



New Trends
in Psychology

Challenges Faced by Women and Children in Internally Displaced Persons Camp in Nigeria

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Abstract: Internally Displaced Persons are people who left their inhabitants in search of safety, but the challenges faced by persons in Internally Displaced Persons camp are enormous. The objectives of the study are to identify the challenges faced by women and children in IDPs camps, to know if necessary mechanisms are being put in place to address the difficulties faced by women and children in IDPs camps, to know and understand the implications of these challenges on women and children at IDPs camps and to identify possible solutions to the challenges faced by women and children in the IDPs' camps in Nigeria. Purposive sampling techniques was used to select the respondents for this study. The samples consist of 50 respondents including 10 women, 12 children and 3 officers in each of New Kuchigoro and Durumi Internally Displaced Persons camp Oral interview was conducted for three officials in each camp while focus group discussion was used for women and children in the 2 camps. Findings reveals that, the challenges faced by women and children in internally displaced persons' (IDPs) camp ranged from lack of financial support, insecurity, lack of good education, hunger, uncomfortable accommodation, water, e.t.c had put serious threat to lives of women and children in

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IDPs' camp. The study therefore recommends that, government and institutions in charge of managing affairs of internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Nigeria on how to address challenges faced by women and children in internally displaced people's camp.

Keywords: Children; Women; Internally Displaced Persons; Camp

Introduction

Internal displacement in Nigeria can be traced back to 1967-1970 during the Nigeria-Biafra civil war. During this period, Nigeria experienced the displacement of people within Nigeria (Eloho, Ogoh & Audu, 2022). The aftermath of the civil war led to the deaths and highest casualties that Nigeria had ever experienced. Ten million (10,000,000) people were displaced within Nigeria due to ethnic rivalries and violent conflict. In 2002, many of these displaced people returned back home while thirty thousand (30,000) of them remain internally displaced within Nigeria. Also, in 2001-2002, there were numerous factors that also triggered the displacements of many Nigerians aside the civil war.

Ethnic rivalries and religious-intolerances factor had caused havoc, especially in the northern part of the country. Conflict between pastoral-herders and farmers has caused the deaths of many people, which had made some people to flee for their dear lives (Global IDP Project, 2002).

Recently in Nigeria, the causes of displacements of people are now many, overlapping and complex. Boko Haram began and also other Non-State Actors activated the displacement of people in Nigeria, especially people who are in the northern and eastern parts of Nigeria. Flooding has also been causing displacement of hundreds of thousands of people within Nigeria, especially during the rainy period (IDMC 2020). International Organization for Migration (2021) was of the view that, in Nigeria, there has been an increase in the displacement of people in the central, north-central, north-western region, and in other regions of the country as a result of land disputes, crime, armed-violence and tensions between farmers and Fulani-herdsmen, cattle rustling, banditry, criminal violence, and communal violence, which is mostly common in the southern parts of Nigeria.

Boko Haram has been the longest insurgency in Nigeria. It has led to long-term dislocation of people and provision of more awareness to the matter of internal dislocation and displaced persons has resulted to defenselessness and unprotected of the victims. The outcome has also increased the poverty rate, unemployment, human

rights violations, and insecurity in the nation, malnutrition and widespread disease (Dunn, 2018). Women and children are mostly the victims of Boko Haram attacks oftentimes, women and girls are often raped, suffer a lack of basic amenities needed for their survival, lack good and sound education, loss of their properties, and the children are forced into child-labor. The insurgency caused by Boko Haram has put women and children at a disadvantage by putting their protection at risk and gave rise to increase in gender-based violence (Alli, Zakuan & Osman, 2019).

Boko Haram attacks became notable and pronounced in 2009, they engaged in activities like kidnapping pupils, students and teachers from schools (e.g. abduction of 250 Chibok girls in their school) in April, 2014 for ransom (Zenn 2014), killing of innocent people unjustly, attacking government properties, burning of religious centers, attacking faithful of a particular religion, burning of houses, public places and market places. All these had caused displacement of many Nigerians, especially people in the northern parts of the country. Akpan, Ekanem et al. (2014) assert that 10,000 people have lost their lives due to insurgency between the periods of 2002-2013. Not only this, properties worth 100 million dollars had been destroyed by Boko Haram, which led to the displacement of people. Over 3.2 million people are dislocated within, 2.9 million are dislocated internally (IDPs) in north-east Nigeria, over 684,000 IDPs in Cameroon, Chad and Nigeria and 304,000 refugees in the four countries. The highest population of IDPs was found in Borno, Adamawa and Yobe (79%) of the internally displaced persons (IDPs) are women, the percentage of children dislocated is 56% and the percentage of men displaced is 47%. This statistic shows that women and children were the most vulnerable. In 2020 there was a new displacement of people amounting to 169,000 as a result of conflict and violence, another new displacement of 279,000 occurred as a result of flooding. As at the end of 2020, Nigeria has the third highest number of internally displaced people (IDPs) in Africa, which amounted to 2.7 million (IDMC, 2020).

According to Akuko (2017), displaced persons have many difficulties like; outdated work experience, discrimination, sexual harassment, psychological and emotional trauma, starvation, lack of education, lack of shelter and clothing, poor medical history, etc. Children have the highest number amidst the refugees, they are half of the total population, one of three children live outside their country of birth. The dislocation of these children exposes them to various dangers which include - long term mental and emotional trauma, environmental dangers, and dangers to their health, sexual abuse and exploitation, especially the girls in the midst of these children. People that were displaced as a result of war or armed conflict had the

negative experience of gender-based violence, hunger, suspension of education, early child marriage, human trafficking, poverty, language difficulties, lack of security and social protection.

Internally displaced persons (IDPs) many times experience vulnerabilities, especially those who were displaced as a result of armed conflicts/war, they suffered from high death rates than the general populace. Internally displaced persons face the challenges of sexual abuse, discrimination, harassment, physical abuse, not enjoying physical security, not enjoying much protection and provision from national governments, and also, they were denied of freedom of movement, good education, good shelter and healthcare services. Most of the people in IDPs camps are women and children who are always vulnerable to sexual and gender-based violence. Internally displaced persons can be used as lures, spies, targets and pawns by combatants. Proper attention is not given to women and children in IDPs camps and this leads many people to suffer for the rest of their lives and also many great dreams of these people are aborted, purposes unfulfilled and not self-independent (Hamzat, 2016).

The challenges of internally displaced persons in internally displaced persons' camp are enormous. The challenges ranges from lack of access to good medical care and attention, hunger and starvation, lack of education, Internal displaced persons' rights are not well understood. The difficulties encountered by displaced people in Nigeria are not in any way distinct from difficulties faced by internally displaced persons (IDPs) generally. Internally displaced persons had rights spelt out in the United Nations Guiding Principles on Displaced peoples and the Kampala Convention. These rights include- right to life, right to freedom of movement, liberty, right to private and family life, right to dignity of human persons. Displaced persons experience the violations of their fundamental human rights. Displaced persons in Nigeria and other countries of the world experience the same difficulties. The insurgency of Boko Haram and other terrorist groups in Nigeria had caused 90% of displacement in Nigeria, which has caused loss of lives, destructions of properties and break down of some families and economic loss. People who were victims of the insurgent group attacks had no option than to run for their dear lives to where they can find safety. According to Norwegian Refugee Council (2017), displaced persons lost their properties, many died in the process of fleeing from danger, destruction of their economic activities.

This study therefore, takes a look into effect of challenges faced by women and children in Internally Displaced Persons camp

Research Questions

The following research questions guide the study

1. What are the challenges faced by women and children in IDPs' camp in Nigeria?
2. What are the mechanisms put in place to address challenges faced by women and children in the IDPs' camps?
3. What are the implications of these challenges on women and children?
4. What are the possible solutions to the challenges faced by women and children in the IDPs' camps?

Research Objectives

The objectives of the study are:

1. To identify the challenges faced by women and children in IDPs camps in Nigeria
2. To know if necessary mechanisms are being put in place to address the difficulties faced by women and children in IDPs camps
3. To know and understand the implications of these challenges on women and children at IDPs camps
4. To identify possible solutions to the challenges faced by women and children in the IDPs' camps

Methodology

The study utilizes survey research design. Purposive sampling techniques was used to select the respondents interviewed for this study. The samples consist of 50 respondents including 10 women, 12 children and 3 officers in each of New Kuchigoro and Durumi Internally Displaced Persons camp used for this study. Oral interview was conducted for officers in the camp while focus group discussion was used for women and children in the two camps. The socio-economic data of the respondents were analysis using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) while Atlas Ti was used to analyse data collected for other sections for accuracy and proper understanding.

Results

Socio-Demographic Information of the Respondents

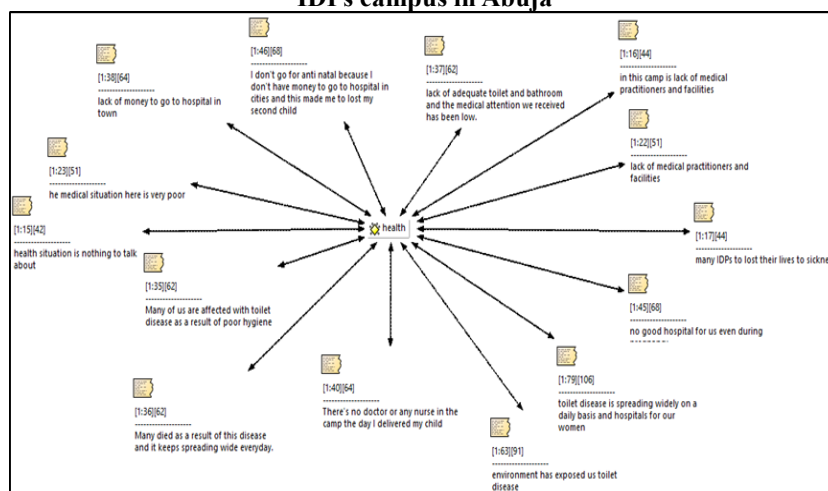
The table 1 shows that 5 females and 5 males participated and the oldest person was 17 years of age and 10years which the average year was 14. It is also showing the number of years so far in the IDP camps and the maximum year was 8years while the minimum years was 2 years.

Descriptive Statistics				
Children	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation
Age	10.00	17.00	14.3000	2.00278
Years in Camp	2.00	8.00	3.8000	1.81353
Women	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation
Age	21	59	35.0	10.89
Years in Camp	1	9	5.43	2.393

Source: Author Field Work, 2022

Data Presentation and Analysis According to Research Questions

Figure 1. Showing the Network Analysis Challenges Faced by Women and Children at IDPs campus in Abuja



Source: Interview Result, 2022

Challenges Faced by Women and Children in IDPs Camp in Nigeria

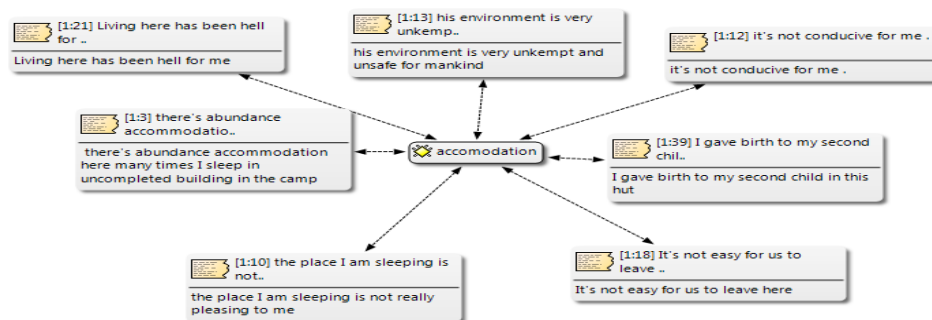
All the internal displaced persons in Abuja camps who participated in the survey showed their displeasure at the government and explained how bad their state of

living was especially the women and children. Most of them stated that life is worse than hell in the camp as they have no access to basic necessities of life like quality education, good electricity, even quality health care services. This observation is fully captured in the word of one of the participants which goes thus:

“My husband was killed when we got to IDPs camp. He went out in search of daily bread but he was unable to returned back to me. I could not feed my children well; they are unable to go to school because I do not have anything doing to cater for their needs and I lack financial support. Many children died of kwashiorkor and obesity which was due to lack of good food, proper care and balance diet.”

The above statement confirmed the finding of (Adekeye, Fawole & Ajayi, 2019) that women and children in IDPs camp were faced with many plights which made life miserable for them. Those challenges include women suffering from, starving for food, poor malnutrition, and lack assistance financially. These plights made the hope of women and children faded away.

Accommodation



Source: Interview Result, 2022

From the research carried out it showed women and children had problem with accommodations, accommodations in the camp are not suitable for their well-being, many did not have a place to sleep at night. Accommodations available were not conducive and enough for the IDPs. This is confirmed by the respondents who live in the camp.

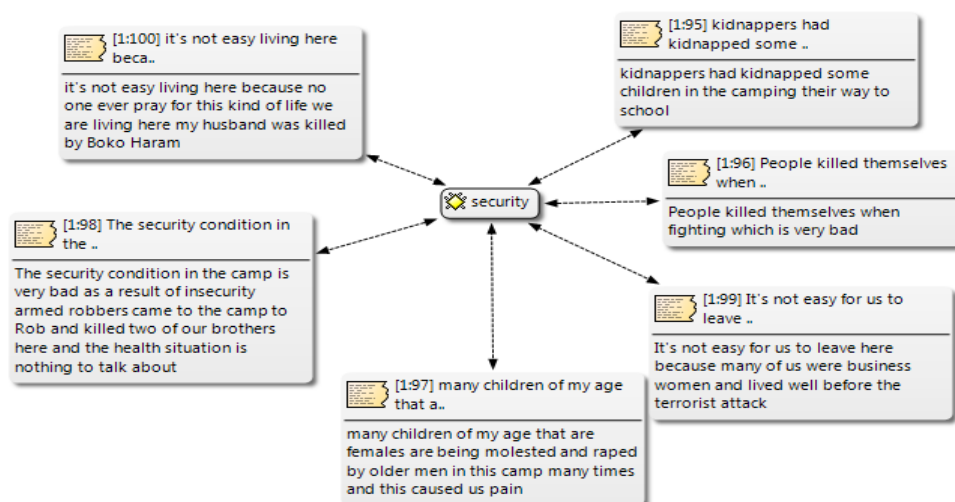
“I am Memunat, I have been in this camp for a year, accommodations that are here are not spacious and conducive many times I sleep in uncompleted building in the camp and I cannot stay in a single room with my parents and my seven siblings”.

Another respondent said:

“Where I am living in this camp is not better than hell compare to where I was living in Gosa before Boko Haram attacked, during dry season my room used to be extremely hot and too cold during rainy season and there’s no electricity.”

This confirm the findings of Fatimah (2017) that IDPs often encountered problem of accommodation that most of them do not have suitable shelter and many of them sleep on bare floor.

Security



Source: Interview Result, 2022

This is another problem faced by women and children in IDPs camps, every night they close their eyes with no expectations of waking up the next day and if they do, it is not in peace because of the numerous cases of robbing, raping and killing of family members.

One of the respondents said and I quote:

“The IDPs camp is not a secured environment, no food and also kidnappers had kidnapped some children in this camp on their way to school.”

Women and children in IDPs camp often face insecurities due to the fact that internally displaced persons camp is not a secured environment to live because many women and children are being attacked on daily basis which made them to be victims

of rape and kidnapers and there were no security personnel available for their safe guarding.

The above statement is confirmed by one of the respondents:

“I have been in IDPs camp for 4 years, many children of my age that are females were molested and raped by older men in this camp and this caused us pain. I was deflowered at the age of ten by a man who forcefully raped me I suffered the pain and could not tell anyone because of stigma and besides there is no security personnel in the camp”

Another respondent said:

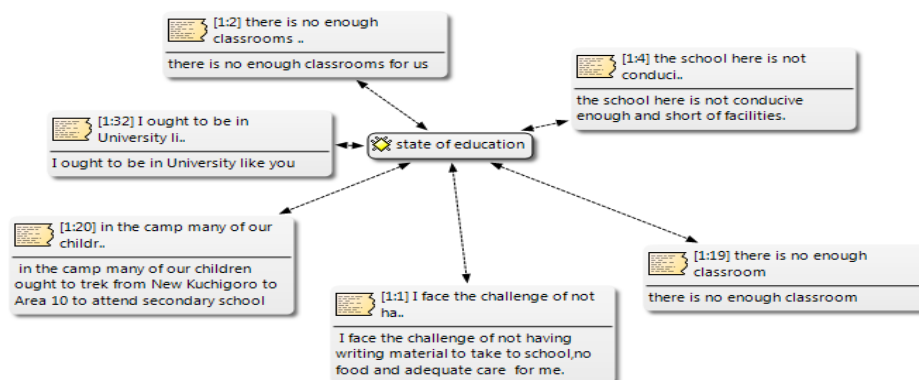
“this environment is not safe for us armed robbers came to this camp to stole our hard-earned money, properties, molested some girls and even killed two of my brothers. I lost my virginity at the age of nine, I was raped by one of those men in this camp and he told me not to tell anyone if I did not want him to kill me and I was infected by sexual transmitted disease (STD) by him I pray I leave this camp so soon because this man will kill me one day or I kill him by myself”

Responses above showed that women and girls often face gender-based violence and human rights violation in IDPs camp and which had negative impact on them.

The above statement corroborates the findings of Akuko (2017) she stated that girls and women are been raped on daily basis as a result of insecurity in the camp. She stated further that the insecurities had made criminal activities increase to higher level which had put women and children at disadvantages in the camp. Women and children in IDPs camp suffered insecurities in terms of food, proper health care, shelter and other things they need to live a better life.

Also, Ugwu (2021) attested to the fact that women and children faces gender based violence in IDPs camp and their human rights are violated many times, many women and girls were molested by camp officials who were put in charge to protect them and this result to psychological trauma and made them flash back on awful incident that brought them to internally displaced persons camp.

Education



Another challenge faced by children in IDPs camp is lack of access to good education: many of these children have little or no access to education, some of them only finished primary school with no access to secondary school education let alone furthering their education to higher institutions. Some of them find it difficult to get materials needed for school like books, school sandals, pen, uniforms, also money to paid their school fees. Many of these children have beautiful dreams of becoming doctor, lawyer, teacher, soldier, nurse and many more but those dreams were abortive because many of them end up learning a skill and dropped out from school and ended up in early marriage due to lack of support to further their education this is back up by some responses from children in IDPs camp. Also, those children in school lack teachers some of educated fellow in IDPs camp sacrificed their time to teach these children in school. There is no secondary school in the camp many of them only had privilege of primary school education and some who finished secondary school before displacement couldn't further due to lack of sponsors and help from government.

“My name is Mariam, IDPs camp is a place that is full of challenges I am 15 years old I left primary school when I was 11 years old and have not returned back to school since then because the only school available in this camp is primary school, my parents were killed by Boko Haram and there is no one to sponsor me for secondary school education.”

Another respondent said:

“I am Shadrach, my father had been in police custody as a result of false accusations and my mother could not afford my school fees, provided for my needs

which made life difficult for me. I trek from New Kuchigoro to Area 1 for my secondary school education.”

This establish findings of (Faith, Omotosho & Olarewaju, 2019) that the educational state of the children in IDPs camp is poor, many children lack necessary materials needed in school like: books, pen, sandals, uniforms and others, teachers in camp are limited because many of them are educated people among IDPs who volunteered to teach them and many times they did not follow syllabus and some of them lack teaching skills and also during raining season many of them did not go to school.

Health

This is another challenge encountered by women and children in IDPs camp Abuja, there are many things that poses threats to their healthy living, their state of health is very poor, there's no well-equipped hospital and medical practitioners in the camp, women were infected with toilet disease as a result of poor hygiene and this disease spreads among them because there is no adequate medical care for them and also because of their unkempt toilets, pregnant women gave birth on their own as a result of lack of fund to registered for anti-natal care and hospital bill after delivery in hospitals available in the city and this made things difficult and some lost their babies during child labor:

“I am a nurse in new Kuchigoro and also work in Durumi IDPs camp the biggest challenge in this camp for women and children is lack of medical care, practitioners and facilities most pregnant women here suffered a lot, some of them that ought to undergo surgery we sourced for funds from people to took them to city for surgical operations because the medical situation here is very poor, the environment and water in this camp are not good enough and that has increased outbreak of cholera and other infections. I plead the government to come to our aids because health is wealth. There is no government hospital in this camp I work for Non - governmental organization.”

Another respondent said:

“I have been here for 7 years one of the challenges in this camp is lack of medical practitioners and facilities when we are sick and it beyond what paracetamol can cure it becomes problem for us because most of us here couldn't avoid the medical bills in the town and this has made many IDPs to lost their lives to sickness.”

Another respondent said:

“I have been here for the past 8 years as IDPs, being a displaced person is one of the biggest challenges life brought to me. Many of us were infected with toilet disease as a result of poor hygiene which was caused by lack of adequate toilet, bathroom and the medical attention we received is very low. Many died as a result of this disease and it keeps spreading widely every day, some of our children died of measles, chronic malaria, typhoid, hepatitis due to lack of medical care and people were infected with HIV/AIDS and this disease spreads widely due to the fact that people have no/little knowledge about it.”

This statement coincides with the findings of Sambo (2017), he stated that lack of needed medical infrastructural facilities to take care of people and the absence of medical practitioners who left due to insecurity, scarcity of drugs and medical facilities led to serious health problems for internally displaced persons.

Food and Clothing

Women and children in IDPs camp often face difficulty in getting good to eat, good water and cloth. Many of them could not afford three square meals because many of them did not have source of income and were not getting much support from government. Many women and children wear shattered and dirty cloth because they could not afford to get a new one and ate any food they got just to support their living. Many children died of malnutrition, kwachiochor due to lack of good food to nourish their body to aid their sustenance and rapid growth. The water available in the camp is not enough for people in the camp because their population is much and this made life terrible for most of them.

This statement was confirmed by the camp secretary in his interview:

“My name is Luka I am the secretary in New Kuchigoro IDPs camp, I have been here for years now and I was displaced as a result of Boko attacked. Internally displaced persons faced many challenges especially women and children. These set of people have not being really enjoy supports and provisions from the government, NEMA and SEMA. Their needs like cloth, sanitary pads, food, drugs, education, and lots more were neglected by government and his officials. Although they are in Federal Capital Territory of Nigeria but they are still suffering for necessities of life. It has been a while officers from NEMA or SEMA came to the camp to check on us even during COVID ‘19 no palliatives were given to us by the government we only heard of it on radio.”

An interview with Mr Luka new Kuchigoro IDPs camp secretary:

This confirms the findings of Levinus (2016) that many children die due to malnutrition. Adefowokan (2019) also attested to the fact that women and children in IDPs camp had difficulties in getting good food and this made them starve for food, did not get good water to drink which affected their hygiene, no sanitary pad for girls and women when menstruating, no good cloth and lack other things they needed for suitable life.

Lack of Financial Support

Many women in IDPs camp lack financial capacity and this made them to be handicapped in providing for some of their needs and that of their families. Most women depend solely on their husbands, donations from NGOs and government to meet their needs. Many of these women learnt vocational skills like tailoring, hairdressing, soap making but lack start-up capital to establish these businesses. Some were traders before Boko Haram invasion but are not depending on others for survival because they lack capital to continue their businesses when they got to IDPs camp and could not get a loan from some financial institution including bank because they lack guarantors.

Some respondents confirmed this fact during their interview:

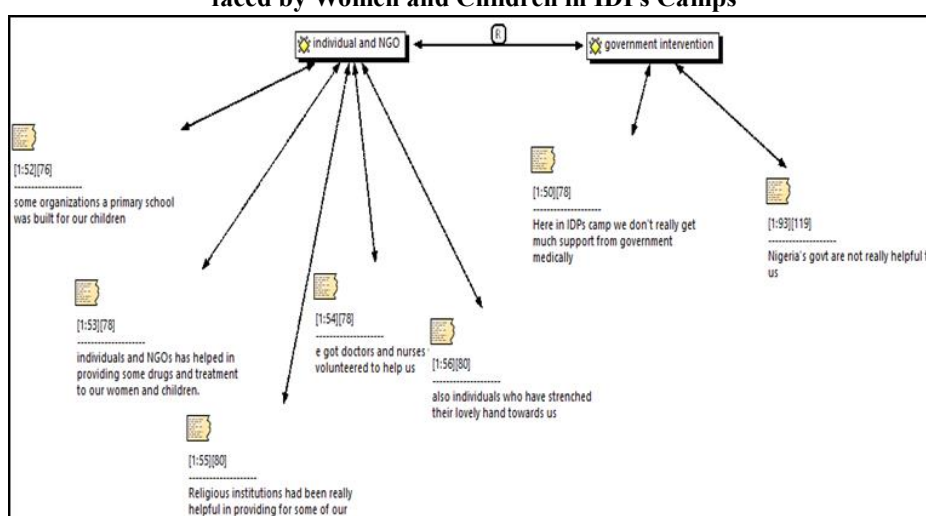
“My name is Aminat, I have four children and I have been in this camp for five years there are many challenges facing us here. It’s not easy for us to survive here because many of us were business women and lived well before the terrorist attack and since the attack that led us here it has been so difficult for us to start our business again because we could not get a loan from banks, there is no financial support from government and other financial institutions that could help us, our children need help in terms of education because there are not enough classrooms and there is no secondary school in the camp many of our children ought to trek from New Kuchigoro to Area 1 or other neighborhoods to attend secondary school and most times we couldn’t afford the transport fare and high price of school fees made some of our children not to attend school anymore because most of us could not afford the fees.”

This substantiates the findings of Adefowokan (2019) in her finding that women in IDPs camp encountered a problem on finances that made many of those women who had skills that could fetch them money suffer because they lack money to establish their businesses and this affected their standard of living and also affected their children negatively because they could not meet their basic needs.

Mechanism for Addressing Challenges faced by Women and Children in IDPs Camps

The respondents stated the several ways in which they have been able to address the numerous challenges faced by women and children in the IDPs camps Abuja, the following are the mechanism adopted to tackle the challenges.

Figure 2. Showing the network analysis on the Mechanism for Addressing Challenges faced by Women and Children in IDPs Camps



Source: Interview Result, 2022

i. Intervention of non-governmental organization within and outside the border of Nigeria has helped tremendously to tackle the lack of basic amenities that are needed in the camps for example most of these NGOs provided social amenities like food, school materials, school, clinics, drugs for women and children and even money. For instances one of the participants said:

“Nelson Mandela institute help us in New Kuchigoro IDPs camp to build three classrooms for the children to enabled their learning and provide other things needed”

“In Durumi IDPs camp before we don't have any school but due to the help of some organizations a primary school was built for our children which will enable some of our children to have privilege to primary education although we still need provision of secondary school for our children.”

ii. Religious Institutions had also contributed in addressing some of challenges faced by women and children in IDPs camps through support from church and mosques

that gave clothes and food to the children. One of the respondents said and I quote: *“Religious institutions had been really helpful in providing for some of our needs and also individuals who have stretched their lovely hand towards us from churches and mosques.”*

iii. Individuals who are medical practitioners too had volunteered by rendering medical support and administered drugs in some cases and those who are not in the Health sector support through financial donation. This observation is fully captured in the word of one of the participants which goes thus:

“Here in IDPs camp we don’t really get much support from government medically unlike the refugees but individuals and NGOs had really helped in providing some drugs and treatment to our women and children. Also, we got doctors and nurses who volunteered to help us.”

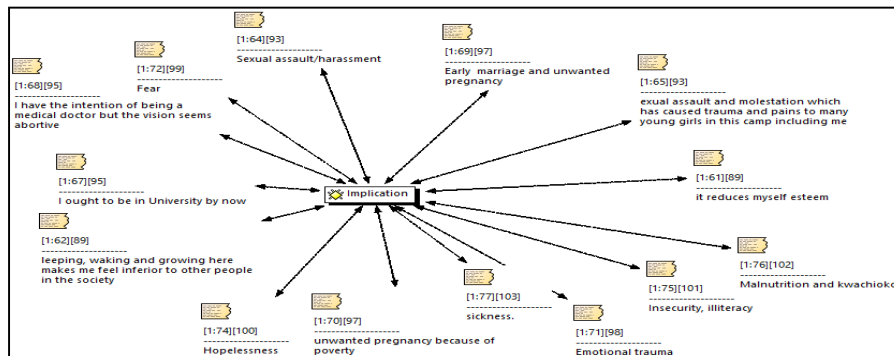
iv. Lastly, doing menial job outside camp: these women and children engaged in peasant farming, hawking and in most cases went out to served rich people as house help for them to survived. One of the respondents said and I quote:

“I had to go to rich men house here in Abuja to work for them at home to help them in doing menial job and get paid. I used the little money to cater for my family’s needs” and to buttress the point earlier stated another respondent who is an officer in charge of the camp said “in this camp the ways some of the needs of women and children are met is that most of our Women engaged in farming with some of their children too this reduced hunger level and suffering in this camp.”

Implications of these Challenges on Women and Children

The challenges faced by women and children in the IDPs camp had various implications on their physical and mental well-being as most respondent have highlighted various effects of the problem.

Figure 3. Showing the Network Analysis on Implications of these Challenges on Women and Children



Source: Interview Result, 2022

I. Low self esteem: most respondent have agreed that the problem led to the feeling of inferiority in them when relating with their peers and this has resulted to emotional trauma and hopelessness for many. For example, one of the respondents said:

“I have been in this camp for three years and faced different challenges and one of its implications on me is that it reduces my self esteem. Sleeping, waking and growing here makes me feel inferior to other people in the society.”

II. Sexual Assault: Many of the respondents also agreed that life in the camp is miserable as women and girls were being molested sexually on several occasions as this can be traced to lack of adequate security and overpopulation in the camp. it has been reported that these incidents have led to early marriages and unwanted pregnancy. For example, one of the respondents said: *“being in this camp where there is no security had given room to sexual assault and molestation which has caused trauma and pains to many young girls in this camp including me”* to buttress the point another respondent said: *“the challenges we are facing in this IDPs camp led some of us to early marriages and made some to have unwanted pregnancy because of poverty. Some of the guys that always gave us money and food lured us into sex at the early age which led to early marriage. I married at the age of 13.”*

III. Poor Education: As a result of the isolation and lack of infrastructure in the camps, children are denied access to their right of quality education and as a result of this they are left with no better option than to drop out of school because even the only school available has been overpopulated and lack basic educational amenities and even manpower. For example, one of the respondents said:

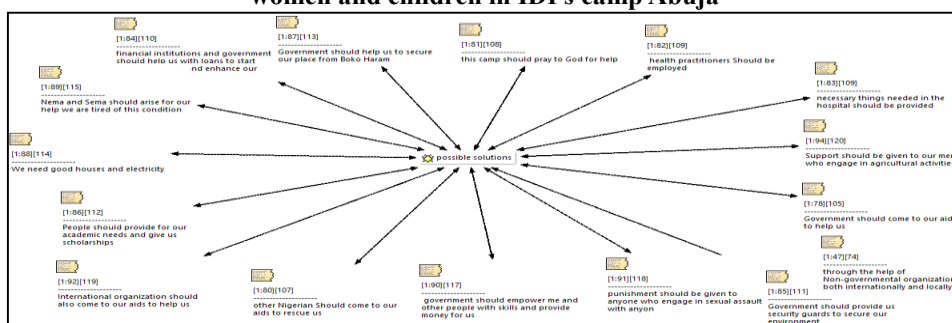
“I ought to be in University by now but the attacked of Boko Haram in my village brought me here without finishing my secondary school. I have the intention of being a medical doctor but the vision is abortive because I could not finish my secondary school and there is no secondary school here in the camp and going to town is costly and I could not afford it this makes me to drop out from school.”

IV. Unfavorable Health Condition: Most of the people agreed that they have no or proper access to quality medical care as there is only one under-equipped clinic in the camp to take care of thousands of people which all the people depend on and

V. poor provision of health kits has led to sickness and even loss of many lives.

Possible Solutions to Challenges Faced by Women and Children in IDPs Camp Abuja

Figure 4. Shows the network analysis of the possible solutions to challenges faced by women and children in IDPs camp Abuja



Source: Interview Result, 2022

There are various ways through which these challenges can be addressed and one of the ways is through:

1. Government intervention: government should carry out their primary responsibilities to the citizen by providing security for lives and properties and also provision of social amenities
2. Provision of educational materials and scholarships for under-privileged children. For example, one of the respondents said *“Government should come to our aids to safe the future of our children and help us because we are helpless and hopeless in this camp where there are many difficulties”*.
3. Financial institution rising to give out loans to women to start a venture as most of them complained of having some skills but they cannot pursue because they lack

financial aids, this will enable them to set up some vocational activities and invariably help them to put food on their table and cater for some basic day to day needs. For example, one of the respondents said ***“Financial institutions and government should help us with loans to start petty businesses and enhance our trade”***.

4. Individual who are rich in the society should also carry out humanitarian services by donating some basic things that are needed among women and children in IDPs camp. For example, one of the respondents said ***“People should provide for our academic needs and give us scholarships and also we need more classrooms to be built”***.

Conclusion

The study revealed that people who are displaced face many difficulties which makes their lives miserable and not worth living for them. Internally displaced persons are facing some difficulties that the public are not aware of because they were forced away from their primal locations and this made them to be handicapped to carried out some of their activities as they desired. In other words, their lives have been thrown out of balance, and they live precariously at the mercy and whims of man, the government and the elements. Both men and women in IDPs camps have challenges, including the children, but the challenges faced by women and children far outweigh those of men because women and children are usually the most vulnerable in the society. Agencies in charge of emergency issues in Nigeria have not paid much attention to the challenges that women and children are facing in the IDPs camps. Some of these challenges are inadequate feeding and nutrition, leading to nutritional deficiencies, lack of access to good education, lack of access to good and conducive accommodation, poor and inadequate clothing and beddings, poor medical attention which had resulted in many of the pregnant women in IDPs camps giving birth without any medical attention from medical doctors, nurses/midwives or healthcare providers, and this also put the lives of these women and their babies at grave risk. Women and children are still facing these difficulties because efforts have not been put in place to examine government policies on the need to cater for the needs of IDPs in the respective camps in New Kuchigoro and Durumi. Rather than be a source of succor to the IDPs, it was found, even as reported in the news, and as the respondents confirmed, that the government officials exploit the vulnerabilities of the IDPs for profit and personal pleasures.

The study was carried out in order to understand the challenges faced by internally displaced women and children in IDPs camps in Abuja from 2018-2021. The major tool employed in the study was focused interviews with the internally displaced persons in two IDPs camps in Abuja to elucidate on the approaches towards managing these challenges. In line with this, the literature assayed and the data generated revealed no internationally acceptable specific definition for an internally displaced person. Therefore, there are only working definitions for internally displaced persons (IDPs) who for reasons of security and safety had to flee to safer locations, away from their places of habitual abode. Consequently, the study adopted the “Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement”, which opines internally displaced persons (IDPs) as “persons or groups of persons who have been forced, obliged to flee or to leave their homes or places of habitual residence, in particular as a result of, or in order to avoid the effects of armed conflict, situations of generalized violence, violations of human rights or natural or human-made disasters, and who have not crossed an internationally recognized border, as revealed in (Oladeji, 2015). This definition by Oladeji (2015) was therefore adopted as the working definition for the study.

Recommendations

The study therefore recommends that:

- First, there must be a clearly stated and applied policy thrust to prevent conflicts and manage crisis and disasters whether natural or man-induced, because it is the primal duty of governments to ensure the security of the lives, properties and the means of livelihoods of its citizen;
- At the macro level, officials charged with the responsibility of protecting the state, the people and managing the policies of governance must be held accountable for any breach of the peoples’ rights and livelihoods. This is necessary to prevent the cause of displacement in the first place, or to manage the conflict or crisis;
- Failing that, the onus lies still upon the government, its ministries, departments, agencies and either elected public officials or appointed public officials to effectively manage the effects of the mismanagement of crisis and conflicts on the peoples’ lives;
- At the micro level, officials at the IDPs camps should be empowered by clearly enunciated, applicable policies to manage their challenges.

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