



PERCEIVED INFLUENCE OF PLANNING EMERGENCY EDUCATION PROGRAMS ON THE PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT OF INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS (IDPs) IN BENUE STATE



¹Fanan Abigail Gire Ph.D.
agire@bsum.edu.ng

&

²Ezekiel Hanior Ph.D.
hanioresizekiel@bsum.edu.ng

1 & 2: Department of Educational Foundations,
Faculty of Education, Rev. Fr. Moses Orshio Adasu University, Makurdi-Nigeria

Abstract

This study investigated the perceived influence of emergency education programs on the psycho-social support of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in Benue State, Nigeria. Specifically, it examined how such programs will influence social cohesion and mental health, and identified strategies for improving program planning to enhance these outcomes. The study adopted a descriptive survey design involving 1,644 respondents randomly selected from a population of 82,179 IDPs across 197 camps, using a self-structured instrument titled; Planning Emergency Education Programs and Psycho-Social Support of IDPs Rating Scale (PEEPPSSIRS). Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics of mean and standard deviation to answer research questions; while Chi-square tests of goodness of fit was used to test hypotheses at a 0.05 significance level. Findings revealed a significant perceived influence of emergency education programs on both social cohesion and mental health among IDPs. Respondents agreed that well-planned educational activities foster cooperation, reduce intra-community conflict, and rebuild social trust. Similarly, access to emergency education was perceived to contribute positively to mental well-being, reduce depression, and support psychological recovery. Strategies such as involving IDPs in planning, integrating feedback, collaborating with mental health professionals, and ensuring cultural sensitivity and educator training were also identified as critical for enhancing program effectiveness. All hypotheses tested were rejected, confirming the significance of the perceived impacts. The study concludes that emergency education programs play a crucial role in promoting social cohesion and mental health among IDPs. It recommends deliberate integration of psychosocial components and participatory planning approaches to ensure relevance, sustainability, and emotional recovery for displaced populations.

Keywords: Emergency education, Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs), Social cohesion, Mental health, Psycho-social support, Benue State, Nigeria.

Introduction

In recent years, the importance of emergency education has been underscored by global events such as the COVID-19 pandemic, which forced educational institutions worldwide to adapt rapidly. Emergency education refers to the provision of educational services in response to crises, such as natural disasters, armed conflicts or public health emergencies. These situations disrupt traditional educational systems, creating urgent needs for alternative learning approaches to ensure continuity and equity in education. Emergency education must ensure that all learners, including marginalized and vulnerable populations, have access to educational resources. This involves adapting materials and methodologies to meet diverse needs (UNICEF, 2020). Educational programs during emergencies should be flexible and able to adjust to rapidly changing circumstances. This flexibility is crucial for addressing the varying contexts of different crises (Inter-Agency Network for Education in

Emergencies (INEE), 2021). The crises indeed in different context force displacement of individuals at various times. Forced displacement is a major driver of mental disorders among refugees worldwide. Poor mental health of adult refugees, particularly mothers, is also considered a risk factor for the psychological well-being and development of their children (Islam, Mozunde, Rahman, Shati & Siddique, 2022).

Despite the challenges posed by emergencies, maintaining educational quality is essential. This can be achieved through trained educators, appropriate curriculum adjustments, and effective assessment methods (Global Education Monitoring Report, 2022). Emergencies can have profound psycho-social influence on displaced persons. Integrating psycho-social support within educational programs is vital for promoting mental health and well-being (World Bank, 2021). The researchers observed that, emergency education plays a crucial role in safeguarding the right to education during crises, ensuring that learners continue to receive support and resources despite challenging circumstances. While significant challenges remain, innovative practices and principles focused on accessibility, flexibility, quality, and psycho-social support may pave the way for more resilient educational systems. As we move forward, it is essential to prioritize collaboration among all stakeholders, invest in resource development, and harness technology to enhance the effectiveness of emergency education initiatives. The lessons learned from recent global crises is invaluable in shaping future responses to educational disruptions among the Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs). The negative effect of displacement on IDPs notable in; emotional instability, social fragmentation and poor mental health well-being. The researchers deem it fit to investigate the perceived influence of emergency education programs on the psycho-social support of IDPs in Benue State, Nigeria.

Literature Review

Emergency education programs in Benue State IDP camps are widely perceived to enhance psycho-social support by providing routine, safe spaces and social-emotional learning that alleviate trauma and isolation. According to UNICEF (2025), integrating psycho-social counselling and expressive activities helps displaced children rebuild emotional resilience and social trust. Evidence from Benue IDP settings highlights high levels of anxiety, depression and trauma due to conflict-induced displacement, suggesting urgent psycho-social needs (Tyover-Tion & Ihaji, 2025). Internally displaced persons report that structured education initiatives foster peer support, reduce stress, and boost self-regulation skills essential for recovery (Lawal, Abubakar, & Ukoji, 2022; Adayonfo, Ogunwale, & Adegbohun, 2023). The researchers observed that; IDPs in Benue consistently report that, emergency education programs significantly strengthen psycho-social wellbeing by addressing emotional trauma, fostering community bonds, and supporting mental health recovery.

Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) are individuals who have been forced to flee their homes due to armed conflict, violence, human rights violations, or natural disasters but remain within the borders of their own country. Unlike refugees, who cross international borders, IDPs face unique challenges as they navigate displacement in unfamiliar environments while still being subject to their home country's laws and conditions. The increasing number of IDPs globally highlights the need for comprehensive strategies that address their rights, needs, and vulnerabilities. According to the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC), over 59 million people were internally displaced worldwide as of 2022, a figure that underscores the gravity of this issue (IDMC, 2022).

Armed conflict remains the leading cause of internal displacement. Civil wars, ethnic conflicts, and violence from non-state actors often force individuals and families to flee to safer areas. For example, the ongoing conflict in Syria has resulted in millions of IDPs within the country (UNHCR, 2023). Natural disasters, such as earthquakes, floods, and hurricanes, can lead to significant internal displacement. The effects of climate change have exacerbated this trend, leading to increased frequency and severity of such events. For instance, the 2020 floods in India displaced millions (IDMC, 2022). Widespread human rights abuses, including persecution based on ethnicity, religion, or political beliefs, can also trigger displacement. In many cases, these violations are perpetrated by state actors or militias, forcing individuals to seek safety elsewhere in their country (Global Protection Cluster, 2021).

Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) often face legal uncertainties regarding their status and rights, as national laws may not adequately protect them. They may lack access to essential services and face discrimination, making it difficult to reintegrate into society (Kälin, 2019). IDPs frequently struggle to access essential services, including healthcare, education and employment. The disruption of these services can lead to long-term negative effects on their well-being and prospects for recovery (World Bank, 2021). The trauma of displacement can have severe psycho-social impacts. IDPs may experience anxiety, depression and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), necessitating comprehensive mental health support (Bhabha, 2020). Many IDPs face significant economic challenges, including loss of property and livelihoods. The inability to secure employment often leads to increased vulnerability and reliance on humanitarian assistance (IDMC, 2022).

The United Nations has established the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement, which provide a framework for the protection and assistance of IDPs. These principles emphasize the importance of addressing the specific needs of IDPs in humanitarian and development responses (United Nations, 2018). The Global Compact on Refugees and the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration also acknowledge the plight of IDPs, advocating for integrated responses to displacement that include durable solutions (UNHCR, 2018). Successful responses to internal displacement often require the involvement of local governments and communities. Strategies that prioritize local solutions and empower IDPs to participate in decision-making processes can foster resilience and recovery (Crisp, 2018).

The researchers observed that, Internally Displaced Persons face numerous challenges that require urgent attention from governments, humanitarian organizations and the international community. While frameworks and guidelines exist to protect and assist IDPs, the reality on the ground often falls short of these ideals. Addressing the root causes of displacement, ensuring access to essential services and providing legal protection are critical steps in supporting IDPs. Furthermore, fostering inclusive policies that empower IDPs to rebuild their lives and integrate into their communities is essential for promoting long-term stability and resilience. As the global landscape continues to evolve, a concerted effort to address the needs of IDPs will be pivotal in achieving sustainable solutions for displaced populations and this may bring solution to the limitation to access resources by the Internally Displaced Persons in Nigeria and Benue State in particular.

Emergency education programs serve as critical platforms for identifying and addressing mental health needs among internally displaced persons. Trained educators and counsellors embedded within these programs can detect signs of trauma early and refer children for appropriate psychological support (UNICEF, 2024). In Benue State, where many IDPs have experienced violence, displacement, and loss, such proactive interventions are essential for preventing long-term psychological harm (Nijolee, 2023). By creating safe and supportive learning spaces, emergency education reduces stressors associated with displacement and restores children's sense of agency and purpose (INEE, 2024). The researchers in line with the aforementioned views observes that; the planning and implementation of emergency education programs will play a pivotal role in the emotional recovery; social cohesion and stable mental health of IDPs. Planning well-structured emergency education programs significantly enhances social cohesion among Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in Benue State by facilitating interaction, shared learning and collective identity. Education spaces promote horizontal cohesion, fostering mutual trust, empathy and peer bonds across fragmented groups as children engage in group-based activities, dialogue sessions and expressive learning that build shared values (IDMC, 2022). In Benue, integrating community-led non-formal education strengthens collaborative ties between state actors, NGOs and affected communities, enhancing vertical cohesion and inclusive participation (Kirk & Winthrop, 2022; Iorbo et al., 2024). Well-planned emergency education programs will serve not only as academic platforms but also as critical instruments for restoring unity and social cohesion among displaced populations.

The researchers observed that; the deliberate planning of emergency education programs fosters social cohesion among IDPs by creating inclusive, safe spaces that encourage shared experiences, mutual understanding, and collaboration. These programs help rebuild broken social bonds caused by

displacement, reduce inter-group tensions, and strengthen both community and institutional relationships. By engaging learners, families, and local stakeholders in the educational process, emergency education becomes a unifying force that promotes collective identity and long-term peace-building. In the context of Benue State, such programs are essential not just for academic recovery but also for restoring communal trust and resilience among displaced populations.

Planning emergency education programs is vital for improving the mental health of IDPs. By integrating psycho-social support, life skills, and structured learning, these programs reduce trauma symptoms, promote resilience, and provide a sense of stability laying the foundation for long-term emotional recovery and psychological well-being among displaced individuals. Effective strategies for emergency education planning include culturally adapted life-skills education (LSE), participatory design, and blended delivery via in-person and mobile platforms. The RESETTLE-IDPs model, co-developed with IDP communities, improved acceptability and relevance while enhancing well-being through peer support and self-efficacy (Eboreime, Abimbola, Obi, Sabitu, & Eboreime, 2024). Incorporating structured social-emotional learning, group dialogue, and expressive activities fosters trust, empathy, and peer bonding, strengthening social cohesion and emotional resilience (Wikipedia, 2025). Coordination among NGOs, government, and camp leaders ensures inclusive, safe learning environments and psycho-social referrals, maximizing mental health impact and communal trust (International Organization for Migration, 2024).

The researchers observed that; thoughtful planning that centers community involvement, blended LSE delivery, social-emotional techniques, and inter-agency coordination builds emotionally healthy, cohesive, mentally resilient IDP communities. It is against this background that, the researchers therefore deem it necessary to investigate the perceived influence of emergency education programs on the psycho-social support of IDPs in Benue State, Nigeria.

Statement of the Problem

In 2024, there were 123.2 million forcibly displaced people globally, including 73.5 million internally displaced people, 36.8 million refugees, 8.4 million asylum-seekers, and 5.9 million others needing international protection. Low- and middle-income countries host 71% of the world's refugees and others needing international protection. Refugees are exposed to adversity are more likely than host populations to experience mental health conditions such as depression, anxiety, post-traumatic stress disorder, suicide and psychoses. Refugees contribute positively to society and there are many evidence-based strategies to support them in reaching their full potentials (World Health Organization, 2025). The situation of refugees likened to the internally displaced persons in Benue State fits into the description of WHO. Cantor (2021) attests that; systematic reviews and individual studies indicate IDPs may also have worse mental health outcomes than refugees overall but this varies between contexts.

Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in Benue State, Nigeria, face persistent psycho-social challenges due to protracted conflict, displacement, and loss of livelihoods. These experiences have resulted in high levels of trauma, anxiety, depression, and disrupted social functioning among both children and adults. Emergency education programs designed to provide safe learning spaces, psycho-social support and life skills, have been introduced in various IDP camps to mitigate these issues. However, there is limited empirical understanding of how beneficiaries perceive the influence of such programs on their emotional recovery, mental health, and social reintegration. Many programs are often implemented without adequate input from IDPs themselves, leading to questions about their cultural relevance, accessibility, and long-term impact. Moreover, poor coordination among humanitarian actors, limited resources, and inadequate follow-up mechanisms hinder the consistency and effectiveness of psycho-social support embedded within these educational initiatives. In Benue State, where displacement is ongoing and education disruptions are severe, it becomes imperative to ascertain the perceived influence of IDPs on emergency education programs regarding the psycho-social needs of IDPs or otherwise. This study, therefore, seeks to investigate the perceived influence of emergency education programs on the psycho-social support of IDPs in Benue State, with the goal of informing

policy and improving intervention strategies for more sustainable and context-appropriate outcomes in the area of study and beyond.

Purpose of the Study

The main objective of this study was to investigate the perceived influence of emergency education programs on the psycho-social support of IDPs in Benue State, Nigeria. Specifically, the study:

1. investigated how planning emergency education programs will influence social cohesion among IDPs in Benue State, Nigeria.
2. ascertained how planning emergency education programs will influence the mental health of IDPs
3. identified strategies for improving the planning of emergency education programs to enhance; social cohesion and mental health of IDPs

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study;

1. What is the perceived influence of emergency education programs on the social cohesion of IDPs in Benue State, Nigeria?
2. What is the perceived influence of emergency education programs on the mental health of IDPs?
3. What are the strategies for improving the planning of emergency education programs to enhance; social cohesion and mental health of IDPs?

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance;

1. There is no significant perceived influence of emergency education programs on the social cohesion of IDPs in Benue State, Nigeria.
2. There is no significant perceived influence of emergency education programs on the mental health of IDPs.
3. There are no significant perceived strategies for improving the planning of emergency education programs to enhance; social cohesion and mental health of IDPs.

Research Methods

The research employed a descriptive survey research design. Descriptive survey design is a research design in which a group of people or items is studied by collecting and analyzing data from only a few people or items which are considered a representative of entire group (Adzongo, 2022). The reason for the choice of the survey research design was to ensure detailed systematic description of facts and characteristics of data collected for the study to help proper analysis and evaluation of findings. The population of the study comprised 82,179 drawn from 197 Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in Benue State (Benue State Emergency Management Agency (BENSEMA), 2025). The sample size for this study was 1,644 respondents which represented 2% of the population; this was in line with Emaikwu (2011) who states that 2 -25% of the total population is ideal to represent the entire population. The researchers adopted a simple random sampling technique to select IDPs in Benue State. The instrument for data collection used to generate relevant data for the study was a self-structured rating scale titled; Planning Emergency Education Programs and Psycho-Social Support of IDPs Rating Scale (PEEPPSSIRS). The data collected was analyzed using descriptive statistics of Mean and Standard Deviation to answer the research questions; while Chi-square test of goodness of fit was employed to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

Results



Research Question one: What is the perceived influence of emergency education programs on the social cohesion of IDPs?

Table 1: Mean score and Standard Deviation on the perceived influence of emergency education programs on the social cohesion of IDPs

S/ N	Items Description	N	VHE	HE	ME	LE	VLE	X	Std.	Decision
	Emergency education programs will promote cooperation among IDPs.	1644	988	494	108	0	54	4.48	.87	VHE
	Planning emergency education activities will encourage positive interaction between different groups of IDPs.	1644	986	413	191	0	54	4.38	.92	VHE
	Well-organized education programs will help rebuild trust among displaced persons.	1644	855	299	353	83	54	4.10	1.10	VHE
	Social bonds among IDPs will strengthen as a result of well-planned emergency education initiatives.	1644	625	415	356	82	166	3.76	1.28	VHE
	Planning emergency education with social cohesion in mind will reduce conflicts within IDP communities.	1644	847	306	383	108	0	4.15	.99	VHE
	Cluster Mean/Std.							4.17	.96	VHE

Source: *field work, 2025*

Table 1 item-by-item interpretation indicates that; Emergency education programs will promote cooperation among IDPs. Planning emergency education activities will encourage positive interaction between different groups of IDPs. Well-organized education programs will help rebuild trust among displaced persons. Social bonds among IDPs will strengthen as a result of well-planned emergency education initiatives. Planning emergency education with social cohesion in mind will reduce conflicts within IDP communities. Respondents rated all items above the 2.50 cut-off point. This implies that there is a significant influence of emergency education programs on the social cohesion of IDPs

Research Question Two: What is the perceived influence of emergency education programs on the mental health of IDPs?



Table 2: Mean score and Standard Deviation of the perceived influence of emergency education programs on the mental health of IDPs

S/N	Items Description	N	VHE	HE	ME	LE	VLE	$\bar{X}$	Std.	Decision
	Emergency education programs will contribute to the mental well-being of IDPs.	1644	654	553	219	163	55	3.90	1.10	VHE
	Effective planning of emergency education will help reduce depression among IDPs.	1644	679	328	444	137	56	3.80	1.14	VHE
	Access to emergency education programs will improve the overall mental health of displaced persons.	1644	459	664	384	173	0	3.80	.91	VHE
	Planning emergency education to address mental health issues will lead to better psychological outcomes for IDPs.	1644	847	469	247	0	81	4.20	1.03	VHE
10.	The mental health of IDPs will be positively influenced when emergency education programs are designed appropriately.	1644	685	467	244	81	167	4.81	1.28	VHE
	Cluster Mean/Std.							3.96	1.01	VHE

Source: field work, 2025

Table 2 item-by-item interpretation further indicates that; Emergency education programs will contribute to the mental well-being of IDPs. Effective planning of emergency education will help reduce depression among IDPs. Access to emergency education programs will improve the overall mental health of displaced persons. Planning emergency education to address mental health issues will lead to better psychological outcomes for IDPs. The mental health of IDPs will be positively influenced when emergency education programs are designed appropriately. Respondents rated all items above the 2.50 cut-off point. There is a significant influence of emergency education programs on the mental health of IDPs.

Research Question Three: What are the strategies for improving the planning of emergency education programs to enhance; social cohesion and mental health of IDPs?



Table 3: Mean score and Standard Deviation on the strategies for improving the planning of emergency education programs to enhance; social cohesion and mental health of IDPs

S/ N	Items Description	N	VHE	HE	ME	LE	VLE	X	Std.	Decision
11.	Involving IDPs in the planning process will improve the relevance of emergency education programs.	1644	745	548	216	81	54	4.10	1.03	VHE
12.	Regular feedback from participants in educational programs should be integrated to improve emergency education programs among IDPs.	1644	905	521	191	0	27	4.30	.81	VHE
13.	Collaboration with mental health professionals will enhance the planning of emergency education programs.	1644	1152	272	165	56	0	4.50	.80	VHE
14.	Incorporating cultural sensitivity in planning emergency education programs will benefit social outcomes.	1644	814	361	248	109	112	4.00	1.23	VHE
15.	Continuous training for educators involved in emergency programs will be essential for better psycho-social support of IDPs	1644	901	576	167	0	0	4.40	.67	VHE
Cluster Mean/Std.								4.30	.76	VHE

Source: field work, 2025

Table 3 item-by-item interpretation indicates that; Involving IDPs in the planning process will improve the relevance of emergency education programs; Regular feedback from participants in educational programs should be integrated to improve emergency education programs among IDPs; Collaboration with mental health professionals will enhance the planning of emergency education programs; Incorporating cultural sensitivity in planning emergency education programs will benefit social outcomes; Continuous training for educators involved in emergency programs will be essential for better psycho-social support of IDPs. Respondents rated all items above the 2.50 cut-off point. This implies that IDPs significantly perceive an influence of strategies for improving the planning of emergency education programs to enhance; emotional recovery, social cohesion and mental health of IDPs.

Test of Hypotheses

Hypotheses One: There is no significant perceived influence of emergency education programs on the social cohesion of IDPs.

Table 4: The table below shows the chi-square test on perceived influence of emergency education programs on the social cohesion of IDPs.

Responses Mode	VHE	HE	ME	LE	VLE	Df	X ²	P	Decision
Observed	988	494	108	0	54	13	2669.703	.000	H ₀ Rejected
Expected	411.0	411.0	411.0	411.0	411.0				

Source: field survey, 2025

Table 4 shows that ($X^2 = 13, 2669.703, P = 0.00$). Since P is $0.00 < 0.05$ level of significance, the null hypothesis which states that; there is no significant perceived influence of emergency education programs on the social cohesion of IDPs was therefore not accepted. This implies that, there is a significant perceived influence of emergency education programs on the social cohesion of IDPs.

Hypotheses Two: There is no significant perceived influence of emergency education programs on the mental health of IDPs.

Table 5: The table below shows the chi-square test on perceived influence of emergency education programs on the mental health of IDPs.

Responses Mode	VHE	HE	ME	LE	VLE	Df	X ²	P	Decision
Observed	654	553	219	163	55	17	1418.277	.000	H ₀ Rejected
Expected	328.8	328.8	328.8	328.8	328.8				

Source: field survey, 2025

Table 5 shows that ($X^2 = 17, 1418.277, P = 0.00$). Since P is $0.00 < 0.05$ level of significance, the null hypothesis which states that; there is no significant perceived influence of emergency education programs on the mental health of IDPs was therefore not accepted. This implies that, there is a significant perceived influence of emergency education programs on the mental health of IDPs.

Hypotheses Three: There is no significant perceived influence of strategies for improving the planning of emergency education programs to enhance; social cohesion and mental health of IDPs.

Table 6: The table below shows the chi-square test on perceived influence of strategies for improving the planning of emergency education programs to enhance; social cohesion and mental health of IDPs.

Responses Mode	SA	A	D	SD		Df	X ²	P	Decision
Observed	745	548	216	81	54	11	1364.861	.000	H ₀ Rejected
Expected	328.8	328.8	328.8	328.8	328.8				

Source: field survey, 2025

Table 6 shows that ($X^2 = 11, 1364.861, P = 0.00$). Since P is $0.00 < 0.05$ level of significance, the null hypothesis which states that; there is no significant perceived influence of strategies for improving the planning of emergency education programs to enhance; emotional recovery, social cohesion and mental health of IDPs was therefore not accepted. This implies that, there is a significant perceived influence of strategies for improving the planning of emergency education programs to enhance; emotional recovery, social cohesion and mental health of IDPs.

4.3 Discussion of Findings

The discussion of the findings of this study is organized around the research hypotheses. The three null hypotheses that were formulated and tested were all not accepted.

The study finding in the aspect of hypothesis one revealed that; there is a significant perceived influence of emergency education programs on the social cohesion of IDPs in Benue State, Nigeria. Responses from respondents revealed that emergency education programs will promote cooperation among IDPs. Planning emergency education activities will encourage positive interaction between different groups of IDPs. Well-organized education programs will help rebuild trust among displaced persons. Social bonds among IDPs will strengthen as a result of well-planned emergency education initiatives. Findings of the study align with UNICEF (2025) which observes that integrating psycho-social counselling and expressive activities helps displaced children rebuild emotional resilience and social trust. Planning emergency education with social cohesion in mind will reduce conflicts within IDP communities.

The study finding in the aspect of hypothesis two revealed that; there is a significant perceived influence of emergency education programs on the mental health of IDPs in Benue State, Nigeria. Responses from respondents further revealed that Emergency education programs will contribute to the mental well-being of IDPs. Effective planning of emergency education will help reduce depression among IDPs. Access to emergency education programs will improve the overall mental health of displaced persons. Planning emergency education to address mental health issues will lead to better psychological outcomes for IDPs. Findings from the study agrees with Bhabha (2020) who attests that; the trauma of displacement can have severe psycho-social impacts. IDPs may experience anxiety, depression and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), necessitating comprehensive mental health support. The mental health of IDPs will be positively influenced when emergency education programs are designed to address mental health issues.

The study finding in the aspect of hypothesis three revealed that; there is a significant perceived influence of strategies for improving the planning of emergency education programs to enhance; emotional recovery, social cohesion and mental health of IDPs in Benue State, Nigeria. Responses from respondents further revealed that involving IDPs in the planning process will improve the relevance of emergency education programs. Regular feedback from participants in educational programs should be integrated to improve emergency education programs among IDPs. Collaboration with mental health professionals will enhance the planning of emergency education programs. Incorporating cultural sensitivity in planning emergency education programs will benefit social outcomes. Continuous training for educators involved in emergency programs will be essential for better psycho-social support of IDPs. The study agrees with World Bank (2021) and Global Education Monitoring Report (2022) views that emergency education to IDPs can be achieved through trained educators, appropriate curriculum adjustments, and effective assessment methods. Emergencies can have profound psycho-social influence on displaced persons. Integrating psycho-social support within educational programs is vital for promoting mental health and well-being.

Conclusion

Based on the findings, study concludes that; there is a significant perceived influence of emergency education programs on IDP's social cohesion, mental health and strategies for improving the planning of emergency education programs to enhance; emotional recovery, social cohesion and mental health of IDPs in Benue State, Nigeria.

Recommendations

Based on the findings the study, it is recommended that the government through Ministry of Education should ensure that;

1. Emergency education programs should deliberately integrate activities that foster unity, cooperation, and peaceful coexistence among displaced persons. Curriculum content should



- emphasize conflict resolution, tolerance, and community values while promoting collaborative learning projects that bring learners from diverse backgrounds together.
2. Emergency education programs embed psychosocial support services within their structure, since displacement often leads to trauma, anxiety and depression. This can include the deployment of trained school counsellors, social workers, and peer-support facilitators who can identify early signs of distress and provide referral pathways for specialized care.
 3. Government should ensure sustainability and effectiveness, the planning of emergency education programs should be participatory, involving IDPs, host communities, local education authorities, NGOs, and mental health practitioners.

References

- Adayonfo, E. A., Ogunwale, A., & Adegbohun, A. A. (2023). *Perceived influence of general anxiety, posttraumatic stress disorder, self-esteem and coping strategies among internally displaced persons in Benue State, Nigeria*. IIARD. <https://www.iiardjournals.org>
- Bhabha, J. (2020). The Impact of Displacement on Mental Health: Lessons from the Global South. *Journal of Refugee Studies (JRS)*, 33(3), 579-594. Retrieved on June 5, 2025 from: <https://centerforthehumanities.org>
- Cantor, D. (2021). Understanding the health needs of IDPs. Retrieved on June 10, 2025 from: <https://www.sciencedirect.com>
- Cantor, D., Swartz, J., Roberts, B., Abbara, A., Ager, A., Bhutta, Z. A., Blanchet, K., Bunte, D. M., Chukwuorji, J. B. C., Daoud, N., Ekezie, W., Jimenez-Damary, C., Jobanputra, K., Makhshvili, N., Rayes, D., Restrepo-Espinosa, M. H., Rodriguez-Morales, A. J., Salami, B., & Smith, J. (2021). Understanding the health needs of internally displaced persons: A scoping review. *Journal of Migration and Health*, 4, Article 100071. Retrieved on June 10, 2025 from: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jmh.2021.100071>
- Crisp, J. (2018). *The Global Compact on Refugees and the Challenge of Internal Displacement*. Refugee Studies Centre. Retrieved on April 15, 2025 from: <https://www.jstage.jst.go.jp/>
- Eboreime, E. A., Abimbola, S., Obi, F. A., Sabitu, K., & Eboreime, O. (2024). Implementation research for RESETTLE-IDPs: Enhancing psychosocial support through life skills education. *BMC Health Services Research*, 24(11762). Retrieved on June 5, 2025 from: <https://bmchealthservres.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s12913-024-11762-x>
- Global Education Monitoring Report. (2022). Education in emergencies: Building back better. UNESCO. Retrieved July 2, 2025, from <https://en.unesco.org/gem-report/>
- Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE). (2021). Minimum Standards for Education: Preparedness, Response, Recovery. Retrieved June 5, 2025, from <https://inee.org/standards-and-resources/standards>
- Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC), (2022). *Global Report on Internal Displacement*. Retrieved on August 5, 2025 from: <https://www.internal-displacement.org/>
- International Organization for Migration (IOM). (2024). Child protection in humanitarian settings: A focus on displacement. Retrieved June 15, 2025, from <https://www.iom.int/>
- International Organization for Migration (IOM). (2024). Mental health and psychosocial support in emergency situations. Retrieved June 4, 2025, from <https://www.iom.int/>
- Iorbo, J. T., Sahni, N., Bhatnagar, K., & Andzenge, N. M. (2024). *Social cohesion in displacement: Education as a unifier among Benue IDPs*. Journal on Migration and Human Security. Retrieved on June 5, 2025 from: <https://cmsny.org/publications/jmhs-iorbo-sahni-bhatnagar-andzenge-050524>
- Islam, A., Mozunde, T. A., Rahman, T. Shatil, T. & Siddique, A. (2022). Forced displacement, mental health and child development: evidence from the Rohingya Refugees. Retrieved on May 5, 2025 from: <https://www.povertyactionlab.org>
- Kälin, W. (2019). The Protection of Internally Displaced Persons: The Role of the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement. *International Review of the Red Cross*, 101(911), 61-83. Retrieved



- on June 3, 2025 from: <https://www.brookings.edu/articles/the-guiding-principles-on-internal-displacement-annotations-2nd-edition/>
- Kirk, J., & Winthrop, R. (2022). *Community-led nonformal education in northern Nigeria*. Journal on Education in Emergencies, 8(1). Retrieved on June 7, 2025 from: https://archive.nyu.edu/bitstream/2451/63611/2/JEiE_Vol8No1_Community-Led-Nonformal-Education-in-Northern-Nigeria_March2022.pdf
- Lawal, A. M., Abubakar, B., & Ukoji, V. (2022). *A critical examination of the psychosocial implications of internal displacement on internally displaced persons in Nigeria*. International Journal of Research and Innovation in Social Science. Retrieved on June 5, 2025 from: <https://rsisinternational.org/journals/ijriss/articles/a-critical-examination-of-the-psychosocial-implications-of-internal-displacement-on-internally-displaced-persons-in-nigeria/>
- Tyover-Tion, P. A., & Ihaji, E. O. (2025). *Emotional abuse, self-regulation and psychosocial adjustment among displaced children in Benue State*. IIARD. Retrieved on June 5, 2025 from: <https://iiardjournals.org/get/IJSSMR/VOL.%2011%20NO.%205%202025/Emotional%20Abuse%2C%20Self-Regulation%20134-144.pdf>
- United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). (2018). Global Compact on Refugees. Retrieved May 2, 2025, from <https://www.unhcr.org/>
- United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). (2023). Global trends: Forced displacement in 2022. Retrieved May 2, 2025, from <https://www.unhcr.org/>
- United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). (2020). Education and COVID-19: The impact of the pandemic on education. Retrieved May 12, 2025, from <https://www.unicef.org/>
- United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). (2024). Education and child labour: Addressing barriers to access in conflict-affected areas. Retrieved May 12, 2025, from <https://www.unicef.org/>
- United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). (2024). From trauma to triumph: Helping children in Benue heal through education. Retrieved May 2, 2025, from <https://www.unicef.org/nigeria/stories/trauma-triumph>
- United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). (2025). Education in emergencies: Challenges and opportunities for IDPs. Retrieved May 2, 2025, from <https://www.unicef.org/>
- United Nations. (2018). Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement. Retrieved June 2, 2025, from <https://www.un.org/en/observances/internal-displacement-day>
- Wikipedia. (2025). *Education in emergencies and conflict areas*. Retrieved on May 2, 2025 from: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Education_in_emergencies_and_conflict_areas
- World Bank. (2021a). Ending child labour in Africa: The economic impacts. World Bank Publications. Retrieved May 2, 2025, from <https://www.worldbank.org/>
- World Bank. (2021b). Poverty and displacement: Economic impact and recovery strategies. World Bank Publications. Retrieved June 2, 2025, from <https://www.worldbank.org/>
- World Bank. (2021c). The economic impact of internal displacement. World Bank Publications. Retrieved May 2, 2025, from <https://www.worldbank.org/>
- World Health Organization. (2025). Refugee and migrant mental health. Retrieved May 2, 2025, from <https://www.who.int/>