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RESILIENCE AND SELF-EFFICACY: THE PSYCHOLOGICAL DRIVERS TO EMPOWERING TRAUMATIC EXPERIENCES FACED BY AGING POPULATION EXPOSED TO VIOLENT CONFLICT: A QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS OF GRASSROOTS COMMUNITIES IN PLATEAU STATE, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

The study explored traumatic experiences faced by the aging population exposed to violent conflict using a qualitative analysis of five grassroots communities with the aim of finding out their experiences following violent conflicts. The study also aim to understand the extent to which the severity and type of Post-Traumatic Stress symptoms that are most significantly related to aging and functional impairment. The study used a phenomenological research design. The selection of a manageable sample was done using Purposive sampling to select 50 older people from 5 communities who have experience violent conflict and/or are now either internally displaced or have resettle back to their communities. Data was collected using qualitative method. The instrument for data collection were structure interviews sessions generated using the Post Traumatic Stress Symptoms Scale (PSS-SR-5) of DSM -V developed for global use by the APA. The instrument was used to conduct a key informant interview with study participants that took about 45 minutes to administer. Qualitative data was analyzed using a phenomenological reduction process known as content analysis. Findings from the study reveals that older people who are exposed to violent conflict in plateau communities have series of Traumatic experiences. These include re-experiencing, hyper arousal, avoidance, depression, anxiety, suicidal prompt and aggression. The Study reveal that there could be other distressing symptoms older persons expose to violent conflict faced that are not categorize by DSM-V a gap for further investigation. The study recommend that an effective model for the prediction of the development of PTSD symptoms as well as immediate and long-term mental health support for trauma victims especially the older population should be developed.

INTRODUCTION

The herders/farmers conflict in Nigeria has continued to escalate rapidly on daily basis with thousands of people being killed with thousands more being displaced (Keghku & Alom, 2019). Conflict is an inevitable part of the human existence and one can say that it as old as humanity. It arises as a result of two people striving to achieve different goals that have been set. Blench (2003) reports that the herders/farmers conflict began at about the 20th century as a result of two major developments: The introduction of modern veterinary services leading to increase in herders' size; and increased farming due to increasing population pressures. McGregor (2014) said that for decades now conflict between herdsman and farmers has been a reoccurring issue in Nigeria most especially in the North Central States or Middle Belt region. In 2004, as he noted, herders and farmers conflicts resulted into "near genocide" of Christians and Muslims in Plateau State, with more than 20,000 refugees fleeing to neighbouring Cameroon. Similarly, Amzat, Fagbemi, Wantu and Akinboye (2016) noted that over 2, 000 people were killed in conflicts between the herdsman and different host communities in Nigeria in 2015 alone. Blench (2010) also highlighted four major factors that affects conflict between herdsman and farmers as: the collapse of the traditional system of cattle routes, the declining importance of diary production, migration and disease and the intensification of agriculture in riverine areas known as Fadama cultivation. These findings are similar to those of Agande (2017) as quoted by Kwaja and Adelehin (2018) who noted that the increased competition for land and water resources further exacerbate everyday conflicts (unrelated to resources) when they occur. For instance, when cattle destroy the crops of a subsistence farmer, it is a direct loss to the farmer's livelihood, and this may exacerbate pre-existing tensions between ethnic groups if the farmer and herder are of different ethnicities, sparking broader conflict and violence. Similar examples play out for herders when cattle are attacked and killed, often in retaliation to destruction of farmlands.

Plateau state of Nigeria, has had a long and unfortunate history of communal and ethno religion conflict since the year 2001. Ever since the upsurge of this crisis, the Northern Zone of the state comprising of Barkin Ladi, Riyom, Jos South, Jos North and Bassa has consistently witnessed incessant hostilities and violent confrontations between farmers and herders leading to the death of many and several others including the aged population being victimized and displaced from their homes (Ajowon, 2004). According to Kwaja and Adelehin(2018), conflicts between farmers and herders exist on a large scale within Nigeria with crop damage, attacks on cattle, and cattle theft/rustling as major conflict triggers that initiate violence between the two groups, which often leads to cycles of revenge attacks. The cause can be ascribed to control over land for grazing and farming, massive desertification of vegetative lands and droughts in Northern Nigeria which compel herders to migrate towards the middle belt region and some parts, of the south in search of greener pasture and water for their livestock. In the course of their movement, the nomadic herdsmen settle in farming communities where there is green vegetation and water such as within the Benue valley. Often times, farmers accuse the herdsmen of encroaching and destroying their farmlands and crops and contaminating their main source of water supply. The herdsmen on their part accuse the farmers of poisoning, killing or even stealing their livestock especially cattle. The herdsmen also accuse the farmers of blocking their grazing routes, alleged to have been established in the early 1960s.

A central issue in armed conflict settings is loss and grief, whether for deceased family members or for other emotional, relational and material losses. There are on-going concerns about the safety of family members that are reported to be a significant source of stress. Displaced persons often search for news about loved ones, but get contradictory or misleading information, leading to more insecurity and confusion. (Ajibo and Onuoha, 2018). For relatives of people who have been forcibly displaced, the uncertainty of their fate and the inability to adequately mourn family members who have disappeared adds further distress and complicates grief (Ajibo and Onuoha, 2018).

Obilom and Thatcher (2008), in their study among inhabitants affected by ethnic religious riots in Jos, Northern Nigeria, reported that 89.7%, of the respondents met re-experiencing criteria, 49.1% met avoidance criteria, and 84.0% met arousal criteria for posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Also, Beiser, Wiwa and Adebajo (2010), in their study reported signs of post traumatic stress symptoms among their subjects. Furthermore, Ogwuche and Mkpelanga (2004) examined the psychosocial impacts of cultural conflict among respondents drawn from refugee population of the Tiv/Fulani armed conflict in Benue State, middle belt Nigeria. The ages of respondents ranged from 17-68 years. Result revealed that 23.6% suffer post-traumatic stress symptoms, 15.8% were down with depression and 9.3% reported symptoms of Acute Anxiety Disorder. Also 5.1% of the victims suffered co-morbid condition of post-traumatic stress symptoms and depression. The results further revealed that the psychological consequences of armed conflict were felt more by females (56.1%) than males (43.9%).

Post-traumatic stress symptoms are one of the most common symptoms related to war-exposure. Additional symptoms of war-related traumatic stress response include sleep disturbances, nightmares, intrusive thoughts & memories, flashbacks, depression, anxiety, isolation, and anger issues and many aged experienced these symptoms (Steel et al 2009). According to Martins-Borges (2013), because of the involuntary and sudden character of their experience, the aged affected by the conflict carry with them very little of what had characterized their identity, and these departures are often related to a psychological suffering related to the trauma to which they were subjected in the pre-migratory and migratory period.

The commonly reported psychological symptoms of conflict that affects the aged include numbing of affect, avoidance, anxiety, panic attacks, depression, anger, isolation, sleep disturbances, intrusive thoughts and memories, cognitive deficits in memory and attention, and increased arousal (Hunt & Robbins, 2001).

For many aged according to Otite (2009), war experiences may lead to Post-Traumatic Stress Symptoms and chronic depression. These conditions, in turn, can lead to suicide ideation and attempts, chronic alcohol and drug abuse, interpersonal violence, and other signs of social dysfunction. Studies by Blanden G, Butts C, Reid M, & Keen L (2021), indicates that populations affected by conflict are not only affected by mental health problems, but have associated dysfunction, which can last up to five years after the conflict. This persistent dysfunction is linked to decreased productivity, poor nutritional, health and educational outcomes for the children of mothers with these problems, and decreased ability to participate in development efforts. The effects of mental health and psychosocial disorders in conflict-affected populations can be an important constraint in reconstruction and development efforts.

A traumatic event is a life-threatening event such as military combat, natural disasters, terrorist incidents, serious accidents, or physical or sexual assault in adult or childhood. Most survivors of trauma return to normal given a little time. However, some people will have stress reactions that do not go away on their own, or may even get worse over time. These individuals may develop PTSD symptoms (Oyenbuike et al, 2018). The prevalence of PTSD among certain populations exposed to high rates of traumatic events, including physical injury, combat exposure, peacekeeping, disaster, and rape, have demonstrated much higher rates of PTSD symptoms than the general population (prevalence estimates range between 10% and 40%) (Elklit, Hyland, and Shevlin, 2014).

Traumatic events can have a negative impact on the mental and physical health of an individual long after their occurrence and, for some individuals, the negative impact is lifelong (Myers et al., 2015). Symptoms of war-related traumatic stress response include sleep disturbances, nightmares, intrusive thoughts and memories, flashbacks, depression, anxiety, isolation, and anger issues (Hoge et al., 2006; Hunt & Robbins, 2001; Nelson Goff et al., 2007; Thorp & Stein, 2005; Woodward, 2004). For this research, the PTSD symptoms were classified in three key categories using the American Psychological Association APA, (2000) classification: re-experiencing (e.g., flashbacks, intrusive thoughts and memories), avoidance (e.g., loss of interest, isolation from others), and arousal (e.g., anger outbursts, startle response).

The effects of the violent conflict in Plateau on older people mental health and psychosocial wellbeing are profound. Experiences of conflict-related violence and concerns about the situation in Plateau are compounded by daily stressors of poverty, lack of basic needs and services, on-going risks of violence and exploitation, isolation and discrimination, loss of family and community supports, and uncertainty about the future. Aged on the Plateau exposed to violence conflict are faced with varying degrees of psychological consequences including depression, anxiety disorder post-traumatic stress and major psychosis. Many researchers have documented the psychological consequences of conflict among their respondents. But only few have looked at the traumatic experiences of these older people in the plateau informing the basis for this study.

Significance of the study

The study aim to find out what types of trauma older people experience as a result of traumatic event from the violent conflict in Plateau state communities. Although conflict is associated with an increase in the prevalence of mental disorders among aged, there are few population-based studies of aged in conflict-affected areas and low-income countries. This study provides insight on the trauma experience by older people and how this trauma can be remove to provide them with a better living condition to enable them enjoy their old age. The study is of significant to both state and non-state actors in the area of policies formulation related to the aging population in plateau state and Nigeria at large. The study is also significant because it is important to increase

knowledge about the association between PTSD symptoms and functional impairment among aged population.

METHOD

Design

The phenomenological research design was used for this study. The phenomenological design is a qualitative method of research that focuses on the study of an individual's lived experiences within the world. It is an approach that is uniquely positioned to support this inquiry. Qualitative methods are used to gain a deeper understanding of the perceptions of people regarding a particular phenomenon (Merriam, 2009).

The research design was used because this study attempts to understand older people perceptions, perspectives and understanding of traumatic experiences they face as a result of exposure to violent conflict. Buccioli A, & Zarri L (2020), points that the best criteria to determine the use of phenomenology is when the research problem requires a profound understanding of human experience common to group of people. According to Christensen, Johnson and Turner (2010), the primary objective of a phenomenology study is to explicate the meaning, structure, and essence of the lived experiences of a person, or a group of people, around a specific phenomenon.

This study which is a qualitative analysis of traumatic experiences faced by aging population in grassroots communities of plateau state Nigeria is based in a paradigm of personal insight and subjectivity that gives more importance to personal experience and interpretation. The researcher seeks to describe the essence of Traumatic experiences as it relates to the herders/farmers conflict by exploring it from the perspective of those who have experienced the conflict with the aim of describing the meaning of this experience both in terms of what was experienced and how it was experienced hence the need to use a phenomenological research design in order to achieve the research objectives.

This research design was adopted because the study is interested in the experiences of the aged who have been exposed to the conflict within the past ten years. These experiences cannot be measured quantitatively as participants described what life has been like after their experiences and their responses was recorded. The researcher did not intervene in any way or expose study participants to manipulation. The methodology for the study followed social science constructivist views. The view seeks for an objective reality through qualitative methods, constructing and arriving at an authentic reality through observations, insights and experiences of researchers (Lincoln & Guba, 2000).

POPULATION

The population of this study comprises of all aged living on the plateau that have been exposed to the herders/farmers conflict within the past ten years. This population cut across all the seventeen Local Government Area of Plateau state where farmer/herder conflict have been experience with the projected figure of 108,119 (65 years and above) male and female aged, according to the National Population Commission and the National Bureau of Statistics 2006 census (NPC & NBS, 2006).

SAMPLE

The total sample for this study is 50 older person drawn from the entire population. The choice of this sample size was to justify the fact that the researcher will be conducting Key Informant Interviews and at such a smaller sample size is require to gain good insight into the study. Similarly, the sample sizes in phenomenological studies are usually small in other to afford the

researcher the opportunity to focus and gain good insight into the phenomenon of interest. A total number of 25 male and 25 female were selected for the study.

SAMPLING TECHNIQUES

The purposive sampling technique was used for this study because it is the best sampling criteria in phenomenological study. The researcher sampled 50 aged for the research who meet the criteria of the study. To achieve this, the researcher went round communities in Plateau state that have experience violent conflict and selected aged who were willing to volunteer for the study and are within the age bracket of 65 years and above who have experience the farmers herders/conflict within the past 10 years and are either resident or indigenes of Plateau State. A total number of 25 male and 25 female were selected for the study to make up a total number of 50 participants.

INSTRUMENT FOR DATA COLLECTION

An open ended structure interview schedule that asks questions to assess the Post Traumatic Stress Symptoms was used for data collection. The researcher used this instrument to conduct a face to face key informant interview with study participants. The content of the interview questions items includes the three Post Traumatic Stress Symptoms which include re-experience, hyper arousal and avoidance including any other psychological symptoms they may be experiencing.

The interview questions were divided into five sections. The first section had items on the demographic variables while the remaining four sections asked questions on the Post Traumatic Stress Symptoms experience by aged. A total of 27 questions were developed for the Key Informant Interview, and the questions require categorical answers such as 'yes' or 'no' and most importantly an in-depth explanations of what and how participants experiences are like. Participants were asked two general questions: What have you experience in terms of the herders/famers conflict and what situations have typically influenced or affected your experience of the conflict?

This research instrument was translated into Hausa language. This gave the researcher and the research participants the opportunity to conduct the KII in which ever language the research participant is more comfortable with. The researcher produced two version of the instrument which included the Hausa and English version of the same instrument.

The interview questions were generated using the Post Traumatic Stress Symptoms Scale (PSS-SR-5). Terms in the instrument were translated into simpler English to enable the participants understand exactly what each research question is asking. However at the process of using simple English or changing the original wordings from the (PSS-SR-5), the researcher did not change the original meaning of such terms as they are used in the instrument. This means that the use of technical language is minimal and appropriate and the terms used are understandable by the participants.

PROCEDURE

Data was collected using Key Information Interviews KIIs. In each round of KII the researcher ask the questions and audio records the response of the participants using a voice recorder device. The voice records were thereafter transcribed and use for data analysis. Participants were asked to attend an interview scheduled for approximately 45 minutes in either English or Hausa language depending on the language level of the participants using the interview schedule develop for the research. Demographic data was assess using a socio-demographic questionnaire. This sought information on socio demographic data (age, gender, their crisis experience, how long they have stay in the research geographical area). This was to help the

researcher to achieve an integrated and holistic understanding of the situation of the aged. To ensure accuracy of the data collected, participants were provided with a copy of their transcribed interview which was read out for them and asked to verify correctness, clarify any discrepancies, and further remark on the inquiry.

The data was analyzed using a phenomenological reduction process known as content analysis. It is part of the phenomenological reduction process, whereby the researcher gives equal value to all of the participants' statements. The researcher removed all repetitive statements as well as those that do not relate to the research questions. Content analysis of data was done after the data transcription wherein the researcher lists out each of the relevant quotes of the studied topic and gives them equal value with regard to the expressions of the group. The textual description began with: what are the participants saying? What are the relevant topics expressed by the research participants? The researcher proceeded to write the textual description and includes "a verbatim" quotations. The researcher also wrote the structural description and the textual analysis, and proceeds to identify the essence of the Post Traumatic Stress symptoms by finding out what are the common elements repeated by each of the researched participants?

RESULTS

The result of this study was presented under the following headings

- a. How participants have been affected by the conflict
- b. Research question one (1). Re-Experiencing Symptoms
- c. Research question two (2). Avoidance Symptoms
- d. Research question three (3). Hyper Arousal Symptoms
- e. Other Psychological Symptoms

Table 1: How participants have been affected by the conflict

Category	Frequency	Percentage(%)
Death		
Death of cattle and other animals	30	100.00
Death of grandchild/Grandchildren)	15	50.00
Death of a child/children	8	26.66
Deaths of relations	7	23.33
Death of spouse(s)	5	16.66
Death of Niece(s)/Nephew(s)	3	10.00
Death of a in-law(s)	2	6.66
Death of siblings	1	3.33
Physical Injury(Handicapped)		
Amputated	2	6.66
Physical impairment	1	3.33
Loss of Property	30	100.00
Loss of source of livelihood	30	100.00
House(s) burnt down	28	93.33
Farmland destroyed	28	93.33
Land rustle	2	6.66
Internally Displaced		
Unable to go back home	26	86.66
Took cover to avoid being killed and relocated from their village/community.	25	83.33

a. Death

The results of the category death indicates that all participants reported death of Cattle and other animals as quoted below "My cattle's, goats and other animals were rustle and some killed on the spot." Half of the respondents reported death of grandchild/ Grandchildren as quoted below "My daughter and my 3 grandchildren were killed". Similarly about half, of the respondents reported death of either a child/children during the conflict as quoted below "I have lost my only child because of this menace.", "my two sons and two daughter in-laws were all brutally murder." About half of the respondents also reported death of relation(s) as quoted below "My family members have been killed". Some respondents reported losing their spouse(s) in the cause of the conflict as quoted in their responses below "I lost my two wives." "They killed my wife and all my five children." some respondents also reported death of Niece(s) and Nephew(s) as quoted in their responses below "My younger brother's children were all killed in one day as a result of this conflict." few respondents reported death of a in-law(s) as shown in their quotes below "two of my brother's in-law were butcher like cows during the conflict." Only few respondents reported losing a sibling in the cause of the conflict as quoted below "My younger brother and 8 of his children were all killed in one day as a result of this conflict."

b. Physical Injury

Result on the theme physical injury (Handicapped) and category experiencing repeated or extreme exposure to aversive details of the traumatic event(s) few respondents reported that their legs were amputated as a result of injury sustain from the conflict as seen in their responses below "I sustain bullet wounds and my leg was later amputated as a result of the gun shot." Similarly only few of the respondents reported that they became visually impaired as a result of injury sustain from the conflict, this is shown in the quote below "I became blind as a result of the conflict."

c. Lost of Properties

The theme lost of property and category directly experiencing the traumatic event(s). All respondents reported loss of source of livelihood as quoted "Another thing is that, my business has been affected. I use to sell mixed local vegetable salad at the local bear joint(katin burkutu) but after this attacks those joint have been burnt down and so my business stop and I am now finding it difficult to fend for myself." Almost all respondents reported that house(s) got burnt down in the cause of the conflict as quoted below "our houses and properties were all burnt down by them." Similarly almost all respondent reported that their farmlands were destroy and they cannot longer access them as a result of the conflict. This is seen in their responses below as quoted "My farm land where I get food to eat and pay for my children school fees, I cannot longer access it." Only few respondents reported that their cattle were rustle during the conflict as seen in their response below "My herds of cattle were rustle away and some of them that got injure in the process were abandoned and bleed to death."

d. Internally Displaced as a result of conflict:

Result on the theme internally displaced as a result of the conflict, most respondent reported that they became Internally Displaced and unable to resettle back into villages/communities for fear of being kill as quoted below "Our houses got burnt down and we have been chase out of our village." Most of the participants were expose to actual or threatened death and took cover to

avoid being killed and relocated from their village/community as quoted from their responses “I was shot and almost died during the conflict. I sustain bullet wounds.”

Table 2: Re-Experiencing

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Intrusive Memories		
Imagining relocating back to burnt houses/villages	29	96.66
Seeing imaginary corpses	26	86.66
Feeling like people are chasing or after their life	25	83.33
Imagining hearing gun shots	20	66.66
Seeing images of burnt house(s), cars and other properties	11	36.66
Have constant mental picture of gun men	8	26.66
See distressing images of grave yards	7	23.33
Hear people screaming	6	20.00
Seeing blood everywhere	4	13.33
Distressing Dreams		
Imagining of their dead beloved ones	25	83.33
Dreams of being killed or someone attempting to kill them	25	83.33
Imagining of fighting wars and battles	16	53.33
Dream of attack by wild animals in dreams	15	50.00
Lack of sleep due to scary dreams	9	30.00
Dream of being attack at worship centres	6	20.00
Seeing scary images in the dream	5	16.66
Dream of attack by armed men while celebrating cultural festivals/weddings	5	16.66
Dream of their farm being set ablaze	4	13.33
Dream of cultivating crops in the farm land and being attack in the process	3	10.00
Dream of seeing self inside a deep sea or pit	1	3.33
Dissociative Reactions		
Assuming cars and stone breaking sounds to be gun shots	20	66.66
Losing touch with the awareness of their surrounding	15	50.00
Daydreaming	13	43.33
Feeling lost on the high way and risk of being hit by a moving vehicle	11	36.66
Feeling lost in their thought	10	33.33
Irrational Thoughts	7	23.33
Cued Psychological Distress		
Not scared all the time	29	96.66
Feeling terrible/Devastated	29	96.66
Persistent negative emotional state	28	93.33
Feeling restless	26	86.66
Feeling of hatred	22	73.33
Feeling of danger	17	56.66
Feeling bitterly	6	20.00
Feeling unfortunate/cheated	6	20.00
Feeling heartbroken	3	10.00
Feeling of anger	3	10.00
Feeling pitiful/miserable/helpless	3	10.00
Cued Physiological Reactions		
Feeling sweating excessively	24	80.00
Feeling pain in the chest/head	22	73.33
Experience increase heartbeat	20	66.66
Develop High blood pressure	15	50.00
Experience back/body pain	5	16.66
Diagnosed with diabetes	4	13.33
Experiences stomach ache	3	10.00

Re-experiencing

a. Intrusive memories

Almost all respondents reported imagining relocating back to burnt house/villages as quoted below "Sometimes I use to also imagine relocating back to my burnt house...The truth is that the fight is still on that is why we cannot go back to our village." Similarly almost all respondents reported seeing imaginary dead people corps as shown in their responses below "What keep reoccurring in my life ever since is that I see their corps in my dreams and sometimes in reality." Most respondents reported that they are feeling like people are chasing them or after their life "I use to feel like people are chasing me or after my life." About half respondents reported imagining hearing gun shots as quoted below "I use to hear gun shots that mostly turn out not to be real gunshots all the time and it gets me scared. I think I am imagining so many things in my head since the conflict." Several respondents reported seeing images of burnt cars, houses and other properties as quoted below "I do feel as if that day is being replay in front of me and I see images of burnt houses, cars and our property that were put ablaze." Some respondents reported having constant mental pictures of gun men as quoted below "I use to see gun men almost everywhere I go and I hate that. I don't know if they are real or it is my ears and eyes that are deceiving me." Similarly some respondents reported that they see distressing images of grave yards as reported in their responses below "each time I am alone, it feels as if I am walking inside a grave yard with dead bodies all around." Some respondents also reported that they sometimes hear people screaming as quoted "I feel as if they can attack again at any point in time because I am always hearing people screaming especially at night." Lastly few respondents reported seeing blood everywhere as quoted below "I see blood everywhere, I don't know if it is my vision or it is real blood that I use to see."

b. Distressing Dreams

Almost all respondent reported dreaming of their dead beloved ones as shown in their quotes below "(They) took away every joy in me and I am always dreaming of seeing my beloved ones, I also do dream that I am making love with my wives". Almost all respondents reported always dreaming of being killed or someone attempting to kill them as quoted below "Ok, I use to dream that they are trying to also kill me like they kill my brother and his children. Sometimes I will dream that it is my brother wife that is chasing me with a knife". About half of the respondents reported dreaming of fighting wars and battles as quoted below "I am always fighting one war or the other in my dreams." Half of the respondents reported being attack by wild animals in their dreams as quoted below "In my dreams there are days I will be dreaming of being hunted by a very dangerous wild animal, I use to dream of fighting with snakes sometimes." Many of the respondents also reported Lack of sleep due to scary dreams as seen in their responses below "I will see someone running after me with either a knife or a gun...Sometimes I see a wild cow running after me." Many of the respondents also reported dreaming of being attack at worship centres as quoted below "Just recently I dreamt that we were in the church in our village and they started shouting from outside the church that Fulani have invaded the community and that we should all vacate the church and run, I was calling my two boys to come so that we can run and take hiding but they and every other person seated in the church refuse to run and I started running alone and I woke up." The table also indicated that some respondents reported seeing scary images in their dreams as quoted below "I use to dream of some men raping my late daughter." Some respondents also reported dreaming of being attack by arm men while celebrating cultural festivals/weddings as quoted below "like last night I dreamt that we were in the village square celebrating Nzem Berom our cultural festival and all of a sudden a group of herds men fully arm invaded the venue of the event and started shooting. I ran and ran until I could not run again and I decided to climb a tree. But unfortunately for me one of the gun me Who

was holding a knife saw me and pull me down from the tree and stab me with his knife.” Some respondents also reported dreaming of their farm land being set ablaze as seen in their responses below “I use to dream that they are setting my farm ablaze.” Few respondents reported that they have dreams of cultivating crops in the farm land and being attack in the process as quoted below “Sometimes I dream that we are at the farmland cultivating or harvesting crops and the herders attack us.” Only few respondents reported dreaming of seeing self, inside a deep sea or pit as quoted below “I will run and sometimes fall in a ditch in my dreams.”

c. Dissociative Reactions

Most respondents reported assuming cars and stone breaking sounds to be gun shots as shown in their quotes below “I even use to assume cars sound and stone breaking sound to be gun shots.” Half respondents reported losing touch with the awareness of their surrounding as quoted “Sometimes I am not even aware of what is happening in my surrounding because my thoughts go so far away and I find it difficult to pay attention to what people are saying. About half respondents reported experiencing day dreaming as quoted below “I have also experience somebody pressing me in the day time when I am sitting and sometimes when I am sleeping.” Many respondents reported getting lost on the high way and risk of being hit by moving vehicles as seen in their response below “Sometimes I find myself carelessly walking in front of a moving vehicle. I am almost lost in my thoughts all the time.” Several respondents reported getting lost in their thought as quoted “I discover that I sometimes go off point when someone is talking. When someone is talking to me I sometimes lose concentration in what they are saying and I end up getting offended when they claim that they told me something and I seem not to remember what they say.” Some respondents reported having suicidal thoughts as quoted below “I have thought on going on a hunger strike so that I might die in the process and join my family but when I tried it for two days I find out that it is not easy as I thought, I had to cook and eat.”

d. Psychological Distress

Almost all respondents reported getting scared all the time as quoted below “I am very afraid and I have been moving from one location to another i.e from one relative house to another because if I go to stay with one of my relative after some few days it will feel as if they will come again and attack me and kill all those my relative like they did to my children, daughters in-law and grandchildren.” Similarly almost all respondents also reported feeling terrible and devastated as quoted “I sometimes get devastated and feel terrible especially when I remember that I have children who are now struggling to earn a living because their wealth were destroy over night.” Almost all respondents also reported Persistent negative emotional states quoted “Sometimes I find it difficult to tell how my daughter was killed. Some days I assume she was rape to death and other days it seems to me that she was stab with a knife but I however do remember seeing her with a bullet wound on her fore head the last time I saw her corps.” Most respondents reported feeling restless as quoted below “I feel so restless when I am reminded of the conflict.” Most respondents reported feeling of hatred as quoted below “...I hate them with every breath that I take.” About half of the respondents reported fear of danger as quoted “I have been crying so much especially at night, I always have this fear that they will come and attack me again.” Some respondents reported weeping bitterly as shown in one of the quotes below “My heart is pain and bleeds almost all the time. I am always weeping like a woman in labour pain.” Some respondents also reported feeling unfortunate/cheated as quoted below “I feel so unfortunate and cheated at this stage of my life.” Few respondents reported feeling heartbroken as seen in their quotes below “Loosing an only child is making me feel heartbroken. This is the most painful event I have ever pass through.” Few respondents also reported feeling of anger as shown in their quotes below “I get very angry because each time my teaming youth come to complain to me that their farmlands have been destroy I feel their pain, get upset and become frustrated.” Similarly, few respondents

reported feeling pitiful, miserable and helpless as quoted below “Yes, my feelings are greatly affected. I usually feel so bad and miserable, pitiful and helpless”

e. **Physiological Reactions**

Almost all respondents reported always sweating excessively as quoted below “When I am angry my body will start shivering and my eyes will turn red. Then I start to sweat excessively.” Most respondents reported feeling pain in the chest and head as quoted below “I experience headache and serious pain in my chest and my heart pound like they are pounding yam when I am reminded of the conflict.” Several respondents also reported experiencing increase heartbeat as quoted below “When I am reminded of this barbaric act ... I become aggressive and I also notice that my body will begin to shiver and I my heart beat will increase at the same time.” Half of the respondents reported having High blood pressure as quoted below “When I went to the hospital, I was told that I have high blood pressure which was never the case before my conflict experience.” Some respondents also reported experiencing back/body pains as quoted below “I use to have serious headache and body pain especially on my back always.” Similarly some respondents reported that they have been diagnose with diabetes as quoted “I hate this suffering and depression I am going through. The Doctors said I have diabetes and I have been told avoid certain food and this make me feel worthless.” Few respondents reported experiencing stomach ache as quoted below “my stomach ache talking about this because my anger is so much.”

Table 3: Avoidance

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Avoidance of Memories, thought, Feelings		
Engaging in irrelevant activities just to forget the conflict pain	18	60.00
Try not to talk about the conflict	17	56.66
Persistent inability to experience positive emotions	17	56.66
Staying indoors most of the time	15	50.00
Avoiding crowd	11	36.66
Avoiding attending important activities like the Nzem Berom cultural festival	10	33.33
Praying when the thought of the conflict comes up	5	16.66
Inability to recall important aspect of the events	5	16.66
Avoidance of external reminders		
Avoid having contact with herders	28	93.33
Avoid engaging in any farming activities	27	90.00
Avoid eating meat or cow product	22	73.33
Avoid going to worship centres	17	56.66
Avoid attending wedding and cultural festivals	17	56.66
Avoid going to the market and trading	15	50.00
Avoid attending funeral	15	50.00
Avoid discussion that has to do with the conflict	14	46.66
Avoid going to see people or being visited because of feeling of being ridiculed	13	43.33
Avoided interest or participation in activities	11	36.66
Avoided attachment or estrangement from others	9	23.00

Avoidance:

a. Avoidance of memories, thoughts and feelings.

Most respondents reported Engaging in irrelevant activities just to forget about the conflict as quoted below “I bury my thought and emotions on playing lidos and dara (a game) with my

grandchildren. We also talk a lot with my wife when the kids are off to bed so that we can eventually fall asleep without being reminded of the conflict. In an attempt to take my thought away from the conflict, I have also been engage in telling my grandchildren folk tales which they enjoyed it a lot and I find a reason to laugh as well.” About half of the respondents reported that they try not to talk about the conflict as quoted below “Yes I try not to think or talk about the conflict ... I discover that each time we talk about the events of this conflict, I will find it difficult to sleep at night and I will be having series of night mares..” About half of the respondents also reported that they experience persistent inability to experience positive emotions as quoted below “All the wealth we gather was burnt down over night and so I get upset when I look at where I was and who I was compare to my present life. I have become miserable.” Half of the respondents reported staying indoors most of the time as seen in their quote below “Sometimes I try as much as possible to avoid going to the market which I use to before ... The best way I can avoid having this negative feelings is I am staying indoors most of the time”. Many respondents reported avoiding crowd as quoted “I am afraid of going inside a large crowd especially weddings and even church because of the type of dreams I have been having.” Many respondents also reported finding it difficult to forget about the conflict as quoted “How can I forget when they wipe away my entire family. I am trying very hard to forget but the more I tried the more the pictures keep coming afresh all the time.” Similarly many respondents reported avoiding attending important activities like the Nzem Berom cultural festival as quoted “So I avoid any social gathering like the Nzem Berom cultural festival and after all I don’t have children anymore that are spinsters or bachelors, and so I am not oblige to attend any wedding all with the hope that other people will attend mine.” Some respondents reported praying when the thought of the conflict comes up as quoted “I decided to put hunting on hold for now and pray when the thought of the conflict comes up till I am able to overcome my fears. ” Some respondents also reported Inability to recall important aspect of the events as quoted “I don’t remember some of the things that occur that day because it was not a pleasant experience that one would want to keep it inside his heart.”

b. Avoidance of external reminder

Almost all respondents reported avoiding contact with herders as quoted “I don’t even want to sit close to people that make me to remember the past because it is harming my health.... I don’t go to the market because I don’t what to have any contact with herders” Almost all respondent also reported avoid engaging in any farming activities as quoted below “I have avoided farming not just because of the mental pain of the conflict but also because I am afraid that I will be kill or that my efforts will be destroy in just a night. Each time I think of engaging in farming activities, it almost feel like a repeat of the past events.” Most participants reported avoiding eating meat or cow product as quoted “I have stop eating cow meat and taking local Fulani cow milk and yogourt.” About half respondents reported avoid going to worship centres as quoted “Before now I use to attend all programs in my church and I was also participating in the women fellowship. But nowadays I feel like God is not alive and even if he is alive, why will he allow my whole family to be killed in one night and yet he did nothing about it and so I avoid going to church.” About half respondents also reported avoid going into Barkin Ladi town as quoted “I avoid going into Barkin Ladi town because I feel if I do I will meet the people who kill my husband. I was told that they are living in Barkin Ladi town and I don’t want to ever come in contact with them.” Half of the respondents reported stop going to the market and trading as quoted “I rarely go to the Barkin Ladi market because if I do I will meet people from the farmers side and they will be looking at me as if I am the only culprit who have cause the harm and I am always left with guilt feeling. So to avoid trading in Barkin Ladi Market just so that I stay away from the Berom man so that I don’t have to remember the conflict or its ordeal”. Half of the respondents also reported avoid attending

funeral service as quoted "Since the conflict I have avoided attending burial and funeral service. The last time I did I felt like I was going to be attack and killed like my boys." About half of the respondents reported avoiding discussion that has to do with the conflict as quoted "I have avoid my friends because they always bring up discussion about the conflict and this discussions always end up hurting my feelings" Many respondents reported diminished interest or participation in activities as quoted "As it is I have lost interest in going to play pool with my friends because each time I do, they seem not to have another thing to chat about except the issues of this conflict" Most respondents reported having detachment or estrangement from others as quoted "I use to have friends who are herders and we wine and dine together visiting each other homes, but with the series of attacks I have face I feel they are jealous of my wealth and they took advantage of the happening just to get back at me. So I have decided to keep distance and avoid having contact with them in the long run." Many respondents reported that they don't like going to visit people or being visited because of feeling of being ridicule as quoted "don't like anybody to visit me or me visiting I just want to be left alone in my room without anybody disturbing me."

Table 4: Hyper Arousal

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Irritable behaviour and angry outburst		
Get unreasonably upset	28	93.33
Hate being ask questions about the conflict	26	86.66
Hate people unreasonably	26	86.66
Get angry and feeling of hatred at the sight of herders	20	66.66
Don't want to hear people discussing about the conflict	16	53.33
Transfer aggression on other people	10	33.33
Can commit murder at very little provocation	2	6.66
Reckless or self destructive behaviour		
Engage in excessive alcohol intake	15	50.00
Jump into a moving car	12	40.00
Attempting suicide	9	30.00
Refusing to eat or take drugs	8	26.66
Hyper vigilance		
Pay attention to gun shots	30	100.00
Being jumpy and overly alert	28	93.33
Pay attention to every little sound around	26	86.66
Fire/stone breaking sounds scared them	23	76.66
Restlessness at the sight of cows	18	60.00
Feeling like someone walking behind them or laying ambush for them while walking alone	13	43.33
Exaggerated startle response		
Shivering when reminded of the conflict	28	93.33
Reacting faster	22	73.33
Increase heart beat	17	56.66
Hands tremble	15	50.00
Eating profusely	13	43.33
Don't like going to the toilet out of anxiety	11	36.66
Being jumpy or easily startled	9	30.00
Crying out loud at the sound of gun shots	2	6.66
Problems with concentration		
Don't care about things happening around	25	83.33
Not in ones thoughts	22	73.33
Can't keep concentration	19	63.33
Pay close attention to things happening around	8	26.66
Having trouble concentrating	7	23.33
Sleep disturbance		
Lack of sleep	29	96.66

ike up late at night and unable to go back to sleep	29	96.66
ve night mares that disrupts sleep	28	93.33
d it difficult to sleep without taken drugs or alcohol	22	73.33
r all night and unable to sleep	20	66.66

Hyper arousal

a. Irritable behaviour and angry outburst

Almost all of the respondents reported getting unreasonably upset as quoted “I find myself shouting on top of my voice on every little provocation. Sometimes I get angry with one person because of what another person else has done which is irrational of me.” Most of the respondents reported hate being ask questions about the conflict as quoted “I hate being ask questions about the conflict.” Similarly most respondents reported hate people unreasonably as quoted “I don’t have loving feelings anymore, I just find myself hating people for no reason.” About half of the respondents reported getting angry and feeling of hatred at the sight of herders as quoted “I hate this Fulani people with every breath in me because they took my joy away and left me miserably.” About half of the respondents reported that they don’t want to hear people discussing about the conflict as quoted “I just get angry easily especially when people like NGOs and churches starts talking about forgiveness. Why will they not go and meet those that are killing us and tell them to repent it is myself who is the victim that I am always asked to forgive.” Many respondents reported transfer of aggression on other people as quoted “I am not supposed to get upset with you but I don’t know why I am very upset at the moment. Each time I am reminded of the conflict I get very angry and I end up transferring the anger to anybody that is close at the moment.” Few respondents reported that they can commit murder at very little provocation as quoted “I can kill anyone at any slightest provocation.”

b. Reckless or self destructive behaviour

Half of the respondents reported engaging in excessive alcohol intake as quoted “Before this conflict I was drinking alcohol but not this much but this event have turn me into an alcoholic that I cannot even help myself. If you see me in the night when I am drunk I believe you will not want to have this discussion with me.” Many respondents reported walking into a moving car unconsciously as quoted “I do forget about myself and get lost in bad thoughts, I have find myself carelessly moving into a moving car unconsciously and almost end in a car accident.” Similarly many of the respondents also reported attempting suicide as quoted “I do think why God left me alive without a family... I have attempted committing suicide.” Several respondents reported refusing to eat or take drugs as quoted “I hate taken this drugs and sometimes I just hate eating as well”

c. Hyper-vigilance

All respondents reported paying attention to gun shots as quoted “I pay attention to every gunshot and every little thing that is happening around me.” Almost all of the respondents reported being jumpy and overly alert as quoted “I am always alert like I already explain to you. When I am walking on the street or seated alone, it feels as if someone is pursuing me and I am easily startle. So I am always over reacting to every little noise especially when I am alone.” Almost all of the respondents also reported paying attention to every little sound around as quoted “Even the cricket sound sometimes scared me. I am scared of noise especially horns from moving vehicles. They remind me of gun shots.” Most respondents reported cars/stone breaking sounds scared them as quoted “I am scared of even sound of cars/stone breaking especially during the farming season when my crops are in the fields.” Many respondents reported restlessness at the sight of cows as quoted “I get so restless especially at sight of cows.” About half of the respondents

reported feeling like someone is walking behind them or laying ambush for them while walking alone as quoted below “I use to feel like people are chasing after me. There is always someone walking behind me and sometimes it feels as if someone is hiding and watching me in the bush. I feel like they will just come out of the bush and stab me especially when I am walking alone. This feeling get me so scared of going out alone.”

d. Exaggerated startle response

Almost all respondents reported shivering when reminded of the conflict as quoted “I also notice that my body will start shivering and I will be sweating”. Most respondents reported increase heart beat as quoted “usually my heart beat was normal but after this conflict I breathe faster than normal.” Half of the respondents reported their hands tremble as quoted “when I am reminded of this conflict, my body will start to shake especially my hands, and they will begin to tremble”. Many respondents reported sweating profusely as quoted “at night I will have night mares of being attack and I will wake up sweating excessively. Even in the day time I sweat each time I am reminded of the conflict”. Several respondents reported feeling like going to the toilet out of anxiety as quoted “when I wake up from sleep at midnight I feel like going to the toilet because of the experiences of this conflict. Several respondents reported being jumpy or easily startled as quoted “I have become very afraid behaving like a little child. I am easily startled as all time.” Few respondents reported screaming out loud at the sound of gun shots as quoted “Sometimes I find myself shouting out aloud at the sound of gun shots.”

e. Problems with concentration.

Almost all respondents reported that they don't care about things happening around as quoted “The people I use to call my family and friends have been killed ... I don't really care about what is happening around me anymore.” Most of the respondents reported lost in their thoughts as quoted “sometimes I don't even know what people are talking about. I rarely go to church because if I do, I don't even understand anything that is going on in the church”. About half of the respondents reported drinking beer with little concentration as quoted “My life have become a routine of going to the beer parlour, take enough that my body can carry and come back home and sleep if possible. ...Even though sometimes I wish I could stop drinking this alcohol, but I am finding it very difficult to avoid it. I cannot sleep even for one hour if I did not take alcohol because it help me forget this pain for some time and even gain small sleep before I start having nightmares.” Many respondents reported paying close attention to things happening around as quoted “I am left with the burden of taken care of the family and this use to make me concentrate on everything happening around me.” Some respondents reported having trouble concentrating as quoted “I having trouble concentrating”

f. Lack of sleep.

Almost all respondents reported lack of sleep as quoted “I don't sleep at all in most cases ... I am afraid of the night and I wish they can just remove all the darkness that is in my heart and in this world because it was at night that I lost my daughter and grandchildren in the hands of the attackers. ” Similarly almost all respondents reported waking up late at night and unable to go back to sleep as quoted “Sometimes sleep just disappear from my eyes. At most if I am able to sleep a little but once it is 11pm I will wake up and be unable to fall back to sleep.” Most of the respondents reported having night mares that disrupts sleep as quoted “It has become part of my life since my ordeal do have dreams about being attack by someone. I use to dream that someone is following me with a knife and sometimes I dream that I saw my husband and he is telling me to come and meet him.” Most of the respondents reported finding it difficult to sleep without taken drugs or alcohol as quoted “First of all the pain this leg give at night is something else so I find it difficult to sleep without taken paracetamol or other pain killers. Aside the leg pain, my thought and imagination stops me from sleeping except I take alcohol like I told you earlier.” Similarly most

respondents reported crying all night and unable to sleep as quoted “I cry all night like a woman. I wake up and I am unable to go back to sleep.”

Table 5: Other Psychological Symptoms

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Other psychological symptoms as a result of the conflict		
Feel as if their future hopes or plans will not come true	30	100.00
Feeling devastated	29	96.66
Feeling depress	28	93.33
Cry all the time	20	66.66
Withdraw from people and stay alone	19	63.33
Feel pain but unable to share	18	60.00
Hate their life and the turn of events	16	53.33
Wishing they are dead	16	53.33
Feel as if they are being mock	16	53.33
Feel emotionally numb (unable to cry or have loving feelings)	9	30.00
Behave weirdly and talk to self on the street	9	30.00
Feeling as if tears have dry out from ones body	5	16.66
Finding it difficult to forgive	5	16.66

Other psychological symptoms

All of the respondents also reported feeling as if their future hopes or plans will not come true as quoted “My future hope is to live and enjoy my old age. I have invested all my resources into farming and they went and destroy it and not only that killing all my children and brother, what other hope do I have again. I don’t see any future or any plan coming true without my family being complete and my wealth have been long destroy.” Almost all of the respondents reported Feeling devastated as quoted “I hate the way my life has become and I feel so devastated.” Almost all respondents reported feeling depress as quoted “I am deeply trouble and I sometimes wish I can take vengeance... I feel like I am dejected and all alone in this world without these children.” Most respondents reported crying all the time as quoted “I have been crying so much especially at night. I always have this fear that they will come and attack me again.” Similarly most of the respondents also reported withdraw from people and stay alone as quoted “I like staying alone and in my room but my wife will not leave me alone ...The only way to avoid being insulted by people is to stay on my own and avoid them so that I will not be ridicule.” About half respondents reported feeling pain but unable to share as quoted “I feel so much pain but I am unable to share with anybody because my condition have become pitiful.” About half of the respondents also reported that they hate their life and the turn of events as quoted “I hate my life and the turn of

event because I get unreasonably upset even with my relative's little children who come around sometimes to help me do some chores. ... Truly each I hear even on radio about conflict I get so angry. I broke one of my radio set in a fist of anger. Look at what my life have become and you expect me not to be angry?" About half of the respondents also reported wishing they are dead as quoted "See this conflict have taken away my peace, joy, happiness, livelihood, home and wealth. This conflict is a nightmare I will go on to the grave with because it brought me more sorrow than joy. ... I wish I am dead than remaining alive." Several respondents also reported feeling as if they are being mock and hate being sympathize with as quoted "I do feel as if people are mocking me when they sympathize with me." Many respondents reported feeling emotionally numb (unable to cry or have loving feelings) as quoted "I so much think about my predicament and I usually find it very difficult to cry. I have suffered a lot and that is why I am praying for death." Some respondents reported that they behave weirdly and talk to self on the street as quoted below "I find myself talking alone on the street and even talking to animals. I usually behave weirdly and talk to non-living things". Few respondents reported finding it difficult to forgive as quoted below "I feel so terrible losing my husband... I am deeply pain and I am finding it difficult to forgive." Some respondents reported feeling as if tears have dry out from ones body as quoted "I am going through distress in my heart that I will feel like crying but I notice that the tears will refuse to come. I will just sit down and be angry with myself for not being man enough to have stop this"

FINDINGS

Findings from the result reveals that aged on the plateau experience series of traumatic experiences to include the following categories: Feeling as if their future hopes or plans will not come true, feeling devastated, feeling depress, crying all the time as, withdraw from people and stay alone, feeling pain but unable to share as, hate their life and the turn of events, wishing they are dead, feeling as if they are being mock and hate being sympathize with, feeling emotionally numb (unable to cry or have loving feelings), behave weirdly and talk to self on the street, finding it difficult to forgive, feeling as if tears have dry out from their body. These findings are in line with those of Mollica, McInnes, Sarajlic, Lavelle, Sarajlic, & Massagli, (1999) who noted that anxiety and depression, which can lead to social isolation, have both been observed in many aged after conflicts. Aged may return to their daily life and experience difficulty in participating in social gatherings or interpersonal relationships due to their anxiety. Post Traumatic Stress Symptoms have substantial impact on the individual and society. There has been emerging evidence demonstrating that, among the anxiety disorders, Post Traumatic Stress Symptoms are one of the most strongly associated with suicidal behaviour. Furthermore, communal conflicts have various psychological impacts among the aged.

The findings of result reveal that participants reported exposure to actual or threatened death and learning that the traumatic event(s) occurred to a close family member or close friend. The findings also reveal that participants are experiencing repeated or extreme exposure to aversive details of the traumatic event(s). Findings also indicate that participants are directly experiencing the traumatic event(s) through lost of property. And the findings also indicates that most of the participants have become Internally Displaced and unable to resettle back into villages/communities. These findings are in line with those of Hobfoll, et al, (2012), who noted that risk factors for PTSD include: Living through dangerous events and traumas, getting hurt, seeing people hurt or killed, childhood trauma, feeling horror, helplessness, or extreme fear, having little or no social and psychological support after the event, dealing with extra stress after the event, such as loss of a loved one, pain and injury, properties and belongings or loss of a job or home and having a history of mental illness or substance abuse. Hunt & Robbins, (2001) also noted

that additional symptoms of war-related traumatic stress response include sleep disturbances, nightmares, intrusive thoughts and memories, flashbacks, depression, anxiety, isolation, and anger issues. Sleep disturbances or nightmares have been reported by many aged according to Silove, Liddell, Rees, Chey, Nickerson and Tam, (2014). They noted that aged report difficulty getting to sleep and remaining asleep due to having nightmares of past conflict events. Recurrent dreams, flashbacks, intrusive thoughts, and memories of conflict experiences disrupt the ability to sleep. Flashbacks and intrusive thoughts can be provoked by other harmless stimuli, such as fireworks or a fire alarm, as these triggers serve as reminders of noises experienced in the conflict zone.

Findings from the result reveals that aged on the plateau experience series of avoidance symptoms to include avoidance of or efforts to avoid distressing memories, thoughts, or feelings about or closely associated with the traumatic event(s) and avoidance of external reminders (people, places, conversations, activities, objects, situations) that arouse distressing memories, thoughts, or feelings about or closely associated with the traumatic event(s). These findings are in line with several researchers like those of Maigari, et al (2019), noted that people who experience Post Traumatic Stress Symptoms may avoid situations and people that remind the victims of the traumatic event, and may have strong negative reactions to something as ordinary as a loud noise or an accidental touch. Similarly, Maigari, Moses, Davou, Tungchama and Suwa (2017) reported that aged avoided discussing emotional subjects that contributed to relational problems. Roberts, Ocaka, Browne, Oyok, and Sondorp (2008) studied the PTSD key symptom categories and reported that a significant amount of ex-prisoners-of-war indicated suffering from avoidance symptoms, such as isolation, avoiding emotional discussions, and emotional numbing.

Findings from the result reveals that aged on the plateau experience series of hyper arousal symptoms to include irritable behavior and angry outbursts (with little or no provocation) typically expressed as verbal or physical aggression toward people or objects, reckless or self destructive behaviour like doing risky or unsafe things that could really hurt them or someone else, hyper vigilance and looking out for danger and things one is afraid of, exaggerated startle response like being jumpy or startle easily, problems with concentration or paying attention and sleeping disturbance like difficulty falling or staying asleep or restless sleep. These findings are in line with several researchers like those of Oyebuie (2018) who noted that psychological and social distress among aged affected by herders/farmers conflict manifests in a wide range of emotional, cognitive, physical, and behavioural and social problems. Emotional problems include: sadness, grief, fear, frustration, anxiety, anger, and despair. Cognitive problems, such as: loss of control, helplessness, worry, ruminations, boredom, and hopelessness are all widely reported, as are physical symptoms such as: fatigue, problems sleeping, loss of appetite and medically unexplained physical complaints. Social and behavioural problems, such as: withdrawal, aggression and interpersonal difficulties are also common.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The research therefore recommends the following:

- i. The series of other psychological symptoms that are not define as Post Traumatic Stress Symptoms by the DSM-V of the American Psychological Association (APA) should be included in the classification to enable mental health practitioners diagnose and possibly proffer lasting solution to all PTSD symptoms aged face following violent conflict.
- ii. Efforts should be intensified by government to introduce various peace building and conflict resolution mechanisms to ensure an end to communal conflicts. Equally relevant psychological interventions should be introduced to address these psychological consequences like the PTSD symptoms among the aged as revealed by the study.

- iii. It is recommended that an effective model for the prediction of the development of PTSD symptoms as well as immediate and long-term mental health support for trauma victims especially the aged need to be developed. In addition, mental health awareness campaigns for trauma victims to seek for mental health care that will also target some of the factors associated with PTSD symptoms needs to be incorporated into the emergency response for aged who are trauma victims.
- iv. Mental health care by mental health specialists (e.g., psychiatric nurses, psychologists, psychiatrists) for aged survivors who require additional specialized supports should be provided.
- v. The research recommends the need for deliberate, planned and sustained relationship between herders and farmers which should be promoted by all relevant authorities in Nigeria.

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