

Impact of Vocational Training on Internally Displaced Women in Plateau State

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Abstract

The aim of vocational training for women in the IDPs camp is key to help transition back to normal life. This study examined the impact of vocational training on internally displaced women in Plateau State. Two research questions guided the conduct of the study. The study adopted descriptive survey research method. The target population of the study comprised all internally displaced women in IDP camps in Plateau State. This research was carried out in Riyom of Plateau State in North Central Nigeria. Sixty respondents were randomly selected as sample for this study but at the end of the exercise, only Fifty-Five (55) were retrieved for data analysis. A structured inventory was constructed and administered on the respondents for data collection. The data obtained were statistically analyzed using simple percentages, mean and standard deviation. The findings revealed that skill acquisition through Beads making has influence on the economic status of women in IDP Camp in Plateau State; also, skill acquisition through soap making has influence on the health status of IDP woman in Plateau State. It was recommended that the administration of the state and stakeholders should build vocational centers and equip them with basic amenities that will help with the vocational training educational facilities to improve the IDPs' educational needs.

Keyword: *Internally Displaced Person, Skill acquisition, Vocational training, Women Empowerment*

Introduction

The rate of armed conflicts and mass violations of human rights, as well as floods, earthquakes and other natural disasters, the number of people fleeing their homes has increased dramatically over recent years (Tajudeen *et al.*, 2013). There are also deeper-seated factors underlying this phenomenon of mass displacement. Imasuen, (2015) asserts that, under-development, poverty, unequal distribution of wealth, unemployment, ethnic tensions, subjugation of minorities, intolerance, absence of democratic procedures, and many other factors have been cited as causes. Displacement frequently arises from events of violent and armed conflict, leading to the distressing impact on those affected.

In their quest for safety, individuals not only lose their sources of sustenance but also leave behind the normal support systems within their communities. Consequently, they embark on involuntary journeys to unknown destinations. The issue of internally displaced persons (IDPs) has become a global concern, with millions of people forced to leave their homes due to conflicts, natural disasters, or other humanitarian crises. Among these displaced populations, women often face unique challenges and vulnerabilities, such as limited access to education, economic opportunities, and healthcare. In addition, IDPs are often confronted with environmental health issues such as malnutrition and infant mortality, low-income levels and high level of illiteracy. Recognizing the importance of mitigating these issues, many organizations and governments have carried out vocational trainings programs aimed at empowering the women in IDP camps.

In Nigeria, numerous individuals have tragically lost their lives and endured various forms of abuse, forcing them to abandon their homes, property, and families. These displacements have occurred due to factors such as the presence of Boko Haram, political instability, civil conflicts, natural or economic disasters, and other threats. As these individuals have not crossed international borders, they are categorized as “internally displaced persons” (IDPs) rather than refugees. According to the World Food Programme (WFP, 2000), IDPs face unique challenges relating to violence and abuse, particularly in regions experiencing ongoing conflicts. Recognizing their primary responsibility to protect and assist affected populations under their control; governments have become increasingly responsive, as emphasized by the collaboration between the World Food Programme and the Norwegian Refugee Council (2017).

Displaced individuals encounter numerous hardships, including limited access to water, healthcare, shelter, education, and basic income. It is crucial to meet their fundamental needs, such as adequate shelter, food, clean water, healthcare, education, security, clothing, and information, upon their safe arrival at temporary locations, in order to sustain their lives and prevent adverse social, cultural, and security consequences for both themselves and host communities. Moreover, Amnesty International in 2010 estimates that at least 17,000 people have lost their lives since Boko Haram intensified its insurgency in northern Nigeria in 2009. Because of intermittent attacks by Boko Haram in various towns and villages, such as Jos north Jos south, Jos east.

Barking Ladi, Riyom, Bokkos, Langtang, Mangu as well as communal violence in parts of Nasarawa Benue and Taraba State, millions of Nigerians have been compelled to flee their homes and seek refuge in IDP camps. According to data from the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC) and the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), as of April 2015, approximately 1,538,982 people who had fled their homes in Nigeria were still residing in internal displaced camps across the country. The IDMC's "Global Overview 2014 report" states that Nigeria has the highest number of conflict-induced internally displaced persons in Africa, ranking behind only Syria and Colombia globally (Thomas & Okau, 2020). This figure encompasses those displaced due to Boko Haram attacks, government-led counter-insurgency operations, sporadic inter-communal clashes, and disasters caused by natural hazards.

The impact of vocational education in Nigeria is enormous in socio-economic lives of the people. Vocational education (formal and non-formal) is the best-known veritable tool for training work force for national growth. It has trained more work force than other forms of education. It also has the potential for developing work force in over one thousand careers represented in all departments of human endeavours (Usoro, Akpan & Otu, 2010). There is no socio-economic sector of the nation that does not benefit from vocational education. For instance, the technical knowledge, technical information and the skills needed for effective assimilation of the modern technological products are acquired through training and re-training in vocational education.

National Policy on Education (FRN, 2004) defined Technical Education, in its Section 6, as that aspect of education that leads to the acquisition of practical and applied skills through the application of basic scientific knowledge and technology. According to Alam (2008) as cited by Ali Idris et al (2013), the knowledge of technical and vocational skills is the prime mover of economic and social development of any nation; therefore, investment in human capital is an

investment for the future of any country. Education and training could be regarded as a bedrock for improvement and has to be problem oriented, person centered, community centered and should be able to cater for social problems which include unemployment, crimes, poverty, health, drug abuse etc. To empower vocational education in the pursuit of the above goals and monitor its efforts in achieving quality learning, the government has set up agents of quality assurance to do the job. These agents are National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE), the National Board for Technical Education (NBTE) and the National Universities Commission (NUC). Each agent has provided minimum standards for use by the training institutions.

In 2005 the National Council on Education (NCE) in response to government declaration of a nine-year basic education programme approved a new curriculum structure namely: lower basic education curriculum (primaries 1-3), middle basic education curriculum (primaries 4-6), and upper basic education curriculum (JSS 1-3) with subject listings. The Nigerian Education Research and Development Council (NERDC), was mandated to re-structure the curriculum. Women's empowerment is widely recognized as a global policy objective (UN General Assembly, 2015) and a key component of strategies to promote health and combat poverty worldwide (World Bank, 2012; Every Woman Every Child, 2017).

Many Nigerians have been empowered through various skills acquisition of that programme. This can be noticed everywhere as there are more self-employed young men and women now than was before because of vocational training. Women empowerment enables women to realize their identity, potentiality and power in all spheres of their lives. It has mainly five dimensions; economic, political, social/cultural, personal and family. Women empowerment is a scheme, through which displaced persons regain their strategic life, which they have been previously denied. Women challenge the existing with a method norms and culture to effectively improve their life and earn their livelihood. As a result, women convert their knowledge, skill and abilities to gain access to organizational resources and mobilize them to earn their livelihood. The talents and skills acquired strengthen them to provide for their families. This studies view women empowerment as a process of empowering displaced women in camps to provide for their socio-economic needs such as school and healthcare.

Empowerment raises the status of women through education, awareness, literacy, and training. Women's empowerment equips and allows women to take life-determining decisions. This research focuses on the empowering internally displaced women through vocational training in Plateau State, Nigeria. As Plateau State has witnessed significant internal displacement due to ethno-religious conflicts, resulting in the establishment of various camps to provide shelter and basic services to affected individuals and families. Therefore, it is against this background that the aim of the study is to examine the empowering internally displaced women through vocational training in Plateau State.

Statement of the Problem

Recently, insurgencies, banditry, kidnapping and high rate of insecurity had made more societies un conducive to develop due to the destruction of human lives and properties. However, the incessant uprising of crises and insurgencies making life unbearable and deserting their traditional homes. The well over 3 million IDPs in Nigeria could hardly sustain themselves

economically while in their relief camps. They tend to grapple with challenges of feeding, clothing, healthcare and the education of their children. The relief materials provided are rarely sufficient given their teeming population vis-à-vis the scarce resources. These persons rely heavily on economic interventions that cannot cater even for their immediate needs. This tendency poses huge threat to the society.

The problems of insecurity that lead to displacement of people are evident in North central part of the country. The unpleasant situation needs urgent attention. To address these problems, there is need to empower the women with skills needed to translate it into their sustainable livelihood. This implies that the IDPs need a vital learning domain in areas of cognitive and psychomotor domain needed for sustainable livelihood. To this end, empirical studies have shown that vocational, technical and entrepreneurship training has the potentials of providing women with skills for self-reliance. The study conducted by Kabir and Adamu (2019) shows that Vocational, Technical Education and entrepreneurship Training is the major programme capable of providing youths with basic skills for self-reliance. This research therefore wants to find out the impact of vocational training on internally displaced women in Plateau State.

Purpose of the Study

1. To examine how skill acquisition influence the economic status of women in IDP Camp in Plateau State.
2. To find out how skill acquisition through soap making influence health status of IDP woman in Plateau State.

Research Questions

1. To what extent will skill acquisition influence the economic status of women in IDP Camp in Plateau State?
2. To what extent will skill acquisition through soap making influence health status of IDP woman in Plateau State?

Methodology

The population of the study was the internally displaced women in camps in Plateau State. This research was carried out in Riyom of Plateau State in North Central Nigeria. The research adopted descriptive survey research design. The sample of the study was made up of sixty (60) participants. The study made use of a self-designed inventory titled “Impact of Vocational Training on Internally Displaced Women Inventory” (IVTDWI). The inventory was divided into two parts, A and B. Part A contained items on the bio data of the respondents such as age, gender, and so on. Part B contained items as captured in the formulated research questions, on a four point Likert scale of Strongly Agree (SA) Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD). The data obtained were statistically analyzed using simple percentages, mean and standard deviation.

Result

The main purpose of this study in Riyom IDPs camp of Plateau State is to empower women with different skills to improve their livelihood. This is done by training internally displaced women in the art of Beads making, and their activities have influenced positively on the lives of the internally displaced women.

Question One: To what extent will skill acquisition influence the economic status of women in IDP Camp in Plateau State?

Table 1: Analysis showing the extent skill acquisition influence the economic status of women in IDP Camp

Frequency of skill acquisition influence on the economic status of women

TRAINING PROCESS	Agreed (%)	Disagreed (%)
Implementation of the affirmative policies in favour of females, especially with admission, employment and appointment	55 (100)	0 (0)
Accompany training with access to finance	32 (58)	23 (42)
Prevent and address sexual harassment	41 (74)	14 (26)
Support childcare	55 (100)	0 (0)
Support safe transportation	55 (100)	0 (0)
Encourage women to enter traditionally male occupations	55 (100)	0 (0)

Source: Field survey 2023.

The study concludes that skill acquisition influence the economic status of women in IDP Camp, as a result, beneficiaries have used such avenue to improve on their economics status as well as cater for the educational needs of their children.

Question Two: To what extent will skill acquisitions through soap making influence health status of IDP woman in Plateau State?

Table 2: Analysis showing the extent skill acquisition through soap making influence health status of IDP woman

S/N	TRAINING PROCEDURE	Agreed (%)	Disagreed (%)
1	Naming and listing the various components needed for the production of liquid soap	55 (100)	0 (0)
2	Grouping the components according to its production and combination process	55 (100)	0 (0)
3	Description of the various component Uses, Effect, and Precautions of usage	55 (100)	0 (0)
4	Identification of other production assistant materials and quantity needed per production based on the quantity to be produced. Such as bucket, volume of water, turning sticks etc.	47 (85.4)	8 (14.6)
5	Starting the process with the required volume of water, first item to be added and mixed. Continuing with other items to be added and stir until all the items are completely added and mixed until the soap is made in the size of 20kg.	15 (27)	40 (73)
6	At the end of the exercise, the different wards came up with liquid soap which the facilitator certified to meet international standard based on the available liquid soaps in the market.		

Source: Field survey 2023.

In this part, the study sought to examine the extent skill acquisition through soap making skills will influence health status.

Discussion of Findings

The findings from research question 1 revealed that skill acquisition influence the economic status of women in IDP Camp in Plateau State. The finding is consistent with the studies of Ahmad (2018); Odusanya (2016); Levinus (2016); Oyefara and Alabi (2016) IDPs are faced with insecurity as a result of Boko Haram insurgency, unemployment, dislocation from family members, are challenges displaced women face in Nigeria. These shelters are not sufficient and in most cases, existing shelters are destroyed or damaged. The accommodations are overcrowded and unsuitable in terms of sanitation and water facilities. This can also be affirmed during an interview section with the coordinator of Riyom camp, Ibrahim Halilu Idris (Oral interview, 2019) the respondent said that insecurity, lack of accommodation, feeding, unemployment are the endemic challenges facing the population of IDPs in Nigeria. The respondents choose unemployment, feeding and insecurity as an endemic challenge. The respondents observed that government has not done much in creating employment in other for them to feed their families coupled with the security situation in the country that has deteriorated making the above challenges endemic to displace the displaced population in Nigeria. This shows that majority of the IDPs women believed that Unemployment is a major endemic challenge that they are currently facing in Nigeria.

The findings from research question 2 revealed that skill acquisition through soap making influence health status of IDP woman in Plateau State. Beneficiaries generate income from soap and detergent making while using such avenues to make soap and detergent to maintain personal hygiene. This view is in tandem with the focus group discussion and interview. This is consistent with Yaquob (2006), who opined that skills acquired such as soap making has helped boost per capita income and enhance earning power resulting in a monumental change in the life of the people. Chandravadia and Kanani (2010) also shared that women have bettered their personal needs and contributed to their area's economic development through engaging in entrepreneurial activities.

Conclusion

The study concludes that bead making has empowered women in Riyom Plateau State; as a result, beneficiaries have used such avenue to improve on their educational status as well as cater for the educational needs of their children. Hardworking beneficiaries who engage in beads making stand the chance of improving their livelihood in general likewise those that have learnt soap making are also smiling to the bank as soap is on high demand, the demand is more than the supply and by such the women have to work overtime to meet up with the demand. The study also revealed that soap and detergent making had raised the income status of the IDP women and this has led to significant improvement in the hygiene of the beneficiaries. All the Beneficiaries that engaged in the vocational training has improved in there general wellbeing.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study and the conclusions reached above, this paper offers the following recommendations:

1. The administration of the state and stakeholders should build vocational centers and

equip them with basic amenities that will help with the vocational training educational facilities to improve the IDPs' educational needs. The provision of scholarships to the beneficiaries should also be prioritized. This is because these people are battling with basic needs like food, clothing, and shelter, thus education becomes less priority if those needs are not met.

2. The government needs to support the effort of non-governmental organizations by assisting those successful graduates with capital to enable them start their own business and remain self-reliant. Government can provide support by buying products made by those beneficiaries to strengthen them until they can compete favourably in the market. In addition, Technical and Vocational Training Centers (TVETC) in collaboration with NGOs should organize training programme that will help to provide out of schools IDPs with needed vocational training for self-reliance.

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