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Insecurity and Behavioural Disorder among Internally Displaced Persons in IDP Camps in Borno State, Nigeria

Mohammed Ahmed Jibrin¹, Awoji Stephen Agada¹, Iwundu Napoleon C².

¹Department of Educational Foundations
Nasarawa State University, Keffi

²Department of General Studies
Federal College of Agriculture Ishiagu

Corresponding Author's Email: ahmedjm090@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

The study investigated insecurity and behavioral disorder among the internally displaced persons in IDP Camps in Borno state, Nigeria. Two research questions, two hypotheses were raised for the study. The target population of the study comprised 874,213 IDPs in Borno States out of which a sample size of 384 participants was randomly selected from 12 IDP Camps in the three senatorial zones of the State. The study employed descriptive survey design. Structured questionnaire tagged 'Insecurity and Behavior Disorder Questionnaire (IBDQ) and interview scale were used as instruments for data collection. Mean and standard deviations were used in answering the research questions while the null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance using t-test. The findings revealed that personal insecurity has significantly affected the behavioral disorder among internally displaced persons in IDP camps in Borno state, Nigeria, and economic insecurity has also significantly affected the behavior disorder among internally displaced persons in IDP camps in Borno state, Nigeria. It was concluded that insecurity significantly affects displaced persons in IDP camps in Borno State, Nigeria, resulting in high prevalence of behavioral disorders such as anxiety, depression, trauma as well as economic wellbeing among IDPs, which hinder their ability to cope and reintegrate. It was therefore recommended among others that government and humanitarian partners should provide structured psychosocial support in IDP camps, including counseling and trauma recovery, with a focus on vulnerable groups like women and children.

Keywords: Insecurity, Behavioural disorder, IDP Camps, Senatorial Zones.

INTRODUCTION

Displaced Persons are seen as group of persons who are forced or obligated to flee or to leave their place of residence, in order to stay off the consequences of armed conflict, violations of human rights, situations of generalized violence, man-made or natural disaster, to another area that is considered relatively safe within the national borders (as internally displaced persons) or travel across an international border (as refugees) (United Nations Human Rights (2021). In the views of Muhammad (2023), IDPS are persons or group of persons who because of armed conflict, systematic violations of human rights, internal strife, or natural or man-made disasters have been coerced to flee their homes or places of habitat residence suddenly or unexpectedly to another location but have not crossed an internationally recognized state border. The issue of displaced persons in recent time has been a global phenomenon (United Nations Human Rights, 2021).

In essence, it is obvious that IDPS are the victims of brutality of man against man, violence confrontations as well as various kinds of inhuman treatment perpetrated either by their own government or by other against them, such as terrorism, communal clashes, religious conflicts, riots, natural disasters among others. Similarly, Tukur and Ahmed (2022), viewed internally displaced persons (IDPS) as a group of people who as a result of situations of armed conflicts, mass violations of human rights, floods, earthquakes and other natural disasters, fled their homes for safety and protection within the country. Since 2014, the increase of violence caused by Boko Haram insurgency has triggered a massive wave of displacement in the northeastern part of Nigeria. In terms of observed incidence and prevalence, the North-east geopolitical zone of Nigeria has been worst hit by the Boko Haram insurgency (Okoli & Lortyer, 2019).

IDPs remain citizens or habitual residents of a particular country and continue to be entitled to enjoy the rights available to the population. According to Human Rights Watch, some officials at internally displaced people (IDPs) camps, vigilante groups, policemen, and soldiers have raped and sexually exploited women and girls displaced by Boko Haram, The organisation added that four of the victims narrated how they were drugged and raped, while 37 said they were coerced into sex through false marriage promises, material and financial assistance. According to the United Nations human right (2021), some of the documented sexual abuse, includes rape and exploitation, of 43 women and girls living in seven IDP camps in Maiduguri, Borno state capital. The victims had been displaced from several Borno towns and villages, including Abadam, Bama, Baga, Damasak, Dikwa, Gamboru Ngala, Gwoza, Kukawa, and Walassa. In some cases, they had arrived in the under-served Maiduguri camps, where their movement is severely restricted after spending months in military screening camps. However, because of their special situation, specific needs and the heightened vulnerability that flow from the fact of being displaced, they are entitled to special protection and assistance (Muhammed, 2023).

According to United Nations Human Rights (2021), it is bad enough that these victims are not getting much-needed support for the horrific trauma they suffered at the hands of Boko Haram. It is also disgraceful and outrageous that people who should protect these victims are attacking and abusing them. Recent happenings in Nigeria show that internal displacement in Nigeria is not only caused by natural and human made disasters but mainly

due to insurgency especially in the North-East geopolitical zone. The most severe problem facing Nigeria in general and North-East in particular is insurgency. Many of those coerced into sex said they were abandoned after they became pregnant and have suffered discrimination, abuse, from other camp residents. Eight of the victims revealed that they were previously abducted by Boko Haram fighters and forced into marriage before they escaped to Maiduguri (United Nations Human Rights (2021).

Insurgency has devastating consequences on economic, religious, political and social activities of the Nigerian state, especially in the state of Borno. A 17-year-old girl said that just over a year after she fled the frequent Boko Haram attacks in Dikwa, a town 56 miles west of Maiduguri, a policeman approached her for “friendship” in the camp, and then he raped her (Mohammed, 2015). In 2011, it took a new dimension, when Boko Haram as terrorist group appeared in the world map. From 2011 till date, the activities of this insurgent group have inflicted serious injuries and hardships to the lives and properties of people in the area. Thousands of lives and properties have been destroyed while many people have been displaced from their permanent homes. Boko Haram attacks have undermined public safety across the country especially in the Northeast geo-political zone and scared it development. The attack includes daily killings, bombing, thefts and destruction of schools, homes and businesses. One day, one of the victims revealed that a member of Boko Haram forced her into sex and became pregnant as a result. The member threatened to kill the victim if exposed the offence (Mohammed, 2015).

In addition, there are cases of irregular supplies of food, clothing, medicine, and other essentials, along with restricted movement in the IDP camps in Maiduguri, in addition to the cases of rape and sexual exploitation by camp officials, soldiers, police, members of civilian vigilante groups, and other Maiduguri residents. In some cases, men used their positions of authority and gifts of desperately needed food or other items to have sex with women. A woman in a Dalori camp said residents get only one meal a day. She said she accepted the advances of a soldier who proposed marriage because she needed help in feeding her four children. He disappeared five months later when she told him she was pregnant. Victims of rape and sexual exploitation may be less likely to seek psychological counselling, due to the shame they feel (United Nations Human Rights, 2021).

A Rapid Protection Assessment Report published in May by the Borno State Protection Sector Working Group, made up of national and international aid providers, identified sexual exploitation, rape, and other sexual abuse as major concerns in nearly all 13 camps and several local communities hosting displaced people in and around Maiduguri. Chaloka (2016), submitted that the United Nations special rapporteur on the human rights of internally displaced persons, said Nigeria’s government had “a tendency to downplay the problem of sexual violence and abuse” of internally displaced people. He expressed concern that this tendency “constitutes a hidden crisis of abuse with fear, stigma and cultural factors as well as impunity for perpetrators leading to under-reporting of abuse to the relevant authorities”. The increasing deadly attacks of the insurgents on various communities and the destruction of lives, properties, business and farmlands has forced many inhabitants to flee their homes to nearby towns and villages (Mohammed, 2015). This situation called for urgent government intervention to usher in more sober responses to the plight of the internally displaced persons.

It is instructive to state that this development has resulted into wanton destruction of lives and properties, displacement of people from their original homes, segregation of families and communities. IDPs in Nigeria faced insecurity and all forms of exploitation and abuse, including rape, largely because IDPs are camped in congested shelters, isolated, insecure or in hospitable areas. IDPs are also largely separated from their families especially, unaccompanied children and teenagers, the elderly and sick, the handicapped and pregnant women, whose special needs and privacy are not attended to, due to fragmented and uncoordinated humanitarian response to the needs of IDPs. Olatunji (2018), observed that non-availability of required United Nations Organisation (UNO) provisions in the country, most especially as it relates to the protection of the human rights of IDPs can be traceable to lackluster attitude of Nigerian leaders. The poor living conditions in the IDP camps have become of great concern. Reports from both domestic and international agencies have shown that these camps since 2009 have lacked adequate facilities in addition to poor sanitation and the IDPs are exposed to diseases such as malaria, acute watery diarrhea, measles and pregnancy related issues (United Nations Human Rights, 2021). The problem of insecurity facing the IDP in their various camps ranges from personal insecurity, economic insecurity, political insecurity, environmental insecurity among others. This study will therefore dwell on two forms of insecurity which are personal insecurity and economic insecurity.

Personal insecurity refers to the feeling of uncertainty, vulnerability or anxiety about one's safety, wellbeing or future. This personal insecurity can manifest in various aspects such as fear for physical safety, emotional insecurity, psychological insecurity. Personal insecurity can be triggered by some factors such as trauma or adverse experiences of trauma, abuse or neglect, uncertainty or unpredictability or unstable environment. According to Johnson (2024), personal insecurity is a deep-seated feeling of uncertainty, inadequacy, and anxiety about oneself leading to lack of confidence in one's worth, abilities or skills. It is a mental and emotional state characterized by a fear of being vulnerable or a sense of being a fraud and can manifest in various aspects of life including relationships, social situations, work and physical appearance. Everybody deals with insecurity from time to time and can appear in all areas of life. Okoli, Chukwuma and Iortyer (2019), reported that insurgent violence has led to increased poverty levels, food insecurity, and social disintegration in the affected areas. His study highlighted how women and children, particularly, have borne the brunt of the crisis, facing exposure to gender-based violence, exploitation, and psychological trauma. He further noted that the social fabric of communities has been eroded due to mass displacement and lack of access to basic amenities

Economic insecurity, on the other hand, is the anxiety or fear of being experienced by individuals and households due to the risk of negative economic events and the inability to cope with or recover from their consequences. It encompasses the perception of vulnerability to potential financial shock, a lack of protection against losses and anticipation of future hardship such as job loss or worsened financial situations. Economic insecurity is the anxiety produced by the possible exposure to adverse economic events and by the anticipation of the difficulty to recover from them (Tukur & Ahmed, 2022). Examples could include fear of unemployment, or the expectations of worsening financial situation.

Behavioural disorder refers to the pattern of behavior that is considered abnormal, disruptive or problematic. It is when someone's action, emotions or thought do not quite fit

societal norms causing issues from themselves or others. Behavioural disorders according to Ryu and Lu (2022), are patterns of behaviour that cause problems in daily lives, relationships or emotion. Think acting out aggression or extreme mood swings. Examples include conduct disorder or oppositional deviant disorder. As a result of the activities of insurgencies in the North- East Geo- political zone of Nigeria, the internally displaced persons in the IDP camps are facing a lot of behavioural disorder such as anxiety, depression, trauma among others which has long term effect on their physical, mental and economic wellbeing.

Statement of the problem

The researchers have observed that insecurity on behavioural disorder arises in the internally displaced persons camps and uncountable peoples have lost their life, exposed to different abuse; abandon their homes, property and their family in Borno State, Nigeria and worldwide in the face of Boko haram. The camps are characterized by chronic overcrowding, insecurity and social problems and high rates of morbidity and mortality. Similarly, the behavioural disorder has been increasing assaults and abduction of children forced labourers and widows and young girls have become sex slaves. In addition, the environment was not conducive for living due to poor feeding health and sanitation, overpopulation and aggression of security personal and increased of non-challant attitudes of the victims found in the IDP Camps. This has caused serious concern to psychologist counselors, researchers and educational bodies and all Nigerians. It is against this background that the researchers intended to find out the influence of insecurity on behavior disorder among the internally displaced persons in IDP camps in Borno state, Nigeria

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to examine the effect of insecurity on behavior disorders among internally displaced persons in IDP camps in Borno state. The specific objectives of the study are to;

- i. Determine the effect of personal insecurity on behavior disorder among internally displaced persons (IDP) camps in Borno state, Nigeria
- ii. Examine the effect of economic insecurity on behavior disorder among internally displaced persons in IDP camps in Borno state, Nigeria.

Research questions

- i. What is the effect of personal insecurity on behavior disorder among internally displaced persons in IDP camps in Borno state, Nigeria?
- ii. What is the effect of economic insecurity on behavior disorder among internally displaced persons in IDP camps in Borno state, Nigeria?

Research Hypotheses

H₀₁: There is no significant effect of personal insecurity on behavior disorder among internally displaced persons in IDP camps in Borno state, Nigeria

H₀₂: There is no significant effect of economic insecurity on behavior disorder among internally displaced persons in IDP camps in Borno state, Nigeria.

METHODS

This study adopted descriptive survey design which sets out to describe behaviour by measuring some variables. The descriptive design gives the researchers the flexibility to test hypotheses and helps researchers to identify what is happening to predict, to observe and to interpret the behaviour and to bring out the actual data of what is happening in the IDP Camps in Borno state. The target population of the study comprised 874, 213 internally displaced persons from 62 formal and 158 informal IDPs camps across the 17 Local Government Areas of Borno State Nigeria.

The sample size of the study comprised 384 internally displaced persons from twelve (12) selected IDP camps in Borno state. The sample size was adopted using table for determining sample size by Boyd (2006), Educational and Psychology measurement. Multistage sampling procedure was used in selecting sample size for the study. In the first stage, purposive sampling technique was used to select five (5) Local Government Areas out of seventeen (17) Local Government Areas in the state based on the high numbers of IDP camps in the area. The selected LGAs are Bama, Biu, Gwoza, Maiduguri and Monguno. In the second stage, two (2) IDP camps were selected from each of the five (5) selected Local Government Areas using simple random sampling technique, making it a total number of ten (10) camps. The selected IDP camps are GSSS Bama and Soye Resettlement from Bama LGA; GGSS Biu and Teacher's village from Biu LGA; Ngoshe camp and Madinatu camp from Gwoza LGA; Bakassi camp and Dalori camp from Maiduguri LGA and GSSS Monguno and Muna camp from Monguno LGA. Lastly, a proportionate random sampling technique was used to select three hundred and eighty-four (384) respondents for enumeration.

Two instruments were used for data collection. They are Insecurity and Behavioral Disorder Questionnaire (IBDQ) and interview scale. The questionnaire, which consists of 10 items, was designed based on 4- point scale of Strongly Agree (SA= 4), Agree (A= 3), Disagree (D= 2) and Strongly Disagree (SD= 1). The interview scale also consists of 10 open-ended questions designed to elicit information from the respondents. The researcher visited the sampled IDP Camps in Borno state with the help of three research assistants selected from the officials of the sampled IDP Camps. The instruments were administered and retrieved on the spot for analysis.

Mean and standard deviations were used in answering the research questions while the formulated hypotheses were, however, tested using t-test. In answering the research questions, any weighted mean below 2.50 was considered disagreed while above was considered agreed. In testing the null hypotheses, if the p- values were found to be less than 0.05, the null hypotheses were rejected while those greater than 0.05 were accepted or retained.

Results

Table 1: Mean and Standard Deviation on the effect of Personal Insecurity on Behavior Disorder among Internally Displaced Persons in IDP Camps in Borno State, Nigeria

S/N	Items Description	SA	A	SD	D	\bar{x}	Std
1	I find it difficult to control my emotions or reactions due to past trauma or stress	101	109	97	77	2.68	1.63
2	I still feel unsafe even within the IDP camp due to threats of violence or attack.	109	108	93	74	2.74	1.65
3	I fear returning to my home community which affects my behavior and daily functioning	109	101	78	96	2.63	1.62
4	I frequently observe aggressive or violent behavior among other camp residents.	116	101	96	71	2.74	1.65
5	I feel depressed due to the presence of armed groups or military operations near the camp	114	96	81	93	2.63	1.62
Pooled Mean						2.68	1.63
<i>Fieldwork (2025)</i>				<i>Scale mean 2.50</i>			

Table 1 shows mean and standard deviation for the respondents on the effect of personal insecurity on behavior disorder among internally displaced persons in IDP camps in Borno State, Nigeria. From the table, the respondents have agreed with all the items in the table giving their mean scores of 2.68, 2.74, 2.63, 2.74 and 2.63 from items 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 respectively which were all above the standard set for the study. The corresponding standard deviations for the items are 1.63, 1.65, 1.62, 1.65 and 1.62 for items 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 respectively. Also, the grand mean score of 2.68 and the standard deviation of 1.63 was above the standard (2.50) set for the study. This therefore indicates that personal insecurity has effect on behavior disorder among internally displaced persons in IDP camps in Borno State, Nigeria.

Table 3: Mean and Standard Deviation for the Respondents on the Effect of Economic Insecurity on Behavior Disorder among Internally Displaced Persons in IDP Camps

S/N	Items Description	SA	A	SD	D	\bar{x}	Std
6	My access to basic needs such as food, shelter, and healthcare has been disrupted by insecurity	111	99	107	67	2.68	1.63
7	I feel upset due to fear of future financial difficulties	109	108	96	71	2.74	1.65
8	I always live in worries due to unemployment	119	131	78	56	3.03	1.74
9	My living condition and wellbeing have worsened due to financial crisis	109	108	90	77	2.74	1.65
10	I hardly think of social interaction or relationship due to my financial situations	119	131	79	54	3.03	1.74
Pooled Mean						2.84	1.68
<i>Fieldwork (2025)</i>				<i>Scale mean 2.50</i>			

Table 2 shows mean and standard deviation for the respondents on the effect of economic insecurity on behavior disorder among internally displaced persons in IDP camps in Borno State, Nigeria. The table further revealed that the respondents have agreed with all the items as evidence from their mean scores of 2.68, 2.74, 3.03, 2.74 and 3.03 for items 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10 respectively. The corresponding standard deviations are 1.63, 1.65, 1.74, 1.65 and 1.74 for items 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10. In addition, the overall mean score of 2.84 and the standard deviations of 1.68 was above the 2.50 standard set for the study which shows that economic insecurity has effect on the behavior disorder among internally displaced persons in IDP camps in Borno state, Nigeria.

Table 4: Independent T- test Analysis on the Effect of Personal Insecurity on Behavior Disorder among Internally Displaced Persons in IDP Camps in Borno State

Groups	N	Mean	Std Dev.	d/f	T	p-value	Sig.
Personal Insecurity	384	34.54	0.88	382	8.34	.003	Rejected
Behavior Disorder	384	21.26	1.62				

P ≤ 0.05

Table 3 revealed an independent t- test analysis on the effect of personal insecurity on behavior disorders among internally displaced persons in IDP camps in Borno state. From the table, a t cal value of 8.34 was obtained at a degree of freedom 382 and the p value (0.003) is less than the alpha value (0.05), indicating that personal insecurity has significant effect on behavior disorder among internally displaced persons in IDP camps in Borno state, Nigeria. Hence, the null hypothesis one was rejected.

Table 4: Independent T- test Analysis on the Effect of Economic Insecurity on Behavior Disorder among Internally Displaced Persons in IDP Camps in Borno State

Groups	N	Mean	Std Dev.	d/f	T	p-value	Sig.
Economic Insecurity	384	29.36	1.06	382	7.62	.010	Rejected
Behavior Disorder	384	18.14	1.97				

P ≤ 0.05

Table 4 revealed an independent t- test analysis on the effect of economic insecurity on behavior disorder among internally displaced persons in IDP camps in Borno state. The table further showed a t-cal value of 7.62 at the degree of freedom 382. A p value of 0.010 was also obtained which is less than the alpha of 0.05. This indicates that economic insecurity has significant effect on behavior disorder among internally displaced persons in IDP camps in Borno state, Nigeria. Hence, Ho₂ was rejected.

Discussion

Finding from the study shows a significant effect on personal insecurity on behavior disorder among internally displaced persons in IDP camps in Borno state, Nigeria. This finding buttressed that of Muhammad (2023), that the activities of insurgents have resulted in mass killings, destruction of homes, schools, farmlands, and displacement of entire

communities. The authors emphasize that the insurgency has severely disrupted agricultural production and economic life, making survival difficult for many residents. Similarly, Okoli, Chukwuma and Iortyer (2019), reported that insurgent violence has led to increased poverty levels, food insecurity, and social disintegration in the affected areas. His study highlighted how women and children, particularly, have borne the brunt of the crisis, facing exposure to gender-based violence, exploitation, and psychological trauma. He further noted that the social fabric of communities has been eroded due to mass displacement and lack of access to basic amenities

The findings revealed a significant effect on economic insecurity on behavior disorder among internally displaced persons in IDP camps in Borno state, Nigeria. This finding corroborated that of Chaloka (2016) which identified fear, hopelessness, and displacement as key factors affecting the mental health of individuals in conflict zones. He argued that conflict-related stress often goes untreated due to the absence of adequate health infrastructure in displacement settings. Many IDPs live in substandard conditions, lacking food, water, and healthcare factors that exacerbate mental and physical health conditions. The finding further revealed that many IDPs suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), depression, and anxiety due to exposure to violence and the loss of family members. Their study emphasizes the need for psychosocial support and mental health services in IDP camps.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of the study, the study concluded that insecurity significantly affect displaced persons in IDP camps in Borno State, Nigeria, resulting in high prevalence of behavioural disorders such as anxiety, depression, trauma and economic wellbeing among IDPs, which hinder their ability to cope and reintegrate. Recent happenings in Nigeria show that internal displacement in Nigeria is not only caused by natural and human made disasters but mainly due to insurgency especially in the North-East geopolitical zone.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the conclusions drawn from the study, the following recommendations were made:

1. The government and humanitarian partners should provide structured psychosocial support in IDP camps, including counselling and trauma recovery, with a focus on vulnerable groups like women and children.
2. Efforts to restore peace and security should be strengthened, alongside reintegration programmes such as skills training, education, and economic empowerment for the effective rehabilitation of displaced persons.

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