

BANDITRY IN NIGERIA AND THE TRAUMA OF WOMEN AND CHILDREN IN IDP CAMPS: MEDIA INTERVENTION STRATEGIES

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Abstract

The number of women and children in Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) camps in Nigeria has remained a social and economic problem to the wellbeing of the victims and national development. The purpose of this study was to explore the media intervention strategies used by journalists to ameliorate the experiences of the victims. The study employed online survey research method. It was anchored on Social Cognitive and Routine Activities Theories. Three research questions were addressed. The study found that the women and children displaced by the bandits in Northern Nigeria suffer various forms of trauma; the journalists in the Northern part of Nigeria employ different media intervention strategies; the media intervention strategies used in assuaging trauma in IDP camp were successful. It recommended that the government of Nigeria should provide adequately for people in IDP camps; the media should sustain its campaigns against banditry; there is need for the media to explore more strategies to reduce trauma in IDP camps.

Keywords: Banditry, IDP, trauma, security, media

Introduction

Nigeria faces a plethora of security challenges ranging from the Boko Haram insurgency in the North-east to farmer-herder conflict and banditry in the North-central and north-east, a revived secessionist movement in the south-east, and more recently attacks on security installations etc. (Goodluck Jonathan Foundation Report, GJF, 2021). The North-western Nigeria has also not been spared as the area is increasingly violent due to the activities of militias, known locally as “bandits” (Buba, 2023). The Northern area of Nigeria provides forest reserves and mountains which form the primary base of operations of bandit gangs in rural communities, providing great opportunities and hideouts for their criminality. The situation has so deteriorated to the extent that many of the residents of Northern Nigeria especially the states of Kaduna and Zamfara have been dislocated from their homes and forced to take refuge in IDP Camps that are also vulnerable to attacks, and thousands of lives and property worth billions of Naira in addition to the huge amounts of money paid as ransom have been lost to bandits with devastating consequences on the economy of the country and traumatic experiences of the women and children located at various IDP camps.

Conflicts and disasters often cause large-scale displacement of people due to destruction of homes, properties and the environment (Ibrahim et al., 2023). These internally displaced persons (IDPs,) are group of persons, who have been forced to leave or have been evacuated from their places of habitual residence, and who have not crossed an internationally recognised state border (Owoaje, et al., 2016 as cited in Ibrahim et al., 2023) are accommodated in IDP camps. Majority of displaced persons may be women and children. Nigeria has had its fair share of displaced people as a result of political and ethno-religious conflict (International Committee of the Red Cross, 2016). Conflict-affected populations face not only direct threat to their lives or bodily harm, but also war-related

socioeconomic stressors such as overcrowding physical and sexual abuse, infectious diseases with increase morbidity and other vulnerabilities which are also extremely traumatic (Maugari et al., 2010).

In spite of government efforts, the security situation in Nigeria is deteriorating and could be said to have overwhelmed both the government, the people and security agencies. There is also no clear discernible ideological persuasion underpinning banditry beyond theft, extortion, and wanton violence. Bandits are primarily motivated by the alluring prospects of wealth in a region blighted by poverty and poor socioeconomic outcomes (GJF Report, 2021). This study explores the traumatic experiences of the displaced women and children who are victims of banditry and are accommodated in IDP camps. It does so against the backdrop of reports of increased bandit attacks on farms, markets, mining sites, villages and rural communities, and the rising tide of violent crimes in Nigeria, especially the northern region (Okoli&Ngom. 2023

Objectives of the Study

The general objective of the study is to find out the traumatic experiences of Northern Nigerian people living in IDP camps. The specific objectives are to:

1. find out the types of traumas the women and children in IDP camps in Northern Nigeria face.
2. identify the media intervention strategies that Nigerian journalist employ in the reportage of the traumatic experiences of women and children in IDP camps.
3. Assess the level of success achieved by using such media intervention strategies to assuage the trauma of the women and children in IDP camps.

Research Questions

1. What are the forms of trauma the women and children displaced by bandits face in IDP camps?
2. What type of media intervention strategies do Nigerian journalists employ to assuage the traumatic experiences of the women and children in IDP camps?
3. To what extent has the media intervention strategies used in assuaging trauma among the women and children in IDP camp been successful?

Review of Related Literature

Banditry

Conceptually, banditry is a derivative of the term bandit meaning an unlawful armed group terrorizing people and confiscating their properties. It is synonymous with the establishment of gang groups who use small and light weapons to carry out attacks against people. In this regard, banditry could mean a set-up criminal activity deliberately designed and carried out for personal gains (Olapeju& Adeniyi, 2020). Due to the complex nature of bandits' activities, Egwu (2016) in a restricted manner, described banditry as a practice of stealing cattle and animals from herders or raiding of cattle from their ranches. In the same vein, Uche and Iwuamadi (2018) state that banditry is reflected in criminal escapades like cattle rustling, kidnapping, armed robbery, drug abuse, arson, rape and the brazen and gruesome massacre of people of agrarian communities with sophisticated weapons by suspected herdsmen and reprisal attacks from surviving victims, a development that has been brought to the front burner of national security. However, the idea of reprisal attack from the victims as pointed out by Uche and Iwuamadi (2018) is no longer the case in Nigeria because bandits in Nigeria of the present are more supplicated and better armed than even the Nigerian police force and the army.

Shalangwa (2013) regards banditry as the practice of raiding and attacking victims by members of an armed group, whether or not premeditated, using weapons of offence or defense, especially in semi-organised groups for the purpose of overpowering the victim and obtaining loot or achieving some political goals. This definition is similar to that of Olaniyan & Yahaya (2016) that sees banditry as the occurrence or prevalence of armed robbery or violent crime; it involves the use of force, or threat to that effect, to intimidate a person with the intent to rob, rape or kill. More importantly, it thrives within the ‘social ecology of the rural sector characterised by gross governance deficits. According to Nahuche (2015), the acts of armed banditry has been perceived by different societies in different ways. This statement is unarguably true because the kinds of banditry that take place in one country may differ from how banditry works in another country and even in different parts of the same country. In Nigeria, for instance, banditry has undergone transformation from a mere act of sudden subtle attack on individuals, communities or organisations in order to take what they possess to violent and armed attack, kidnapping, mass killings, and taking away of people’s property, farmland or even gaining control of the community as a whole, and imposing levy on them, rustle cows and other animals and take ransom as rescue fees. In support of this view, Mburu (1999) observes that banditry had transmitted from what he called “innocuous tribal sport” into terrorism unleashed by hardened former guerilla fighters that were used to killing and having little respect for the laws of the land or any symbol of formal authority. Crumney (1999) argues that, banditry was indeed a significant African phenomenon embedded in rural societies, and that bandits are recognised as such by rural dwellers. Lending credence to this view, Osanba (1998) cited in Nahuche (2015), notes that raiding had evolved into military operations using conventional war tactics and involving thousands of livestock.

Not only young men are killed, but women and children are brutally murdered as well, huts stores and harvest are set on fire and shops looted (Nahuche, 2015; Olapeju & Adeniyi, 2020; Olapeju & Adeniyi, 2020). Bandits operate within and along rural borders with the assistance of their local collaborators including in some cases, state agents deployed to work for the safety and security of the people (Abdullahi, 2019). In the context of this paper, we take banditry to mean the totality of incidences of armed robbery or allied violent crimes, such as kidnapping, cattle rustling, village raids as well as highway raids which involves the use of force, or threat to that effect, to intimidate a person or a group of persons in order to rob, rape, kidnap or kill the victims (Olapeju & Adeniyi, 2020), Okoli & Okpaleke, 2014).

Banditry can be classified based on the underlying ‘intent’ or ‘motive’. In this regard, one can talk of ‘social banditry’ that is generally motivated by the intent to protest social inequality and to redistribute wealth within a locality (Olapeju & Adeniyi, 2020). Likewise, one could talk of other forms of banditry that are principally motivated by ‘political’ or ‘economic’ reasons (Okoli & Ugwu, 2019). When location of occurrence is the underlying index, one can speak in terms of ‘rural vs. urban banditry’ or ‘frontier vs. countryside banditry’, as the case may be (Olapeju & Adeniyi, 2020). The authors opine that banditry can be ‘mercenary’ or ‘autonomous’ depending on how the actor of ‘agency’ is played out. Mercenary banditry is perpetuated by auxiliaries or mercenaries working for a principal in a sort of principal-agent relationship, while autonomous bandits are self-motivated and personally commissioned (Olapeju & Adeniyi, 2020). ‘Organised banditry’ thrives on a network of actors that are syndicated and coordinated while petty banditry is perpetrated by individual or group actors that are not so organised. ‘Roving bandits’ are more or less mobile or itinerant while stationary bandits are settled or sedentary. Lastly, ‘maritime banditry’ refers to offshore robbery (piracy) as compared to those that occur on the coast or mainland (Olapeju & Adeniyi, 2020).

Trauma in IDP Camps

Trauma encompasses the psychological and emotional response triggered when an individual undergoes or witnesses an exceptionally distressing event surpassing their coping capacity (Oshodi et al., 2013). This may involve incidents like accidents, violence, death, or war exposure (Adejumo & Daramola, 2019). The repercussions of trauma can be far-reaching, impacting diverse facets of an individual's mental and physical wellbeing. Psychologically, trauma may give rise to a spectrum of symptoms, including intrusive memories, flashbacks, nightmares, emotional distress, hyper vigilance, and heightened arousal responses (Atilola et al., 2015). On an emotional level, trauma can evoke intense feelings such as fear, sadness, anger, shame, guilt, and helplessness.

The physical aftermath of trauma varies, presenting as physical pain, fatigue, sleep disturbances, headaches, and alterations in appetite or weight (Oshodi et al., 2013). Socially, trauma can disrupt an individual's capacity to trust, establish, and maintain relationships, potentially leading to social isolation, withdrawal, and challenges in forming intimate connections (Oshodi et al., 2013). Jayne (2020) describes trauma as an emotional response to a terrible event like an accident, rape, or natural disaster. However, a person may experience trauma as a response to any event they find physically or emotionally threatening or harmful. Not everyone who experiences a stressful event will develop trauma (Jayne, 2020). Some people will develop symptoms that resolve after a few weeks, while others will have more long-term effects. A traumatized person may feel overwhelmed, helpless, shocked, or have difficulty processing their experiences. Trauma can also cause physical symptoms (Jayne, 2020). It can have long-term effects on the person's well-being. If symptoms persist and do not decrease in severity, it can indicate that the trauma has developed into a mental health disorder called post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). There are several types of trauma, including: acute, chronic trauma, complex trauma and secondary trauma, or vicarious trauma.

Security and Insecurity

Security is a term viewed by many people as the safety of persons or country from internal and external threats. However, many scholars view it from different perspectives. This makes the concept difficult to be accorded a universal definition. By implication, security has a wider meaning such as to feel safe, to be protected and it is used to describe a situation without any risks or worries (UNDP, 2002) as cited in Oghuvbu (2021). Security is broadly viewed as "freedom from danger or threats to an individual or a nation. It is the ability to protect and defend oneself, be it an individual or a nation, its cherished values and legitimate interests and the enhancement of well-being" (Mijah, 2007 cited Eugina 2013, p.60). Nwagboso (2012) cited in Adagbabiri and Okolie (2018, p.48) argue that security is "commonly associated with the alleviation of threat to the survival of individuals or groups". Thus, security can be equated with freedom from present and future danger, harm or anxiety

In the view of Onoja (2014, p. 35), "security is peoples' relative feeling of being secure from economic, political, socio-cultural and psychological fear". This implies that security must be people driven or oriented to assure citizens that government is competent, capable and efficiently ready to guarantee their safety and freedom of movement, association that enables them to carry out their socio-economic activities without molestation, intimidation, harassment or violent threat from any person or group within and outside of the polity (Eke, 2013). Security is often equated with national security because the contextual meaning of both applies to human security. In the context of this paper, security entails protecting the citizens from the threats posed by terrorists, kidnappers, herdsmen and the unknown gunmen. Some scholars like Igbuzor (2011) and Oche (2001) while conceptualising security placed emphasis on the absence of threats to peace, stability, national cohesion, political and socio-economic objectives of a country. It is conceived as to be secure and free from both fear of physical, psychological abuse, violence, persecution, or death and from want such as

food, health and good job (Asmau & Abdurashed, 2020). Also, Omede (2012) sees security as a dynamic condition which involves the relative ability of a state to counter threats to its core values and interests. It also focuses on emotional and psychological sense of belonging to a social group which can offer one protection (Nwanegbo&Odigbo, 2013).

This description of the foregoing structured the concept of security into four dimensions. These dimensions can be woven together to give a composite definition of security as the protection against all forms of harm whether physical, economic or psychological (Olabanji& Ese, 2014). It is, however, contended that security is not the absence of threats or security issues, but the ability to rise to the challenges posed by these threats with expediency and expertise. It demands safety from chronic threats and protection from harmful disruption (Igbuzor, 2011). Security embraces all measures designed to protect and safeguard the citizenry and the resources of individuals, groups, businesses and the nation against sabotage or violent occurrence (Ogunleye, Adewale, Alese, &Ogunde, 2013). On the other hand, insecurity is the absence of security. It expresses a state of fears emanating from uncertainty surrounding the protection of lives and property. Olapeju and Adeniyi (2020, p.4) described insecurity as “the state of being exposed to risk or anxiety, where anxiety is a vague unpleasant emotion that is experienced in anticipation of some misfortune”. From the explanation above, the phenomenon of security or insecurity implies both physical occurrence and psychological state of mind that constitutes a challenge to peace and development of both the individuals and the societies (Olapeju& Adeniyi, 2020). This definition adequately explains what insecurity is all about in the context of Nigeria and with a particular reference to the experiences of women and children in IDP camps. Women and the children in IDP camps in Nigeria are subjected to circumstances that create physical and psychological fears and trauma in their minds.

Trauma and Displacement of Persons

In places where conflict, war, violence, and natural disasters are frequently observed, displacement from these areas to the safe zone is expected (Kett, 2005). Globally, more than 40 million people have been displaced from their primary living areas (United Nations Commission on Human Rights, n.d). With the war in Gaza and Ukraine, this number has more than double in 2024. A person or group of people who have been forced or obliged to flee or leave their homes or places of habitual residence, in particular as a result of most of the internally displaced people being accounted for by human-made causes like wars, violence, and ethnic conflicts is said to have suffered displacement. The impacts of these events not only change socio-political structures but also have a lasting impact on people’s migration (Morina, Akhtar, Barth & Schnyder, 2018).

Displaced persons in Nigeria are camped in IDP camps in make shift structures for temporal stay. Most forced and prolonged displacements take place against a backdrop of resource–poor settings where social vulnerability, lack of adequate infrastructure along with loss of hope for the future can act to compound the already raised risks (Sigvardsdotter, Malm, Tinghog, Vaez, Saboonchi, 2016). When displacement takes place, victimized internally displaced persons experienced a variety of mental health problems, particularly depression and post-traumatic disorders (Morina, Akhtar, Barth & Schnyder, 2018). More importantly, if the displacements are prolonged, the person will experience more behavioural problems (Norwegian Refugee Council, 2015).

It is well established that, populations affected by armed conflict are frequently exposed to traumatic events and daily stressors which put them at risk of elevating levels of mental health disorders (Makhashvili, Chikovani, Mckee, Bisson, Patel, Roberts, 2014). Those that are displaced are usually exposed to multiple types of traumatic events in their place of origin and during displacement. These events are often repeated, prolonged and interpersonal in nature and have been demonstrated to have a

deleterious effect on mental health (Nickerson & Levy, 2011). The public health implication of this is, the psychological distress occurring in the post conflict environment also contributes to harmful health behaviours such as hazardous drinking, substance abuse, suicidal tendencies and increased smoking (Owoaje, 2016; Roberts, et al., 2009). In a study conducted in northern Uganda, women were found to be twice more likely to develop symptoms of depression and PTSD (Roberts et al., 2008). A study among IDPs in Nigeria shows that having a diagnosis of depression remained as an independent predictor of PTSD (Sheikh et al., 2014). It has been previously suggested that women may be at higher risk of mental disorders because of the psychological consequences of exposure to trauma (Roberts et al., 2008). Women and children constitute over 70% (Owoaje et al., 2016) of internally displaced populations, and they experienced a wide range of health risks. They are extremely vulnerable to physical and mental health problems. This may be due to their lower threshold compared to men.

Causes of Banditry in Nigeria

Nigeria's banditry crisis and deepening security challenges are fuelled by the existence of vast under-governed hinterland and trans-border spaces where various non-state armed groups operate unhindered and outside of the law, engaging in various forms of transnational crime (Okoli & Ngom, 2023). Barely two months into the Year, 2024, there has been a renewed upsurge in banditry across Northern Nigeria. The worst-hit states are Benue, Niger, Kaduna, Zamfara, Katsina, Adamawa and Taraba. President Bola Tinubu should deliver quickly on his pre-election mantra to save Nigeria from violence (PUNCH Editorial Board, 2024). The root causes of banditry in Nigeria have been attributed to illiteracy, unemployment, poor leadership, porous borders, proliferation of arms, and non-compliance with the rule of law. However, in this study, we argue that while the foregoing factors contribute to the increasing rate of banditry, the psychology of bandits is the main factor that sustains the act. Banditry is perpetrated by a group of people that naturally have the intent to kill, and who are irrational human beings. A weak security apparatus, the proliferation of small arms and light weapons, socioeconomic conditions such as poverty and unemployment, cattle rustling, and illegal mining activities in the North West promote banditry in Northern Nigeria.

Akinyetun (2022) argues that the increase in banditry in Nigeria is the result of the interactions among people who are victims of adverse socio-economic conditions in the setting. The setting is characterised by recurring social malaise. Negative choices resulting from interaction with the setting, leads to criminal action (Akinyetun, 2022). Nahuche (2015) in his study finds out from the key informants who were direct victims of armed banditry, community leaders who may have received reports of incidents of armed banditry, police officers who were involved with issues of security and prominent indigenes of the communities that armed banditry has been linked to several causes among which are displacement due to wars. In Nigeria's bordering countries, lack of basic amenities, unemployment among youths, moral decadence among the youths and other members of the affected communities force the impatient into banditry (Nahuche, 2015).

Communication Strategies for Trauma Victims

Effective communication with trauma victims is a delicate and nuanced process that requires a combination of empathy, cultural competence, and the establishment of trust. If the media people are to communicate effectively with trauma victims, certain strategies have to be adopted to ensure efficacy in the communication process. Communication strategies can include providing examples of successful coping strategies and stories of individuals who have overcome similar traumas. Trauma victims can learn from the experiences of others who have gone through similar circumstances. Sharing narratives of recovery and resilience can inspire hope and provide a sense of validation to

trauma victims in Nigeria. (Hassan, Ibrahim, Abdulmumini, Amos, 2024). Establishing trust has proven to be an effective strategy for communicating with trauma victims. Building rapport and credibility is foundational to effective communication with trauma victims. Demonstrating genuine empathy and interest in the individual's experiences is crucial, creating a sense of connection and understanding. Consistently conveying reliability and honesty builds a foundation of trust, assuring trauma survivors that their concerns are taken seriously (Foa et al., 2021). Active listening has also been argued to be a cornerstone of effective communication with trauma victims. The media can draw the attention of the women and children in IDP camps to their programmes and influence their listening habits. This can help the victims learn from the media the ways they could reduce trauma in the camps. Acknowledging and validating the emotions expressed by trauma survivors fosters a sense of understanding and compassion (Hassan et al., 2024).

The media by encouraging trauma victims and making their messages empathic can encourage traumatized women and children in IDP camps to share their stories. Also, utilising reflective listening and asking open-ended questions are effective techniques to confirm understanding and encourage further expression. Psychoeducation is another strategy said to play a pivotal role in empowering trauma victims with information about the effects of trauma and available support services. Offering clear and accessible information about common reactions to trauma help normalise emotional responses and reduce feelings of isolation. Communicating that trauma is a natural response to distressing events and encouraging individuals to seek support as a strength rather than a weakness contributes to a supportive communication environment (Akinsulure-Smith, 2020; Foa et al., 2021). Cultural competence as a strategy is integral to effective communication; recognising that cultural factors influence the expression and interpretation of trauma experiences is important. Acquiring cultural competence through education and awareness of diverse cultural backgrounds enhance communicators' ability to engage sensitively with trauma survivors. Adapting communication styles to align with cultural preferences and involving cultural leaders or guides facilitates a deeper understanding and bridges potential communication gaps (Hinton, 2015; Street, 2017; Odejide, 2021). In addition, through media modeling, trauma-stricken victims in IDP camps can benefit from observing positive models and engaging in role-play scenarios.

Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored on two theories: Social Cognitive Theory (SCT) and the Routine Activities Theory (RAT). The Social Cognitive Theory was developed by Albert Bandura in 1986. The theory provides a framework for understanding and supporting effective communication with trauma victims in Nigeria. SCT posits that individuals learn and develop behaviours based on observation, modelling, and reinforcement process (Hassan, Ibrahim, Abdulmumini, Amos, 2024). SCT is related to the study in the sense that that communication with trauma victims can be enhanced by employing the components of the theory which include: self-efficacy, modelling and vicarious learning and reinforcement. Also, by fostering a sense of self-efficacy, communication can empower trauma victims and facilitate their active participation in their healing. By Modeling, according to the theory, trauma victims can benefit from observing positive models and engaging in role-play scenarios. Vicarious learning, as a tenet of this theory, posits that trauma victims can learn from the experiences of others who have gone through similar circumstances. Sharing narratives of recovery and resilience can inspire hope and provide a sense of validation to trauma victims in Nigeria. (Hassan, et al., 2024).

However, the above theory was considered to be inadequate for this study as it fails to explain the motivational factors that enhance criminality. Hence we supported the theory with the Routine Activities Theory (RAT). RAT was pioneered by Cohen and Felson (1979) in an attempt “to

understand patterns and upward trends of predatory criminal events in the historical context of changing economy (Hsieh and Wang 2018). The theory holds that crime is likely to occur when there is a spatial-temporal convergence of three essential elements of crime, namely a motivated offender, an attractive target, and the absence of capable guardianship (Tahir & Usman, 2020; Tahir & Usman, 2020; Maxfield 1987). According to exponents of the theory, motivated offenders are individuals who are capable and willing to commit a crime while suitable targets can be a person or object that are considered by offenders as vulnerable or attractive (Tahir & Usman, 2020). On the other hand, guardianship can be a person or an object that is effective in deterring offense to occur. Mere physical presence of guardianship in space and time can deter crime committal (Tahir & Usman, 2020). Applied to the purpose of the study, it is to be observed that armed banditry is a crime that has been precipitated and sustained by the prevailing socio-existential environment in the rural and urban societies characterised by a high proclivity to criminal indulgence like banditry. This is typically the situation in Nigeria but worse in northwest Nigeria where marauders and brigands are having a sustained field day in a criminal escapade that is threatening to overrun the entire region.

Research Methodology

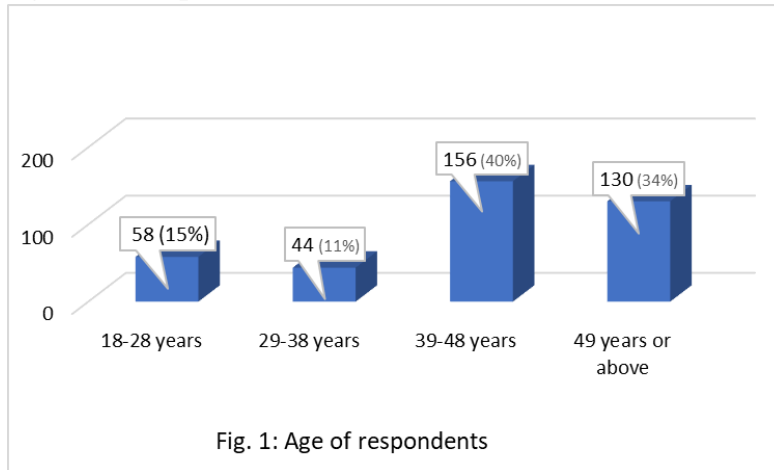
The study employed mixed method research combining quantitative and qualitative online data. This method was considered the best way to get correct information from both the victims of banditry living in IDP camps and the journalists in the Northern part of Nigeria where bandits operate. The online method provided safety measures for the researchers as it was considered dangerous to make personal contacts with the respondents because of security reasons and the heavy presence of security men who could prevent the inmates the opportunity to respond freely to questionnaire administered physically.

The population of this study was divided into four categories, the first category included selected adults of the selected communities of Kaduna Sokoto, Kebbi, Zamfara and Katsina and Benue while the second category consisted of community, vigilante and opinion leaders who have lived in the research areas for at least 10 years and had direct links to issue of armed banditry either as security agents or prominent indigenes of the communities of the states. The third category consisted of persons who have been victims of incidents of armed banditry. The fourth category was made up of journalists who worked in the Northern part of Nigeria. Data from all the categories was collected through structured and unstructured questionnaire.

Presentation of Relevant Description of the Survey Data

The first set of data presented and discussed are those relating to the demographic characteristics of the respondents. We used tables to present the data to facilitate comparison.

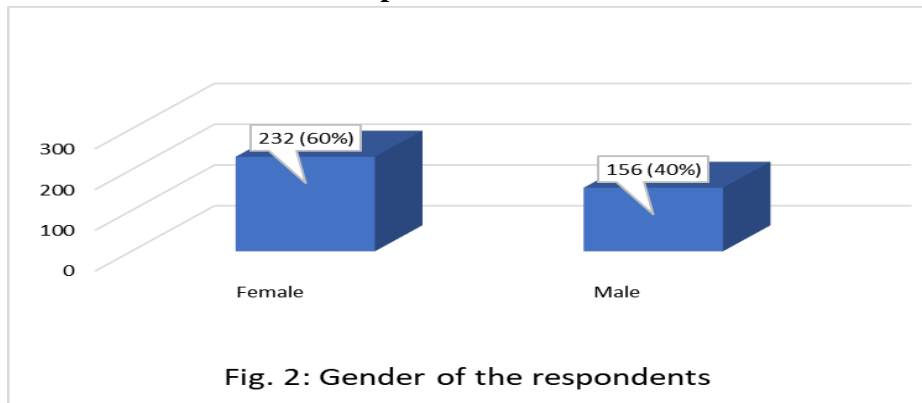
Age of the respondents



Source: Field survey (2024)

The data in Fig. 1 shows that most of the respondents (a combined 74%) are aged 39 years or older, compared to 26% aged between 18 years and 38 years. This implies that the individuals who were part of the study were aged enough to offer meaningful information. The age range covered those from 18 years and above. This was done to avoid seeking for the consent of parents in order to gather data from children below 18 years.

Gender distribution of the respondents



Source: Field survey (2024)

The data in Fig. 2 The table shows that more women (60%) than men (40%) were surveyed. This provided women that were the target of the research more chances to express their experiences. Moreover, the subject matter of this study was not gender-sensitive because some of the respondents were journalists that cut across gender and who employed various media strategies in reporting the traumatic experiences of IDP victims. In addition, the husbands and older adults equally had experience of the trauma suffered by the women and children in IDP camps.

Marital status of the respondents

The structure of the marital status of the respondents is presented in diagram below

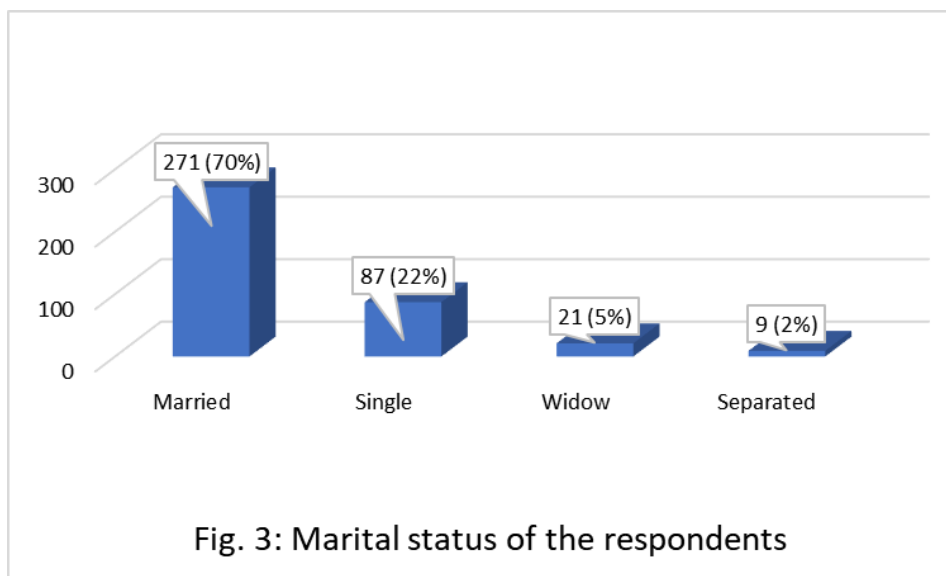


Fig. 3: Marital status of the respondents

Source: Field survey (2024)

As presented in Fig. 3, greater proportion of the surveyed women (70%) are married compared to those who are single (22%), widowed (5%), or separated (2%). In other words, the married group exceeds the single by 50%. This implies that about 7 in every 10 women who volunteered to be part of the study were married. The various categories were important in this study as they all experiences trauma in IDP camps.

Table 1: Awareness of the Trauma in IDP Camps

Item	Response	Frequency	Percent
Are you aware of the existence of Trauma in IDP camps in Northern Nigeria?	Yes	388	100.0
	No	N/A	0.0
Do you experience Trauma in IDP camps	Yes	388	100.0
	No	N/A	0.0

Source: Field survey (2024)

As presented in Table 2, all the respondents (100%) surveyed indicated that they are aware of the existence of trauma in IDP camps. This suggests that they are informed on the research problem and are in position to supply answers that would address the research questions adequately. With a good knowledge about the problem under investigation, the respondents are better poised to offer valid opinion that helps to achieve the research objectives of this study.

Table 2: Knowledge of Media Campaigns against Trauma in IDP Camps

Item	Response	Frequency	Percent
Do you have any knowledge of Media Campaigns against Trauma in IDP Camps?	Yes	387	99.7
	No	1	2.9
Has the media messages to reduce trauma helped you in any way?	Yes	387	99.7
	No	1	0.3
Would you like to continue hearing such media messages?	Yes	378	97.4
	No	8	2.1
	NA	2	0.5

Source: Field survey (2024)

As indicated in Table 3, only 1 person (0.3%) indicated to not have knowledge of the media campaigns to reduce trauma in IDP camps. This number is insignificant, and therefore, implies that a wide range of knowledge of the media campaigns against trauma in IDP camps exists among the inmates of the camps. This implies that they can apply the knowledge to reduce trauma and depressions people experience in IDP camps in Northern Nigeria.

Journalists Result on Media Strategies

In the area of the media strategies the IDP camps trauma reporters employ, our respondents' journalists differed in the strategies that they use. However, majority of the respondents agreed that they make use of pictures to indicate to those in IDP camps can actually be happy. They accompany their stories with pictures of people in bad mood for long and those in good mood to draw a contrast that allowed the women and children experiencing trauma to think about and choose the mood they preferred. The also report the health consequences of bad mood. Overall, we identified persuasion, moralisation, dramatisation, emotional appeals, canceling, building rapport and credibility, modeling, reinforcement and Trauma-informed care to be some of the media intervention strategies the journalists identified.

Discussion of Major Findings

The study found that the women and children displaced by the bandits in Northern Nigeria suffer various forms of trauma. The women in IDP camps experiences different forms of mental health issues, especially depression. This finding is similar to that of Morina, Akhtar, Barth & Schnyder (2018) and the Norwegian Refugee Council (2015 which found that displaced women in IDP camp experienced a variety of mental health problems, particularly depression and post-traumatic disorders. For those that had prolonged displacements, they experience behavioral problem (Norwegian Refugee Council, 2015). This means that majority of the displaced women were not only aware of the prevalence of trauma in the camps or had the knowledge as shown in Tables 1 and 2 but also had their health jeopardised. Children on their own side suffer shocks that also have effects on their health. This agrees with the finding of Jayne (2020) that a traumatized person may feel overwhelmed, helpless, shocked, or have difficulty processing their experiences.

We also found that the journalists in the Northern part of Nigeria employ different media intervention strategies to reduce the effects of trauma or experiences that could lead to trauma among the women and children in IDP camps. In support of this finding, Hassan et al., (2024) study showed that mass media messages were used to provide IDP inmates with coping strategies, inspired hope, and provide a sense of validation to trauma victims in Nigeria. Responses from the journalists showed that they engage the victims with persuasion, moralisation, dramatization, emotional appeals, canceling,

modeling and reinforcement. Finally, our study found that the media intervention strategies used in assuaging trauma among the women and children in IDP camp were successful. This is evidenced by the testimony of the victims of banditry who were relocated to IDP camps. Many of the respondents to our questionnaire said they have been able to sustain life because of the positives messages from the mass media and even the entertainments the media provide.

Conclusion

We conclude that the activities of bandits are horrific and disheartening with serious economic and social consequences on Nigeria. The displaced women and children are exposed to economic and social hardships that lead to trauma. The development is unacceptable and is synonymous to a state of war. Trauma is a bad experience and when children and women are subjected to it, the effects could live with them forever and chronic trauma could lead to death.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, we recommend as follows:

1. the government of Nigeria should provide adequately for people in IDP camps.
2. the media should sustain its campaigns against banditry
3. there is need for the media to explore more strategies that will be more effective in reducing the traumatic experiences of the people in IDP camps.

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