

Formal Education and Women's Resilience Post Conflict-Induced Disasters: A Gendered Perspective on Life in an Internally Displaced Persons' Camp(s)

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ABSTRACT

This paper discusses the impact that access to formal education has on the resilience of women who have been displaced by the protracted conflict-induced disaster (bokoharam) in Northeast-Nigeria. The qualitative research was conducted phenomenologically in an inductive and interpretive manner; the results were interpreted using thematic analysis to explain how education intersects with gender, residence, culture, resilience, and recovery. The results were depicted using thematic mapping. The data analysis results made it evident that the factors influencing access to formal education pre-displacement did not equally apply to both genders and suggest that women were marginalized. The interviewed respondents noted that post-displacement, formal education has contributed to their resilience as they read, write, communicate, show respect to one another, and maintain a positive attitude; the women created an informal support group. The testimonies of the respondents bring the conclusion that although culture influenced their access to education before being displaced, the new culture (family, learning, faith, hope, and support) they have developed in the Internally Displaced Persons camp fills them with hope to such an extent that they now express interest in having access to formal education for their advancement. A method for reintroducing education in the region was suggested.

1. Introduction

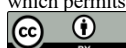
The findings from the research conducted by Kovinthan-Levi (2019) after Sri Lanka's thirty-year-old conflict to determine the impact formal education had on women's resilience showed that not only was education a source of hope, it contributed to resilience, social cohesion, and social change. Similarly, El-Bushra and Smith (2016) posited that formal education has the potential to transform gender relations, contribute to social cohesion, and bring about social change by equipping people with the knowledge and skills to empathize across differences,

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challenge stereotypes, and build relationships (UNESCO, 2016). Further to this, research conducted in Israel by Ben-Porath (2006) to determine the effects of formal education following conflict-induced disasters revealed that a country's ability to develop resilience and build back better after a disaster is largely dependent on education. Nonetheless, there is still a knowledge gap regarding how access to formal education contributes to the resilience of women affected by conflict-induced disasters (Novelli et al., 2016), as is the case in Northeast-Nigeria (NN). This is the gap this research intends to fill.

Adesoji (2010) asserts that the anxiety and fear of formal education taking over cultural and socio-cultural practices of NN fuelled the insurgency: *bokoharam* (Western education is a taboo). The apprehension of some communities in NN towards education deprived women of acquiring the quality formal education (Fafunwa, 2018) required to have sustainable livelihoods (Duru et al., 2022) in the event of a disaster. Correspondingly, research conducted by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (2004) to determine impacts of formal education on resilience revealed that education is a prerequisite for enhancing resilience, especially for women and children who are most impacted by conflict-induced disasters (Livingston et al., 2017).

Therefore, this research aims to examine how access to formal education before the *bokoharam* insurgency has contributed to the resilience of women in an Internally Displaced Persons camp. The objectives of the study are to explore the context of conflict and insurgencies in NN and examine the experiences of women who have been displaced by conflict-induced disasters. Thereafter, the relevance of access to formal education for displaced women's resilience will be evaluated, and recommendations will be made.

Study Area: NN covers one-third of the country's land area at 280,419 km². It comprises regions including Adamawa, Bauchi, Borno, Gombe, Taraba, and Yobe. It shares borders with Cameroon to the East, Chad to the Northeast, and Niger to the North. According to the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS, 2012), NN has a population of over 23 million. Although Islam is the dominant religion in NN, Christianity and indigenous religions also have adherents (Nyako, 2015). The region was known for peace and tranquillity; sadly, the enactment of the Sharia law in 2001 possibly led to the emergence of the 'ama'atu Ahlus-Sunnsh Lidda' Awati Wal' Jihad sect in 2002. By 2009, the region experienced the emergence of *bokoharam* (Adesoji, 2010). The formerly peaceful region has become plagued by protracted conflict. The *bokoharam* conflict has generated acute forced displacement, leading to the displacement of over 7 million people (4 million self-identifying females and 3 million self-identifying males) who require humanitarian assistance.

It has been asserted that the *bokoharam* sect seems to be focused on targeting communities with a high level of education, as was the case in Chibok 2014, Dapchi 2018, Kaduna 2024 (Jazeera, 2024), Kebbi 2025, and Niger 2025. About 2,000 girls have been kidnapped between 2014 and 2025. Although there is some evidence that the Nigerian government has made efforts to address security challenges in NN, such as increasing military presence and security details, the region continues to face significant threats and instability (Nyako, 2015). Therefore, there is a need to change the strategy being used to one that addresses the concern of western education being a taboo by introducing a system of education that respects the culture and beliefs of the people. Perhaps this will help restore peace within the zone. Figure 1 below shows conflict-affected areas in the zone and depicts the movement of Internally Displaced People (IDPs).

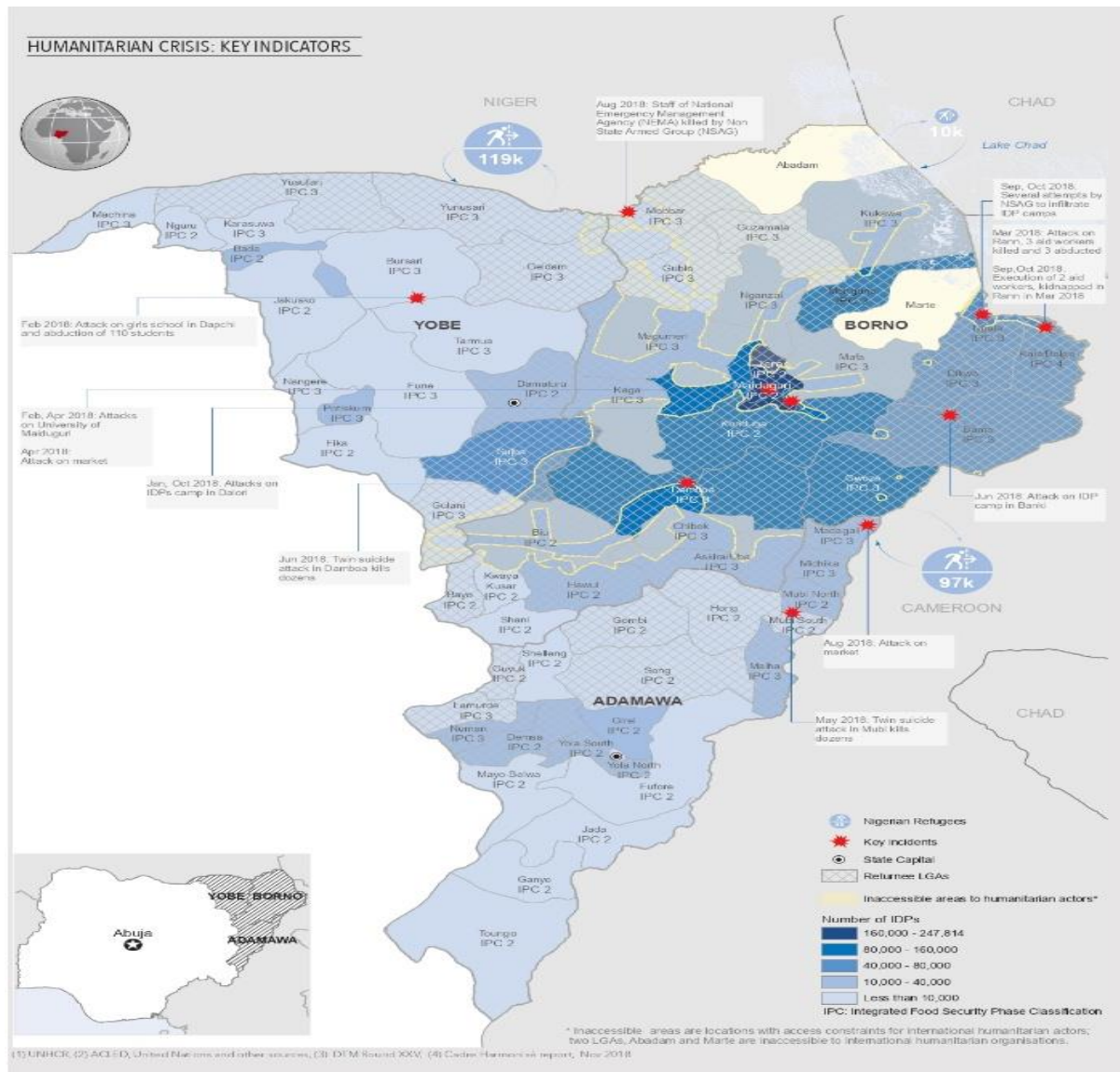


Figure 1: IDPs in Nigeria and Their Movement
Note: UNOCHA (2019)

This section gave a background, it explained the research's aim and objectives, introduced the geographical and socio-political area to help determine the methods used to conduct this research; this is explored next.

2. Materials and Methods

The research was conducted phenomenologically in an inductive, interpretive, and qualitative manner this approach ensured that the viewpoint of those being studied was understood (Burrell & Morgan, 1979). The research utilized qualitative interviews from twenty IDP in two of the five IDP camps across in Abuja. The state was selected as it is safe in comparison to other states in the region. Additionally, being the federal and administrative capital of Nigeria, Abuja attracts a large number of IDPs from across the region. In line with the ethics on risk, the exact location of the respondents is not included in the codes given to IDPs, to help ensure their anonymity and safety. The interview served as the research's empirical basis and helped enhance the understanding of how access to formal education before the insurgency has helped the displaced persons develop capabilities that have improved their resilience (Groenewald,

2004). Methodological triangulation was employed using frameworks, literature and interviews that provided the data set required (Casey & Murphy, 2009) to explore the lived experiences of the displaced women.

The agency responsible for administration of IDP camps, National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) was selected an entry point to the respondents. This ensured the respondents willingly shared their lived experiences and the data set is reflexive, free from the interviewer's bias (Cassell et al., 2006). The use of an entry point ensured the respondents were at ease to engage in this research (Thompson, 2012). After stratifying the proposed sample using the research objectives, NEMA suggested a purposive sample that met the research's aim. Participants were selected based on having experienced conflict-induced displacement; residing in an IDP camp; prior exposure to formal or informal education; and capability to discuss their lived experiences in English or Nigerian Pidgin. This approach echoes the assertions of Etikan (2016), which posit that to achieve the aim of a study, a sample that meets the study's criteria should be selected.

Conducting qualitative interviews phenomenologically helped deconstruct the lived experiences of the participants (Englander, 2012) and ascertain whether or not access to formal education has contributed to enhancing their resilience. The interviewed sample comprised fourteen female respondents represented by the code IDPF, and six male participants denoted by the code IDPM. Although the primary focus of the study is women's lived experiences with conflict-induced displacement, male participants were included to provide comparative gender perspectives which helped to corroborate the women's claims. With security and accessibility considerations in mind, the qualitative interviews were conducted over the phone for a period of two weeks with each interview lasting between 40 and 60 minutes. To ensure that the opinions of the respondents and not the researchers were discussed the stories told by the respondents were recorded by hand and a tape recorder with the respondent's permission and informed consent. The interviewer did not interrupt or ask leading suggestive questions when the respondents were sharing their lived experiences (Roberts, 2020). The interview guide can be perused in the appendix.

The data collected was interpreted using Braun and Clarke's thematic analysis. The interviews were coded using recurring themes and subthemes which were expounded in the discussion section using literature and frameworks. Data collection continued until thematic saturation was achieved, which was considered reached when no substantially new themes emerged from subsequent interviews. By the eighteenth interview the recurring themes that constituted the thematic categories (gendered exclusion, discrimination, culture, residence, resilience and recovery) were established. This aligns with Hennink and Kaiser (2022) assertion that smaller purposive samples can achieve saturation where there is thematic convergence in lived experiences.

The researchers repeatedly reviewed the recording transcript and reflective notes to identify ideas, patterns and concepts, which were coded; the codes were categorized into themes and subthemes relating to gendered exclusion, discrimination, culture, residence, resilience and recovery which were analysed and depicted using Braun and Clarke's thematic mapping. To enhance analytical rigour the authors independently reviewed coded transcripts to ensure consistency in interpretation. Areas of differing opinions were discussed to reach a consensus. Records were maintained from the analysis till the study's completion in line with Braun and Clarke (2019) suggestion for enhancing dependability and transparency.

As a result of the study's relatively small sample size comparison and generalization were limited. It should therefore be noted that the percentages presented in the findings are descriptive indicators of response frequency rather than statistical generalizations. The percentages

reported indicate the proportion of participants within the sample (n=20) whose narratives reflected a particular coded theme or subtheme. Participants often expressed multiple overlapping themes within a single interview; therefore, some percentages reflect multiple-response coding rather than mutually exclusive categories. In line with Sandelowski (2001) admonitions, the findings from our small samples were quantified carefully to avoid overrepresentation. Also, the study prioritized interpretive depth and lived experience over numerical generalization (Hall et al., 2024).

The research followed Coventry University's (CU) five-R ethics (respect, risk, rights, routes, and record-keeping), which helped reduce bias associated with transcribing respondents' opinions, even when they seemed flawed (Resnik, 2011). The information provided by the respondents was treated respectfully and not discussed with friends as stated by CU ethics on confidentiality. Before collecting data, the researcher ensured the respondents were informed about their rights to withdraw and remain anonymous, so they do not feel obligated to their detriment as noted by CU ethics on respect and rights. To ensure the research is ethically appropriate, required approvals were obtained as stated by CU ethical requirements for conducting research.

The capability framework was incorporated to the literature and results sections to understand how access to formal education enhances resilience. Similarly, the Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE) framework which serves as a guide for understanding the requirements for education in emergencies was incorporated into the analysis and the discussion sections to ensure that the suggestions potentially promote resilience. This research employs the radical humanist paradigm (Burrell & Morgan 1979) as it is intellectually appropriate to see subjectivity and objectivity as mutually constructive (Deetz, 1996).

2.1 Research Limitations

The following limitations should be considered when interpreting the research findings. The study employed a purposive sample of 20 participants recruited from two of the five IDP camps in Abuja. While this approach facilitated an in-depth exploration of participants' experiences, the findings are not intended to be statistically representative of the conflict-displaced populace in NN. Rather, the study provides context-specific insights into lived experiences and how education contributes to resilience of individuals displaced by conflict. Abuja hosts over 25,000 conflict displaced persons from Northeast-Nigeria and provides a secure and accessible environment for data collection. However, the experiences documented in this study may not fully capture the diversity of experiences across different displacement settings and geographical contexts. Participant recruitment was based on the inclusion criteria outlined earlier in the methodology. While these criteria ensured the feasibility of data collection, they may have limited the inclusion of perspectives from displaced persons who communicate in other languages.

The study did not incorporate extensive demographic information of participants; this is consistent with the study's focus on understanding experiences of conflict-induced displacement rather than examining variations across demographic information. Future research may benefit from incorporating how age, educational attainment, ethnicity, or marital status may shape displacement experiences; enabling a more nuanced analysis of participant experiences. Although women and men were included in the study, the research was intentionally designed as a women-centred inquiry; women constituted majority of participants. The study does not seek to draw comparative conclusions regarding gender differences; therefore, all gender-related observations were interpreted with caution given the limited number of male participants. Given the exploratory and qualitative nature of the study,

emphasis is placed on the depth and contextual richness of participants' accounts rather than on statistical generalizability.

Despite its limitations, the study contributes empirical insights on resilience of people displaced by conflict and advances understanding of the challenges they face. The findings provide a foundation for future research employing a more diverse samples across multiple displacement settings.

3. Literature and Frameworks

The literature review section discusses case studies in regions where conflict affected women and girls' education. It highlights how the educational gap created by conflict-induced displacement was managed and the lessons for bridging the poverty trap created therein.

Women, Education and Displacement: Levine et al. (2019) examined the impact of displacement on gender roles among internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Pakistan. They found that prior to displacement, school attendance, which was generally low became even lower for girls, due to poor infrastructure, restrictions on girls' mobility, and community resistance to formal education. Education was perceived as foreign, western, and a threat to culture, some argued that it encouraged insubordination, reduced marriage prospects, and wasted resources on girls who would marry into other families. Fathers who supported girls' education faced discrimination and threats, leading them to comply with the prevailing norms of sending daughters to Islamic schools. However, within a few years of displacement, their perceptions subsequently shifted, largely because of the influence of their host community. The displaced persons observed that educated girls in their host community attracted husbands that treated them better, had reduced occurrence of maternal mortality and improved well-being. The displaced persons realized that education was a prerequisite for advancement and they refuted the idea of formal education being foreign.

Education thus became a tool for challenging undemocratic social norms and strengthening social cohesion by amplifying marginalised voices (BenPorath, 2006). Similar to Pakistan, communities in NN are apprehensive of formal education for fear of losing their cultural identity. Paul and Ibrahim (2026) research on conflict and female education establishes that women and girls experience disproportionate educational, psychosocial, and socio-economic consequences of *bokoharam* (UNDP, 2023). The *bokoharam* conflict has perpetuated physical displacement, sexual and gender-based violence, economic marginalization, long-term psychosocial trauma, disrupted; family life, livelihoods, and education (International Crisis Group, 2024). Education in Emergencies (EiE) literature suggests that within the Nigerian context, entrenched patriarchal norms, poverty, and unequal gender relations limited women's educational participation prior to displacement (Olanrewaju et al., 2019).

And continues to reproduce gendered exclusions post-displacement (Dryden-Peterson, 2022). Therefore, this research was necessitated by the knowledge gap regarding how access to education helps women cope during disasters. And the fact fourteen years on the *bokoharam* continues to increase marginalization, under-development, and poverty in the region (UNOCHA, 2019). Perhaps, it is worth trying to manage the ongoing crisis by giving displaced women the enlightenment they require to stay relevant in the twenty-first century economy using a framework that fits the regions context.

Women's Educational Access Post-Conflict: Kovac et al. (2022) report on the Bosnia & Herzegovina and Croatia conflict between 1990-2006 indicates that conflict-induced displacement significantly impacted access to education for women in these regions. Before the conflict, women in these regions generally had better educational attainment compared to

men, however, during the conflict, displacement disrupted access to schooling, for children from displaced families, leading to setbacks, due to trauma and loss of educational opportunities. Post-conflict, there has been significant recovery in education access, especially for younger children who could adapt and catch up over time. The data suggests that educational outcomes for girls and women displaced during the conflict have begun to improve over time, with many gradually closing the gap to become at par educationally with non-displaced girls and women. This highlights the recovery potential of educational attainment. Although some disparities still exist, for those with longer exposure to conflict-induced displacement; these gaps exist as a result of age, duration of displacement, and migration. This emphasizes the need for targeted educational support using policy, pedagogy and framework that help bridge the gap created by these disparities; this is next.

3.1 Analytical Framework

This section discusses the relevance of the capability and INEE framework(s) to the research and their practicability in bridging the educational gap created by the protracted conflict in NN.

The Capability Framework: According to Amartya-Sen (1980), a person's ability to achieve being formally educated is dependent on their personal utility, the availability of resources, their freedoms, a comparison of available resources and freedoms. Amartya-Sen (1992) added that education is a prerequisite for wellbeing that is fundamental to capabilities such as reading and writing, which should be equally accessible to women and men. However, in humanitarian settings structural barriers such as insecurity, cultural restrictions, trauma, and institutional collapse significantly impact access to education and individual agency. Nussbaum's (2003) extends the framework to include dignity, bodily integrity, practical reasoning, emotional wellbeing, and social participation as essential dimensions of human flourishing. Formal education goes beyond fundamental capabilities and should consider the synergy between teaching, learning and development. To such an extent that learners begin to think critically and creatively, communicate effectively, make informed decisions, solve practical problems, cope with and manage new situations. Nussbaum (2003) further noted that women's education should be given priority, ensuring that the content, context and process of curriculum delivery helps women develop capabilities that will equip them combat poverty and inequality while developing their resilience.

Nevertheless, Lugones (2010) argues that capability frameworks may insufficiently account for the structural and historical conditions shaping women's agency in contexts marked by violence, displacement, and patriarchal control (Unterhalter, 2017). As is the case in NN, where women's educational exclusion is not merely a question of individual capability. Rather it is a manifestation of sociocultural, religious, and political structures that regulate women's mobility, participation, and access to resources. Regardless, the capability framework is relevant to this research as it emphasizes how education contributes to women's resilience. Nonetheless, it is not sufficient to talk about access to education for women affected by conflict-induced disaster using the capability framework alone, a structural framework is required to improve educational access. The framework that suits this context is the INEE framework; this is highlighted subsequently.

The Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE) framework: Education in emergencies (EiE) developed the INEE framework. It emphasizes protection, participation, inclusive learning environments, teacher support, psychosocial wellbeing, and community engagement (INEE, 2021) as the minimum Standards for continuing learning during humanitarian crises (UNESCO, 2022). While INEE prioritizes access and enrolment, less attention is often given to the cultural adaptability, sustainability, and psychosocial relevance

of educational models within conflict-affected communities. In NN, resistance of western education by some communities reflects deeper tensions surrounding identity, religion, colonial legacies, and sociocultural transformation which are not considered in INEE. Educational interventions that fail to account for local cultural contexts may encounter resistance, limited participation, or weak long-term sustainability.

Therefore, this study contributes to the existing literature by integrating the capability and INEE frameworks as explanatory lenses for examining how educational experiences shape women's resilience within conditions of displacement and insecurity. Building on this synthesis, the study proposes the North-West Sub-Saharan (NWS) Pedagogy as a culturally responsive, trauma-informed, and community-oriented educational model capable of addressing both structural inequalities and the lived experiences of displaced women in NN and perhaps regions with similar contexts. Unlike conventional humanitarian education approaches that focus on access, NWS emphasizes psychosocial recovery, collective resilience, local participation, adaptive learning, the use of technology and culturally grounded educational engagement. The requirements for incorporating NWS in NN to bridge the poverty trap created by the protracted conflict will be expounded in the discussion, the following section discusses the research findings.

4. Analysis of Results

The interview results are discussed in this section using themes and subthemes embedded in the twenty interviews, analysed using the study's objectives, frameworks, and literature. While the responses might not adequately represent the situation of all Nigerian IDPs, the responses are concordant suggesting validity in lived experiences giving a measure of credibility to the findings. To enhance clarity, the thematic analysis incorporated frequency-based coding of recurring responses from multiple interconnected issues. The percentages reported indicate the proportion of participants within the sample (n=20) whose narratives are reflected in a theme and or subtheme.

4.1 Residence and Education

The theme of residence and education generated subthemes (deplorable living conditions, loss of economic viability, status-based discrimination, stigma and societal bias) that emerged across the interviews, suggesting considerable convergence in the participants lived experiences. They noted facing discrimination despite having the same culture as their host community; IDPF3 said:

"When we go to the clinic for treatment, they discriminate against us... I finished secondary school; I tried getting a sales job here, the stigma of being an IDP made the business owner reject me. This makes me feel unwanted in my own country of origin".

It seems these views of being discriminated against was held by several others as IDPM4 noted:

"The camp roofs are leaking this makes us sick, when we go to the hospital for treatment, they treat us unkindly, they say we are uneducated liabilities, they talk about us in our presence forgetting we all speak the same language... it's troubling".

IDPF4 spoke about their experience from a sanitation and hygiene perspective, she narrated:

"We were given mosquito nets when we came, they have now become worn out. We also don't get regular supply of clean water, but since we cannot get the water

ourselves because we don't have money and we don't have skills that can help us earn money, to buy clean water and other things we need, we manage what they give us".

The quotations from IDPF3, IDPM4 and IDPF4 are representative examples of the broader pattern identified in the data. Seventeen participants (85%) discussed discrimination and social exclusion, while nineteen participants (95%) associated their displacement with a loss of economic viability. Many participants within the sample noted feeling unwanted because they are perceived to be aid dependent, lacking economic value and formal education. Since *bokoharam's* devastating impacts on displaced persons, it appears they have begun to understand the importance of formal education for their advancement.

The respondents acknowledged and implied that the issues they face in camp are influenced by having lacked access to formal education. Interestingly, displaced persons with a significant level of formal education also complained about being discriminated against because of the notion that all IDPs are uneducated. Advancing the argument, Nwalieli (2018) asserted that although being in their home country (Nigeria) IDPs are stereotyped. Perceived as aid-dependent, unwilling to work, uneducated and a liability to their host communities even though they are required by law to receive aid. Further to this, the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC, 2014) noted that displaced persons are discriminated against, perceived to be uneducated, provided limited access to security, Water Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) and electricity. Although it is difficult to draw a generalization from the experiences of the displaced persons, it is difficult to dismiss their lived experiences regarding how access to formal education has influenced their coping and recovery. The summary of their responses, are in the Table 1:

Table 1: The Descriptive Association Between Education and Living in IDP Camps

Relationship Between Education and Residing in IDP camps	N = 20	% Responses
Deplorable Living Conditions	16	80.00
Loss of Economic Viability	19	95.00
Status Based Discrimination	17	85.00
Stigma & Societal Bias ¹	14	70.00

Note: "% Response" Indicate participant contribution to themes with some participants in several themes

The respondents' assertions in Table 1 above indicates that the stereotypical perception of IDPs being uneducated intersects with access to amenities resulting in living in deplorable conditions at 80% leading to stigma and societal bias regarding their being IDPs at 70%, The prevalence of narratives concerning discrimination suggests that educational stigma intersects with displacement status to shape social exclusion within host communities at 85% which impacts their economic viability at 95%. The responses suggests that access to formal education impacts their living conditions as the perception of IDPs being uneducated, lacking the required skills and literacy to contribute to the local economy impacts their resilience and ability to rebuild their lives. Thus, it is relevant to understand how culture impacted their access to education; this follows.

4.2 Culture and Education

The culture and education theme generated recurring narratives relating to early marriage, religious schooling, educational opportunity, literacy, and changing perceptions regarding education following displacement. The interviews suggest culture influenced the displaced

persons access to formal education before the insurgency and is influencing their recovery, IDPF9 remarked:

"I wanted to go to school and become a teacher, but in our culture, women get married early; I was married at 13. My father said my husband would send me to the teacher training college; it never happened. I attend Islamic school".

Conversely, a male respondent implied culture did not affect his access to formal education; which has contributed to his resilience. He highlights current ongoing trends in the camp, IDPM1 noted:

"...Children go to Islamic school to learn the Quran, I also went to a formal school, where I learnt to read, write and be conscientious. Here, I get called to represent fellow IDPs, there is no culture or religion here, we learn from each other, we are family".

IDPF1 who attended a formal school explained how culture contributed to her accessing education:

"Despite our culture, I went to a formal school. Education is free for girls in parts of NN through governmental and non-governmental organisations, but some parents prefer to marry off their daughters. I can say that having formal education has helped me even in this camp, because I can read and write, I get called to represent women. I get hope and comfort from reading my bible and I read to the women in our support group; my favourite authors are Buchi Emecheta (Joys of Motherhood), Chimamanda Achie (Half of a Yellow Sun) and Chinua Achebe (Things fall apart)."

A male respondent affirms culture impacting women's access to formal education IDPM2 says:

"My father was a wealthy livestock farmer and could afford to send all of us to school, but he chose to send my brother and I to secondary school. My sisters were betrothed while in primary school as is the culture, but all five of us went to Islamic school".

Advancing the claim of finance not contributing to education her attainment IDPF5 noted:

In our time, girls had free education, but most dropped out before form 5 (Grade 12). Girls between 12-20 were pressured to marry. Most women here can't read or write, so we came together to form an informal support group where those who can read, take a book and read to all, we also discuss issues in camp that affects us.

The quotations from IDPF9, IDPM1, IDPF1, IDPM2 and IDPF5 are representative of the broader theme. All participants discussed culture in relation to education, while 70% of respondents expressed a change in perception regarding the relationship between culture and education following displacement. As suggested by the respondents although formal education was not an integral part of their culture as Islamic education was, all participants consistently linked educational competencies (reading, writing, communicating and being conscientious) with coping and resilience. This education related competencies have helped them remain informed, filling their mind with the hope found in books, especially religious books.

To share this word of hope and comfort with each other, the women created an informal support group where they read, share experiences, aspirations for the future, and discuss matters arising in the camp. The statements of the respondents seem to suggest that education related competencies in addition to the new culture (family, learning, faith, hope and support) in camp has contributed to their resilience. The new culture is much similar to the existing culture in NN; family-ties, faith, hope and learning which are the core aspects of the region's culture all remain with them post-displacement, this implies that culture has a place in the learning experience and vice-versa (Markey et al., 2023).

Advancing the respondents assertions of learning and culture going paripassu, Setiadi et al. (2017) suggests that a pedagogy which fosters a culture of peace is crucial for learning (UNESCO, 2022). Perhaps it is time to start rethinking the pedagogy of education being used in NN to one that rightfully situates culture. Displacement has made the women thirst for education to such an extent that they engage themselves in education-related activities (reading and writing), which gives them comfort, has contributed to their resilience and set them on the path to recovery. This is not a case in favour of displacement but to note how perceptions and realities can change. As Collado (2019) asserts, displacement becomes the unfortunate catalyst for improving human relationships and developing pro-social behaviours, due to the realization that further disintegration would only add more suffering in a difficult situation (Freire et al. 2018). The respondents' testimony contain change in perceptions regarding the impact access to education has on culture, finance, value system and domestic responsibilities pre-displacement and post-displacement; in table 2 below:

Table 2: The Relationship Between Education and Culture Pre-Displacement and Post-Displacement

	PRE DISPLACEMENT				POST DISPLACEMENT			
Response (n=20)	Value System	Culture	Finance	Domestic Responsibility	Value System	Culture	Finance	Domestic Responsibility
value of n	18	20	11	20	8	6	19	20
Relationship with Education	90%	100%	50%	100%	40%	30%	95%	100%
Change in Perception					50%	70%	45%	0%

Note: Changes in perception indicate participants contrasting views on education pre and post displacement.

The respondents' assertions as seen in Table 2 above indicates that, pre-displacement, education was assumed to directly impact value systems, culture and domestic responsibilities. Education could have been argued to have had no direct relationship on finances as most of the displaced persons were employed in extractive trades. However, post-displacement these assumptions have changed, 50% of the responses claim that value system is not directly impacted by education while 70% suggest that education will not erase their culture as they had previously assumed. This change in perceptions seems to be as a result of their new realities. Finance saw a 45% shift in favour of education, this change in perception might have occurred as a result of their lived experience in the camp.

The respondents claimed that education impacts finance by virtue of their viability for employment being tied to their educational attainment. Domestic responsibilities on the other hand showed no change, some women claimed it increased as there are no support systems as extended family or domestic help to assist help with responsibilities. This then brings the question of whether or not women were marginalised as a result of exiting oppressive structures embedded in colonization, capitalism, and heterosexuality (Lugones, 2010) that has opened them to a life of subjugation. From the women's assertions, they have been drawing on cultural, social, subjective (enablers of psychosocial competencies) and educational resources. They even created an informal support group as a mechanism for their collective survival and resilience (Heide et al 2004). The next section discusses how education is impacting resilience post-displacement.

4.3 Education and Resilience

Educational skills and psychosocial competencies emerged as recurring themes across the interviews. Participants associated communication, mutual respect, positive attitudes, reading, writing, and participation in support groups with their ability to cope with displacement. When asked how their access to education before displacement has helped them remain resilient, their claims give the impression that education has contributed to their resilience. IDPM5 remarked:

"...Many of the women here depend on their husbands for financial support, they do not have the education or the skills to earn a living. Now, that we are here and depend on the government, the only thing we have is the education and skills we had before coming here; those that have none cannot support themselves to leave here".

IDPF1 shared the story of a girl who turned tragedy into an opportunity using education:

"On the wedding day, of a 14yr old girl, bokoharam attacked the village; we all ran. The bride escaped but her husband and parents died, she ran to an IDP camp. She later began attending a school that was free for girls, she is now in the university on a state scholarship. She escaped misfortune and decided to make something out of her experience, but not everyone can do what she did and not everyone has such fate. She chose education, and it has paved the way for to have a chance at a better life.

The respondents' testimonies echo Sen's (1980) capability theory, nevertheless, being educated is influenced by infrastructure, culture, opportunities and a comparison of how these influences collectively affect being educated. The respondents noted that their current inability to access formal education in camp is attributable to school structures being destroyed by the insurgents or converted to IDP camps, IDPF4 noted:

"The schools have been destroyed or converted to camps, I think reconstruction must occur, but the attacks are still on, our recovery might take a long time as we have been through emotional trauma. Currently, I read, write, communicate with my fellow IDPs, maintain a positive attitude, and I am a part of our informal support group".

Similarly, respondent IDPF6 emphasized:

"...The schools have been destroyed, and teachers have fled. I read my Quran, I can't write, but I talk to everyone especially in the group it reminds me I am not alone. Some of our children were born in this camp and have never been to school. This is not good for them or us because we do not want them to become a liability to society".

The quotations from IDPM5, IDPF1, IDPF4 and IDPF6 are representative examples of the wider dataset. Communication and mutual respect emerged as the most frequently reported psychosocial competencies, while support-group participation was discussed by all female respondents. Advancing the argument, the International Disaster Monitoring Centre (IDMC, 2018) asserts that disruptions to education of displaced persons can harm their mental health and widen economic disparities creating a poverty trap that endures long after displacement. Furthermore, Olanrewaju et al. (2019) noted that Nigerian IDPs lack access to education and opportunities, are poor, discriminated against, neglected and remain in a struggle for available resources (Paul & Ibrahim 2026). Regardless, the women suggest that educational related activities have contributed to their resilience despite their adversity. They reported writing, reading, communicating, having a positive attitude, showing respect for one another and having an informal support group where they bond over shared trauma. The summary of their assertions; men and women are shown in Tables 3:

Table 3: Educational Skills, Psychosocial Competencies & Resilience Among Men and Women

	WOMEN (n=14)						MEN (n=6)					
Competency	Communication	Mutual Respect	Positive Attitude	Reading	Support Group	Writing	Communication	Mutual Respect	Positive Attitude	Reading	Support Group	Writing
% of respondents	100%	100%	92.86%	85.72%	100%	42.86%	66.70%	100%	50%	83.40%	16.70%	83.40%
Value of n	14	14	13	12	14	6	4	6	3	5	1	5

Note: “% Response” Indicate participant contribution to themes with some participants in several themes

The assertions of the women as depicted in Table 3 gives an impression of stability and points to the fact that while the women are lacking in the conventional ability to read and write, they use psychosocial competencies (communication, positive attitude, mutual respect and support group). These education related skills better known as psychosocial competencies have contributed to their resilience and serves as a mechanism for collective survival. The women stated that in their informal support group, they talk about issues in camp that relates to them; from domestic responsibilities to childcare, finances and the life the hope to build. The women's reality aligns with the work of Amartya Sen (1999) which emphasizes that empowerment can occur through capabilities developed outside the conventional ability to read and write, especially among marginalized populations. This then bring the question of what women's resilience would look like if they all had the conventional ability to read and write.

On the other hand, the assertions of the men as depicted in Table 3 above show more fluctuation with highs and lows across all variables. Within this small male subsample, the men who had the conventional ability to read and write seem to be lacking the psychosocial competencies required to enhance their resilience. Can it then be acceded that this difference between men and women is as a personality difference, learned behaviour or social conditioning? Lugones (2010) posits that the gendered experiences of oppression are shaped by intersecting systems of colonialism, patriarchy, and social expectation.

These gendered experiences influence expressions of resilience and access to supportive mechanisms for men and women. Gender can be seen playing a defining role in the adaptation and coping strategies of displaced populations, in the context of resilience and reconstruction (Serraglio & Thornton 2024). Nevertheless, the availability of opportunities, one's inherent capability and a desperate need for change influences individual responses. This is the case in the experience of the girl who ceased the opportunity created by tragedy to change her reality, her actions were not only courageous, they were an act of defiance to social conditioning. As Freire et al. (2018) suggested. Liberation requires action that challenges power structures to create a new and more just social order. While the impact of access to education on resilience was discussed, recovery influenced by access to education emerged, this is subsequent.

4.4 Education and Recovery

The recovery theme generated recurring narratives concerning access to schooling, livelihood opportunities, reconstruction, and future aspirations. These themes appeared consistently

across the majority of interviews. From the interviews, it was clear that women who missed the opportunity to be educated want access to formal education as much as those who had access to education before *bokoharam*. Despite the women's want to be educated for their advancement and recovery, the resources to provide education within the camp seem to be lacking, IDPF2 explained:

"Our children are not going to school there are no schools and we don't have money our livelihood was destroyed. I hope the government looks into this; though it might take a while" ... if I had the skill or education to earn a living it would help me rebuild my life.

Similarly, IDPF12 shared the sentiment of others when she spoke about wanting to be educated:

"The schools around were burnt down, we have no access to education or livelihood. The government needs to look into providing us with schooling or skill acquisition training so that we can begin to earn money and rebuild our lives".

Advancing the argument, IDPF8 highlights her hope about accessing education and recovery.

"I hope the insurgency ends soon so I can begin earning money to send my children back to school. I want them to have a better life. I will also love to go back to school, rebuild my home and take better care of my family; life here has been unpleasant."

The quotations from IDPF2, IDPF12 and IDPF8 are representative examples of a broader pattern within the dataset. Eighteen participants (90%) advocated reconstruction initiatives, while sixteen participants (80%) specifically linked rebuilding schools with improved recovery outcomes. The data implies women associate being able to earn a living with having education which they link to recovery. The women's perspective is consistent with the findings of Amaratunga and Haigh (2011) which recommend that affected individuals undergo social rehabilitation for their recovery however, this takes time as effective recovery competes with many governmental priorities. Gotham and Cheek (2017) asserted that reconstruction determines a community's vulnerability or resilience, therefore, a well-planned governmental policy is required. Correspondingly, the United Nations Human Settlement Program (2012) noted that a community's post-disaster reconstruction plan should not be predetermined by availability of resources, it should identify actions required to rebuild affected lives using a bottom-up approach. Freire et al. (2018) posited that education for those who feel dehumanized brings about the transformation of behaviours by demythologizing vertical ideologies that result from the unfinished personality of humans.

From the respondent's assertions, the first step to building back better is rehabilitation. The next step is literacy and then skills acquisition to help them earn a living, with their newfound literacy and skills they will better be positioned to earn a living. When they are financially independent, they would be able to contribute to the labour force and support their community, thus ending the stigma associated with being IDPs. While the respondents' statement is at par with the literature, none of them explicitly mentioned policies on reconstruction; they however referred to the Government as being responsible for reconstruction. 90% of the respondents advocated for reconstruction, 80% noted that rebuilding schools will improve access to education and help with their recovery.

The respondents stated that having schooling will provide them the skills required to earn a living, buttressing their claims, IDMC (2010) emphasized that disruption to education affects social cohesion, increases gender inequalities, decreases employment opportunities, generating a poverty trap that endures long after displacement. Therefore, improving access to education as soon as situations permit should be a priority. Figure 2 below is a thematic map of the themes and subthemes discussed. Details of what providing access to education entails follows.

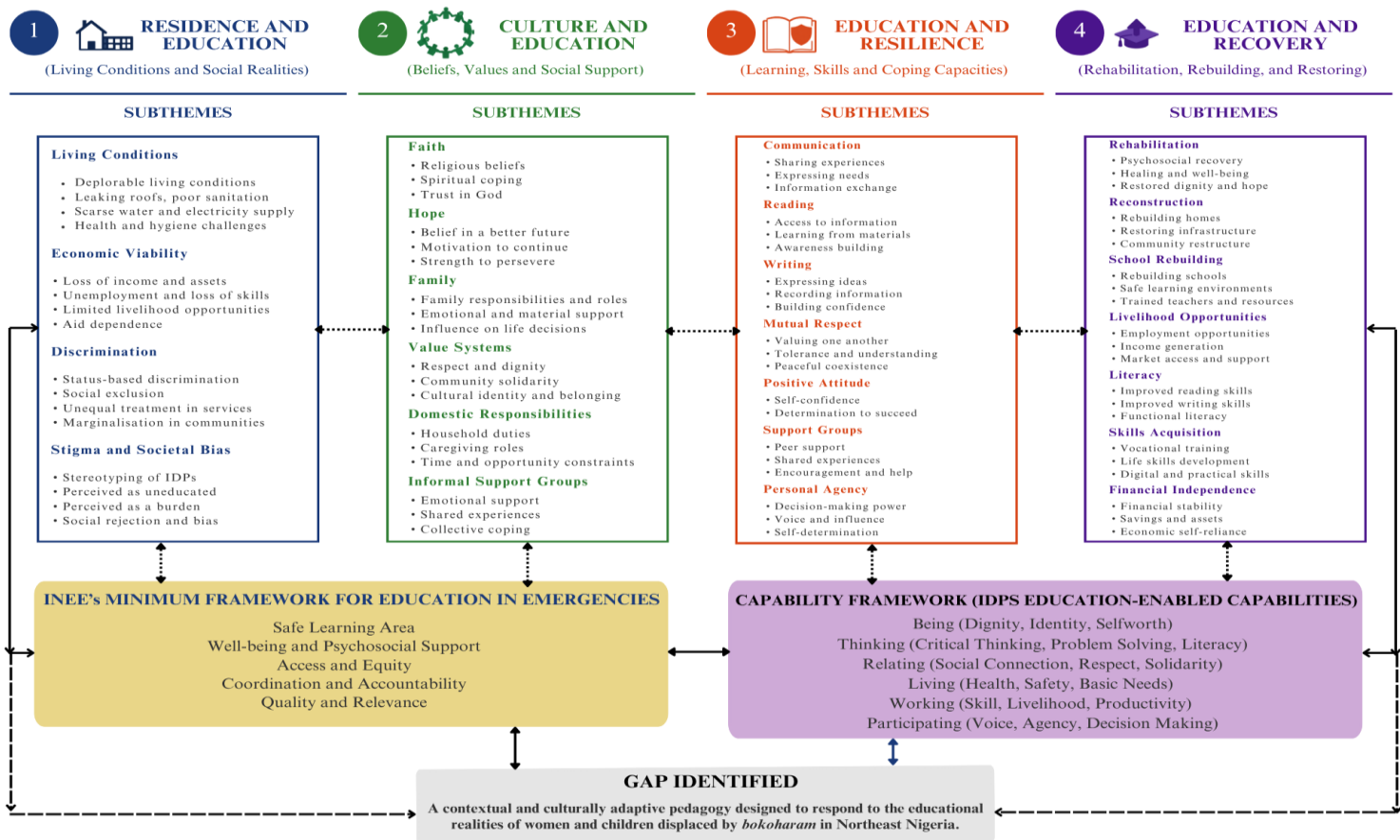


Figure 2: Thematic Analysis Representation

Note: The Authors work, adapted from Braun and Clark (2006) analysis. Image developed using CANVA.

5. Discussion

Improving access to education post-displacement as requested by the women will require a pedagogy that acknowledges culture, addresses discrimination, and is acceptable and adaptable. The pedagogy that meets these criteria is the pedagogy of community education; it is rooted in culture, employs dialogical learning, and gives learners influence over learning and information sharing. The pedagogy of community education emphasizes collective consciousness, social justice, respect, and equips learners to solve practical problems (Fleming 2008; HarshaDhar & Shashirekha, 2014). Introducing the pedagogy of community education to the region will require a framework that will not exacerbate existing fears of formal education taking over sociocultural norms. The framework that meets these criteria is the Education in Emergencies (EiE) framework; INEE, which leverages participation, accountability, non-discrimination, and legal protection to provide accessible, acceptable, and adaptable education. Perhaps it is worth considering the redesign of existing curricula to ensure education moves beyond traditional teaching methods.

This will help ensure learning is culturally grounded, respectful, adaptable and equips learners to be relevant in the twenty-first century economy, thereby alleviating the poverty trap associated with displacement. There is currently no formally recognised pedagogy that consolidates an information technology immersed curriculum using the pedagogy of community education and the structure of the INEE as a unified model. This opens the

opportunity for conceptual innovation; it is on this basis that the authors put forward the “North-West Sub-Saharan (NWS) Pedagogy”.

The NWS Pedagogy (an information technology immersed pedagogy of community education structured with the INEE framework) is similar to the Northern Pedagogy, which is a culturally rooted, place-based, and land-based education system developed for Indigenous communities to move beyond colonial models toward self-governance and the development of skills for northern life (Peterson et al., 2019). NWS emerges as a contextual and culturally adaptive pedagogy designed to respond to the educational realities of women and children displaced by *bokoharam* in NN. NWS draws from the Capability and INEE frameworks while responding to their limitations. Existing EiE frameworks in sub-Saharan Africa prioritise access and enrolment without adequately addressing the structural conditions that constrain women's agency, participation and programme continuity (Mendenhall et al., 2021).

The historical context of education in Northern Nigeria highlights the need to engage with traditional institutions, religious leaders, civil society actors, governmental agencies, humanitarian organisations, educational institutions, and women-led community groups (Unterhalter, 2017). These engagements contribute to the psychosocial support and social resilience required to overcome challenges associated with insecurity, infrastructural loss, trauma, poverty, patriarchy, and distrust of western education in NN. Re-introducing education using NWS might bring about the step-change needed to alleviate the poverty trap of displacement amongst IDPs. NWS integrates technology, psychosocial support, livelihood-oriented education, and participatory learning. A livelihood-oriented education encompasses literacy, vocational competencies, and technological skills required to improve adaptive capacities and livelihood opportunities. Participatory learning helps strengthen social cohesion by enhancing women's confidence, leadership capacity, and participation in decision-making processes.

To ensure NWS success, a pilot should be conducted in an IDP camp in NN before wider implementation across the zone. The pilot would require the rehabilitation of displaced persons, the creation of safe learning environments, and the recruitment of culturally trained and qualified educational personnel. Key stakeholders include NEMA, state education authorities, religious and traditional leaders, humanitarian organisations, women-led groups, mental health practitioners, teachers, and community representatives. Safeguarding mechanisms should include child-protection procedures, gender-sensitive reporting pathways, and appropriate referral systems for vulnerable participants. There are financial costs associated with implementing the NWS Pedagogy, including the provision of trauma-informed mental health specialists, safe and equipped learning spaces, teacher recruitment and retention, technology infrastructure, safeguarding systems, and monitoring and evaluation activities. Educational personnel must be technologically competent and willing to work with experts and researchers in the field of education to develop an appropriate curriculum. The curriculum should leverage culture, prior knowledge, skills and levels of engagement to make learning adaptable to the learner's situation (Livingston et al., 2017).

Teacher preparation should include trauma-informed practice, digital literacy, safeguarding, and community-based learning. Access to technology must be included in implementation, through provision of devices, reliable power sources, and offline learning options where connectivity is limited. Monitoring and evaluation indicators include enrolment, attendance, literacy acquisition, psychosocial wellbeing, retention, participation in livelihood activities, and transition into further education or employment. These indicators provide evidence of NWS effectiveness and scalability. NWS is not without limitations as have been articulated; thus, it should be adapted to the needs of where it is being implemented. NWS contributes to

ongoing scholarship on EiE and resilience by integrating psychosocial recovery, cultural responsiveness, community participation, adaptive learning structures, and technology, thereby extending debates beyond educational access toward long-term recovery and reconstruction while contributing to the Sustainable Development Goals on education. Fig 3 below puts the requirements for NWS pilot implementation into a framework.



Figure 3: NWS Pilot Implementation Framework Representation

Note: The Authors own work. Image developed using CANVA.

The next section highlights findings and recommendations suggested to help bridge identified gaps.

6. Conclusion

This study aimed to examine how access to formal education before the insurgency has enhanced the resilience of women in the Nigerian IDP camps. There have been studies on education and resilience, affirming that education contributes to resilience. However, the knowledge gap regarding how access to formal education has helped women cope with disasters necessitated this research. NN was chosen as the study area because there are over 2million IDPs therein, and conflict has been ongoing in the region since 2009. The analysis revealed that currently, there is no education in IDP camps, the displaced persons suggest noted being discriminated against. The analysis further revealed that access to education in NN is influenced by availability of finances, the want to be educated and the culture of the land; this reaffirms the validity of the capability framework that says, 'freedoms and functioning influence access to education'. From the analysis, it was evident that factors influencing access to formal education does not equally apply to both genders, the testament of both men and women strongly suggest women were marginalized. It is noteworthy that while culture appears

to have influenced access to formal education before the insurgency, in the IDP camps, they have developed a new culture; family.

The respondents spoke about having access to formal education for their advancement. They suggested that formal education has contributed to their resilience as they read, write, communicate, show respect to one another and have a positive attitude. The women even created an informal support group as a mechanism for their collective survival and resilience. They said that although culture influenced their access to education before displacement, the new culture they have developed in the camps fills them with hope. As deduced from the IDPs testimonies, and as noted by Nussbaum, education should go beyond fundamental capabilities to focusing on equipping people especially women to combat poverty. However, the context specific nature of NN requires that any system of education to be introduced post-displacement should consolidate a technology immersed curriculum delivery using the pedagogy of community education with the structure of the INEE framework as a unified model.

There is currently no unified model that meets the requirements of a technology curriculum delivery immersed pedagogy of community education structured with the INEE framework. This opens the opportunity for conceptual innovation; it is on this basis that the authors put forward the “North-West Sub-Saharan (NWS) Pedagogy”. Introducing the NWS Pedagogy to Northeast-Nigeria might help equip women IDPs with the skills, and competencies they require to break the poverty gap associated with displacement and give them the assets essential for them to remain relevant in the twenty-first century economy consequently ending the poverty trap associated with displacement and perhaps ending the notion *bokoharam*.

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Appendix – Interview Guide

Section 1: Introduction and Consent

Thank you for agreeing to speak with me today. I am conducting this research to better understand how access to formal education has influenced the resilience and recovery of women affected by displacement due to *Bokoharam*. Your participation in this interview is completely voluntary. You are free to refuse to answer any question or stop the interview at any time without consequences. Everything you share with me is confidential, and your identity will remain anonymous in the research findings. With your permission, I would like to tape-record this interview and take notes to ensure that your experiences are captured accurately. The recording and notes will only be used for academic purposes and will be stored securely. Some questions may involve discussing difficult experiences related to displacement and conflict. Please feel free to pause, skip any question, or stop the interview if you become uncomfortable at any point

Section 2: Background Information

- Can you tell me a little about yourself?
- Did you attend any form of school before displacement?
- What level of education did you complete?

Section 3: Education Before Displacement

- What were attitudes toward education in your community before displacement?
- How did access (or lack of access) to education affect your life before displacement?
- Did you ever want more education? Why or why not?

Section 4: Experiences of Displacement

- What changes occurred in your daily life after arriving at the camp?
- How has displacement affected your opportunities for education or work?

Section 5: Education and Resilience

- In what ways, if any, has education helped you cope with displacement?
- Do you think education contributes to resilience? How?
- Have you participated in any learning activities in the camp?
- How do women in the camp support one another?

Section 7: Recovery and Future Aspirations

- What are your hopes for the future?
- What kind of education or training would help improve your life?
- What is currently prevent access to education and what changes would you like to see?

Section 8: Closing Questions

- Is there anything else you would like to share about your experiences?
- Do you have any questions you would like to ask me?