Patterns of Social Interaction, Integration and Adaptation of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in Uhogua Camp, Edo State, Nigeria

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Abstract

This study examined the role of social interaction on recovery among victims of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in Uhogua camp, Edo State Nigeria. Sample which consisted of 528 was selected from the population of displaced victims. The quantitative and qualitative methods were adopted and concepts theorized using dramaturgy. Respondents consisted of female (71.0%) and Christian religious group (99.2%). Ninety-seven percent of respondents were displaced by Boko-haram insurgency. Some 72.2% engaged in interaction within significant others in the first three months of migration in the camp. Thirty-six percent extended interaction to generalize others, and this was activated in post-significant-others interaction. Seventy-percent and 51.9% showed a recovery in the interaction engaged with significant others and generalized others respectively. Social interaction ($x2 =279.7$, $P=0.000$) and intergroup relations ($x2 =135.5$, $P=0.000$) significantly altered recovery positively. Respondents were keen to engage in interaction when they perceived that environment was secured, well accommodated and ventilated and nutrition was moderately sufficient. Social interaction among IDPs in Uhogua camp rapidly altered recovery positively. Stakeholders overseeing displacement camps should mainstream inter-group relations as integral to the paraphernalia of management.

Keywords: Social interaction; Displacement; Identity and impression management; Recovery

Introduction

Social interaction is a significant aspect of life. It functions within the assumption that society is a collection of individuals that relate with one another in the social space. This relation exists between individuals, groups, organizations and fosters an exchange of comparative advantage, ideas, values, norms and expectations. Sociologically, society is a network of individuals and groups which engage in interpretive social action (Haralambos and Holborn 2011; Giddens 2012). Interaction is an interpretive action and serves as a means of survival. Therefore, there exists an interwoven relationship, interdependency, interrelatedness and mutual exclusive interaction between individuals or groups to survive in the society. The study of a group is vital in sociological discourse. These ideas that people converge and relate as member of a family, gender, occupation, ethnic, religion, class and age and so on in the process of social interaction.

These explain the notion of in-group and out-group boundary by which members derive integration or exclusion as the case may be. The group interaction nourishes feelings of membership, integration and the 'we' feelings often promote an in-group sense of belongingness, satisfaction, motivation and collective consciousness. This type of group relation is a conflict-free membership and serves to provide resources and commonwealth that benefit all and neutralize social dislocation or anomie. Conversely, out-group relations promote fatalism, anomie, conflict-ridden relationship, discrimination and prejudice inimical to the social health of membership. Every society, however, microscopic engages in group interaction to keep the survival of membership.

In the meantime, the assembly of displaced persons in camps is a configuration of microscopic society. Individuals that converge in this type of society are socially expected to relate as members of similar ethnic, religion, gender, tribe or

occupation. Practically, displacement is an unpalatable psychosocial experience which strongly diminishes the sense of confidence, creates a sense of anxiety and loss of confidence and such significantly reduce interaction. Displacement restricts interaction among victims not because of lack of interest to engage in it. Rather the spillover experience imposes fear and sense of insecurity which tend to reconfigure self-realization. There is the mortification of self and the reconfiguration of interaction essentially takes significant others as an immediate channel of connectivity. The sojourn in displaced camps brings together victims of different ethnics, tribes, gender, occupation and religious background.

Primarily, the means of survival occupies the mind and the base of interaction is the significant others in terms of family members readily available to cushion the gap of damaged emotions and anxiety. In the threshold of displacement, the immediate and essential contact is the family (Imoudu, 2019). Subsequently, the longer the duration of the victims in the displaced, there is a propensity to negotiate further window of interaction with generalized others. This stage marked the point at which victims neutralize the sense of insecurity to accommodate wider interaction where there is now the opportunity to acquire resources to survive longer in the camp. Intergroup relation occurs in IDPs camps to integrate victims (Imoudu, 2019).

There are numerous studies which covered aspect of displacement. Some authors focused on migration challenges of IDPs in the course of recommending comparative solution (Ladan 2006; Mberu and Pongou 2010). Some studies identified challenges of IDPs in the area of economic disadvantage (Isokon 2014); psychosocial inadequacies (Hamzat 2013); inconsistency of state policy covering IDPs (Federal Ministry of Justice 2011); and nutrition inadequacy and epidemics of IDPs (Kim, Torbay and Lawry 2007)). Interestingly, there is no concerted

approach to engage the concept of IDPs as a holistic explanation of displacement, migration, adaptation, integration and placement (Eme, Obioma and Tumininu, e*t al.* 2016*;* Emmanuelar 2015). While it is that intergroup relation is a measure to engage social ingredients of integration and adaptation of IDPs, existing studies were inadequate to engage the current conversation. It is now important to model aspects of intergroup relation which add up to literature of displacement. Against this backdrop, this study was conducted to examine the pattern of intergroup relations and how this significantly influenced consistency of integration and adaptation of IDPs.

The discourse of intergroup relation modelled this study and social interaction theory of Erving Goffman's dramaturgy was adopted for discussion (Giddens, 2016; Ritzer 2016). Dramaturgy is a sociological concept developed by Goffman (2014) that uses the metaphor of theatre to explain human behaviour. Dramaturgy is a sociological perspective that is a component of symbolic interactionism and used in sociological analysis of everyday life. Developed by American sociologist Erving Goffman in his seminal 1959 text *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* (Ritzer 2016), dramaturgy uses the metaphor of theatre to explain human behaviour. According to this perspective, individuals perform actions in everyday life as if they were performers on a stage. Identity is role performance. Here, the term "role" works in two ways, referencing both the name for a theatrical character and how individuals fill roles in reality by acting as a mother, friend, husband, caregivers etc. Dramaturgy argues that the presentation of oneself through role is a way of engaging with society.

The theory further models impression management; here, Goffman contends that each performance is a presentation of self and that everyone seeks to create specific impressions in the minds of others (Ritzer, 2016). This universal drive is

called *impression management*. Individuals manage others' impressions of them by successfully portraying themselves "onstage," or in public. People present themselves to others based on cultural values, norms, and expectations. Most of the time, people seek to meet society's expectations, but the dramaturgical frame applies even in cases of rebellion. If an individual wish to convey that they do not agree or identify with social norms, s/he must use a commonly legible system of symbols to communicate that information. As such, the individual is engaging in impression management by trying to present themselves in a particular way to society. From a dramaturgical perspective, a performance of identity is successful when the audience sees the performer as he or she wishes to be viewed.

The innovative strength of the dramaturgical perspective is its recognition of the "two-way street" nature of *identity management* (Haralambos and Holborn, 2016). An individual invests energy in portraying a particular identity to other people. Dramaturgy binds both presentation and reception, demonstrating that one's identity is fundamentally intertwined with society outside of oneself. The performer is always aware that the audience is doing evaluative work on its own and might doubt the authenticity of the performance. The interrelatedness of the individual's sense of identity and society is evidenced by the actor's acute awareness of the audience. Goffman explains this awareness in terms of front stage and backstage behaviours. Front stage actions are those that are visible to the audience and are part of the performance, while backstage actions only occur when the audience is not around (Goffman, 2014).

Accordingly, the interaction that is performed by members of IDPs is a reflection of dramaturgy. There is consciousness among the victims to set off a new identity in the situation of uncertainty as a way of survival. The self-presentation is the offshoot of significant others that rally in the instant to interact creating

mortification of new self-realization and management. This mortification is essential to sustain and nourish immediate self-confidence and association. Primary in dramaturgy theory is self-presentation in everyday life. The theory creates a model of self-realization to reflect the fluidity of everyday life and capacity of the individual to adapt adequately through uninterrupted interaction. The IDPs is a circumstance of fluidity in human existence. Invariably, every individual is programmed to interchange self-birth or mortification to adapt through interaction. In the process, there is a stage to exhibit impression management and stage identity management. Victims of IDPs create an impression through self-presentation that there is a dire need to accommodate the predicament of the moment. This is shown in the anxiety, psychosocial spillover, and insecurity of the moment which constrain interaction with the significant others. The victims must interact in the immediate to cushion the disorder. Again, identity management now percolates to a stage of generalized others where interaction takes forms of complex relations in the intervention of government provision, camp officials, relations at the level of inter/intra ethnic, religion, occupation and tribe. Here, the front stage is the identity created by physical interaction and interpretation thereof. There is also the backstage which is the sense of security, perception of acceptance and genuineness attributed to the social interaction. The backstage appears to give a defining moment to recover from the shock of displacement for the victims.

Methodology

This study was conducted in Uhogua camp, located in the forest zone of Edo state. The camp is the largest accommodation of IDPs in the south-south geopolitical zone of Nigeria. The study adopted a descriptive design classified into the quantitative and qualitative method. The quantitative design utilized a survey method which captured participants in opinion poll design. This design

captured cross-sectional participants and characteristics which consisted of gender, religious background, occupation, ethnic and tribe. This type of design ensured that every category of the study population was included for representativeness. A qualitative design engaged the ethnographic method in which few participants expressed oral experience in the IDPs camp. The study populations consisted of victims of displacement. The sample consisted of 528 was selected using a statistical method. The populations of displaced persons in the camp were 4,200 persons. The sample was drawn using Cochran's (2005) formula, $z^2 p(1-p)/e^2$. The value equal confidence interval and is constant at 1.96 workings at the two-tail range. P-value equals the proportion of the target population using 0.5 or 50% where the value is unknown; e gives the error term working at 0.02. The application of this formula yielded sample size.

Sampling techniques consisted of purposive, proportionate/quota and accidental sampling. The study location, Uhogua camp, was purposively selected as the largest IDPs area and therefore was considered suitable for the study. Consequently, the population was stratified and proportionate method was applied to justify population in terms of gender, religion, tribes and ethnics. To execute the survey, participants were drafted in to fill the research instrument of the questionnaire through accidental sampling. Data were collected analysed quantitatively and qualitatively. Quantitative data generated through the opinion poll in the questionnaire were analysed using a computer-aided method in which data were numerically coded and input into a computer programme. The analysis applied frequency table and percentage tools, as the statistical package for social science (SPSS) software version 23.0, was used to process quantitative data. Whereas, data were collected qualitatively through the use of semi-structured interview and data were analysed using content analysis of the thematic structure and manual coding. The study was thematised for discussion and guided by the

ethical principle of informed consent, volunteerism, safety and anonymity. Inclusion criteria were the availability of respondents, willingness and stability of emotion.

Findings

The victims of war like book-haram phenomenon are displaced and sought protection most times in social environment different from their place of origin. The camps are created as a temporary abode to reintegrate victims back to normal social life having experienced psychosocial shocks. In the new environment also, it is expected that social relationship is built among victims coming from different family background, religion, gender and occupational status. The relationship is not expected to be limited to members of IDPs; it should also extend to the local community that hosts them. This discussion practically demonstrated the pattern of social relationship among IDPs and how this contributed to integration.

In the meantime, respondents that participated in this study consisted of male (29.0%) and female (71.0%); 97.0% consisted of victims from the northern part of Nigeria, and these were peoples of Tivs, Igala and Hausa/Fulani. There were 3.0% of respondents that consisted of peoples from southern Nigeria, and this consisted of Ijaw and Urhobo peoples of the riverine area. Age distribution of respondents consisted of victims who were less than 20 years (17.6%), 20-29 (31.3%), 30-39 (31.6%) and 40-49 (12.5%) (see table 1).

Table 1: Distribution by Pattern of Intergroup Relations

S/N	Research Questions	Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1.	Do you think relating with your ethnic group in the camp makes you happy?	Yes	381	72.2
		No	147	27.8
		Total	**528**	**100.0**
2.	Do you think relating with other ethnic groups make you cope well in the camp?	Yes	192	36.4
		No	336	63.6
		Total	**528**	**100.0**
3.	Is there segregation between religious groups in this camp?	Yes	508	96.2
		No	20	3.8
		Total	**528**	**100.0**
4.	Do you consider that members of this camp relate well with their tribal people?	Yes	274	51.9
		No	254	48.1
		Total	**528**	**100.0**
5.	Are there intergroup relations in this camp?	Yes	356	67.4
		No	172	32.6
		Total	**528**	**100.0**
6.	What forms of intergroup relations exist in the camp?	Gender	102	19.3
		Ethnic	240	45.5
		Tribe	43	8.1
		Religion	143	27.1
		Total	**528**	**100.0**
7.	Do intergroup relations contribute to wellbeing in the camp?	Yes	189	35.8
		No	339	64.2
		Total	**528**	**100.0**

Source: *Researcher's Field Survey, 2019*

Others consisted of 50-59 years (5.7%) and 60 years and above (1.3%). Some respondents were married (35.4%), single (24.2%), single parent (7.2%) and widow (17.4%). There were respondents (75.9%) that indicated they were literate, and 99.2% were Christians. Ninety-seven percent were displaced by Boko-haram insurgence which ravaged northern Nigeria more than a decade now (Imoudu, 2019). Yet 2.7% were displaced by floods, and 0.2% reported cases of fire disaster which displaced them.

Table 1 shows the description of group relations among the IDPs. Although members of the IDPs came from only one ethnic group, there were indications of factors that divided the IDPs into group relations. Respondents were asked to show how they feel when they related with members of their ethnic group. Some 72.2% confirmed that they were happy in their relationship with members of their ethnic in the camp. There were members of the IDPs that were enthusiastic in their relationship with others, especially members of a similar ethnic group. This was because they speak the same language, or came from the same region and shared a similar experience of displacement. These individuals found solace in the similarity of ethnic and were always hopeful for positive outcomes. At other ends of expression, some members of the IDPs were reluctant to express free interrelationship with members of their ethnic.

The observation here was that it is not deliberate attitude by these individuals to exclude interaction with others, but there was a feeling of insecurity and fear that such relationship could threaten their emotional stability having recuperated from the shock of sudden displacement. A follow up to this observation was discussed in the words of an official in the camp:

We noticed some feelings of insecurity and fear among some IDPs. Some of the victims prefer to stay alone, especially among family kindred. The IDPs are facing a psychological problem, as a

result of the shock. The camp has a counselling unit, and this is helpful in that direction (IDIs/Camp Manager/Uhogua IDPs camp/Edo State/2019).

Although it would have been expected members of the IDPs related well together if they belonged to the same ethnic group, but the fear and shock of displacement were spillovers which hampered sense of social interaction. Furthermore, some respondents (36.4%) believed that they found happiness when they related to other ethnic groups in the camp. These individuals were enthusiastic and elated to mingle with the host community and believed they were safe in the hands of their host. At the same time, this group felt they could imbibe and accommodate the culture of the host community as a source of rapid integration. They related well with the locals, learnt their language and dialect and found happiness in such interaction. Conversely, 63.6% of the IDPs were reluctant to engage in a social relationship with the host community. They practically expressed anxiety and fear of unforeseen attack and so they slow to adjust adequately in their new environment. In this case, some of the IDPs only related to their ethnic members, while others limited their relationship among family relatives.

The discussion of group formation was further extended to show how the IDPs related to members of a religious group. There was only Christianity as the religion which IDPs reported in the camp. The finding shows that 96.2% believed there was segregation along with religious belief especially denominations in Christianity. This was acutely demonstrated by members of different denominations and group formation was established along this line. Conspicuously, members of IDPs found solace in the denomination they belonged and were rapidly ready to engage in social interaction. Apart from the chapel of worship in the camp, some squared-sized banners showing Christian denominations could be seen in the camp. This formed another basis of group relations. Similarly, the majority of respondents identified that they belonged to

Hausa ethnic. There were smaller tribes which IDPs members could be classified. Some were identified to be Kanuri, Fufude, Kwa, Mongelu among other tribes. Relationships were also formed along this line. The identification is that 51.9% could trace their tribal people and developed social relationship along this line. These tribal individuals were abundantly happy and expressed freewill to share their concerns with collective effort to bring succour. At the same time, 48.1% felt relationship along the tribal line was insignificant and so preferred to relate with their significant others or family group.

Further probe of discussion revealed intergroup relations. Practically, members of the IDPs camps were consciously or unconsciously into groups and these groups were important for their adaptation and survival. There were 67.4% of the respondents that believed intergroup relations were parts of interaction in the camp since members found attachment with their groups and yet these groups exist in mutually exclusive. The group formed in the camp did not exist to create tension. These groups were part of the survival strategy adopted to neutralize tension of displacement, though 32.6% did not believe in the existence of group formation. The forms of intergroup relations among the IDPs consisted of gender (19.3%), ethnic (45.5%), tribe (8.1%) and religion (27.1%). Some of the IDPs felt ethnic grouping was the primary concern and so these individuals were roundly constrained in their social relationship and showed a slow pace of recovery and integration in the new environment. Others were fluid and quick to recognize grouping along with religious denominations, tribes and gender and these IDPs were rapid to recover from the shock of displacement. The implication is that they were dynamic in group formation and group interrelations rather static. Consequently, 35.8% of the IDPs that were dynamic in group formation and interrelations attested to the contribution it makes to improve wellbeing. Some 64.2% could not connect their wellbeing to group formation

which could be a factor of distrust, lingering sense of shock from displacement and psychosocial spillover from the war experience.

There are two variables cross-tabulated for the test (see table 2 and 3). As social interaction functions at the level of the independent variable, so do social adaptation functions at the level of the dependent variable.

Table 2: **Social interaction does not significantly influence social adaptation**

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi Square	279.7 28a	2	.000
Likelihood Ratio	387.5 65	2	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	279.1 89	1	.000
N of Valid Cases	528		
a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 63.75.			

Source: *Researcher's Field Survey, 2019*

Table 3: Intergroup relations do not significantly influence social adaptation

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi Square	1 35.5 61 a	2	.000
Likelihood Ratio	1 81 .4 27	2	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	1 30.7 30	1	.000
N of Valid Cases	528		
a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 47.25			

Source: Researcher's Field Survey, 2019

The Pearson chi-square value was given as 0.000, an indication that a 95% confidence interval is satisfied. It follows that the null hypothesis is rejected. This means social interaction is an important therapy that must be present to facilitate quick recovery or adaptation in time of displacement.

The findings in this study revealed the significance of social interaction, especially in the subsection that captures intergroup relations. It was found out that members of IDPs who declined interaction along with gender, tribe, ethnic and religion were slow to recover and adjusted adequately, whereas victims that formed group relations were rapid in their recovery and adjustment. The

Likelihood Ration (0.000) and the Linear Association (0.000) also confirmed the significance of social interaction.

In table 3, intergroup relations were cross-tabulated with social adaptation to show the degree of relationship between the variables. The Pearson chi-square value (0.000), Likelihood Ratio (0.000) and Linear Association (0.000) show the result of the test. The confidence interval of 95% or 0.05 is satisfied with this test. The null hypothesis is, therefore, rejected. The implication here is that social adaptation is a factor of intergroup relations. This is demonstrated by the IDPs in their pattern of group relations, and how they found the adjustment to cope well in their new environment.

Discussion of Findings

In the meantime, social interaction engaged by members of IDPs was a significant determinant of recovery from the shock of displacement. IDPs in Uhugua camp were largely victims of conflict displacement from northern Nigeria. There was a distinction between victims that rapidly engaged in interaction with others and those victims that retarded interaction. Here, the former was rapid to neutralize burden of shock and adapted well in the brand new social life. The latter was slow to adapt and this significantly affected recovery. In the analysis of Erving Goffman, the presentation self is a process of mortification which takes the form of impression management and identity management. The theory was the classification of social dynamism which presents ongoing social interaction in the dynamic social change of the society. Impression management is the creation of a positive impression on the cognitive component of others. This impression serves to define a person either positive or negative in the mind others (Goffman 2014). This moulds relationship in mutual benefits. Role management takes off from the foundation of impression established (Goffman 2014). The nature of role performed is aptly moulded by the impression established in the foundation.

Ultimately, both impression and role management take off from mortification of self-generated from rapidly changing social world. Social unrest, war, natural disaster, ethnic and tribal war, oil spillage, gas flaring and degradation of the natural environment, and lately the insurgency of northern Nigeria are components of social change. Displacement is therefore inevitable to generate from a violent social change like the ones above. Self-presentation in everyday life also becomes inevitable. Interaction, integration and adaptation, therefore, interplay to influence capacity in the process of mortification.

Conclusion

Group interaction plays a significant impact on the integration of members of society. Scientifically, members of IDPs in Uhogua camp that engaged in unbroken interaction with others in this case generalized others were rapid in the recovery from the shock of displacement. This is because the relationship with others generated feelings of confidence, neutralization of fear and mortification of new self-formation and a new identity to survive. These respondents showed a perception of confidence and rapid recovery. Two stages of recovery are important for discussion. The first stage is the preparatory moment of recovery. This is the period which is the preliminary period of entrance for the IDPs. The victims expressed in Uhogua camp desire to relate with close individuals particularly family members or household relatives in the displaced camp. The interaction also provided the network with family members outside the camp, in this case, extended families that were sympathetic. The preparatory moment was the period in which victims assessed the prevailing condition of the camp in terms of accommodation, security, nutrition and health services which interplay to negotiate the exchange of social relations beyond the significant others. The second stage is the takeoff moment of recovery. This was the period the victims extended relations to individuals between gender, religious group, ethnic

interrelation and tribal groups. The IDPs showed a propensity to engage others in interaction since they were now confident of survival and negotiate exchange interaction. Significantly, the period of the preparatory moment took the victims of IDPs four months since more than sixty-percent attested to this in Uhogua. Expectedly, the incubation for takeoff stage was six months and above.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are considered.

1. There is a need for the mainstream social interaction of IDPs in the programme designated by stakeholders to address displacement. Social interaction was significant for recovery among victims in Uhogua camp.

2. Stakeholders that oversee IDPs must accommodate the physiological needs of the victims. These needs in this case of Uhogua camp were important for recovery.

Contribution to Knowledge

This study is novel in the literature of displacement. The introduction of self-mortification in the analysis of displacement provides a model of scientific discussion of displacement, interaction, integration and adaptation in a post-conflict settlement. Whereas existing studies were preoccupied with structural analysis of displacement, this current study is preoccupied with the agency, micro-sociological analysis of displacement.

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