Predictors, Barriers, and Facilitators to Refugee Women's Employment and Economic Inclusion: A Mixed Methods Systematic Review

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Abstract : This mixed-method systematic review and meta-analysis provide an encompassing understanding of the barriers, facilitators, and predictors of refugee women's employment and economic inclusion. The study sheds light on the complex interplay of sociocultural, personal, political, and environmental factors influencing these outcomes, underlining the urgent need for a multifaceted, tailored approach to devising strategies, policies, and interventions aimed at boosting refugee women's economic empowerment. Our findings suggest that sociocultural factors, including gender norms, societal attitudes, language proficiency, and social networks, profoundly shape refugee women's access to and participation in the labor market. Personal factors such as age, educational attainment, health status, skills, and previous work experience also play significant roles. Political factors like immigration policies, regulations, and rights to work, alongside environmental factors like labor market conditions, availability of employment opportunities, and access to resources and support services, further contribute to the complex dynamics influencing refugee women's economic inclusion. The significant variability observed in the impacts of these factors across different contexts underscores the necessity of adopting population and region-specific strategies. A one-size-fits-all approach may prove to be ineffective due to the diversity and unique circumstances of refugee women across different geographical, cultural, and political contexts. The study's findings have profound implications for policy-making, practice, education, and research. The insights garnered a call for coordinated efforts across these domains to bolster refugee women's economic participation. In policy-making, the findings necessitate a reassessment of current immigration and labor market policies to ensure they adequately support refugee women's employment and economic integration. In practice, they highlight the need for comprehensive, tailored employment services and interventions that address the specific barriers and leverage the facilitators identified. In education, they underline the importance of language and skills training programs that cater to the unique needs and circumstances of refugee women. Lastly, in research, they emphasize the need for ongoing investigations into the multifaceted factors influencing refugee women's employment experiences, allowing for continuous refinement of our understanding and interventions. Through this comprehensive exploration, the study contributes to ongoing efforts aimed at creating more inclusive, equitable societies. By continually refining our understanding of the complex factors influencing refugee women's employment experiences, we can pave the way toward enhanced economic empowerment for this vulnerable population.