



Impacts of Forced Migration on Family Dynamics and Communication Patterns

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ABSTRACT

Forced migration, whether due to conflict, persecution, or environmental disasters, significantly disrupts family dynamics and communication patterns. This paper explores how displacement affects familial relationships, communication strategies, and overall family functioning. The phenomenon of people leaving their habitual residence due to reasons beyond their control is termed as forced migration. In general, people are forced to migrate either as a result of wars, terrorist incidents, political oppressions, armed conflicts, psychosocial oppressions, and natural disasters. The study will employ a method of quantitative survey to assess the impact of forced migration family dynamic and communication pattern. The majority of mass population movements all over the world are experienced due to forced migration. As a result of forced migration, family dynamics and ways of communication in many areas such as economy, health, accommodation, education, culture, belief and human relations was disrupted. As a result of new social conditions, differentiation is experienced within the family in terms of responsibility, values, decision-making process, and communication within the family, roles, and relationships with people outside the family.

Keywords Forced migration, Family dynamics, disruption and communication patterns

INTRODUCTION

Forced migration, driven by factors such as conflict, persecution, or environmental disasters, represents a profound and disruptive force in the lives of individuals and families. Unlike voluntary migration, which often involves planning and preparation, forced migration is abrupt and involuntary, leading to significant upheaval and instability. This sudden displacement can have severe implications for family dynamics and communication patterns. Family Dynamics Disrupted forced migration often results in the fragmentation of family units. As families flee from danger or disaster, they may be separated, either temporarily or permanently. This separation can disrupt established family roles and structures, causing emotional distress and altering relationships within the family. The loss of traditional family roles such as those related to parenting, caregiving, and economic support can undermine the familial support system that individuals previously relied upon. Additionally, the economic strain of displacement can exacerbate these disruptions. Families may face challenges such as unemployment, inadequate housing, and lack of access to basic services. This financial instability often shifts responsibilities and expectations within the family, further complicating family dynamics. The stress of navigating a new environment, coupled with the struggle to secure essential resources, can strain relationships and impact family cohesion. Communication within displaced families is also profoundly impacted. Forced migration often introduces new linguistic and cultural barriers. Language differences can hinder effective communication, leading to misunderstandings and further isolation. Cultural adjustments, including adapting to new social norms and practices, can exacerbate these communication challenges. Moreover, the stress associated with displacement can affect how family members interact with each other. Increased anxiety, fear, and trauma can lead to heightened conflict, reduced patience, and less effective communication. The ability of family members to express their needs and emotions may be compromised, further straining relationships. In response to these disruptions, families may develop new coping mechanisms and communication strategies. The use of technology, such as social media and messaging apps, can help maintain connections with separated relatives and support networks. Additionally, access to psychological and social support services can play a crucial role in helping families manage the challenges of displacement and restore effective communication patterns. Understanding the impact of forced migration on family dynamics and communication patterns is essential for developing interventions that support displaced families. By addressing these disruptions, we can help families adapt to their new circumstances.

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

The primary objective of this research is to examine the impact of forced migration on family dynamics and communication patterns. Specifically, the study aims to:

1. Understand the extent to which forced migration disrupts family structures and decision-making processes, including the emotional, social, and logistical challenges faced by families who have been displaced.
2. Analyze changes in communication patterns among family members due to displacement, separation, and resettlement in different locations, including the frequency, methods, and quality of communication.
3. Identify the key factors influencing communication difficulties among displaced families, such as access to technology, financial constraints, time zone differences, and emotional stress

LITERATURE REVIEW

Forced migration either as a result climate change such as flooding, desertification, conflicts, terrorism, wars, political oppression, or other factors beyond human control have proven to have a significant impact the on-family structure, relationship and communication patterns within the family. The field of forced migration and communication pattern as well as family dynamics has seen so many researches carried out by scholars in the field. This literature review synchronizes available academic research on how forced migration impacts dynamics and communication pattern within the family. H. Karaman, et M. E. Deniz in their article Forced Migration and Family Dynamics posited that there are various scenarios awaiting families experiencing forced migration. Migrant families can live in camp conditions in the host country, settle in houses and integrate, be sent to a third country by the state, or be sent back to their country of origin. They went further to add that migration causes differentiation in the life of families in the areas of socio-cultural, education, accommodation, economic situation and physical and mental health. This situation brings about changes in family relationships, responsibilities and roles.

G.J. Abela, et M. Brottragerb, et J.C. Cuaresma, et R. Muttarak, had examine in their article Climate, conflict and forced migration that the integration of concerns related to conflict-driven forced migration in the current policy discourse concerning actions to combat climate change appears particularly urgent in the context of the targets defined by the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). They went on to add that the link between climate change and migration is not made explicit in the SDGs, which focus on adaptation measures and do not treat forced migration and climate change as interrelated phenomena which may be moderated by conflict onset.

According to H. Graf, in his article, Media Practices and Forced Migration: Trust Online and Offline, migration separates a human being from their familiar world and is often characterized by experiencing several losses, such as the loss of valued social roles, the loss of former life projects, and the loss of intimacy with beloved ones. In the new country, life is different, often involving poverty, inadequate housing conditions, unsatisfactory mastery of one's new life by, e.g., difficulties in finding a job, and problems understanding the new language and culture.

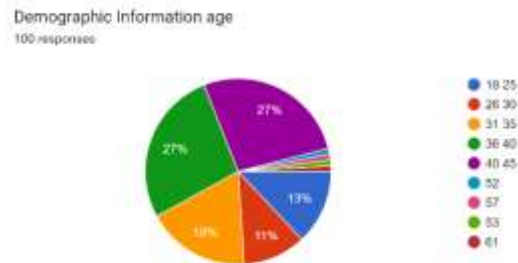
It is evident that forced migration can profoundly impact the dynamics and communication pattern of affected families. Many scholars have since carried out extensive research on the topic because of the centrality of the theme to national and international economic development. A close examination of H. KARAMAN, et M.E. DENİZ in their article Forced Migration and Family Dynamics, G.J. Abela, et M.Brottragerb, et J.C. Cuaresma, et R.Muttarak, on their article Climate, conflict and forced migration, and According to H. Graf, in his article, Media Practices and Forced Migration: Trust Online and Offline, would reveal that the subject matter has been properly researched and they have covered the topic in details. That notwithstanding, these scholars in attempt to domesticate their research in their immediate environment fail to capture the Nigerian experience which is unique and distinct from any other country or region. And this is the main reason for this work, the accurately represent the Nigerian experience of the impacts of forced migration on family dynamics and communication patterns.

METHODOLOGY

As part of our research methodology, we conducted an in-depth literature to delve into the various aspects which forced migration can impact the dynamics and communication pattern of affected families. Through this review, we observed a recurring gap in the existing literature, specifically placing emphases on the long-term impact of force migration in the different countries while neglecting the Nigerian experience. This gap is particularly concerning, given the critical nature of family nature of forced migration in Nigeria. The survey method was the most suitable approach for this study. It was chosen primarily because of its capacity to gather quantitative data and apply the findings on the topic. A structured questionnaire Google for was used to collect information on the impacts and outcomes on force migration and family dynamics. This questionnaire aimed to gather insights from the target respondents regarding how force migration affects their communication pattern. It also sought to identify individuals' barriers or challenges when engaging in such situation.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

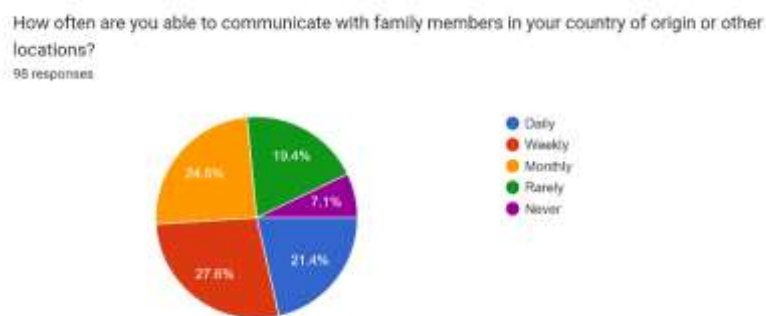
To properly evaluate the degree of how forced migration disrupts family dynamics and communication patterns. The researcher employs survey methodology to gather data using questionnaire to get response from the respondents. We sample the opinions of 100 (one hundred) respondents for this research.



Demographic Information

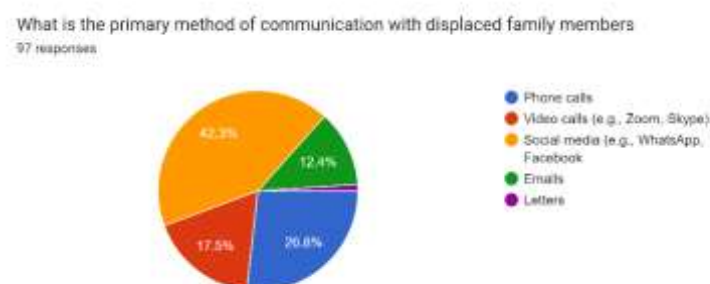
From the information on the chart above, out of 100 respondents, 27% were between the ages of 36-40 and 40-45, making these two ages bracket the joint top respondents and providing over 50% of the total responses received for the research. The age category for others contributed only 4%, making it the least responsive

Also based on gender question there are more female with 50% while male 38%, 57% says they have been displaced from their family members, 32.7% said that forced migration hasn't impacted their family's ability to stay together, 29.6% agreed that forced migration has caused a major disruption which has affected the decision-making structure within their families, 37.6% feel they don't feel often disconnected as a result of migration from their family.



Frequency of Communication

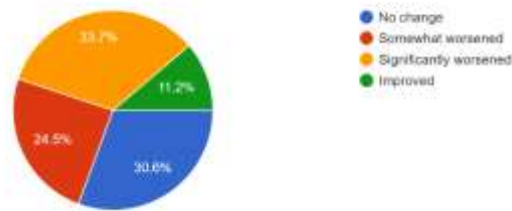
On the question of the frequency of communication, the research revealed that over 27.6% of the people who experience forced migration only communicate with their loved ones on weekly bases, and alarming 24.5% communicate weekly, meanwhile, the research also discovered that about 7.1% of the respondents never gets to communicate with their loved ones.



Communication Channel

On the question of communication channel used by separated families, the research showed that social media platforms such as WhatsApp, Facebook among others was mostly used accounting for 42.3% of the total responses, while emails and letter writing accounted for the least with a combined percentage of 12.4% less than half of the phone calls which is 26.8%

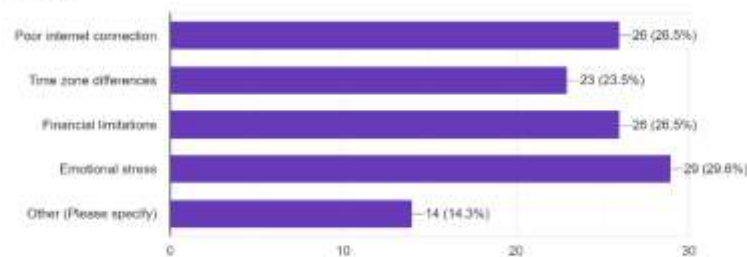
Has the quality of communication with family members changed since forced migration
96 responses



Quality of Communication

The research showed that 33.7% of the respondents experienced a significantly worsened quality of communication while 30.6% responses showed that there were no changes to their quality of communication

What are the main challenges you face in maintaining communication with family members
96 responses



Factors Affecting Communication

The research also discovered that the major factor affecting communication frequency among forced migrants is emotional stress, accounting for 29.6%, closing followed by poor internet connection and financial limitations, both accounting for 23.5%

RECOMMENDATIONS

This research discovered a great gap on the Nigerian experience of forced migration and family dynamics, therefore recommends that further research should focus on exploring forced migration's impact within Nigeria. This will help bridge the gap in literature and provide insights into the specific areas and ways to cope for Nigerian families affected by displacement.

Furthermore, this research recommends that policies that incorporates the findings on forced migration and its impacts into national migration and resettlement be made to mitigate the long-term effects of forced migration on Nigerian families.

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