

Child Abuse And Neglect As Predictors Of Self-Esteem Of Pupils In Internally Displaced Persons' (Idps) Camp In Borno State, Nigeria

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Abstract

This study examined the predictive power of Child Abuse and Child Neglect on Self-Esteem of Pupils in Internally Displaced Persons' (IDPs) Camps in Borno State, Nigeria. The study adopted a correlation survey design and 2 research questions and 2 hypotheses guided the study. The population of the study consisted of 1,377 primary five pupils (males 790 females 587) in the learning space located within the 23 IDPs camps the sample of the study was 295 primary five pupils comprising of 150 males and 145 females. The instruments for data collection were Child Abuse Questionnaire (CAQ), Child Neglect Questionnaire (CNQ) and Child Self-Esteem Rating Scale (SERS). The instruments were subjected to face validation by 2 experts in Early Childhood Education and 1 expert in Measurement and Evaluation, all from the University of Nigeria, Nsukka. The pilot study was conducted at Yola and data collected was analysed using Cronbach Alpha and the reliability coefficients obtained were as follows: 0.79, 0.86 and 0.82 for CAQ, CNQ and SERS respectively. The researcher with the help of three research assistants collected data for the study. Data collected was analyzed using Simple Linear Regression analysis. Specifically, Correlation Coefficient of Determination (r^2) was used to answer the research questions and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) aspects of simple linear regression were used to test all the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The findings of the study revealed that there is a negative relationship between child abuse and self-esteem of pupils in IDP camps in Borno State, Nigeria and there is a negative relationship between child neglect and self-esteem. It was recommended among others that children should report cases of abuse to school teachers and other relevant agencies around them to prevent it from recurring and also help to process their emotions around the abuse to avert demission in their self-esteem.

Keywords: Self-esteem, child abuse, child neglect, insurgency, pupils

Introduction

Boko Haram (BH) started attack in Maiduguri in 2009 and since then the situation has degenerated into insurgency and terrorism. The BH has incessantly attacked virtually all the Local Government Areas in Borno state and all its neighbouring states in the North-East and beyond. The activity of BH has resulted in millions of people being displaced from their ancestral homes, loss of lives and property worth billions of Naira destroyed between 2014-2020. With over 23,000 people estimated to have been killed, 2.15 million internally displaced by the insurgent attacks (Internal Displacement Monitoring Center, 2019).

Some of the affected people fled to neighbouring countries, while those within the state were resettled in a government designated camps referred to as Internally Displaced Persons camps (IDPs). According to United Nation International Committee (2010), IDPs are individual or group of individuals who were forced to flee or to leave their houses in order to avoid violation of human rights and the effects of armed conflict, situation of generalized violence, or natural or human made disaster, and who have not crossed an internationally recognized state border. Similarly, International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) (2016) defined IDPs as group of persons who have been forced to or obliged to flee or leave their homes or places of habitual residence, in order to avoid the effects of armed conflict, situations of generalized violence, violations of human or man-made disasters, and who have not crossed intentionally recognized border. In this study, IDPs are those who have relocated from their ancestral home to another location within their own state as result of perpetual gun attacks by boko haram insurgents.

It has been observed that the IDPs settle where basic needs such as shelter, food, hygiene, facilities and healthcare are insufficient and people living in dire conditions (Voices from the Field, 2019). This has resulted in parents not being able to cater for their children's education leading to thousands of children being out of school (United Nation International Childs Education Fund, (UNICEF), 2017). This is worrisome and could adversely affect the gains in education achieved prior to the insurgency. Evidences abound that since the displacement of millions of Nigerians from the comfort of their homes to government designated IDP camps as refuges, children estimated at 1.8 million with 1 in 4 under the age of five have lost one or both parents and could not locate their relations (Salami, Iwuagwu & Amodu, 2020). Thus, were compelled to stay in the IDP camps with humanitarian agents who may not be able to provide the basic needs that will help these children return to normalcy. Hence, most children living in IDP camps seem to be exposed to various forms of child abuse (UNICEF, 2017).

The term child abuse subsumes many different conditions. It could be any form of harm or ill-treatment deliberately inflicted on a child which may include assaulting and thrusting on a child (Akduman, Ruban, Akduman, & Korkusuz, 2005). Child abuse is a human originated act of commission or omission and human created or tolerated conditions to inhibit or preclude the development of inherent potentials of children (Bankole & Arowosegbe, 2014). By so doing humans tends to deliberately inflict, ill-treat and force children to work on extremely difficult circumstances of exploitation which affect their physical and mental developments. These

definitions centre on the deliberate behaviours or actions of adults towards the child that is considered as harmful or threat of harm to the child. A child who is deliberately harmed through the actions of a parent or/and significant others either at home or otherwise is considered to have been abused. Most children seem to be abused in their homes by parents, caregivers, uncles, cousins and other relations, with fewer cases occurring in the organizations, schools or communities the child interacts with. Sometimes, these children are also neglected.

The concept of child neglect is generally the failure of fulfillment of individuals' obligation of taking care of a child and physically or mentally disregarding the child (Atay, 2003). Neglect is the failure of a parent, guardian, or other caregiver to provide for a child's basic needs adequately. (Youths Empowerment and Development Initiative (YEDI), 2015). In the same vein, the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR 2019) explained that child neglect includes physical neglect (failing to provide food, clothing, shelter, or other physical necessities), emotional neglect (not providing love, comfort, or affection), and medical or educational neglect (not providing access to needed medical care or education), or supervisory neglect (failure to appropriately supervise).

Neglectful parents or guardians are less likely to provide an intellectual stimulating environment for the child to read, supervise their homework and generally, such parents do not become involved in their children's academic life and this may greatly impact on their self-esteem. This is synonymous with people in the IDP camps in the North-East, Nigeria. Child Welfare League Nigeria (WLN) has reported that about 5 million children are neglected annually in Nigeria, resulting in rampant cases of stunted mental and physical growth of such children (UNHCR, 2019). Most children in the IDP camps seem to lack adequate nutrition, have poor access to medical and educational facilities. They tend to always be on the streets in search of charities and begging for alms which tend to increase their vulnerability and exposure to situations of abuse. Many children are found to be unkempt, weak and malnourished and cast out by families to fend for themselves. By implication, it could be said that most children especially those in the IDP camps seem not to have received the nurturing they need to thrive; instead they are neglected, abandoned and sometimes abused.

Neglected children may have grade repetitions in school, disciplinary referrals and a high number of suspensions, working and learning at below average as reported by teachers (Wright 2017). They may also have weaker orientations to future vocational and educational goals compared to non-neglected children. Child neglect is reported to have longer-term impact on children's mental health problems such as: post-traumatic symptoms, precocious sexual behavior, anxiety, stigmatization, guilt, and fear, sexual dysfunction, dissociative symptoms, eating disorders, substance abuse, and anger, depression, substance abuse, aggression, shame and low self-esteem (American Psychological Association, 2009; Heim and Nemeroff, 2001; Okenyi, 2021).

Self-esteem is a central construct in clinical, developmental, personality, and social psychology. It is related to personal beliefs about skills, social relationship and abilities. According to Murphy, Stosny & Morrel, (2005) self-esteem is described as a global barometer of self-evaluation involving cognitive appraisals about general self-worth and affective experiences of the self that are linked to the global appraisals. Furthermore, Muhammad, Syed & Haider (2015) stated that self-esteem constitute sane valuation of oneself followed by an

emotional reaction towards oneself. Subjectively, it can be inferred that self-esteem rises when one wins a contest, garners an award, overcomes challenge, or gains acceptance to a social group, in other words high self-esteem is attained.

Problem of the study

The vulnerability associated with lack of self-esteem could lead one to not gearing towards achieving high in life and education. Children in the IDP camps prefer to risk their academic with behavioural problems such as dropping out of school, truant, anxiety, depression and other negative outcomes. Hence, this study intended to investigate the predictive power of child abuse and neglect on self-esteem on pupils in IDPs camps in Borno State, Nigeria.

Purpose of the Study

This study intended to investigate the predictive power of child abuse and neglect on self-esteem on pupils in IDPs camps in Borno State, Nigeria. Specifically, the study sought to determine:

1. the predictive power of child abuse on self-esteem among pupils
2. the predictive power of child neglect on self-esteem among pupils

Research Questions

The following questions guided the study

1. What is the predictive power of child abuse on self-esteem among pupils?
2. What is the predictive power of child neglect on self-esteem among pupils?

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses guided the study and was tested at 0.05 level of significance

H₀₁: child abuse has no significant predictive power on self-esteem among pupils.

H₀₂: child neglect has no significant predictive power on self-esteem among pupils

Methodology

Design of the Study

The study adopted correlation survey design. This design according to Nworgu (2015) seeks to establish relationship that exist between two or more variables, and thereafter can indicate the direction and magnitude of relationship. The design is deemed appropriate for the present study because it will enable the researcher to establish the relationship between independent variables (child abuse and neglect) and dependent variable (self-esteem) of pupils in IDPs camps in Borno State. In similar studies, Achagh et al. (2020), Eya et al. (2020), Ezema et al. (2019), Gana et al. (2019), Ugwuanyi and Okeke (2020), Ugwuanyi et al. (2020), Ugwuanyi, Okeke and Njeze (2020), Ugwuanyi, Okeke and Ageda (2020), Ugwuanyi, Okeke and Asomugha (2020) have adopted this design.

Area of the Study

The area of the study is the in IDP camps in Borno state, Nigeria. Borno state is located in the North-East of Nigeria and its capital is Maiduguri. In Borno state there are 23 IDP camps spread over the state. The camps are: Bakasi, Bama, Banki, Custom House, Dalori I, Daloru II, Damboa, Dikwa, Elmiskin, Elmiskin Camp, Farm center, Gubio, Gwoza, Madinatu, Muna, Mafa, Mongono, Mongolis, Ngala, Ngala, NYSC camp, Stadium and Teachers village (BOSEMA 2021).

Population of the Study

The population of the study consists of 1,377 primary five pupils (males 790 females 587) in the temporary learning space in all the 23 IDPs camps (BOSEMA 2021). The respondents are believed to have attained a reasonable level of maturity and could easily recount their abuse and neglect experiences which could affect their self-esteem

Sample and Sampling Technique

The sample for the study comprised of 295 primary five pupils comprising of 150 males and 145 females in temporary learning spaces in the selected IDPs camp selected through accidental sampling. The criterion for the sample was based on the pupils on ground at the time of the research. The selected camps are: Bakassi, Dalori I, Dolori II, Stadium, Teachers village, and Farm center camps. Also, purposive sampling was used to select all the primary five pupils that have experienced abuse and neglect in the hands of their parents or other adults within or outside the camp.

Instruments for Data Collection

Three instruments were used for data collection in this study. These instruments are: Child Abuse Questionnaire (CAQ), Child Neglect Questionnaire (CNQ) and Child Self-Esteem Rating Scale (SERS). The questionnaire was developed by the researcher to elicit information on different categories of abuse experienced by pupils within the IDPs camp. CAQ is made up of two sections (A and B). Section A contains information on the demographic characteristics of the pupils and section B has 16 items on child abuse organized in four clusters to take care of the categories of child abuse as: physical, sexual, emotional and neglect. In same vein, Child Neglect Questionnaire (CNQ) has section (A and B). Section A contains instructions for the pupils since the document are pinned together there was no need repeating demographic information while section B has 16 items on child neglect. The items of the instrument was measured on a four Likert type response option of Very Often = VO, Often = O, Sometimes = S, Never = N. The responses were rated as 4, 3, 2 and 1 for VO, O, S and N respectively.

Child Self-Esteem Rating Scale (CSERS) was adopted from Rosenberg Self-Esteem Rating Scale to accommodate the characteristics of the pupils under study. Seven items were added on the instrument, making a total of 17s items statements that are related to overall feelings of self-worth or acceptance. The instrument is also on four rating scale option of Very Often = VO, Often= O, Sometimes = S, Never = N.

Validation of the Instruments

The instruments were validated by three experts: two in childhood education unit of the Department of Educational Foundations and one from Measurement and Evaluation unit of Department of Science Education, all from the Faculty of Education, University of Nigeria Nsukka. The experts securitized and edited the appropriateness of the language and the instructions for the respondents. The suggestions and corrections provided by the experts were used to modify the instruments and the final version of the instruments.

Reliability of the Instrument

The instruments were trial tested on a sample of 30 pupils who were randomly selected from Malkohi IDP camp in Yola South Local Government Area of Adamawa state, Nigeria. Data collected were subjected to reliability estimate in order to determine the internal consistency of items on the instruments using Cronbach's Alpha. This method was used because the items were polychromous scored. The reliability coefficients obtained were as follows: 0.79 for child abuse; 0.86 for child neglect; and 0.82 for self-esteem respectively. The overall estimate of was 0.79.

Method of Data Collection

The researcher used 326 copies of the instrument each to collect data form primary 5 pupils in 4 IDPs camp temporary learning spaces. Three research assistants were engaged to help administer the instruments. They were briefed on how to administer the instruments and collection of data from the respondents. During administration, the research assistants read, interpreted and explained the items of the instrument in Hausa language to the respondents for easy understanding. The instruments were retrieved on the spot from the respondents. This indicates the percentage of return rate at 100% since the instruments were retrieved on the sport. The researcher with the help of the research assistants visited the six selected camps in three days. That is, two camps were successfully administered with instrument in a day. The researcher collected the instruments from the research assistants, collated and arranged them for data analysis.

Method of Data Analysis

Data collected was analyzed using Simple Linear Regression analysis. Specifically, Correlation Coefficient of Determination (r^2) were used to answer the research questions and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) aspects of simple linear regression was used to test all the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

Results

Research Question 1: What is the predictive power of child abuse on self-esteem among pupils?

Table 1: Regression analysis of the predictive power of child abuse on self-esteem

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
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1	.420 ^a	.176	.173	8.70153
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a. Predictors: (Constant), Child Abuse

Table 1 shows that the correlation coefficient between child abuse and pupils' self-esteem is -.420 with coefficient determination of 0.176. This shows that there is a negative relationship between child abuse and self-esteem. By implication, increased child abuse experiences leads to decreased self-esteem. A coefficient of determination of 0.176 implies that 17.3 percent of the negative variation in pupils' self-esteem can be attributed to their experience of child abuse. In other words, the predictive power of child abuse on pupils self-esteem is 17.3 percent.

H₀₁: child abuse has no significant predictive power on self-esteem among pupils.

Table 2: Analysis of variance of the predictive power of child abuse on self-esteem

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig
1	Regression	4564.748	1	4564.748	60.287	.000 ^b
	Residual	21352.083	282	75.717		
	Total	25916.831	283			

a. Dependent Variable: Child Self-Esteem

b. Predictors: (Constant), Child Abuse

Table 2 shows that child abuse had a significant predictive power on pupils' self-esteem $F(1,282) = 60.287, P = 0.000$. This is for the fact that the associated probability value of 0.000 is less than the 0.05 level of significance. Thus, the null hypothesis of no significant predictive power of child abuse on self-esteem was rejected. Therefore, child abuse has significant predictive power on self-esteem among pupils.

Research Question 2: What is the predictive power of child neglect on self-esteem among pupils?

Table 3: Regression analysis of the predictive power of child neglect on self-esteem

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.619 ^a	.383	.381	7.53068

a. Predictors: (Constant), Child Neglect

Table 3 reveals that the correlation coefficient between child neglect and self-esteem is -0.619 with coefficient of determination of 0.383. This shows that there is a negative relationship between child neglect and self-esteem. Thus, the more the child is neglected the less his self-esteem development. Besides, a coefficient of determination of 0.383 implies that 38.3 percent negative variation in pupils' self-esteem can be attributed to their experience of child neglect, while the remaining 61.7 percentage can be attributed to other factors other than child neglect.

H₀2: child neglect has no significant predictive power on self-esteem among pupils

Table 4: Analysis of variance of the predictive power of child neglect on self-esteem

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig
1	Regression	9924.276	1	9924.276	174.997	.000 ^b
	Residual	15992.555	282	56.711		
	Total	25916.831	283			

- a. Dependent Variable: Child Neglect
- b. Predictors: (Constant), Child Neglect

Table 4 shows that child neglect had a significant predictive power on pupils' self-esteem, $F(1,282) = 174.997, P = 0.000$. This is as the associated probability value of 0.000 is less than the 0.05 level of significance. Hence, the null hypothesis which stated no significant predictive power of child neglect on pupils' self-esteem was rejected. Therefore, child neglect has significant predictive power on self-esteem among pupils.

Discussion of Findings

Predictive Power of Child Abuse on Self-Esteem among pupils

The finding of the study revealed a negative relationship between child abuse and self-esteem of pupils in IDP camps in Borno State, Nigeria. A corresponding hypothesis also revealed that child abuse has significant predictive power on pupils' self-esteem. The finding of the present study on the predictive power of child abuse on self-esteem is consistent with previous research studies. For instance, Rachna, Simi and Chandra (2013) reported that below poverty level adolescents experience more maltreatment- sexual, emotional, physical abuse and neglect and lower self-concept compared to above poverty level adolescents. Bankole and Arowosegbe (2014) found that dimensions of child abuse such as psychological abuse, sexual abuse physical abuse has influence on self-esteem. Özlem (2012) revealed a significant negative correlation between childhood abuse and self-esteem. Ajake, Bisong and Etuk (2011) reported a significant negative influence of emotional abuse on the students' self-concept of senior secondary school students in Cross River State Nigeria. Adigeb and Mbua (2015) reported that physical abuse of children has a significant relationship with their academic performance. Another study found that sexually abused children were unhappy or depressed and they had low level of self-esteem (Swanston, Plunkett, O'Toole, Shrimpton, Parkisn, & Oates, 2003).

The findings of the present study and other related empirical studies is in tune with the Looking-Glass Self Theory by Charles Horton Cooley (1864-1929) as related to the present study that children's development of self-esteem is determined by their perceived appraisal of their interactions, relationships and dealings with significant others within the environment. In view of this assertion, Handini and Minarni (2019) reported an influence of child abuse by parents on adolescent development of self-confidence. Other forms of child abuse could be traced to separation from primary caregivers as observable among most children within the IDP camps whose parents have been killed by the insurgents or could not locate their parents after a disperse by insurgent attack. Those experienced by children within the IDP camps seem

to be a bit hard on the children owing to the situation of events in their lives and within the camp premises.

Predictive Power of Child Neglect on Pupils' Self-Esteem among pupils

There is a negative relationship between child neglect and self-esteem. Further analysis corroborated this finding by revealing that child neglect has significant predictive power on self-esteem among pupils. Several large-scale studies have supported the finding of this study in their reports that children subjected to neglect may suffer from depression, anxiety, stress related disorders, and post-traumatic disorders (Lambie, 2005; Tillman Prazak, Burrier, Miller, Benezra, & Lynch., 2015; Usakli, 2012; Adela & Yu, 2019). The finding is also consistent with that of Nakiyemba (2018) who reported a negative significant relationship between child-neglect and self-esteem. Furthermore, research has consistently shown that exposure to child neglect in all its forms negatively affects the current and future emotional and psychological well-being of children Nakiyemba in the same vein added that negative relationship between parental neglect and poverty on maladaptive behavior in children.

Supported by Valentino et al. (2008) whose assertion among others maintained that abuse or neglect and violation of the rights of children are common in an environment wherein children are largely housed (such as IDPs and other grounds associated with forced migration). A child who is neglected frequently feels depressed and unable to feel good about himself/herself. What is particularly insidious about this form of abuse is that the children have no memories and no physical evidence of being beaten, molested, or abused because the bruise and the scars are invisible, it is the soul that is injured. Thus, child neglect leaves hidden scars that manifest themselves in many different ways, one of which is low self-esteem irrespective of gender causing devastating life consequences. This is as the affected children are often left with no one to turn to because most of the perpetrators of this heinous acts are parents and caregivers. Culmination of these psychological problems could contribute to the development of low self-esteem as they might lack social and emotional support to cope with such situations.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, the researcher concluded that:

- there is a negative relationship between child abuse and pupils' self-esteem
- there is a negative relationship between child neglect and pupils' self-esteem

Recommendations

The recommendations provided here focus on the findings of the study:

1. School counsellors and teachers who work directly with the pupils should be actively involved in working with humanitarian agencies within the camps to prevent child abuse from ever occurring.
2. Children should be encouraged to report cases of abuse to school teachers and other relevant agencies around them to prevent it from recurring and also helped to process their emotions around the abuse to avert demission in their self-esteem.

3. A stable classroom environment should be created for the abused children to help cushion the stress associated with abuse so they can participate actively in the class.
4. Trained mental health providers within the camps should provide school children affected by child neglect with mental health therapies to build up their self-esteem.
5. The school counsellors can work with parents to learn effective ways to establish caring relationships with their children. Schools can also engage teachers in this process to help bridge the gap between the classroom and home to support the children and family.

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