



Research Paper

Gender, Religious Inclination and the Preference of Coping Styles among the Survivors of Boko-Haram Sect in Maiduguri, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated the differences in the choice of coping styles among the victims of Boko-Haram sect in Maiduguri, Borno State. The age range of the subjects investigated was 20-55 with the mean of 37.5 years. Out of the 300 respondents, 100 were males and 200 females, 80 of which were single, while 28 were married. The Coping Strategy Inventory (CSI) is a 42-item self-report questionnaire designed to assess coping thoughts and behaviors in response to a specific stressor. The format of the CSI is adapted from the Lazarus "way of coping" questionnaire (Folkman & Lazarus, 1981). The major objectives of the study was to have a critical look at/x-ray of what crisis is all about and the coping situations of the survivors of Boko-Haram Islamic sect across gender lines. The results showed that men engaged in problem-focused coping, while women were found to engage in emotion-focused. The research work focused on the understanding of coping styles and the manageability in the real sense of the word as conceptualized by the communities. Manageability points to the way local communities experience crisis and perceive the hazard visa-a-vice their capacity to handle the situation in accordance to the resources available as well as a range of coping mechanisms. This work was able to unfold localized factors, available socio-economic resources and even factors of senility. The concept could be a key factor in ameliorating posttraumatic conditions as well as equipping the local communities with awareness thereby strengthening their understanding of the potential threat which could be posed by crisis. Similarly, it legitimizes the initiatives of the local coping patterns.

KEYWORDS: Boko-Haram, coping styles, gender, religious inclination

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I. INTRODUCTION

Historically, Borno was part of North Eastern State and later became Borno State in 1976 with Damaturu as a local government under it. Damaturu became a state of its own in the year 1991 and was named Yobe State. Borno had been relatively peaceful before the advent of insurgency in 2009. Prior to this time, the city was a multicultural vibrant and known for its dynamism in Nigeria. As a state, it is endowed with both human and material resources which provided many opportunities for its indigenes and other Nigerians co-existing together with them. The state witnessed its first terrorism from the terrorist sect in the year 2009 (Adamu, 2014). This led to the killing of innocent citizens by an insurgent group known as Boko-Haram. The group disrupted educational system in the state creating a huge negative effect, especially on basic education. The terrorist group didn't like children to attend schools and therefore unleashed on them criminal behaviors such as kidnapping and attacking their teachers on duty posts (Adeyemi, 2014). Also alleged were the killings of teachers and religious leaders of both Christianity and Islamic faiths. The terrorist acts instilled fear in the minds of people across the entire region. This part of the country witnessed massive destruction of human live as well as untold setback on the school activities. Borno State Government (BSG, 2012) has it on record that the state is the largest in Nigeria in terms of land mass and covers 69,435 square kilometers and is situated in the North-eastern part of the country.

The State occupies a central position to all its international and national neighbors such as the Northern Cameroun, Southern Chad and the Republic of Niger. A huge number of students from Adamawa, Gombe and Yobe States are not left out from the benefits derived from education offered by the state's basic education

programs. Kanuri constitutes the major ethnic group in the State and the larger part of the inhabitants of the state are farmers, fishermen and herdsman. The people send their children to both orthodox and Quaranic schools.

II. METHODOLOGY

Participants

The proposed participants for the study will be 300 people comprising of males and females. They will be made up of 100 men and 200 women. The respondents will be drawn from areas most affected by the crisis such as Abaganaram, Railway, Kumshe, Bolori, Kasuwan- shanu and Zajeri. Their ages will fall within 20-55 with a mean of 37.5 and a standard deviation of 7.5. 144(48%) will be single, 156(52%) married, 78(26%) will be either divorced or separated, and 66(22%) will be either widows or widowers. 59(19.5%) civil servants, 137(45.5%) will either have primary school education or secondary school education, and 123(41%) will have post secondary school education, while 40(13.5%) will be University graduates or will have equivalent qualifications.

Instrument

1. 42 item questionnaires, paper and pencils will be used to collect the data.

Design

Two factor coping patterns, gender (male & female) and religion (Christianity & Islam) will be assessed. Two levels each in coping patterns, gender and religion will be considered.

Two-way ANOVA will be used to analyze the results statistically.

The CSI is composed of 14 subscales which are made up of eight (8) primary scales, four (4) secondary scales and two (2) tertiary scales. The construction of the subscales was based on a second look of the coping assessment literature (Tobin, Holroyd & Reynold, 1982) and the factor structure was born out of using Wherry's hierarchical rotation (Wherry, 1984, Tobin, Holroyd, Reynolds & Wigal, 1985). Formed from the "way of Coping" questionnaire (Folk man & Lazarus, 1981), twenty-three (23) items were used while forty-nine (49) were written to reflect the dimensions of the hypothesized subscales.

The primary scales are made up of specific coping strategies that people use in response to stressful events. These are:

- i. Problem Solving: This subscale includes items referring to both behavioral and cognitive strategies designed to eliminate the source of stress by changing the stressful situation.
- ii. Cognitive Restructuring: The subscale that includes cognitive strategies that alter the meaning of the stressful transaction as it is less threatening, is examined for its positive aspects, is viewed from a new perspective, etc.
- iii. Social Support: This subscale includes items that refer to seeking emotional support from people, one's family and friends.
- iv. Express Emotions: This subscale includes items referring to releasing and expressing emotions.
- v. Problem Avoidance: The subscale that have items referring to the denial of problems and avoidance of thoughts or action about the stressful event.
- vi. Wishful Thinking: The subscale that refer to cognitive strategies that reflect an inability or reluctance to reframe or symbolically alter the situation. The items involve hoping and wishing that things could be better.
- vii. Social Withdrawal: This subscale comprised of items that reflect blaming oneself for the situation and criticizing oneself.

The secondary subscales include:

- i. Problem Focused Engagement: The subscale that have both problem Solving and cognitive Restructuring subscales. The subscales involve cognitive and behavioral strategies to change the situation or to change the meaning of the situation for the individual.
- ii. Emotional Focused Engagement: This subscale includes both Social Support and Express Emotions. The items reflect open communication of feelings to others and increased social involvement, especially with family and friends. The coping efforts are focused on the individual's emotional reaction to the stressful situation.
- iii. Problem Focused Disengagement: The subscale that includes both Problem Avoidance and Wishful Thinking. The items reflect denial, avoidance, and an inability or reluctance to look at the situation differently. They reflect cognitive and behavioral strategies to avoid the situation.
- iv. Emotion Focused Disengagement: This subscale includes Social Withdrawal and Self criticism. This subscale involves shutting oneself and one's feelings off from others, and criticizing or blaming oneself for what happened.

The tertiary subscales are:

- i. Engagement: The subscale that includes Problem Solving, Cognitive Restructuring, Social Support, and Express Emotion. The subscale reflects attempts by the individual to engage in efforts to manage the stressful person/environment transaction. It is expected that the coping strategies will enable individuals engage in an active and ongoing negotiation with the stressful environment.
- ii. Disengagement: This subscale includes Problem Avoidance, Wishful Thinking, Social Withdrawal and Self Criticism. It includes strategies that are likely to result in disengaging the individual from the person/environment transaction. Feelings are not shared with others, thoughts about situations are avoided and behaviors that might change the situation are not initiated.

III. PROCEDURE

The Coping Strategies Inventory (CSI) is a 42-item self-report questionnaire purposely designed to assess coping thoughts and in response to a specific stressor. The format of CSI is adapted from the Lazarus' "way of Coping" questionnaire (Folkman & Lazarus, (1981). The format requires a person to explain in one paragraph or two, the events and circumstances of a stressful bout. The CSI could be given the option to make a request for the stressor in an open-ended manner, or of requesting a particular type of stressor (e.g., one that brings about headaches or one that was ineffectively coped with). The norms reported in this adapted manual were developed with an open-ended format. It requires a person to take the CSI's 42 questions in a 5-item Likert format following the description of a stressful situation. Since the respondents belong to different ethnic groups and dialects, assistants will be used to administer the questionnaires. The assistants will be allowed to help the respondents that would not be able to read and write in order to fill the questionnaires. Data will be collected within the span of one week and maximum of two weeks.

IV. RESULTS

A clear description of the results of the study is presented below. Frequency distribution was employed to organize the descriptive statistics, which the χ^2 was used for the inferential analysis.

Table I. Frequency distribution of age

| Age Range | Frequency | Percentage |
|------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| 20-25 | 30 | 10 |
| 26-31 | 45 | 15 |
| 32-37 | 120 | 40 |
| 38-43 | 90 | 30 |
| 44-49 | 9 | 3 |
| 50-55 | 6 | 2 |

V. MATERIAL AND METHODS

This cross-sectional survey study was carried out during the crisis period in various camps where the Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) were settled in Maiduguri city. Data was collected by a coping strategies inventory, a 42 questions questionnaire, in a 5 items Likert Format designed to assess coping thoughts and behaviors in response to a specific stressor. Twenty-three of the items were taken from the "way of coping" questionnaire (Folkman & Lazarus, 1981) and items were written to reflect the dimensions of the hypothesized subscales.

The primary subscales consist of specific coping strategies people use in response to stressful events. These includes:

1. Problem solving. The subscale includes items referring to both behavioral and cognitive strategies designed to eliminate the source of stress by changing the stressful situation.
2. Cognitive Restructuring: This subscale includes cognitive strategies that alter the meaning of the stressful transaction as it is less threatening, is examined for its positive aspects, is viewed from a new perspective, etc.
3. Social Support: This subscale includes items that refer to seeking emotional support from people, one's family and one's friends.
4. Express Emotions: This subscale includes items referring to releasing and expressing emotions.
5. Problem Avoidance: This includes items referring to the denial of problems and the avoidance of thoughts or actions about the stressful event.
6. Wishful Thinking: This subscale refers to cognitive strategies that reflect an inability or reluctance to reframe or symbolically alter the situation. The items involve hoping and wishing that things could be better.
7. Social withdrawal: This subscale includes items that reflect blaming oneself for the situation and criticizing oneself.

The secondary subscales are:

- (i) **Problem Focused Engagement:** This subscale includes both the Problem Solving and Cognitive Restructuring subscales.
- (ii) **Emotional Focused Engagement:** This subscale includes both social support and express emotions. The items reflect open communication of feelings to others and increased social involvement, especially with family and friends. This coping effort is focused on the individual's emotional reaction to stressful situation.
- (iii) **Problem Focused Disengagement:** This subscale includes both problem avoidance and wishful thinking. The items reflect denial, avoidance and an inability or reluctance to look at the situation differently. They reflect cognitive and behavioral strategies to avoid the situation.
- (iii) **Emotional Focused Disengagement:** This subscale includes social withdrawal and self criticism. The subscale involves shutting oneself and one's feelings off from others and criticizing or blaming oneself for what happened.

RESULTS

INFERENCE RESULTS

Hypotheses One:

There are gender differences in coping strategies

The hypothesis was tested with the independent t-test and results revealed that there was a significant gender difference in problem focused coping strategy, $t = 4.818$, $df = 298$, $p = 0.0005$ ($p < .05$); with mean scores of 46.37 and 40.60 for male and female respectively. This implied that males significantly had higher mean scores in the use of problem focused coping strategy. Furthermore, there were significant gender differences in blamed self-coping strategy, $t = 7.46$, $df = 298$, $p = 0.0005$ ($p < .05$); mean scores of 7.46 and 4.98 for males and females; indicating males had higher mean scores; and there was a significant mean difference in avoidance coping strategy, $t = 4.924$, $df = 298$, $p = 0.0005$ ($p < .05$); with mean avoidance coping strategy scores of 28.11 for males and 24.30 for females. However, there was no significant gender difference in seek social support coping strategy, $t = 1.630$, $df = 298$, $p = 0.104$ ($p > .05$); and wishful thinking coping strategy, $t = 0.526$, $df = 298$, $p = 0.599$ ($p > .05$). Table 1 shows the result summary.

Table 1: Showing Mean Gender Differences in Coping Strategies

| Coping Styles | N | Mean | T | df | Sig. |
|----------------------------|-----|-------|-------|-----|--------|
| Problem focused | | | | | |
| Male | | 46.37 | 4.818 | 298 | 0.0005 |
| Female | 100 | 40.60 | | | |
| | 200 | | | | |
| Seek Social Support | | | | | |
| Male | | 17.90 | 1.630 | 298 | 0.104 |
| Female | 100 | 16.99 | | | |
| | 200 | | | | |
| Blamed Self | | | | | |
| Male | | 7.46 | 7.465 | 298 | 0.0005 |
| Female | 100 | 4.98 | | | |
| | 200 | | | | |
| Wishful Thinking | | | | | |
| Male | | 28.88 | 0.526 | 298 | 0.599 |
| Female | 100 | 30.11 | | | |
| | 200 | | | | |
| Avoidance | | | | | |
| Male | | 28.11 | 4.924 | 298 | 0.0005 |
| Female | 100 | 24.30 | | | |
| | 200 | | | | |

Hypothesis Two:

There is a main effect of gender on the coping styles.

The hypothesis was tested with the one-way analysis of variance statistic (ANOVA). Table 2 shows the summary of the ANOVA mean scores for the coping strategies.

Table 2: Mean and Standard Deviation Table for Coping Styles across Gender

| Coping Styles | Mean | Standard Deviation | 95% Confidence Interval for Mean | |
|----------------------------|-------|--------------------|----------------------------------|-------------|
| | | | Lower Bound | Upper Bound |
| Problem focused | | | | |
| Male | 46.37 | 9.18 | 44.55 | 48.19 |
| Female | 40.60 | 10.05 | 39.20 | 42.01 |
| Seek Social Support | | | | |
| Male | 17.90 | 4.15 | 17.08 | 18.72 |
| Female | 16.99 | 4.79 | 16.32 | 17.65 |
| Blamed Self | | | | |
| Male | 7.46 | 3.29 | 6.81 | 8.11 |
| Female | 4.98 | 2.73 | 4.65 | 5.31 |
| Wishful Thinking | | | | |
| Male | 28.88 | 31.29 | 22.67 | 35.09 |
| Female | 30.11 | 7.36 | 29.08 | 31.13 |
| Avoidance | | | | |
| Male | 28.11 | 6.30 | 26.86 | 29.36 |
| Female | 24.30 | 6.34 | 23.41 | 25.18 |

Result in Table 3 indicating that there was a significant gender main effect on problem focused coping strategy, $F(1, 298) = 23.209$, $p = 0.0005$ ($p < .05$); with problem focused mean scores of 46.37 and 40.60 (Table 2) for males and females respectively. This means that males are more predisposed to engage in problem focused coping strategy than females.

Table 3: ANOVA Summary Table for Gender Main Effect on Problem Focused Coping Strategy

| Source | Sum of Squares | Df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|----------------|----------------|-----|-------------|--------|--------|
| Between Groups | 2215.682 | 1 | 2215.682 | 23.209 | 0.0005 |
| Within Groups | 28449.105 | 298 | 95.467 | | |
| Total | 30664.787 | 299 | | | |

The result in Table 4 revealed that there was no significant gender main effect on seeking social support coping strategy, $F(1, 298) = 2.655$, $p = 0.104$ ($p > .05$); with mean scores of 17.90 and 16.99 (Table 2) for males and females respectively.

Table 4: ANOVA Summary Table for Gender Main Effect on Seek Social Support Coping Strategy

| Source | Sum of Squares | Df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|----------------|----------------|-----|-------------|-------|-------|
| Between Groups | 55.815 | 1 | 55.815 | 2.655 | 0.104 |
| Within Groups | 6263.955 | 298 | 21.020 | | |
| Total | 6319.770 | 299 | | | |

Table 5 showed that there was a significant gender main effect on blamed self coping strategy, $F(1, 298) = 55.723$, $p = 0.0005$ ($p < .05$); with mean scores of 7.46 and 4.98 for males and females (Table 2). This indicates that being male predispose an individual to engage in blamed self coping strategy than being female.

Table 5: ANOVA Summary Table for Gender Main Effect on Blamed self Coping Strategy

| Source | Sum of Squares | Df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|----------------|----------------|-----|-------------|--------|--------|
| Between Groups | 410.027 | 1 | 410.027 | 55.723 | 0.0005 |
| Within Groups | 2192.760 | 298 | 7.358 | | |
| Total | 2602.787 | 299 | | | |

Results in Table 6 revealed that there was no significant gender main effect on wishful thinking coping strategy, $F(1, 298) = 0.277$, $p = 0.599$ ($p > .05$); with mean wishful thinking scores of 28.88 and 30.11 for males and females respectively.

Table 6: ANOVA Summary Table for Gender Main Effect on Wishful Thinking Coping Strategy

| Source | Sum of Squares | Df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|----------------|----------------|-----|-------------|-------|-------|
| Between Groups | 100.042 | 1 | 100.042 | 0.277 | 0.599 |
| Within Groups | 107663.4 | 298 | 361.286 | | |
| Total | 107763.4 | 299 | | | |

Result in Table 7 indicated that there was a significant gender main effect on avoidance coping strategy, $F(1, 298) = 24.250$, $p = 0.0005$ ($p < .05$); with mean avoidance coping strategy scores of 28.11 for males and 24.30 for females. This implies that being male predisposes an individual to use avoidance as a coping strategy than being female.

Table 7: ANOVA Summary Table for Gender Main Effect on Avoidance Coping Strategy

| Source | Sum of Squares | Df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|----------------|----------------|-----|-------------|--------|--------|
| Between Groups | 970.282 | 1 | 970.282 | 24.250 | 0.0005 |
| Within Groups | 11923.385 | 298 | 40.011 | | |
| Total | 12893.667 | 299 | | | |

Table 8 shows the summary of the ANOVA mean scores for the coping strategies.

Table 8: Mean and Standard Deviation Table for Coping Strategies across Age Group

| Coping Strategies across Age group | Mean | Standard Deviation | 95% Confidence Interval for Mean | |
|------------------------------------|-------|--------------------|----------------------------------|-------------|
| | | | Lower Bound | Upper Bound |
| Problem focused | | | | |
| 20-25 | 45.57 | 7.85 | 42.64 | 48.50 |
| 26-31 | 47.56 | 9.39 | 44.74 | 50.38 |
| 32-37 | 39.58 | 9.15 | 37.93 | 41.24 |
| 38-43 | 42.10 | 11.22 | 39.75 | 44.45 |
| 44-49 | 48.22 | 8.29 | 41.85 | 54.59 |
| 50-55 | 46.33 | 9.29 | 36.59 | 56.08 |
| Seek Social Support | | | | |
| 20-25 | 17.77 | 4.19 | 16.20 | 19.33 |
| 26-31 | 17.62 | 4.08 | 16.40 | 18.85 |
| 32-37 | 16.43 | 4.06 | 15.69 | 17.16 |
| 38-43 | 19.98 | 5.25 | 16.88 | 19.08 |
| 44-49 | 17.33 | 6.33 | 12.47 | 22.19 |
| 50-55 | 19.33 | 5.75 | 13.30 | 25.37 |
| Blamed Self | | | | |
| 20-25 | 7.80 | 2.80 | 6.76 | 8.84 |
| 26-31 | 7.44 | 3.44 | 6.41 | 8.48 |
| 32-37 | 4.66 | 2.60 | 4.19 | 5.13 |
| 38-43 | 6.03 | 2.59 | 5.49 | 6.58 |
| 44-49 | 5.44 | 1.13 | 4.58 | 6.31 |
| 50-55 | 3.67 | 1.21 | 2.40 | 4.94 |
| Wishful Thinking | | | | |
| 20-25 | 33.00 | 56.85 | 11.77 | 54.23 |
| 26-31 | 26.27 | 6.03 | 24.45 | 28.08 |
| 32-37 | 32.13 | 7.12 | 30.84 | 33.41 |
| 38-43 | 27.24 | 6.60 | 25.86 | 28.63 |
| 44-49 | 28.33 | 4.69 | 24.73 | 31.94 |
| 50-55 | 29.17 | 6.71 | 22.13 | 36.20 |
| Avoidance | | | | |
| 20-25 | 26.47 | 5.28 | 24.49 | 28.44 |
| 26-31 | 28.84 | 6.79 | 26.80 | 30.88 |
| 32-37 | 23.97 | 6.92 | 22.72 | 25.22 |
| 38-43 | 25.86 | 5.90 | 24.62 | 27.09 |
| 44-49 | 26.89 | 4.91 | 23.11 | 30.66 |
| 50-55 | 22.17 | 5.78 | 16.10 | 28.23 |

VI. SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The displacement of over one million people in the northeastern Nigeria (NEMA, 2015) is an understatement considering the threat posed by Boko Haram in the entire country. The insurgent group almost crippled the Socio-economic activities in Nigeria, Cameroun, Niger Republic and the Republic of Chad. NEMA, is of the belief that many Nigerians living in adamawa, Borno and Yobe States have virtually been displaced. This slowed down efforts geared towards the achievement of Millennium Development Goals (MDG's), Education For All (EFA) and the vision 2020 programs in the country.

The provision of relief efforts to victims and sufferers of crises is never adequate without adapting the ways and methods familiar to the victims and have been used by them. The acceptability of the methods employed in rehabilitating victims therefore should be based on the outcomes of research and past experiences. It is with this in mind that "coping strategy" as a relief method has been evolved with the aim of assisting the victims of crises access fast relief and rehabilitation. Experience has shown that disaster survivors do not hesitate to embrace any assistance that they themselves partook in building. It is therefore imperative for

research efforts to be mindful of the natural coping processes of the victims when fashioning out methods and principles for rendering relief and rehabilitations.

- i. Government should be aware of nepotistic syndromes in appointing those who are employed as relief workers and facilitators.
- ii. An independent body should be put in place to check/inspect periodically the food preparations and the conditions of the environment where Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) are being kept for rehabilitation.
- iii. Government should be fully aware of the reverse effect camp conditions and guide against its menace since it is believed that “a stitch in time serves nine”.
- iv. Government of Nigerian should gear efforts towards providing free and compulsory education especially to the girl child.
- v. Police personnel on duty posts in the schools should be given the needed care.
- vi. Religious teaching in the schools should be incorporated along with peace and security studies to be part and parcel of the curriculum.

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