

Refugee Integration and Peaceful Coexistence in Kenya: A Case of Kakuma Municipality, Turkana County, Kenya

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ABSTRACT

An important and relevant research area was the integration of refugees and their peaceful living with the host community in Kakuma Municipality of Kenya. Kakuma is host to over 283, 969 refugees of different nationalities, the study aimed at evaluating the effectiveness of refugee integration programs in promoting peaceful coexistence between host and refugee communities in Kakuma, Kenya. Of the other concern of the study is to understanding the perception of the host community towards refugee integration and peaceful coexistence and assessing the efficiency in implementing the concept of refugee integration in concern to peaceful coexistence among groups. The study was anchored on Intergroup Contact Theory, the theory claims that people of different groups might reduce prejudice and harmony among the groups and favorable interface through contact. A mixed-methodologies approach to was the study was used, whereby both qualitative and quantitative data collection methods were used. The target population includes the Kakuma Municipality citizens and the Kakuma refugee camp residents that are approximately 439,708 people. The sample size of 400 was used for quantitative part by using Yamane's formula and the participants were selected purposively. The qualitative component comprised of 20 key informant interviews. For the quantitative component, data was obtained using structured questionnaires, while the qualitative component was acquired using semi-structured interviews. Quantitative data was examined using SPSS version 28.0, which included descriptive and inferential statistics such as Pearson's correlation and multiple regression. Thematic analysis was used to examine qualitative data. The study's goal was to give thorough insights on refugee integration and peaceful coexistence in Kakuma Municipality, which will help to influence refugee management policy and practice. The results revealed that perceptions of refugee integration, efficacy of integration programs were significantly and positively correlated with peaceful coexistence, with regression analysis showing that these factors explained 75.6% of the variance in peaceful coexistence. Key findings based on the objectives included: generally positive host community perceptions towards refugee integration and peaceful coexistence, with daily interactions, cultural exchange, and economic integration being important factors; the crucial role of access to healthcare services in promoting peaceful coexistence, with equal access, quality care, and addressing language barriers being key issues; the effectiveness of refugee integration programs in promoting peaceful coexistence, particularly when addressing diverse needs and involving local government support. Based on these findings, recommendations were made to engage the public in promoting positive perceptions and intensify efforts towards implementing effective integration strategies.

Keywords: Refugee Integration, Peaceful Coexistence

INTRODUCTION

Refugee integration is the process through which refugees are incorporated into an economic, social and cultural fabric of a new country (Sahin et al., 2021). According to the UNHCR, "the process through which refugees can freely engage in economic, social, cultural and political activities of the country of asylum while at the same time preserving the culture of origin" this is what refugees undergo in the process of integration (UNHCR, 2014). The process of refugee integration should be a symbiotic relationship where both the host community and refugees can work towards living together peacefully, making sure that one community does not give into violence against the other. Peaceful coexistence is important in such communities as it is seen a situation where refugees and host communities can practice the culture of tolerance where no one is discriminated or threatened

with an act of violence.

The plight of refugees across the world has escalated over the years; it is estimated that there are now more than 80 million forcibly displaced individuals (UNHCR, 2021). The Global Compact on Refugees (GCR) focuses on refugee inclusion and living together in peace with host communities. The compact also focus on assisting host nations and communities to urge the refugees to be self-reliant and assimilated. Several countries around the world are making efforts in providing integration opportunities for refugees with examples such as the “Welcome class” for Refugee children in Germany, private sponsorship in Canada and in Sweden “the introduction program” designed to assist newly arriving refugees and ease their integration by providing labs such as language learning, civic participation, and employment.

Africa has been the most affected continent by the refugee crisis which continues up to date, due to the instability in countries caused by political unrest, civil wars, high levels of unemployment, drought to mention but a few. The continent has been grappling with the refugee issues since the post colonialism and World War II, meaning the region has been looking into migrant integration for years. The are factors that make host countries in Africa avoid the integration of refugees in the host population, such as insecurity and their economies not being able to support refugees. That notwithstanding, there countries such as Uganda, a country that has assumed the lead in the developed countries in coming up with a coherent system of dealing with the refugees by granting them almost the same status as the Ugandans in terms of services and employment (Idris et al., 2020). The only regional legal framework that targets internally displaced persons, focuses on solutions which are local integration within the country of asylum or a third country for the refugees, is the Kampala convention adopted in 2009 by the African Union. It is the first regional instrument in this regard and this one has legal force (African Union, 2009).

In addition, regional cooperation has been Africa’s approach to addressing and assimilating refugees. The region has players in Eastern Africa include IGAD which has played a significant role in the enhancement of regional policies on refugee situations. A role of regionalism in the management of protracted situations of refugees was underlined in 2017. In 2017, the member-state of Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) adopted the Nairobi Declaration on the Question of Somali Refugees and their reintegration into the Social Fabric of Somalia. Some of the African countries that have embraced the frameworks are Djibouti, Somalia, Ethiopia and Uganda among others (UNHCR, 2018). Issues still exist even with these developments; for example, dearth of funds realized in host countries, deterioration of environment in regions hosting refugees, and a necessity for a fairer burden sharing among African states in the continent.

Kenya has a history of having hosted refugees for three decades now. According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), there are currently over 676,332 refugees and asylum seekers in Kenya most of whom are in the Kakuma refugee camps located in the semi-arid and dry climatic regions of Turkana and Garissa counties respectively in Kenya by 2023. The host communities have however felt the impact of the presence of refugees in different ways that can be categorized as either positive or otherwise. On one hand there is increased strain on the local infrastructure, resources and social services that are to benefit both the host and refugees in the Kakuma Municipality. On the positive side, the local economy has received value addition from refugees’ diverse origins, workforce, business initiatives, cultural interphase, as well as economic activities on the aspects of income generation (World Bank, 2022). The Kalobeyei Integrated Socio-Economic Development Plan (KISED P), which was initiated in 2016, can be considered as an example of efforts towards implementing the humanitarian-development integrated approach that is supporting the cooperation between refugees and host community. The Kenyan government in its endeavour to address refugee management in the country put in place the Refugees Act 2021, aimed at promoting integration of the refugees and their peaceful coexistence with host communities.

Kakuma Municipality for instance emerges as an ideal area of focus on issues of refugee absorption and coexistence, as the population of refugees contributed to it being conferred to a municipality. Kakuma Municipality is host to over 283, 969 refugees of different nationalities, who have been residing in the municipality for more than three decades. It is an excellent location to examine integration and conflict-free living over several years because the settlement has admitted a significant number of refugees in the years. The Kalobeyei Integrated Socio-Economic Plan (KISED P) is a plan in that falls within the municipality, this plan is

in line with the notion of economic transformation of both the hosting community and the refugees alike as noted by UNHCR 2018. Refugee's integration and their ability to access essential services is highly affected by Kakuma Municipality's inadequacies, the geographical placement of Turkana County and the scarce resources. It is perhaps, necessary to come up with context-sensitive strategies for fostering integration and coexistence in such related contexts, based on knowledge of how these challenges are or can be managed in these municipalities.

Objective of the study

To evaluate the effectiveness of refugee integration programs in promoting peaceful coexistence between host and refugee communities in Kakuma, Kenya.

Research Question

How effective are the current refugee integration programs in Kakuma, Kenya, and how do they impact the peaceful coexistence of host and refugee communities?

EMPIRICAL REVIEW

Efficacy of Refugee Integration Programs and Peaceful Coexistence of Refugee and

Host Communities

Astolfo et al. (2021) assessed the efficacy of an all-encompassing program in Uganda that aimed to integrate refugees. The strategy of study included surveys, structured interviews and data gathered through program monitoring. Positive results were linked with integration outcomes and reduction on cases of host-guest conflict with the program that provided refugees legal, social and economic support. Therefore, the study also stressed the fact regarding coexistence it is important that integration processes should be planned and complete. Because the study focuses on the influence of comprehensiveness of a refugee integration program in Uganda on integration outcomes and harmony between the hosts and the refugees, the study establishes a contextual gap.

In Jordan, through Bouchara (2021), the authors explored how the approaches in managing integration impacted the economic and social welfare of the host as well as the refugee population. Interviews and observing of different phenomena were conducted and this method was based on the qualitative case study approach. Improved communication, appreciation and economic relations were the effects of integration activities because needs of refugees were fulfilled. In the course of the research, some of the challenges of ensuring that such programs can be sustained and expanded in the long run were elaborated. As the study only concerned the refugee's integration program in Jordan and impact on the social integration and economic welfare of refugees and hosts it has shown a contextual research gap.

According to Dryden-Peterson (2020), the impact that a community-based program that sought to assimilate refugees into the Uganda society had on the cohesion of the host population as well as the refugees. Since adopting the mixed-methods design, researchers completed surveys of program participants and non-participants, in addition to the qualitative interviews. Analysis to the findings revealed that the refugee integration program helped host and refugee communities develop better cooperation. The evidence from this paper suggests that when the social relationships between the host communities and refugees are encouraged by multiple integrated approaches at community level, then comprehensive approaches to refugee integration may enhance coexistence. By exposing how a community-based refugee integration program impacts on the host country's social cohesiveness and host-guest peace in Uganda, this research raises concerns of external validity.

In the study conducted by Betts et al. (2019) a program which sought to foster integration and enable the Somali refugees in Kenya live harmoniously with other communities was considered. Quantitative and qualitative findings were used where the research based the treatment group and the control group in a random controlled trial. The program helped the refugees get better leadership skills training and community conversation facilitation that advanced the refugees' social relations, acceptance, and unproportioned conflict resolution with the host community. Refugee-led integration wide-ranging opening may further social cohesiveness and urgent

and long-term harmonious coexistence, the overview of the research presents. While the study explored the impact of the refugee leadership and the community mobilisation program on integration and peaceful coexistence for the Somali refugees in Kenya it lacked consideration of context.

Conceptual Framework

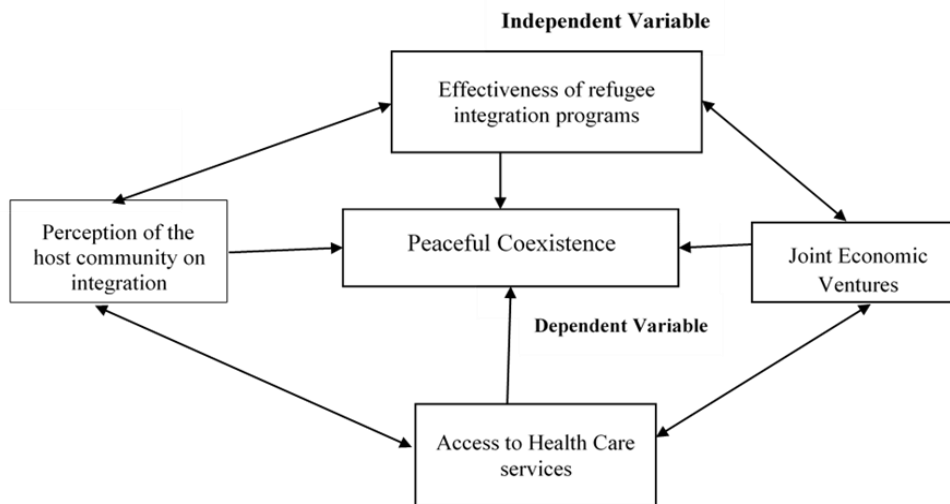


Figure1.1: Conceptual Framework

The model depicts the relationship between the two variables in Kakuma Municipality whereby integration of refugees act as the independent variable and peaceful coexistence as the dependent variable. The following are the four fundamental factors upon which the issue of effective refugee integration programmes are based; perception about integration, accessibility of health care, efficiency of integration programs, and coordinated social and economic projects. This call for a multi-dimensional approach to integration is in alignment with the concept advanced by Ager and Strang (2008) for the different domains highlighted in the integration process such as health domain, social network domain and employment domain. Another reason for arguing for the inclusion of perceptions as a variable is given by acculturation theory as presented by Berry (2005) where she shows how attitudes impact integration.

This study posits that on the basis of the aforementioned elements, low conflict and tension, mutual support and cooperation, taking part in joint activities, safety and security determine the possibility of refugees living in harmony with their hosts. This point of view flows from Allport’s (1954) on contact hypothesis that posited that contacts between different groups could reduce prejudice and foster harmonious interactions. Further, the framework addresses some of the issues Putnam (2007) has to say about diversity and social capital regarding some schemes and manners in cooperation in the use of resources that contribute to the unity of society. Analyzing these interactions, the study aims at contributing to the existing literature on refugee-host relations in camp contexts (Betts et al., 2019; Rodgers, 2021) and contribute to understanding of how integration processes affect community relations among migrants.

Theoretical Review

Intergroup Contact Theory is the overarching theoretical framework that this research used.

Intergroup Contact Theory

It was first put forward by Gordon Allport in his book titled „The Nature of Prejudice“ published in 1954. In some cases, the theory claims that people of different groups might reduce prejudice and harmony among the

groups and favorable interface through contact (Pettigrew and Tropp 2008). Thus, the optimum intergroup interaction is based on four principles put forward by Allport (1954): equality on the two groups' level, the same goal, constructive collaboration, as well as support from an authority, law, or tradition. In intergroup interaction, there are higher probabilities of decreasing bias and enhancing relations in the case that these entities are met (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2008).

There is a possibility that positive relationships that refugees share with host communities will enhance social harmony, enhance mutual understanding, and eradicate negative stereotype-based perceptions as postulated by intergroup contact theory useful in refugee integration and harmony (Kotzur et al., 2017). To this end, it has been employed in several studies concerning affinities between various groups and people's perception of refugees (Ghosn et al., 2019; Hangartner et al., 2019).

The theory that forms the basis of this research is Intergroup Contact Theory – according to which, the nature and quality of relationship between the host and refugees plays a key role in the formation of their perception and behavior. Based on this hypothesis, factors such as equal status, common goals, can influence the outcomes of intergroup contact, others including mutual respect, shared goals, cooperation, and institutional support may influence how intergroup relations go and whether the two or more groups get to merge and live amicably. In light of the Intergroup Contact Theory, this study aims at exploring how a specific aspect of effectiveness of integration programs affects positive intergroup contact and hence the coexistence of hosts and refugees in Kakuma Municipality.

The Intergroup Theory brings out how the two groups in this study, that is the host and refugee communities can peacefully coexist if the host community reduces prejudice among the refugees, if there is equal to access health care services by both the host and refugee communities and when there is constructive collaboration between the host and refugee communities that will in turn enhances economic ventures.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study employed a convergent parallel mixed methods design, which involved collecting and analyzing both qualitative and quantitative data simultaneously (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2017). This approach was chosen to provide a comprehensive understanding of refugee integration and harmonious cohabitation in Kakuma Municipality. The qualitative part of the study used a descriptive research design (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016) and involved conducting semi-structured interviews with key informants in Kakuma who had extensive experience or knowledge regarding refugee integration and community relations. These informants included community leaders, non-governmental organization representatives, government officials, and long-term residents of both the host and refugee communities. The interviews were conducted using an open-ended interview guide, which allowed the interviewers to probe and explore issues of interest within the set themes and topics (Patton, 2014).

The quantitative section employed a survey to collect data from a large sample of people in the host and refugee populations. The survey used predefined questionnaires with closed ended questions (Fowler, 2013) to obtain measurable data on attitudes, service utilization, and participation in joint activities. This approach allowed for the comparison of frequencies and relationships between variables. The convergent parallel mixed methods design enabled the study to achieve both depth and breadth in its effort to explain the integration and harmonious relationship between the refugee and host populations in Kakuma Municipality. The quantitative data allowed for broader conclusions and the identification of patterns or relationships, while the qualitative data provided background information and a more specific understanding (Johnson et al., 2007). This mixed methods approach supported the study's objectives of examining attitudes, experiences and complex interrelations between the two groups and their integration.

Target Population

The target population for this study included adult members of the host community and adult refugees in Kakuma Municipality. According to Turkana County Government data of 2022 and UNHCR data of 2023, there are approximately 439,708 adults in Kakuma Municipality. The adult population of the host community is estimated to be 155,739 people, while the adult refugee population is estimated to be 283,969 people who are in the camps.

To ensure that the voice of the population of interest on issues of integration and coexistence was captured, the study focused on different sub-groups of this adult population, including community leaders, local government officials, businesspeople, health workers, teachers, UNHCR and NGO staff, and participants from youth and women groups. Children were not included in the study population.

Table 1: Target Population of Kakuma Municipality

Population Group	Number of Individuals	Percentage
Kakuma Municipality (Host Community)	155,739	35.40%
Kakuma Refugee Camp	283,969	64.60%
Total	439,708	100%

Sources: Turkana County Government (2022), UNHCR (2023)

Sample Size and Sampling Procedure

The sampling procedure involved a multi-stage approach. First, the adult population was stratified into host community and refugee population groups. Then, proportionate random sampling was employed to select participants from each group for the quantitative part of the study. For the qualitative part, purposive sampling was used to identify key informants from various categories, including officials from the host and refugee populations, healthcare and educational institutions, NGOs, UNHCR, and leaders from both communities. The selection of key informants was based on their knowledge, experience, and involvement in matters related to refugee integration and coexistence.

To ensure effective data collection, both quantitative and qualitative methods were employed in estimating the sample size. For the quantitative part of the study, Yamane's formula (1967) was applied to establish the appropriate sample size from the adult population of Kakuma Municipality. This formula is useful for finite populations and provides an estimate at a given level of confidence. This was the formula:

$$n = N / (1 + N(e)^2)$$

Whereby: n = sample size. The total population has been estimated to be 439,708 and is represented by N. The margin of error is represented by the symbol e, and is 0. When the 95% confidence level is adopted it is 0.05.

Using the formula in the foregoing we have:

$$\text{Number of observations (n)} = 439,708 / (1 + 439,708(0.05)^2)$$

Hence, n= 400

The quantitative sample size of the host community was 141 while that of the refugee community was 259, as evidence from the target population above the refugees are more than the host community. For the qualitative part, purposive sampling was used to select key informants in Kakuma Municipality who could provide in-depth information about refugee integration and coexistence. As such 20 participants were purposively selected and interviewed in line with the study objectives. Key informants included officials from the host and refugee populations, healthcare and educational institutions, NGOs, UNHCR, and leaders from both communities.

Table 2: Sample Size Distribution

Component	Population Group	Sample Size
Quantitative	Host Community	141

	Refugee Community	259
Qualitative	Key Informants (various categories)	20
Total		420

Data Collection Instruments

Two main data collection instruments were employed in this study to gather the necessary information for effectively answering the research objectives and questions. For the quantitative component, structured questionnaires were developed and distributed to the sample population using a drop-and-pick technique. The structured questionnaires were chosen because they allow for the collection of standardized data from a large number of respondents, enabling statistical analysis and comparison of responses across different groups (Fowler, 2013).

For the qualitative component, semi-structured interview guides were created for conducting key informant interviews. Semi-structured interviews were selected as they provide a flexible approach to explore the perspectives and experiences of the participants while ensuring that the discussions remain focused on the key topics of interest (Patton, 2014). The interviews were conducted with government officials, UNHCR representatives, community leaders, and other relevant stakeholders who had in-depth knowledge and experience related to refugee integration and coexistence in Kakuma Municipality. Each interview was conducted for 30 to 40 minutes.

Response Rate

The study aimed to collect data from a sample of 400 respondents using structured questionnaires. Despite some challenges, such as respondents' unwillingness to grant permission, illiteracy and communication issues with the research assistants helping with question translation, the study achieved a commendable response rate of 86.75%, with 347 questionnaires returned out of the 400 distributed. For the qualitative component, the study targeted 20 key informants, comprising 10 participants from the host community and 10 from the refugee community. The same semi-structured interview guide was used for both categories of key informants to ensure consistency in the data collected. Out of the 20 key informants approaching, 16 (80%) participated in the interviews.

The breakdown of the returned and unreturned questionnaires is presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Questionnaire Return Rate

Category	Number of Questionnaires	Percentage (%)
Returned Questionnaires	347	86.75
Unreturned Questionnaires	53	13.25
Total	400	100

The high response rate for both the quantitative and qualitative components of the study was attributed to the efforts made by the researcher and the research assistants in building rapport with the participants, explaining the significance of the study and ensuring that the questionnaires and interviews were conducted in a manner that was convenient and comfortable for the respondents.

Efficacy of Refugee Integration Programs and peaceful coexistence

Kakuma Municipality is privileged to have several integration programmes initiated and supported by both development partner and the county government of Turkana. Some of the main integration programmes include

education and training, livelihood, economic ventures, psychosocial programmes, health programs, to mention but a few.

Table 4 displays the descriptive data on the effectiveness of the refugee integration initiatives in Kakuma Municipality. In this part, we look at how the respondents felt about the integration programs' ability to help with things like securing local government support, educating and training participants, enhancing livelihoods, and fostering peaceful coexistence.

Table 4

Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean	Std. D
Refugee integration programs effectively promote peaceful coexistence between refugees and host community members.	6%	9%	14%	51%	21%	3.72	1.064
There are sufficient education and training programs to support refugee integration.	11%	14%	18%	35%	23%	3.44	1.276
Livelihood programs have successfully improved the economic situation of both refugees and host community members.	10%	9%	15%	35%	32%	3.71	1.26
Integration programs adequately address the psychosocial needs of refugees.	8%	12%	8%	39%	32%	3.74	1.259
The local government actively supports and participates in refugee integration programs.	4%	10%	6%	42%	39%	4.01	1.103
Average						3.724	1.192

The vast majority of respondents (72%) agreed that refugee integration programs do a good job of fostering peaceful coexistence between host communities and refugees (mean=3.72, std=1.064). This would suggest that people see integration efforts as helping to promote peaceful coexistence. More respondents were split on whether education and training programs are sufficient; 58% agreed and 25% disagreed (mean=3.44, std=1.276), indicating a need for further possibilities in this area. The majority of respondents (67%) believe that livelihood initiatives have improved the economic status of both refugees and host community members (mean=3.71, std=1.26). This suggests that livelihood interventions have had a beneficial effect. As for the psychological and social requirements of refugees, the vast majority of respondents (71%), with a mean score of 3.74 and a standard deviation of 1.255, believe that integration programs do a good job of meeting these needs. Finally, 81% of those who took the survey believe that their local government is actively involved in refugee integration programs (mean=4.01, std=1.103), showing that local authorities are actively involved in these initiatives for the better.

Additional insights were derived from qualitative data collected from important informants.

Respondent 007, for example, said;

“Integration programs have been successful in bringing refugees and host community members together through joint livelihood projects and cultural activities.”

In addition, Respondent 004 noted;

"The local government has been actively involved in supporting integration programs, which has helped improve their effectiveness and sustainability."

Additionally, Respondent 01 said that;

"Education, employment, healthcare, and social services are just a few areas where refugees and host communities have different requirements, and they should all be met by good refugee integration programs. A feeling of justice and shared prosperity may be fostered when the needs of both groups are being addressed and when they are given equal chances. This helps to alleviate tensions."

As an additional point, Respondent 009 mentioned:

"Successful integration projects must also be designed to be sustainable and scalable. Governments, UN agencies, NGOs, and communities must work together in close conjunction with long-term financing, institutional backing, and capacity building for local players."

Regression Analysis of the coexistence between refugees and the host community in Kakuma Municipality

A regression analysis was done in Kakuma Municipality to establish the correlation between the dependent variable (coexistence between refugees and the host community) and the independent variables (perception of the integration of refugees, health services received by refugees, efficiency of the refugee integration programs and economic and social interaction between refugees and the host population). To explain the difference in peaceful coexistence the regression analysis helps to determine the importance of each predictor variable and its statistical significance.

Table 5: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.869a	0.756	0.753	0.3092

Therefore, it can be stated that the variables of the model and peaceful coexistence are highly related, with the R-value of .869. It was 869 in the regression model. An R-squared of 0.756 was observed during the analysis of the data. 756, the model's predictor variables explain 75 % of the variation in the response variable. It was also revealed that the model explains 6% of the variance in peaceful coexistence. An adjusted R-squared score of 0.753 provides a more cautious assessment of the model's explanatory power by taking into consideration the number of predictors in the model.

Table 6: ANOVA

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	101.29	4	25.322	264.866	.000b
	Residual	32.697	342	0.096		
	Total	133.987	346			

The overall significance of the regression model is examined by the ANOVA. At the 1% level of significance, the model is shown to be real with an F-value of 264.866 and a p-value of .000. To put it another way, the predictor factors significantly affect peaceful coexistence when taken as a whole.

Table 7: Regression Analysis

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	0.453	0.132		3.434	0.001
	Efficacy	0.219	0.032	0.226	6.904	0.000

Peaceful coexistence is affected by each predictor variable independently, as shown by the regression coefficients. With all other factors held constant, the greatest correlation between healthcare access and peaceful coexistence is 0.487 units, meaning that a one-unit increase in healthcare access leads to 0.487 units of peaceful coexistence. Consistent with previous empirical research (Getachew & Yigzaw, 2020; Tanle & Tettey, 2017), this outcome highlights the significance of equal access to vital services in fostering social cohesiveness and alleviating host-community hostilities against refugees. To a lesser extent, views on refugee integration affect harmonious cohabitation (B=0.319, p=0.000). Once all other factors are held constant, there is a correlation between a one-unit rise in favorable views of refugee integration and a 0.319-unit increase in peaceful coexistence. The roles of positive attitudes and perceptions in encouraging harmonious interactions between host communities and refugees have been previously shown, and our result lends credence to such results (Esses et al., 2017; Gürsoy & Ertaşoğlu, 2018).

When refugee integration programs are successful, it greatly affects the likelihood of peaceful cohabitation (B=0.219, p=0.000). Peaceful coexistence increases by 0.219 units for every one unit rise in the effectiveness of integration initiatives, everything else being equal. Study after study has shown that integration programs that are both thorough and well-designed may do wonders for fostering social cohesiveness and harmonious cohabitation (Bouchara, 2021; Dryden-Peterson, 2020). And lastly, B=0.11, p=0.002 shows that cooperative social and economic endeavors significantly affect peaceful coexistence. Holding all other factors fixed, there is a correlation between a one-unit rise in joint ventures and a 0.11-unit increase in peaceful coexistence. Findings like these are in line with what has been written about the power of joint efforts to help refugees and host communities connect, learn from one another, and work together (Baak, 2019; Omata, 2021).

The findings indicate the importance of addressing these key factors through comprehensive and multifaceted approaches to refugee integration that promote social cohesion and peaceful coexistence. The results align with the existing literature and leads to a better understanding of the drivers of peaceful coexistence in refugee-hosting contexts.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Efficacy of Integration Programs and Peaceful Coexistence

An overwhelming majority of Kakuma residents (60-80%) believe that refugee integration programs successfully foster peaceful coexistence (72%), raise incomes for all parties involved (67%), meet the psychological and social needs of refugees (71%), and attract the attention and funding of the local government (81%). Based on these results, it seems that people believe integration initiatives help with things like economic security, mental health, social cohesiveness, and participation in institutions. However, only 58% agreed that there are sufficient education and training programs to support refugee integration, indicating a key area for improvement.

The correlation analysis showed a substantial association between efficacy of integration programs and peaceful coexistence (r=.639, p=0.000). The regression analysis further confirmed program efficacy as a significant predictor of coexistence (B=0.219, p=0.000), with one-unit increase in efficacy linked with a 0.219-unit increase in peace, holding other variables constant. This supports Bouchara's (2021) case study on the positive impact of

comprehensive integration programs that address the diverse needs of refugees and promote their participation in the host community in Jordan. Moreover, Dryden-Peterson's (2020) findings in Uganda highlighted the importance of holistic, community-based integration programs that engage both refugees and hosts in fostering social cohesion.

In addition, the qualitative findings highlighted the success of integration programs in bringing refugees and host community members together through joint livelihood projects and cultural activities. The active involvement of the local government in supporting integration programs was seen as improving their effectiveness and sustainability. Respondents emphasized the importance of integration programs addressing the diverse needs of both refugees and host communities in areas such as education, employment, healthcare, and social services, fostering a sense of fairness and shared prosperity. However, the findings also identified the need for integration programs to be designed for sustainability and scalability, with long-term funding, institutional support, and capacity building for local actors, and close collaboration between governments, UN agencies, NGOs, and communities.

CONCLUSION

The results show that positive attitudes towards refugees and their integration into the recipient societies, and opportunities for cultural exchange, economic integration, and recognition of the contribution of refugees to growth are significantly associated with peaceful coexistence. As a way of creating social cohesion, the study observed that it is necessary to encourage positive stories while discouraging the negative ones. The study also highlights the importance of the culturally effective health care systems that should embrace the idea of togetherness and how crucial it is that refugees and hosts have equal opportunities to access quality healthcare services in order to foster the relations of mutual trust.

Furthermore, the study also discovered that to foster social integration, more so, the community should promote integration programs that are cross-cutting and involve different sectors of the society, which should also seek to foster social interaction, economic interdependence and psychological health. From the findings of the research, it can be argued that the need for proper integration strategies that has to consider the specific needs of the two communities and ensure that the two communities actively participate in the integration process cannot be overemphasized. Further, the study established that shared businesses, community events and collaboration measures are very useful for refugees and host communities to engage in with a view of building a common bond and interdependence.

RECOMMENDATIONS

To achieve peaceful coexistence between refugees and the host community in Kakuma municipality, the communities should be engaged publicly and have conversations that will help in painting a good picture on the integration of the refugees. These programs should work towards effectively disseminating positive messages about refugees and their integration through the use of local media, community leaders and influencers, and hence may reduce the negative perceptions of the public.

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