



# Assessment of Psychosocial Distress among Internally Displaced Persons (Idps) in Informal Camps in Host Communities of Maiduguri Metropolitan Council, Borno State, Nigeria

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**Abstract:** *This study assessed psychosocial distressed among Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in informal camps in host communities in Maiduguri, Borno State. The study was guided by four objectives and four research questions. The research design for this study was a survey research design. The population for this study consisted of all IDPs from various Local Government Areas living within informal camps in host communities totaling 193 households. The research instrument used to collect data for this study was questionnaire. It was tagged (APDAIDPHIC) Assessment of Psychosocial Distress among Internally Displaced Persons in Host Communities Camps, Maiduguri, Borno State. The instrument for the study was subjected to face and content validation by three experts. A pilot study was conducted at El-Miskan camp, in Jare Local Government Area, Borno State in order to establish the reliability of the instrument. Cronbach Alpha method was used to determine the internal consistency of the instrument of data obtained from the pilot that yielded a reliability coefficient of .937. The data collected were analyzed using descriptive statistics of simple percentage to analyze the demographic data of the respondents, mean and standard deviation used respectively for the analysis of research questions. The findings of study revealed that the level of emotional distress among internally displaced persons was high in host communities camps, Maiduguri; level of physical distress among internally displaced persons is high in host communities camps, Maiduguri; level of mental distress among internally displaced persons is high in host communities camps, Maiduguri; and the level of cognitive distress among internally displaced persons is also high in host communities camps in Maiduguri, Borno State. The study concluded that Boko Haram attacks caused emotional, physical, mental and cognitive distress among Internally Displaced Persons informal camps in host communities in Maiduguri, Borno State. Based the findings of the study, it was recommended among others that government should ensure social support responses given to Internally Displaced Persons in host communities of informal camps within Maiduguri to reinstate and stabilize them from the shock and trauma experienced as a result Boko Haram attacks; and Non-Governmental Organizations should develop and offer measures to mitigate the effects of psycho-social distress among IDPs in informal camps in host communities and so that funds they offer will reduce the plight of the IDPs.*

**Keywords:** Psychosocial Distress, Internally Displaced Persons

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background of the Study

Psychosocial distress is referred to a connection between psychological aspect of experience, thoughts and emotions, which can result into emotional, physical, mental and cognitive distress in person affected by conflict and disasters it can also be interpreted to be psychological challenges affecting human beings which manifest itself in diverse conditions such as sense of inadequacy, anxiety, depression and inability to function and concentrate effectively or solve problems of life. Psychological distress is the exposure to a stressful event that threatens the physical or mental health, the inability to cope effectively with this stressor and the emotional disorder that results from this ineffective coping. As psychological distress may be a forerunner to mental, physical, and emotional exhaustion, there is a need to initiate preventive or early interventions to avoid mental, physical, and emotional chaos in such patients.

Psychosocial problems in emergencies are highly interconnected, yet specific problems may be mainly either social or psychological in nature. Significant problems that are largely social include: pre-existing (pre-emergency) social problems (e.g., extreme poverty, political oppression, belonging to a group that is discriminated against or marginalized), emergency-induced social problems (e.g., separation of family disruption of social networks, destruction of community structures, resources and trust, increased gender-based violence), recovery-induced social problems (e.g., undermining of existing community structures, networks or social identity and attachment processes), The social impact of secondary stressors, which are the circumstances, events or policies that are indirectly related to or are a consequence of an emergency. Secondary stressors can worsen social problems that existed before the emergency. They can also complicate recovery when their impact becomes greater than the emergency event itself.

The impact of “Boko Haram attack on health of IDPs is influenced by a host of factors such as the nature of the conflict, the kind of trauma and distress experienced, the cultural context, and the individuals, as well as communities’ resources of IDPs in Teachers Village camp (Mohammed & Thabet, 2017). Adult victims usually feel guilt or shame, degraded, humiliated, and dehumanized. Their self-esteem is extremely low, and they view themselves as unlovable (Zust, 2000). Many psychological factors also contribute to the emotional response to violence. Fear, anger, shock, sadness, and disbelief are all common and normal emotional responses. These IDPs responses may be based on the person’s personality and normal coping patterns, coping reserves, and support system available. After a disaster, common responses can include sleep disturbances, and increased use of alcohol, tobacco, and illicit drugs (Videbeck, 2008)”.

Borno State continues to struggle “due to a prolonged Boko Haram attack, arising from the insurgency and counter-insurgency activities in the region, in relation to the Boko Haram activities. Boko Haram, as the group is popularly known, can be roughly translated to ‘western education is prohibited’. Founded in 2002, the group started systematic attacks in 2009 against the Nigerian security operatives, traditional leaders and the civilian population. Since then, Boko Haram has targeted markets, motor parks, places of worship, government offices, detention centers, religious figures and, increasingly, schools and children. Borno State is itself one of the most affected states in the Northeast,

which was repeatedly hit by insurgency and where the biggest populations of the IDPs are from (Adamu, 2012)".

Thousands of Borno indigenes have been sent to their untimely graves and some have been displaced and made to be 'refugees' in different locations in the state and the Nation, while several thousands, too, have been hospitalized since the menace of the sect. In addition, hundreds, if not thousands have joined the physically challenged persons in the country due to Boko Haram insurgency. Its means "terror has evolved from the use of crude weapons to bombs, and the use of children as suicide bombers. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) (2007) stated that internally displaced persons are forced to flee their homes but unlike refugees, they remain within their country's borders. Specifically, they are persons or group of persons who have been forced or obliged to flee or to leave their homes or places of habitual residence, in particular as a result of or in order to avoid the effects of conflict, situations of generalized violence, violations of human rights or natural or human-made disasters, and who have not crossed an internationally recognized state border (Akhunzada *et al.*, 2015). As internally displaced, they often live in temporary dwellings or shelters thereby taking them away from their means of livelihood, material and cultural resources, and access to traditional coping that they had previously depended on (Bang & Few, 2012). These displaced persons are faced with many challenges which include limited job opportunities, poor housing conditions, and lack of access to toilets, electricity, and water. They lack access to good health facilities leading to increase morbidity and mortality (Bang & Few, 2012)". This is a true reflection of people affected by Boko Haram activities in Borno State.

Mental health and psychosocial problems are prevalent in most communities of the world, these problems are much more frequent among people who have faced adversity, such as exposure to a humanitarian crisis (World Health Organization 2012) like Boko Haram insurgency in Maiduguri being the headquarter of Boko Haram insurgents that broke up in 2009. It is worthy of note that the psychosocial distress does not only affect the individual and his or her mental health, rather its impact is felt at different levels (individuals, families and communities) and types (emotional, psychological and social) of impact of the crisis are dealt with (ACF, 2011). The presence of mental health problems among the internally displaced persons contribute to difficulties in coping and resettlement in normal life. Aldwin and Yancura (2004) suggested that the ways individuals cope with trauma may play a more important role in their adjustment than the traumatic event itself. The victims are reluctant to discuss trauma related events or symptoms because of painful feelings. This makes it more difficult to obtain accurate information on the traumatic events and its impact".

Emotional distress describes the "unpleasant feelings or emotions that people may have when they feel overwhelmed. These emotions and feelings can get in the way of their daily living and affect how they react to people around them. Emotional distress happens when people are faced with stressors that you are unable to cope with. These stressors could be: traumatic experiences like in the case of Boko Haram insurgents where many relations and neighbours are killed or injured in the cause of attack by insurgents, major life events, everyday stressors such as workplace stress, family stress, and relationships,

health issues Emotional distress can come out as: fatigue, sadness, anxiety, avoidance of social situations, fear, anger, moodiness etc. and anxiety (Doran, 2004)".

Physical distress is an injury sustained as a result of attacks sustained from violent group or terrorist group. In this context physical distress represents physical injuries sustained as a result of insurgents' attacks. Physical distresses represent the physical imbalance of people affected by insecurity. Cognitive distress represents the "severe and long-term consequences, which are generally harmful to intellectual and perceptive of people affected by insecurity. Cognitive distress can be determined by one's thoughts or beliefs. Cognitive theorists suggest that people' ascription of events, their perceptions of control and self-efficacy, and their global belief or assumptions influence the behaviours and emotions they have in reaction to situation".

In December 2015, "Internally Displaced Monitoring Centre estimated that the IDP population is composed of 53 % women and 47% men and 92% of IDPs were displaced by the insurgency attack (Adimula, 2016). The Internally Displaced Persons in host communities camps, are people from different Local Government Areas, as a result of series of Boko Haram attacks in various Local Government Areas, following their displacement to the host communities camps, the IDPs witnessed various degrees of trauma. However, due to the displacement course by insurgency which started since 2009, following a series of attacks in different parts of the state which led to the migration of people from different local government areas of the state to the state capital (Maiduguri). The IDPs living in the camp are people who depend on themselves before the emergence of the insecurity, they have their own means of surviving in their communities, some of them were farmers, fisher men, commercial drivers, businessmen and women and some of their children were in schools before their displacement. In their various communities or villages, people were tortured, women and young ladies are raped, some in the presence of their parents, husbands and community members, some women and young ladies were forcefully married and taking away by the Boko Haram sects, markets were burnt, commercial cars were seized and some were burnt, this experience led many of the internally displaced persons into trauma and psychosocial distress. The researcher observed some men, women and children are thinking too much in the camp which means they need to be counselled. When the researcher visited the camp some of them were sitting idle in various locations of the camp and discussing among themselves, even for them to go to farm is not easy where by all the farming land is occupied by the insurgency and the little one that is left for farming behind the community certain criteria have to be followed before they will be allowed by the security agencies to go to the farm".

Also, one of the components for which Internally Displaced Persons are to be cared for, is their psychosocial dimensions. The care offered to them in this aspect would require that the level of their psychosocial distress is established so that appropriate psychiatric support, counseling, and practical support can be offered to them. It is based on the above discussion that the researcher was motivated to assess the level of psychosocial distress among Internally Displaced Persons in Host Communities Camp, Maiduguri, Borno State.

## 2.0 METHODOLOGY

This chapter presents methods used in conducting the research, these include; Research Design, Population and Sample, Research Instrument, Procedure for Data Collection, Method of Data Analysis and Expected Outcome:

### 2.1 Research Design

Survey research design was adopted for this study, according to Anderson (1981), “survey design is used by a researcher who wants to collect data from a large sample within a very short time. Also allows the researcher to use instruments such as questionnaire, interviews, observation checklist, and phone calls to collect data for the study. The analysis of data obtained from survey design is done using descriptive statistics such as frequency counts, percentages, mean, standard deviation, etc. The findings obtained from survey researches are then generalized on the entire population. This research design is appropriate for this study because the study will collect data from Internally Displaced Persons’ (IDPs) in Host Community Camps in Maiduguri, Borno State”.

### 2.2 Population and Sample

The population for this study consisted of all IDPs from various Local Government Areas living within informal camps in host communities totaling 193 households. The camps were Yajuwa IDPs Camp behind Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) quarters with a total household of 65, Ajiri IDPs Camp adjacent CBN quarters with a total household of 83’ and Busugu IDPs Camp behind CBN quarters with a total household of 45 (SALIENT HUMANATERIAN ORGANIZATION, 2023). In view of the manageable population; census method was adopted hence all the head of households, male and female were recorded to participate as sample in this study.

Therefore, the sample from all the heads of household was 193. The choice for census sample is in line with the view of Sambo (2008) that when the size of the subject is manageable and considers the whole population of interest census study is appropriate.

### 2.3 Research Instrument

Questionnaire was the instrument adopted for this study. The “questionnaire was design by the researcher to elicit responses from the IDPs. It was tagged (APDAIDPHIC) Assessment of Psychosocial Distress Among Internally Displaced Persons in Host Communities Camps, Maiduguri, Borno State. The questionnaire was divided into two parts of “A” and “B”. Part “A” sought personal information about the respondents while Part “B” contains 28 items with Likert type scale of very high level 4points, high level 2points, moderate level 2points and low level 1point designed to elicit responses from the respondents for the research questions”.

The instrument for the study was subjected to face and content validation by three experts: two senior lecturers including the supervisory member from the Department of Continuing Education and Extension Services, University of Maiduguri, and one from the Department of Education, University of Maiduguri, Borno State. This is in line with Kerlinger (2008) that validation of content of research instrument by expert is an important acceptance type of validation. These experts critically examined the instrument with



respect to its fitness for the purpose of this research work. Their criticisms, suggestions and comments were taken into consideration in producing the final version of the instrument.

A pilot study was conducted at “El-Miskan camp, in Jare Local Government Area, Borno State in order to establish the reliability of the instrument. The choice of El-Miskan IDPs camp, in Jare was predicated on the fact that the camp possesses similar characteristics with the camps in Host Communities of Maiduguri Metropolitan Council but was not part of the camp under study. This is in line with Olaofe (2010) position that pilot tests were conducted with a small sample size of respondents similar but not the same as the ones that would be used in the study. Twenty households’ heads was randomly selected for the pilot study. Twenty copies of the questionnaires were distributed to selected respondents in El-Miskan camp, Borno State. Following the pilot study, the areas of difficulties and ambiguities in the instrument were refined and made easier for respondents’ comprehension. Also Cronbach Alpha method was used to determine the internal consistency of the instrument of data obtained from the pilot that yielded a reliability coefficient of .937”.

#### **2.4 Procedure for Data Collection**

The researcher obtained a letter of introduction from the office of the Head of Department, Department of Continuing Education and Extension Services, University of Maiduguri, Borno State. The letter assisted the researcher to get permission from the respective camp heads to formally introduce the purpose of the study and the questionnaire to the causes needs to voluntarily participate in the study. After obtaining the consent, the researcher and the 2 retrained research assistants administered the questionnaire to the respondents, however, most of the respondents may not be illiterate to respond to the questionnaire, in view of this the questionnaire were translated to their respondents so as to enable them respond adequately. The research assistants administered the questionnaire in Busugu, Ajiri and Yujuwa camps. The administration and collection of the instrument last for 2 weeks.

#### **2.5 Method of Data Analysis**

The data for this study were analyzed using “descriptive statistics of simple percentage to analyze the demographic data of the respondents, mean and standard deviation used respectively for the analysis of research questions. For research questions, one to four, weighted mean scores of 2.50 and above were considered as high level, while weighted mean scores of 2.49 and below were considered as low level”. The choice of descriptive statistics is informed by Adefila (2008) who stated that descriptive statistics provide valuable information and the use of descriptive statistics to present bio-data and to answer questionnaires to the particular group of individuals observed.

### **3.0 DATA ANALYSIS, RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

The data were analyzed and presented under relevant headings as follows: Analysis of Demographic Data, research questions, Summary of Major Finding and Discussion of Findings.

### 3.1 Data Analysis and Result

Table Descriptive Statistics on Demographic Data

**Table 1 Statistical Distribution on Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents**

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
<b>1. Gender:</b>		
Male	162	83.8%
Female	31	16.2%
<b>2. Age:</b>		
26-35 years	53	27.7%
36-35 years	79	40.8%
56-75 years	46	23.8%
76-years and above	15	7.7 %
<b>3. Educational qualification</b>		
SSCE	95	49.2%
NCE/ND	34	17.7%
Non-formal Education	64	33.1%
<b>4. Occupation:</b>		
Farmer	62	32.3 %
Trader	76	39.2 %
Artisan	55	28.5%

**Source:** field survey 2023

The table presents data on four variables: gender, age, educational qualification, and occupation, along with their corresponding frequencies and percentages. Gender distribution reveals a majority of males comprising 83.8% of the sample, while females constitute the remaining 16.2%. This suggests a notable gender imbalance within the sample population. Regarding age demographics, the majority falls within the 26-35 years bracket, accounting for 27.7%, followed by the 36-55 years bracket with 40.8%. The age groups of 56-75 years and 76 years and above represent 23.8% and 7.7% respectively. This distribution indicates a relatively younger population, with a substantial proportion being middle-aged.

Educational qualification shows that the largest group holds Non-formal Education, comprising 33.1% of the sample. SSCE (Senior Secondary Certificate Examination) holders represent 49.2%, while NCE/ND (National Certificate of Education/National Diploma) holders account for 17.7%. This suggests a diverse educational background within the sample, with a notable portion having completed non-traditional educational pathways. Occupationally, traders form the largest group with 39.2%, followed closely by farmers at 32.3%, and artisans at 28.5%. This distribution reflects a diverse occupational profile within the sample, with a significant portion engaged in trading activities.

**Research Question 1:** What is the level of emotional distress among Internally Displaced Persons in host communities' camps, in Maiduguri?

**Table 2: Mean and standard deviation of responses on the level of emotional distress**

<b>among internally displaced persons in the Teachers Village IDP camp</b>				
<b>S/N</b>	<b>Item Statements</b>	$\bar{X}$	<b>SD</b>	<b>Remark</b>
1.	The level of traumatic experiences as many relations and neighbours are killed or injured in the cause of attack by insurgents.	3.05	1.03	High level
2.	The level of unpleasant feelings in daily living affect how reaction to the people around as a result of insurgents activities.	2.73	1.04	High level
3.	The level of anxiety, avoidance of social situations, fear, anger, moodiness as a result of insurgents activities	2.77	1.05	High level
4.	The level of guilt or shame, degraded, humiliated, and dehumanized as a result of insurgents activities	2.54	1.02	High level
5.	The level of self-esteem and feeling unlovable in camp as a result of insurgents attacks	2.43	1.15	Moderate level
6.	The level of financial strain as a result of insurgent activities.	3.17	0.87	High level
7.	The level of relationship difficulties in camp as a result of insurgent attacks	2.35	1.03	Moderate level
8.	The level of use of substance in the transition from controlled to excessive substance use as a result of bad experiences.	2.07	0.92	Moderate level
<b>Weighted average</b>		<b>2.64</b>	<b>1.01</b>	<b>High level</b>

*Source: Field Survey, 2023*

The data in Table 2 shows the mean and standard deviation of responses on the level of emotional distress among internally displaced persons in host communities camps, Maiduguri. The Table reveals that the respondents indicated that the level of traumatic experiences is high as many relations and neighbours are killed or injured in the cause of attack by insurgents, same way the respondents indicated that the level of unpleasant feelings in daily living is high thereby affect reaction to the people around as a result of insurgents' activities. These were supported by mean scores of 3.05, and 2.73. The respondents also indicated that the level of anxiety, avoidance of social situations, fear, anger, moodiness as a result of insurgent's activities is high and guilt or shame, degraded, humiliated, and dehumanized as a result of insurgent's activities is to high level. These were also supported by mean scores of 2.77, and 2.54. In addition, the respondents indicated that the level of financial strain as a result of insurgent activities is high with mean score of 3.17. Though the respondents indicated that "the level of self-esteem and feeling unlovable in camp because of insurgents' attacks is moderate, same way level of relationship difficulties in camp as a result of insurgent attacks is moderate and level of use of substance in the transition from controlled to excessive substance use as a result of bad experiences is moderate. Mean scores of 2.43, 2.35 and 2.07 supported these. All the eight item constructs have standard deviation ranging from 0.87 to 1.15. This means that the responses of the respondents are not widely spread as they are close to their



respective mean scores. The table has a calculated weighted average mean and standard deviation score of 2.64 and 1.01 respectively. This implied that the level of emotional distress among internally displaced persons is high in host communities' camps, Maiduguri (mean = 2.64, SD = 1.01)".

Research Question 2: What is the level of physical distress among internally displaced persons in host communities' camps, Maiduguri?

**Table 3: Mean and standard deviation of responses on the level of physical distress among internally displaced persons in host communities' camps**

S/N	Item Statements	$\bar{X}$	SD	Remark
9.	The level of physical injuries sustained as a result of insurgents 'attacks	2.85	0.96	High level
10.	The level of inadequate oxygen supply, and biochemical imbalances in the camp as a result of insurgent attacks	2.54	1.02	High level
11.	The level of nutritional deficiencies, food allergies and sensitivities, unhealthy eating habits in the camp as a result of insurgent attacks	2.72	1.07	High level
12.	The level of dehydration, substance abuse and dental challenges in the camp as result of insurgent attacks	3.17	0.87	High level
13.	The level of deterioration of health and health services in the camp as a result of insurgent attacks that requires an extraordinary helping response	3.24	0.83	High level
14.	The level of mortality in the camp due to epidemic as a result of insurgent activities	2.72	1.07	High level
<b>Weighted average</b>		<b>2.87</b>	<b>0.97</b>	<b>Agreed</b>

Source: Field Survey, 2023

The data in Table 3 shows the mean and standard deviation of responses on the level of physical distress among internally displaced persons in host communities camps, in Maiduguri. The respondents indicated high level for all the constructs as the mean scores are above 2.50. The table reveals that the respondents indicated that level of physical injuries sustained as a result of insurgents 'attacks is high, and level of inadequate oxygen supply, and biochemical imbalances in the camp as a result of insurgent attacks is also high, same way level of nutritional deficiencies, food allergies and sensitivities, unhealthy eating habits in the camp is high as a result of insurgent attacks. These were supported by mean scores of 2.85, 2.54 and 2.72. The respondents also indicated that the level of dehydration, substance abuse and dental challenges in the camp is high as well as the level of deterioration of health and health services in the camp is high as a result of insurgent attacks that requires an extraordinary helping response. These were also supported by mean scores of 3.17, and 3.24. In addition, the respondents indicated that the level of level of mortality in the camp due to epidemic as a result of insurgent activities is high with mean score of 2.72. All the six item constructs have standard deviation ranging from 0.83 to 1.07. This means that the responses of the respondents are not widely spread as they are close to their respective mean scores. The table has a calculated weighted average mean and standard deviation score of 2.87 and 1.07

respectively. This implied that the level of physical distress among internally displaced persons is high in host communities' camps, Maiduguri (mean = 2.64, SD = 1.01).  
 Research Question 3: What is the level of mental distress among internally displaced persons in host communities' camps, Maiduguri?

**Table 4: Mean and standard deviation of responses on the level of mental distress among internally displaced persons in host communities' camps**

S/N	Item Statements	$\bar{X}$	SD	Remark
15	The level of change of behaviour affects their relationships with people around them as a result of insurgent attacks	2.67	1.08	High level
16	The level of how people experience problems in the way they think, feel or behave in camp as a result of insurgent attacks	2.65	1.02	High level
17	Insurgent activities significantly interfere with the level of enjoyment of life in the camp	3.05	0.95	High level
18	Insurgent activities significantly impaired the level of cognitive functioning	2.72	1.07	High level
19	Insurgent activities significantly impaired the level of learning disabilities	2.72	1.10	High level
20	The level of psychiatric morbidity as a result of insurgent's attacks	2.95	0.99	High level
<b>Weighted average</b>		<b>2.79</b>	<b>1.04</b>	<b>Agreed</b>

Source: Field Survey, 2023

The data in Table 4 above shows the mean and standard deviation of responses on the level of mental distress among internally displaced persons in host communities camps, Maiduguri. The respondents indicated high level for all the constructs as the mean scores are above 2.50. The table reveals that the respondents indicated that change of behaviour affect their relationships with people around them to high level as a result of insurgent attacks, same way how people experience problems in the way they think, feel or behave in camp is high as a result of insurgent attacks and insurgent activities significantly interferes with the level of enjoyment of life in the camp to high level. These were supported by mean scores of 2.67, 2.65 and 3.05. In addition, the respondents indicated that insurgent activities significantly impaired the level of cognitive functioning and learning disabilities to high level and the level of psychiatric morbidity as a result of insurgent attacks is high. These were also supported by mean scores of 2.72, 2.72, and 2.95. All the six item constructs have standard deviation ranging from 0.95 to 1.08. This means that the responses of the respondents are not widely spread as they are close to their respective mean scores. The table has a calculated weighted average mean and standard deviation score of 2.79 and 1.04 respectively. This implied that the level of mental distress among internally displaced persons is high in host communities' camps, Maiduguri (mean = 2.79, SD = 1.04).

Research Question 4: What is the level of cognitive distress among internally displaced persons in host communities' camps, in Maiduguri?

**Table 5: Mean and standard deviation of responses on the level of cognitive distress among internally displaced persons in host communities' camps**

S/N	Item Statements	$\bar{X}$	SD	Remark
21.	Long-term hardship people are exposed to due to insurgent attacks affect the level they can recall facts	1.96	0.95	Low level
22.	Long-term hardship people are exposed to due to insurgent attacks affects the level of occupational functioning and daily life	2.72	1.07	High level
23.	The level of distracting influence due long-term hardship people are exposed exerts on reasoning control in most individuals	2.72	1.07	High level
24.	Long-term hardship people are exposed to impair the level of how to explain and interpret situations	2.30	1.13	Moderate level
25.	Long-term hardship people are exposed to impair the level people can adjust and adopt the camp as their new homes	2.38	1.12	Moderate level
26.	Long-term hardship people are exposed to affect the level of how they gather and process information to develop healthy living	2.72	1.07	High level
27.	Long-term hardship people are exposed to impairs the level of how people can justify actions and measure their worthiness.	2.72	1.07	High level
28.	Long-term hardship people are exposed to impair level of critical thinking and executive functioning	2.70	1.05	High level
<b>Weighted average</b>		<b>2.53</b>	<b>1.07</b>	<b>Agreed</b>

Source: Field Survey, 2023

The data in Table 5 above shows the mean and standard deviation of responses on the level of cognitive distress among internally displaced persons in host communities camps, Maiduguri. The table reveals that the respondents indicated that the long-term hardship people are exposed to due to insurgent attacks affects the level of occupational functioning and daily life to high level same way distracting influence due to long-term hardship people are exposed exerts on reasoning control in most individuals and affect the level of how they gather and process information to develop healthy living to high level. These were supported by mean scores of 2.72, 2.72, and 2.72 respectively. In addition, the respondents also indicated that long-term hardship people are exposed to impair how people can justify actions and measure its worthiness as well as the critical thinking and executive functioning to high level. These were also supported by mean scores of 2.72, and 2.70. Though the respondents indicated that the long-term hardship people are exposed to due to insurgent attacks affect the level they can recall facts to low level with mean score of 1.96 while long-term hardship people are exposed impair the level of how to explain and interpret situations as well as level people can adjust and adopt the camp as their new homes to moderate level (mean score = 2.30 and 2.38. All the eight item constructs have standard deviation ranging from 0.95 to 1.13. This means

that the responses of the respondents are not widely spread as they are close to their respective mean scores. The table has a calculated weighted average mean and standard deviation score of 2.53 and 1.07 respectively. This implied that the level of cognitive distress among internally displaced persons is high in host communities' camps, Maiduguri (mean = 2.53, SD = 1.07).

### 3.2 Summary of Major Findings

The followings are the summary of findings:

1. The level of emotional distress among internally displaced persons is high in host communities' camps, Maiduguri (mean = 2.64, SD = 1.01).
2. Level of physical distress among internally displaced persons is high in host communities' camps, Maiduguri (mean = 2.64, SD = 1.01).
3. Level of mental distress among internally displaced persons is high in host communities' camps, Maiduguri (mean = 2.79, SD = 1.04).
4. The level of cognitive distress among internally displaced persons is high in host communities' camps, Maiduguri (mean = 2.53, SD = 1.07).

### 3.3 Discussion of Finding

With reference to research one that sought to determine the level emotional distress among Internally Displaced Persons in host communities of informal camps in Maiduguri. The data in Table 5 revealed that the level of emotional distress among internally displaced persons is high in host communities' camps, Maiduguri. This finding is in line with the opinion of Doran (2004) that observed that victims of terrorist activities exhibited unpleasant feelings in the way of their daily living and affect how they react to the people around them. This happens when they are faced with stressors that they are unable to cope with. These stressors could be: traumatic experiences like in the case of Boko Haram insurgent where many relations and neighbours are killed or injured in the cause of attack by insurgents, major life events, and everyday stressors such as workplace stress, family stress, and relationships, health issues. This finding is also supported by Zust, (2000) that adult victims usually feel guilt or shame, degraded, humiliated, and dehumanized. Their self-esteem is extremely low, and they view themselves as unlovable.

Research question two that sought to determine the level of physical distress among Internally Displaced Persons in host communities of informal camps in Maiduguri, the data presented in Table 6 revealed that the level of physical distress among internally displaced persons is high in host communities camps, Maiduguri. This finding is agreement with findings Videbeck, (2008) that the victims of violence certainly can have physical injuries needing medical attention, they also experience psychological injuries with a broad range of responses. The finding is also in line with WHO (2002) that some victims of violence are agitated and visibly upset; others are withdrawn and aloof, appearing numb or oblivious to their surroundings, cause loss of human life or the deterioration of health and health services on a scale that requires an extraordinary helping response from outside the affected community. to support this finding also is Dougherty (2000) that states conflict events can result in the experience of severe stress or injury in any population, irrespective of their cultural background. There is a direct or

indirect exposure of a person to a life-threatening event, physical stress and casualty to physical existence (APA, 1996).

Research question three sought to determine the level of mental distress among Internally Displaced Persons in host communities of informal camps in Maiduguri. The data in Table 7 revealed that the level of mental distress among internally displaced persons is high in host communities' camps, Maiduguri. This finding is in line with the opinion of World Health Organization (2012) that the presence of mental health problems among the internally displaced persons contributes to difficulties in coping and resettlement in normal life. Mental health and psychosocial problems are common in all communities of the world; these problems are much more frequent among people who have faced adversity, such as exposure to a humanitarian crisis). The finding is also in agreement with the opinion of Marchand, Drapeau, and Beaulieu-Prevost (2012) that people with mental distress can experience problems in the way they think, feel or behave. Their thinking, feeling and behaviour are all mixed up; this significantly interferes with their relationships with other people, their work, and their enjoyment of life. This finding is in line with the findings of Crea, *et al.*, (2015) and Porter and Haslam (2005) identified that camp conditions and post-displacement accommodations are important predictors of mental health. Also, the findings of Husain, Anderson, *et al.* (2011) and Mels, *et al.*, (2008) identified that exposure to violence and daily stressors, including those associated with the built environment and socioeconomic hardship, are associated with posttraumatic stress disorder and poor mental health among these populations, suggesting that discontinuation of these stressors can be an important intervention to mitigate the consequences of trauma.

Research question 4 four sought to determine the level cognitive distress among Internally Displaced Persons in host communities of informal camps in Maiduguri. The result presented in Table 8 revealed that the level of cognitive distress among internally displaced persons is high in host communities' camps, Maiduguri. This finding is in line with the finding of Markstrom, Marshall and Tryon (2000). They identified key protective factors in an individual's life that can buffer and prevent the impact of knowledge is trauma. The most significant protective factor is the individual's connection with and attachment to beneficial friends, family and unrelated adults. to support this finding are also Dolcos and McCarthy (2006). They attest that negative emotional stimuli appear to exert a greater distracting influence on cognitive control in most individuals. It is in line with this finding that Alperstein and Raman, (2003); and Luthar and Cicchetti (2000) opined that the most significant protective factor is the individual's connection with and attachment to beneficial friends, family and unrelated adults. For IDP's particularly, experiencing caring, accepting and encouraging relationships with family and non-family adults (such as teachers, coaches and mentors) has a significant and positive impact on their cognitive development. For older IDPs and teenagers who have already been exposed to and adversely affected by long-term hardship, the late establishment of healthy individual relationships can help intercept the individual's negative life trajectories and prevent future exposure to high-risk situations.



## Conclusion

The study assessed psychosocial distress among Internally Displaced Persons from various Local Government Areas in host communities of informal camps in Maiduguri, Borno State.

Findings revealed Boko Haram caused psychosocial distress among victims of Boko Haram attacks from various Local Government Areas of Borno State in host communities of informal camps within Maiduguri, Borno State. It is concluded that Boko Haram attacks caused emotional, physical, mental and cognitive distress among Internally Displaced Persons in informal camps in host communities in Maiduguri, Borno State. The prevalence of psychosocial distress among IDPs in informal camps in host communities in Maiduguri was considerably high. Generally, the prevalence of psychosocial distress was similar in males and females (households) the prevalence of severe psychosocial distress in the informal camps showed a sharp increase. The risk factors associated with psychosocial distress in this sample included trauma, being widowed, being unable to work and having a medical condition, depression (e.g., lost interest; sadness; hopelessness) and anxiety (e.g., restlessness; feeling tense) etc. All the four categories of symptoms (emotional, physical, mental and cognitive distress) were highly associated with how the IDPs felt on arrival in informal camps as internal refugees. This indicates that the IDPs may need psychosocial support at the time of arrival, possibly reducing their distress symptoms, there were many things that needed to be arranged before they could abandon their homes.

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