

COUNSELLING IMPLICATIONS OF THE INTERNALLY DISPLACED PEOPLE IN NIGERIA OCCASIONED BY BOKOHARAM INSURGENCY

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Abstract

This paper focused on the counselling implications of the internally displaced occasioned by Boko Haram. It described Boko Haram as a coinage from Hausa language which implies that western education is a sin and that it is responsible for the hopelessness, joblessness and moral decadence of many youths in Nigeria today founded by Muhammed Yusuf. Some of their activities in Nigeria include massive destruction of properties and sending many people to early grave. They equally rendered people displaced from their homes either by burning or pulling them down with their weapons called the internally displaced. The paper unveiled the counselling implications of the internally displaced persons through rehabilitation counselling, rational emotive therapy and cognitive restructuring. It recommends, among others, the posting of qualified counsellors to these camps to give them succour and providing employment to the teeming youths.

Abraham Maslow, a foremost psychologist, who propounded the theory of self actualization, in an individual, knows, like every other person that an individual cannot be thinking of obtaining a desired dream in life when in a state of macabre. This is because; the lower order needs must be met before thinking of self actualization. The security of the present and the future is very sacrosanct to a human being, what to eat and shelter to domicile. Zahadi (2015) argued that the safety and survival of the state is called National Security where the citizens are free from threat.

How secured is Nigeria today? Unfortunately, Nigeria is in a state of security threat occasioned by armed robbery, kidnapping, cattle rustling such that people could hardly sleep with their eyes closed as there is no assurance of the next occurrence. More recently, on security challenge was the activities of Fulani herdsmen who have been destroyed farm lands and even killing the legitimate owners of those properties as demonstrated in Benue state or Nigeria. In spite of these serious and various security challenges, the attention of this paper is on Boko Haram insurgency that has seriously ravaged the North Eastern part of Nigeria specifically Borno, Yobe and some parts of Bauchi state which has left many people homeless, hopeless, helpless and psychologically traumatizing. What are the counselling implications of these orgies. Gory stories of death, desolation and displacement instead of the usual pop and peagenting witnessed in the New Year (Daily Trust, 2018).

The Origin of Boko Haram

From the Hausa language, Boko Haram, "Boko" which means non-Islamic education and Haram, an Islamic word refers to sin. Therefore, western education is sin. This is antithetical to the will of God and therefore, should be jettisoned. The Boko Haram insurgences are of the teachings that the wealth of Nigeria is within the jurisdictional operation of a small group who are politicians. They

are equally against the gargantuan injustice that is endemic in the Nigerian society and probably to create an Islamic state.

Although, recently, it was reported that about 700 Boko Haram fighters surrendered on 6th January, 2018 as a rebirth of what the military spokesman tagged “devastating artillery and aerial bombardment” occasioned by the Nigeria Armed Forces. Despite claims by the Nigerian government to have subdued the dare-devil terrorism of Boko Haram insurgency; reports abound of their daily incursions in Nigeria especially in the north eastern part. It is not yet over to Boko Haram in Nigeria. This equally led to the extinction of serving Boko Haram insurgents (Daily Trust, 2018).

The Origin of Boko Haram

The term Boko Haram is a coinage from the Hausa word "Boko" which means "Animist" western or otherwise non Islamic education and the Arabic word "haram" figuratively implies sin. It is diametrically opposed to western education, their culture and modern science as well (Wikipedia, 2017). The group was founded in 2002 by Muhammed Uztaz Yusuf and in 2004, it moved to a place called Kanama in Yobe state (Anyadike, 2013). It set up a base named Afghanistan where it was used to attack a nearby police outpost killing all their personnel on duty. They did not conceal their aversion for western education, which according to them, is responsible for corruption and the ravaging abject poverty in Nigeria today (Toni, New York Timme, Femi, 2014). He equally built a religious structure and place of learning that captivated the attention of poor Muslim families from across Nigeria and neighbouring countries of the world. He had the intention of instituting an Islamic state and it become a recruiting centre for supposedly the jihadist. It was unfortunately recorded that the government then was lackadaisical about these anti-people and the security threats of the organization and went ahead to broadcast their preaching which ironically catapulted him to heroism.

What have been the activities of Boko Haram in Nigeria?

1. Since its inception in 2009, it has killed or maimed thousands of Nigerian citizens and displaced millions of people from their homes (New York, Timee, 2015).
2. It has been ranked as the deadliest terror group by the global terrorism index in 2015.
3. They have their cabinet, the police also rendering welfare services to members that captivated membership. Even school drop outs were not excluded.
4. It is surprising to hear that some unemployed graduates destroyed their certificates with the erroneous belief that their state of hopelessness and joblessness was precipitated by a government that encouraged western education.
5. Their preaching instigated violence that is inimical to the overall activities of a constituted authority.
6. Their violence became worst with the killing of their leader by the government.
7. They killed and destroyed properties.
8. The north eastern states were subjected to a state of anomie.
9. The apogee of the insurgency was the capturing of 200+ Chibok girls who are hoteliers in government owned secondary schools. Although about 103 of those girls have been released. According to Obok (2009) & Abubakar (2014) in Anyadike (2015) they are financed from proceeds of armed robbery and kidnapping. Sometimes in 2013, some Boko Haram members kidnapped a family of seven who went for a vacation in Cameroon. They were released two months after paying 3.15m as ransom. They access their money through couriers which impedes being tracked down. They equally

annex equipment from fleeing soldiers which constantly make them to be battle ready (NBC News, 2017).

The incursions of Boko Haram, in Nigeria is still on course but has aggressively reduced but not without gory stories of the internally displaced persons (IDP).

The Internally Displaced Persons

The internally displaced persons have been described by United Nations guiding principles on internal displacement as follows:

Person 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 armed conflicts situations of generalized violence, violations of human rights or natural human disasters.

However, in line with this write up, the internally displaced persons are the displaced people occasioned by Boko Haram insurgency whose homes have been destroyed and thereafter became homeless. No means of livelihood, their children school/education truncated, they live in fear, helplessness and hopelessness. The epic centre is in the North eastern part of Nigeria. The internally displaced person's worldwide phenomenon. Although, it is not easy to come up with an accurate statistics of the IDPs due to the fluctuating nature of their movement.

However, at the end of 2014 global trend (2014) reported that there were 38.2 million IDPs worldwide and specified with the countries that parade the highest number of IDPs as follows:

- Syria (7.6million)
- Columbia (6 million)
- Iraq (3.6 million)
- The Democratic Republic of (2.8million)
- Sudan (2.2 million)
- Rakistan (1.2 million)
- Nigeria (1.2 million)
- Somalia (1.1 million)

UNHCR Registered IDPs and People in IDP – Like Situations by Country/Territory between 2014 and 2017

Country/territory	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Afghanistan	129,300	153,700	230,700	297,100	351,900	447,500	486,300	631,300
Azerbaijan	686,600	686,600	603,300	586,000	592,900	599,200	600,300	609,900
Bosnia and Herzegovina	135,500	131,000	124,500	113,600	113,400	113,000	103,400	84,500
Burundi	13,900	100,000	100,000	100,000	157,200	78,800	78,900	78,900
Car	147,000	197,000	197,000	197,000	192,500	105,200	51,700	894,400
Chad	112,700	178,900	166,700	170,500	131,000	124,000	90,000	19,800
Colombia	3,000,000	3,000,000	3,000,000	3,304,000	3,672,10	3,888,30	3,943,50	5,368,100
Congo	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Cote d'ivoire	3,500,709,200	709,000	686,000	519,100	517,100	126,700	45,000	24,000
Croatia	4,000	2,900	2,500	2,300	2,100			

DRC	1,075,300	1,317,900	1,460,100	2,050,700	1,721,400	1,709,300	2,669,100	2,963,800
Georgia	246,000	271,300	329,800	352,600	360,000	274,000	279,800	257,600
Iraq	1,834,400	2,481,000	2,647,300	1,552,000	1,343,600	1,332,400	1,131,800	954,100
Kenya					80,000	300,000		
Kyrgyzstan					80,000	163,900		
Libya						93,600	59,400	53,600
Mali							227,900	254,800
Montenegro	16,200	16,200						
Myanmar	58,500	67,300	67,300	62,000	239,200	339,200	430,400	372,000
Nepal	100,000	50,000						
Nigeria								360,000
Pakistan		155,800	155,800	1,894,600	952,000	452,900	758,000	747,500
Philippines					139,500	159,500	1,200	117,400
Russia	227,600	226,400	225,900	79,900	75,400			
Serbia	227,600	226,400	225,900	224,900	228,400	228,200	227,800	227,500
Somalia	400,000	1,000,000	1,277,200	1,392,300	1,463,800	1,356,800	1,133,000	1,133,000
South Sudan					223,700	209,700	345,700	331,100
Sri Lanka	469,000	459,600	504,800	434,900	273,800	138,400	93,500	42,200
Sudan	1,325,200	1,225,000	1,201,000	1,079,100	1,602,200	2,033,100	1,873,30	1,873,30
Syria								6,620,800
East Timor	155,200	62,600	15,900					
Uganda	1,814,900	1,236,000	853,000	428,600	125,600			
Yemen		77,000	100,000	250,000	193,700	347,300	385,300	306,600
Zimbabwe						54,300	57,900	60,100

Source: <http://venturesafrica.com>

It is pertinent to note that displacement can be triggered by flooding, herdsmen insurgency, communal clashes, war and so on, but the emphasis in this write up is on the internally displaced persons occasioned by Boko Haram insurgency with epic centre in the Northern part of Nigeria.

The State of the Internally Displaced

According to Rose (2017) while empathizing with the displaced, she averred that:

Children who are internally displaced are displaced from their parent, they are held in military barrack, separated from their parents, they are held in military barracks, separated from them without taking care of their health needs, suffer psychological trauma, no school to go and no date for their Eldorado. They develop sense of isolation with desperation that makes them more vulnerable to promise of Martyrdom through acceptance of dangerous and dehumanizing missions (NBC News, 2017).

The internally displaced person is forced out of home into homelessness. Most of the properties owned are destroyed with many sent to early graves. Those lucky to be alive become hopeless, family members are scattered and those fortunate to be in cohesion found it difficult as the bread winner might have been vocationally dislocated or even killed. They now depend on good will from well wishers, donor agents, NGOs and even the government for survival. They ory of violence they experience put them into a serious psychological trauma. They become vulnerable to attack as their protective shields are removed.

The education of the displaced is truncated with an aberrated socialization pattern. Physiological needs become the preoccupation of the displaced persons without any hope of self-actualization and therefore need succour, a palliative, a reassurance and counselling become better alternatives for these people.

In the course of this paper, we earlier pointed out that these people are housed in overcrowded camps distributed across the northern parts of Nigeria. They use school facilities, dilapidated and unused government apartments with negligible basic amenities. They are very vulnerable set of unfortunate human beings. However, we need to say thanks for the support they are receiving from individuals and various organizations. For instance, of recent, it was reported that a couple in Kuchingoro, a village that can boast of housing about 5 million IDPs in Nassara contributes four hundred and eighty thousand naira (₦480,000) every month to take care of three hundred (300) children of displaced persons. Even some governors and religious societies are not left out. Also Donald Trump; the current American president pledged a donation of One hundred and twenty million dollars (\$120m) to control drought and conflict in Nigeria.

Counselling Implications

One of the most fundamental roles of a counsellor is the ability to effect a remarkable change in an individual's life. This they can do for the internally displaced persons (IDPs) by harnessing resources in all ramifications to bring back these unfortunate people back to their feet. The internally displaced persons therefore need to be counselled through various counselling interventions as, unveiled below:

1. These set of people need the input of rehabilitation counsellors who are charged with the responsibility of counselling and case management framework. To equally give an assistance to individuals who are bedevilled in disability, health challenges like the internally displaced persons who cannot participate in employment or education or live independently and access services in the community.
2. With a dislocated vocation, vocational counselling becomes germane with appropriate vocational information. There is the need for vocational assessment of the IDPs. Hence the need for effective involvement of the various stakeholders in the job search, matching, placement and maintenance. There is the need for a referral service to other therapist depending on the various challenges of the displaced persons.
3. Technological assistance in rehabilitation counselling is another very vital intervention to the IDPs. This is a technology of piece of equipment used by people with disabilities to perform tasks that might not otherwise be possible. There is no doubt about the fact that some of these victims of insurgency might be incapacitated as result of injuries. This might include orthopaedic challenges capable of preventing them from optimum functionality. This is where technological assistance is expedient. The rehabilitation counsellor has to midwife between the clients and the various stakeholders for the provision of these facilities. (<https://www.asorc.org.au/aboutus/about-rehabilitation-counsellors>).
4. The counsellor has it as a duty to challenge inappropriate, self-destructive, counterproductive assumptions in the life of the displaced and confronting their inconsistencies. Their present situation might prompt them into irrational thoughts. For example, they may believe that their past experience will determine their present behaviour and that the influence of the past cannot be changed (Okeke,

2000). A cognitive therapist demystifies the built up emotional distress of the wounded internally displaced persons.

However, there is the need for openness, positive regard, personal respect, active listening and mostly importantly, the spirit of empathy. The counsellor has to be emphatic. Empathy is putting oneself in the world and position of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs). This makes the counsellor to appreciate their present situation. By this, the counsellor can invest the fullest potential to give the Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) the best.

In conclusion, counselling aims at assisting an individual for self insight, self development and be able to find solutions to actual or perceived problems. For the internally displaced, counselling programmes like rehabilitation counselling, vocational counselling, assistive technology, group and individual counselling can be of tremendous help to them.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are made for this study:

- i. One of the reasons for the mass followership of the Boko Haram sect is poverty. Unemployed youths should be engaged so that their idleness will not make them willing horses for mob actions.
 - ii. Media activities should be embarked upon to disabuse all ungodly and un-Islamic claims that are being used to confuse people in to membership of Boko Haram sect. This can be done by involving religious leaders to give public lectures to debunk such claims.
 - iii. Government should give more to the citizens more than what the Islamic sect is giving to people for the purpose of attracting them. Therefore, people will see no reason for giving them attention.
 - iv. There has to be rehabilitation in the area of infrastructure. Attention has to be given to the dilapidated structures and the environment must be made more conducive for habitation and education.
 - v. Let security be beefed up in all these areas to prevent a resurgence of the sect.
- All these will go a long way to stop Boko Haram incursions in Nigeria. Most importantly, the government has to be very proactive, security conscious, the enhancement of the security agents are a legacy of corrupt free and transparent government.

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