable regarding their ability to generate income (Crea, Loughry, O'Halloran & Flannery, 2017). Most refugees are employed in low-wage jobs such as restaurants, security, car guards, paid domestic workers, babysitters, and casual workers, and so are rare refugees working in public institutions such as Universities, Hospitals, etc. (Crea, et al, 2017). Women and gentlemen in the informal sector construct their income-generating operations by selling commodities from the DRC and other items inside the host community (Mupedziswa & Ntseane, 2013; Mungela, 2011; Zihalirwa, 2017) for economic reasons or who are politically

reliant. Some of these opportunities may be available in the DRC but are not adequately compensated or valued.

In this setting, migrants earn a living in South Africa while actively participating in social revitalisation through remittances. Bukasa (2010) proposes that for Congolese migrants, family and social ties are so important that they are willing to renounce their personal social and material status in the host country. African society's vision for households backs up Bukasa's view of encouraging and promoting girls and boys to migrate to greener pastures and better living conditions (Sumata, 2003).

The other factor is that African cities, as explained by Gondola (1999:30) cited in Peter (2010), affect the bodies of youths in various ways; namely, the cities produce youths in such a way that they delay their entry into the world of adulthood, which can be defined by either professional status on one hand or marital status on the other. Migrants who have already established themselves in the host community can stimulate others by sending remittances or convincing them to join the host society. It must not only be understood the Congolese migrants' desire to remit regardless of their limited financial capabilities but also cultural material exchange such as foodstuff from the DRC to South Africa under informal procedure. As a result, a foray into the field of food anthropology is required.

3.3 Part II: existing literature on food and food access

This section summarizes academic research on food access in the South African food economy and global insights into food access. In both contexts, the experiences of migrants, especially refugees, are examined.

3.3.1 Global Insights into Food Access

For this literature review, the variable of food access is explored within the broader perspective of urban food access based on theoretical and empirical evidence with a particular focus on the context of migration. In the last decade, studies on food security among migrants granted much attention to food availability and food utilisation, including dietary intake, Knowledge, cultural

practices, and health status implications on foreign nations migrating to the global north (Joassart-Marcelli, et al, 2017; Moffat, et al, 2017; Rondinelli, et al, 2011). Conversely, the global South has focused on the livelihood strategies and cultural inclination around food among migrants 'household low-income populations (Cooke, 2012; Nutz, 2017; Amisi, 2006; Naidu & Nzuza, 2014).

There has been an increase in recent years in literature focusing on food access rather than merely availability of food, the issue of food access among migrants has received little attention in the literature on food security (Wood, et al, 2021; Pereira, et al, 2010; Larsen, 2011; Cooke, 2012; Brell, et al, 2020; Harris, et al, 2014). The same line of research conducted by Maynard, et al. (2019) suggests a high-quality longitudinal and in-depth qualitative study to bring more clarity over the directionality of relationships between food insecurity by paying attention to problems that handicap food access among immigrants including economic instability and inequalities among other impediments.

Food access must be analyzed using the conventional food security conceptual framework model to critically explore the gap related to this study. This model brings significant discussion about what the critical challenges around food access could be and the appropriate ways for successfully investigating these problems, as a variety of criteria have to be used to assess food access in disadvantaged people (Cooke, 2012; Maynard, et al, 2019).

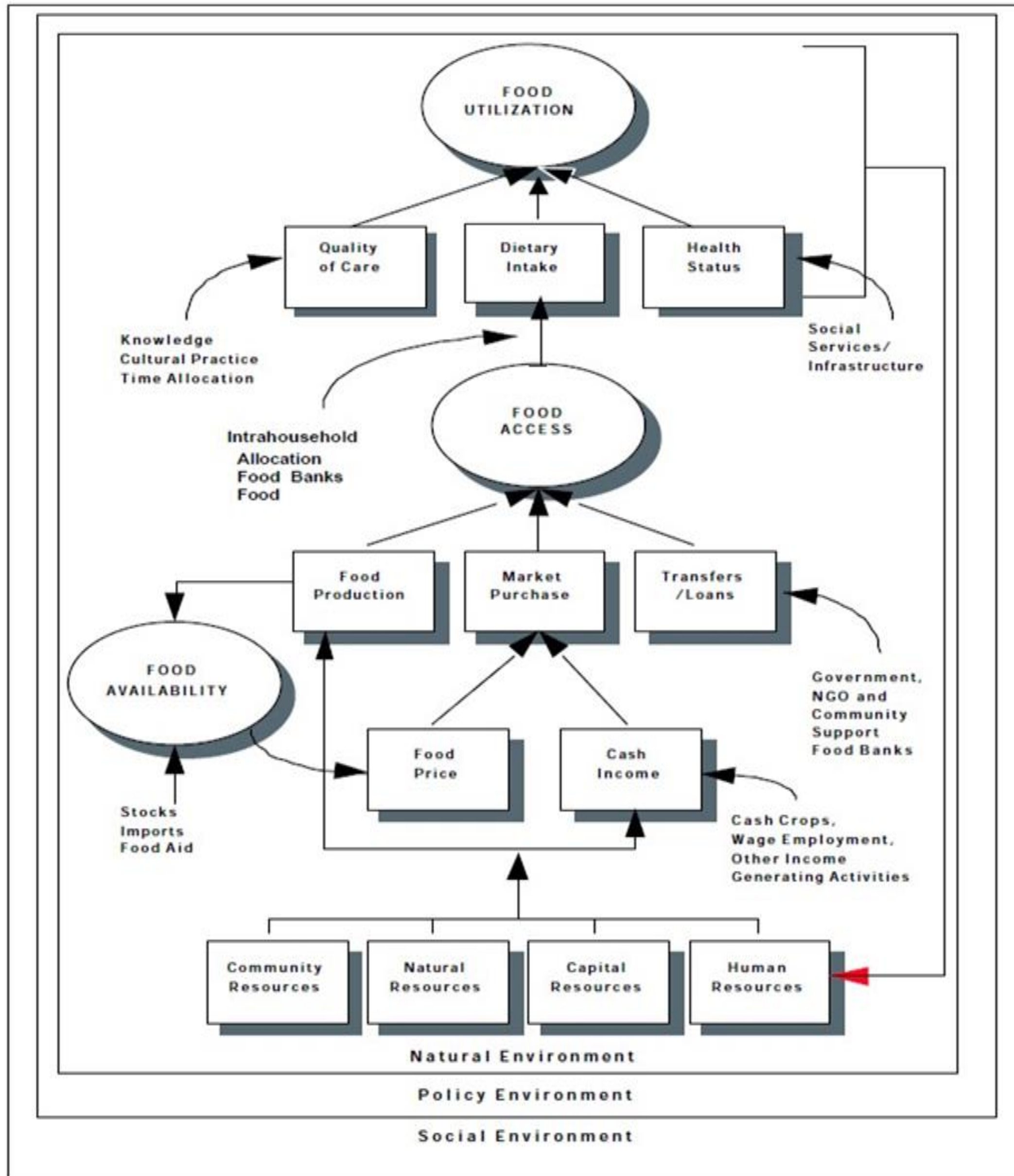

Figure 1. Food Security Conceptual Framework

3.3.1.1 Components of Food access faced by the Refugees: Profile of the global North- South

3.3.1.1.1 Definition

Pinstrup-Andersen (2009) indicates that access to food is widely described as having resources to acquire food. A Product is a food when it can be utilized by whoever values it, whether or not it is healthy food, and be able to obtain it in a socially acceptable manner (Bickel, et al, 2000). Other

scholars refer to food access to food entitlement which means a right of a person or household to acquire food either through market purchasing or food self-production (Gibson , 2012; Rose, 2010). Which means the ability of an individual or household to have food, either through market purchase or self-production (Gibson 2012; Rose, 2010). In other words, food access is described as "*the ability of a household to procure available food"* (von Braun, et al, 1999).

3.3.1.1.2 Food arena

Spatial studies on food access in the global north among migrants, especially low-income refugees, place a premium on the geographical aspects of the food system and the ability of households or individuals to access food physically (Pereira, et al, 2010; Larsen, 2011). Some academics were enthralled by concerns regarding food justice, education, and health problems in those low-income areas (Alkon, et al, 2020; Lahut, 2020; Meenar & Hoover, 2012). A similar study has been conducted on the spatial aspect of food access and has received much attention in the form of Food Deserts (Cooke, 2012). Food deserts are areas where certain people cannot obtain sufficient and affordable food, resulting in inequitable food access across communities (Choi & Suzuki, 2013; Breyer & Voss-Andreae, 2013).

Thus, urban food insecurity in the North is to blame for the unequal spatial distribution of various food retailers within the metropolitan area. The literature on the spatial aspect of food access progresses from early research focusing solely on proximity to studies considering all three factors (Chen & Clark, 2013; Chen, 2017; Cooke, 2012). Geographic analysis is used in most spatial food access studies to explain the spatial constraints of food access. Scholars assessed food accessibility in the food economy using three criteria: proximity, diversity and variety (Hollands, et al, 2019).

Proximity is the shortest distance between an individual and a grocery store, while the number and types of food stores in a given region are referred to as diversity. And variety, which evaluates the food variability and prices available in different grocery stores. For concentrates on vicinity and variety, ground-truthing and non-participatory perception are utilized to gather information. This is then strategized on a guide utilizing Geographic Data Framework techniques in a few examinations on consumer goods, and prices or agendas are utilized to gather data (Cooke, 2012). Larson, et al. (2009) have incorporated an investigation of all papers distributed inside the US

between 1985 and 2008, which manage issues of neighbourhood admittance to food stores or potentially the sorts of food items accessible in these food stores.

Most of the examination has been coordinated towards the spatial profiling of various shop types inside assigned territories (Verbeke, 2015; Larson, et al, 2009; Shannon, 2016). This affirms the intuitive idea that the occupants of neighbourhoods with better admittance to bigger food stores, which sell a more prominent variety of food, would generally have better weight control plans. These observations tracked that little autonomous stores, for example, corner shops, are exposed to their estimate's physical and monetary restrictions and accordingly have restricted variety inside their stock and more exorbitant costs.

These imperatives imply that the food sources that add to a solid and different eating regime are costlier and harder to get in more distraught areas (Kolak, et al, 2018). This has incorporated more itemized evaluations of the variety, quality and costs of food accessible in these retail outlets. All these together further uncover how lopsided characteristics in the metropolitan food economy impede low-pay buyers (Caesar & Crush, 2016; Hunter & Skinner, 2002; Amisi, 2006).

Various exploration papers have led to more definite in-store assessments of food varieties accessible, with explicit reference to the accessibility and moderation of quality food varieties. The focus has been on the cost and accessibility of quality food varieties in economically disadvantaged communities (Shannon, 2016; Larson, et al, 2009; Powell, et al, 2007). These considerations involve an observational aspect of the food store nutrition environment, achieved through a food store overview directed among a designated number of stores within a particular region (Cooke, 2012).

The analysis collects information on the availability and cost of a predetermined crate of items deemed adequate for a healthy diet. The spatial appropriation of the accessibility and moderateness of specific food types is depicted by geologically breaking down the after effects of the in-store overviews.

More recently, numerous investigations in refugee areas in North America have focused on the food access constraints imposed by the spatial concept of the food system. These factors are especially important when considering food access in low-pay networks, as they play a significant role in determining the availability of various food sources.

3.3.1.1.3 Food availability

This approach is the oldest and remains the most influential in food security. The main ideas of this approach come from Venetian thinker Giovanni Botero (1588) but popularized by Thomas Malthus (1789) and known as the Malthusian approach (Ceesay, et al, 2022). Its concern focuses on the (dis)equilibrium between population and food: to maintain this equilibrium, the food production growth rate of available food should not be lower than the population's growth rate (UNDP, 2012). According to FAO (2011), adequate quantities and food quality supplied through domestic production or imports, including food aid, are about to be made available to all population strains. In the context of the green economy, food availability is strongly linked to the availability and use of natural, human and financial resources, particularly the scarcity of natural resources.

Food availability describes the physical readiness of food supplies, which is "*predicated on well-functioning market infrastructures with adequate road and rail networks and ensuring adequate storage and processing technologies"* (Gibson 2012; Rose 2010). *"It also involves food promotion, quality, location of outlets and variety*" (Godrich et al.; Ibid, 2017). The possibility of growing one's food locally rather than importing is an asset (Eric, 2017). This alludes to the farmers' ability to make a decent living—to sell their products at various outlets without undue regulatory burden, including farm stands, on-farm retail, farmers markets, mobile markets, and community-supported agriculture. This applies to both traditional and urban farmers who may operate on small plots of land with low sales volume. Still, it also depends on the ability of small food retailers to make a reasonable profit selling reasonably priced healthy fresh food.

To this end, Bondemark (2020), in his study on the Swedish market, states that there are concerns about major retailers' market power and affordable food availability among certain Swedish population groups. Incomes thus influenced food distribution according to the socio-economic classes, which interplay between food availability and food market structure (Puddephatt, et al,

2020; Bondemark, 2020). This market structure establishes the connection between social class and food consumer behaviour variation in values, lifestyles and general consumption goals.

The latter is consistent with Weber's argument on food availability among social classes stratified according to their relations to the production and acquisition of foods and the principles of their consumption of goods (Kwon & Kwon, 2013). Food availability has become common sense as consumers are led by a sense of altruism to buy food available from their food producers' networks (Kumar, et a, 2021; De Bernardi, et al, 2020).

Referring to the stimuli-organism response (altruism), buying food in this context supports business growth rather than merely cravings. Altruism as the stimulus, support local producers, transparency, satisfaction with labelling, and desire for labelling as the consumers' internal state (organism), and purchase intentions and brand love as the response (Kumar, et al, 2021; De Bernardi, et al, 2020).

Food is a weapon of discrimination in other social contexts, especially in high-income populations where food cost is a demarcation point against disadvantaged communities. Shop outlets potential for organic foods in Europe and in other high-income countries are structured in a way that can attract immigrants with organic food habits by nature (Ashaduzzaman, et al, 2021; Badantade, et al, 2021). Food may be available but not accessible to some individuals. Food accessibility means poverty reduction: simply making food available is not enough because low-income households must also be able to purchase it.

In the mid-1990s, income, a link between poverty and food availability, was well-documented. Bower, et al. (2014) stated that income is not the only barrier to obtaining healthy food. When comparing US community households with similar poverty rates to respond to forces, the outcome was that poor black household's neighbourhoods have fewer supermarkets and more small grocery stores than their rich white counterparts (Sodergren, 2021; LeDoux & Vojnovic, 2021). Overflowing with junk-food options, these smaller establishments rarely offer the healthy whole-grain foods, dairy products, or fresh fruits and veggies that a supermarket would provide.

When it comes to having healthy food options, the poverty level of a neighbourhood certainly matters and even goes beyond poverty, and market structure matters (Bower, et al, 2014; Kolak, et al, 2018). The latter indicates that low-income households may have the financial ability to afford food; however, they find themselves in a food desert due to the lack of appropriate supermarkets. In Baltimore, for example, the city has created a system for food desert residents to order food online (Bower, et al, 2014). The role of social networks in this regard has led to more abundant healthy foods in all poor neighbourhoods.

Furthermore, community initiatives such as farmer's markets and mobile food vans have been seen as helpful in filling this gap in poor food access areas. Other efforts offered by high-income countries to provide food to poor communities rely on new distribution approaches. This depends primarily on food production and stocks in a closed economy, while food trade may also play a relevant role in an open economy. This was the international community's reference approach at the political and academic levels until the early 1970s.

This is well reflected in the concept of food security given at the World Food Conference of 1974: the Food Balance Sheet is the instrument used to determine food supply (FAO 2011). A food balance sheet offers a detailed picture of the trend, "*Availability of adequate world food supplies of basic foodstuffs at all times to sustain a steady increase in food consumption and to compensate for production and price fluctuations"* (Jati, 2014).

This approach has two policy consequences: the need to reduce the rate of population growth, namely the fertility rate, on the demand side through appropriate policies and a nation's food supply over a given reference period. For each food item, the food balance sheet indicates the availability of each primary product for human consumption, which correlates to the provenance of supply and its utilization. The total quantity of foodstuffs produced in a region, added to the total quantity of foodstuffs imported and adjusted for any change in stock that may have occurred since the beginning of the reference period, shall indicate the available supply during that period. Then, the per capita supply of any such food item available for human consumption is obtained by dividing the corresponding quantity by the relevant data on the population engaging in it. The per capita

food supply data is expressed in quantity and by applying relevant food composition factors for primary and secondary food supplies.

Sen (1999) critically reviews different approaches and policies aimed at reducing the rate of fertility pressure on food consumption factors. On the supply side is the need to boost (per capita) food production–namely agricultural production. For this purpose, the main policy generally prescribed and implemented is increasing agricultural productivity for food surpluses. Food availability means ensuring that sufficient food is available through its production. In Senian's world, access to food is not all about availability but complexity of components (Sen, 1981).

3.3.1.1.4 Food Stability

Discuss aspects like food preservation through diverse processes and the government held responsible for keeping food accessible to people or consumers all the time. Food stability considers the risk and vulnerability to food security due to economic shocks and natural and other shocks affecting households' income (Gibson 2012). Normally, those risks and vulnerability to food security are caused by effects outside of the economic model (Laborde, et al, 2020). The causes are conflicts from political instability or economic crises whose effects distress the agricultural sector in all its chain supply processes in developed and developing countries.

Thus, the vulnerability approach to food stability is that public institutions and economic operators are concerned about making food available at the community and household levels. According to Scaramozzino (2006), the vulnerability and management of risks affecting food stability is explicitly dynamic and provisional, which means it is not concerned with the current situation. It looks at their future incidence.

Furthermore, the experts also consider the uncertainties or worries about future food instability, the role of external shocks, and the strategies that households or public institutions may use to reduce the likelihood of negative outcomes (Scaramozzino, 2006). However, there is a need to raise concern about the actual outcomes of the vulnerability to food stability. Among them is the shelf-life of food products, which makes food much longer viable on the market till the next harvest season. The shelf-life also refers to the quality of the product and its viability, a key issue for

consumer safety as they can consume foods that they enjoy as often as they like (de Waal, et al, 2018; Whelan, et al, 2018).

In high-income countries, such as South Africa, food is massively manufactured or processed in the market and constantly delivered to consumers daily. This is well-organised based on a sophisticated refrigeration system, technical assistance, and support to store operators so they can run their businesses sustainably for long-term preservation of high quality. Food stability has also been proven to be beyond the technological aspect.

Empirical studies demonstrate that in developing nations, access to appropriate and sufficient food is unstable, indicating that whether a household or person is food secure at any point in time should be viewed in a dynamic manner (Capaldo, et al, 2010; Bazezew & Bewket, 2013). For instance, drought-prone areas in the Amhara Region of Ethiopia were pointed behind food insecurity outcomes (reduced seasonal food shortage), thus bringing vulnerability to food insecurity at the household level (Bazezew & Bewket, 2013).

According to Timmer (2014), food stability is incumbent on the government's responsibility for failures and successes in keeping accessible staple foods at stable prices at all consumption levels. Notably, in major urban markets where most consumers procure food, the issue of food stability is critical. Or, in a Malthusian view of food availability towards increased urbanisation, food fluctuates in all its dimensions as demand augments (Timmer, 2014). Low-income households suffer from poor food options compared to higher-income buyers, who can purchase at high prices (Bashir, et al, 2018). This affects the food provisions for households or individuals living below the poverty or under certain vulnerable circumstances. Another shock to food stability indicated by Laborde et al. (2020) is the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic.

There have been trade-offs between the need to control the virus and prevent catastrophic economic and food security crises that disproportionately affect the world's poor and hungry. Agricultural and food markets are experiencing disturbances due to labour shortages caused by restrictions on people's movements. This resulted in income losses and changes in food demand despite no significant food shortages yet emerging. Another shock to food stability is that the

export restrictions imposed by some countries have disrupted trade flows for staple foods such as wheat and rice.

COVID-19 has the most direct and serious effect on food access, but it also impacts supply, changes market preferences for cheaper, less healthy foods, and causes food price volatility. This havoc may have limited access to and promotion of unhealthy food to decrease its competitive advantage based on cost and/or convenience. Food assistance was available from all levels of government and the private and not-for-profit sectors, and the ability to use that assistance at all healthy food retail outlets by all strains of the population allowed eligible individuals and families to access it even though not at all point of time (Park & Berenguer, 2020).

3.3.1.1.5 Nature of Food Market Venue

This section underlines the factors motivating consumers to go to particular shops, stores or supermarkets for food purchases and how they vary among buyers in different market venues. In the current context of this study, primary food supply is contextualized in local markets where raw, freshly produced food is accessible to consumers. Study on local food supply indicates that consumers perceive a product as local once it is locally produced, and it is seen as an important additional value to reach certain market venues (Kiss, et al, 2020; Butti, et al, 2018).

Wägeli & Hamm (2016) support the latter on local food supply as an indicator of reaching a particular food shopping venue as this transcends consumers’ desires and benefits to local commodities. A study on urban consumers' perceptions of local food confirmed an interest in consuming local food even though it does not always translate into purchasing power (Penney & Prior, 2014).

The convenience of supermarkets' one-stop shopping, transport to market venues, price, and food labelling were major barriers to purchasing local food (Penney & Prior, 2014). Ikonen, et al. (2020) support this by stating that the form or food label relatively impacts consumers’ behaviour in choosing what to purchase. Khoury, et al. (2014) encourage the increase of homogeneity in global food supplies with clear indications of health benefits through food processing, including total

quantities of energy-dense foods in terms of calories, protein, fat, and weight through food processing.

The expansion in homogeneity overall forecasts the foundation of a worldwide standard food supply, which envisages globalized food across market venues (Borsellino, et al, 2020; Clapp & Moseley, 2020). This adjustment in global food supplies, known as secondary or tertiary food supply, reiterates the need to greatly reduce the impact of food insecurity among low-income populations. Literature on economy and society informs that beyond the fact of acquiring food through purchase exists the property right that grants buyers the potential right to access the shopping point of their choice (Nair & Shams, 2020; Carruthers & Babb, 2000). The same is true for sellers who have the right to own places, which include large general stores and supermarkets, little corner shops, and neighbouring farmers' markets where customers can buy food at a relatively high price (Khoury, et al, 2014; FAO, 2004).

Little corner shop outlets have limited food item variety and little healthy food. Yet, they are utilized for emergencies in suburban regions, especially for low-income people, including migrants, where there are no larger stores for food supply (Webber, et al, 2010; Pine & Bennett, 2014). Lee (2015) identifies the insubstantial connection between nutritional climate and dietary outcomes as a new general store opened in a low-income Philadelphia community. Cummins, Rock, and Matthews (2014) observed no significant changes in dietary habits among the underserved neighbourhood amongs Philadelphia’s population.

Abeykoon, et al. (2017) confirmed no significant changes in dietary behaviours in the low-income US neighbourhood where the new food supermarket occurred. In their studies of a built environment intervention, DuBreck (2017) found a similar situation. One possible explanation for these outcomes is related to people’s ability to acquire food they can afford and prefer shopping nearby to avoid long-distance costs.

The separation to and thickness of large general stores concerning people's homes is often fair in big cities. For example, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)'s widely used online tool identifies census tracts where more than 33% of the population lives a mile or more from a

major general store (LaVarnway & Craven, 2017). This information is important because it reveals a lot about the challenges of navigating the US food environment and the aid programmes at the household and individual levels for low-income people, including refugees (Nunnery & Dharod, 2017).

Many studies have addressed this issue by focusing on shops' daily quality service delivery to enhance healthy food access solutions (Chen, 2017; Chen & Kwan, 2015). By the aim that these studies would develop a reasonable number of accurate measurements of the food stores' environment, they oversight other key issues. Other major variables affecting grocery stores' migrant-unfriendly environments were discovered based on suburban segregation, community safety standards, and the availability of diverse transit options. According to a study conducted in Uganda by Viswanathan, et al. (2017), some food store retailers took advantage of refugees who spoke Ugandan languages to pay for much more food than usual.

Some refugees feel that they are unable to shop in specific locations or stores due to their socio-economic status. By learning how disadvantaged residents manage these areas of the urban food environment, this article draws on a larger body of studies on food access strategies. Food provenance and its qualities have led to a much more comprehensive view of food provisioning beyond proximity to major food vendors. Safety at the neighbourhood level can also influence how and when people access food stores.

Only a few studies have examined how violence and street safety affect food access trends among migrants (Burdette & Whitaker 2004; Zenk, et al, 2011). This food supply chain model within a racial and economic discrimination sphere predicts worries linked with shopping habits (Kwate, 2008; Bower, et al, 2014). The street vendors in New York City are mostly immigrants, their community members find relief in the fact that they share similar food that they are accustomed with since back home (Basinski, 2014).

To this end, limited data available indicate the existence of policies that regulate or discourage the ongoing food street practices due to the risk such activities pose to the health and safety of practitioners along the value chain (Alimi, 2016; Samapundo, et al, 2015; Cortese, et al, 2016).

The stigma of concentrated economic conditions and racially segregated neighbourhoods also affect people's views of each other and the neighbourhood where food stores or supermarkets are located (Sampson 2012; Herrick 2008).

Discussion on food market format continues as the literature in this sphere of knowledge typically informs the traditional retail and modern market systems in low-income, emerging and developed countries (Amine, 2012). In these countries, there are limitations on the supermarket format's adoption by not just low-income populations such as migrants but also high-income inhabitants due to the shortcomings of traditional retail systems in service delivery (Goldman & Hino, 2005).

However, these two systems operate alongside each other. For instance, traditional markets or open markets are frequently used by consumers in the highly developed Asian economies of Japan, Hong Kong, Taiwan, and South Korea, where supermarkets' market share has peaked at less than 50% (Goldman & Hino, 2005). A group of academics recently highlighted another case of traditional food retail and supermarket forms coexisting, this time in the highly developed economies of Western Europe and North America (Maruyama & Wu, 2014). The context of migration, where not many options are available, has led people to diffuse to what food stores exist, no matter the cost or price (Soltani, 2021). In this case, the supermarkets are more accessible to lower-income consumers, but their use is unequal to high-income consumers (Goldman & Hino, 2005; Maruyama & Wu, 2014).

Moreover, this situation has been extensively witnessed in developing or emerging countries where even though there is easy accessibility to traditional markets, consumers prefer for a variety of issues to continue and purchase their food in supermarkets (Meng, et al, 2014). However, many studies sanctioned super-markets people ‘unfaithfulness due to economic factors: higher-income consumers get higher benefits from switching from traditional stores to supermarkets (Goldman & Hino, 2005; Maruyama & Wu, 2014; Avila, et al, 2020).

The underlying reason is their higher opportunity costs of time and transportation possibilities, enabling less frequent shopping for food (Goldman & Hino, 2005).

In contrast, lower-income consumers, who purchase small amounts and shop frequently, get lower benefits from shopping in supermarkets (Goldman & Hino, 2005; Maruyama & Wu, 2014). Some researchers, however, also view the problem as cultural. Ethnic–cultural minorities, such as Muslims in the United Kingdom and Chinese and Mexicans in the United States, buy a lot of their food in traditional styles in these situations (Goldman & Hino, 2005).

3.3.1.1.6 Transportation relation to food access

While there is a paucity of information on refugee travel patterns, results from the literature on recent immigrants can help illuminate the transportation issue refugees face. The distance between the migrants' homes and the main food stores determined how difficult it was for them to get food (Farber, et al, 2018). Přívara (2019) demonstrated that immigrants' challenges in getting food relate to low-income levels and the distance between their homes and the main food stores.

According to data from 2012 to 2013, the average distance between U.S. households and the closest supermarket was 2.19 miles. Individuals without a car or who do not live near a food venue with healthy options have limited access to meals that support healthy eating habits. A study in Detroit found that people living in predominantly low–income neighbourhoods travel an average of 1.1 miles farther to the closest supermarket than people living in predominantly middle-low-income neighbourhoods.

The distance between consumers' homes and food store locations can not only constrain accessibility but also affect the affordability of food if transport is required to ensure accessibility. In this study, although refugees are mostly urban residents where transport is likely to be available compared to rural areas, some refugee households may still struggle with transportation costs if their nearest food store is at long walking distance or does not offer their preferred foods.

In addition, the lack of transport dramatically affects the ability to access food. Transportation and distance to sources of healthy foods impact low–income households, especially those living in urban cities. Overall, for those with limited access to public transportation, the cost of travel time to find healthier options and out-of-pocket expenses may be too high. For those immigrants with average wages in the United States, Klein & Smart (2017; 2019), for example, found that recent

refugees were more likely than the general population to make quick transitions into and out of car ownership. Klein & Smart (2017) indicate that they were less likely than others to own a car at any given time, a palliative measurement of transportation burdens. The lack of consistent availability of cars found by Klein and Smart may be responsible for a twist of other evidence in the literature about differences between immigrants' and residents' travel behaviour.

Other evidence of transport precariat is that immigrants are more likely to walk or cycle to achieve their demand for daily activity (Barajas, et al, 2018; Farber, et al, 2018; Blumenberg & Smart 2014). Blumenberg & Smart (2014) find that immigrants lack social connections to meet their transportation needs. Among other assistance such as learning English, job skills and financial planning, the refugees in the US expressed the need and desire to accommodate transportation issues (Mitschke, et al, 2011). For those living near the shopping centre, the literature indicates that accessing food was not a serious problem (Yeoh, et al, 2015). Farber, et al. (2018) indicate that there is an ignored relationship between transportation and social exclusion in the context of migration. This relationship with transportation-related social exclusion or discrimination has been identified through the ability of low-income populations have in accessing basic social needs such as employment, food, health, etc.

This context might fit a country where prevailing xenophobic attacks, such as South Africa, negatively may affect refugees' well-being. Fear of being harmed, refugees may choose private transportation, which could be beyond their economic capability or may not be sustainably practised. This theory is affirmed by (Guimarães, et al, 2019), who claim that social exclusion can emerge when transportation obstacles are combined with socio-economic disadvantages. Besides this, recent refugees in Canada could have difficulty in learning how to use a new transportation system due to language barriers, or they may not know how to reach certain destinations due to confusion about transfer policies, even if they are within a reasonable travel time (Farber, et al, 2018).

3.3.1.1. 7Prices in Relation to Food Access

This section focuses on the role of price in bringing food closer to the refugee households, known as consumers or demands in economic language. Price can be seen as the third party connecting

the food demand to suppliers. Timmer (2013), therefore, considers two dimensions for studying food prices: the average price level and the volatility price. Ideally, the average price should allow and even provide sufficient incentives to the poorest to access food sustainably.

However, what surprises me is the fluctuation of food prices, notably the increases and falls that are likely to generate risks of food deprivation for consumers below the poverty rate, including refugees. This food price dynamic not only implies the risk of food deprivation but also has adverse micro-level effects on household decision-makers that may lead to a deeper and more disappointing effect regarding household food choices (Timmer, 2013). The food prices vary with the availability and variety of food.

A study on food security among refugees and migrants in Djibouti records that the prices of foods are much higher, and the types of preferred food for the refugees are quite limited on the market (Green & Snyder, 2019). Though food prices may consistently be unfordable for the Yemen refugees, for instance, they feel underserved as they are not familiar with the staple foods in Djibouti which refugees in Canada believe the same (Green & Snyder, 2019; Lane, et al, 2018). Food price instability is, therefore, really hurting people experiencing poverty in the short and the long run.

Timmer (2000, 2010) records a contradiction between the effectiveness of the basic food safety model adopted by policymakers and the reality of the low-income households' level of access to food in the long term. Timmer's (2012) study on the global economic crisis confirms and explains little about this contradiction in food access at the low-income household level. The main concern is the resilience of low-income households from food prices bouncing by cutting off luxury foods in favour of what they can afford. When the global economy is reasonably steady, and food prices are stable, national policymakers devote their attention to political and financial resources at long-term access, which includes the growth process (Timmer, 2012).

According to Timmer (2014), national policymakers should actively consider the short-term or real scenario where low-income people living on subsistence incomes face this phenomenon of steady food costs while preparing for long-term access to food. This could help people

experiencing poverty avoid falling into abject poverty by allowing them to link themselves to long-term food choice access using their own resources and entrepreneurial abilities.

Food choice access cannot be fully resolved in the context of refugees until food market prices are affordable to persons living on subsistence earnings. Furthermore, leaving marketers to do what they want will not solve the problem, albeit a few countries, especially in Western, European, East, and Southeast Asia, have done so successfully (Balkan & Tumen, 2016; Akgündüz, et al, 2015). Working together to bring poor households, including refugees, into a growing economy based on a safe and secure food system is part of the public policy efforts to provide a favourable economic market environment. Only then will we put an end to hunger. To this end, the Balkan & Tumen (2016) findings on immigration study on consumer prices in Turkey indicate that prices of basic foods declined much faster than the prices of luxury foods upon the arrival of Syrian' refugees in the country.

The decline in basic food prices has an alternative understanding. Immigrant mobility is one of the causes affecting consumers' conditions through the changing level of collective demand and creating a shift in the content of collective consumers (Balkan & Tumen, 2016; Akgündüz, et al, 2015). The reality is that refugees always have limited economic opportunities or lower salaries towards their fellow natives. For this reason, they may look for inexpensive food prices more intensively than local natives.

Moreover, Balkan & Tumen (2016) indicate that the price search activity among immigrants is more intensive for basic items than luxury items. Luxury foods are proposed to offer a refinement in texture, taste, fat content or other qualities that render their accessibility costlier. Basic food items are generally less cheap, and their production mechanism employs a more technical informal labour force than more refined food. The food price-search mechanism theory towards these two potential forces can be validated in different backgrounds.

In the Turkish context, informal sources offer more possibilities to access cheap labour, including food, than their formal counterpart (Balkan & Tumen, 2016; Van den Berg & Hassink, 2015). Studies on the impact of refugees on host developing countries show that the presence of refugees

reduces wages and increases the demand for not only food but also education, health services, infrastructure such as water supply, sanitation and transportation, and also, in some cases, for natural resources such as grazing and firewood prices (Barman, 2020; Akgündüz, et al, 2015). The same situation is in Rwanda, where overall, one-fifth of the value of food aid distributed to refugees gets sold for cash income (Taylor, et al, 2016).

For example, refugees earned substantially less than the local retail price for the corn, beans, rice, salt and cooking oil they sold. The expense of converting food to cash lowered the value of the food package, the demand from migrants, and the resulting spillovers. Although food sales by refugees supplement the local food supply, they lower costs slightly. Local producers, who compete with low-cost food aid, suffer. Findings from Rwanda, Tanzania and Uganda continue recording that an additional refugee leads to an increase in the consumer price index around the cash (Taylor, et al, 2016; Alix-Garcia & Saah, 2010).

However, small price changes have larger effects when calculating real-income multipliers because prices affect all households in the local economy. Development projects in the global South that increase the supply response of local farms and businesses could increase the real impact of cash aid by minimizing these price effects that the developed countries do not believe the same (Taylor, et al, 2016; Alix-Garcia & Saah, 2010).

3.3.1.2 Income source relation to food access

Specific points are analysed to highlight the refugees' flexibility in obtaining income in response to food access. These points include refugees' livelihood (land access to food production, financial capital to food access, social support for food access), work entitlement, and household head income (flexibility in the balance of power linked to household head over income) (Nutz, 2017; Hagen-Zanker, et al, 2018; Harris, et al, 2014; Huang, 2020; Lawlis, et al, 2018).

When it comes to analysing household cash income sources to access food, three characteristics stand out. Food production or cash crops, employment wages, and other income-generating activities were indicators used to assess low-income immigrants' source of income (Nutz, 2017; Hagen-Zanker, et al, 2018; Harris, et al, 2014; Huang, 2020; Lawlis, et al, 2018). Other factors,

such as the gender-based age of the household head's income, appear more relevant than these (Hitczenko, 2016; Kainuwa, et al, 2013; Qazi, et al, 2018; Adepoju, et al, 2015). These three indicators can be viewed under the household livelihood assets lens, which can provide a clear understanding of the refugees' sources of income.

3.3.1.2.1 Refugees livelihood

Discussing access to food among disadvantaged people is objectionable without mentioning how a household earns an income to sustain daily living. This encompasses the household livelihood sources (assets) an individual puts in place or interacts with. Livelihood refers to an individual's resources to obtain the necessities to lead a better life (Alam, 2017; Manlosa, et al, 2019). Livelihood is described as activities that enable a person or household to meet their needs in the long term while maintaining dignity (Manlosa, et al, 2019). Food is one of the needs, and its accessibility requires the household or individual's ability to interact with their contiguous assets. Several scholars have researched the refugee livelihood income sources and strategies they use to meet their basic needs (Amissi, 2006; Nurtz, 2017; Maseya, 2015).

The livelihood outcomes were more unstable, and there was insufficient income to meet refugees' households basic needs (Amissi, 2006; Nurtz, 2017; Maseya, 2015). To comprehend the sources of this scenario, Nutz (2017) argues that one needs to consider that being a refugee drives an individual into a state of defenselessness, and more importantly, he correlated this phenomenon with the household livelihood assets to conclude that refugees are underserved.

These assets are known as physical capital (e.g. farm equipment, cattle or a sewing machine), human capital (the education, skills and health of household members), financial capital and its substitutes (savings, credit, cattle, etc.), social capital (the social networks and associations to which people belong) and natural capital (natural resource base). At the country level, In Costa Rica, Egypt, Mexico, Pakistan, South Africa, and Zambia, UNHCR and the ILO collaborated to conduct market and value chain studies in connection to these livelihood assets, as indicated in the model below (Nutz,2017).

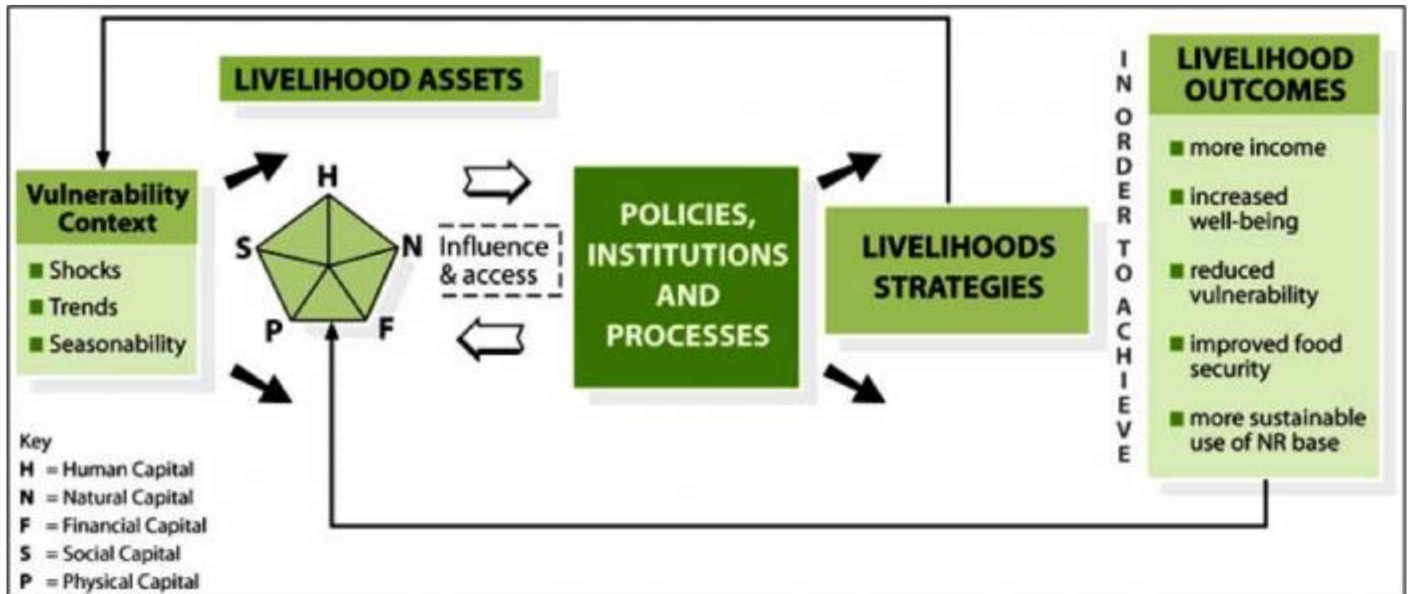

Figure 2. Livelihood Instrument (Nutz, 2017)

According to Nutz (2017), the combination of the market system approach where these livelihood assets are identified with more traditional livelihood interventions, including aid interventions, has been seen to render not only the income sources but also the quantum of refugee households' earned income in terms of cash difficult to access. This contradiction unveils more about the relationship between income and food access.

Although both are considered livelihood outcomes, increased cash income reduces the vulnerability to access to food. On the other hand, it cannot help improve food access by itself. This is confirmed by a study on refugees' economies that shows that food access requires a multi-faceted approach that goes beyond improved access to income (Kato & McKinney, 2015). This is to say, income alone is neither a guarantee nor a prerequisite for better food security, as is reflected in the livelihood instrument model. The trends are trying to diversify how households or individuals can access food.

This describes how households build a complex portfolio of activities and social support capabilities that can be translated into life, enhancing refugees' well-being. Diversifying one's means of subsistence leads these low-income people to long-term capability that increases their resilience to enough food access. For example, the modern position of urban food production and

earning money is critical. But there is another view that urban food gardens can be source of food production

3.3.1.2.2 Refugees and land access to food production

The analysis of food access believes that food should be produced or purchased. If it is to produce food for subsistence or from a market perspective, this requires access to both natural (land) and physical (equipment) assets (Nutz, 2017; Vos, et al, 2020; Lintner & Elsen, 2020; Huang, 2020). Studies on refugees economic integral approach and other low-income migrants under existing vulnerabilities indicate that land relation to cash crops has played a critical role in assessing food security among these disadvantaged people (Vos, et al, 2020, Lintner & Elsen, 2020; Huang, 2020).

Huang (2020) records a study on disassembling locality in local food systems with refugees and immigrants, indicating that in the US, only about 13% of migrant farmworkers are working with farmers and gaining farming skills. Lintner and Elsen (2020) corroborate a similar trend in Europe, where Italy engages refugees in the agricultural sector as an important strategy for increasing refugees' income sources through organic farming. The literature in this regard does not indicate if the refugees have the freedom to own land for cash crops or self-production.

However, Vos, et al. (2020) have led a similar study in Uganda, among other income opportunities. Refugees have access to land, freedom of movement, and the ability to work under the country's Refugee Policy (2006) and Refugee Regulations (2010). This method has aided South Sudanese refugees in establishing self-sufficient livelihoods, achieving food security, and improving local economies. Zambia and Ethiopia have used similar policy measures to provide refugees access to services, land, and assistance in establishing new agricultural livelihoods and social and economic integration into local communities (Vos, et al, 2020).

However, integrating large immigrant populations into the local economy has shown positive results in other cases. Cash transfer plus programmes connected to agricultural production or nutrition-assistance programmes (Cash + programmes) have shown to be beneficial, allowing underserved refugee households to keep their food, avoid asset sales, and build household

resilience (Vos et al, 2020). The lack of this opportunity for many Rohingya refugees from Myanmar currently in Bangladesh faces severely limited income-earning opportunities (Vos et al., 2020). Overall, this shows that the economic integral approach is still far from liberating refugees from their income vulnerabilities, and food security can still be contested in this regard.

3.3.1.2.3 Financial capital to food access

Financial capital is one of the basic factors for humans to access and afford food. This is understood as the ability of the household to afford consistently and have access to enough food for all members to achieve a healthy life (Sati, 2015; Sati & Vangchhia, 2017; Shobe, et al, 2018). In this discourse, financial capital means the household consumers dispose of money that helps them acquire food. Studies in this regard reveal significant gape between low and high-income countries hosting important number of refugees.

Studies in this regard reveal that The average American household spent $127 per week on food; however, lower- and moderate-income families only paid $67 to $111 per week on food, whereas upper-income households spent $150 to $217 per week (Rahkovsky, et al, 2018; Shobe, et al, 2018). Due to lower earnings and higher rates of food insecurity, African American and Latino households amongst refugees spend less money on food (Coleman-Jensen, et al, 2012).

Even after controlling for household size and composition, food-secure households spend 24 percent more on food than food-insecure households (Coleman-Jensen, et al, 2012). Scholars researched Western countries advanced, income and poverty, to explain why food-insecure African-American families spend less on food (Shobe, et al, 2018). Shobe, et al. (2018) argued that these phenomena affect people differently based on ethnic affiliation, where low-income African American households have shown low food expenses compared to non-Hispanic white individuals and other customarily under-represented minority communities in the US.

Smith, et al. (2022) have previously confirmed this link between food insecurity and income poverty among low-income people from developing countries in the US. Adults who had experienced high rates of food insecurity in prior years had suffered substantial employment repercussions from the economic crisis and were concerned about meeting their basic needs in the

coming month, according to late December 2020 findings among this group of low-income households (Bernstein, et al, 2021).

The Covid-19 pandemic has exacerbated the situation, harming immigrants' or family members' employment opportunities (51.8 percent) (Bernstein, et al, 2021). According to Bernstein, et al. (2021), many individuals with low-income immigrants to the US, families expressed concern about meeting basic requirements in the coming month, such as having enough to eat (43.2%) and being able to pay rent or a mortgage (50.8%), energy bills (49.1%), or medical expenses (52.1 percent). Shrider, et al. (2020) summarized the reality of the highest economic income population based on the report on income, earnings, income inequality, and poverty in the United States as follows:

Income:

- Median household income was $67,521 in 2020, a decrease of 2.9 percent from the 2019 median of $69,560. This is the first statistically significant decline in median household income since 2011.
- The 2020 real median incomes of family and non-family households decreased by 3.2 and 3.1 percent from their respective 2019 estimates.
- The 2020 real median household incomes of non-Hispanic Whites, Asians, and Hispanics decreased from their 2019 medians, while the changes for Black households were not statistically different.
- In 2020, real median household incomes decreased by 3.2 percent in the Midwest and 2.3 percent in the South and the West from their 2019 medians. The change for the Northeast was not statistically significant.

Earnings:

- The real median earnings of all workers aged 15 and over with earnings decreased by 1.2 percent between 2019 and 2020 from $42,065 to $41,535.
- The total number of those who worked full-time, year-round, declined by 13.7 million between 2019 and 2020. The number of female full-time, year-round workers decreased by about 6.2 million, while the decrease for their male counterparts was approximately 7.5 million.

- In 2020, the real median earnings of those who worked full-time, year-round, increased 6.9 percent from their 2019 estimate. The median earnings of men ($61,417) and women ($50,982) who worked full-time year-round increased by 5.6 and 6.5 percent, respectively.

This situation shows how critical the lack of employment and other support programmes lead to income poverty, including for immigrants (Flahaux & De Haas, 2016; Dudek, 2021; Jacobs, et al, 2021). Asset poverty is the second described as a household's inability to raise sufficient financial income to sustain itself (SIPP, 2010). SIPP (2010) establishes a relationship between assets and poverty to come to this conclusion. SIPP (2010) considers assets as the net wealth of a household, including bonds, stocks, mutual funds, and other property that an individual owns. Shrider, et al. (2020) summarized the report on income, earnings, income inequality, and poverty in the United States as follows:

- The official poverty rate in 2020 was 11.4 percent, up 1.0 percentage points from 10.5 percent in 2019. This is the first increase in poverty after five consecutive annual declines
- In 2020, there were 37.2 million people in poverty, approximately 3.3 million more than in 2019.
- Between 2019 and 2020, the poverty rate increased for non-Hispanic Whites and Hispanics. Among non-Hispanic Whites, 8.2 percent were in poverty in 2020, while Hispanics had a poverty rate of 17.0 percent. Among the major racial groups examined in this report, Blacks had the highest poverty rate (19.5 percent) but did not experience a significant change from 2019. The poverty rate for Asians (8.1 percent) in 2020 was not statistically different from 2019.
- Poverty rates for people under 18 increased from 14.4 percent in 2019 to 16.1 percent in 2020. Poverty rates also increased for people aged 18 to 64, from 9.4 percent in 2019 to 10.4 percent in 2020. The poverty rate for people 65 and older was 9.0 percent in 2020, which is not statistically different from 2019.
- Between 2019 and 2020, poverty rates increased for married-couple families and families with a female householder. The poverty rate for married-couple families increased from 4.0 percent in 2019 to 4.7 percent in 2020. The poverty rate increased from 22.2 percent to 23.4 percent for families with a female householder. The poverty rate for families with a male householder was 11.4 percent in 2020, not statistically different from 2019.

According to the World Bank Group (2018), there is usually a link between poverty and food security due to insufficient income and wealth, and hence insufficient access to available food. Income growth, on the other hand, aids in the improvement of food demand and, as a result, food security. Prices and the composition of their meals and other elements connected to food security are known to be influenced by food demand and supply trends.

Although food insecurity is commonly linked with diverse factors, low, middle, and high-income consumers perceive high food prices differently in South African urban communities (Lamb, et al, 2019; Mokgabudi, 2012). While the degree of domestic food production dictated by the extent and availability of access to production inputs and services is a fundamental factor of food security in remote locations, real wages and employment are the main determinants of food security in urban areas (Lamb, et al, 2019; Mokgabudi, 2012).

From the above-mentioned, a relationship is established between food affordability and asset poverty. Multiple financial income sources alleviate the worries of dispatching money regarding low-income households' basic needs. Although the increase in food prices may have the greatest impact on households with low and moderate incomes, at this point, a balance from income-diverse sources may afford food of their choice. Affordability depends on consumers. For instance, healthy food is particularly expensive, but affordability can extend beyond financial consideration. Costigan (2020) argues, "*The ability to afford food depends not only on how much cash a family has on hand from assets or salary, but also on how much assistance they receive, how long it lasts, and whether they can use their benefits at the places they shop*".

According to Shobe, et al. (2018), around 62 percent of food-insecure households in the United States requested support from at least one of the following federal programmes to secure food for their families: SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Programme); WIC (Women, Infants, and Children); and the National School Lunch Programme (NSLP) are some of the programmes available (Coleman-Jensen, et al, 2012). This discussion is pertinent to refugees because they constitute one of the most economically marginalised social groups globally and in South Africa.

In South Africa, a general breadwinner is entitled to a national minimum wage of R3710 after 20 working days to provide for their household members (National Treasury, 2023; STATS SA, 2023; South African Reserve Bank, 2023; SASSA, 2023). The National Minimum Wage is around R930 when distributed to household members of less than five; this is less than the upper-bound poverty threshold of R1 417 per capita (National Treasury, 2023; STATS SA, 2023; South African Reserve Bank, 2023; SASSA, 2023). It is anticipated that a basic healthy food basket would cost approximately R3388 for a household with fewer than five members. Electricity, housing, and transportation are estimated to account for more than 60% of household head wage (National Treasury, 2023; STATS SA, 2023; South African Reserve Bank, 2023; SASSA, 2023).

Setting aside money for housing, electricity and transportation, less than R1480 is expected to cover a minimal nutritional basket of food (STATS SA, 2023). Further estimates indicate that workers' families will underspend by at least 56,2% on food (assuming that food costs R3388,00 and that workers have R1482,90 left over after transportation, housing and power) (National Treasury, 2023; STATS SA, 2023; South African Reserve Bank, 2023; SASSA, 2023). In this case, a worker cannot feed her family healthful food. A household with four members would need to set aside R370,72 if all of the R1482,90 was spent on food. This is 44% below the R663 food poverty line (National Treasury, 2023; STATS SA, 2023; South African Reserve Bank, 2023; SASSA, 2023).

3.3.1.2.4 Social support for food access

As a resource, the components of social support, such as informational, emotional or instrumental support bases, are not normally found in conversations around household food access, although this is a market channel of food access. Informational, emotional and instrumental support were three inseparable but accessible resources to the migrants' households (Gichunge, et al, 2015; Tippens, 2020). Generational perceptions of support among Congolese refugees in urban Tanzania show its effectiveness, alluding to how families or friendships are woven around food, directly affecting food-sourcing information for those newly settled in the area (Tippens, 2020).

In a migrants’ context, financial capita is essential but not at all. It requires proper information provided by social support networks, which networks can be viewed as a resource that diminishes weakness in this regard (Hadley, et al, 2007). This phenomenon is better understood by individuals who have undergone the same experiences and are animated by the same emotions.

According to Shobe, et al. (2018), these resources are significant while envisaging other families 'adapting procedures such as incorporating food help, settlements, imparting suppers to neighbours and different families, food given by neighbours or different families, local area soup kitchens and getting food from others. Other studies have examined the input of family relations, taking into account the size and age of active family members in the more successful pooling of assets, for example, the share of food expenses for those in the age of breadwinner, bringing support to others housing aspects which will reduce weakness (Muyanga,et al, 2013).

However, Stokes-Walters, et al. (2021) indicate that where there are disparities in earnings that lead to low income, there is the likelihood of influencing household food decision-making. Food deficit or sufficiency is a home internal design that is outside of the market channel, and it is where adaptation to changes is required to acquire food before reaching out to the market. Understanding each family member's exact contribution and feelings and how they are coordinated around food is hard to determine because of the complexity and softness of these household relations.

Another source of social support is the networks of relationships, which are effective through social groups sharing the same sense of identity (Naidu & Nzunza, 2014). Migrants utilize this social relation's 'identity' to circulate the economy into the society through a good texture of networks, and it is through this socio-economic channel that individuals construct an intricate arrangement of protection for the most vulnerable, such as refugees seeking food (Huang, 2020; Naidu & Nzuza, 2013; Harris, Minniss & Somerset, 2014).

This protection arrangement is particularly obvious as food is an essential need. Thus, food is moved between families outside the market along channels of casual social ties. The maintenance of social bonds through non-open market means is what this process entails. The other concept underlying this procedure is that it acts as a conduit for households looking for protection from

established members, like the Ethiopian community in the Durban market (Chetty & Sherefedin, 2018; Crush, et al, 2015). Being effectively occupied with food exchange inside the social economy can help refugee families decrease the danger of food weakness because of shocks.

Therefore, how families and individuals encourage and utilize their social resources inside the ethical economy will significantly influence how they can access food. This does not exclude other valuable interpersonal skills in evaluating households' capacities to access food. Interpersonal skills reside in the household head's flexibility to use the benefits of social identity, such as sharing knowledge among community members. This social capital asset can contribute to food access by passing information to one another, especially where people like refugees might find a limited number of food stores they would prefer.

According to the research, those with fewer social links reported more access issues, whereas those with stronger social ties reported fewer issues. Furness & Gallaher (2018) are the scholars who release the positive side of social support in social identity. This is when they were assessing households' food insecurity in rural Uganda and found that through people sharing the same social identity, increased food access was fully facilitated by sharing norms and mutual trust that reside in social identity among household heads.

Contrary to studies conducted by Reddy & van Dam (2020) and Naidu & Nzuza (2014) in Africa and Asia, people with less use of their social identity benefits among the communities increase in poverty and, more importantly, lead to less access to what they recognize to be healthy foods among members of the household. This led to the belief that refugees, whose human capital is an important element of social identity circulation, might be found less important in the receiving communities to improve food access as they are a minority. Public interaction through formal gatherings such as migrant church members' initiatives is an important awareness to increase access to food for the most vulnerable.

3.3.1.2.5 Refugee and Work Entitlement

As previously expressed by the market system development academics, the new strategy for refugees' assistance remains self-resilience livelihood to increase income so that refugees may

obtain the food of their choice (Harris, et al, 2014; Nutz, 2017; Amisi, 2006; Azkorra, 2018; Cuthill, 2017). Even though this would be the ideal, the evidence shows that self-reliant livelihood is more informal (Azkorra, 2018; Cuthill, 2017; Amisi, 2006).

This indicates that the competent authorities overlook the right to wage work among refugees and may not sustainably respond to their basic needs. They depend more on informal income because many receiving countries lack a working social integration policy plan (Azkorra, 2018; Cuthill, 2017; Amisi, 2006). The right of urban refugees to actively participate in activities that generate cash to support themselves is poorly understood by employers and mitigated on the ground by the local municipalities for certain occupations. This situation is less severe in most high-income nations than in developing countries where poor local households and refugees can access skilled income.

While the main goal is not to rely primarily on the industry's supply side, education and training are key strategies for increasing the revenue streams available to refugees to help them become more self-reliant (Nutz, 2017; Azkorra, 2018). According to (Nutz 2017; Betts, et al, 2014), this entrepreneurial culture through basic entrepreneurship training and financial and vocational education encountered insignificant impact because of a lack of a sounding and comprehensive understanding of existing markets and the private business sectors within which refugees are making a living.

In low-income countries, for instance, disputes between locals and immigrants practising similar traditional income-generating activities, such as selling street foods or other casual works where market demand for these goods and facilities is already met, are recorded. This could have significant consequences for both communities, which must negotiate the limited economy in these traditional areas (Nutz, 2017). Field, et al. (2020) analyzed the refugee economies in India and concluded that refugees' labour market incomes are inconsistent.

Field, et al. (2020) attributed the cause to refugees’ struggle to find jobs that fit their education and skill levels, are sustainable, and pay well. According to Field, et al. (2020), this is due to several interrelated variables. Such include social and economic edges restricting refugees' right to work

and town life. This phenomenon can force them to work in an insecure informal sector and risk eviction and abuse in casual labour. Many assistance groups dealing with refugees are aware of the urban job retrenchments, according to Thomas, et al. (2011), and their worries pushed for the refugees to self-reliant livelihood activities in the Turkish economy. Syrian refugees in Turkey were forced to fend for themselves due to their self-resilience activation, which primes the understanding of various organisations in most industrialized nations. This might help to reduce the vulnerabilities of refugees who rely on aid, especially as the primary source of opportunity and socio-economic prosperity (Schuettler & Caron, 2020).

In Africa, work opportunities are unaffordable, particularly in nations with severe poverty and unemployment rates, such as South Africa. Here's where politicians should focus on the quality of life in low-income neighbourhoods to determine where they should act. This study considers how to situate disadvantaged families in the food supply chain affected by the supermarkets' lifestyles. For impoverished households to engage in and maintain such a market lifestyle, they must have a constant source of income. According to Nutz (2017) research on refugee economies, this is a long way off due to market disorientation. For example, multiple persons might start the same conventional income-generating occupations, such as hairdressing or security guarding, in areas where market demand for these items and services is already met.

This might have severe consequences for individuals in the host community who already work in these traditional areas (Nutz, 2017). Betts, et al. (2014) confirm this in another study on refugee economies, which records that Interventions promoting refugees' sustainable livelihoods must be based on a sound and comprehensive understanding of existing markets and the private business sectors in which refugees live. (Balkan & Tumen (2016) analysis of this matter finds that this economic conflict (informal labour market) constitutes the channel through which the price declines.

According to Balkan & Tumen (2016), Syrian refugees supply inexpensive, informal labour and, thus, substitute the informal native workers, especially in informal-labour-intensive sectors (Amissi, 2006) in South Africa. Balkan & Tumen (2016) document that prices in these sectors fell by around 4 %, while the prices in the formal labour-intensive sectors almost remained unchanged.

Increasing the supply of informal immigrant workers generates labour cost advantages and keeps prices lower in the informal labour-intensive sectors (Balkan & Tumen, 2016). This analysis leads us to believe that refugees' earnings, compared to prices in the formal labour-intensive sectors, are insufficient to afford quality goods and services in this sphere of living.

3.3.1.2.6 Household head's Income

The analysis of household income to food access involves two critical aspects. This includes the household head's income and gender-based age. More than these, the other variables do not seem to be important (Arene & Anyaeji, 2010). Household income has a favourable influence on food prices. The more productively a household head works, the greater the household members have enough food. This necessitates a lucrative and long-term occupation among household heads. The age of the household heads positively influences household income, meaning that older household heads are more likely to be food-safe.

This is predicted, according to the assumptions stipulating that the households' incomes are likely to be much higher due to longer stays on their lifestyle activities (Arene, 2008). The household consumption spending on food is mainly a function of projected income, meaning higher expected income is a higher level of food consumption. Titus & Adetokunbo (2007) enrich this discussion by stating that at the age of sixty and above, the ability of a household head to physically and economically access food considerably diminishes compared to that of a 30-year-old.

The incidence is higher in female-head households than in male-head households. The incidence of the physical and economic inability to access food decreases with increased education. The incidence is relatively low for those with professional occupations and highest for traders, vendors and the unemployed. Based on the dependence ratio, the household's physical and economic inability to access food increases in dependency ratio than no dependency. This concerns the vulnerable people who depend on aid, such as asylum seekers and refugees.

In this process of livelihood diversification among the low-income population, there is a dispute over gender-based access to resources and opportunities. It is shown that women rarely own assets, may have a lower level of education due to discriminatory access during childhood, and their

access to productive capital and decision-making is often referred to as men. Women embrace fewer job opportunities and lower wage rates than men. But many rural women engage in subsistence farming as food security activity, this does not rule out the urban background. As a result, at all levels and stages of development programmes, special attention to the status and capacity of women is needed.

As part of the broader resettlement journey, Syrian refugees' household heads reported experiencing food insecurity, including in the transitional phase of refuge and each settlement context in Canada (Vatanparast, et al, 2020). In Canada, income status has been identified as a major obstacle that directly affected food cost, physical access, and the amount of familial or other support networks, including sponsorship connections, were all experienced and affected by low-income barriers to food security (Vatanparast, et al, 2020).

3.3.1.3 Individual Factors to Food Access

3.3.1.3.1 Education Constraints to Food Access

Poor refugee household's lack of access to education is mostly caused by poverty, among other factors. This human capital (access to education) has been proven to have social and economic advantages (Alkire & Foster, 2011; Meyer, et al, 2016). People and their family members gain from education as they are opened to more advantageous opportunities that may improve their incomes and food needs. Education helps individuals and family members acquire knowledge and positive judgment towards interoperability between livelihood assets that seek to improve income, increase well-being, reduce vulnerabilities and consequently improve food access.

According to Alkire & Foster (2011), the household's capabilities are affected without education. In poor households, there are numerous barriers to education. For instance, many social, physical, and economic barriers have been proposed as reasons why education is lower among poor households in developed countries (Kainuwa, et al, 2013; Qazi, et al, 2018). The cost of education is a handicap and puts household members into perpetual poverty and deprivation without a chance for recovery.

Some indicators of household food insecurity based on gender specify the role of educated women in non-traditional areas of activities (Adepoju, et al, 2015). Adepoju, et al. (2015) indicate that their presence grandly contributes to the fall in the price of assets which are sold by low-income consumers in times of economic crisis and falling returns to wage labour as more poor people compete in the market (Adepoju, et al, 2015).

Thus, enhancing women's status accounted for a lot while improving food availability. In Nigeria, Ganiyu & Omotayo (2016) investigated the relationship between women's educational status and food security provision for household members. The findings revealed that the respondents' educational attainment has a strong relationship with the types of food available. It concluded that women with more education are more likely to supply a wider variety of foods, improving household food security. Boosting women's human capital and capacities, particularly education, would empower them to exercise their rights and assure food security for their families. Lack of educational opportunity does not restrict a barrier to food access nor deprive household members because people always desire what kind of food they would like to purchase based on their knowledge of food.

Leib (2013) study broadly explains food accessibility based on educational knowledge. People with nutrition knowledge would seek healthy, equipped, fresh, reasonably priced food for people of diverse economic backgrounds. At this stage, studies conducted on refugees' diet and access to food denote that refugees struggle not only with information related to full-line grocery stores, small stores, farm stands, farmers markets, mobile markets and food delivery services access but also proper nutritional package (Mousa, 2020; Kavian, et al, 2020; Villena-Esponera, et al, 2019).

3.3.1.3.2 Biological aspect to food access

Human health is critical because it helps people to work at their best. Scholars discovered a connection between poor health and poverty, which drives poor health and vice versa (Power, et al, 2020; O'Connell, et al, 2019). Poverty and health, particularly among low-income communities, can be observed by the quality and quantity of food the household has access to and the income raised. For example, where the household breadwinners are unhealthy, the ability to raise income is limited to provide sustainable foods on the table for their entire family (Power, et al, 2020;

O'Connell, et al, 2019). Most importantly, this might have happened if the household head(s) has a biological disease or illness and cannot select some food, which prevents the household from having food of choice.

Furthermore, the inability to access food has also been observed, and the family is more likely to face mental illnesses such as anxiety and depression, which could lead to the inability to provide enough food for the family (Dye, 2014). The relationship between mental and physical health and food insecurity has been indicated to be a common phenomenon in developing countries (Weigel, et al, 2016). This relationship was examined in the context of the African and American refugee populations. The case study of the city of Durban in South Africa indicates a correlation between having less or insufficient food and a significant level of anxiety and depressive symptomatology (Maharaj, et al, 2017). The inability to raise enough income compared to the household market obligations and family members' desires may lead the entire household to such a handicap.

For instance, Maharaj, et al, (2017) state that not getting enough or eating less was associated with anxiety and depression. This aspect refers to "*the inability of a person to optimally or at least effectively absorb the food they eat*" (Gibson, 2012) and to convert it into nutrients (Rose, 2010). The consumer uses food that biologically makes him feel energetic, this element may impact how the person accesses food.

Optimum food utilization is predicated on several factors, including adequate knowledge of nutritional skills or proper application of such knowledge, physiological needs, food preferences, storage facilities, preparation and cooking facilities and time to purchase food (Godrich, et al, 2017; Gibson 2012; Rose, 2017). Ali, et al. (2016) argue that food utilization means ensuring a good nutritional outcome, which can be termed nutrition security. This means having sufficient food will not ensure a good nutritional outcome if poor health results in frequent sickness.

The link between biological utilization and food access can be established, showing how much the utilization hinders access to food. This has multiple facets to explain its implication at the household and individual levels. Food availability does not imply that people have physical access to it. It requires people to know exactly the food they want to purchase. So often, people are driven

by the assumption that food sourced out of their natural environment attracts people's attention in the sense of dislike rather than focusing on the particularities of the food.

When consumers are about to purchase food, their first reaction is to know where the food comes from or where it was grown. Thereafter, consumers decide to consider the quality and nutritional value as a second priority. These qualities are contested by food labels' mistrust and depending on certain characteristics posed by the consumers. Charlebois et al. (2016) suggest that mistrust towards industry and/or regulators augments consumers' willingness to self-authenticate.

Findings also suggest that highly educated consumers are more likely to distrust the information on food labels and are more willing to use a stratagem to validate food content' labels and restrict consumers access to food (Carraresi, et al, 2016). The consumers who read labels regularly expressed a higher willingness to self-authenticate, and gender is much accounted for in this process. Thus, women are more likely to read labels than men (Carraresi, et al, 2016). Here comes the role of knowledge to food access.

People purchase more of what they know or habitually eat than new foods at the market. It was revealed that marketing, network and innovation capabilities directly and positively affect the performance of food access to consumers. The network capability plays a dual role: It directly influences performance and indirectly affects the capability to acquire information about the market and supply chain agents. The acquired market- and consumer-related information is extremely valuable in enhancing the marketing capability and improving performance.

The market and networks aim to avail food of all kinds. Its accession depends on individuals' knowledge package whether the food is nutritionally or desirably valuable. The innovation capability is slightly less significant than the others in affecting performance. In addition to this, the food acquisition process and the health response to food have also been addressed. People in this context may have access to food but cannot consume it due to health problems such as diabetes, allergies, etc.

In this case, the significant infrequency of food insecurity emphasizes the necessity of meeting the basic needs requirements. Napier, et al. (2018) confirm this when analyse the predictors of food insecurity and coping strategies of female asylum seekers and refugees in Durban, South Africa. Failure to meet basic needs such as steady income exposes many of these women's families to precarious disease and illness as they source food on the street and other unsecured informal shop outlets (Napier, et al, 2018).

In relation to this, Hunter-Adams (2017) points out that the nutritional shift to highly processed, high-sugar meals has been extremely fast in low and middle-income nations. Obesity and hunger are frequently observed within a single home in these same conditions. In this article, Adams (2017) explores the individual and collective meanings associated with foods in a specific migrant context and their connections to changing food environments in Cape Town, South Africa, as part of a larger study of cross-border migrants' experiences.

While there was no discussion of food scarcity, the food environment appeared to limit dietary variety. The perspectives and experiences of the migrants imply that increasing the accessibility and affordability of already attractive, nutrient-dense meals is important. Although this information is relevant, literature is still silent on other diverse impediments to health well-being implications to food access, such as refugees with physical health backgrounds, including diabetes, heart attack or allergy to certain foods who perceive themselves restricted to accessing available food at the marketplace.

3.3.1.3.3 Refugees and nutritional knowledge to food access

Study on food access based on nutritional knowledge informs that resettled refugees often arrive in their host countries with little knowledge of nutrition or available food choices (Rondinelli, et al, 2011). As time passes, some research has shown that increased access to healthy foods among refugees corresponds with healthier dietary practices (Drewnowski & Eichelsdoerfer, 2010; Baronberg, et al, 2013). Later on, Rondinelli, et al. (2011) found that the nutritional concerns encountered by Drewnowski, et al. (2011) and Dunn, et al. (2013) over resettled refugees are

beyond the dietary component of the food rather perplexed by their past experiences, and abrupt changes to food choices and behaviour.

A study on supermarket solutions conducted by Shannon (2016) shares a link between neighbourhood context, food deserts, and everyday mobility that impact food accessibility and affordability. In a neighbourhood where the food market style is a supermarket-based supply chain, food is more accessible and affordable for high-income households. Those who cannot afford food from the supermarket or do not have such an infrastructure live in a food desert environment with no options for safe food. Large chain supermarkets, for example, were less common in predominantly black and Hispanic communities than in predominantly white and non-Hispanic neighbourhoods. Minority groups have less access to safe food choices due to these differences (Larson, et al, ; Powell, et al, 2007). Access to foods that promote healthy eating habits is often influenced by affordability.

According to Drewnowski & Eichelsdoerfer (2010), leading studies on food consumption among low-income people reveal that people prefer to consume inexpensive and easy foods, even though they are poor in nutrition. A recent review on food access reveals that residents in areas without supermarkets are likely to pay more for such healthy foods, as small stores typically charge more for items like fresh produce (Rose, 2010).

Controversy among people with nutritional knowledge about the value of food items in convenience stores or larger chain supermarkets and grocery stores matters (Rose, 2010). According to French (2003), price drops for healthy food options have also been shown to increase purchases with the possibility of those options. Improving access to foods that support healthy eating patterns should be a focus for all stakeholders in addressing health disparities (Baronberg, et al, 2013). Several strategies have also been proposed to encourage more equitable access to healthy food choices, such as attracting and opening supermarkets in underserved neighbourhoods and selling healthy foods at reduced prices (Larson et al., 2009).

This could reduce the effect of food deserts and long motilities seeking for food (Morland, et al, 2002; Beaulac, et al, 2009; Kolak, et al, 2018). Food deserts are where food supplies are scarce or

nonexistent, especially in low-income areas where grocery stores, small food markets, or street food markets are available. Compared to large chain stores, which supposedly have a larger range of healthier choices, buying food from the street market appears to carry poorer nutritional-quality foods (Brown, et al, 2008). Studies on nutritional status among refugee households have confirmed the poor health outcomes among refugees' children caused by poor food consumption (Larson, et al, 2009; Smith & Morton, 2009; Beaulac, et al, 2009).

3.3.1.3.4 Cultural Relevance of Food

This section analyses three legendary bodies. Literature that examines the relationship between food and culture sheds light on how deeply ingrained food is in cultural identities and modes of access. The literature on how refugees adjust to life in high-income countries and their pathways to access food and food systems emphasizes the importance of examining how such communities perceive their rights, entitlements, choices, and quality of life in relation to the perception of belonging to certain communities in a new geographic location.

The literature on the experiences of refugees and the difficulties in resolving food access shed light on the grave consequences of this phenomenon. People and organisations express themselves socially and culturally through food (Naidu & Nzuza, 2014). People's histories, cultures, and common futures can all be better understood via cuisine (Andreatta & Ferraro, 2012). Food may teach people about their environment and help them feel more connected to their native country or ecological systems when they are away from it.

Additionally, eating can allow migrants and refugees to explore their innermost desires or analyze societal politics and relationships (Reddy & van Dam, 2020). The influence of food on social influences and individualism is deeper. Cultural norms and values are created and performed through food, such as prohibited foods and ways to identify one's otherness (Mycek, et al, 2020). Regarding acculturation, assimilation, adaptation, social isolation, integration, and the resulting gains or hazards to quality of life, patterns of change and resistance in food choices might provide valuable information. Food and culture are inextricably intertwined, and for those who have experienced being a refugee, acclimating to a new country can be stressful and include being away

from friends and family. Therefore, cultural foods are an important part of settling in (Gingell, et al, 2022; Greenburg & Polzer, 2008).

This means the cultural relevancy of the food determines food access. This means that cultural considerations drive consumers' food choices. In other words, even if food is available, it is not culturally accessible to consumers unless it is culturally relevant or acceptable. Costigan argues that culturally relevant food has great health and other benefits, including preservation of food traditions, connection to familiar flavours and ingredients, and maintaining a healthy diet in a new place. In this context, Naidu & Nzuza (2013) found that migrants tend to be culturally driven by home food. The challenge for refugees is that migration away from their countries of origin can create a physical disconnection from their cultures, but this does not mean that they disconnect their cultural beliefs and practices, including those about food (Reddy & van Dam, 2020; Hamilton, et al, 2014; Mycek, et al, 2020).

3.3.1.4 Households and adjacent factors to food access

A significant part of the early household food access study focussed writings on the likelihood of food desert concentrates such as in Africa (West, Central and Southern Africa), Asia and the Middle East, Latin America and the Caribbean Refugees' Household (Zakari, et al, 2014; Caesar & Riley, 2018). In the process, family food access is analysed on a full scale whereby household food access is a component of public food supplies, food value patterns and family pay (Ngema, et al, 2018; Caesar & Riley, 2018).

These examinations utilized the information gathered from family wage overviews to survey the food security of metropolitan networks by implication. UNHCR, ILO, UNICEF & WFP (2017) inform several mechanisms refugee households use in this regard. These mechanisms include some households purchasing food on credit or taking additional loans (UNHCR, ILO, UNICEF & WFP, 2017). Other refugee households skip some basic needs for savings purposes, buy affordable foods, reduce expenditure on healthcare, sell assets, shift to less preferred food, reduce food quality or skip meals (Napier, et al, 2018; Maharaj, et al, 2017).

Others preferred cheap foods, reduced the number of meals, reduced meal portion size, borrowed food from friends or relatives, restricted consumption by adults, sent household members to eat

elsewhere, restricted consumption by female household members, spent days without eating (UNHCR, ILO, UNICEF & WFP, 2017). Another adjacent force is the land distribution by the local authorities for farming purposes (UNHCR, ILO, UNICEF& WFP, 2017; Nutz, 2017; Idris, 2020`). Refugees in Uganda and Zambia were given access to and control of resources such as a plot of land for purposes of cultivation or pasturing to strengthen their informal food support and income security for self-reliance, while in the US, the access to land for agricultural purposes is limited to refugees (Idris, 2020; Nutz, 2017; McElrone, et al, 2019).

Thus, within the South African context, understanding the informal food economy as a resilient approach to food access among low earners, including immigrants, is important in understanding the extent to which refugee households respond to issues related to food access. There has been a concern of interest inside food access writing regarding the refugee experience of food instability on the family scale, as even though food access difficulties are underlying, as far as the food economy or the food framework influencing food costs, these difficulties are capable separately. Later examinations on refugee 'migrants in Asia (Turkey, Tehran, Cox's Bazar Camp in Bangladesh) have contended that getting food requires a few unique kinds of assets (Pakravan, 2020; Dobiášová, 2016; Ahmad, et al, 2020).

Thus, the idea of qualifications has supported numerous new examinations encompassing food access on a family level, whereby a scope of family resources are broken down as far as their effect on food access (Pakravan, 2020; Dobiášová, 2016; Ahmad, et al, 2020). An exploration of Canadian hosting refugees affirmed this through a survey on food access through a job investigation on the family level, through gathering information encompassing the particular monetary and social attributes of families (Kamali, et al, 2021).

According to Falvey (2012), these family-level investigations into food availability are prefaced by the idea that job security is a significant and frequently sufficient condition for food security. So, food security should be viewed within the larger context of work security. A family's economic security refers to its viability as a lucrative and regenerating unit, determining its access to public food supplies and the value allocated to food patterns.

Various family-level food security investigations have been conducted in South Africa both from local citizens and from immigrants' perspectives, and the results of these investigations have been more deceiving than expected among low earner populations (Cooke, 2012; Battersby, 2011). The value of food patterns in public food supplies is little known from refugees' perspectives. Disregarding the spatial economy in examining family food access is something to worry about for the refugee family food access level, especially in an ethnic market that always feels marginalised (Joassart-Marcelli, et al, 2017).

Everywhere, some refugees have gradually become urban citizens; however, they are sometimes given little attention to some emic social issues related, for instance, to food accessibility such as distance and transport to food purchase process, acquiring food quality and other resources of great importance inside the hosting country (McElrone, et al, 2019; Lawlis, et al, 2018; Bower, et al, 2014). Among these arguments, possessing a means of transportation allows low-income households to fairly optimize their food expenses as they can circulate even the utmost isolated spatial food economy whereby there are diverse food retailers of their choice (Lawlis, et al, 2018; Bower, et al, 2014; Shannon, 2016; Gichunge & Kidwaro, 2014). In terms of food access conditions, all refugees are not the same in terms of socio-cultural and economic status; therefore, a more in-depth understanding of the characteristics and resources used at the family level is required (Morris, et al, 2009; McElrone, et al, 2019; Lawlis, et al, 2018).

Furthermore, these prerequisites of food access call upon an investigation of each receiving country's socio-economic and political stands towards immigration, which overall shares more comprehension over the refugees' food access limitations (McElrone, et al, 2019; Lawlis, et al, 2018). However, Cooke (2012) contrasts this when analysing the low-income households' food access in the South, indicating that how the family is economically organised had significant ramifications for food security strategy. Cooke (2012) stipulates that urban food uncertainties have more to do with household management issues than political and public food supplies. Relating Cooke's (2012) arguments to those of Mycek, et al. (2020), one can indicate that it is more difficult to pinpoint which variables are directly contributing to refugees' family food insecurity and that the refugees are more perplexed by the way economic activities are structured in contrast to the sending countries.

In the South, for instance, the impressing food costs resulting from recurring political instability evoked more reaction even though it disproportionally affected the low-income populace, including refugees (Lagi, et al, 2011). Cooke (2012) asserts that in vulnerable situations, such as poverty or those who have been through stressful situations, the government is responsible, as stated in the IFSS, for improving their household earnings through assistance that helps them develop business ideas. This IFSS is a stand-alone plan for impoverished people like refugees that monitors access to food through wages. The limitation of this plan is the lack of acknowledgement that family food access is influenced by other factors, such as the geographical food environment and food value, which impact refugee households' food access (Nutz, 2017; Cooke, 2012).

According to Nutz (2017), the practical third-party intermediation scheme that imbues this group of people with access to food within South Africa has limitations. In this context, the third element calls for government involvement to assess the accessibility of disadvantaged individuals using a dynamic record of the unique food economy, in which these people use their resources based on accessible food. Sen (1981) states that the entire household structure or individual food access complexity analysis is woven around capabilities and qualifications.

Scholars' findings in a similar context support Sen's ideas by proposing an integrated approach to food access analysis that recognizes that, while Food scarcity may be primarily a spatial phenomenon, it cannot be looked at as such at household or individual level, because physical access to palatable food is rather an enabler, nor a guarantee to a good eating routine (Cannuscio,et al, 2014; Hillier, et al, 2011; Cannuscio, et al, 2013). Refugees may also encounter barriers due to food outlets' structure, type, thickness, and closeness (Cook, 2012).

In addition to these social elements, the lived insight of neediness determines the way refugee households interface with the entire spectrum directly or indirectly linked to food access as opposed to being a result of a single phenomenon of the spatial food environment (Nutz, 2017). Food access is undertaken to address a bunch of conditions under which people are confined. Nutz (2017) built up around capacity resources in a refugee context.

Judelsohn et al. (2021) ascribe mentality systems as methods that portray these groups' prevailing food access limitations. Judelsohn et al. (2021) unveiled that cultural and economic disparities have led to acculturation that contributes to dietary inequality, potentially resulting in negative health effects such as disease. These health effects may push refugees to select certain foods and avoid others, rendering the household relatively food insecure. Regarding the refugees being the core element under research, an investigation at the household level is deemed to clarify the factor(s) that influence their food access.

3.3.1.5 Policy Implications to Food Access

As food insecurity exacerbates the individual's nutritional status among low-income earners, especially among the immigrant population, researchers, among other causing factors, attribute this to policy implications to households' food access failure. Nutz's (2017) findings on refugees' livelihood strategies in Africa attribute the food desert to the market systems failing to work properly for certain target groups due to existing rules and regulations in the host countries.

These are formal laws, decrees, or informal rules, including social and cultural norms. Research findings indicate that in some countries, refugees are legally restricted from working or are permitted to do so only in limited sectors or after a certain period (Nutz, 2017). Complicated bureaucratic processes might obstruct or delay the recognition of abilities required to execute them, even for people permitted to work and possess appropriate talents.

In terms of social and cultural norms, companies may be hesitant to hire refugees, even if they are legally permitted to do so, due to prevalent biases and misconceptions regarding refugees (Nutz, 2017). Another policy affecting refugees is that policy where food access in disadvantaged networks regularly happens with a kind of restriction both in terms of the number and mixture of food outlets (Cooke, 2012). Battersby& Marshak (2017) explain how considerations concentrating on geographical inequities within the urban food retail climate are created in a friendly equity hypothesis and, more explicitly, in debates over food equality.

According to a study on urban food access among low-income earners in Cape Town, food access needs are seen to be limited to the geographical and monetary minimizing of certain networks, and

metropolitan food instability is thought to represent a sort of social avoidance along these lines (Cooke, 2012; Battersby& Marshak, 2017). A study on Sierra Leonean migrants in Durban illustrates more evidence of foreign home foods not being authorised on the market being the focal point of geographical and monetary limitation (Naidu & Nzuza, 2014).

This is to say the urban food framework has not yet opened its industrial food production doors to some foreign food systems that would allow and give the underestimated migrants' networks satisfactory amounts of different and reasonable food. According to Battersby & Marshak (2017), examining political facts and trends holds the government partly accountable for the underlying metropolitan food framework that creates disparities in negotiating food among low-income consumers.

For further information, Kroll (2016) examines people experiencing poverty in the foodways in South Africa. This study reveals that South African food systems are changing due to changes in food value chain regimes, significantly influencing people experiencing poverty (Kroll, 2016). However, the demand side factors emerge from impoverished people's foodways, influencing how they eat, what they buy, and the culturally conditioned meanings they assign to it.

According to Cooke (2012), Southern arrangement continues to be dominated by the assumption that more prominent food production in rural areas is deemed to improve metropolitan food security by lowering food costs. Cooke (2012) continues to discover that food security interventions within SADC are almost always aimed at revitalizing agrarian creation. In this perspective, since 2002, South African policy on food security has been Coordinating a Food Security System that provides a reformist approach to dealing with urban food security and lived experience of food insecurity at the household level where the immigrants are part of the citizens (Cooke, 2012). In this context, an examination of South Africa's food price policy finds importance, despite the good effects of social assistance programmes, no systematic attempts to review agricultural food policy that considers all population group inside the country (Kroll, 2016; Kirsten, 2012).

The combined outcome from the International Food Policy Institute research and the South African food security policy context record ample foreign exchange constraints, meaning the country is open to foreign commodities. This is clarified in two ways by Termeer et al. (2018): On the one hand, there is a well-established formal commercial sector linked to international agriculture and international financing, which allows for cheaper access to a variety of easy meals. On the other hand, many impoverished, small-scale black farmers and informal traders operate outside the official system. The bottom line of this is to comply with the proposition of the national integrated food security strategy (IFSS) that is not limited to the availability and accessibility of food at all times but likewise the right of adequate nutrition to citizens.

Despite all of the good indications that make South Africa a food secure status, the practical component of this integrated food security policy provision remains unclear when some groups of people, such as lower-income citizens, including nationals and immigrants, struggle to acquire food for their choices (Koch, 2011; Kepe & Tessaro, 2014; Kirsten, 2012; Naidu & Nzuza, 2014).

3.3.1.1.6 Anthropology on Food Access in the Democratic Republic of Congo

Generally, the anthropology of food gathering is a set of representation, beliefs, knowledge and practices either inherited or learned and shared by people of a certain culture or social group (Sobreira, et al., 2018). These are the social criteria that Congolese people use to obtain food, either naturally through breeding, gathering, hunting, and fishing or conventionally through the market process (Tollens, 2003). Two crucial factors of access to Congolese food markets should be emphasized. On the one hand, markets are defined by the availability of processed foods in traditional and contemporary patterns. On the other hand, the market sells only raw or unprocessed foods. While economists are concerned with food availability and affordability, and nutritionists are concerned with food use, food and eating have a range of connotations in anthropology (Mintz and Du Bois, 2002; Warde, 2016; Weaver, et al, 2019).

In anthropology, food access problems include what to eat, who to prepare it for, how to cook it, who to eat with, when to consume it, and how to get it. Himmelgreen (2002) supports this by saying, "*What people eat is who they are.*" Eating is an integral element of one's identity. Food's

cultural importance determines how Congolese approach food, even though its primary objective is to offer subsistence (Palojoki and Tuomihn, 2003). In anthropological research, culture underlines "*a specific structure of articulated desire in a distinctive consuming strategy that shapes the contour of a specific identity space"* (Mintz and Du Bois, 2002).

Congolese are cultural traditionalists regarding food access, favouring specific food and eating traditions that imply higher trust, stability, and food assurance (Lee, 2015; De Merode, et al, 2004). Nasi, et al. (2011) indicate that traditional customs characterize practically all aspects of Congolese food production. In their local tongues, indigenous Congolese people preserve knowledge of their land and, presumably, food resources (Lyana & Manimbulu, 2014). Traditionally, these food resources are seasonal, and people can receive them whenever possible. They can also be free to access, especially those frequently sourced from the natural or wild environment. To combat the decline in official sector jobs, urban and suburban areas surrounding DRC towns have turned to self-production of traditional food, which they sell primarily on the street market (Iyenda, 2001).

This custom is passed down from generation to generation, demonstrating the identity of the Congolese people (Wilkie & Carpenter, 1999). Traditional meals are more than just an active component of organism and sustenance for Congolese people; they are also the essence and symbol of social life, allowing people to speak with one another, especially through traditional methods and techniques. Dietary standards such as food taboos concern food access among Congolese communities. According to the traditional norms and rituals of each ethnic group in the DRC, certain animals are prohibited from being hunted, such as hyenas, cats, and owls, which are inedible birds and creatures that deliver death news to society, especially in the twilight (This apply to Bashi ethnic group in the eastern part of the DRC).

In several dialects of the Congo, some ethnic groups consider many species of caterpillars belonging to the Lepidoptera order—called "milanga" in larval form—to be edible meals and a source of protein, while others are not known to use them as food (Lyana and Manimbulu, 2014). Snake flesh and chicken gizzards are not allowed to be eaten by women because they may affect their fertility (Lyana and Manimbulu, 2014). According to Lyana & Manimbulu (2014), women can protect themselves by avoiding certain meals in their life cycles. Balasha, Jean-Hélène, et al.

(2022) recognize the role of gender in the Congolese food production. Despite being prohibited from eating some foods, women play an important role in household food security and nutrition in Congolese civilizations since agriculture is largely based on rudimentary methods. They are also capable of intervening in food production and post-harvest processes. The particulars of the Congolese people are to maintain cultural continuity, from dressing to food artefacts, taking part in a different agro-food network (Friedman, 1990). The organisational structures of the food system are determined by cultural norms (Brunori, 2007).

In most African cultures, men head the family unit, particularly in the DRC. Thus, respect for male authority is crucial. They are responsible for providing food and other necessities for the entire family. Generally, the father's preferences determine the household's food consumption. Culinary rituals and other cultural patterns of food heritage passed down from ancestors continue to appeal in today's food consumption habits, such as insects' and caterpillars' cultural idiosyncrasies (Shine,2020). Tierney & Ohnuki-Tierney (2012) add to this by stating that something may stink in one culture but be fragrant in another because many things are edible, but it is up to each culture to decide what constitutes food.

For example, fermented milk (Odunfa & Oyewole, 1998) from the *Mashanza* cow combined with sweet potatoes is a popular meal among Congolese men, particularly among the *Bashi* ethnic group. Congolese people place a high priority on male and female obedience and respect. Women are typically responsible for household chores and child care. Congolese cuisine combines French and Arabic influences with traditional African staples such as cassava, banana, yam, rice, beans, and taro to create a starchier, more traditional African diet. Fresh fish is available to residents living near or around lakes and rivers. Fresh fish, goat, chicken, and cattle meat are frequently served with some variety of cassava leaves (paste and leaves) or corn in local-style eateries.

The way these things are used varies depending on the ethnic group. For example, the *Bashi* of eastern Congo utilize cassava root to manufacture fufu flour. At the same time, the *Rega* of the same region and western inhabitants of the DRC can use it to make a chewy paste known as *Shikwange* (Aloys & Angeline, 2009). Most markets in the DRC sell fish, particularly dry or salted fish. A sort of open-air roadside restaurant that serves people quickly-cooked cuisine is also known

as an open-air roadside restaurant. Food must be eaten per the customs of each tribe and hamlet, and it is more practised and appreciated in rural areas.

It raises issues of taboos and totems which prohibit or permit the use of specific foods (Fieldhouse, 2017). Similarly, in the Mashi language, women are not permitted to eat the gizzard or kaborobonzi, which means 'of chicken'. Before a man eats any other parts of the chicken, he must ensure that the *kaborobonzi* is present on his plate since it symbolises authority. In some civilisations, blood is sacred to ensure sovereignty and authority. Chicken, pork, rice, beans, sweet potatoes, cassava leaves, and fufu are commonly offered at ceremonial occasions. Goat is used in various situations, and it is a typical Congolese meal served with cassava or plantain and other ingredients. Plantain is a sweet banana that can be used as a substitute for taro, sweet potatoes, and yam. Plantains are consumed with fermented milk from cows by some tribes, such as the *Bashi* and peanut butter (Kindakinda) by the *Rega* tribe. It's excellent cooked as chips in urban areas. The finest beverage for older people in the DRC is traditional wine such as banana (*kasisksi*) and palm wine from the Raphia species (*malafu ma yimba*).

Elders traditionally share palm or banana wine during ceremonies, such as asking for a woman's hand in marriage while addressing important issues surrounding the ceremony. Furthermore, modern beverages such as beer (Primus, Amstel) and soft drinks (Fanta, Coca-Cola, etc.) are increasingly ingrained in Congolese food beverage consumption and daily events.

Nonetheless, as time passes, people come into contact with various civilizations. The impact of climatic change and an increase in foreign food cultures and technological innovation is jeopardising indigenous food in the Congolese people's area. Urban Congolese people, as opposed to rural Congolese people, have various French cooking styles, such as grilled meals (Johnson, 1991). Since the goods are not produced nearby, the new food is more expensive. As a result, the new eating habits will not last. The less foreign products consumed are from French bakeries and patisseries, many of which are managed by Lebanese immigrants in the DRC.

Fewer people consume tea and bread for breakfast as a result of the previously described. They decide to consume what they are accustomed to instead. Country food access experiences were

observed (Tod-Tims, 2020). In present-day Inuvik, Canada's Northwest territories among Shawna, the indigenous residents sometimes go without foods weighted with pleasurable emotions and tastes of home for extended periods (Tod-Tims, 2020).

Conversely, access to traditional food is a matter of country food distribution that impacts individuals' consumption, a quotidian practice that nourishes social connections and a sense of well-being. Even though traditional foods remain culturally and nutritionally significant elements of the overall food system in many societies, it is important to illustrate the extent to which households or individuals make up their nourishment through different channels. The multi-stream access to rural food impacts the local customers' socio-emotional and physical well-being. This includes edible food obtained by hunting, collecting, or fishing and sold on the market for distribution.

Food insecurity for Indigenous peoples' country food shortages is a key developing concern in Arctic Canada, tentative to hike prices and access to nutrient-dense commercial country foods. Country foods are traditional northern indigenous foods harvested from the land and sea by hunting, fishing, and gathering. These streams to food access in North Canada are not far from that practising in Africa, including the DRC (Naylor, et al, 2023; Raj, Roodbar, et al, 2022).

The quantity of food available on the social market is determined by labourer networks that supply sufficient food to families and the public market. Food insecurity is worsened in the DRC by crowded families in towns and cities compared to those on the farm (Kismul, et al, 2015), and the extremely high cost and sometimes low nutritional quality of market foods (Kismul, et al, 2015). Cultural anthropology of food access in the DRC elucidates the pattern for consumers to participate in acceptable food culture (Landreville, 2020; Baer, et al, 2021). Nutritional anthropology guides the analysis of diets based on nutrient-poor and calorie-dense imported processed foods and identifies the causes of serious health problems such as diabetes and gout.

This happened since the DRC has been plagued by domestic crises that have hampered local food markets in meeting the indigenous people's food that tie them to their cultural and homeland eating habits.

Thus, they appeal to more nearby imported food supplies to cover the gap (Eric, 2017; Lyna & Manimbulu, 2014; Tollens, 2003). In line with the food import behaviour in the internal market (Eric, 2017; Lyna & Manimbulu, 2014; Tollens, 2003), understand a big discord between the GDP and the international trade prices where the low-income population felt left behind.

This analysis needs to mention the AIDS model input using the NGO's data where low-income populations living with less than 3$ a day compensate for the gap with food commodities (Eric, 2017). Despite this, many Congolese people are always hungry due to a lack of access to sufficient income. The current review looked at the importance of food markets in people's lives in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and how being away from one's cultural market might affect food access for Congolese living abroad.

3.3.2 Insight Into South African Food Economy Context

3.3.4.1 Immigrants' livelihood experience insight into food access in South Africa

The term immigrants encompasses economic migrants, refugees and asylum seekers. The 1951 Geneva Convention identifies refugees as people who cross international borders because of fear of being persecuted for various reasons (Holzer, 2012). Despite their legal status of staying in the host country, refugees and other migrants tend to experience socio-economic marginalization, which forces them into abject poverty in their host countries (Msabah, 2019). Many studies have addressed the link between migration and food access (Crush, 2017; Maharaj, et al, 2017; Alexie, 2014; Crush, 2013).

Generally, these studies point to the fact that refugees tend to have poorer food access than the rest of the population. This reality can be related to refugees' experiences of discrimination and even systematic exclusion, which affect their ability to access adequate food in their host countries (Nutz, 2017; Harris et al., 2014; Jinnah, 2013). So far, 20 million refugees worldwide have had such experiences (FAO, 2018). Studies among refugees have revealed that Congolese refugees were socially and economically marginalized in South Africa's cities of Johannesburg and Durban (Amisi 2006; Amisi & Ballard, 2005). The marginalization of refugees is seen from the perspective

of xenophobic attacks fueled mainly by competition over limited economic resources between migrants and poor South Africans (Mashau, 2019; Neocosmos, 2010; Misago, 2019).

The result has been the loss of livelihoods for migrants (Neocosmos, 2010). In an attempt to stay away from xenophobic attacks, migrants concentrate in cities where the cost of accommodation, food and other living expenses is very high, which some migrants may not afford because most of them are engaged in the informal economy as the main source of livelihoods (Crush, et al, 2015; Philip, 2010; Maharaj, et al, 2017; Napier, et al, 2018). Xenophobia is not the only factor leading to the economic exclusion of migrants and refugees. A study conducted by Viswanathan, et al. (2017) in Uganda highlights that refugees are likely to be excluded from the marketplace because of language barriers, amongst other factors.

Due to this challenge, refugees struggle to find employment; hence, the informal sector and remittances tend to be their source of income in most cases (Nutz, 2017; Amisi, 2006; Amisi et al, 2011). In the context of South Africa, Amissi (2006) examines social networks as a form of social capital to understand the livelihood strategies of DRC refugees better. Secondly, he looked at the refugees' income-generating activities and how Congolese refugees deal with unexpected events like long-term unemployment.

In terms of earnings, the informal economy continues to be the primary source of income for Congolese refugees in Durban. Household income is not purely derived from wages. Remittances also play an important part. Compared to other household demands, their earnings are primarily utilized to pay for housing-related expenses. Compared to the townships surrounding the area, rent in the suburbs is high. Considering the administrative barriers that Congolese refugees face in this sector and the general trends and patterns of informal economic activities, there are grounds to conclude that the livelihoods of the Durban refugee community are not sustainable since they are mainly active in the informal sector where individuals’ livelihoods are insecure and precarious.

The cause of this could be the average wages. The informal sector is smaller than in the formal economy. There are ties between working informally and being poor. As a result, the informal economy employs a higher proportion of disadvantaged citizens than the formal economy.

According to Amissi (2006), there is no clear link between working informally and poverty or between working formally and poverty eviction. Hunter & Skinner (2002) support this viewpoint and argue that the benefit from informal activities is unreliable because it's particularly difficult to gauge the profitability of various operations. Earnings in the informal economy fluctuate every day.

Most female refugees work in hairdressing and as traders in various market niches in and around Durban, including flea markets. As a result, their earnings are low and fluctuating since these jobs are easily available, less risky, and do not require much training. Formal education is needed. Male refugees work in several professions. Household head men are well-represented in formal jobs, including security, hairdressing and repairing electronic appliances, which is risky in terms of success.

Amissi (2006) shows that those with a higher education, whether employed or self-employed, tend to earn a higher income. Yet, other sources of income include a substantial flow of money between Durban and other provinces of South Africa and between South Africa and the rest of the world, including the DRC, which contributes much to sustaining basic needs, including food. Other scholars mention the role of network as a source of access not only to the market but also to minimum income including family members, friends, priests and South Africans (Hunter & Skinner, 2002; Amisi & Ballard, 2005). However, these networks can also produce different sorts of exploitation, age and gender inequality vis-à-vis access to information and network resources because social networks are rooted in cultural values (Amisi & Ballard, 2005: 10).

In addition, refugees often receive lower salaries than their local counterparts (Brell, 2020). Furthermore, they may pay higher prices to access food, amongst other needs, because locals may intentionally hike prices when trading with someone who has not mastered the local language. To address the problem of refugees' socio-economic exclusion, a humanitarian approach calling for food aid rather than cash intervention has been advanced over the self-care approach for refugees (El-Khani, et al, 2018; Zamponi, 2018).

This entails that refugees ought to receive food support. However, this can expose them to food monotony, which is not necessarily their choice. This food aid approach has been regarded as inefficient because the supplied food is not only regarded as of poor quality due to long storage but also tends to deny refugees access to alternative options to access their food of choice (Dudley, 2011). A study on refugee food intervention by Wilson (1992) advocated adopting semi-cash intervention in the form of food stamps or vouchers to allow refugees to partake in the exchange processes to access food on the market.

Caesar & Crush (2016) propose that food access needs to expand to meet the food choices of poorer urban residents. The economic integration of refugees is another possible solution, but this may depend on each country's social context and policies. Developed countries such as the United Kingdom, Canada and Australia, and developing countries such as Zambia, Egypt and Uganda have integrated refugees into income-generating activities such as agriculture and food service value chain (Harris, et al, 2014; Nutz, 2017). This integration has largely allowed refugees to build an economic source that helps them access affordable and familiar food in line with their cultural beliefs and collective life experiences (Le Vine, 2018; Reley & Dodson, 2016).

3.3.2.1 Low-income earners and South African casual food economy

Various investigations have probed how the casual food economy works for low-income African earners. In South Africa, this casual or informal food business constitutes an important massive structure of the casual food retail area for low-income earners' food source. In South Africa, the research conducted on food sourcing indicated the overall attributes and capacities of food spaza shops and the kind of consumers they serve (Mukwarami, et al, 2018). Particular attention has been directed to spaza shops or tuck shops where most underserved communities live (Mukwarami, et al, 2018). Following the history of the country, the establishment of this informal sector served as a tool of economic freedom where the deprived communities left behind have an opportunity to undergo their livelihood activities as they would have liked (Lamb, et al, 2019; Tengeh & Mukwarami, 2017; Mukwarami, et al, 2018).

Studies in this area have found a correlation between increased informal food outlets and migration in South Africa (Lamb, et al, 2019; Tengeh & Mukwarami, 2017; Mukwarami, et al, 2018). The

increase of foreign-owned grocery spaza shops at the cost of locally-owned ones encompasses economic migrants, refugees and asylum seekers (Lamb, et al, 2019; Tengeh & Mukwarami, 2017; Mukwarami, et al, 2018). The characteristics of this kind of informal business are restricted in terms of scale, privately sustained and home-located in most cases, have uncontrolled prices, and people pay for it unexpectedly expensive (Lamb, et al, 2019; Tengeh & Mukwarami, 2017).

Other characteristics have a strong, connected social worth among sellers and consumers, which looks like social support to each other. According to Crush & McCordic (2017), most of these food spaza shops are owned by refugees and South African local migrants, which explains the reason for this social support to each other. Another motivation behind purchasing food from these shop outlets is the likelihood of obtaining their home foods (Naidu &Nzuza, 2014). Many people rely on the ease of purchasing from unlicensed vendors for food, and unlicensed food markets are estimated to account for 32-45% of the South African food system (Greenberg, 2010; Greenberg, 2016). Unlike conventional food shop outlets, food spaza shops can offer single items according to what consumers can afford.

To this, Metelerkamp & Mercer (2018) found a good reason for spaza shops to serve the low-income populace, whether you are South African or a foreign nation, "*When it comes to food, you can start with whatever you have even if it's just enough to buy two eggs. You can boil them and go to the street and sell them. Slowly, you work your way up. We help each other here*." When assessing the size and nature of the refugees' food spaza shop industry in the country (SA), the researchers recorded the articles and quantity that are being retailed, which are equivalent to the necessities of the low-income population contrary to that in the supermarket food retail outlet (Maselwa, 2017; Chebelyon-Dalizu, et al, 2010; Frayne, et al, 2013). A study on food security in Southern African cities tracks down records that spaza shops could remain competitive in prices and rely upon the quality of the service rendered to the low-income neighbourhood, making them interested in the food retailing outlets (Frayne, et al, 2013).

That is why most low-income refugees prefer to purchase their food in small quantities from nearby spaza outlets, where there are many options to find more modest unit sizes of food than making mass purchases at bigger supermarkets (Battersby & Marshak, 2017; Battersby, et al,

2016). The role of spaza shops in the urban informal food economy in KwaMashu, South Africa, was disclosed when half of the surveyed spaza shop workers were family members or friends who are remunerated half money or paid in-kind such as food (Petersen & Charman, 2018). Spaza shops or spaza shops could attract people because of forged relationships and communication inside the casual food economy, whereby household food access is an outcome of their loyalty to their food environment.

A study conducted by Brown, Bacq & Charman (2020) on urban food in Cape Town notes five major points: First, in terms of absolute numbers and relative to other vendors, few food-based informal micro-enterprises operate from the ward's high streets. Second, whereas shopping malls and formal merchants encourage street dealing in geographically nearby nodes, food-trading micro-enterprises are rare and spatially marginalized in these nodes. Third, the most vibrant street food companies provide take-out and cooked meals, and they operate in nodes that are physically separate from malls and formal merchants. Fourth, despite their proximity to supermarkets, spaza stores remain an essential component of home supplies and have managed to survive the price-cutting techniques of supermarkets inside the area. Fifth, much business competition happens horizontally between firms of the same scale. In contrast, competition between big and micro-enterprises is subdued, with geographical logic playing a key role in restricting major merchants' competitive reach.

Although formal food enterprises and supermarkets such as Spar, Pick and Pay, Shoprite or Checkers, etc. have reasonable prices, Spaza shops gain much attention from consumers as they can stay open late to attract customers after work, which adds to their convenience and the possibility for nearby and faithful customers to get credits for some sort and amount of food varieties (Brown, Bacq & Charman, 2020; Charman & Petersen, 2014; Tawodzera, 2019). Food Street and Spaza Food's networks cover the distance gap between the low-pay populace network and bigger grocery stores. Brown, Bacq & Charman (2020) find that the lowest-income households tend to conduct a single monthly bulk shop, usually from one supermarket, while high-income households shop more frequently from different sources.

Nearby casual food retailers progressively supplement the other food supplies; otherwise, low-income households would be inside a food desert. Battersby, et al. (2016) revealed that while food-secure and food-insecure families obtain food from informal sources, food-insecure households rely more on informal sources. Brown, et al. (2020) find that logistically, casual food shops are extremely limited in terms of stock and food quality. Additionally, Gastrow (2018) indicates the monopolistic situation of the neighbourhood retailers in low-pay and stable networks, which implies that nearby retailers charge more for their food varieties.

On the opposite side of this, supermarkets dominate the food system; for instance, in Philippi East Cape Town, consumers spend significantly more per month on food from supermarkets than food from informal traders and spaza shops (Brown, et al, 2020; Battersby, et al, 2016). Consumers from this area are disappointed by the casual food market services, or it is an issue of social stratification where most consumers are high-income. A study conducted on African retail consumers by Skinner (2016) assumes supermarkets are frequently considered to benefit low-income customers. In line with this, Ong, et al. (2021) supplement Skinner's (2016) ideas by indicating that household wealth is one thing and its capacity to manage household expenses wisely is the most significant key to piercing the barrier to obtaining appropriate foods to the modern food shop outlets.

In this regard, the analysis of Ong, et al. (2021) was inspired by Battersby’s (2011) analysis of the alternative approach to food access, which provided clarity over the household capacity and its utilization of resources for food access. This ranges from organisation, shopping planning and one’s ability to reflect how resources are purposely used to purchase food in the more extensive food climate. Frayne, et al. (2013) indicate that the kinds of retailers from which migrants bought food are conceivably the most grounded marker of their food safety. Nutz's (2017) findings on refugees’ livelihood economy in South Africa portray admittance to food as a multi-dimensional target, indicating that refugee households are continually constrained to compromise the different goals while trying to get food on the table.

The spatial food retail climate and the family's unique characteristics may influence which concessions are made and which locations are preferred in food purchasing decisions, affecting where people shop and the types and amounts of food they may buy. The same study demonstrates how the low-income earner's migrants, for some food items other than the most available, use factors such as proximity, comfort, an incentive for cash, item quality reach and social connection networks as a portion of the components impacting these migrants (Nutz,2017).

The analysis by Naidu & Nzuza, 2014 insists on better inoculating the inseparable social elements inside which food access is installed as an identity marker, strongly implying how food is perceived and consumer choices. The social embeddedness of retailers has significant ramifications for how food is gotten to by the household. In line with this, Cooke (2012) indicates a significant failure inside poor metropolitan networks is among amount and quality, whereby people who experience pay restrictions struggle to get healthfully rich food by acquiring various food sources. The examination of the spatial food track down significant bits of knowledge into this argument of the metropolitan food climate among recognized and casual retailers towards purchasers and what these connections mean for food access suggests a more nuanced appraisal of the neighbourhood food climate is needed (Battersby, 2016, Cooker, 2012, Frayne, et al, 2013).

This, on the other hand, requires additional investigation. This might be accomplished by conducting in-depth case studies of areas where supermarkets have been created. This should entail tracking changes in low-income households' food consumption and formal and informal retail employment patterns over time. As the urban population evolves, it is important to understand the dynamisms around the urban food economy, which comprises both formal and retail economies, a reliant framework to access basic needs. Although this is a growing phenomenon, little has entered into the conceptualization of refugees' food access by special food access assessment. At the international level, the limited literature on this subject has mainly focused attention on factors seeking to improve food security among people from refugee backgrounds resettled in high-income countries and the risks they are exposed to (Gingell, et al, 2022; Maharaj, et al, 2017). Food access and one aspect of food security received less attention.

In contrast to the factors that influenced their food consumption, they emphasised the effects of the food they consumed on their health. When Kirkland, et al.(2022) explored perceptions of resettled Congolese refugees’ maintaining cultural traditions in Ohio in the USA, they included only women. However, another section of the literature, Nutz (2017), Wilson & Renzaho (2015) and Harris, et al. (2014), focused on how refugees' ability to get food increased through communal food gardening. They focused on refugees in some Southern African and Australian countries.

In South Africa, limited literature on refugees mainly focused on social exclusion and livelihood strategies and did not have salient themes around food (Amissi, 2006; Amissi, et al, 2011). However, Napier, et al. (2018) informed on the indicators of food insecurity among refugees and asylum seekers in the city of Durban. Instead of investigating other important aspects of food access that can provide tangential information about people's health status, they concentrated on the relationship between income and food to assess the refugees' state of health.

Refugees being exposed to market approach experiences, income, and food availability are not enough to determine people’s health and well-being. The influence of cultural identity is another lever in renegotiating access to food. Thus, this universe of knowledge has very limited information about refugees in South Africa. Given the increasing rate of refugees in South Africa, investigating their food access remains an important research area in anthropology, especially within the under-researched populations like Congolese refugees in Durban. Research is therefore required to understand how these disadvantaged individuals interact with the market to get food within the Durban metropolitan food dynamics.

3.4 Conclusion

This literature study used a market approach to gather pertinent information about food access among Congolese refugees residing in Durban. The body of knowledge on migration revealed an increase in migration worldwide; their impact or experiences on food access is crucial to know. Their food access offers two levels of analysis: the global North and the South. The body of literature in the global North concentrated on the systematic structure and analysis of the economy and food desert in the context of immigrants. The results demonstrated that social inequality is one

of the barriers impeding low-income immigrants' access to food in the context of the market approach.

On the other hand, research in the global South focused on refugees' household capabilities to generate income. The findings revealed that income is insufficient to cover the refugees' household expenses. In South Africa, the increase in migration was noticed. Its existing literature on food access focused much on food identity and food choices among foreign nationals. The findings unveiled that migrants used their home food identity to drive food access in the host country (South Africa). However, few refugee studies are highlighted, focusing on food security and its health implications among Burundian and Congolese refugees in Durban. Limited studies on Congolese refugees in South Africa explored their livelihood strategies to secure income in Durban.

The findings revealed an inability to secure enough income. Considering all these socio-cultural and economic challenges, a study examining refugee' experiences under a market approach is limited. Thus, investigating their food access remains an important research area in anthropology, especially Congolese refugees' food access experiences using the Durban market approach and under a multi-cultural food context. Congolese people experience little cross cultural food context inside their own country. Anthropology of food and food access in the DRC implied traditional and imported food. Even though imported foods are emerging among urban eating habits, traditional food systems still impact individuals' consumption, a quotidian practice that nourishes social connections and a sense of well-being. Anthropology on food access illustrated the extent to which households or individuals make up their nourishment through different channels. This is resided in indigenous genius practices and beliefs carried over multiples of food, including hunting, collecting, or fishing, and sold on the market for diversification and distribution.

CHAPTER FOUR. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND METHODS

This section explains the approach and methods used to reach conclusions. The approach and methods of this study helped to ensure reliable, valid results that addressed the aims and objectives of this study, which consisted of examining the Congolese refugees' food access case of the Durban market approach. It encompasses the kind of data collected, where from, and how it was collected and analysed. Thus, this section is structured as follows: research design, data collection techniques, sampling size and technique, data processing and analysis, and ethical considerations.

4.1 Research Design

The research study is an ethnographic qualitative study approach. This approach helped the researcher study Congolese refugees' food access using the market approach. The market approach is about supply and demand; anthropology recognises this through market research ethnography (Freedman, 2016). The qualitative approach in this market research ethnography required the researcher to engage with and observe the informants in their respective or cultural environments, such as their homes and public markets.

Cultural identity is an important element to consider when the researcher is engaging with the informants. This is because migrants always carry their beliefs and methods of approaching food, which can differ from how people do regarding the law of supply and demand in Durban. The law of supply and demand recognizes this and calls upon the market value of goods regardless of the particularities of cultural identities. This is crucial to pay attention to in the context of a particular population group, such as refugees. By being forced to leave their country of origin, these Congolese refugees might have lost their identities, not only serving as a means of production but also as a way of negotiating what an individual cannot provide himself.

These identities engrained into daily life (culture), such as food production, eating behaviour and economic opportunities (employment, etc.), may not be the same. A person's eating habits are directly correlated with their level of economic power if they rely on the market to buy their meals. This is to the extent that market research ethnography acknowledges no money or buy (Freedman, 2016). This ethnographic qualitative research also emphasised how economic opportunities and culture interrelated together to shape Congolese refugees' food behaviour as individuals or as

members of a particular community towards food purchase decision-making (Creswell, et al, 2007; Savage, 2006). Etymologically, ethnos means people, cultural group, or race; thus, literally, this means ethnography is writing about people's culture (Draper, 2015; Creswell, et al, 2007). Studying people in their cultural context is the fundamental form of ethnographic social research.

As migrants, Congolese refugees, in particular, have different knowledge, histories, interactions, and cultural perspectives that affect their food purchase and food choice experiences (Draper, 2015). The latter is important to disclose through the researcher's immersion into these consumers' way of life. This argument is supported by Tracy (2019), who states that ethnographic research is the only way that allows the researcher to disclose consumers' patterns of food access through immersion within a cultural context.

The latter was done through a narrative account with the informants within a particular theoretical framework (Freedman, 2016). Food access, which is the component of food security, is concerned with the ethnographic storytelling approach. Beveridge, et al. (2019) employed this method to assess the state of food insecurity in Guatemala's dry corridor region. Villena-Esponera, et al. (2019) employed the same method to collect data about the perception of food insecurity, anthropometric and food intake to assess the food and nutritional status of the Colombian refugees in Ecuador.

The qualitative approach presents more detailed methods to investigate the phenomenon and provide quality data. According to Admin (2021), qualitative research is a type of social inquiry that focuses on how people make meaning of their knowledge in their environment. It also entails interpreting their day-to-day experiences (Denzin, 2000). Qualitative methods can be conducted in a world where people of various ethnicities live together. To create this comparison, one might question the features of differences and similarities among individuals. Qualitative research is critical in resolving the researcher's concerns in this situation.

According to a study by Coghan & Brydon-Miller (2014), personal or communal experiences are involved at each stage of the qualitative research. Investigating or inquiring into real-life events is classified as qualitative research. The characteristics of qualitative research are that data analysis

aids in the interpretation and understanding of human behaviour rather than how often this happens (Kim, et al, 2017; Butina, et al, 2015; Ormston, et al, 2014). Probing through interviews or observations is a powerful and active way of understanding human behaviour, such as the eating process to access food. Thus, the researcher might have planned the study using a variety of tools and appropriate approach (Kim, et al, 2017; Butina, et al, 2015; Ormston, et al, 2014).

The purpose is to gather several distinct thoughts that will lead to the data's conclusion or Contextualisation of an individual's or collective life circumstance of reality to another. Given the variety of sources (natural) and living context of data collection, and the assessment of data obtained as a result of the subject's internal features, the data collected through this qualitative approach is open to subjective criticism where informants responding to a given social phenomenon points out their views in the manner they are experiencing it or in the way other researchers understand human experiences (Hennink, et al, 2020; Saunders, et al, 2018).

Qualitative research has several advantages. In practice, quantitative research employs methods that are entirely appropriate to the subject matter, especially in ethnographic research, includes interviews, focus groups and participant observations (Hennink, et al, 2020; Ginsburg, et al, 2019). The research approach is built on available and coming-in data. In addition, the subject materials are analyzed in greater depth, and debates are held to depict what is important or not to the people (Hennink, et al, 2020). In qualitative research, the data gathered has a predictive quality as it primarily works within fluid structures, and the intricacies of the information can be included in the resulting results (Saunders, et al, 2018).

This helps to promote a thorough understanding of human personality and behaviour features in the context of their natural environment (Mays & Pope, 2020; Saunders, et al, 2018). Respect for the distinctiveness of a diverse person’s ability to do something is maintained in qualitative research as it is extremely effective at bringing about constructive social change. Research indicates that any social change driven by the constructive and creative capacity for the most vulnerable people, such as bringing about access to basic needs, including food, recalls to the most efficient techniques to interpret and understand societal interactions towards food accessibility issues (Van der Ploeg, 2014; Tischler, 2013).

Qualitative research has allowed several researchers to examine and collect data about food access for people experiencing poverty in various case studies employing diverse methods. Sonnino, et al. (2016) employed a place-based approach to identify relationships between food system actors, including producers, consumers and government, in food security narratives. The main idea is to improve vulnerable consumers' access to resources and markets by ensuring sustainable livelihoods and more equitable access to resources.

Brons, Oosterveer & Wertheim-Heck (2020), exploring the notions and dynamics of the inclusiveness of Syrian refugees in the Netherlands food system, used narratives interviews as techniques to study practices on the lived experiences of migrants in their daily food routines and understandings of health and sustainability. Given the study's short-term/long-term comparative nature, they combined in-depth semi-structured life history interviews (accounts of performative action) with food practice observations.

All this is to elucidate a respondent’s feelings, perceptions, and attitudes toward their lived experiences. From the above mentioned, the ethnographic qualitative methods encourage the researcher to be more intimate and interdependent to ensure all information is accurate and dependable. It also analyzes the ranks and counts of sentiments, attitudes, and behaviour to create an in-depth and detailed picture of a subject.

Lastly, it can also explain why a specific response was given in response to a set of questions in an interview. The feasibility and complexities of combining the two methods for sample collection and triangulation prove to deliver a coherent study are reflected in the use of this tool. A case study conducted by Judelsohn, et al. (2021) on the refugees resettled in the United States of America (USA) between 2012 and 2016 employed the mixed-methods approach to determine the role played by urban planning in facilitating food equity for new Americans.

Using this mixed-methods approach, on one side, allowed (Judelsohn, et al, 2021; Le Compte & Schensul, 2012; Pakravan & Charvadeh, 2020) to review ten cities’ inclusive plans for most of the refugee population. Along the same lines, scholars such as Pakravan & Charvadeh (2020)

employed the mixed-methods to determine the food security situation of Afghan refugees in Southern areas of Tehran province.

On the other side, an in-depth interview from the population study of Buffalo helped to explore the nuances of the findings from the review of comprehensive plans. For this deep-dive case study, interviews and a focus group were conducted with refugees from Burma to gain an understanding of how local governments and civil society groups plan for new American populations, particularly in terms of their food and health (Judelsohn, et al, 2021).

The best of the ethnographic qualitative methods is their flexibility in getting deeper into the matter. In line with this, Muller (2020) records that qualitative research concerns quality data rather than amounts and numbers. The qualitative study employs a methodical approach based on observations and descriptions of observable events (Goduka, 2012). This suggests that qualitative outcomes cannot be measured. It develops and employs hypotheses or theories about certain ideas using thematical models rather than computer approaches and mathematics. The process of measurement is central to the success of the qualitative study. Qualitative methods can be widely employed in psychology, sociology, and marketing to provide evidence that a hypothesis is relatively subjective (Muller 2020). Instead of relying on objective facts, this research seeks instinct facts or opinions before suggesting an outcome. That is why the research is closely affiliated with social methods.

Muller (2020) and Queirós, et al. (2017) congruent with Goduka (2012) on the qualitative approach advantages when conducting social research:

- A larger sample size is not possible with an ethnographic qualitative approach:

It is easier to get an accurate generalized conclusion when the researcher can research a smaller sample size with rich quality data for any hypothesis. The statistical analysis has more depth, the additional data that the researcher acquires from this effort provides the outcome with more confidence.

A reduced sample size reduces the chance that outliers in the research group may skew the results the researcher aims to obtain.

- Ethnographic qualitative research allows researchers to get rich knowledge, but it requires much time:

Researchers gather data for qualitative research in real-time scenarios so that thematic analysis can occur progressively (Treiman, 2014). Interviews emanating from this approach provide direct, beneficial responses and a data-driven strategy. With fewer delays in acquiring these materials, finding correlations that finally lead to a beneficial conclusion becomes easier. Qualitative research requires the separation of systems or the identification of variables to achieve findings. As a result, it's not a simple procedure to implement (Rovai, et al, 2013).

- Randomized techniques are not used in ethnographic qualitative research:

Personal bias might enter the data spectrum when research participants perceive a study is trying to attain a specific conclusion (Muller, 2020; Sahyoun, et al, 2014; Mello, et al, 2010). The opinions offered during interviews are either half-truths or outright lies to manipulate the results. That is why using a quantitative approach to investigate a specific hypothesis within a big population demographic is beneficial (Arcos, et al, 2015). This method employs a randomized technique that is beneficial for acquiring data (Arcos, et al, 2015). As a result, bias is unlikely to arise in most cases (O'Cathain, 2018). The qualitative approach also allows the data to be statistically applied to the rest of the population under investigation to confirm its conclusion. There is always the possibility of inaccuracy, but this method usually yields the views of the interviewed informants (Sahyoun, et al, 2014; Mello, et al, 2010).

- That is why, when conducting ethnographic qualitative research, it is not easy to duplicate results:

Opinions are considered viable alternatives to facts and anything conceivable (Nardi, 2018). Quantitative research solves this difficulty by focusing solely on actual data (Loewen & Godfroid, 2019). In the qualitative approach, the study cannot validate itself because the results always point to different data (Sahyoun, et al, 2014; Mello, et al, 2010). Although there may be minor modifications over time, the general conclusions reached by researchers utilizing this method remain contestable. As a result, this data is useful when determining the requirement for specific future outcomes (Sahyoun, et al, 2014; Mello, et al, 2010). The facts contain themes that can be considered when making difficult judgments.

- Ethnographic qualitative research can concentrate on a single fact or a sequence of facts:

Researchers can utilize the qualitative technique to concentrate on a specific fact in the population they want to investigate. This strategy is also useful when a set of data points is particularly wanted within a population (Edmonds & Kennedy, 2016). It is a cultural process that allows one to comprehend the causes of decisions, behaviours, and actions. Understanding the reason behind Congolese refugees' ability or decisions to purchase a particular food gives discomfort points or specific preferences that must be addressed more easily. The data analysis can then be proposed to expand to the rest of the refugee population, allowing all the people found in this condition to be acknowledged and proposing collective intervention (Sahyoun, et al, 2014; Mello, et al, 2010).

- The ethnographic qualitative study is conducted in an anonymized manner:

There is no need to give personal information as long as researchers can verify that individuals fit the demographic profile of their study group. People are more willing to provide an honest perspective when they know their feedback won't come back to haunt them, the anonymous aspect of quantitative research makes it ideal for data collecting. Even when interviews are conducted as part of this project, personal information is used as a screening tool rather than an identifier.

- Ethnographic qualitative research does necessitate direct observation to be useful:

Researchers adhere to specified protocols when employing the qualitative technique and must monitor each subject firsthand. This means that unless an interview is conducted directly over the phone, a study cannot send interviews to participants without necessitating their presence in the room when they respond. This advantage leads to a higher response rate because people have more time to ask questions or to be interrogated. Although the difficulty of the questions asked or the duration of an interview might deter participation, the amount and quality of data collected via the qualitative approach are always valuable. In this perspective, Napier, et al. (2018) used a coping strategy questionnaire to determine the state of food security as this gives a good indication of what the Durban asylum seekers and refugee women have to go through to provide safe and nutritionally sound meals to family members. The qualitative approach also presents another positive side of it that Muller (2020) sums as the following:

- This ethnographic approach takes into account the significance of social processes:

The ethnographic qualitative approach aims to find answers to any questions to confirm or reject a hypothesis. It is concerned about people's motives when they express an opinion or make a decision (Tilly, 2015). This data collection procedure aims to create a real-time picture of what is going on in the chosen population. As a result, this alternative assesses how society evolves or how people understand their own or others' actions (Tilly, 2015).

- In this ethnographic research process, each solution must not be self-contained:

The researcher does get to review replies from participants in qualitative research. Even if the information provided to researchers appears ambiguous or incorrect, the responses must not stand on their own (Lune & Berg, 2017). Rather than going off on a tangent like other ways, the qualitative approach provides unlimited opportunities to seek clarification. Part of this advantage stems from the fact that the data collected by researchers is anonymized when it comes to analysis. If an answer yields inconclusive results, there is a way to ensure that what was received is an accurate opinion of informants (Lune & Berg, 2017). It is difficult to bias results if a query is formatted incorrectly.

- Ethnographic qualitative research cannot lead to unnatural situations:

When a verifiable setting is not accessible for examination, qualitative research works well and tries to make sense of it. Researchers can then derive data that is relevant for review based on the decisions taken in that domain (Mohajan, 2020). This strategy might sometimes produce an unrealistic setting because of the questions or methods employed to gather information. Researchers can try to skew results by influencing the study's design in its early stages, just as a participant can try to distort results by submitting false responses (Mohajan, 2020).

- Randomization efforts in this approach fail to produce meaningful data.

The ethnographic qualitative approach does attempt to explain why specific variables arise in particular contexts. Its objective is to pinpoint the essential characteristics of a particular group for which extrapolation data might later be required to make generalizations (Karlan & Zinman, 2010; Martin-Shields & Stojetz, 2019). There are situations when the data isn't useful.

- Specific input is not available:

Ethnographic Qualitative research is not best characterized as a pass-fail course (Anderson, et al, 2012). Researchers' data ensures that the majority of a population's features will feel certain about a particular issue (Anderson, et al, 2012). The insights gathered by researchers using this method are important for the particular stakeholders in the study. Specific feedback situations that allow for positive refinement are not possible with this data.

- Ethnographic qualitative research investigations are often highly costly:

If cost is a concern when conducting research, the ethnographic qualitative approach does not require substance cost. However, a complex result could be time-consuming if corporate interests need more information to assess (Winter, 2000; McCusker & Gunaydin, 2015). A focus group is one of the most popular strategies for implementing this strategy. Working with groups of people to gather information is much more affordable than other approaches, such as individual interviews (Winter, 2000; McCusker & Gunaydin, 2015). When it comes to ethnographic qualitative research, there are some expensive options, such as online data collection. Still, there are no guarantees that the respondents will release the bulk of data needed because of miscommunication issues due to internet disruptions.

- The veracity of the answers in this context requires much attention.

Due to the direct interaction between the researcher and the informants, all responses provided during an ethnographic qualitative research project should be accurate as they represent the informant's reality and his circumstances (Sürücü & Maslakçi, 2020; Primrose, et al, 2010). This method is always predicated on the assumption that everyone is trustworthy and that each scenario is unique (Sürücü & Maslakçi, 2020). Direct observation is always possible with this method, the data is constantly tinged with participants' beliefs, which cannot be generalized to the rest of the population (Sürücü & Maslakçi, 2020). This advantage explains why so many qualitative research projects are not replicated. It does not require the data to be produced several times to ensure more confidence for the same data. If different outcomes occur, it enriches the quality of the data.

- Individual traits may or may not apply to the overall population:

It is possible that an ethnographic qualitative study's responses or features do not fairly reflect the entire community because of sample size considerations made by the researcher (Munt, et al, 2017). The assumptions that are required for this work, it is not easy to get incorrect findings or connections (Muller,2020; Sahyoun, et al, 2014; Mello, et al, 2010). The certainty the researcher can draw from this data is due to enough data collection from limited participants. Beveridge, et al. (2019) provide a holistic assessment of household capabilities for food access security through the ethnographic qualitative approach.

They insisted on how individuals' socio-political perceptions shape one's food accessibility experiences and outcomes. The frame of this is to understand the key drivers of food access. In addition, Napier, et al. (2018) used a qualitative approach to explain the quantitative data. He assesses the prevalence of household food insecurity and the correlation between food insecurity and coping strategies among female asylum seekers and refugees in the city of Durban.

The best of the ethnographic qualitative methods is their flexibility in combining quantitative and qualitative approaches (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2019). The quantitative technique focuses on the objectivist worldview and positivist paradigm (Vrasidas, 2000; Creswell, 2009; Goduka, 2012). Logical positivism was the dominant research paradigm in the twentieth century (Vrasidas, 2000; Creswell, 2009; Goduka, 2012). This paradigm is founded on the objectivistic worldview, which holds that there is an objective reality and that knowledge can only be achieved by direct experience and verification amongst independent observers (Creswell, 2009; Goduka, 2012).

The positivist paradigm is drawn from natural science and is defined by testing a hypothesis derived from an existing theory using observable social reality (hence, it is also known as deductive or theory testing) (Vrasidas, 2000; Creswell, 2009). This paradigm also assumes that the social world exists objectively and externally, that knowledge is valid only if it is based on observations of this external reality, and that universal or general laws exist (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008; Goduka, 2012).

Thus, theoretical models that can be developed are generalizable and explain cause-and-effect relationships that lend them to prediction (Goduka, 2012). The good quantitative approach allows research to be measurable, focused on causation, and replicable and generalisable data.

4.2 Data Collection Methods

Data collection is important to any research study (Wisdom & Creswell, 2013). For data collection, ethnographic research draws from various methods and techniques, "*including in-depth unstructured interviews, structured interviews, questionnaires, focus groups, mapping, photography, and video documentation*" (Adams, 2012; Asan, et al, 2015). For the current ethnographic study, the researcher employed interviews and participant observation methods of data collection. To this background, the researcher employed two stages of data collection, comprising participant observation (stage 1) and key informant interviews (stage 2). This means that the researcher had more than one encounter with participants.

The key informant interviews (stage 2) collected data using the Household Food Insecurity Access Scale (HFIAS)' interview guide, which contains key questions related to food choices and socio-economic factors to acknowledge the participants' perceptions of food access. According to Jennifer, Swindale, and Bilinsky (2007), the HFIAS is an appropriate tool for the Measurement of Household Food Access designed by the Food and Nutrition Technical Assistance Project (FANTA), which was funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). The data generated with this interview guide qualitatively helped to generate data that assess whether Congolese refugees, for instance, have adequate, regular and sufficient access to various food preferences in their host countries.

4.2.1 Stage 1: Participant Observation (Qualitative Data)

Participant observation was applied to gain a deeper understanding of the phenomena through the researcher's immersion in the natural setting of participants and one-on-one interactions (Musante, 2015; Jorgensen, 2020). This approach consisted of participating in food purchasing activities and observing food purchasing behaviours in marketplaces frequented by Congolese refugees. The

researcher required permission from key informants to accompany them on food shopping activities and purchase food together.

This approach provided the researcher with an opportunity to observe and participate simultaneously. According to Musante (2015), participant observation can be a source of questions about which to interview. As such, data collected through participant observation guided the researcher in formulating questions for key informant interviews, which intervened at stage 2 of this data collection.

The purpose is to collect first-hand data on the constraints affecting food access associated with these activities. While participant observation allows the researcher to adopt an emic (insider) perspective - behaving as a participant - to gain in-depth, rich information in the participants' natural setting, it also enables an etic (outsider) outlook, thus enabling them to view the phenomenon as a researcher (Draper, 2015; Mackellar, 2013; Arnal Sarasa, et al, 2020). There was some reaction whereby Congolese refugee participants tended to change their behaviour when they knew they were being observed, which is one of the challenges of using participant observation.

This challenge pertains to access perceived by Congolese refugee participants as if the research behaved as intrusive. These challenges were minimised because the researcher is a well-known community member who shares the same culture and living conditions as other community members. According to Munthali (2011), conducting fieldwork in one's community is an asset, even though Mackellar (2013) perceives it as a source of bias as the researcher may directly or indirectly influence the person under observation. However, this method provides benefits, including easy access to information by the researcher and freedom to informants (Ginkel , 1998).

Therefore, the proposed study benefited from the rapport the researcher established over the last six years through regular visits, food sharing, and other interactions with several community members in their homes, leisure and shopping activities and previous fieldwork in the community. The researcher also acted as an informant. While a research diary (smartphone-based) was used to jot down key elements of the observations, detailed field notes were recorded immediately after

the researcher had parted ways with the participant. This is important to minimise reactivity as observing and writing can attract the attention of those observed toward the researcher.

Food security researchers somewhat ignore the rich and in-depth information gained from these methods of participant observation as part of the broader qualitative paradigm despite their utility in other disciplines such as retail, education and tourism (Mackellar, 2013). Participant observation is largely used in social sciences, most particularly in anthropology, where researchers engage and participate in the life experience of the people under-researched, taking into account the subjective life experience (Emerson, et al, 2001; Sofield & Marafa, 2019; Sandiford, 2015). Being part of the Congolese community made the conversation fruitful during purchase and visitation observations. Occasionally, they attended ceremonies such as marriage, birthdays, religious consecrations, and funerals and facilitated a variety of foods they could access.

Studying food access from a market perspective requires the researcher to spend important time in the field as he has the opportunity to participate and palpably touch reality whilst observing the behaviour trends of participants. Through participant observation, the researcher gained greater familiarity with the multiple streams of food sources and the accompanying reasons, which assisted the researcher in gathering rich data. This was accomplished through personal visits to the researcher' informants' communal meal sharing such as restaurants and shop outlets that provide foreign foods,' where some informants frequented.

The participant observation covered the gaps orchestrated from the interview sessions through spontaneous dialogue. The visit to the above settings was one of the most beneficial because the researcher could spend significant time with appropriate informants, allowing him to delve deeper into issues concerning their capabilities and food selection patterns at a specific point in the Durban market. Although being a participant observer was difficult, the researcher could understand the information in great detail since he spoke the same language as the participants. Andreatta & Ferraro (2012) record that language has been a barrier between researchers and participants for millennia.

4.2.2 Stage 2: Key Informant Interviews (Qualitative Data)

Ethnographic qualitative research involves interviews and participant observation as legitimate techniques to yield rich data from a particular cultural setting, such as food access (Moser & Korstjens, 2018). For the proposed study, a key informant interview was used. According to Kumar (1989) a key informant interview consists of data collection through interviews with people willing to provide needed information or insights on a particular subject. Thus, the interviews were conducted over five months (September 2021-January 2022) amongst a relatively small number of 20 informants who were extensively interviewed about the food access phenomenon in their host environment. Each interview took 30 to 45 minutes to probe the given phenomenon in its natural setting (emic perspective).

This study conducted key informant interviews with heads of Congolese refugee households using a semi-structured interview guide. The researcher captured verbal and nonverbal notes from participants in great detail, as this is possible using qualitative data collection methods. Maintaining neutrality tends to be challenging for researchers because of the intimate relationship that exists or that is developed between informants and the researcher.

For every study, objectivity is critical. Although the researcher developed a positive relationship with study participants, he ensured no bias was orchestrated through the investigation. During the data gathering and analysis, the researcher employed cultural plurality as the Democratic Republic of the Congo is a multicultural country with approximately 450 ethnic groups. Every piece of information was meticulously captured and transcribed, such as the body motions and facial expressions were also captured.

The researcher used his mobile telephone, Huawei Dual Lens 1:2.2/26 ASPH, to capture all the details. Most data collection and observation occurred during weekends when informants were available. Using an interview guide, the researcher employed structured and semi-structured interview techniques during participant interviews. Structured interviews consisted of recording the socio-demographic aspects of the informants, such as: identity, marital status, educational level and occupational activity.

The unstructured interviews were capitalized on different aspects of the life experience related to food access. An unstructured qualitative approach is designed to run in a non-chronological way, and this is well, as all the interviews were conducted in an informal venue. Thus, participants were subjected to open-ended questions, allowing informants to express themselves fully and not be restricted (Nokwanda, 2012). When using open-ended questions, the informants may forget the point because they are free to express themselves; in this scenario, the researcher assisted the informants in getting back on the line by rephrasing the question.

Though questions were asked as clearly and concisely as possible to prevent ambiguity, participants occasionally provided extraneous information. Some of the researcher’s participants actively constructed questions based on their understanding of the situation but on a similar issue. To make the informants' input relevant to the issue, the researcher could sometimes divert or shift the order of thought based on the linguistic fitness of each individual, whether they are Swahili, Lingala, or French speakers.

Those participants with whom the researcher did not share an ethnic group could translate the name of their preferred food culture or those available in the Durban marketplace. The researcher was so interested in the participants' food stories that they felt compelled to divulge all of their possible food sources in Durban. The researcher's quality assurance (interrogating participants as though he is not a native of the Congo) to his informants made him seem like an alien from the Congolese community who needed to be trusted.

The basic inquiry framework was employed to capitalize on the topic even though the informants were given more time to express themselves than the researcher could have. Since semi-structured and unstructured interviews conform to qualitative research philosophies, they are the only instruments that allow the interviewer to collect most of the material needed to gain an emic perspective (Nicholls, 2009; Mann, 2016).

In this context, aligning the information gathered from the Congolese refugees into the topic context appears obvious. The use of unrestricted questions allowed the researcher to suggest

meaningful and directed responses to the phenomena being investigated and allowed the participant to offer responses that the researcher may not have anticipated during the session (Ortiz & Beach, 2013; Ottrey, et al, 2018). The researcher was astounded by the informant's flexibility in providing unexpected comments through the interview, which prompted the researcher to go much deeper into other concerns relating to the topic.

The informants' capacity and willingness to participate with zeal to provide rich data become a discourse in which the researcher may not reference his interview advice to some extent. The researcher uses the opportunity to interview informants whenever and wherever they can meet them, based on the conjectural life situations of migrants in general and refugees in particular. This was achievable because of the nature of semi-structured interviews, which consist of many open-ended questions.

Although the informants were given time to express themselves, they were under an interview guide so that their responses corroborated with the topic substances. In addition, from time to time, unstructured interviews were employed to compare the literature to the information provided by the informants. As the informants expressed their multiple substances to food access in Durban marketplaces, the researcher felt compassion to release his one, too, as part of the Congolese community in South Africa.

However, using the etic perspective, the researcher, from time to time, could restrain himself from not sharing all of his experiences and asking suggestive questions or answers as the purpose was to be informed as much as possible from the informants. The setting was as natural as possible, reducing the distance between myself and the informants. The interviews took place in the participants' preferred location, where they felt comfortable expressing themselves. The researcher wanted to ensure that his location choice would not frustrate the Congolese refugee participants.

Furthermore, most of these visits took place in their workplaces and residences, as this could not have detached them from their daily activities, from which the researcher got inspiration. This makes the qualitative research methods useful as the researcher undertakes a study in its natural setting. Sandelowski (2000) states that the dedication to examining something in its natural state

is all that naturalistic inquiry entails. This was feasible as the researcher shared the same languages with the informants.

Most Congolese people speak Swahili, Lingala and French despite the differences in their ethnic language, as the Congo accounts for nearly 450 dialects. Given the advantages of sharing the same language, the researcher could not provide an interpreter. Full working knowledge of these three languages was initially an asset when comprehending some food names, especially cultural food from home that they can or cannot get locally.

Thus, it was much easier to translate the recorded interviews at a short pace. This aimed to obtain key informants' perspectives on the observed food patterns and behaviours at phase one. The key informant interviews further provided data for answering the research questions about sources of food access, food choices and satisfaction, and food access constraints. FAO (2018:2) states, "*Key informant interviews, such as focus group discussions, can complement questionnaire survey, get indications and trends on specific topics when resources and time are not available to conduct a more extensive questionnaire survey*".

For this particular study, the researcher decided to skip the focus group stage of interviews because of the time constraint and interruption of COVID-19 protocol measures to be observed as hereby announced by the government. In situations where in-person interviews were held, masks were used. In situations where in-person interviews were not feasible, the use of telephone sessions was appropriate.

Thus, rich ethnographic qualitative data through interviews and observations were gathered and scrutinized. Despite the wealth of information on the phenomenon and the current state of knowledge in this sector, the data was limited to specific individuals which could not be generalized. Future research should mix quantitative and qualitative data collection to improve generalisation efficacy.

4.3 Sampling Size and Technique

Sampling is the process whereby researchers select participants from a population of interest that is under study. Congolese refugees residing in Durban for more than one year are the population

of interest in this study. Durban is among the three cities that host most Congolese refugees, including Cape Town and Johannesburg (Lakika, 2011). A purposive technique was used to sample size the participants of this study. From the perspective of purposive sampling, only 20 key informants were recruited from the population of Congolese refugees residing in Durban.

These 20 key informants included men and women who are heads of households. All the 20 key informants were part of the participant observation and interview stage. According to Kumar (1989), the number of key informants usually ranges between 15 and 35. This delimitation is linked to resource and time constraints, which justifies limiting the number of key informants to 20 in this study. These 20 key informants were recruited from churches, community meetings, and workplaces in the Durban centre.

4.4 Data Processing and Analysis

The data analysis followed a two-pronged approach, consisting of content/thematic analysis of observation and interview data. Content and thematic analysis are often used interchangeably in the literature, although some researchers find these techniques somehow different. Content analysis is a model for systematic qualitative analysis involving coding, creating categories and abstraction based on written, verbal or visual communication messages (Elo & Kyngäs, 2008). It also involves counting the frequency with which they occur in a text.

In contrast, thematic analysis involves data coding and the identification of emerging themes and does not employ any mathematical tool to analyse data (Silver & Lewins, 2014). A theme is a key pattern in which the researcher is interested in the data (Vaismoradi, et al, 2013). Given that both modes of analysis involve coding, they were used complementarily to increase the quality of qualitative data analysis.

Against this backdrop, the analysis's first step consisted of translating and transcribing the qualitative data obtained through key informant interviews and observation. The second step consisted of assembling or grouping data according to the likeness of the response. This allowed the researcher to move on to the third step, consisting of data codification according to the

similarity of responses (Gibson & Brown, 2009). Then, the data was coded using Nvivo to identify emerging themes and key patterns in line with the research questions to be addressed.

4.5 Ethic Considerations

The research study was guided by standard ethical considerations, including participant informed consent and confidentiality. This is why participants were required to sign the consent form based on a template from the University of KwaZulu-Natal's School of Social Science. The consent form clearly explains the aim of the research project. It emphasizes the right to voluntary participation and the withdrawal at any time as the participant wishes, the use of pseudonyms to ensure the anonymity of the participants, confidentiality, and contact details of both the researcher and his institution (UKZN).

The researcher was restricted from sharing the information communicated by participants with a third party or using it for any other purpose except for writing a thesis to maintain confidentiality. Furthermore, data collection only commenced once ethical clearance approval for this study was obtained from the University of KwaZulu Natal's Social Sciences Ethics Committee with the approved number HSSREC/00003374/2021

4.6 Validity and Reliability

The issues of validity and reliability are hyper-critical in a research paradigm because they determine the level of trustworthiness that demarcates scientific knowledge from ordinary information (Noble & Smith, 2015; Golafshani, 2003). The validity and reliability of the study findings were enhanced through the triangulation of data, which is one of the strategies (test) used to improve the validity and reliability of research findings (Flick, 2018; Leung, 2015; Golafshani, 2003). From this perspective, the data was collected through different methodologies and sources, including participant observation and informant interviews with several Congolese refugees.

These refugees were regarded as participants since they willingly chose to lend a hand to the enlightenment of the current study by participating in the interview sessions, even though they did not represent the entire migrant population in Durban. The bulk of the chosen individuals were

questioned. As a result, a large amount of data has been gathered, although not all of it has been considered for analysis and interpretation.

However, new or critical information was taken into consideration. As someone adamant about the validity and viability of scientific studies, the researcher would want to point out that qualitative research accepts subjective data and that the actual study heavily relies on subjective data. No statistical instrument can verify the veracity of subjectivity (Golafshani, 2003). Qualitative research uses the triangulation method in response to this argument.

Triangulation is typically a strategy (test) for improving the validity and reliability of research or evaluation of findings (Golafshani, 2003). Mathison (1988:13) asserts that Triangulation has become an important methodological issue in naturalistic and qualitative evaluation approaches to control bias and establish valid propositions because traditional scientific techniques are incompatible with this alternate epistemology. Thus, a triangulation strategy was used in this study to validate data shared by participants during interview sessions.

4.7 Originality of the Study/Value

In South Africa, part of the literature on Congolese refugees has mainly focused on social exclusion and livelihood strategies and did not have salient themes around food. In contrast, other literature has informed on the indicators of food insecurity among Burudians and Congolese refugees and asylum seekers in the city of Durban. Investigating other important aspects of food access that are culturally responsive to Congolese refugees' food insecurity would be much more relevant.

The influence of cultural identity in a market context is another lever in renegotiating access to food and food choices. Thus, this universe of knowledge has very limited information about refugees in South Africa. Given the increasing rate of refugees in South Africa, investigating their food access remains an important research area in anthropology, especially within the under-researched populations like Congolese refugees in Durban.

4.8 Study Challenges

During data collection from the participants, the researcher faced obstacles. The researcher was supposed to interview 25 participants, but due to their multiple preoccupations, he went to interview 20. The study could not target specific Congolese refugee ethnic groups as food mobility is effective through the internal movement of people seeking livelihood inside the country (DRC) and, therefore, the possibility of sharing cultural materials.

The current study is based on Food Access among Congolese Refugees Living in Durban, South Africa: A Market Approach. This study focuses on various aspects of food accessibility among refugees from various perspectives. The current study occurred during the Covid pandemic in 2019, during which people were afraid of being unable to obtain necessities due to numerous limitations such as job losses. As a result, gaining access to informants was difficult. The researcher has to wait until the respondants avail themselves.

Some of the images related to home meals in this study were difficult to obtain at the time of the observations, and some of them were taken within the migrant's food stores and restaurants at Masobiya Mdluli Street, St George’s Street and around Berea. They may have assumed that the researcher was looking into their stores to report them to the authorities for merchandise confiscation.

The researcher showed them a document permitting data collection for surety issues. Otherwise, the researcher may be accompanied by some of the community's well-known leaders. Due to their employment obligations, most informants were subjected to weekend home interviews. This was a significant problem because participants' family members would frequently interrupt their interviews, and there were occasions when they were preoccupied with housework. The length of the interview sessions exceeded expectations. The interview procedure became tiresome for both the researcher and the informants when, for instance, the researcher begins an interview but cannot finish it without interruptions.

Rescheduling was possible also became difficult because it conflicted with already confirmed and scheduled interviews for other candidates. The researcher had to be cognizant of his perceptions

of the Congolese refugees' experiences and views while also being a fellow Congolese. This allowed the researcher to reduce the impact of ethnocentrism on the study. The household heads of the Congolese refugees were questioned in this study on their perceptions of and understanding of food access in the context of their new food market environment. The opinions of all partners for those families with all parents living in the home, family members, and some community leaders would have been helpful even though a lot of pertinent data was gathered. Due to the size and goals of this investigation, this was not feasible.

4.9 Conclusion

This chapter provided extensive explanations to understand the approach and methods used to reach conclusions. The approach and methods of this study helped to ensure reliable, valid results that addressed the aims and objectives of this study, which consisted of examining the Congolese refugees' food access case of the Durban market approach. It highlights the kind of data collected and where from, as well as how it was collected and analyzed.

CHAPTER FIVE: REFUGEES HAVE ADEQUATE FOOD ACCESS

5.1 Introduction

The current section responds to this study's first objective, which assesses whether the Congolese refugees have adequate food while attempting to access the market. Three overarching themes helped to measure whether the Congolese refugees have enough food while attempting to access the market: familiarity with Durban's food supply, household's ability to gather information, and an informal approach to food sourcing.

The first theme details the Congolese refugees' attitude towards Durban's food availability. The second theme enlightens the Congolese refugees' household's ability to gather information to access enough food. It focuses on how these Congolese refugees negotiate information about food and bargain food access in keeping with their socio-economic means. The third theme responds to the socio-economic status of Congolese refugees in supplying the cheapest local and home food.

5.2 Refugees' Familiarity with Durban's Food Supply

'Food from here', referred to as the new food regime*,* was a distinctive merger term used by most informants to identify food that people usually eat in Durban, typically Western food regime, versus the food they ate back home. This observation raises a positioning question regarding the food they know the most regarding food belonging and, less importantly, the new market's opportunity in terms of food habits. This is congruent with Naidu & Nzuza's (2014) findings on Sierra Leoneans maintaining home food habits in Durban.

The findings reveal that the migrants are alienated from the issue of identity beyond the requirement in terms of monetary capacity to obtain food. This preemptive measure by the informants to acquire food does not leave behind the intersection between identity and capacity for the households to be accountable for food access. This intersection was very important to them as this allowed the most vulnerable households to identify food with similar features that they could consume quickly.

According to the informants, "*food from here or new food regime*" was not as diverse as the informants would have preferred because of the lack of participation in food production planning. These informants feel excluded regarding what they identify as food not being theirs. Esterik (1999) realises that food security cannot be achieved this way. He argues that people's special relationship with food is culturally constructed, and their sense of self is often based on their ability to feed their household members.

With the new food regime, the informants feel being denied this ability. Instead, the informants are compelled to acquire food designed to meet a certain group aspiration regarding nutritional values, appearance, taste, smell, cultural values, etc. (Newell, et al, 2014; Wilson & Renzaho, 2015). As a result, not all the food to which the informants had access implied acquisition; rather, their food purchase shows that the implication of cultural food systems also mattered.

Additionally, the informants classified the food as 'unfamiliar' in response to inner trouble created by the gap in the differences of groups of food consumed since it does not reflect the taste or physical aspect they were used to in practice. According to the informants, most of the food they purchase is packed and labelled, indicating the nutritional contents, expiration date, and conditioning issues. C. Wright Mills (1959) is congruent with the informants' views over two aspects that people like refugees are experiencing. This includes personal trouble and external forces such as food access issues.

In relation to this, the informants believe that food labelling as an external force have been manipulated by humans rather than being a natural process and have lost its trustworthiness of being food. Food and its environment instigated The lack of trust, even though the refugees could afford a minimum of food items. Some informants, such as Mr Solo and Mr Mung, mentioned that many refined foods are available and accessible to them, but this does not help to diversify food at their household level, evoking the issue that fresh foods are overwhelmed by the market of refined food products.

Food processing evoked by the informants is affirmed by (de Waal, et al, 2018), characterising the global food industry and South Africa as part of the adherence to these globalised food habits. This global food industry conveys a consumption shaped mostly by the Western food lifestyle based on living conditions and people's education level. To the uninitiated consumers such as Mr Solo and Mr Mung, this would serve as a barrier to food access.

The study conducted by Berggreen-Clausen, et al. (2022) is congruent with the latter, referring to their findings about food access among immigrants in the United States of America (USA). Their findings reveal that a dual between Western and immigrant-constructed food habits is inevitable. The immigrants try to obtain fresh, traditional and healthier food (Berggreen-Clausen, et al, 2022).

This is the concern the informant said they are experiencing in the Durban food marketplace. They express the inadequacy of healthy food access and the superposition of multidimensional aspects of the food environment coined by Western food style habits. Food acceptability is one of the factors influencing this food inadequacy (Ivers & Cullen, 2011; Chakona & Shackleton, 2019; Mello, et al, 2010). In this endeavour, the following participants, Mrs Fura supported by Mrs Frame, expressed their concerns.

> *We are so amazed with the food from here, most of our foods come from stores supermarkets, with expiry dates on them, this is new to us, we have never experienced such a phenomenon.* (Mrs Fura).
>
> *All the big food shopping is either Spar, Checkers, Pick-n-pay, Boxer, or Food Lovers; food is diversified in nature, but this is not what we grew eating, in addition, this it is overly conserved to the point where it loses its taste, yet we have no other option. Our expectations would be to consume fresh food every day; however, if it is not frozen chicken or steak, then it is fish over and over again.* (Mrs Frame)

This emphasizes that the Durban food environment is an important dimension of food access because it affects the preference and choice of food that Congolese refugee household low-income consumers face and the decisions to make about which foods to purchase (Napier, et al, 2018; Paulk, 2015; Chetty & Sherefedin, 2018). Above all, the informants admit that economic access is

not the prior concern to acquiring food in the context of the market; however, a psychological factor linked to the kind of food known by the informants counts the most.

For the informants, this shows that physical access to food without emotional consent is the same as that of an individual without cultural standing or under the influence of undesirable food intake (Reddy & van Dam, 2020). The health implication is the leading worry in their process of food access, whereby the package of food with shelf-life date label clutches on the quality and quantity of food they are willing to purchase.

According to Khumalo (2017), contemporary technologies override indigenous knowledge in the Durban food market. This threatens the informants' access to enough food and what they consider nutritious food, as most of them have indigenous knowledge due to the lack of industrial food technologies back home (Eric, 2017). In this attempt, some informants were forced to accept whatever the marketers would offer its targeted consumers in a particular environment, but the consumers could meet their food desires.

For instance, goats, the second-most significant livestock species in Sub-saharan communities after cattle, are essential for reducing food insecurity in community areas (Khumalo, 2017). Mr Joe has to make a long trip outside Durban, which needs an extra budget to purchase goat meat. Congolese refugees show that the struggle for food access is not solely about economic access but also physical access to the food they prefer.

The second concern was the conditioning form and the quality of processed food, whereby the cost was inevitable but permeable according to everyone’s capacity. Frozen food was more affordable by the informants than fresh processed food. According to the informants, there is a relationship between socio-economic classes and food distribution. According to the informant, fresh and healthy foods were more likely purchased by bourgeoisie consumers, who tended to save frozen food for special occasions. Aristocracy likely steers clear of frozen food since prolonged storage in a refrigerator change the item's quality (Alexandre, et al, 2013).

This can prompt manufacturers to lower prices, which is perceived as an opportunity for the informants' low-income consumers to repurchase inexpensive foods. Of course, purchasing power has to do with household income, but access to food is not solely limited to household income. The social level of food consumption among these refugee migrants depends on the availability of food that the consumers know and habitually see (Mirindi, 2019; Landreville, 2020; Chakona & Shackleton, 2019; Arnal Sarasa, et al, 2020). This included the diversity of available food and the form of food conservation accessible to the informants. This was an important driver to understand the resilience of purchasing power towards acquiring more fresh food than frozen food.

Most informants express their concerns, such as that fresh foods are likely to be limited in areas where the spaza shops are the nearest source of food supply. These small food stores were mentioned to have high prices and limited food diversity. However, the informants recognized that the spaza shop could provide some of their important foods similar to home dishes such as Koushiboo rice, which the modern supermarkets do not provide. According to information provided by Mrs Fura and supported by Mr Kab:

> *Overall, buying a long-distance increases the transportation expense. We frequently travel to distant supermarkets to buy groceries that tuck-shops do not have, like koushiboo rice, the rice that we Congolese people prefer the most – French white bread; different smoke meats, and fish that cannot be found or are hike prices at the tuck shops.*

The suitable approach to food sourcing by the Congolese refugees' informants offers diverse options to understand their relationships between the extent they can go, between their home construction and foods that fall under globalization habits, according to each capability. At the moment, the informants highlighted four major channels as potential suppliers of the Western food regime—Shoprite, Pick n Pay, Spar, and Woolworths. All of these big food retailers are established in South Africa, and each of which owns a variety of globalized foods or Western food regimes and accounts for more than half of the retail share of the nation's food market (Igumbor, et al, 2012).

Generally, globalized food is manufactured under hazard condition and critical control points HACCP and ISO 22000:2005, risk-based food safety management systems for controlling and

ensuring product safety through the food value chain. In support of this effort, Brown, et al.(2020) point out that modern supermarkets, such as Checkers, Spar, and Pick n Pay, are found in mall centres where even the poorest can pick up food items that they can afford.

However, according to Brown, et al. (2020), the informants provide more details about this, such as informal traders (spaza shops) employing various imaginative, adaptable, and distinctive techniques to maintain their status as significant food providers for households in times of emergency. This is to ensure that food is geographically accessible, reasonably balanced in terms of price, and culturally sensitive.

To this endeavour, the informants ensured that the small food retailers were generally owned by the migrants, where the informants were able to access similar food items such as *Koushiboo* rice consumed back home versus 'Carolina' and 'Aunty Rice'. While appearing to be resilient to corporate invasion, small food vendors do not always provide sustainable diets and, in certain cases, such as those involving poor hygiene and lack of traceability. This limitation threatens food security (Brown, et al., 2020).

In contrast, the informants' rhetorics towards big food retailers show a stratification advantage in the modern supermarkets' ability to provide food of a high calibre at a cost that appears to accommodate the varying living standards of the local population group. According to the informants, they can access more modern foods in supermarkets than in informal sources.

However, according to their limited income, the types of foods consumed weekly by most informants show four types of food: The first type is starchy foods. Of these starchy foods, the most available is Maize meal, usually known in Durban as Inyala mealie meal. The second type is grains such as beans and rice. The third type is meat, such as chicken and fish, which the informants meant to be accessible to them in Durban communities. Napier, et al. (2018) findings on food security among women seeking asylum in Durban indicate that the above-listed foods are preferred less but more affordable foods for the informants. By nature of habits, few of these foods were similar to those being the staple foods in the DRC (OCHA, 2018; Mondo, et al, 2019).

According to informants, the appropriateness of the produced foods, including spicy components, represented the majority of the so-called ‘globalized food regime’ available in Durban food stores and was perceived as the element of unpredictability and weighing on the household food decision. This aspect reveals that the food environment shaped the informants' attitudes, another unforeseen obstacle that refugees face, especially those with a particular background in food habits. This is factual regardless of the informants' economic ability to purchase food (Nunnery & Dharod, 2017; Kwate, 2008; Bower, et al., 2014).

According to Mr Solo and Mr Stev, both refugee household heads, although the foods are diverse due to food technology versus food seasoning, they feel like experiencing food monotony while back home (DRC), they were accustomed to food diversity based on the growing season. The informants failed to understand the benefits of food technology between two harvest times. It is to make food available always without waiting for the natural cycle process to get food supplied.

This makes food facilitators in Durban industrial ventures rather than subsistence ones as it intends to serve a sizable consumer base with a wide variety of cultural orientations on a national and international level (Greenberg, 2016; Battersby, 2011). Kelly, et al. (2019) also spoke well-light on this, contending that effective management of the food system holds all parties accountable for supporting this range of industrial food ventures through intensive manufacturing, including government initiatives, producers, manufacturers, distributors, retailers and consumers. Mrs Esta, a single mother of four, made the same contributions to this predicament as Mrs Fura and Mrs Francine:

> *The variety of manufactured foods that our kids like to eat, including yoghurt, bread, cornflakes, cool drinks, and juice, are significantly out of proportion to the family's meal package, which happens from time to time. I am out of comfort zone because this isn't the only kind of food the whole family needs.*

Other informants, including Mrs Sara, Mr Mung, and Mrs Jose, expressed their dismay that they are doing their best to provide this food regime to their household youngsters because they were born and are growing within it no matter how restricted it is in quantity and quality. The youngsters

were occasionally forced to eat various unappealing, non-convenient meals. The latter was also brought up in debate aiming to analyse the intergenerational differences in acculturation experiences that often happen in the immigrant families of first and second generation children (Wilson & Renzaho, 2015; Terragni, et al, 2014). INDDEX Project (2018) suggests that in relation to food depolarisation by the alienators, twelve food groups for a household's adequate food consumption include cereals, roots, and tubers; pulses; nuts and seeds; dairy; meat, poultry, and fish; eggs; dark leafy greens and vegetables; other fruits and vegetables high in vitamin A.

FANTA revised the INDDEX Project (2018) model and came out with 12 concise food groups model. This including Cereals (proup one), Roots and tubers (group two), Vegetables (group three), Fruits (group four), Meat, Poultry, Offal (group five), Eggs (group six), Fish and Seafood (group seven), Pulses, Legume, Nuts (group eight), Milk and Milk Products (group nine), Oil/Fats (group ten), Sugar/Honey (group eleven), and Other (group twelve).

Comparing Fanta's classified food groups to that of the four types of food groups declared acceptable by the informants, the outcomes demonstrate that household food consumption (HFC) performs inadequately. The informants pointed out the inadequate forms and varied ways they approached these 12 food groups about processing, packaging, labelling, and conservation. Although in-depth studies, especially the quantitative side, are important, with the actual findings, there could be an assumption that the informants' households run a risk of poor dietary diversity, hunger and food insecurity access.

Therefore, the following is important to highlight: poor household dietary diversity (PHDD), Household Hunger Scale (HHS) and Household Food Insecurity Access Scale (HFIAS). The PHDD, qualitatively and quantitatively, means the informants' food group diversity sum was inferior to the minimum threshold, and normally, this should not have gone under five food groups out of twelve. As Mrs Fura and Mrs Francine indicate, there is not enough variation in each group type for the most accessed food. As part of the FANTA II Study, the Household Dietary Diversity (HDD) was made public in 2006 as a population-level indicator of household food access. A key indicator of food security, household dietary diversity is defined as the number of food types a household consumes over a certain reference period.

A more varied household diet should be associated with adequate calorie and protein intake, a higher proportion of animal-sourced protein, and, more importantly, household income (Jennifer, Swindale & Bilinsky, 2007). This requirement is also supported by Mekonnen, et al. (2021), that the HDD varies across food groups and does not indicate the quantity of food consumed by a household. However, it derives the household's socio-economic capacity to get food.

While the medium diet diversity score requires daily consumption of over five out of the ten food groups considered, the high score for diet diversity, which is a daily intake of over six of the ten food groups considered, appears to be a nightmare for the informants. This classification seems to be used most frequently by FANTA in determining household food access, particularly in terms of its capacity to acquire a sufficient amount and quality of food to satisfy the nutritional needs of all household members for a productive life.

Then, household dietary diversity enables the analysis of household food access and provides justifications for food sufficiency, defined as the number of distinct foods consumed by household members over a specific period. This method has been proven to be a useful one for measuring household food access, especially when consumers use the market as their primary source of food (Kabir, et al, 2022; Larochelle & Alwang, 2022).

In contrast to informants' households receiving no grants, food expenditure was significant monthly. Low dietary diversity (LDD) was apparent in those households' income with no food stocks and mostly depending on daily food purchases. During participant observation, Mr Joe stated that half of his deep freeze was always filled with a variety of food he could provide monthly without hindrance. COVID-19 could have hindered Mr Joe's and other informants' capacity to secure enough food. The lack of capacity to secure food can lead to household hunger, especially if the household is experiencing a lack of resources.

Thus, the concept behind the Household Hunger Scale (HHS), a scale for measuring household food insecurity, is that experiencing a lack of food at home lead to predictable behaviours that can be recorded by a survey and summed up in a scale. In this endeavour, a question was addressed to

the informants whether household members have ever gone without any food to eat because of a lack of the means to procure it. The majority of the informants responded that this could not happen.

However, they mentioned that they often could not afford food they would like to eat. So, these Congolese refugees' informants do not experience household hunger. Instead, they are experiencing food insecurity access mostly due to cross-cultural food access discrepancies. The inaccessibility to food the household informants know and like the most is one of the factors leading to the Household Food Insecurity Access Scale (HFIAS). Here is where the cultural identity theory plays its role.

The informant, even though they could pose means to afford food, that is not who they are. They felt like something was missing in them. Home food is scarce in the Durban food market; the informants purchase what is available, not what they want, and the food they want, most of the time, the price is over what they have budgeted for that particular item. That is why some of the household members were going to sleep at night without eating, not because there is no food or resource to procure food but because of an issue of cultural acceptability sometimes between the household heads and their descendants. The issue of cultural acceptability mostly happens where most children are South African-born, and the parents are foreign-born nationals.

The DRC patrilineal system informs that the household heads, being the household surety, have the power to dictate how the household members should be organised and, to some extent, what to eat (Kismul, et al, 2015). The fact that Mr Mung, a father of six, has to supply little or enough food at home indicates that one has the right to challenge this provision. It does not bother him anymore if someone refuses to eat what is on the table, whether it is convenient or not. "*Sometimes our children need to grow using to our food too. It happens that they sleep without eating because our food is strange to them. They want food from here,*" said Mr Mung. Five other informants indicate the same thing as Mr Mung, whose position on HFIAS seems critical because of the liking and disliking of food among family members.

In conclusion, food inadequacy inside these informants' households needs intervention because, beyond the ability to afford food, it involves the issue of acceptability at the household member level, beyond Congolese refugees' capacity in the context of South African food habits and cost of living.

5.3 Household' Ability to Gather Information

In the same line of food access analysis among Congolese refugees, it was observed that there is a relationship between food adequacy and the ability to gather information, which was among the ultimate factors differentiating a household from another regarding what food and where to source it. In addition, it involved illiteracy issues with regard to language. These are people who are French speakers living in an English speaking country. Most of them indicate that they can pick up some English words but are hard to read or speak correctly.

An exception was perceived with Mrs Aline and Mrs Debo, all married women, affirming that they have the habit of reading the daily newspapers where they can grab new food items with sometimes discounts on various items such as "*beef, pork, mutton, and goat*". Mrs Jose, a widower, and Mrs Sara married to Mr Tino, claimed that *"poultry foods such as smoked turkey and chicken selling either in full or in pieces are available at Spar and Checkers."* They got informed about them by the mass media and, more importantly on TV broadcast or through their fellow migrants that those foodstuffs were more affordable at Bluff Meat Supply.

Kumar, et al. (2021) agree with the informants on the role of mass media in attaining an important consumer's mass through audiovisual channels or door-to-door newspapers. Some informants were not used to this new culture of reading newspapers, while many opportunities were grabbed besides food, such as job opportunities and discounts on foodstuffs. However, through reading newspapers and watching adverts on TV, Tino's wife, Mrs Sara, and Mr Joe (informant) showed a bit of difference: to familiarize themselves with diverse food products and what they require before getting to the venue.

This ability was more relevant on TV than the use of newspapers shared by other informants in this regard because of language barriers and lack of interest in readings. During nighttime

participant observation sessions, the researcher and the informants learned about a TV advertisement regarding food discounts at specific food stores. The informants found this to be a thrilling moment.

This attempts to emphasise that a more concrete focus on specific attainable functions in life can be achieved by assessing a person's familiarity with various food products and their physical accessibility. This connects to references to an individual's capacity in everyday language and the term "core capabilities" used in modern business (Wells, 2012; Walke & Unterhalter, 2007). The informants indicate that they were not used to these new channels of food awareness, and most trustworthy social media outlets include audiovisual media and newspapers since they advertise goods and services to huge audiences at the same time.

A small number of literate respondents also mentioned food advertising online as a vital source of information regarding food supply, but this is less typical in the case of refugees and asylum seekers who are less likely to be literate or to face language obstacles (McElrone, et al, 2019; Landau & Freemantle, 2010). This marketing tool has allowed the low-income population to plan for what they can afford and acquire new food niches (Carraresi, et al, 2016). According to Mrs Debo, who is supported by Mr Solo (informants):

> *We are able to obtain new foods such as spinach, fruits, a variety of drinks and Juice, as well as other refined fate items such as milk (Yogurt, Fresh Milk, Powder Milk), Rama, peanut butter, and so on that we could not find in the DRC. Some of them may be available in the DRC, but there are no good advertising channels, contrary to what is happening in Durban.*

The informants agreed that the Durban municipal marketplaces are organised to the extent that they facilitate even the most vulnerable households to adhere to food entitlement with rampant new faces of food brands previously unknown by these Congolese refugees. The informant emphasises that the structure or the way the food market is organised does not limit the availability of food varieties but also attracts all the categories of consumers to participate by taking into account the minimum wages and cultural behaviours of the mass than an individual concern.

Those who cannot afford an item of food as a whole are allowed to pay for pieces or small quantities, and the consumers themselves extrapolate this through other different networks. Those informants who could not gather information through audiovisuals or from newspapers could be informed through their affiliation with one or more community networks. Mrs Belind (informant) indicates that for the first time, she knew it was possible to pay for chicken quarters, half or pieces, during their monthly meeting of *chinyabuguma*, which means togetherness.

The following food commodities, fish and poultry, were part of the weekly meals for Mrs Belind (informant). They were affordable dishes in relation to their accessible size. Mrs Belind further highlights that she likes it when "Mr Bigshow and Mr Mbash" lead their *chinyabunguma* meeting because he is well-informed and experiencing the same food crisis. According to Mrs Belind (informant), Mr Mbash owns a food store where many Congolese buy food, adopting the same strategy as big food stores, such as selling fish pieces to allow even the poorest to access food.

The Congolese churches, which serve as one of the main sources of information for these refugees, are the only gatherings that Mrs Frame and Mrs Fura claim to visit. Due to their busy schedules, Mrs Frame and Mrs Fura don't have time to watch TV or read newspapers. Instead, they rely on the information provided by their fellow immigrants at work, either individually or in groups, about the necessary foods. The same applies to turkey and chicken, according to Mrs Frame, Mrs Fura and Mrs Lusita, all household heads.

During the participant observation phase, most households were about to serve fish or chicken as dinner meals. According to the informants, those food items are regularly served at household level since they are frequently on special or promotion sales (price decreased), and anyone who discovers this should immediately let others know through social media networks or gatherings. Herrera & Pasch (2018) and Isgor, et al. (2016), congruent with the informants, that the food price decreased on sale has something to do with domestic management over food consumption. As many informants may not be aware of this event, communicating through various channels is vital. Discounts are a great opportunity for those who cannot purchase food at a normal price.

Everyone knows that food items are currently being sold in huge quantities and at a discount as retailers attempt to make place for ideally better or new products by eliminating outdated inventory. *"In this case, discounts on food is our saviour,"* said Mrs Belind (informant). The informants also share the preventive measures to better read or use any food on purchase from special offers because many manufactured foods, once approaching shelf life degradation, become unworthy to health, which motivates specials to get rid of it. This factor, many of the illiterate informants were not aware that the nutritional values of those food commodities were not worthy to some extent compare to fresh food.

For this lower-income population, such as refugees, quantity takes precedence over quality, i.e. having enough food on the table that they may not care about other considerations. Referring to Pollay & Mittal's (1993) model towards attitude and perception in work, Blankson (2017) on African immigrants' considerations towards goods and services advertising and buying have a double standard on decision making. Congolese refugees in Durban show a correlation between behaviour and this double standard toward what they consider important from food information.

An intangible thematic analysis of variables reflecting attitude and perception of social media advertising (TV, radio, newspapers) on one side, and on the other side, the role of third parties. This study reveals that social media was the quickest path for the informants to know about what food is available and how it is affordable. At the same time, the third parties could provide more details on why food on special is affordable and where the closest supply point is.

According to Mrs Fura and Mrs Jose (all informants), "*Occasionally, we are able to get food at a lower cost than we could not have done without this development*." Thus, to gain a wider variety of cheap foods for comparative purposes, the informants employed various store adverts, and it has been shown that this impacts buying decisions. Unlucky and less fortunate Congolese refugee households UCRH, LFCRH acquire very different food items according to the consideration made of these information propagation channels.

Bread and cereals make up most of the food unfortunate households purchase UCRH, with maize meal being the most often purchased food item. On the other hand, the less fortunate households LFCRH spend one-third of their income on food. In contrast, UCRH spends a third of its expenditures on meat and fish, with chicken being the most often purchased item, accounting for nearly half of that expenditure.

While chicken is still the most frequently purchased item for LFCRH, they also spend much more on other commodities, including beef, lamb, and boerewors. This category accounts for a third of their expenditures. This demonstrates that LFCRH's food purchases are not significantly more varied than UCRH's. Insights are also gained by analysing how people react to advertisements and network resources.

Taking into account, for instance, that for Congolese refugees, the item that measured the source of information, "*I always watch TV*," was associated with personal information sources, such as "*It was a pleasure for me to discover that from your TV we can plan for what we can afford*" and personal interest. It was occasionally linked to social comparisons, such as looking at what other people are buying. The Congolese refugees have shown they rely more heavily for survival on information sources grounded in the reality of the physical environment around them.

This new ability accommodated into themselves is nothing more than a means of gaining access to particular foods that they would otherwise not be able to afford sustainably. For instance, bread and other cereals products make up the majority of foods purchased by the UCRH for their children and are widely influenced by Television and newspaper advertising campaigns (Akinola, Pereira, Mabhaudhi, De Bruin & Rusch, 2020; Igumbor, Sanders, Puoane, Tsolekile, Schwarz, Purdy & Hawkes, 2012).

The researcher observed children between 6 and 17 watching television during the participant observation phase. These children are exposed to many ads, and as a result, their perceptions significantly influence their parent's decision to buy food, whether it is on discount or not. In accordance with this, the South African Advertising Research Foundation, which examined 37.5 hours of children's television programming, discovered that food advertisement was among the

most attracting advert by the children (Igumbor, et al, 2012). The bulk of the food advertisement promoted high-energy items like candy, processed breakfast cereals, and high-sugar beverages (Igumbor, et al, 2012).

A similar study was undertaken by researchers from the University of Western Cape, and they discovered eight food adverts in seven hours of children's TV on the public television channel SABC1 (Igumbor, et al, 2012). This demonstrates that all the major food companies in South Africa frequently spend more on marketing campaigns, including McDonald's, KFC, Albany, BB Bread companies, etc., spending more than four times as much flashing their goods for acceptance and promotion purposes.

> "*All the new brands and promotion of goods such as bread, cooking oil, etc. They will get to us through advertising",* affirms Mrs Fura, mother of three children. *"It was on TV that I discovered for the first time that French bread is available on the market,"* said Mr Job, a father of five children. According to Mr Job, *"brown bread is highly recommended due to it nutritional components and much affordable than white bread, although does not taste nice."* Whereas Mrs Lusita, a mother of three children, *"prefers white bread instead of brown bread compared to taste." "Cooking oils such as sunflower and others are widely available; Like yesterday I was planning to buy 2 liter of sunflower oil, this afternoon I read on newspapers dropped in the early morning at home, 4 liters of sunflower was on special I end up changing mind,"* according to Mrs Nisha.

Additionally, informants like Mrs Esta, Mrs Nisha, Mrs Sara, and Mr Stev do not solely rely on these social media campaigns as a unique source of information. Instead, they engage in "eye shopping," which requires them to check for discounts even though there is no money to buy food. Igumbor, et al. (2012) endorse this approach because they perceive it as a buffer against skyrocketing food prices. It can also be economical to stock up on many different food goods while keeping expenditures minimal. This has led informants to increase dietary diversity and diversify food access sources.

5. 4 Informal and Formal Approach to Congolese Refugees' Food Sourcing

The informants consider the informal strategy, or what they frequently refer to as the 'black market', as a framework for pro-poor urban opportunity in contrast to conventional methods of food procurement functioning as both a source of sustenance and a replacement. According to academics, this cadre takes into account an important strategic aspect of food security for the most marginalized immigrants and the low-income inhabitants of South Africa, who are currently fighting to get their hands on the food they cannot formally afford (Wegerif, 2020; Even-Zahav, 2016; Chakona, & Shackleton, 2019).

Many of these sources are unofficial food retailers whose transactions are domestically coordinated from one household to another, where their homes are turned into a cadre of food delivery services. This food supply system typically depended on kinships or nearby consumers. The preferred method of communication is typically word-of-mouth, telephone contact, social media, or in-person meetings.

Most of the food vendors were immigrants from Africa who shared a similar culinary culture and knew in advance who they would target. Sales are increasing for them, say the informants, because their retailers are now customers of their goods. Mrs Sara and Mrs Nisha, both housewives, contributed credible information to this effort, "*After living in Durban for thirteen years, I saw that the cost of living gradually rose due to inflation*". After comparing the costs of home expenses to the questionable assets of the household, she decided to start a chicken breeding business. The fact that chicken was the cheapest and lasted numerically longer than other foodstuffs was a pattern that motivated Mrs Sara's homemade poultry.

Furthermore, she preferred it to conventional chicken because it was closer to the chicken she grew up eating. She realized that increasing the chicken production would attract numerous immigrants who liked the same kinds of foods and would allow her to increase the price further. With the same goal in mind, Mrs Nisha put her efforts into urban food gardening so that fellow migrants could access the home veggies, even though most informants are tenants and regularly use public transportation to buy food. This is currently the main family support system for Mrs Nisha. Studies show that managing the food supply chain is essential for generating money and acting as a

resilience mechanism to support adequate food supply (Harris, et al, 2014; Carraresi, Mamaqi, et al, 2016; Meenar & Hoover, 2012).

The researcher has provided this element not just as someone who is deeply analyzing the operation of this system but also as someone interested in how consumers, including the seller who is also a consumer, benefit from the system and how the process of information dissemination is viewed as an unofficial activity that is of critical concern. As mentioned, Mrs Sara was selling traditional chicken, and several informants acquired it through social media platforms like WhatsApp and phone contacts. *Mrs* Fura, a resident of Masobiya Mdluli Street, stated:

> *"I have to drive about 7 kilometres from my separate homes to buy traditional chicken at Mrs Sara's house."* According to an informant like Mr Zain*, "I frequently procure my foods that I like the most to* Masobiya Mdluli Street *that is approximately 7 to 8 kilometres away from Umbilo to purchase Ngai ngai leaves."* Mrs Jose, a 30-year-old married woman, prefers to get the soft chicken from Jonny's residence since it is cheaper there than it is at stores.

Research into this area of the informal economy within urban poor communities is poorly understood, as one is interested in researching this area within the context of urban poor communities and finding that it is especially related to house-to-house food exchange for financial business support. However, Even-Zahav (2016) highlights great support for food security among the lower-income population.

Although quantitatively, the food items obtained from this spectrum of the food market seem helpful, research conducted from a public health policy perspective within the broader southern African region stresses the under-nutrition experienced by impoverished consumers (Petersen & Charman, 2018; Wägeli & Hamm, 2016). It deprives the body of essential nutrients, and its excessive use contributes to obesity, health and behavioural issues. Even the informants acknowledged the poor energy density of the black food market, but what matters to them is that the price can be negotiated between the seller and the buyer. According to informants, another

benefit of it is that it provides them credit without interest to its potential consumers in case of emergency food.

A recent study has emphasised the informal economy's contribution to meeting urban inhabitants' routine food demands (Frayne, et al, 2013; Battersby, 2016; Crush & McCordic, 2017). Building on this expanding bulk of research, a study of a database including the results of a small-area census of domestic micro-enterprises operating in low-income immigrant population settlements makes an addition to the literature on the informal economy (Meng, et al, 2014; Crush, 2017; Carraresi, et al, 2016). It would be essential to disclose the scope and scale of the gloomy food market inside the formal economy of food mobility and trading activities to improve understanding of refugees' food sources. The South African economic structure design superimposes two class tendencies, one of which is supported by nominally employed people and another of which is not, contributing to the survival of the informal economy (Crea, et al, 2017; Tod-Tims, 2020).

During participant observation, the informants reveal how their participation in these informal life economies has a different impact on their economy, particularly in relation to domestic stock supplies. The net price of some groceries in the supermarket is sometimes double that of supplies from the informal market. Mr Alias, the household head with six children, claims that Zimbabweans have always supplied stock like 10 kg of sugar, 10 kg of rice, 10 kg of beans, and 20 kg of maize meal, with larger servings than those at Spar or Checkers. Meanwhile, Mr Kab, a father of three, agrees with Mr Alias that "*the price of food on the illicit market is three times lower than what is offered on the legitimate marketplaces.*" Mr Joe would rather spend money on transportation and travel to the township, which is located 15 to 20 kilometres from Durban's city or suburbs. Mr Joe claims that one advantage of supplying food to the township is less government regulation of business.

"All of my goat meat, fish from dams, and shanks of cattle are sourced from townships", said Mrs Debo, a father of three children. According to Mrs Aline, a married mother of three children, "*Our Congolese network from Pietermaritzburg (PMB) constantly informs whenever there are enough supplies and a variety of goods that are expensive in the formal market or sometimes hard to get them there".*

These perceptions gathered from interviewees were confirmed during participant observations. The researcher admits that the informants' facts in the informal market are crucial for domestic sustenance, where informants and the researcher went to townships to acquire foodstuffs. This is not a utopia since in South African low-income population, townships' economy is known to serve over 50% including both urban and peri-urban of all South Africans who are economically disempowered and generally Africans (Petersen & Charman, 2018; Battersby, 2011; Even-Zahav, 2016).

Although the state responses to this sector have received the modern sector a continued undervaluing and undermining of the detriment of the traders themselves, their suppliers, and their customers, there is still more to know from the informal economy (Wegerif, 2020). As yet, highlighted by Greenberg (2015), the informal micro-enterprises in this environment are an organic feature within South Africa's economic landscape and offer significant livelihood options for keeping people out of poverty. This is driving the Congolese refugees who are the current respondents in this study to arrive to fit themselves in an environment strictly technocratic and selective despite their challenges related to refugee status.

The substantial reliance of the Congolese refugees on the informal economy to satisfy daily food needs was also explained by the rapid growth of social capital agency of settlers across South Africa, particularly through street-foods economic migration behaviour brought from home and second mode of economy in South African communities (Charman & Petersen, 2014; Brown, et al, 2020; Petersen & Charman, 2018).

"We acquire various food items from Zambia, such as dry fish commonly known as mikeke, ndagala, makoki, etc., that we would not have been able to subsist in South Africa if we had been forced to rely solely on the formal market", according to Mr Mung. Additionally, Mrs. Aline, who is married to Mr. Salom, stated*, "I obtain sambaza, or fresh fish from Zambia and Mozambique, beans from Congo, and makayabu, or salt fish from Mozambique, all of which I buy via our underground marketplaces*."

The informal market among migrants is the source of the growth of transnationalism. The statements made by the informants after realizing the way of life in the formal sector attest to this. These Congolese migrants learn from their experiences in the Durban economy that nothing in economic trends, especially in major cities like Durban, can be had for a derisory price. The perspectives of the Congolese refugees resort to arguments that the market has surprises whether or not they have money since the forces of the economy operate disproportionally to the population with low incomes. In a foreign country where people may travel as far as five to seven kilometres from their homes to purchase or deliver items of food to their counterparts, an ideal "bring to share" is a capability circumscribed behind the informal market where the goods' price exchange equals a sense of humanism through care for one another.

During participant observation, the relationship between this sense of humanism (individual capability) and the successful functioning of the informal business was noted amongst other drivers to food access among informants. The researcher attested to these connections at a flea market where informants bought food items on credit from their fellow migrants, who were to be paid at the end of the month. According to the informants' experiences, this strategy of encouraging food acquisition has a firm foundation.

Informants supported one another based on ethnicity since they have similar cultural identities, such as a mother tongue and eating habits. Chinyabuguma, a Congolese ethnic group made up of Mashi dialect speakers from the Walungu region in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo, followed by Mweneka (Legal speaking), and Bembe and Fuliru, was one of the dynamic networks that emerged from this root. These networks answer inquiries and address other problems, including availability and affordable access to food (Naidu & Nzuza, 2013; Brunori, 2007; Monsutti, 2016).

The development of these networks allowed informants to diversify their dietary needs, regardless of their level of direct financial competence (Brunori, 2007; Monsutti, 2016). The informants' eating habits were based on the spiritual realm and supported their access to food through food canteen organisation or ownership of food tuck-shops where church members support one another. This indicated the importance of religion as a source of food access. One of their members who

established this business years ago supplies smoked fish, fresh chicken, and many other goods at a decent price, according to informants who are members of the Durban Mission Church. Delivery was arranged but is typically accessible after church services for those placing orders.

Not all informants acquire food on credits; those who were once working-class refugees and had clear purchasing power paid in cash, but those who are financially challenged were eligible for food assistance—an opportunity that the official markets were not able to provide. Being a refugee working class or not with no guarantee of stay gives rise to uncertainty about living and increases the rhythm of poverty. In contrast, the same rhythm reduces reliance on cash to buy food in urban market environments (Battersby, 2011; Crush, et al, 2022). This situation cannot be disputed insofar as people like refugees are deprived of resources due to their unprecedented preparations before leaving their country of origin (Phillips, 2013; Paulk & Madison, 2015; Rugunanan & Smit, 2011). This phenomenon offers policymakers new information about obstacles relating to food security.

5.5 Discussion

This chapter was aimed to cover three objectives: The first objective was to unpack how food access by the Congolese refugees is reflected in food adequacy (regularity, sufficiency and variety). Further objectives were to identify whether the Congolese refugees were delighted with their food access in Durban and where they sourced the food. While some of the findings support the literature, others go beyond it.

The findings demonstrate that Congolese refugee' households are struggling to have adequate food while attempting to access the market in Durban based on three overarching themes: (1) Refugees are not too familiar with the available food in Durban, (2) Household ability to gather information, and (3) informal and formal approach as Congolese Refugees' food sourcing. Most informants evoked the feeling of food antipathy when examining their perception of available food in the Durban market, stating that they are not too familiar with food from here.

Three aspects flow from this perception. First, the aspect limiting the Congolese refugees 'households' access to certain food products even if it would have the financial possibility of

obtaining them. The second aspect leaves behind the idea that informants have a food preference to reach out to. Most participants refer to their traditions and the types of food consumed back home. This finding is consistent with the literature pertaining to food identity (Naidu and Nzuza, 2013; Jagne, 2020; Kirkland, et al, 2022).

Third, another significant demand-related factor is the individual's internal capability related to food acceptance or dislike of a food product offered on the market. This does not determine whether a consumer is able or not to afford a specific food item on the market, which is referred to as the biological aspect of food access (Maharaj, et al, 2017; Gibson, 2012; Godrich, et al, 2017; Rose, 2017).

It may, in some way, be related to cultural habits, but not always, since a person may become accustomed to a particular food or its sources without necessarily belonging to a particular food identity (Jagne, 2020; Kirkland, et al, 2022). Instead, it could be related to the type of food and its related sources that the person is most familiar with or used to. What these informants called 'Food from here' geographically falls under the environmental capability to offer individuals the food that makes them comfortable in the most convenient ways (Bonciu, 2017; Joassart-Marcelli, et al, 2017).

For these informants, food in Durban markets falls under this criterion of exotic food whereby accessibility to it colludes with the individuals' decision-making, which Rose (2010) refers to as food access perturbation. Rose's (2010) geographic food access analysis found its influence on consumption and weight status among the low-income population. The same views have indicated the Congolese refugees around the Durban food market.

This indicates that geographic access is a key element of food access because it is one of the factors that determines a person's level of food acceptance before even other variables come into play. The Congolese refugees seem to expand the literature on the food acquisition process besides the market and access theories to justify their inadequacy inheriting from this geographic food aspect. On the one hand, this is consistent with Lamarck cited in (Galera, 2017; Barbieri, 2019; Sobreira, Garavello & Nardoto, 2018) and Darwin cited in (Barbieri, 2019; Galera, 2017) perceptions

convey the idea of systematic classification of crops and animals that form a significant portion of human food takes a stance on the morphological, cytological, biochemical, and molecular biology characters.

The theory of ecology, on the other hand, supports these characteristics and is prone that each edible crop and animal belonging from a specific geographic distribution form construction nurses of people through the social identity theory (Willetts & Clarke, 2014). The assimilation aspects residing behind these collateral theories are crucial components, a way of supporting the refugee's ability to make decisions in circumstances where it would not be possible to do so otherwise.

Of course, the contribution of modern food processing has deepening as well the psychological ability by the range of diversified food items that Congolese migrants were claiming to be local fare (Sobreira, et al, 2018). Everything exotic always arouses self-denial since consumers first refer to the morphological aspect before tasting what is forming part of their food or is considered traditional food. Academics who investigated the availability of food from a market-oriented point of view revealed that many low-income households were facing this phenomenon of food sourcing and coping techniques (Whelan, et al, 2018; Hollands, et al, 2019).

Other scholars focused on health implications arising from changing the food environment among immigrant low-income households (Akinola, et al, 2020; Sobreira, et al. 2018; Whelan, et al, 2018; Lakika, 2019). Others have made the logically sound argument that inadequate food supplies in migrant households are caused by food stereotypes (Timmer, 2000; French, 2003; Villena-Esponera,et al , 2019; Shobe, Narcisse, & Christy, 2018)

However, this aspect of food antipathy connected to environmental distribution is a person's inner self-maintenance, most strongly his partake or dislike of the food around him (Chen, 2017; Wansink, 2004). What some people consider to be food may not necessarily be the same for others. This phenomenon led the informants to spend a lot of time wandering the markets eyeing foods that would morphologically resemble the foods they were most familiar with and had well-established vernacular names even though these names were different referring to Congolese

ethnic group identities (Lyana & Manimbulu, 2014; Mufwaya & Muchuru, 2016; BBC World Service Trust, 2010).

Even though some informants have the financial resources, they tend to purchase the same foods more frequently because of their background. This holds factual whether the food items the informants were considering were in line with their purchasing power or not; they had to forego a greater percentage of their money on the food they knew than on other exotic food even though it could be much more affordable (Kirkpatrick & Tarasuk, 2007). This is consistent with the researcher's investigations during participant observation sessions during informal and formal household food purchases.

The second overarching theme referred to formal and informal food sources, both prominent food sourcing according to the Congolese refugees. The food access theory in a market context focuses on formal sources to acquire food among immigrants (Kirkland, et al, 2022; Goldman & Hino, 2005; Maruyama & Wu, 2014; Avila, et al, 2020). For this subject, the informal sources are expanded to incorporate Congolese refugees' food access to their home cultural traditions and host affordable foodstuffs with the same features as the formal market. The informal approach was potentially used because they could get the same amount of food for half the price in the black market, both processed and their home food (Naidu & Nzuza, 2014; Jagne, 2020; Kirkland, et al, 2022).

The assurance of having access to fresh goods is another push factor for these Congolese refugees to source their food informally. This is consistent with Kirkland, et al. (2022), who suggest that organisations should provide Congolese and Burundian refugees in Ohio, United States of America, orientation services to local grocery stores that could avail local food similar to their home food. This shows the significance of informal sources to food access for foreign nationals. In contrast to the informal food supply, the informal sources were acquired through modern supermarkets, with the majority of food being processed.

The informants' scepticism about food from formal sources is limiting their access to processed food following its holistic approach to improve safety management systems since the Codex

Alimentarius hygiene code of practice became the global standard (Kussaga, et al, 2014). According to Kussaga, et al. (2014), risk-based food safety management systems such as HACCP and ISO 22000: 2005 are used to monitor and guarantee product safety through the food value chain. This means HACCP helps to reduce food safety risks and enhance international trade by boosting consumer confidence in food safety (Kussaga, Jacxsens, Tiisekwa & Luning, 2014).

The informants claim that the HACCP-based processed food system offers more food products than the indigenous food systems used in the DRC, including yoghurt and other high-energy products they buy for their kids who cannot eat anything else. This is consistent with Tollens (2003), Lyana & Manimbulu (2014), Maass, et al. (2012), that the Congolese food system differs from that of other developing or emerging African nations typically due to the absence of operating food industry legislation, competent agribusiness enterprises, the most successful are indigenous enterprises, and being culturally influenced.

This contrasts the situation in which African countries, such as South Africa, are insatiably improving the food import rules to supply safe food to their inhabitants under HACCP (Cabral, Favareto, et al, 2016). In relation to this, South Africa restricts imports, limiting cosmetics products and food that does not meet hygiene standards (Cabral, et al, 2016). For instance, regarding this perspective, the South African food security sector has reached a position where local food-processing businesses, in complementarity with outsourcing of import foods, are seeing a high-value hybrid food product growth such as fish, poultry of all kinds, meats, etc.(Cabral, et al, 2016).

Thus, according to Santin (2019), it is vital to note that about 1.8 million tons of chicken are consumed in South Africa each year. 1.3 million come from local poultry farmers, and its supplements are supplied by Brazil, the United States, and the European Union, whose exports contribute about 500,000 tons worldwide. This insight shows that South African local producers align with the global HACCP to supply more food to its domestic consumers than it imports (Santin, 2019; Cabral, et al, 2016). This overarching food system and its advanced services delivery lifestyle are where Congolese refugees find dissatisfaction, which negatively impacts their ability to participate fully in local food consumption.

The third overarching theme referred to the household's ability to gather information. The ability of the household to obtain information was the other factor that the research believes to be crucial to the market-related food environment. The Congolese refugees' household food expenses were highly related to this ability to gather information related to food and its sources, whereby those with less or higher income, unless they have reliable information, could acquire food with limited items than those with this ability. Suppose the majority of informants have this ability, like few of them, or the curiosity to acquire information about the market that provides them with food products, the issue of inadequate access to food would not arise.

This indicates that information is power when it comes to the analysis of inadequate food and that a person should have it before starting the process of gathering food, especially if they do not belong or are not living the lifestyle and will not be able to support themselves from it (Lyana & Manimbulu, 2014; Huang, 2020; Basinski, 2014). Therefore, acquiring its food necessitated that to adhere to what they called "connections" or have information on where to purchase food.

The ability to gather information for food access correlates with the household head's level of literacy to acquire information directly or indirectly. Directly means that few informants could use and understand the shopping advert technological tools. This finding is consistent with the literature on literacy and shopping environment among refugees resettled in high-income countries (Hadley, et al, 2010; Dimitri & Rogus, 2014). Knowing the locations of fewer outlets may make comparison shopping impossible for them, raising food prices and ultimately increasing the likelihood of inadequate access to food.

The finding also expands the literature on advert shopping environment to word of mouth through social identity in the social network. In this context, Congolese refugees with English barriers could communicate through this channel to locate food stores. Since they are unfamiliar with all the different food stores and names, shopping can be difficult (Dimitri & Rogus, 2014). This phenomenon can also affect many local internal migrants, rich or poor, who move to major cities to improve their living conditions.

The scope and scale of food sourcing change as significantly as agglomeration bounce can impact anyone. The context of Durban illustrates these drastic changes in agglomeration, where formal advertisement is the operating mode to reach out to many consumers (Hunter-Adams, 2017; Battersby & Marshak, 2017). This procedure differs from Congolese refugees ‘homelands, done through the informal sphere (Iyenda, 2001; Termote, et al, 2010).

Delocalisation is another factor connected to information or false information. During participant observation, the researcher has come to realize that the Congolese refugees were established in the inner suburbs where living conditions are quite expensive compared to South African townships that benefit economic living cost (Mokgabudi, 2012; Tengeh & Mukwarami, 2017). The inner-city suburbs like Umbilo, Glenwood, Masobiya Mdluli Street and St George’s Street are expensive and convenient for everything. Although closer to Durban central, a source of supply for most goods and services and its living expenses do not match the refugees' socio-economic status. This social sphere of living is more rustic and down-market, with a discernible difference in municipal service delivery levels, such as the type of food that refugees are exposed to (Black, 2018; Berggreen-Clausen, et al, 2022; Crea, et al, 2017).

Although informally designed, the ability to gather information is the easiest option for these refugees to survive there. This is consistent with Amisi's (2006) and Nutz's (2017) literature on informal strategies employed among refugees to alleviate the formal living cost. Regardless of the food sources and capacity for information gathering, most informants demonstrated the regular availability of four meal options at the household level. This finding is inconsistent with FANTA II and III, an indicator guide to measure food access scale, which provides 12 groups for an individual to be food secured (Jennifer, et al, 2007). This outcome demonstrates that household food consumption (HFC) performs inadequately.

This needs to be confirmed through a quantitive study, the qualitative distribution tendencies unveil that the informants' households risk poor dietary diversity, hunger and food insecurity access. The Household Hunger Scale (HHS), the Household Food Insecurity Access Scale (HFIAS), and the Poor Household Dietary Diversity (PHDD) should all be highlighted for this reason in quantitative research if someone would like to conduct a study on this subject. The

informants' food group diversity was below the minimum threshold according to the PHDD, which is a qualitative and quantitative indicator. This should have been at least five of the twelve food categories.

Qualitatively, as the informants Mrs Fura and Mrs Frame pointed out, there was insufficient variance in each group's type of most often accessed foods. As a population-level indicator of household food access, the Household Dietary Diversity (HDD) from the FANTA II (available in 2006) and ealier FANTA III Study. Household dietary habits are a crucial sign of food security. This term means the variety of foods a household consumes through a specific time frame.

According to Jennifer, et al. (2007), a more diversified diet in the home should be linked to sufficient protein and calorie intake, a higher percentage of protein from animal sources, and most crucially, the household's income level. The fact that the HDD varies across food types and does not show the amount of food consumed by a household but rather derives from the household's socio-economic ability to obtain food supports this criterion.

5.6 Conclusion

The study aimed to assess the Congolese refugees' food access in Durban using a market approach. The current section draws on three key findings enlightening how the Congolese refugees had inadequate food access to the market. Such include 'refugees are not too familiar with the available food in Durban', 'Household ability to gather information', and 'informal approach as a Congolese Refugees' food sourcing'.

The first theme informed in detail about food empathy. Respondents express this food empathy vis-à-vis the opinions of predominant food habits in the host country, which are unfamiliar to the informants back home. The findings showed that the informants perceive food diversity but do not meet their desiderata. Their food preference helped them to shorten the host food consumption. The second enlightens the household's ability to gather information.

The household's ability to gather information was a function of the household's financial means and food environment, which was quite extensive than theirs in the DRC. They need enough

information to bargain food prices they can afford and enough for them. The third theme: ‘informal approach as a Congolese Refugees’ food sourcing,’ is informed by the most accessible food sourcing that provides not only cheap food but also preferred food (home food).

More importantly, the informal source was to acquire home food. The study's findings underlined the importance of food in Congolese knowledge systems, particularly in refugee communities, despite not applying to the full population of the informants. The informants attributed their identity to the issue of access to the food they eat back home. The predominant modern life linked to host food versus informal life comparable to the informants back home reduced the full participation of these people in food consumption access in Durban. This outcome demonstrates that household food consumption (HFC) performs inadequately. The way refugees negotiate food access should be a government preoccupation, among other social issues.

CHAPTER SIX: CONGOLESE REFUGEES HAVE ACCESS TO FOOD OF CHOICES

6.1 Introduction

Food choices have complex meanings because what an individual considers food may not necessarily be the same for another. This chapter seeks to respond to this study's second objective, which assesses whether the informants have access to food of their choice. After data treatment, it appeared to have four overarching themes influencing the Congolese refugees' access to food choices. These themes are: memories of organic food, food similarity (switching to foods that are culturally comparable by appearance), household member size (impact on individual access to food of choice) and household income (in accessing food of choice).

The first theme unveils the nature of food the informants usually purchase in the DRC and reflects who they are to ensure that their choices remain the same in Durban and cannot be separated. The second theme shares the Congolese refugees' patterns of choices based on foods that are culturally comparable by appearance to the food they have never experienced before. The third theme emphasizes the connections between the number of people living in the household and its capacity to satisfy everyone's dietary choices. Lastly, the fourth theme details the Congolese refugees' household ability to raise income and related food purchases.

6.2 Memories of Organic Food

Based mostly on their memories of past encounters, the informants seem to hold distinct opinions on organic food access, particularly regarding its flavour and texture. The informants indicated that the meal from South Africa was not as good in texture or flavour as the food from home. They use the justification that freshly delivered, naturally farmed food is the best food ever to support their right to buy food at the Durban market. It is the best food because they used to eat it fresh back home as it came straight from the lake, farm, garden, or bush.

No further human transformation is susceptible to altering its sensory components, indicate Mrs Francine and Mrs Debo, all married women who have been in South Africa for eight and ten years. A misperception appeared to exist among most interviewees regarding the difference between

frozen and organic food. Foods automatically classified as organic were those that were fresh; those that weren't, especially if they were frozen, were seen as processed foods.

To their astonishment, most items sold were frozen or canned goods. The informants claim that to avoid becoming too accustomed to frozen food, they had to buy fresh food daily, serve it, and repeat it the next day. As long as the correct food is provided, some would choose to travel a distance of roughly 7 km from their homes. Mr Joe and Mr Stev, the household's leaders, must travel to Isipingo Township to purchase live chicken that they can slaughter themselves rather than purchasing nearby, reasonably priced frozen chicken than the one obtained from Farewell.

This highlights the value of fresh food, which continues to appeal to the eating patterns of the Congolese refugees. Mothers of three children, Mrs Sara and Mrs Debo, demonstrate the aforementioned point by relating how their children grew up eating fresh produce from their gardens. They never needed to purchase vegetables from the market because they could grow them themselves. Since there is no space for gardening, they use the market as long as fresh food is available.

The paradox the refugees encountered in the supply process was that back home, the most common type of market was the mobile or street market, whereby vendors could walk around with their goods on their heads. With regard to food, this was in contrast to the supermarkets that refugees are exposed to in Durban, as it should be freshly from the place of production and directly liquidated either by cash or credit. The supermarkets occasionally carry some of their favoured veggies, like aubergine, *bonga bushubgu* (bitter leaf), *bishusha* (squash leaf), *ndunda* (amaranths), and *bishogolo* (beans leaf). They favour mobile marketers instead because of the widespread notion that food is always fresh, not only because there is a greater chance of finding a good deal.

The majority of mobile marketers, according to informants, are people who supply them with this type of food and who have a strong sense of shared cultural identity, including shared memories related to food and language. The informants' preference for these traditional foods helps to deepen the cultural notions associated with them while also calming their nostalgia and cravings (Naidu & Nzuza, 2014; Akinola, et al, 2020; Harkness & Super, 1996). As a result, Congolese refugees

could hardly be expected to stick to traditional food, given the wonders presented by contemporary food.

To some extent, beliefs had a significant part in influencing decisions. The informants maintained that their home food cannot be separated from them and that they must still have access to it no matter how much it may cost as long as it is available. Some participants indicated they supplemented their mobile market source with formal sources such as supermarkets offering this or similar food. Informants such as Mrs Francine shared why it was easy to store enough home food items whenever they were available. She states,

> *On his trip back to South Africa from the different provinces of the DRC, Rwanda, and Burundi, my partner, a car dealer, always carries food items with him to supply the spaza shop merchants. I must make sure I have chosen my part of the merchandise before my husband delivers the entire order.*

Mrs Fura states that whether she has the ability or not, she can purchase various food items in the Congolese spaza shops in St George's Street as the owner is a well-known member of their community. *"Fish products, including smoked fish, dry fish, and salted fish, are also included in this category",* said Mrs Fura. Mr Joe added, *"I could not worry at all when it comes to eating our home food because sometimes in Checkers South Way Mall, you may find salted fish as well as bush meat."*

The majority of the statements made by these informants demonstrate that people's practices regarding home food cannot be erased and that regardless of the social challenges they may be confronted with, such as food regime change, they are always able to find a solution to meet such needs, one of which is by contributing to the income of other migrants. For many of them, it appears to be more of a means of maintaining ties with one another than an absolute source of revenue.

The presence of food items that are eerily reminiscent of home food in some supermarkets does not intend to ensnare the Congolese refugees' traditional diets; rather, these migrants are looking for opportunities to acquire items that resemble and can eventually be changed into foods that

based on sensory perception, resemble food from back home. This factor encourages their service providers to offer food price discounts to their fellow migrants who are community members because everyone is in a similar circumstance.

Maharaj, et al. (2017) seem to indicate that this behaviour is typical of human nature, whereby people in difficult situations—like refugees who are cut off from their most basic needs—do not underestimate the importance of the food they remember most when there is a mingling of different cultural food identities. Many Congolese migrants, including refugees and asylum seekers, prefer to eat food with the same texture and flavour as the food they were used to eating and drinking in the DRC or one of the neighbouring countries to South Africa (Rukema, et al, 2021). A food regime-style relationship is sealed between Congolese and its neighbouring countries through multiple shares of mobile economic activities. Still, the cross-border marriage that people have gone through offers much of their cultural artefacts. This is an important element explaining why food access along their journey to South Africa would not pose a big issue.

Distance in food habits in South Africa demands steps in characterizing these interactions and synthesising what is known about immigrants and their food environment (Berggreen-Clausen, et al, 2022). Here is where memories are coming from and induced Congolese refugees to partake in home consumption. Here are some recollections that inspired Congolese refugees to indulge in home consumption.

When Mrs Sara, a mother of 3 children, buys a live chicken at Adams Mission, she is reminded of food she has not had in a while: home chicken. She notices the taste and texture of the live chicken compared to the dead one in the supermarket. "*We also got such frozen chicken from Rwanda called kuku tamu, although these were not particularly different from our chickens,*" said Mrs. Aline. She also remembers the home chicken named *Kuku Tamu* (DRC). *To cut with teeth would be incredibly difficult. It is unlike the chicken from here, which stays sticky and viscous even after being roasted. During my transit in Kinshasa, the soft chicken was the most affordable than ours, and in times of financial challenges, we could mix both chickens*.

The participants align their underlying sensory beliefs about food to serve as the direction in territorializing former home food markets in a new food regime environment, both for biological sustainment and for remembrance of home rituals and a way to alleviate the current difficult life of being a refugee. Williams-Forson (2014) contends that eating conjures spiritual or psychological nutrition, satisfying physical requirements, and sensory memories. The memory of food for these Congolese refugees is similar to that of Ghanaians living in the United States and Sierra-Leonean migrants in Durban, who indicated that they struggle to feel content if they do not eat yet their soup and fufu from home (Williams-Forson; 2014; Naidu & Nzuza, 2014; Kukema, et al, 2021).

Piqueras-Fiszman & Spence (2015) realized that psychological, physiological, and physical processes are involved whenever people interact with food or drink to maintain food culture. To associate these processes with the modern eating lifestyle assists these immigrants in re-establishing informal access to former eating habits. This backup to the former eating habits process is being facilitated through social media platforms like WhatsApp, Facebook, and Twitter, where these Congolese refugees update each other regarding home food sourcing. In this manner, foodways are constructed to retain cultural integrity. The maintenance of home food has nothing to do with the physical attractiveness of the materials; otherwise, local food would have been prioritized by these immigrant refugees based on the shape and appealing effect of the product's packaging and the food sources (Piqueras-Fiszman & Spence, 2014).

For these Congolese refugees, access to food walked together with perception, which reflects their identity. This could occasionally be altered by an impression created by conjecture. This indicates that people make food choices based on what they expect to eat or believe will satisfy their wants, not based on their biological demands but their social memory background. Compared to this memory background, Vignolles & Pichon (2014) integrated marketing and sociological perspectives better to understand the links between food consumption and nostalgia.

Their findings support the current findings suggesting that recalling food memory is rather much more related to positive emotions than negative ones. This could be the pattern as to why ethnographic researchers in marketing have been drawn to the idea of nostalgia because it provided a way to understand a different approach that reflected an emotion, mood, or preference in another

way as an emotional response (Vignolles & Pichon 2014; Reid, et al, 2022; Abarca & Colby, 2016). This emphasises that the Congolese refugees recalled home foods as safe for consumption compared to the host agri-food regime style that created distrust and doubt in the minds of these consumers. The negative emotions, although insignificant, were the long process the home food must undergo before arriving in Durban.

Furthermore, the convenience and affordable food, on the one hand, and the dread deriving from the fact that very little is known about this sort of food on the other. This constituted a problem for Congolese refugees seeking authenticity in origin, in the symbolic dimension, and the unicity of a product. Most of these refugees from the Democratic Republic of the Congo claimed that choosing food was not just a matter of risk-taking but related to a certain stage of life where a particular food was preferred. According to informants, the same food consumed as a youngster is still consumed as an adult and affects what, how and who to ask for their ingredients.

The choices are directed based on home food spelling. Some of the vernacular names of the foods are given due to their physical-chemical properties and the social enjoyment they provide when consumed. This is illustrated by the Democratic Republic of the Congo's remembrance of the *Mchele ya arufu* variety of rice, which migrants find particularly filling. This rice cannot be compared to the rice known as 'Carolina' despite being affordable for the Congolese. The Congolese refugees only need to eat their previously consumed food and use all available means to obtain it.

Butti Al Shamsi, et al. (2018) and Piqueras-Fiszman & Spence (2015) recognize the significance of each ethnic food texture and taste in the food labels in addition to the direct impression derived from eating. The participants were referring to frequent access to fresh organic food in the DRC. The participants state that people in the DRC cultivate their food naturally utilizing organic matter and various wild foods.

When interrogating the Congolese refugees on how adequate the access to organic food choices in Durban is, the majority referred to their home food background to gradually integrate and develop the ability to new food regime entitlement. Then the Congolese people narrate that they rarely

relied significantly on imported food commodities because domestic production such as cassava, maize, beans, rice and palm cooking oil, which are even though frequently insufficient to meet domestic demand, is accessible even for the most vulnerable households (OCHA, 2018; Mondo, et a, 2019; Kazige, et al, 2022).

Alongside food quality integrating people's behaviour, the informants narrate that being able to afford an extra imported product defined the gradient of health index characterising each individual or household consumption. In relation to this, staple food such as beans was described to be the common affordable food in both urban and rural areas, but rice, the third most significant staple food was primarily consumed in bigger metropolitan areas an aside dish for the bourgeois consumers (OCHA, 2018; Mondo, et al, 2019; Kazige, et al, 2022).

As an important reference, food markets in the Eastern DRC play a critical role for beans and cassava, while rice and maize are supplemented by an extra import, which is offered yearly round. Some of the most important variables affecting the pricing of basic foods in Eastern DRC include fuel costs and the state of the road infrastructure connecting important rural production zones to significant consumer markets (OCHA, 2018; Mondo, et al, 2019; Kazige, et al, 2022). For the most part, the market is limited to sales of subsistence agricultural products scheduled for one or two days in the rural areas, followed by daily openings in the urban cities.

According to the informants, the Durban market offers broader aspects of the food system where purchase is the unique way to access food. When inquiring on how refugees manage to access food in this market space where a purchase is a unique path to acquire food, the response was such that quality and quantity matter, and this has shown a strong implication on the individual and household ability to choose a portion of food in the receiving country. The food that is being circulated in these spaces is typically manufactured and managed through the modern agro-industrial process, and retail points are constantly supplied by both the local firm and import counterpart (Maroun, et al, 2018; Greenberg, 2017; Kussaga, et al, 2014).

6.3 Food Similarity

The market in Durban seems to offer a different selection of foods than the one in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). Still, the informants have access to some of them that have noteworthy organoleptic properties. This is based on the distinct characteristics of some processed foods, such as maize, which is more refined, whiter, and shinier, has a delicious flavour, and expands more during cooking than corn from the Democratic Republic of the Congo, which the informants ate from childhood. According to the informants, these organoleptic differences are why they perceived *Inyala* flour in the Durban market as the same as *Semoule* flour or Semolina in the DRC market.

Even though utilization is not part of the concern in the debate, the latter was used to explain the ability offered by some of the food items to justify the consumption choice by these Congolese refugees. However, other Congolese refugees could choose similar food for certain reasons. Normally, Congolese enjoy fufu, which needs a mixture of maize flour or semolina with cassava to get fufu consistency. Habitually called Ugali or paste food in the Swahili language. The informants' narratives in this regard have also been confirmed by previous findings on Congolese staple food back home.

The similarities in these staple foods in Durban influenced their choices as well, regardless of the structural function of price that influences the quality, which in Durban determines who is eligible for food access (Mondo, Irenge, Ayagirwe, Dontsop-Nguezet, Karume, Njukwe & Mushagalusa, 2019; OCHA, 2018; Kazige, Chuma, Lusambya, Mondo, Balezi, Mapatano & Mushagalusa, 2022; Caesar & Riley, 2018; Greenberg, 2016). *"We could never consider making our food using chemicals. We truly did eat naturally at home,"* Mr Joe affirmed. *"The beverage we used to consume at home was endogenously processed. Beverages come in a variety of flavours, including banana, orange, and pineapple,"* said Mrs Fura.

These perceptions are covered by a study conducted in Melbourne, Australia, among refugees from the Horn of Africa (Wilson & Renzaho, 2015). This study provides two important acculturation models that apply to Congolese refugees. First was food integration, where they maintained their culture of origin as a first option while integrating the Durban food environment as a way of life.

Secondly is food assimilation, whereby the informants partake fully in the new environment but desire more home food practices. The rejection of the culture of origin and full acceptance of the host culture as a way of life. Given that eating is habitual, it is obvious that the informants consume food and beverages in Durban differently.

In relation to this, Terragni, et al. (2014) make the case that the local surroundings in which they reside impact food cultures and behaviours. However, like with most ethnic groups in Africa, Lyana & Manimbulu's (2014) findings in a study on culture and eating choices in the DRC detailed a possible connection between DRC's ethnic groups and the rest of the Southern African food consumption. They share certain foods, like cassava, sweet potatoes, meats, etc.

"When I was in the DRC before moving to Durban, I had a neighbour who had to cook pork meat every Friday since it was possible to buy it fresh from the butchery; in my language, it was known as 'Matisi'", recalled Mr Joe. *"The only difference is that the pork meat we purchase from Bluff Meat Supply is smoked, which cannot be made by local sellers,"* according to Mrs Debo.

In this context, Williams-Forson (2014) notes that people's food preferences are influenced by how they make decisions about what they eat based on their cultural values and the foods that are both readily available to them and indicative of at least one aspect of their identity. For immigrants, the absence of at least one of their traditional food functions may affect the food security and nutrition market. Although the current study does not consider the nutritional value of food, it recognizes that people's well-being and food security may be psychologically linked to their cultural belief systems. When examining food access, cultural belief cannot be disregarded because it is one of the factors that can drive two or more people to select the same food but for different reasons. People feel they always have access to food thanks to these various meanings manifested in physical access rather than just economic access.

Additionally, refusal to comply with this constitutes unbiased advocacy for a person's or household's food sufficiency and food safety for an active life. The Congolese refugees view consuming foods different from their own as simply filling their stomachs because those foods do not satisfy their cravings. As a result, they believe that they are not eating properly. Regarding this,

Ahmad, et al. (2020) suggest that people's psychological attachment to their food gives it psychological value through this time of exile and that no appealing or nutritious food can compensate for that.

The informants selected certain wild-bitter leaf *mboga bushungu* and *mulenda* crops, such as edible plants that biologically lack robust nutritive components. Nevertheless, it is consumed because it contains some nutritional value, particularly when mixed with other ingredients. According to participant Mrs Fura, who has preferred eating "bitter leaf" since back home, these foods balance blood sugar levels in those with high diabetes and comfort those suffering from stomachaches.

One amazing characteristic of the communities of Congolese refugees in Durban is their ability to take advantage of the natural plant biodiversity that is inedible in their new home country to create a parallel market, a source of income, and to keep in touch with many of their African and Congolese counterparts. For instance, Congolese refugees utilize cassava leaves (*Sombe or Pondu*) to communicate during marketization to remedy the socio-cultural and economic tensions.

However, the informants were able to cross borders when they were seeking out edibles like *Amadumbe* or Colocasia Esculenta. The genus Colocasia, a family of flowering plants known in South Africa as Amajumbe or Jumbo elephant ear and Sweet potatoes, is native to Southeast Asia and the Indian subcontinent. These decisions were able to bring together Congolese refugees with South Africans of other ethnic groups, such as Blacks and Indians, despite difficult times for immigrant communities as they navigate both home and host identities (Naidu & Nzuza, 2014; Joassart-Marcelli, et al, 2017). Furha clarified, "*Even if it is not the same cassava as that in the DRC, the Cassava leaves in KwaZulu-Natal make us feel at home.*" Mr Stev also said, *"Colocasia and cassava are my escape from this meal at this point. I frequently visit my Indian friend who dished me a plate of colocasia."*

Tensions between different members of society inevitably increase in this context of food-related social and environmental change (Joassart-Marcelli, et al, 2017; Caesar & Riley, 2018; Ahmad, et al, 2020). Refugees from the Congo tend to hold onto and protect the collective cultural values that

make up who they are, but they are also keen to find foods comparable to their own. This process is critical to identity creation or reconstruction for the Congolese refugees who wish to maintain their links through home food while fighting to adapt to the new market.

Regarding this, the Congolese refugees' options for food in the new environment are difficult, but they cannot drive them from their practice (Přívara, 2019; Cummins, et al, 2014). This is because there seems to be a strong correlation between people's memories and socio-emotional aspects of food, and this may be part of the reason why some people find the Durban food market to be heaven and others find it to be hell depending on their food preferences (Pereira, et al, 2010; Lyana & Manimbulu, 2014).

Different ethnic group members, such as Mr Kab and Mr Mung, contend that while access to food is not a major problem in the Durban food market, obtaining food from their preferred sources is a major problem. Mrs Jose, a mother of three children, also notes that many of their customers' food preferences are not well known by the big supermarkets, but rather they refer to mobile markets, where one learns by chance or via relationships that their food preferences are available or may be substituted. Home food preference helps people remember their origins or place in the world (Wilk & Carpenter, 1999), but they can also gradually fade away if certain behaviours become routines. Socialization and cross-cultural communication processes develop human memory, suggesting that daily actions in everyday life are remembered (Dasen, 2022; Röttger-Rössler, et al, 2015). It is clear that participants bring in their old habits during the socialization process in the host society to show who they are and are not.

6.4 Congolese Refugees' Household Member Size

This section assessed the influence of the Congolese refugees' household family member size on individual access to food choices. In most household member sizes, the children under age of eighteen were the most dominant, ranging between five and six individuals per household. Households with more children reported having more problems with food selection than families with fewer children. The leaders of these homes with more children claim that they cannot cater to each child's preferences because the most important thing is to put food on the table, regardless of its quality.

Food quantity was the target for most household heads, where under-age children were dominant because these humankind have more pressure on energetic foods given that they are too selective in food items (Scaglioni, et al, 2018; Rollins, et al, 2014; Vollmer & Baietto, 2017). Some household heads have to split themselves into multiple perceptions to meet the individuals' food preferences halfway, especially for these children, given their dietary capricious habits.

The Congolese refugees' household heads could not disagree at some points with these children's capricious phenomena as it is one of their prerogatives to quench their appetites and to make their biological system work (Scaglioni, et al, 2018). To this endeavour, Mrs Aline and Mrs Fura, household heads with a minimum number of three children, sometimes could prefer to spend their meagre cash on foods with quality nutrition that their children were appealing to spontaneously, hoping that it would help them develop well.

However, this could not happen every day, and not every household member will apply the same gesture as Mrs Aline does, given that their family members can eat any food. Most of the time, household heads face the issue of food selection, especially if children were born and raised in South Africa. According to Mrs Aline, Mrs Fura, and Mrs Frame, a mother of six kids, they cannot cope without certain manufactured meals like sweet drinks, milk, and fatty items like yoghurt. Households where members were born and raised in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, where they experienced its food culture for half of their childhood, and then spent their adolescence in South Africa, have shown that they are not very erratic when it comes to food.

It was observed in so many households that family members had food-capricious preferences, and this attitude was influenced by eating choices and behaviour, whereby parental decisions weighted significantly in household members' ability to choose what to eat.

Prior studies in this context provided significant contributions that the heads of households are purposely promoting the food programme without the full consent of the household members at the same time influencing their food choices (Scaglioni, et al, 2018). The household food access concerning the categories of children at home gave rise to an important issue. The Congolese

refugees' household heads had difficulty managing whether their households had a small or large number of members. For example, there was dispute about the ideas and opinions regarding a dietary lifestyle to adopt in a household where the majority of family members were both under and over eighteen. Each individual would like to eat food of their own choice which parents cannot afford. Mrs Sara (informant) said,

> *"Sometimes I run out of things to buy, each child, I do not eat this, the other I want this, and sometimes in all, they ask I may only be able to buy a food item, sometimes I have to submit it has an opinion of either with the risk of having my children dissatisfied."*

The gravity of this disagreement depended on the household heads incomes on one side and, on the other side, the family members' outside eating style influence as some individuals are in direct contact with the market realities and different consumers who can influence their way of negotiating food. This perception was evidenced during the participant observation segment whereby, Scaglioni, et al, 2018; Terragni, et al, 2014 identified four parenting skills governing the interaction patterns of household members around physical access of food and preference. The four characteristics include uninvolved or negligent parenting, authoritative, accommodating, and authoritarian parenting. These four parenting skills were observed while interviewing and monitoring the informants' (during participant observation) ability to provide food to their domestic members.

The household heads (informants) alternated between authoritative and authoritarian behaviour, seeking to adapt the domestic members' physical access to food choices, the household income regime, and its distribution to the multiple household expenses. This does not mean the household heads could not accommodate their domestic members' food choices to some extent. Mrs. Belind and Mrs. Debo (all informants) admit that when one of their household members cannot collectively eat the same food item as others, it has to be justified by a biological issue.

In this circumstance, it requires special intervention. Other than that, special food may be related to an event such as a birthday, marriage, etc. Where household members are more than six, the heads were more insensitive to the superfluous dietary preferences of their family members. They exhibited authoritarian tools to control the household's food choices. However, the informants have

a proper manner of exercising their power, whether their parenting authoritative or authoritarian skills, without using derogatory language that unfairly imposed or restricted the family to a choice of foods.

During the participant observation phase, the researcher could have assisted some of the informants' conversations in this regard, whereby the heads conveyed concise instructions regarding food preference alleviation following the ongoing market barriers. The households with children under the age of decision-making exhibited positive responsiveness as they were shown deliberate use of cajoling subjected to stricter regulations and directives.

For those households with smaller members (less than four) and manageable monthly incomes, the heads of Congolese refugee households acted permissively. They were opened to various food options, albeit they struggled to set boundaries. This situation was not the same for all the informants. The households in this category demonstrated high levels of demand but low levels of satisfaction since family heads have to budget to meet food diversity but quantitativily limited (Berggreen-Clausen, et al, 2022; Kirkpatrick & Tarasuk, 2007; Mello, et al, 2010).

For instance, Mr Solo, a self-employed mechanic who is a father of 3 children, asserted that food options are a frequent situation in his household. Mr Solo complained daily about how his meagre resources are under significant strain because he and his wife usually share similar food. At the same time, each of his three children requires food diversity. However, compared to Mr Joe, who shares a similar income but has a large family with many household members, Mr Solo appears to be more responsive to the dietary preferences of his family members. In this attempt, the informants show compassion and entitlement to their domestic members to eat the food they want, while this effort affected the other household's basic needs (Sen, 1981).

Children who were old enough to partake in any food flavour reduced the pressure and vulnerability on the entire household's capacity to provide food, and the breadwinner's did not have to worry as much about sticking to a tight food budget. However, even though it allegedly could be para-sources that compensate for inaccessible food to the household' members, the food quantity remains a significant factor where a household has more adults than children.

The exception was when the household had adults among the primary breadwinners, such as Mrs Debo and Mr Zain's daughters. The latter, together with Mrs Josee, a widower and mother of five descendants, three of whom were minors and two others were at the age of earning income, the consent to acquire food was a unipolar decision between breadwinners. "*Me and my daughters always share the responsibility to provide particular food items, and that is how we overcome the challenges due to food choices among us",* said Mrs Jose. Choosing food that is common to everyone prevents alienation, which is capable of volatilising the togetherness effort to respond to food sovereignty, which is likely to be enjoyed by everyone inside the same household.

Wherever there was bipolar consent but unipolar to take responsibility for providing food, one of the members could have consumed food that they would not prefer because they no longer contributed as much as previously did. *"Whoever wants to eat a particular food item of their choice is free to do so, but in my opinion, food is food,"* declared Mrs Frame (informant), who was backed up by Mr Joe, indicating that as long as no one is vomiting up, it still applicable to all the household members.

Considering the above-mentioned detailed narratives, the household heads are going through significant struggles in attempting to achieve food sovereignty at the individual level. Failing to achieve sovereignty over individual food choices does not make the household heads fall under the negligent parenting framework as many could (Scaglioni, et al, 2018). Many household heads acted as if they were negligent parents concerning individual food preferences rather than a strategy to lower food expenditures than satisfy individual food preferences.

These households are likely to have food insecurity since most of the informants' families were run in a parenting style that followed Congolese culture and in which the household members are subjected to the parents' dietary preferences (Mirindi, 2019; Williams-Forson, 2014). Nevertheless, a self-breadwinner was able to cross parenting food boundaries aiming to improve their eating behaviours were seen in families exposed to permissive parenting (Lopez, et al, 2018; Vollmer & Baietto, 2017).

In the African context, according to Zihalirwa (2017), cited in Rukema et al. (2021), a household member, whether able to cross food boundaries or not as long as he is living under the same roof with his guardian, is not exempted from the heads' eating habits until such reliance is removed (Rukema et al., 2021). Some of these family members are no longer culturally blinded to deserve such treatment; however, they are brainwashed by the life circumstances of the household heads' income.

According to Rollins, et al. (2014), a range of behaviours that combine efficient and inefficient patterns explain why the Congolese household behaves as such. The household heads stated they are the only individuals outside their cultural norms likely to understand good food and where to purchase nutritious meals instead of junk foods. The informants recognised these presumptions, who had fewer children and less obligation to purchase food. Reduced food pressure was also associated with increased food avoidance traits and reduced consumption of foods from the household in children under the age of ten.

In smaller homes, who respect family members' preferences, household heads were observing flexible methods linked to lower levels of food avoidance caused by the food features and lower levels of non-home food consumption (Akinola, et al, 2020). This flexibility was reinforced through COVID-19. According to informants like Mrs Esta and Mrs Francine, women with four and six children, respectively, the flexibility to obtain food changed drastically during and after COVID-19; now, food preferences depend on the socioe-conomic situation at the time of the request. The informant emphasises that activities generate income following the loss of their livelihood.

Thus, many of them stay at home without anything to do while they have to respond to food queries from their domestic members (Wegerif, 2020). In this circumstance, the household head's responses to food needs were proportionate to his situational financial ability with less pressure to make choices. This was happening in a household with many children, and the household head's capacity to satisfy everyone's choices was insufficiently embedded. To this endeavour, Mr Joe, a father of six children, describes how challenging it is to choose between satisfying each child's dietary preferences or availing of any food:

I often find myself scratching my head when each child says I don't eat fufu, I go for rice, the other I go for yoghurt, the other I eat spaghetti, while the others prefer fried chips at the moment that I can only afford one or two items of all they ask for.

Regarding his three children, Mr Solo makes a similar point:

Observe now, Mr Researcher, these kids won't eat what we just made. The oldest, as you can see, has now changed his mind and now prefers macaroni and eggs instead of chicken and rice. How are we going to satisfy all of the kids' needs at this point? In comparison to what is needed to support all of these kids' needs, not to mention additional expenses, my income is extremely limited. The majority of the meals we cook from home is not even enjoyed by these kids.

According to Mrs Belind, a mother of three kids:

Despite the fact that this situation has an impact on our finances and makes it difficult for us to save money for the future, we are obliged to change our diet. Equivalent to the fact that we always have to work to pay our rent and food. According to Mrs Belind, a mother of three kids.

The literature supports these refugees' lives (Amissi, 2006; Amissi, et al, 2011) when investigating the livelihood strategies experienced by the Congolese refugees in Durban. They seem to embrace multi-stream income sources with wages that cannot fulfil household necessities. Even though the income could be limited compared to the household members' needs, many households lacked an appropriate management mechanism to respond to each desideratum adapted to the household's capabilities to secure food. Failing to satisfy the household members could explain why one either gets to eat reluctantly for lack of other alternatives or stays without eating, not because there is nothing to eat but because they do not want the food made available.

Regarding adequacy, one might think that the household is food-secured, but this is not the case at the individual level of each household member. The situation in these households is comparable to that. At the same time, South Africa enjoys food security on a national level, but on a household level, certain members lack access to the food of their choice (Chakona & Shackleton, 2017).

These Congolese refugees, being dwellers in South Africa, theoretically have the right to food like any citizen.

However, the fieldwork in this study shows that this is not the case insofar as household members do not consume as much variety of food as they would regularly like to have. This inadequacy in food distribution among household members entails an important factor in Food access measurements regarded as an index in food security studies (Chakona & Shackleton, 2017). Food access measurements can also assess the nature of food insecurity in households and the severity and monitoring interventions (Chakona & Shackleton, 2017). From the opinions of the above informants, some projections can be assumed. The question of food diversity in a household like that of Mr Joe, who has six children, becomes hypothetical whose main activity is the local transport of goods:

> *It also happens several times that I only do one trip a day, sometimes for R300 or R400 or nothing. With R400 or R300 me who has such a number of children and we live at the rate of the day, should I buy food or what? And if the food, how many food items that this budget would afford? If all the children would like to eat the same thing, we would understand, but since we can't help it, bought what we can with the means we have, provided that children see something than see nothing. Some of them are capricious to food; these are the children of Mandela to say from South Africa, sometimes, I see the children sleeping hungry since the available food is hated. We have to force them to eat what is available, and sometimes you can eat the same food two to three days, especially after the breakup of the COVID-19, where life have become expensive at all levels without exception.*

Mr Mung, who has eight children, added*: "Here at home, if it is not rice and beans, then it is fufu and chicken, and all of us have to comply with it because it is the only affordable foods and luxury foods for us refugees."*

Food dissatisfaction continues to be at the centre of discussion within informants' household family members. The household size of these informants has an important influence over the Household Dietary Diversity across food groups and, as pointed out in INDDEX Project, 2018, even though it does not indicate the quantity of food consumed by a household. Most household

members see their food dietary diversity as poorer than the minimum FANTA requires. According to Mr Joe, the poor food is a function of household income and number of family members. By the way, Mr Mung (informant) appears to show that meeting the requirements for the six food categories is difficult. In another sense, they choose items that can include everybody and last longer than individual satisfaction.

Even though no single cut-off or objective level designates when a family is sufficiently diversified, the current findings provide two possibilities for using this indication in a performance-reporting setting. One approach concerns households with small household member size. Food dietary diversity (HDD) has a significant probability of being met contrary to the presumption that HDD is, with a high probability, possible with wealthier households. Mr Steve's household of three family members and Mrs Esta's household of three members illustrate the latter would diversify their diets as their earnings rise. However, Mr Joe, Mr Mung, Mrs Jose (who is dependent on child support), and Mr Zain (a pensioner) have large families with household members varying between five and eight; therefore, it is important to take into consideration that their dietary diversity is decreasing rather than increasing.

6.5 Congolese Refugees' Household Income in Accessing Food of Choice

This point discusses the impact of Congolese refugees' household income in accessing food choices. Most informants in the interview indicated that if they nurture their household members, it is because of their small income-generating activities in the informal sector. They add that, being insufficient or not, this is how they manage to meet the food needs of their household members. As it is in the informal sector that it takes place, they can endure the worst hazard of this source of income. Nevertheless, being inconsistent or not, they are satisfied with their daily wages. This is how their food expenditure depends on their daily income. "*With this figure, it is improbable to make a monthly food provision,"* said Mr Asante, father of four children, who works in an artisanal field of recycling automobile plastic objects.

Mr Asante said:

> *Due to the nature of my income source, I don't need to plan ahead like the wealthy people do to acquire food. Early morning, I have to get up to my workshop, as you can find me*

right now. As you can see yourself, Mr Researcher, I already know that part of my ratio is covered as one client ever arrive. I can't possibly go to bed hungry because so many people are aware of my input in the recycling of automotive plastic objects. As you can see, the retail price of this car part (water bottle) is approximately R800; however, the client prefers rather bring it to me and save R600 as I will charge him R200. With R200 my familly members cannot sleep without having anything on the teeth.

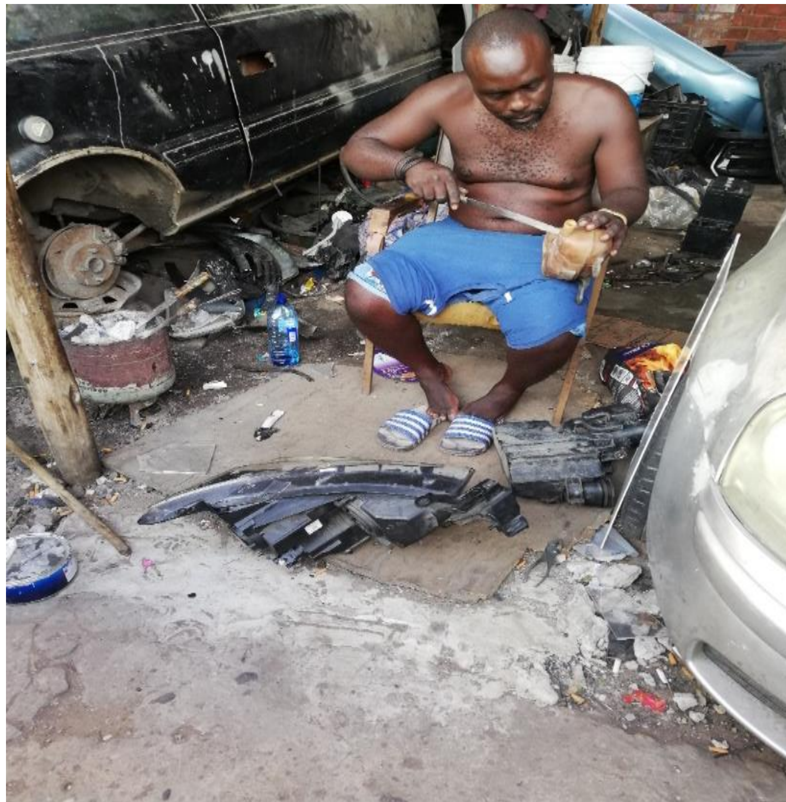

Figure 3. A Man stick with fire Car Components, Recycling Plastic To Survive

The household economic situation of many informants includes Mr Asante, a father of five children, who has justification in other studies whereby household heads live under one dollar a day to acquire food. As with Mr Asante's household, the literature indicates that these kinds of low-income households have to cut significant expenses to align their food needs to their earning regime (Berggreen-Clausen, et al, 2022; Kirkpatrick & Tarasuk, 2007; Martin-Shields & Stojetz, 2019). Cutting down some expenses does not indicate that the informants secure enough food.

Rather, they choose food that corresponds to their daily income, while fortunate people plan monthly for food provision.

With this regard, the Informants expressed that their food participation qualitatively and quantitatively within the scene of food consumers is significantly reduced. The majority provided reason to this phenomenon to the lack of constant earning sources. Many interviewees, such as Mr Asante, Mr Solo, Mrs Belind, etc., asserted being without formal employment. Amisi (2006) is congruent with the informants on this issue by indicating that many refugees and asylum seekers are struggling to find better sources of income in South Africa. In relation to Amisi (2006), it was hard to determine how much a Congolese refugee household constantly earns monthly.

However, most informants received an income fluctuating between R1650 and R5000 per month, which is insufficient to cover Durban's living lifestyle. The eating style in Durban is based by the majority on processed food habits (Mokgabudi, 2012; Even-Zahav, 2016; Sinyolo, 2020). The informants' participation in this food space is an ample opportunity to grapple with food that falls under the globalisation process. Still, they are betrayed by its requirements, including stable sources and enough income. For some, they were managing to access cheap food that met this kind of income.

Although food could be qualitatively and quantitatively varied from one another, the informants indicate that food choices were stepped by income breakdown. There is housing cost on one side; on the other, education costs emerged over nutrition during the school opening. During this period, Mr Joe (informant) states that there is mounting financial depletion in many refugee households, forcing many of them to choose lower-quality foods.

The households adhered to daily or weekly and rarely monthly paid wages, the informants indicate that the staple food frequency patterns changed insignificantly to items such as rice, dry beans, and maize flour, which remains not something new but the same as they used to in the DRC. Mr Ahadi (informant) provided sounding details to back up this:

> *Back in the DRC, there was always what we used to call economic food, and this goes into what we call staple foods for those of us who depend on daily income. I am*

> *always be content with maize meal or semolina, also known as 'maize flour', in this country; if it could not be this food, I don't know what should we be eating today. I remember when we first arrived in this country, one sack of semolina worthed less than R20; this helped us feel at home. Nothing can even replace this food commodity today; it may be affected by food inflation, but it is our daily bread. I don't have any complaints when I consume beans and rice or beans and maize paste from Monday to Sunday. It is our economic food matching our marginalized income.*

Mirindi (2019), congruent with the informants, states that the foods they eat match their income but are not all staple foods. They rely on the flexibility of the food price concerning their financial possibility. Of course, there are some similarities in terms of food cultural identity. For example, both the Democratic Republic of the Congo and several southern African countries produce a lot of beans and maize meal (Mirindi, 2019). Among the three commodities—maize, rice, and beans; rice is considered the most introduced food among African staple foods because of its accessibility and affordable price among other food commodities (Mirindi, 2019).

These livelihood earners (informants) find some comfort when buying these food items, which researchers identified, as well as the DRC's boarding school students' regular staple food (Mirindi, 2019; Landreville, 2020). In the DRC, rice, beans and maize meal are the staple foods for students because they are available and affordable than other foods. Similarly, A vernacular term was given comparable to the Christian faith prayer, "Our Father who is in heaven give us our daily bread." This vernacular term from the reality that most low-income Congolese people, including students, often consume those foods. The economic patterns and existing eating behaviours from home were among the factors motivating Congolese refugees to continue following the same food customs in their new food environment.

Although the tiny income that these informants earn does not allow them to afford more luxury foods, there is a way forward. Mr Kab, one of the informants and a father of four children, spends less money by combining food between back-home eating habits and the current food regime. The informants cannot regularly afford the new food regime or their food from home.

Mrs Aline and Mr Joe report:

> *We still buy dried beans, rice, and maize flour food from home; however, we alternate them with food from here, which are staple foods to. Since our home foods are price hikes and easy accessible than some of the host foods we prefer to alternate them. Although Koushgbou rice, a home rice, is available to us, it is not actually cost-effective enough to be used as our daily meal. Varieties like 'Carolina, Basmati, and Aunty', however, do not swell as much as rice from homeland, Koushgbou. We would prefer to have 'Carolina, basmati, and Aunty rice' rather than this expensive rice, which costs twice as much for five kilograms as it does for ten kilograms of Koushgbou rice.*

Additionally, one of the informants, Mrs Frame, a mother of six children, supported by Mr Zain, reported that: *"To afford food was not an issue before 2013 when I came in Durban, there was mobility of Jobs and therefore money was circulating among refugees than nowadays where a bag of Inyala is closer to R80.*" These opinions continue showing that refugees' household incomes are still far behind being constantly able to juggle the cost-effective food that weighs on them. These are people without basic income, meaning that they do not plan for what to eat, but daily earnings dictate what and when to eat particular meals. This indicates that there is a relationship between income and food access. The more insufficient income, the less probable the informant is to be subject to fair nutrition.

6.6 Discussion

The current chapter answers one of the objectives of this study, which seeks to know whether the informants have access to food of their choice and the factors influencing their choices. The findings reveal four overarching themes that the informants consider to have an immediate impact on food access of their choices. These include access to organic food, switching to foods that are culturally comparable by appearance, household member size impact on individual access to food of choice, and household income in accessing food of choice.

The habits and behaviours constructed by choosing organic food significantly impact Congolese refugees' consumption trends in Durban. This finding is consistent with the literature. Enriquez &

Archila-Godinez (2022) and Chen & Antonelli (2020) found that food expresses people's identities, morals, and lifestyle choices. The continuation of living an organic lifestyle, as suggested by the informants, has requirements.

In addition to being a simple decision based on continuous availability and health implications, it is the least convenient method of preservation, and the most convenient method of preparation. This argument is justified in Chhabra (2022) and Vollmer & Baietto (2017), which examined convenience's role in food choices considering the function of preparation methods and food consumption. The most readily available organic goods are retailed in the most expensive stores in the neighbourhood, such as Woolworths, Pick 'n Pay, and Food Lovers. A few was provided by the street traders, which informants encounter while trying to acquire the organic food of their choice.

The research on food access generally agrees that the social context of food is a tool of discrimination, particularly in high-income populations where the expense of food serves as a dividing line between economically advantaged societies and others. This means the limitation regarding organic food choices facing Congolese refugees is relevant but differs across social contexts. For instance, the potential market for organic foods in Europe and other high-income nations is set up in a way that can draw immigrants who have a natural preference for organic foods (Ashaduzzaman, et al, 2021; Badantade, et al, 2021).

There is even another area in the United States, such as Ohio, where it is hard to find outlets with immigrants' organic foods (Jagne, 2020). Food may be available but inaccessible to some individuals, especially low-income consumers. This was one pattern behind the Congolese refugees switching to foods that are culturally comparable by appearance. The so-called soft chicken or Zulu chicken is simply a cultural identity-driven choice, which does not mean that it is the same chicken; nevertheless, the taste and texture present a little difference but not distant enough (Tollens, 2003).

So often, when income is tight, the informants resort to processed chicken with high energy density. This is consistent with the literature on food acculturation (Kirkland et al., 2020) among

Congolese refugees resettled in the United States of America (USA). Compared to South Africa, the USA has the majority of global food consumption habits with processed and high energy dense (Kirkland, et al, 2020). With this, the Congolese refugees in Durban have more opportunities to grab the organic food they choose than those in Ohio.

The Congolese in Durban often resort to high energy-dense food due to a lack of income to afford organic choices, while those in Ohio have economic resources to afford home food but cannot find it (Kirkland, et al, 2020; Jagne, 2020). The finding of Congolese refugees' household income informs that these people are economically disadvantaged. They secure their income informally while exposed to formal consumption of goods and services (Sen, 1981; Bishokarma & Amir, 2014; Rai & Smucker, 2016).

Their monthly income range between R1650 and R5000. The global view of this income distribution or tendency unveils that several basic needs was hampered. These informants resort to unwilling food or cheap food. According to Himmelgreen (2002), "*What people eat defines who they are*". However, due to income restrictions, the Congolese refugee households eat what they are (poor) rather than what they are perceived to be culturally.

Anthropology research concerns food and households as a family unit (Mintz & Du Bois, 2002; Warde, 2016; Weaver, et al, 2019). On this, the household member size and its impact on individual access to food of choice are other aspects less pinned down in anthropology. The findings show that the family's size impacts the household members' food access as a whole and its individual members' food satisfaction.

The confrontation of household member size with terms such as adequacy, regularity, and sufficiency varies as the household member size was significant. Less freedom to choose one's preferred food existed when the number was larger than it could have been in the alternative (4 to 7 children). This expands with Higashi, et al. (2017*)* literature on the impact of economic scarcity on the food security of all household members. In the case of Congolese refugees, only the heads of the household have the right to decide what food to eat and at what time.

This opposed Wales's (2009) approach to household members' decision to access food. He indicates that convenient meals for a household of such height necessitate everyone agreeing on what to eat, when it should be provided, and who to eat with. In Africa, the household head decides what food to buy, how to prepare, and when to eat it. This is because they are the only breadwinners in the household unless other members can perform the same duty; then, the decision would have come from all the breadwinners.

In the current study context, the only breadwinners were the household heads. The household head's decision is driven by the extent of income earned, which is considered insufficient. Thus, omitting the income-related decision, the household-level food access collides with two cultural tendencies in food access between the household members' food choices and household heads. Most household descendants were young children born in South Africa under Western food regime styles, and most of these young children attended schools. These younger children can know about food and influenced by others, social media, and other networks of food advertisement.

There are disputes over food access with the household head, which is culturally shared and economically limited. This is consistent with the literature about social identity, food access and capability approach. To this, Chhabra (2022) asserts that the food consumption habits of young adults have changed over the past 20 years due to greater urbanization, income-induced diet diversification, and shifting lifestyles. A common occurrence among college students today is eating something other than the three standard meals of breakfast, lunch, and dinner.

According to several studies (Kirsten, 2012; Balkan & Tumen, 2016; Bondemark, 2020), young people eat for various reasons, such as their love of trendy foods, how delicious they find food, their awareness of their bodies and peer pressure. They also eat because of media advertisements and the link between food and cost. Furthermore, diets have evolved significantly and depend on the kind of food the market provides over time. With these forces, the household heads could not have constantly met all the household members' choices. In most cases, the household heads align the household food needs with what is closer to their home cultural traditions to ensure their children keep their parents' identities in mind (Jagne, 2020; Kirkland, et al, 2022).

Additionally, there are frequent gaps between cultures; younger people could, in the future, feel pressure to catch up with what they have left behind. This finding is consistent with studies on the dietary transition issues among foreign nationals to control food stress and food scarcity caused by economic and cultural factors (Wood, et al, 2021). Even though it is known that refugees are economically marginalised in South Africa (Nutz, 2017, Amisi, 2006) to mitigate their food accessibility, few demonstrated the difference during participant observation sessions. According to the socio-ecological model driving food security, these are informants with mindsets that rely on pragmatism and practical methods to satisfy food desires for their household's younger members.

Although these informants are recessive relative to most informants, they understand that identity is constructive and involves individual consent. Thus, they could partake more in host traditions and styles of eating to form an additional identity. This is consistent with the literature in light of which in high-income countries, people with refugee backgrounds adhere to host traditions as a result of societies' restrictions on their access to resources and cultural food-gathering techniques (Gingell, et al, 2022). Adopting a new culture then can be understood as conditional because they cannot always access their cultural materials.

The overall informants would like to respond validly to the household members' food entitlement but were encountered by the expenses associated with several necessities for the household. These needs shrink the household head's capacity regarding food sustainability and suggest an important predictor of food inadequacy, among other factors (Kirsten, 2012; USDA, 2009; Blankson, 2017). A similar study by Arksey & O'Malley with enhancements by Levac, et al, cited in (Wood, et al, 2021), confirmed the current trend of Congolese refugees' food choice impediments.

The only difference between their work and the current one is based on the methodological aspect used. Their developed framework employed the Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses extension for the core Scoping Reviews checklist concept (Wood, et al, 2021). The current study used fieldwork through participant observations and semi-structural interviews to experience the reality on the ground.

6.7 Conclusion

This chapter investigated whether the informants have access to food of choice and what factors could influence the choices. The findings display four overarching variables: access to organic food, to foods that are culturally comparable by appearance, household member size impact on individual access to food of choice and household income in accessing food of choice. The outcomes from these variables show the inter-dependence of each other to display barriers and opportunities to food access among Congolese refugee households in Durban. At household members' level, the findings show an imbalance of access to food choices driven by two different cultural identity approaches: African and Western.

The level of food accessibility in this situation was dictated more by the African parenting environment, which goes against most of the family members' access to food choices and is contrary to their entitlement to food. In this situation, the entire household concentrated its food regime in Congolese style within a context where the food regime has evolved. The households selected to participate in this study had no other adult income earners with whom to put together their balance of power in food access decision-making. It can be suggested to the next research to consider this aspect. It may be advisable for the government and NGOs to provide household breadwinners with more economic room to prevent an excessive food monopoly at the home level.

CHAPTER SEVEN: FOOD ACCESS CONSTRAINTS

7.1 Introduction

This section intends to cover one of the objectives of this study, which seeks to understand the main factors constraining Congolese refugees' access to the food of their choice in Durban. The data treatment reveals three overarching themes: Household income dynamics, Food homogeneity and housing costs. The overall understanding of these overarching themes will shed light on how they relate to the food access constraints of the Congolese refugees' households.

The informants are seen as socially and culturally excluded as there is miscommunication regarding normative value systems driving the food customs, traditions, edibility and food taste, which can drive individuals to food inaccessibility. Many informants have perceived deviation from socio-culturally accepted diets and eating habits. Cultural perceptions are not the only issue; the economic factor is also the gear to impairment in negotiating food choices and seeking shelter in a refugee context. These impediments to food access can lead individuals to loss of self-esteem, especially as refugees.

7.2 Household Income Dynamics

The findings of the household's monthly income patterns illustrate their capacity to deal with supplies, especially food and pricing realities. The financial ability revealed that the informants' households mostly lacked potentially sizable revenue.The majority of the informants were independent of formal or informal wages. However, the highest income oscillated between R1650 and R5000 per month for most of the informant's household. Most of them have limited possibility of owning an asset that could procure a constant income, such as housing or a vehicle, which means these people's hope of living relies on a mere adjustment.

Regarding income, Stats South Africa (2019) confirms that the median pay in South Africa is less than R2500, which can support hardly three persons (for R930 per person per day). The R930 is estimated to cover individual nutrition, excluding other basic needs such as housing, education, transport, health, etc. Stats SA (2019) estimates that 28% of 7.5 million households in urban areas are those categories with this threshold. Considering only its aspect of food pricing, the law of

supply and demand seems that feeding a household of four to eight individuals with this salary scale about the average consumption per individual becomes unfeasible.

Thus, what these informants do is just a mere adjustment to survive, contrary to what Sen (1987) expects for food entitlement. Even those few informants who claimed to be wage income displayed dissatisfaction, claiming to be constrained by the ability to sort out food worries. The weakness comes from the marginalisation of competency as they are refugees, according to Mr Solo, who was formally working for a local company owning trucks. Since then, informally battling to afford food prices has required cutting off other basic needs of capital importance. With the same income extortion, there was the likelihood of purchasing poor food quality and quantity and the household members' bipolar participation, meaning the like and dislike of certain foods.

On the contrary, some informants seemed to perceive that they would lose some food habits if they submitted to one ethnic group diet and temporarily skipped another, given that the efficiency for the cash value is not tied to constant wage income with high standard status. UNDP; ILO; WFP, 2017 findings on refugees seeking to assess expanding economic opportunities for Syrian refugees and host communities. Jobs in Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, and Turkey show that the lives of those refugees and Congolese refugees in Durban fending informally have undergone the same context to ensure economic and social resilience.

Regarding formal paid jobs, four household refugee heads in Glenmore share that the challenges they face are related to the general condition of the labour market and refugee-specific work policies. According to six informants interviewed in this regard and works of scholars nuanced that even before they arrived in Durban eight years ago, the labour market was under pressure with high levels of unemployment and informal employment and dependency on low-wage and foreign labour (Amis, 2006; UNDP; ILO; WFP., 2017; Nutz, 2017; Amisi, et al, 2011).

Concerning these economic opportunity trends, the latest Quarterly Labor force survey (QFLS) released by Stats SA (29 November 2022) indicated that the official number of unemployed people ranged between 32.9 and 33.9 percent. The reality remains discouraging despite the positive trend indicated by the QLFS, and the total employment level remains below pre-COVID-19 levels.

Economists at the Bureau for Economic Research noticed a significant increase in manufacturing and trade employment (Stats SA, 2019).

However, of the twenty informants interviewed, eighteen were informally fending, while one was officially employed as a nurse. This unemployment rate on the refugees' side is very significant. The cause of this is likely influenced by some employer scare reverts on their business by the low-income community discontent (Nutz, 2017; Amisi, et al, 2011). On the other side, the misunderstanding of current work permit policies (refugees' status paperwork) by the employers who lack proper information regarding this work permit makes refugees face sectoral restrictions for formal employment and lack opportunities for regular, well-paid and safe work (Lakika, 2011, Nutz, 2017, Amisi, 2006).

Two informants nuanced that they shifted from permanent jobs to contract because of the numerous tax deductions and ended up having no job during and after the COVID-19 lockdown. Other informants mention that employers are often reluctant to formally employ refugee workers after having hired them for a contract term. The dispute regarding social security contributions punctures places pressure on fiscal charges to the employers. This happened for employers who like fraudulent activity and refugees who misunderstand formal pay. This happened to refugees working informally in highly vulnerable conditions with little protection from exploitation by their employers and low, unreliable salaries (UNDP; ILO; UNICEF, WFP., 2017).

A discussion engaged with Mr Mung and Mr Solo, both educated informants, informally working confirm the above statement. Their involvement in the informal labour market was considered inappropriate because of labour related policy in South Africa whereby the South Africans are given first priority. These informants have gone through appropriate programmes to build their skills or entrepreneurship capacity to qualify entry into formal labour market (Jacobsen & Fratzke, 2016; Nutz, 2017; Hagen-Zanker, et al, 2018).

In addition, the informants acknowledged the inability to raise important income, followed by the changing mood of the South African government, making it difficult to implement long-lasting livelihood strategies. This phenomenon of livelihood strategies seems to be common for refugees

worldwide. The only difference in South Africa is that refugees with affirmed status are allowed to work and study with their given documentation permits. In Jordan, Syrian refugees, instead of refugees' status, have to apply for special (Krafft & Kettle, 2017; Bellamy, et al, 2017).

According to informants, the UNHCR, through humanitarian efforts such as Durban's DIACONIA, always facilitate employment through skills building; however, remuneration for those working is low, with most refugee households undertaking risky informal work instead. One of the informants, Mr Zain, indicated that he had worked before for the Department of Education as a teacher and interpreter at DIACONIA, and food poverty was a part of his household.

Many of his counterpart refugees were fending for themselves through trading, saloons, car guards, security and restaurants'employees. MrZain has been dismissed from his position and is living on receiving cash transfers, a long-distance business through freight agencies. MrZain, among other informants, is then experiencing food poverty. The income could be insufficient for food price hikes and other household expenses. One hypothesis underlying by informants was the entitlement to better-paid jobs to address the financial aspect of the supply side and facilitate investment in assets to expand a business (Jacobsen and Fratzke, 2016; Nutz, 2017; Hagen-Zanker, Ulrichs & Holmes, 2018).

While most informants mentioned high transportation costs as an additional barrier to securing enough income, none of them has in mind that there is a poverty bottom line that they should be careful of when negotiating or raising income to sustain household basic needs such as food. Francis & Edward (2019) indicated this concern. Any working individual in South Africa should know that the food poverty line is around R561 per person per month. This refers to the amount of money an individual in extreme poverty will spend on the minimum daily energy intake (Francis & Edward, 2019).

The lower-bound poverty line is approximately R810 per person per month. This refers to the food poverty line plus the average amount derived from non-food items of households whose total expenditure is equal to the food poverty line. The upper-bound poverty line is around R1,227 per

person per month. This refers to the food poverty line plus the average amount derived from non-food items of households whose food expenditure is equal to the food poverty line.

Referring to the above range of refugees' income compared to the food poverty line addressed by Francis & Edward (2019), most of them are concerned with this phenomenon. One piece of evidence is to consider the feeding of these households with more than three family members, excluding other household utilities and dividing this number by this household income. None of them is above the bar. The updated government national poverty line baseline did not encompass that of refugees; rather, this accurately reflected the plight of many poor Congolese refugees in South Africa, who often end up substantially worse off as they provide for themselves and their family members.

According to the findings of the affordability index, more than half (55.5%) of the population lives below the upper-bound poverty line; this is worse for the informants living on a unilateral source of income (Posel & Rogan, 2016; Francis & Edward, 2019). Mrs Fura, a mother of three children, and her husband, working as a security guard, estimated R650 for a complete baske to feed a single family member while receiving a child support grant of only R420 a month. This is insufficient to cover the costs for a family of three children, excluding the heads. As if these clarifications were insufficient, an accurate baseline as of 2021 (Galal, 2022) indicates that an individual living in South Africa with less than R945 (roughly 54.69 U.S. dollars) per month was considered poor.

Furthermore, Galal (2022) stipulates that individuals having R663 (approximately 38.37 U.S. dollars) a month available for food were living below the poverty line according to South African national standards. This is just for food and not all the other necessities. The researcher discovers that excluding food households' priorities are the following: Transport (to work, for scholar transport to school, to go to town to shop, and to access public health care services), electricity (to cook food, keep the lights on, keep warm and for security), education for children (so children can have a brighter future than their parents experienced). After these expenses, households must cover many other essential expenses, including food, domestic and personal hygiene products.

There is a range of goods and services expenses that households on low incomes typically be expected to cover but are not clearly stated, such as data communication. The purpose here is to provide a sense of what some important household expenses cost for low-income households. Further, it provides insight into what level of income households living on low incomes require to live at a basic level of dignity. On low wages and grants, these expense costs are well beyond the affordability capacity of most Congolese refugee households living on low incomes. Congolese refugee households cut back on food costs and take on food credits to cover expense shortfalls.

Thus, household income is affected by changes in the patterns of household consumers and fluctuations in prices of services and goods. The informants' household resilience would be calculated considering the total income and costs on the consumer price indices of food and non-food items separately. This is not the only applicable threshold. For instance,18.2 million people in South Africa lived under 1.9 U.S. dollars, the international absolute poverty threshold defined by the World Bank. A prominent aspect of this in South Africa is related to extreme income inequality.

The country has the highest income Gini index globally at 63 percent as of 2018. One of the crucial obstacles for the informants is to abide by extreme current lifestyle conditions. There is evidence to suggest there is a rapid adaption by some of the informants to the current economic and food environment. The development of strong social support networks enhancing access to credits and food accessibility through the supply of previously unavailable culturally specific foods within the new environment was highlighted by the informants.

7.3 Housing Costs

This point discusses the relationships between the Congolese refugees' housing costs and their ability to access food. The responses from in-depth interviews with the household heads revealed an approximate picture of the cash allocated to food expenditure being hampered by rent fees. Most household heads, informed the ongoing galloping rent fees affecting the household's food access. According to the informants, the only circumstance where these refugees prioritised enough food budget was during the COVID-19 lockdown, whereby the government solicited the

house owners to exercise less pressure on tenants. However, the situation turnback is worse than before COVID-19.

This situation was more consistent across genders, especially where the household heads were females' widowers and, having lost their jobs or their informal resourcefulness, encountered harsh restrictions to the extent of not being resourceful. The tough part of this kind of refugee life was that most lived outside camps in urban areas with relatively high living costs and were cut off from humanitarian aid opportunities to generate income. The self-fending household heads revealed that sixty percent of their income, regardless of the sources they mobilize, is critical in covering rent.

After deducting rent fees, the remaining has to be allocated to food, and sometimes, this situation would push Mrs Jose, a widower of five children, to skip some of the daily meals. Mung, a father of seven children working for Mister D food delivery service, supports Mrs Jose's statement that it became customary for all household members to get one meal simultaneously on the condition that to avoid to be evacuated. The rent fee is R4000 per month while earning R5000 for an apartment of one and a half bedroom, which Mung and his six children rented. Skipping some meals was common in Mung's household due to the cut of other supporting sources previously received from the minor charity organisations recognized by fifteen of the former household heads.

The scenario was very concerning for Mrs Jose's family, who rely on the allowance from her five children, who each receive close to R500, expecting to cover rent fees, an average of four times higher than this amount. Sometimes, she could allocate it to basic food expenditures with the risk of being evicted from her occupied bachelor house. Indeed, Hagen-Zanker, et al. (2018) noticed the same scenarios that informants in this study are experiencing regarding housing when analyzing Syrian refugees' housing conditions. He discovered that the highest expenditure for refugees is rent, depending on location and accommodation type.

A highly competitive housing market puts tenants who cannot pay the rent at threat of eviction, resulting in many Syrian refugees being in and off livable accommodation (NRC, 2015). The informants'preferred differing their ability to procure food of choice rather than being evicted on the road to avoid frequently moving in and off accommodation. In relation to this, Mr Joe, a

household head of six children, asserts that he always compromises intra-household basic needs as long as he honours his rental requirements to avoid the dehumanizing act of being evicted. Mr Joe said,

> *I can't play with other people's rent since I have so many kids. With all the children I have, I won't have anywhere else to go. We choose to eat sub-standardly as long as we can afford the house's rent since, in addition, I need a vast space like this for my work in the flea market. We even agreed my wife and I that two meals rather than three a day and choose cheapest food items so as to be able to maintain this place.*

All these informants were formally dwelling in an urban area where renting mortgage costs ranged between R4000 and R6000 on average (Selebalo & Webster, 2017; Francis & Edward, 2019), except one informant who was found owning a house. Tino said,

> *Many people in our Congolese community believe that I have become wealthy as a result of this house, but they are unaware that it is actually the rope that I struck myself with. I think the bank will get their money back. I was initially prompted to take the credit at the bank because I believed that the work I had done as a researcher would be useful for a very long time. I stopped making food stocks as I formerly did. Instead of two large meals per day, we just eat one. The job that forced me to borrow money from the bank is no longer available to me. It used to be uncommon for a visitor to leave my house without eating any of the food, but now things have changed.*

Mr Mung, Mr Kab and Mrs Debo, other informants who came to Durban before 2006, support the abovementioned about the relationship between housing fees and food access that there were many of them with adequate food access and lower proportions of households with inadequate food access (Nenguda & Scholes, 2022). However, there was a discernible change as the years went on. They reported decreasing food access over time and explained this change due to higher accommodation than their income.

Moreover, the unemployment among refugees brought on by job losses, intolerable accommodation rules, and food price increases could make it harder for these household heads to

acquire essential and non-essential food purchases. It is significant to highlight that the study period was accompanied by a severe outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic that drove up many household utilities. From these informants' points of view, a trinity of relationships between employment, accommodation and food access can be observed.

This relationship had different effects depending on each household's level of income sources. Households with formally employed heads had fewer food worries than those randomly earning income. More households with unemployed heads noticed severe food worries due to housing costs (rental), such as Mrs Jose and Mr Zain relying on pension and child care grants and households relying on informal incomes.

The quantity of social welfare grants does not rise fast enough to keep up with the cost of food and other essential household needs like housing. This study reveals that the 'Mrs Jose and Mr Zain's homes significantly depend on government social subsidies to survive. For most of them, it is the only source of revenue they have access to for basic needs like housing and subsistence. This source of income is insufficient for survival and unsustainable for buying necessary food items and honouring the rental agreement. Ngumbela (2018) predicts that households are destined to have greater levels of food insecurity and debt. Some families reliant on social assistance are consequently exposed to shocks and pressures because they lack the resources, capital, savings, or assets necessary to escape this predicament (Ngumbela, 2018).

Similar studies examined whether housing costs could change economically vulnerable households' pace of accessing food (Fletcher, et al, 2009; Nenguda & Scholes, 2022). The findings indicated that yearly rental costs were associated with nearly a three percentage point increase in food insecurity rates. More so, the rental costs seem only to affect the food access of renters and not poor, low-income homeowners. In the current study, even the only informants owning housing indicated that their food frequency could have been reduced to two instead of three times a day.

The same case was found in Canada, whereby few differences in the effects of housing cost increases on food insecurity, which is defined as a lack of access to adequate food because of financial constraints (Tarasuk, et al, 2020; McIntyre, et al, 2016). Similar to Canadian low-income

families, Congolese refugees in Durban most commonly adjust their food expenditure to try to balance changes in other expenses, such as housing costs (Emery, et al, 2012; Newell, et al, 2014; McIntyre, et al, 2016).

According to informants who have spoken on the matter, their legal documents appear to make it impossible to receive the rental guarantees. They must complete this process with all the associated costs, such as financial resources, while passing under the guise of someone holding a valid document. The contract is between a third party and the landlord when, according to informants, it is not always known with certainty what the precise cost of rental charges will be. This process appears unhealthy and hinders their ability to purchase enough food, said Mr Solo, the automobile mechanic.

According to the informants' stances on this issue (Greenburg & Polzer, 2008), the Department of Home Affairs makes it difficult for refugees and asylum seekers to obtain official documentation. Even interviewees who had access to documentation frequently indicated that to get into a lease, landlords and estate agents need a South African Identity Document. Permits for refugees and asylum seekers were not mentioned (Greenburg & Polzer, 2008).

The informants also add that their ability to meet the food needs of their households is weakened by searching for rental houses located in places where their security seems to be guaranteed. Not only are the rental costs very excessive, but so are many other aspects of social life. This would be the case, for instance, with the food supply because of how it is delivered, which is outside the financial and cultural capabilities of the immigrant and necessitates compliance at all costs. The refugee is like someone who would have leapt the steps when comparing their financial and cultural capacity to the social milieu where they are forcibly forced to reside.

The livelihood practices these refugee informants use, particularly in the informal component that secures the income that are consistent with social life in the South African townships rather than the Durban lifestyle in their current living area. This social life in the townships is consistent with how Congolese people live back home; therefore, rental costs and other essentials like power and water are reasonable in a way that allows inhabitants to be nutritionally secure. The Durban

lifestyle is believed to be more difficult to live in as a refugee than the Congolese refugees would prefer to face in townships, and the ability to secure food is much ampler.

7.4 Food Homogeneity

This point discusses the relationships between the so-called ‘food homogeneity’ and Congolese refugees' household food access. The informants' perceptions of food sourcing show that the foodstuffs are identical in every store and outlet. Regarding food sourcing, the informants state that the big supermarkets provide a wide range of food commodities, often located in the shopping malls in Durban. This includes food stores such as Checkers or Shoprite, Spar, Pick'n Pay, and Boxer, which were the most identified common food service providers in their area, offer anything other than processed food with high-sugar diets for the informants (Hunter-Adams, 2017). According to informants, the outlook of these food stores and the structure of food pricing give these Congolese refugees an exclusive impression since their capacity to bargain for food prices is impeded by the structure of food pricing in these stores.

Moreover, studies of this perspective have been done at national and international levels and highlight the effects of shopping mall construction on consumers’ behaviours from backward backgrounds (Mokgabudi, 2012). The construction of shopping malls in low-income neighbourhoods normally benefits consumers in many ways, including better quality products, more convenient locations, a wider selection of goods, and lower costs than tiny local merchants (Mokgabudi, 2012).

The situation does not appear uniform through all these benefits. The informants point out that food is all the same in Durban retail shopping malls and not easily accessible. Here, the informants do not have the same perspective as the mall developers, who perceive things in different ways that selecting a preferred supermarket or shopping centre is not a rational choice based solely on price but rather involves striking a balance between addressing economic, social, and psychological requirements (Mokgabudi, 2012). For these low-income informants, the affordability of food prices is much more exorbitant than the conducive environment of the supermarket within the shopping mall, which usually attracts many food and service consumers with higher incomes.

Both the food price and the abundance of mass consumers could not favour the low-income Congolese refugees, contrary to what would be the positive perception of abundance and crowded atmospheres at shopping malls (Barki & Parente, 2010). What could be considered the positive perception for these Congolese refugee informants was discretional based on what they usually call a ‘connection’ or an opportunity to acquire the same foods from unofficial sources through discretion. These unofficial sources are facilitated by individuals having close relationships. It is a resourceful approach whereby these Congolese refugee household informants obtain cheap food items of the same quality and sometimes in much larger quantities than the normal price on the market.

Even when it was about food special prices, sometimes the stores are not divulgated through social media; however, they reach a small number of proxy consumers. A few informants with medium income also disvalued this connection; however, this could be an outcome rather than a big opportunity for them to rely on. Normally, consumers are perceived as having a negative perception of shopping under connection medium within malls rather than Spaza shops (Barki & Parente, 2010). Although they could struggle to engage in socially relevant consumption practices, they do so to avoid being socially ousted. One more interesting point from these Congolese refugees of all groups of consumers is that they are being affected by increased awareness about products they consider necessary for a minimal level of decent living. This awareness influences their consumer behaviour.

Since consumer culture does not adequately define what makes up a minimally decent living, low income customers will keep on aspiring for products that they perceive as socially relevant for a better lifestyle (Mokgabudi, 2012 Barki & Parente, 2010; Yurdakul, et al, 2017). Most of these low-income refugees have commercial street food sourcing backgrounds because there is the possibility of getting cheap food but not necessarily good quality. However, not all commercial street food crowding is attractive in Durban because it is designed mostly around the busiest shopping centres. The big shopping centres display a large luxurious selection varying in quality to accommodate everyone.

"At any shopping venue, such as Spar, Checkers, Pick 'n Pay, Food Lovers, and so on, we cannot discount the price, unless there is a discounts or product on special," said Mrs Sara. *"We always buy our food at Checkers or Spar. We buy food products that we can afford even though it may not be enough purchase for us,"* said Mr Zain, a household head pensioner. *"The only time we change diet it is when we go for home foods. There is a chance of discounts on food items from our food back home in the DRC, whether it is a supermarket or an open market,"* Mrs Aline declared. *"Aside from those food supermarkets, there are a lot of Spaza shops, food stores, and restricted food open markets that are normally used in an emergency,"* said Mrs Jose, with Mrs Frame's backing.

This venture of food venue could provoke cynicism on the one side and wonder on the other. Therefore, why do some individuals experience 'wonders'? The understanding of this is based on the assumptions and objectives marketers use to influence what consumers perceive as varied and good-quality foods. Sometimes, new consumers in the area will encounter different brands from producers, manufacturers, and merchants. On one side, there are the food firms and agribusiness who capitalise on anything that can be edible and thus generate income without adapting this to the consumers' economic and cultural environment.

The Congolese refugees see this as a degustation opportunity as more foods are texturally made and diversified in shape and taste, especially for their children born and growing up in this food environment. According to Kussaga, et al. (2014), among other factors driving the inadequacy of operations and tight supervision of adherence to refined food, there are health implications, but this could not solely be driving the Congolese refugees to partake in the new food regime.

On the other hand, there is scepticism endorsed by these Congolese refugees to partake in the new food system even though eating is a biological necessity that needs critical attention. This scepticism of the new food system means that these Congolese refugees got involved in the system randomly without proper guidance as to how and where settling correlates with the socio-economic situation of the refugee, mostly regarding the economic life expenses of the area. Most areas occupied by the Congolese refugees are socially stratified, meaning all the amenities, such as food stores, schools, rentals, etc., are highly priced and have minimum wage to sustain there. But what

is being noticed is that most of these Congolese refugees are self-employed with lower income than the minimum wage to sustain theme.

For instance, the minimum wage to sustain in Durban differed from place to place, such as Umbilo, Glenmore, Glenwood, Masobiya Mdluli Street and St George's Street, where most Congolese refugees are likely to be found. This social stratification in terms of living wage defines the characteristics of food and people being part of the scene. For instance, areas such as Umbilo, Glenmore, and Glenwood, where many selected informants live mostly with white inhabitants, have highly rated living environments compared to other places in Durban. The food system in these areas is mostly modern dominant food habits, which require cultural acceptability and a good income standing.

These have seen remoting scepticism at informants' ability to cope with such living conditions. Getting back to what the informants have insinuated to this concern, they grant less focus on the form and texture of the food they consume regularly. What is needed is more than one option associated with food quantity and affordability. Based on the Congolese refugees' experience in relation to food quantity and affordability, the most economically disadvantaged consumers only buy as much food as they can afford.

Although these refugees fend informally to earn a living, their formal spending was a growing reliance on cash as the primary means of interpersonal and household access to food. This situation is experienced in the case of most industrialized countries, where high-quality goods and services are in important demand in cities like Durban as its consumers seek out more convenient goods that require a good standing income. In relation to this, the informants were regarded as poor consumers because of their inadequacy in consumption (Hamilton et al., 2014). Their consumption inadequacy can be explained in ways.

The informants perceived food as always being the same from time to time. Also, their inability to live a minimally decent life and willingness to compare themselves to more affluent consumers aspired to purchase discretionary products that reflected a better financial status and gave a perception of living in abundance (Barki & Parente, 2010). Sometimes, informants could feint

their financial inability through discretionary purchases (Yurdakul & Atik, 2016). Four informants who saw the high cost of long-life milk and a loaf of BB Bread proceeded to discretionary purchases from hand-to-hand sourcing. The following statement from Mr Joe attested:

> *Why should I buy one litre of Milk Long Life and a loaf BB Bread for R15 and R16 while outside of the SPAR, I will have them for R10 each and not only these products but many others products. Those who afford the right price and us who buy from second hands we are all the same, we consume the meme products the same 'luxury'. I need to wait later one, may be around 7: 00 time for the SPAR shopping mall to close, the products will reach us outside from people who always ask for cash money assistance to rich and in return buy foods for them.*

According to Jaiswal and Gupta (2015), many low-income consumers identify shopping from the main sources as a cheap way to access what is essential. But from Mr Joe, it does not necessarily work like that. He identifies the discretionary purchase of food as eating like the bourgeois consumers. In relation to this, narratives from Mr Kab, a household of three children, show that the meaning of essential and non-essential purchases is highly contextualized among low-income informants because, at times, it becomes necessary for them to buy products that help them live a minimally decent life.

Mr Joe expressed that his self-respect was hurt when more affluent persons looked down upon them and tried to associate them with mafia people beggars. All of this, these informants avoided the stigma of being regarded as poor, and nobody should consider them informally eating. Among the Umbilo suburb,a predominantly white resident purchases Spar brands in plastic to avoid being perceived as poor and like having a comfortable living.

A case in this context is that of Mr Kab, the father of three children who did not like to compromise with the Umbilo rental contract because he felt depreciated by losing his eating camouflage. Mr Kab and his network of car guards somehow built a strong bond with a few SPAR workers to avoid the shame of asking their neighbours for what food items are on special discount. Whenever Mr Kab's fridge is full of provisions, there is a special discount on food items, which could be a big

opportunity for him to secure enough food. For Mr Kab, this particular opportunity was a moment for him to ensure his neighbours that he is a big shopper from the SPAR food outlet. Mr Kab even buys a deep freezer to keep up with more food because the special discount is not always there.

Then, providing a deep freezer appeared as a sign of richness because a household with such an appliance secures more than enough food. In relation to Mokgabudi (2012) states that having such a food conservation appliance indicates the socioe-conomic gap between high and low-income people, especially in developing nations. Also, he emphasizes that a deep freezer is an example of possessions that are seen as essential items required to reflect a relatively higher status to others. Mr Kab knew that most food, whether on special or not, must be consumed before expiry dates, and life shelf is extremely short term. Deep freezer helped Mr Kab prolong food's long life even after its standard consumption date had passed. The characteristics of the major manufactured food items that Mr Kab has encountered need refrigerators, which constituted an additional cost to household expenses as it required stable electricity to keep fresh and long-lasting food.

Contrary to Mr Kab’s perception of Spar food products, Mr Joe prefers having his essential purchases at Food Lovers because there are good prices of foods and more varied smoked meats than many other food stores in the area. Mrs Belind said she grew up eating smoked meats because her father was a bush meat hunter. To keep bush meat longer, Mrs Belind’s father would use smoke, and this smoke could later give a better taste to bush meat, even though other scholars disagree with Mrs Belind and Mr Joe that bushes could provide healthy food (Whelan,et al, 2018). So, choosing Bluff Meat Supply allowed Mr Joe to grab similar food tastes. However, Mr Joe finds the preemptive methods used by the smoked food producers inadequate to allow the meat to last long without being kept in the refrigerator.

For Mr Joe, the food in the Durban market requires a refrigerator, whether the food is smoked or not, because of their mode of production but also to preserve their taste and texture from being altered, especially for those foods that cannot be exposed for so long to the open air without degenerating.

Other informants, such as Mrs Fura, Mrs Nisha, and Mr Stev, agree with Mr Joe that frozen food or any food stored in cold temperatures does not taste like fresh food, which embarrassed them and hindered their ability to obtain such food regularly.

According to the informants, the common trait of most big food stores in Durban is the sale of manufactured or refined foods that, therefore, require suitable preservation techniques. More importantly, the informants realize that foods of this kind are abundant in big stores such as Spar, Checkers, Pick 'n Pay, Shoprite, etc., and brands change according to each store's management but remain the same food. Besides what the informants considered essential food sourcing, such as Bluff Meat Supply, Housewives Market and Chester, Mr Joe considers Spar or Checkers a second source of non-essential or luxury food purchases. Mrs Sara and Mr Stev purchase from these food outlets to enhance their self-image and avoid being regarded as poor. For Mr Zain and Mrs Belind, the brand in the Spar and Checkers was more than what they could access without having transport fare, so they preferred to avoid attention to several food stores to secure the most economical ones. Mr Zain said:

> *Whenever my neighbors ask me 'from where do you buy such good food quality for your children?' I responded it took me time to discover that checkers food outlet has the best products and not only that but you can make economical purchases. Although we do not have enough income to buy expensive food in my household, nor big stock, but when you visit my children eating behaviour they are eating in branded checkers products*.

Mr Joe's narratives reflect Mr Zain's desire to shop at Checkers or SPAR regarding bakeries. Their narratives show that purchases at QueensMead Spar or Checkers brands, such as bread, were significantly more appreciated by their household members than BB or Albany loaf of bread. Although these Spar or Checkers-made bread were more affordable than other options like BB brands or Albany, they could not make them popular before COVID-19, but post-COVID-19, before 12:00 AM, no single item of Spar-made bread was available. Instead, their flavour seems to be similar to that of baked bread at home (DRC).

Another benefit was the size, enough for everyone in the family to feel quite satisfied. Informants claim that, prior to COVID-19, these loaves were intended for those with low incomes, but now,

people of all income levels are embracing them and leaving the most popular brands (Albany and BB). This could be one reason the stock ran out so quickly.

According to Mr Joe and Mr Kab, who cannot afford regular BB and Albany brands because of the size of their households, they are less likely to arrive in the afternoon. In light of this, Mr Joe always keeps a provision of bread of this type in his refrigerator as a precautionary measure to combat the spontaneous shortage of bread and other goods, despite the worries that the refrigerator impacts food organoleptic qualities.

Although there is an artisanal bakery close to Mrs Sara’s house with the same bread Mrs Sara used to have in the DRC, she prefers purchasing at Checkers Southway Mall, five kilometres from her residence. This understanding corresponds with earlier research that shows that poor persons like well-known branded things to reflect an improved societal status (Pieters, 2013). Therefore, individuals like Mr Joe, Mrs Sara and Mr Zain purchased branded foods to be considered more affluent and, hence, more respectable people in their neighbourhoods.

This is to say that good brands are a symbol of ranking and prestige; therefore, an informant who would like to reflect an improved status was doing so by using well-known brands (Pieters, 2013). Therefore, purchasing trademarked foods and other items to reflect this impression has been adjusted according to disposal power rather than socially relevant consumption practices. Therefore, by purchasing socially relevant goods and services, the low-income population fulfils their need to feel respected and considered worthy human beings while economically torturing themselves (Yurdakal, et al, 2017). Shopping in this sphere of food consumption society shows that low-income individuals have different views according to their capabilities and aspirations.

In regards to this, Mrs Jose, a mother of five, would like time to have a meal from well-known restaurants worldwide like KFC, NANDOS, McDonald's, etc. The fact showed that Mrs Jose has to spend a very astronomical sum on a single dinner equivalent to practically a week's worth of provisions to satisfy each household member to the appropriate level. Mrs Jose and other informants of the same were forced to lead a modest food policy that relies on readily accessible, lower-cost items similar to what they would like to have at KFC, such as those found at Checkers,

Spar, etc. With all the ingredients in a self-made chicken and fried chip dish, Mrs Jose claims that the only difference is the brand, but the good of KFC, Nandos, etc., wherever you go for it will have the same taste and texture as those recipes in the supermarkets.

> *Occasionally, I go above and beyond myself to give them this convenient cuisine so as not to prevent them from enjoying luxuries like any other modern youngster, but due to financial constraints, often a year can go by before they have tried this recipe.*

Since the high-income population is presumed to be good consumers, the low-income population is thought to be spending poorly; therefore, many informant consumers need respect, dignity, and self-worth by spending where the high-consumption society is sourcing food. According to Mokgabudi (2012), this desire precedes the informants' essential purchase, making them purchase products that promise compensation for their low social status. Such purchases help mitigate poverty-induced shame and are part of the cocoon components of a signal of higher social status (Yurdakal, et al, 2017).

The desire to be counted among the key consumers at highly regarded, well-known restaurants does not end there. The informants also highlight the varied food store and supermarket categories as a concrete indicator of consumer discrimination. Additionally, the fact that they are there indicates their outrage toward the consumers. Even though they were the same brands from the same supermarket, food quality is served according to the level of affordability regardless of important agglomeration in the urban areas. There is evidence that the consumption rate would increase in a low-income setting because it has been demonstrated that this particular consumer type spends a significant amount of their income on food expenses after the rent.

However, most people purchases are staple, such as meat, beans, rice, and maize meal. The source matters most and determines quality, even though the stock happens to differ. According to the informants, the ideal location for stocking is food from Woolworths, where they could get high-quality, primarily organic, food items. Mrs Sara argued, "*It is an adventure to purchasing superior food at Woolworths. We do not eat it for days despite its quality.*"

Running behind brands can sometimes confuse informants since their focus is to be who they are not. This opinion is supported by Atkin, et al, 2019 when analyzing Indian poor households intending food access. They argue that a sense of inequality leads people experiencing poverty to consider conspicuous goods as essential goods at the expense of adequate nutrition, too - an example from India shows that relative social deprivation induces poor households to forgo 13% of their daily caloric intake in favour of aspirational products; and higher the social deprivation, higher the demand for discretionary aspirational product is.

This sacrifice reflects the essentiality of non-essential purchases. As understood from the narratives, the essentiality of non-essential goods lies in their symbolic value and, therefore, essential goods and services are not merely those that fulfil the basic nutrition needs but also those that are important for living dignified and reducing food worries for tomorrow (Jaiswal & Gupta, 2015). This confusion over essential and non-essential purchases concerns the informants 'social identity'. Based on social identity, they thought, the informants tried to identify in-groups and out-groups in a Durban structured consumption society and understand their belongingness to a particular group based on social comparisons (Stets & Serpe, 2013). The informants make intergroup comparisons whose outcomes bring satisfaction or dissatisfaction with their current consumption society identity. Such social comparisons are compelling for those who want betterment in their lives (Hill, Martin, & Chaplin, 2012).

In the light of social comparisons, it is essential to realize that these informants are inadequately located, are often stigmatized with negative social acceptances and are subject to derogatory behaviour because they are unable to become a part of the consumer culture they want (Reza & Amir, 2020). Existent literature reinforces that controlled motivation, such as avoidance of poverty-related stereotyping, increases the desire to purchase discretionary products, resulting in subjective well-being (Martin & Hill, 2015; Yildi & Erciş, 2022).

Previous research has shown that consumption-inadequate consumers make hedonic purchases to transform their lives and feel happiness (Alba & Williams, 2013; Gupta & Srivastav, 2016). Although economically challenged customers engage in materialistic purchases to feel happy, the impact of such purchases on well-being needs to be further explored (Moldes, et al, 2019).

Therefore, this section broadens the understanding of the reasons pushing informants to say there are always similar components in the same ‘cocoon’.

7.5 Discussion

The current chapter answers the objective of understanding the Congolese refugees’ challenges to food access choices in Durban. The findings theorised around three overarching factors: household income dynamics, food homogeneity and housing costs. Analysing the food homogeneity that the informant perceived as the barrier to food access of their choices, it is more a matter of collective perception than an individual identity.

The informants ' perceptions and attitudes toward new food show they belong to a group with a particular food system. This is consistent with the literature on food identity among immigrants and refugees (Naidu & Nzuza, 2013; Jagne, 2020; Kirkland, et al, 2022). Their perceptions were influenced by the fact that they frequently switch from one food to another within the same food space. How they adjust their diets within the same group—for example, adding a maize meal to make *ugali* or paste fast-grown chicken and fish—does not increase their nutritional diversity as much as if they could use their food. This would mean they are familiar with the idea of nutritional diversity anchored in the context of the DRC food system.

This is consistent with their declaration that they are fed up with always buying the same food. The ‘same foods’’ are referred to as Westernized food, which is abundant in the market system in Durban (Napier, et al, 2018; Ashaduzzaman, Jebarajakirthy, et al, 2021 Maroun, et al, 2018). According to Uzogara (2000), Western foods are either genetically modified (GM) whole foods or contain ingredients derived from gene modification technology, and many of them are consumed today in many parts of the world. This is reaffirmed by Faber, et al. (2011), Steyn, et al.(2006), and Schönfeldt, et al. (2010), that processed food such as starchy foods, particularly those made from maize, make up a significant amount of the diets of many low-income South Africans.

The majority of the informants indicated not usually drinking energy-dense (juice, cool drink), which is inconsistent with earlier studies in South Africa that found the majority of low-income consumers were used to processed food and high energy dense (Gibson & Vermeulen 2010; Faber,

et al, 2011). In such a case, affordability can also explain the homogeneity of food the informants can afford. Anecdotal information can be part of the process as well, whereby the informants pay attention to conspiracy theories over Western food negatively affecting people's health and well-being (Faber, et al, 2011; Steyn, et al, 2006; Schönfeldt, et al, 2010) just as their way of approaching current food could be consistent with the literature of historical evolution of anthropology of food.

According to Uzogara (2000), genetic engineering of plants and animals is an ancient agricultural activity that farmers have used since early historical times and is currently being improved by technology. It is a source of sustenance for humans. From a social fact standpoint, these informants are acting in the same way that various stakeholders, including organic farmers, environmentalists, worried scientists, ethicists, religious rights groups, food advocacy groups, some politicians, and trade protectionists, have expressed their scepticism about this practice becoming a way of life (Uzogara, 2000). It can be recommended to find ways to raise public awareness that informs the newcomer refugees of the South African food regime to avoid refugees viewing things in a solitary way.

Viewing things in a solitary way have negatively affected their participation in food consumption or purchase processes, and they end up purchasing the same food often. Food homogeneity can be understood by where an informant is settled, where the cost of living is proportionate to the individual's income, and the quality of service delivery is proportionate. For instance, the informants choosing to settle in Umbilo or Glenmore, where living costs are disproportionate to their income level, it is evident that the food is the same as they have commitments to fulfil.

The same finding expands to South African low-income consumers who often have the same food based on location and affordability (Acham, Oldewage-Theron & Egal, 2012). The informants chose foods they could afford, making it appear like the only food they had ever seen. According to these interviewees, food homogeneity and poverty are related nowadays. Most informants had no financial assets and were unemployed, a sign of poverty. This is congruent with Galal (2020), who argues that a person in South Africa is considered poor if their total monthly food expenditure is R945 South African rand, according to an accurate baseline estimate from 2021. The same

baseline emphasizes that if a person's monthly food expenditure is determined to be R 663, they are considered to be living below the poverty line.

Contrary to the literature on households, this baseline was designed for one person as a unit of people who share certain aspects of life, such as those related to production, consumption, or children's parenting. In terms of income production, the heads of households were the only breadwinners with a monthly income between R1650 and R5000. The poor income is consistent with the assertions made by Barman, 2020; Amisi, et al, 2011; Landau & Freemantle, 2010; Nutz, 2017; Tod-Tims, 2020; Khoury, et al, 2014, Amisi, 2006; Amisi & Ballard, 2005 that the absence of reliable sources of income are the cause of this predicament.

In relation to this income trend and the estimated scales of poverty inferred from total monthly food expenditure per individual (R663 and R945), the household with more members to support has a high probability of falling between food poverty and the extreme food poverty line. The informants' statements about the rising housing costs could have also reinforced this range of food poverty scale.

This result is consistent with a modest body of research on housing among economically disadvantaged families, which demonstrates that rising housing costs harm people's ability to buy food (Fletcher, et al, 2009; McIntyre, 2016; Greenburg & Polzer, 2008; Hadley & Sellen, 2006). This evidence corroborates the informants' claims about the uniformity of the food they had access to daily, significantly reducing their ability to diversify food choices (Chakona & Shackleton, 2017). The outcomes are inconsistent with research showing widespread food security across South Africa (Hendriks, 2014; Stats SA, 2014). According to De Klerk, et al. (2004), around 20% of South African homes have extremely limited or no access to food. A significant part of its households also experience food insecurity.

7.6 Conclusion

This chapter highlighted three broad themes about food access constraints among Congolese refugees in Durban. The overall conclusions are that household income dynamics and food homogeneity frustrated consumers with food access and housing costs, decreasing the household's ability to access food. Additionally, the findings offer perceptions and useful suggestions for professionals and academics who wish to assist households of resettled Congolese refugees.

CHAPTER EIGHT: Refugees' Coping Strategies to Food Access Constraints

8.1 Introduction

This chapter aims to investigate the coping strategies employed by the Congolese refugees toward food barriers experienced in Durban. The finding shares three key coping mechanisms: accessing food through mobile food markets, Spaza food stores and food access through urban cash farming. These coping strategies offer cultural and economic responses to the Congolese refugees who perceived themselves as socio-culturally and economically marginalised during their resettlement experiences in Durban.

8.2 Accessing Food through Mobile Food Markets

The informants gave various explanations for why they chose to eat on the street, with some citing difficulty locating food in the formal dining environment. Due to their lack of familiarity with the different food names, several informants found it challenging to shop in supermarkets. Other respondents claimed they find it simple to obtain food from mobile migrants because they have the foods they are most familiar with, and it is not difficult to reach out to them. The image further demonstrates the variety of meals people in Durban eat to overcome food restrictions. These are the same potatoes, beans, cassava root, etc., that were once common in the DRC and can only be obtained from their few fellow Congolese and occasionally from their fellow South African low-income consumers, as indicated by Mrs Fura and Mrs Francine, both of whom are household heads of more than three children.

Figure 4. Fleat Market and St George's Street Food Sourcing

This is congruent with WIEGO (2022) that for the individuals who do not live nearby, this channel requires the informants to have a ‘connection’, as they typically refer to it. The informants refer to it as the illicit parallel market for food access. This kind of food sourcing involves informal transactions to obtain enough food items that the formal market does not provide to these low-income consumers. The interviewees claim that two key factors support using this channel: reasonable pricing and the possibility of obtaining certain foods unavailable on the legitimate market. In terms of advantages and disadvantages, the informants share that this food access channel has more benefits than disadvantages. According to the informants, this type of market is primarily held by the vast majority of people who share similar life conditions with them, and it is mostly mobile functioning.

More importantly, the informal market (black market) business owners can deliver enough food items to the informants since they are not legally established to pay taxes. Conversely, this type of market frequently discourages informants from fully shopping in formal food outlets. The key components of this process are street food sourcing and home-to-home food supply. All these channels have something in common: they are mobile networking markets. The only difference made by the informants is that home food suppliers are online-based businesses, especially those performed on WhatsApp (Whiting & Deshpande, 2014; Reza & Amir, 2020). Since home-to-home food supply is frequently compared with internet marketing, the nature of its foundation shows that it is fundamentally anchored based on who they know.

Additionally, the informants claim that all the information and bargaining regarding food purchases are done over the phone, ultimately resulting in delivery. During the participatory observation session, it was observed that the Congolese refugees are effectively organised in this sphere of home-to-home food supply. Some informants acted in synergy, which consisted of putting together efforts to lessen food costs to their fellow consumers through their WhatsApp network. The informants and food suppliers were reported acting in symbiosis, which means they could benefit from each other’s assets, whether in kind or counter value. Mrs Sara, a mother of three children and Mrs Aline, a mother of three children, are both food vendors congruent with this connectivity concerning food access.

According to Mrs Aline and Mrs Sara, whoever has something like food to sell forecasts it on different Durban-based Congolese community organisations' WhatsApp numbers. This is how Mrs Lusita (Congolese food vendor) was known to be among the most home-to-home food suppliers. Many informants rely on her concerning home food and the cheapest food. *"Sometimes, we question how she got stocked with various commodities and goods"*, said Mr Solo (informant). When the researcher inquires about Mr Solo's food consumption, he reveals that a significant portion of his household's food supply comes from Mrs Lusita (informal food supplier), in contrast to Mrs Fura (the informant), who did not specifically name the source but instead made reference to 'connections' or 'deals'. Due to their socio-economic circumstances, many additional informants, including Mr Joe, Mrs Belind, and Mrs Nisha, realized they could not always rely on the present supermarket-style pattern of food consumption.

As a result, they began exploring this coping mechanism for food access. The mobile home-to-home food supply the informants are referring to is not only run by Congolese nationals. The informants seek food from other foreign nationals and local South Africans for food affordability and diversification. To this, most informants reveal that some informal food suppliers (home-to-home food suppliers) are found on street corners or at flea markets. In several of the statements made by the informants, Mrs Lusita, one of those food sources, has shown that she shares what she consumes with the people in her community, whether at her home or, more significantly, at the flea market.

According to Mrs Esta, a mother of two children who receives support from Mr Kab, the household head of the three children, *"As soon as I learned about the food connection to be found at Mrs Lusita's house or the flea market, I stopped purchasing large quantities of goods like beans, rice, sugar, milk powder, and dry fish because she disposes of what we call refugees' price or translate from Swahili beyi ya wa kimbizi."*

Beyond being a food source, Mrs Belind perceives these channels as a wide range of domestic goods, including apparel, home furnishings, and small appliances. More importantly, informants indicate that they found more advantages when food is supplied at home than researching suppliers

as it saves time and transportation costs. It is a strategy that facilitates transactions for the vendors as well. "*Sometimes we encounter obstacles like attending church services and the Durban flea market, held all Sundays*", said Mr Alias. The design of the businesses itself necessitates that the service providers be mobile to reach potential consumers as everyone does not have a guarantee that what ones needs will be exactly available at that particular venue. Mrs Lusita occasionally appears at culturally supportive events, sometimes merchandise physically with her or on her cell phone; some people get to know about food to buy.

According to the informants, people without social media accounts, such as WhatsApp or telephone contact, are on the street in the afternoon, especially around big malls, to target everyone for food purchases in modern supermarkets. With regard to this, the informants state that their providers are similarly well organised at their level. During participant observation of food purchases with the informants, the researcher found that the traders are organised and abide by minimum food packaging hygiene and conservation methods such as a refrigerator for those food needs and those that do not require this system. "*Mrs Lusita, in contrast to other service providers we are aware of, has a fair mode of transportation where the goods are carefully loaded*," said Mrs Belind, supported by Mr Kab (informants). Like other informal service providers, the goods are modestly labelled and set up on trestles under the folding tent at the point of sale.

The good of our informal traders, but not all, the client is 'the king' must be warmly welcomed and briefly taught, for instance, how to prepare and, more importantly, how to mix food. The informants and their food suppliers are organised so that, even though the suppliers are out of stock, they can still pay in advance and expect to be served before anyone else. This is made possible as the service providers guarantee the informants positive feedback through the management of their stockpiles and their replenishment. This shows that mobile merchants are creative rather than constantly marginalised by modern food suppliers. Unlike modern food suppliers, mobile food suppliers have a cheery voice and skills that can influence new clientele even without full capacity to afford food.

Additionally, they acknowledge the choice to grant credit to people who do not promptly repay their food credits. Home-to-home and street food suppliers were also perceived to be better servers

and more conducive to the informants than other migrants who own tuck-food stores such as Ethiopian food stores. Their workplaces are different daily, and they frequently lug hefty loads, essentially home foods. According to informants, they care more about their health, and these channels rarely offer easily degradable food items such as fish, fruits, vegetables, and dairy products like cheese. It is uncertain that many disposed of the sophisticated stakes necessary to execute this assignment.

Although the informants' working schedules are inconsistent and frequently scattered, this does not stop them from being happy with their diet choices. The home-to-home vendors start early delivery according to programme setbacks with the informant consumers. It does not matter the day. According to the informants, the type of 'connection' counts between the marketer and the consumers. Even a simple phone call is sufficient for those who know Mrs Sara's phone number to get the food supplied as long as she has the items. During participant observation, the researcher unveils that this kind of channel for food access is gaining momentum among market consumers as it utilizes new skills to transform local products into particular foods that the informants used to get at home (DRC).

Thus, after eating Mrs Sara's smoked chicken, Mrs Fura, who is married to Mr Mazambi, claims that she feels like she is in the DRC, though she is in Durban, while the frozen chicken pushes her to forget her origins. The other tactic is to turn the frozen fish into smoked fish; Mr Alias, a mother of six children, thinks this method is good even if his peers think it is pricey. The researcher discovers during participant observation that Mr Alias (informant) smokes a substantial amount of 'baby hake' fish, sometimes on the orders of his fellow refugees.

Swaps are sometimes carried out based on the value of food items to another, but they are typically carried out using credit that must be repaid quickly. This credit is crucial among these foreign migrants because it fosters combatting food shortages at the household level (Karlan & Zinman, 2010). It has undoubtedly shown to be quite helpful because it encourages a lot of informants without access to cash to purchase food, a convenience that the formal market could not provide. In addition, it helps informants since they can taste and apply their home native practices (Naidu

& Nzuza, 2014). Taking part in this kind of activity appears to remedy the issue of social inequality brought forward by formal marketers in a fleeting manner.

However, uncertainties remain in the way this channel responds to provisioning. The matrix of this informal economy logically creates a repercussion on the formal supply chain since it was hard to trace its provisioning source. Neither the informants nor the people who provided them with the food can disclose information about the rustic nature of this supply channel or the extent to which these refugee households could survive this situation. This situation remained largely unsustainable. Compared to the formal household expenditure chain, these informants live a highly 'chance' - minimal life (Joassart-Marcelli, et al, 2017). This means these informants are free from food entitlement because of uncertainties in food supplies. The uncertainties in food supplies of this nature were reported in areas like Glenmore, Glenwood, Musgrave and part of Umbilo 7 and Morning side.

The strict application of governmental regulations can randomly inspect market food outlets and impose controls primarily on food quality, which is reported to be one of the causes. Access to high-quality food in these regions is significantly influenced by the price of operating in parallel markets and the hazards that suppliers and consumers face. Even if the informant realised that they were saving based on the pricing, the meal quality was more deteriorated in the black-market system. According to Puetz, et al. (1991), the informants' references to the prices in the parallel commodities markets are inaccurate.

Contrary to what informants view as wonderful possibilities, they typically come with increased expenses and risks for market participants. According to Puetz, et al. (1991), maintaining high-quality food is unsuccessful in this area, but for the informant, it is advantageous to charge a low price for meals. In this context, Mr Joe shared, "*Why should I have to buy fish from the fish market in town when I have a fisher who always sells to me the fresh fish from the sea and occasionally from the dam?*" Mrs Fura, a mother of three, added, "*10kg of fresh fish costs me about R250 if I get it from a fisherman on the street in an informal market because I am unable to purchase it in a regular market. The only bad side of fisherman products is the smell of paraffin*."

In an informal economy, neither the suppliers nor the customers are entirely or completely protected. Since these activities are illegal, economic actors must work outside the law to compete in the formal economy. They are not covered by the law in practice, which means that even though they operate within the parameters of the law, the law is not applied to them. Yet another possibility is that the law is disregarded because it is inappropriate, contrary, or imposes excessive fees. On the other side, this breach of the economy contributes to boosting the food security of low-income households.

The findings on urban food security in 15 Sub-Saharan African cities are consistent with the informants' strategies for gaining access to food in Durban, claim Haysom, et al. (2017). Numerous of them highlight the importance of informal trade in boosting the country's economy, particularly in ensuring the food security of low-income households (Haysom, et al, 2017; WIEGO, 2021). The same model of the economy is perceived among the Congolese people living in poverty (Arsen, et al, 2020; da Silva, et al, 2014).

The Hungry Cities Partnership has carried out the same research in the countries of the South, the African Urban Food Security Network (AFSUN), and more recently, the Consuming Urban Poverty (CUP) initiative (Hanna & Oh, 2000; Haysom, et al, 2017, WIEGO, 2021). Taking the Consuming Urban Poverty (CUP) project as evidence to support the ongoing strategies to diversify food sourcing among poor household consumers, the Kisumu (Kenya), Kitwe (Zambia), and Epworth (Zimbabwe)' data is supportive.

Where the vast majority of residents declared accustomed to the informal food economy, i.e., from street food vendors to shops, passing by market vendors offering a variety of commodities such as vegetables, pulses, and meat (Opiyo, et al, 2014), the interviewees' thoughts on the frequency of food consumption habits from the informal market are similar to those of the poor consumers discovered by CUP in the nations of Kenya, Zambia, and Zimbabwe, even if they do not exactly share the same geographic location. According to findings in the same context of the current study conducted by (Crush, et al, 2011; Meng, et al, 2014; Ortega & Tschirley, 2017), food supermarkets have spread quickly in southern Africa, though a little more slowly paced than the informal food trade, in response to economy and income population growth.

This pace is for those emerging consumers with growing incomes and stable economies. The informants ‘perceptions and the paucity of literature show that informal food sourcing is given little attention in the KwaZulu-Natal province economy. Much interest is focused on macroeconomics because it is believed to contribute significantly to the growth of the national economy (Charman & Petersen, 2014; Battersby & Marshak, 2017; Tawodzera, 2019). This could lead to thinking that most of the population depends on a formal economy despite significant gaps in wealth possession.

The significance of the informal economy in the urban food system, particularly in preserving food security for the poorest households, such as refugees, has been repeatedly highlighted by this research. The quality of the economy, the local population's standard of living, and the poor population's rapid migration in South Africa are used to defend the rise of supermarkets and informal trading. Here is where the theory of capability comes in, where the informants are to develop the mechanism of resilience to respond to the failure of socio-economic exclusion highlighted in the background section. Most interviewees expressed a little relief with the informal market food supply intervention in Durban Central and its neighbourhoods.

8.3 Informal Community Shops (Spaza shops)

The informants disclose that there are only a few informal community stores, often known as Spaza shops, where people can obtain foods that the regular market does not have. They are made to provide modest, sometimes inferior cuisine to neighbourhood consumers. Puetz, et al. (1991) are aware of alternative non-official markets, such as tuck shops with a physical address where basic food is offered at competitive prices.

Governments formally tolerate or even approve them, contrary to street food, when they are seen as performing a complementary function or when there are intentions to begin the transition to market liberalization (Puetz, et al, 1991). Mr Joe refers to St George’s Street and Masobiya Mdluli Street in Durban with well-known tuck shops as examples of growing markets for Koushibou and other sources of home foods. Among the spaza shop food sourcing, the informant acknowledges

that not all of them are useful. The importance is given to those serving or susceptible to dish home foods or similar home foods.

The research results reveal that there are small food stores owned by the Congolese refugees whereby they could source limited food items, especially home foods. This is congruent with Gastrow (2018), showing that spaza food stores are home-based convenience store enterprises whereby foreign nationals, for the most part, can access minor home food simultaneously, boosting the income of the household owners selling the foodstuffs. The informants were doing so when they needed to buy food that needed provision and could not be found at larger retailers' stores and were able to offer a wider selection of products at low prices.

Mostly, informants valued food identity more than monetary worth, prioritising staples like beans, rice from Congo, dry fish *Makayabu* smokies such as bush meat *Makaku* or monkey before choosing other host environment foods. Most informants were asked to explain how their home food is brought into Durban and said that some of it is brought in illegally. Their fellow Congolese people produce some of it, so they cannot afford it daily because the cost will always be hiked.

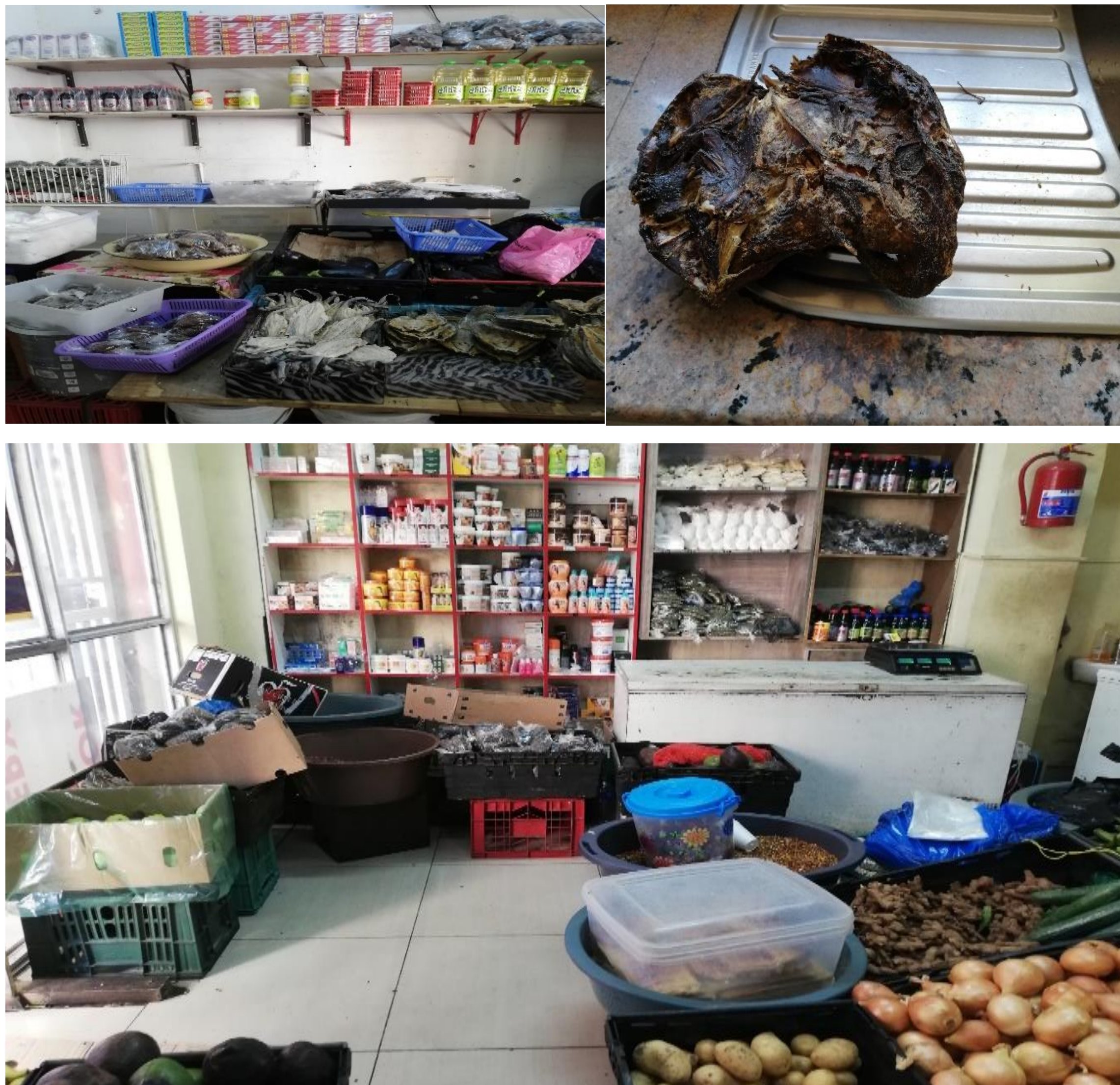

Figure 5. Spaza Food is Owned by Congolese Refugees in Masobiya Mdluli Street and St George's Street

Low-income informants frequent the supermarkets even though they purchase daily at informal food markets, particularly for inexpensive items and foods the informal cannot provide. Most interviewees who lived in this agglomeration in densely populated places like the Durban Central Commercial District (CBD) reported visiting supermarkets far less frequently than those who lived in the Berea, Glenmore, and Umbilo suburbs. Based on the formal lifestyle of the environment, the respondents gave the impression to purchase essential goods from supermarkets.

According to the perspectives acquired from these informants who reside in the CBD, they tend to purchase less food from supermarkets because it's possible to come across a larger concentration of migrants from different nations near the informal food trade. The interviewees' perceptions point to significant factors that enable their regular use of informal companies. Specifically, food sellers are adept at attending to the requirements of residents of underprivileged neighbourhoods. These customers' access to huge quantities of food is restricted because they have no refrigerated space and rely mostly on public transportation or taxis to food purchase.

The households of low-income informants are forced to buy food more often. Beyond what the research suggests, other reasons why poor households access the informal sector to obtain food are important: Convenient location: Informal food outlets are often located at pick-up points, and, as the mapping shows, these informal outlets are evenly distributed across urban establishments. Consumers, therefore, do not have to bear additional transport costs to buy food. Opening hours: Surveys of informal vendors regularly show that they often open early and close late. Quantities wanted: Informal food retailers often reduce bulk products to sell in smaller quantities, which can be more expensive per unit but more affordable for these poor informants. Credit: Informal food businesses often offer credit, which allows informants to buy food in times of financial difficulty.

The opinions gathered from these informants living in the CBD show that they consume fewer supermarket products due to the possibility of finding much more agglomeration of migrants of various nationalities around the informal food trade. Very important factors emerge from all the informants' opinions, facilitating their systematic recourse to informal businesses. Namely, food retailers are skilled in meeting the needs of members of their poor community. Indeed, these consumers, whose income is irregular, have no refrigeration space and depend mainly on public transport or taxis, which limits their access to large quantities of food.

These strategic factors underscore the informal sector's central role in distributing food, facilitating access, and strengthening food security among these vulnerable households. But when you look at the influx of supermarkets and the crowd of consumers around, one would tend to believe that modern supermarkets provide easy access to food for poor households. The current results show that modern supermarkets are certainly not always a godsend for rather poor households. A study

conducted in Cape Town by Battersby (2011) found that supermarkets in low-income areas often offer less healthy foods but are cheaper than those in more affluent areas.

This could rapidly discourage even those informants who are able to afford foods in modern supermarkets. Do not forget that in the process of obtaining food, the psychological factor counts, which embodies the phenomenon of trust not only in the quality of the food but also in the person who sells it. This is why, beyond the price and quality of the food offered, the informants would feel much more comfortable among informal vendors since they share the same socio-economic and cultural background. The participants' opinions in this study indicate that it should not be believed that supermarkets better facilitate access to the food desired by the informants. From the latter, informants point out that supermarkets have accelerated the transition to less healthy diets by storing processed and refrigerated foods for a long time.

Urban gardening has also been frequently highlighted as a strategic focus of current policy initiatives to improve food access and security (Harris, 2014; Furness & Gallaher, 2018). The informants indicate that the UNHCR, through the inputs received from its local partners but also associated with their experiences acquired in their country of origin, exploits to the maximum the little ground in their residence to plant various vegetables there. According to the informants, the difficult daily life in all its aspects in the host environment is an equally important factor, especially since food retailers, formal and informal, take advantage of their multiple local, national and international networks to obtain enough to eat and sell. Alongside what has been indicated, access to food is also a question of means, i.e. purchasing power.

As the study shows, the informants either manage informally to obtain financial income or say they do not have enough capital to sell all they earn from household agricultural activities. In the primary context, that is to say, back home (in the DRC), this practice at the domestic level is only a reinforcement activity in the event of a deficit in the formal food supply. Therefore, this is rarely a primary food source since those who practice it sell the surplus they produce. In South Africa, informants see it as an opportunity to make it a para-official primary source of food, although the sources of supply are not always constant and sufficient. Research from this perspective shows

that informal businesses greatly facilitate access to food and thus contribute to the stability of the urban food system (Furness & Gallaher, 2018; Gichunge & Kidwaro, 2014).

Furthermore, the findings of this study, supported by the scholars Sodergren (2021), Harris, et al. (2014), and Field, et al. (2020), indicate that the informal food trade constitutes an important source of employment, especially for women as a self-reliance mechanism. One of the informants, a woman owning a food store, shares her story and experiences that many of their food suppliers are from Johannesburg's unofficial *gambela* market. Gambela market is a foreign marketplace in Yeoville township in Johannesburg dominated by Congolese migrants. In the DRC capital, there is a *gambela* market where low-income people come to sell goods and services.

In memory of this market, Congolese migrants in Yeoville gave the same name and performed the same cultural identity as back home (Naidu & Nzuza, 2014; Lakika, 2019). The informants revealed that even though the name *gambela* has Congolese origins, many other African countries, including Nigerians, Zimbabweans, Cameroonians, and others, share the same cuisine and cultural traditions (Lakika, 2019; Jagne, 2020; Kirkland, et al, 2022). These countries offer a wide variety of African food products. Other Africans go there to purchase and sell because of this. According to Mon Mung, this market is special because people can cohabit and share a common sense of understanding. Modern supermarkets cannot solve the obstacles they face on a daily basis, said Mrs Aline, who distributes a range of food products from the Congo. Mrs Aline said,

> *There are police everywhere in the city, so getting supplies is difficult, but we are powerless to convince them. We are managing to provide food, to our families, especially our home food in order for us to feel we are back home. Recurring corruptions are starting to detract the community's ability to provide a variety of services in our area, and this is causing many vendors to increase their food product pricing. They supply the majority of the home food and other goods that we are using in Durban.*

The informants exert enough effort in these underground markets to balance their food supplies. Regardless of the distance between the sourcing centre informants' homes, the so-called ‘connection’ network makes all this possible. Informants would have had difficulty coping with food access in Durban without this social formation and connection.

During a participant observation session, the researcher went grocery shopping with the informants to observe where and how they got their food. The researcher found that a phone call needed to be placed before leaving the informant's household for the food providers. From that moment, the researcher knew it was not like a market with predictable operating hours. The informants know that many people conduct home-based food sales to avoid legal repercussions from the municipal authorities (Puetz, et al, 1991). Furthermore, in the unlikely circumstances that the informants are caught buying or selling food items that are uncommon in the South African food market, they were not thinking twice to justify themselves with bribes.

The informant (Mrs Aline) and four other informants support that, compare to the Gambela's informal market in Yeoville, where they previously resided, Masobiya Mdluli Street and St George's Street are limited in food-sourcing foreign spaza shops. They attribute this limitation to a lack of organisation contrary to that of suppliers in Yeoville's informal Gambela market which are well organised and cooperative with the law enforcement officers. All these food suppliers have a common relationship rooted in the neighbourhood, and more of their supplies arrive at their destinations via the above-mentioned processes. However, Masobiya Mdluli Street and St George's Street informal food markets provide a quiet number of food variety. Given the crowd of Congolese residents in those locations, Mrs Aline had access to whatever food she desired and was familiar with whom to contact. The proxy was important for many informants in this process.

The issue was that those residing in Masobiya Mdluli Street and St George's Street had better access to food than those who had to travel up to ten kilometres to the sourcing areas. According to Mrs Aline and Mrs Sara, individuals who live nearby benefit the most, and sourcing from far away benefits access via vicarious relationships and cost related.

However, the wonderful thing about all of this is that everyone can buy things on credit for those customers who lack the upfront cash but will be forced to pay later, either with interest rate or not, depending on their close relationships. By examining how food is stored during participant observation, particularly commodities that are vulnerable to deterioration, like fish and other

refined delicacies, the researcher understood why prices are lower and why goods are sold even on credit.

Many food items gradually lost their organoleptic qualities, such as smell, taste, and appearance. These include Fish that were either smoked, salted or fresh. Fish, rice, beans, and maize meal (fufu) were served to the migrants at shopping points in those areas. Having a shopping experience with Mrs Aline and Mrs Sara in Masobiya Mdluli Street and St George’s Street was about perusing their local marketplaces. A group of Congolese people were seen there chatting in their tongues while requesting food. Due to the close bonds between the merchants, even when they run out of stock, they can still transfer their customers to the following merchants who provide the same food items but not at the same price. Some of the business owners were not able to afford to rent a commercial space; they occasionally opened up shop on the street. This fact makes the price, to a certain extent, affordable.

In the evening, most shops were open on the street. This is consistent with the same behavioural patterns observed in the DRC, the informants’ ancestral homeland (Iyenda, 2001; Lyan & Manimbulu, 2014; Tollens, 2003). Also, at this time of the day, the law enforcement agents were probably less cautious, which enabled the sellers to target breadwinners of their communities returning from work who wanted to enjoy food from home. Vendors and buyers rely on the same subsistence economies. The vendors are also direct users of their goods, just like the customers.

Consumers were discovered to be organised in cultural clusters based on how they share certain cultural identities, such as languages. Still, they did not show a substantial gap in terms of food consumption (Tollens, 2003). Due to this, it was uncommon for the researcher to find a sufficient and diverse supply of food at the stores of many interviewees. The informal food industry's prices are less competitive than modern supermarkets due to the suppliers' comparatively constrained inability to import huge amounts of food from their country. In times of shocks such as COVID-19, informal retailers of this kind (spaza shops) provided food access to balance the shortages and distance to big food shopping centres that the informal wage earners would not be able to access.

One of the informants, Mr Joe, shares that before the COVID-19 pandemic, he used the spaza shop for small commodities such as airtime or children's snack foods such as chips or sweets. Still, during and post-COVID-19, this food channel has become the routine food stockpile sourcing, the only way food arrangement is given. Some informants do not believe that informal food markets are the best place to find high-quality food; rather, they see them as a supplement for those goods that modern supermarkets either cannot make or can only partially make available to those of low income. According to the informants, people use spaza shops in this endeavour because supermarkets like Scheckers and others are still a convenient source of sufficient and secure food. The informants see the spaza shop as a transitional buy.

The informants claim supermarkets were the only place people could get food in the country's cities for the past ten years. Everyone at the time had access to well-paying work, could buy enough food at the nearby supermarkets to fill the refrigerator for half a month, and could get by on a modest income. The same routine is not followed now. Except for the informants' food, which includes maize meal, beans, rice, and fish, sourcing from spaza kshops is a sign of poverty among low-income consumers (Naidu & Nzuza, 2017). Mr Joe, assisted by Mrs Belind and Mr Kab (informants), discloses that their spaza shops are the only locations where migrants serve home meals to support this attempt. In the context of Congolese refugees, the so-called 'connection' is the only means to learn how or where this food sourcing are discovered, necessitating social connectivity and the household heads' ability to gather information.

8.4 Food Access through Urban Cash Farming

The informants resort to homegrown food sourcing through livestock and cash crops in the absence of who they are and the attempt of social construction implementation of who they are not. According to the informants, indigenous livestock and cash crop practices are a crucial pillar of urban agriculture that significantly raises their standard of living in Durban. Cheteni & Mokhele (2019) are congruent with those subsistence practices among African poor households. The Department of Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries DAFF (2012) and Cheteni & Mokhele (2019) assert that various practices—such as those involving sheep, cattle, and poultry—play a key role

in providing food to all kinds of consumers. In this endeavour, the informants share some particularities regarding these practices that are culturally responsive to their needs.

Mr Joe (informant) paid attention to rare home poultry in the nearby supermarkets and had to drive twenty minutes to reach one of their home food suppliers, who indigenously bred Zulu chicken *inkuku* that Congolese people prefer to eat. *"As a refugee like me, Mr Khee is an old buddy of mine, a home poultry farmer,"* claimed Mr Joe. Mr Kab further asserted that he is the source of the tender chicken Congolese immigrants favour in our eateries. He is not limited to poultry but rather to multiple vegetables as well.

Mr Joe (informant) shares that he was a Muslim converted to Christianity (Protestantism). Still, he has not given up his Muslim fellowships regarding eating behaviour, assuming that Muslim people eat organic or halal food (Kamarulzaman, et al, 2016). The relationship between religion and the market is important in accessing halal food (Kamarulzaman, et al, 2016). Mr Joe and other informants agree that eating organic food is preferable, and migrants' spaza shops are predisposed to serve this. Mr Joe thinks that since Mr Khee enjoys eating organic food, the produce must also be organic.

Mr Joe said there's a possibility of selecting that it has grown naturally. At Mr Khee's household, informants besides Mr Joe purchase food from him. "*Many of Mr Khee's Congolese refugees friends and even their neighbourhood Burundian friends rushed to choose a good chicken and cassava leaves based on their individual financial capabilities*", said Mr Joe. The informants understood that organic food means nothing regarding whether chemical fertilizers or genetically modified agents have been used in the processes. This induced Mrs Aline to unpack that "*Mr Khee and Mrs Sara are always cultivated a big portion of land with cassava leaves exactly same cultivar like as back home, they are our source of 'Sombe' (in Swahili language)."*

Figure 6. Mrs Sara, a Food Gardening Supplier of Congolese Home Vegetables

The market for cassava exists in most parts of central and eastern African countries where cassava is the staple food of indigenous people in the DRC (Mondo, et al, 2019; Jarvis, et al. (2012). The formal market delivery of cassava is not formally operational in the South African food market; thus, it is difficult to access this kind of foodstuff (Amelework, et al, 2021). However, the crop is grown on a small scale and traded informally, resulting in a limited supply on the formal market despite the socio-economic importance of cassava in South Africa.

According to Madula (2022), high migrant population from other regions of Africa rely on cassava as their major source of carbohydrates one reason for the country's increasing demand for cassava. Thus, the informant praised Cassava for its contribution to food security; its most popular component, the roots or tubers, can feed at least three people with only one tuber (Madula, 2022). The informants ate the tubers, grilled, or made flour. Vitamin C, an essential vitamin that

stimulates collagen synthesis, acts as an antioxidant and improves immunity, among other nutritional benefits, is particularly abundant in cassava root. The leaves are also loaded with proteins and important vitamins like A and B, so they are used to make a delicacy known as *moroho* in South Africa (Madula, 2022) and *sombe* in other African nations. The country's agricultural growth potential for cassava cultivation has not been fully realized (Amelework, et al, 2021).

In addition to Madula's (2022) article on cassava demand, the informants grow this crop on a small scale, like Mrs Sara and Khee and trade it informally among themselves. During participant observation on food purchases with the informants, the researcher evidenced this and recorded the perceptions of each stakeholder in this regard, which consists of lessening the impact of food shortage on the formal market. The researcher also understands that most informants are content to access this delicious food regardless of its cost. The researcher further realizes that the Congolese refugees manage and adapt quite a bit to the adverse economic and cultural conditions related to organic food access.

This observation comes from the enormous structure of Mr Khee's Poultry Project and Mrs Sara's gardening of diverse vegetables commonly eaten in the DRC (cfr. picture no 3). These strategies of growing their home food serve as a way of communicating with one another, a powerful counterweight to the formal economies' shortcomings, even though the industrial operators are not able to notice this because of their enormous number of consumers (Joassart-Marcelli, et al, 2017). As for this, the informants perceive it as a benefit in this informal economic realm as opposed to the formal economy, particularly the minimum diversified food they receive from other Congolese migrants and refugees (Gichunge & Kidwaro, 2014; Sodergren, 2021).

Regarding price, the informants argue that no one wins or loses more than the other in this situation. It is a win-win situation for both ‘facilitators’ and those being facilitated. As noticed in the previous sections, the informal economy of these migrants is founded on relationships rather than harsh market principles, which means without cash on hand, the informants are given a chance to food credit. The circuit shows that Mr Khee is relying on a subsistence economy, so he's forced to sell on credit if necessary because he does not have another source of income, and even though

it happens, he has little income. Also, most informal activities of this kind do not adhere to legal requirements or do not have proper marketing broadcasts to attract important public consumers.

These impediments allow informants with little income to benefit from short-term food credits and, thus, help vendors and consumers survive the side effects of the formal economy. The informants' methods of sustenance are not unusual; they are typical of the ‘subsistence economies’ of the developing globe. This is comparable to the economy of Congo Brazzaville and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, where the informal sector employs more people than the formal sector (Mirindi, 2019; Landreville, 2020; Inogwabini, Sandukan & Ndunda, 2017). For these Congolese exiles, it is merely a replication or backup of their prior means of subsistence, which they left behind in their native country.

8.5 Discussion

This chapter answers different strategies the informants put in place to cope with their challenges in accessing food. The finding shares three key coping mechanisms: accessing food through mobile food markets, spaza food stores and food access through urban cash farming. Napier, et al. (2018). This finding aligns with research on the various interventions provided and coping mechanisms refugees use in a few destination countries (Napier, et al, 2018; Nisbet, et al, 2022). Poor communities in developing nations have also been observed using these coping mechanisms (Crush & Caesar, 2014; Ngidi &Hendriks, 2014; Shariff & Khor, 2008).

The informants could have designed and implemented these strategies for removing barriers to food access to lessen the impact of food shortages for some items and cost barriers for most foods on the formal market. The mobile or street food market and spaza food stores give the informants access to food either freshly sourced from the DRC, made locally by other low-income residents or Congolese through urban agriculture, or wildly produced by nature. The elements of social identity are more connected to overcoming barriers to food access. This is consistent with Naidu and Nzuza's (2013) study on migrants from Sierra Leone maintaining their dietary identities through home food in Durban.

The ability to lend one another food credits to lessen the impact of their shared financial hardships that the official sources could not offer is another aspect of Congolese identity derived from their efforts to overcome restrictions to food access. The ability to reject the dominant tenet of the market theory of food access, which consists of a direct exchange of money for goods, is enhanced in this setting by social identity.

In addition, the situation is discussed concerning non-refugees (Martin, 2014; Choudhury, et al, 2011). Both informants' vendors and informants' customers benefit from these strategies. In this case, the informants talk about how crucial they believe it is for individuals to be connected for reasons relating to cultural identities and to expand their choices to additional affordable (less popular foods) food opportunities available in this market (Zihalirwa, 2017).

However, these strategies present some limitations. This is consistent with Napier, et al.(2018), who qualify this trio approach to food sourcing among refugees as an unlawful design strategy concerning its effectiveness and sustainability. Its impediment resides in their operating mode, which can only be done by 'connection', especially for home-to-home food supplies and or purchase by coincidence for street food supplies. Spaza shops could remain the least reassuring operating mode because of their physical address; however, they mostly serve the nearest informants.

Concerning food entitlement that promotes flexibility and qualification in terms of individual and household access to food (Sen, 1981; Wells, 2012), the informants cannot easily get the food they desire in this regard. Their native food cannot legally enter South Africa and those who do run the risk of being apprehended by law enforcement. These obstacles decrease the informants' capacity to obtain a variety of foods due to two factors: first, the scarcity of food, and second, the high cost of some food items. Due to this, the research population's level of food entitlement is low.

The latter aligns with food security research by Napier et al. (2018) among Burundian and Congolese women who have fled their countries and are seeking asylum in Durban, demonstrating that many of these people are at risk of going hungry. The current research supports (Napier et al., 2018) that the community of these informants continues to struggle considerably with limited

access to food options across the market. To support this endeavour, the government must update its immigration and trade policies so informants can easily access their food identities while consuming in the host food environment.

8.6 Conclusion

The current chapter answered the question that seemed to identify the overcoming barriers to food access among Congolese refugees in Durban. The finding theorised around three overarching themes: accessing food through mobile food markets, informal community shops (spaza shops) and food access through urban cash farming. Overcoming barriers to food access was adopted by the Congolese refugees as a result of socio-cultural and economic limitations in Durban.

Using these strategies, the Congolese refugees tried to push above the constraints of the new eating customs while still maintaining their connections to their homeland. The social nature that these processes produced seemed valuable because it was the primary means by which these refugees could avert the impending food shortage heading their way. Even the most financially impoverished Congolese refugees could buy the food they chose for the lowest possible price using cash or credit.

However, these strategies present limitations. Unlawful design strategies with regard to its effectiveness and sustainability. Its impediment resides in their operating mode, which can only be done by ‘connection’, especially for home-to-home food supplies and or purchase by coincidence for street food supplies. These obstacles decrease the informants' capacity to obtain a variety of foods. Food entitlement is then fairly reached among refugees using this model. The research provides perceptions and practical advice for experts and academics who want to help the households of relocated Congolese refugees.

CHAPTER NINE: CONCLUSION

9.1 Introduction

This chapter recapitulates the fundamental findings and arguments of the study, assuring that the study has attained its assigned objectives, which consisted of:

- To provide important thoughts about market food access concerns, namely obstacles and prospects for Congolese refugees (availability, accessibility and affordability).
- To identify the Congolese Refugees' challenges and prospects in accessing systems that were culturally responsive to their food need (acceptability).
- To address the breaches of service delivery that prevent refugee communities from accessing basic needs.
- To explore potential alternatives and create culturally responsive approaches that could have facilitated the complexity of the Congolese refugees' access to food in the Durban marketplace.

The former was made possible through an appropriate ethnographic qualitative research design. This approach helped the researcher to study the Congolese refugees' households' food behaviour in their respective market experiences. The rich data was gathered with twenty key informants, selected purposely, using semi-structured interviews and participant observations. This approach involved participating in food purchasing activities and observing food purchasing behaviours in the marketplaces frequented by Congolese refugees. The chapter summarises the research's contributions concerning its main research questions.

9.2 Summary of Findings

The study provided current perspectives on challenges that refugees experienced in attempting to access food in their current cultural settings. Several key findings revealed that Congolese refugees' food access struggles remain significant in Durban, South Africa. Food inadequacy is relevant through themes such as: 'Congolese refugees are not very familiar with the food options in Durban', 'household's ability to obtain information,' and 'informal method as a Congolese Refugees' food sourcing'. The first theme informed in detail about food empathy. Respondents

express this food empathy vis-à-vis the opinions of predominant food habits in the host country, which are unfamiliar to the informants back home.

The findings showed that the informants perceive food diversity but do not meet their desiderata. Their food preference helped them to shorten the host food consumption. The second enlightens the household's ability to gather information. The household's ability to gather information was a function of the household's financial means and food environment, which was quite extensive than theirs in the DRC. They need enough information to bargain food they can afford and enough for them. The third theme: 'Informal approach as a Congolese Refugees' food sourcing,' informed the most accessible food sourcing that provides not only cheap food but also preferred food (home food). More importantly, the informal source was to acquire home food.

To assess the preference for food, the finding measured three overarching elements: Access to organic food, Switch to foods that are culturally comparable by appearance, Household member size impact on individual access to food of choice and Household income in accessing food of choice. The outcomes from these variables show the interdependence of each other to display barriers and opportunities to food access among Congolese refugee households in Durban. At household members' level, the findings show an imbalance of access to food choices driven by two different cultural identity approaches: African and Western.

The level of food accessibility in this situation was dictated more by the African parenting environment, which goes against most of the family members' access to food choices and is contrary to their entitlement to food. In this situation, the entire household concentrated its food regime in Congolese style within a context where the food regime has evolved. This happened, among other reasons, because there were no adult earners of income other than their respective heads in the selected households to participate in this study. This would help compare their power balance in household food access decision-making.

Although the dominating choices in the household were made in a Congolese parenting style, three primary factors contributed to this, which has nothing to do with the household head's supremacy. Factors include household income dynamics, food homogeneity that causes consumers to choose

alternatively, and housing prices to hike. The overall insight of these factors showed the Congolese refugee households distraught in renegotiating food access on the market. However, the finding provides limited overcoming barriers to food access among the Congolese refugees in Durban. The finding theorised around three overarching themes: accessing food through mobile food markets, informal community shops (spaza shops) and food access through urban cash farming.

Overcoming barriers to food access was adopted by the Congolese refugees as a result of socio-cultural and economic limitations in Durban. Using these strategies, the Congolese refugees tried to push above the constraints of the new eating customs while still maintaining their connections to their homeland. The social nature that these processes produced seemed valuable because it was the primary means by which these refugees could avoid the impending food shortage heading their way. Even the most financially impoverished Congolese refugees could buy the food they chose for the lowest possible price using cash or credit.

However, these strategies present limitations with regard to their effectiveness and sustainability. Its impediment resides in their operating mode, which can only be done by 'connection', especially for home-to-home food supplies and or purchase by coincidence for street food supplies. These obstacles decrease the informants' capacity to obtain a variety of foods. Food entitlement is then fairly reached among refugees using this model. In doing so, the finding has responded to the study's research objectives.

9.3 Contributions of Study

Navigating the literature pertaining to this study indicated that not much has been explored around food access among refugees using a market approach in South Africa. This study has several contributions to the literature. It is one of the first to exclusively focus on describing elements of the market approach to food access among Congolese refugees in Durban, South Africa. The study has exclusively focusing on Congolese refugee households and incorporating the elements of social identity and capability theories into this understudied topic. At the international level, the limited literature on this subject has mainly focused attention on factors seeking to improve food security among people from refugee backgrounds resettled in high-income countries and the risks

they are exposed to (Gingell, et al, 2022; Maharaj, et al, 2017). Food access and one aspect of food security received less attention.

In contrast to the factors that influenced their food consumption, they emphasised the effects of the food they consumed on their health. When Kirkland, et al. (2022) explored perceptions of resettled Congolese refugees maintaining cultural traditions in Ohio, USA, they included only women. However, another section of the literature (Nutz, 2017; Wilson & Renzaho, 2015; Harris, et al, 2014) focused on how refugees' ability to get food increased through communal food gardening. They focused on refugees in some Southern African and Australian countries.

In South Africa, limited literature on refugees mainly focused on social exclusion and livelihood strategies and did not have salient themes around food (Amissi, 2006; Amissi, et al, 2011). However, Napier, et al. (2018) informed on the indicators of food insecurity among refugees and asylum seekers in the city of Durban. Instead of investigating other important aspects of food access that can provide tangential information about people's health status, they concentrated on the relationship between income and food to assess the refugees' state of health.

Refugees being exposed to market approach experiences, income, and food availability are not enough to determine people’s health and well-being. The influence of cultural identity is another lever in renegotiating access to food. Thus, this universe of knowledge has very limited information about refugees in South Africa. Given the increasing rate of refugees in South Africa, investigating their food access remains an important research area in anthropology, especially within the under-researched populations like Congolese refugees in Durban. Scholarly contributions focus on Congolese refugees, who are an important part of the refugees in Durban.

Furthermore, the focus on these subjects followed a deep observation by the researcher on the ongoing sociocultural and economic situation facing migrants in the country. Moreover, the decision came from Congolese migrants’ conversation around food access struggles in Durban. The researcher learned from the literature studied that having access to food involves acceptability (cultural identity) and the ability to afford it. Deconstructing those factors was crucial to determining to what extent these refugees can access the food they choose. Therefore, it was

crucial to adopt a qualitative technique to investigate how these immigrants obtained food in a market-based setting. Since anthropology is a comprehensive study of all facets of human life, the researcher believes that by approaching the topic in this way, the researcher could have contributed significantly to the body of knowledge on food security amongst migrants.

9.4 Suggestions

After having a clear understanding of the market experiences driving the Congolese refugees' food access in Durban, it results from the informants that the following should be attended to: the immigration labour policy that allows them access to better jobs for better income sustaining the market experiences.

The majority of informants admitted that most of their home foods enter South Africa illegally, which accounts for its scarcity and price increases. This needs to be properly considered in the South African trade policy's coordination. The latter would help vacuum out the intermittent worries facing the informal home food retailers, a blockade to purchase their food choices easily and affordably.

The UN organisations mandated to handle refugee affairs should encourage and protect the survival initiatives of refugees under market experiences.

It can be advisable to replicate the current study using a quantitative approach to provide statistical significance. This will require determining to what extent the Congolese refugees' households in Durban have inadequate food access by measuring the Congolese refugees' Household Food InsecurityAccess Scale (HFIAS), Household Dietary Diversity (HDD) and Household Hunger Scale (HHS) using a larger size of participants.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Consent document

Dear participant,

My name is Cumya Zihalirwa (*Student Number: 215079935*). I am a PhD candidate studying at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Howard College Campus. The title of my research is ''Food Access among Congolese Refugees Living in Durban, South Africa: A Market Approach'.

The objective of this study is to examine the actual experiences of Congolese refugees with food access in the Durban market economy**.**

I am interested in interviewing you so as to share your experiences and observations on the subject matter.

Please note that:

- The information that you provide will be used for scholarly research only.
- Your participation is entirely voluntary. You have a choice to participate or not in this research. You will not be penalized for taking such an action and you are free to partaken in using the language you feel comfortable with (Swahili, English, fresh or Lingala).
- Your views in this interview or information recorded on questionnaire will be presented anonymously. Neither your name nor identity will be disclosed in any form in the study.
- The interview same apply to questionnaire will take about (30-*45 minutes*).
- The record as well as other items associated with the interview will be held in a password-protected file accessible only to myself and my supervisors. After a period of 5 years, in line with the rules of the university, it will be disposed by shredding and burning.
- If you agree to participate, please sign the declaration attached to this statement (a separate sheet will be provided for signatures)

I can be contacted at: School of Social Sciences, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Howard College Campus, and Durban. Email: 215079935@stu.ukzn.ac.za, Cell: +27782162428.

My supervisor is Dr. Rudigi Joseph Rukema who is located at the School of Social Sciences, Howard College Campus/ Howard College Campus of the University of KwaZulu-Natal. Contact details: email: josephr1@ukzn.ac.za, Phone number: 0332605289

The Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee contact details are as follows: University of KwaZulu-Natal, Research Office, and Email: hsrrec@ukzn.ac.za and 031 260 4557/3587/8350

Thank you for your contribution to this research

DECLARATION

I,…………………………………..hereby confirm that I understand the contents of this document and the nature of the research project ,and I consent to participating in the research project. I understand that I have liberty to withdraw from the project at any time, should I so desire. I understand the intention of the research. I hereby agree to participate. I consent / do not consent to have this interview recorded (if applicable)

SIGNATURE OF PARTICIPANT DATE

………………………………………………………………………………………………

Appendix 2 : Interview guide format

My name is Cumya Seraphin Zihalirwa (student no: 215079935). I am a Ph.D. candidate at the University of KwaZulu Natal, Howard College. The title of my research is Food access among Congolese refugees living in Durban: A market approach. In the Durban market, the study will examine the actual experiences of Congolese refugees with food access.

1. demographic information of Household

Name of the informant…………………………………………………………………..

Gender of the household head…………………………………………………………..

Head education level……………………………………………………………………….

Household breadwinner…………………………………………………………………

Source of income…………………………………………………………………………

Estimated income per month…………………………………………………………...

Household member size…………………………………………………………………

2. Key Informant Interview Guide

Q1: Where do you source the food you consume in your household?

Q2: What are your food choices in Durban?

Q3: What informs your food choices in Durban?

Q4: What factors constrain you in accessing to the food of your choice in Durban?

Q5: How do you deal with the constraints affecting access to your food choices?

Q6: Did you worry that your household would not have enough food (issue of adequacy: regularity, sufficiency)?

Q7: Did you or any other household member have to eat a smaller [meal] than you felt you needed because there was not enough food?

Q8: Did you or any household member have to eat [fewer meals in a day] because there was not enough food?

Q9: Was there ever no food to eat of any kind in your household because of lack of resources to get food?

Q10: Did you or any household member go to sleep at night hungry because there was not enough food?

Q11: Did you or any household member go a whole day and night without eating anything because there was not enough food?

Q12: Are you or any household member not able to eat the [kinds of foods you prefer because of lack of resources?

Q13: Did you or any household member have to eat [a limited variety of foods] due to a lack of resources?

Q14: Did you or any household member have to eat some foods [that you really did not want to eat] because of a lack of resources to obtain other types of food?

Appendix 3: Ethical approval

15 October 2021

Cumya Zihalirwa (215079935)
School Of Social Sciences
Howard College

Dear C Zihalirwa,

Protocol reference number: HSSREC/00003374/2021
Project title: Food Access among Congolese Refugees Living in Durban, South Africa: A Market Approach
Degree: PhD

Approval Notification – Expedited Application

This letter serves to notify you that your application received on 10 September 2021 in connection with the above, was reviewed by the Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee (HSSREC) and the protocol has been granted FULL APPROVAL.

Any alteration/s to the approved research protocol i.e. Questionnaire/Interview Schedule, Informed Consent Form, Title of the Project, Location of the Study, Research Approach and Methods must be reviewed and approved through the amendment/modification prior to its implementation. In case you have further queries, please quote the above reference number. PLEASE NOTE: Research data should be securely stored in the discipline/department for a period of 5 years.

This approval is valid until 15 October 2022.
To ensure uninterrupted approval of this study beyond the approval expiry date, a progress report must be submitted to the Research Office on the appropriate form 2 - 3 months before the expiry date. A close-out report to be submitted when study is finished.

All research conducted during the COVID-19 period must adhere to the national and UKZN guidelines.

HSSREC is registered with the South African National Research Ethics Council (REC-040414-040).

Yours sincerely,

Professor Dipane Hlalele (Chair)

/dd

Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee
Postal Address: Private Bag X54001, Durban, 4000, South Africa
Telephone: +27 (0)31 260 8350/4557/3587 **Email:** hssrec@ukzn.ac.za **Website:** http://research.ukzn.ac.za/Research-Ethics

Founding Campuses: Edgewood Howard College Medical School Pietermaritzburg Westville

INSPIRING GREATNESS

Appendix 4: Turnitin report

Turnitin Originality Report

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