



AN EVALUATION OF SOCIAL CAPITAL AND WELL-BEING IN THE UNITED STATES
OF AMERICA: THE CASE OF AFRICAN REFUGEE WOMEN IN LAS VEGAS

BOATENG, Alice

Department of Social Work, University of Ghana,
Legon, Accra, Ghana.

ABSTRACT

This study examines the role and impact of social capital upon the well-being of African refugee women residing in Las Vegas. It builds on the researcher's previous study of Liberian refugee women who resided in the Buduburam refugee camp in Ghana. For the purpose of this study, social capital is defined as the social relations of mutual benefit characterized by norms of trust and reciprocity (Putnam, 2000). To date, the scanty literature about African refugees primarily focuses on the trauma that they have experienced. This study illuminates the strategies that African refugee women use to cope with resettlement in the face of this trauma. The study's objectives are: To evaluate the strategies used by refugee women to increase their social capital, in order to help develop the resources and services they need; and, to explore the differential effects that social capital may have on refugees in different locations.

Keywords: Refugees, Social Capital, Immigration, Las Vegas, USA.