

Psycho-Social Problems and Coping Mechanisms of Sudanese and South Sudanese Refugees with Multiple Displacement Histories in Sherkole Refugee Camp, Benshangul-Gumuz Region

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South Sudanese Refugees with Multiple Displacement Histories in
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Abstract

This qualitative study investigates the psycho-social problems and coping mechanisms of Sudanese and South Sudanese refugees with multiple displacement histories residing in the Sherkole Refugee Camp in Ethiopia. Employing Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA), the research aims to capture the individual narratives of psycho-social problems, coping strategies, and resilience experienced by the participants. By conducting in-depth interviews and focus group discussions, the study unveils a profound narrative of human resilience amidst recurring turbulence, shedding light on the multifaceted experiences of the refugees. The research site's diverse refugee population provides a rich context for understanding the complexity of displacement experiences. The deliberative approach acknowledges potential biases and cognitive dissonance, weaving reflexive measures into the research process, ensuring methodological neutrality and cultural sensitivity. Findings from individual interviews and focus group discussions underscore the enduring psychological toll of forced displacement and illuminate the importance of nuanced, culturally sensitive, and sustained interventions sensitive to the psychosocial dynamics within the refugee community. These insights aim to inform the development of targeted mental health and psychosocial support interventions, facilitating the enhancement of mental health and overall well-being for this vulnerable population. In conclusion, this study not only uncovers the profound psychosocial challenges faced by refugees but also highlights the necessity of reflexivity and self-critique as integral components of ethical qualitative inquiry. Overall, the research aims to contribute essential insights into the psychosocial landscape of populations with recurrent displacement.

Keywords: Refugees, Multiple Displacement, Mental Health, Psychosocial Problem

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

APA- American Psychologist Association

DPA- Data Protection Association

FGD- Focus Group Discussion

IPA-Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis

IPU- Inter-Parliamentary Union

IRC- International Rescue Committee

MHPSS- Mental Health and Psychosocial Service

PTSD-Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder

UK- United Kingdom

UN- United Nations

UNHCR- United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this chapter is to introduce the study to the readers. Thus, it discusses the background of the study, statement of the problem, research questions to be answered, significance, scope, and operational definition.

1.1 Background of the Study

Refugees are often forced to leave behind everything due to situations such as war and imminent, life-threatening risks posed by state or non-state actors (UNHCR & IPU, 2015). They are victims of war and violence, and the psychological impacts, such as dysfunction, can persist for many years post-trauma (Catani, 2010). Violent acts such as rape, torture, and armed conflict tend to have longer-lasting impacts than those caused by natural disasters or accidents (Catani et al., 2008).

Various studies suggest that approximately half of the refugees may suffer from mental disorders due to stress experienced before or during displacement (Attanayake et al., 2009; Bundesweite et al., 2016; Gäbel et al., 2005). The breakdown of social networks and the constant stress of displacement increase the risk of mental health-related psychosocial issues (Chu et al., 2013). Despite these adversities, studies have shown instances of positive psychological transformation among trauma survivors, including improved well-being, psychological growth, a harmonious sense of coherence, and adaptive adjustments to situations (Veronese & Pepe, 2015; Sleijpen et al., 2016).

For decades, civilians in regions like Sudan and South Sudan have endured the detrimental effects of ongoing conflict and repetitive displacement (UK Home Office, 2012; Human Rights

Watch, 1997). This research aims to comprehensively investigate the psychological and social hurdles faced by refugees from Sudan and South Sudan and understand their coping mechanisms.

Understanding the implications of multiple displacements requires a detailed exploration of its theoretical and historical contexts. Multiple displacements refer to the phenomenon where refugees experience multiple episodes of forced migration due to ongoing or recurrent conflict. This repeated trauma compounds the psychological burden on individuals, often exacerbating mental health issues such as PTSD, anxiety, and depression (Silove, 2013).

Historically, Sudan and South Sudan have been embroiled in prolonged conflicts, including the First and Second Sudanese Civil Wars and clashes following South Sudan's independence in 2011. These conflicts have led to cyclical patterns of displacement, severely disrupting the lives of civilians.

The theoretical foundation for this study takes a multidisciplinary standpoint, combining insights from the Social-Ecological Model (Bronfenbrenner, 1979) and Post-Traumatic Growth Theory (Tedeschi & Calhoun, 2004). By combining these theoretical approaches, the framework proposes a comprehensive understanding of the psychosocial constraints and opportunities for good psychological change among Sudanese and South Sudanese refugees forced into repeated displacement. This integrated theoretical approach supports the concept that the refugee experience, characterized by multiple displacements, is not only defined by vulnerability but also by the potential for significant personal and social-psychological development (Hutchison, 2019; Walsh, 2007). It outlines how individuals interact with a complex system of interactions and cope with stress (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Zimmerman, 2014).

Coping mechanisms are crucial in understanding how refugees manage stress and adversity. According to Folkman and Lazarus (1984), coping is a dynamic process involving cognitive and behavioral efforts to manage specific external and/or internal demands. Refugees employ a variety of coping mechanisms, such as problem-focused coping, which involves actively addressing the problems causing stress, and emotion-focused coping, which involves managing emotions that arise from stress (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984).

Research has highlighted the importance of social support networks as a vital coping mechanism for refugees. Support from family, friends, and the larger community can mitigate the negative psychological effects of displacement and contribute to resilience (Schweitzer et al., 2006). Furthermore, religious and spiritual practices have been noted as significant coping strategies among Sudanese and South Sudanese refugees, providing a sense of hope and meaning amidst adversity (Omondi & Finlay-Sigsworth, 2020). Additionally, psychosocial interventions such as community-based support groups, mental health services, and educational programs have shown promise in enhancing coping strategies and psychological well-being among displaced populations (Jordans et al., 2010).

This study aims to understand the dynamics of relationships among multiple traumatic events, subsequent psychosocial problems, coping mechanisms that lead to resilience, and the potential for positive psychological changes such as post-traumatic growth after experiencing repeated displacement. By examining these relationships, the research seeks to contribute to the broader

understanding of how refugees from Sudan and South Sudan navigate their experiences of trauma and displacement, ultimately informing humanitarian programs and interventions to better support this vulnerable population.

1.2 Statement of the problem

The existing body of literature underscores the link between traumatic experiences and adverse mental health outcomes, such as stress and depression (Tedeschi & Calhoun, 2004; Schnurr & Green, 2004). However, the intricate complexities that arise from multiple displacements and repetitive trauma—especially within the context of prolonged conflict as endured by Sudanese and South Sudanese refugees—demand deeper exploration. Current studies often fail to differentiate the psychosocial problem associated with repeated displacement from those of single trauma events (Miller & Rasmussen, 2010). Moreover, the literature does not adequately capture the potential for positive psychological changes, such as resilience and post-traumatic growth, which can serve as adaptive responses to cumulative hardship (Hobfoll et al., 2007; Southwick et al., 2014). The World Health Organization (2024) highlights the overall mental health risks and psychosocial support needs of refugees, asylum seekers, and migrants on the move, emphasizing the importance of tailored interventions (World Health Organization, 2024).

Recent research has begun to shed light on the developmental impacts of forced displacement on young children, revealing diverse outcomes in areas such as peer relations, prosocial behavior, and cognitive development (Bernhardt et al., 2024). Additionally, studies have identified factors influencing these outcomes, including repeated exposure to adverse experiences and the quality of resettlement in the host country (Bernhardt et al., 2024). Other contributions have focused on

the health risks and mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) for children in displacement settings, assessing interventions to protect forcibly displaced children (Kaplan et al., 2021). Furthermore, evidence suggests that prolonged internal displacement can significantly increase the risk of developing mental disorders, contributing to the global burden of disease (Chesmal& Robert , 2013).The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (2024) provides a comprehensive overview of Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) in emergencies, detailing the types of support provided and their effectiveness (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, 2024).

This qualitative research aims to fill the gaps in the existing literature by expanding the understanding of trauma as not just a singular incident but also as a layered experience with cumulative effects and understanding of trauma as a series of interactions across various social ecologies and potential for transformative growth. By delving into the lived experiences of Sudanese and South Sudanese refugees at Ethiopia's Sherkole Refugee Camp, It will explore their psychosocial challenges and their coping mechanisms in their narratives, capturing the nuances of their experiences. The study examines how repeated trauma exposure might contribute to psychosocial problems within these uniquely affected populations. Concurrently, it investigated the coping mechanism used by the affected populations and the nature of positive psychological outcomes like post-trauma growth and resilience using positive coping mechanisms (Betancourt & Khan, 2008; Tedeschi & Calhoun, 2004).

By centering refugees' voices, this research seeks to provide a comprehensive view of the psychosocial effects of multiple displacements. It will integrate insights from recent studies to contextualize individual stories, addressing empirical gaps and highlighting the distinct psychosocial challenges and strengths of this group. This inquiry is vital for improving the

mental health and psychosocial support programs that are sensitive to the finely-grained needs of multi-displaced populations.

Through rigorous narrative inquiry, this study contributes to evolving intervention strategies, transitioning from a deficit model to one that recognizes and fosters potential strengths and resilience amid adversity (Eggerman&Panter-Brick, 2010). By understanding the gaps in current research, this study advocates for a closer examination of the psychosocial impact of multiple displacements, aiming to facilitate a more inclusive and informed mental health response for the refugees at Sherkole camp. Embracing a qualitative methodology, the study used refugee stories to inform a comprehensive understanding of their mental health challenges and achievements, enriching the empirical discourse and guiding more effective mental health programs.

1.3 Research Questions and Research Objective

The study aims to answer the following research questions:

1. What specific traumatic events have Sudanese and South Sudanese refugees residing in the Sherkole Refugee camp experienced due to multiple displacement episodes (in their country of origin, on the way, and after they arrived in the country of asylum)?
2. How does the unique experience arising from repeated displacement induce psychosocial problems in Sudanese and South Sudanese refugees in the Sherkole Refugee camp? What coping strategies do Sudanese and South Sudanese refugees in the Sherkole Refugee Camp employ to navigate the psychosocial challenges induced by repeated displacement?
3. How do Sudanese and South Sudanese refugees in the Sherkole Refugee camp exhibit resilience and post-traumatic growth amidst the ongoing psychosocial challenges?

Objective of the Study

Guided by the research questions, this study seeks to:

1. Document and analyze the range of traumatic experiences that Sudanese and South Sudanese refugees have encountered during multiple displacements.
2. Uncover and elucidate the psychosocial problems that arise from the unique experiences of repeated displacement and multiple traumatic events.
3. Examine the coping strategies employed by Sudanese and South Sudanese refugees in the Sherkole Refugee Camp and assess the emergence of positive psychological changes, such as resilience and post-traumatic growth, after enduring multiple traumatic events.
4. Provide robust and actionable insights to inform the enhancement of evidence-based mental health and psychosocial support interventions specifically designed for Sudanese and South Sudanese refugees with histories of multiple displacements.

1.4. Significance of the Study

This study holds profound significance as it aims to illuminate the complex psychosocial challenges encountered by Sudanese and South Sudanese refugees with a history of multiple displacements at the Sherkole Refugee Camp in Ethiopia. By focusing on this specific population, the research endeavors to reveal nuanced understandings of their mental health challenges and adaptive mechanisms, facilitating the development of targeted support interventions.

Furthermore, this study seeks to investigate whether exposure to multiple traumatic events among this refugee population results in the emergence of complex mental disorders or fosters positive psychological changes. These insights are pivotal in informing the refinement of the existing Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) program at the Sherkole Refugee Camp or potentially crafting tailored programs to meet the specific needs of Sudanese and South Sudanese refugees grappling with multiple displacement experiences.

By informing the design of intervention programs, this research aspires to enhance the mental health and overall well-being of this vulnerable population. While acknowledging the frameworks and programs already in place by UNHCR and implementing partners, the intent of this research is to provide additional insights and extend ongoing efforts to deliver tailored MHPSS interventions. Furthermore, the analysis presented in this study can serve as a foundational platform for future research, enabling comparisons with analogous populations in other refugee camps or contexts.

In summary, this study aims to shed light on the profound psychosocial challenges encountered by multi-displaced refugees, endeavoring to steer the development of effective strategies to improve their mental health and overall well-being.

1.5 Scope of the Study

The primary focus of this study is to investigate the psychosocial challenges and coping mechanisms employed by Sudanese and South Sudanese refugees and are currently residing in the Sherkole Refugee Camp in Ethiopia. Study participants will comprise refugees of various genders and ages who have experienced multiple displacements, currently reside in the Sherkole camp, and express a willingness to participate in the study. Further details regarding participant selection and recruitment will be detailed in the methods section.

1.6 Operational Definition of variables

Multiple displacement experiences: Multiple displacement experiences are defined by individual stories of repeated instances of flight. These accounts will be uncovered through in-depth interviews, where refugees recount the number of displacements and describe their cumulative subjective impact, emphasizing personal histories over mere numerical counts.

Psychosocial challenges: This term refers to the range of psychological and social difficulties described by participants, as they relate to displacement and trauma. Through thematic analysis of interview data, psychosocial challenges will surface from participants' descriptions of emotional states, social relationships, community dynamics, and identity changes.

Coping mechanisms: In the context of this study, within the qualitative framework, coping mechanisms are the ways in which participants articulate their strategies for dealing with psychosocial challenges. They will be identified through narrative analysis, looking for themes of adaptation and resilience during in-depth interviews and focus group discussions.

Positive psychological changes: Positive psychological changes are identified through the positive modifications in self-perception, relationships, and life philosophy the refugees convey in their stories. The study will analyze narratives for evidence of personal growth, increased resilience, and an enhanced sense of meaning, following exposure to trauma.

Chapter Two

Literature Review

2.1 An Overview of Multiple Displacement

According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR, 2023), millions of people worldwide are forcibly displaced due to conflict, persecution, and violence. The rate of displacement remains alarming, with nearly one person being displaced every two seconds. By mid-2023, the global population of forcibly displaced individuals reached 110 million, reflecting the urgency of addressing displacement challenges (UNHCR, 2023).

This significant increase from previous years highlights the need to understand the experiences and vulnerabilities faced by displaced populations. As we delve into the literature, it is essential to consider the evolving dynamics of displacement and the impact on affected individuals and communities.

In the context of this study, our focus lies on refugees from Sudan and South Sudan. The Sudanese and South Sudanese refugees have endured decades of protracted civil war, spanning three distinct conflicts (1956–1972, 1983–2005, and 2011-present). Consequently, they have faced multiple displacements from their homes (Ager et al., 2008). Beyond the immediate physical dangers associated with displacement, these refugees grapple with long-term mental and emotional tolls resulting from repeated upheaval and uncertainty. Previous research has reported wide variation in mental illness prevalence data, partially due to methodological limitations (Miller & Rasmussen, 2010). Nuanced understanding of their experiences is essential for shaping responsive and holistic interventions. This systematic review aims to summarize the current body of evidence for the prevalence of mental illness in global refugee populations and overcome the methodological limitations of individual studies.

2.2 Psychosocial Challenges Arising from Multiple Displacement

The cumulative impact of multiple displacements takes a significant psychological and social toll on both individuals and communities. The existing body of literature underscores the link between traumatic experiences and adverse mental health outcomes, such as stress and depression (Tedeschi & Calhoun, 2004; Schnurr & Green, 2004). Exposure to multiple traumatic events significantly increases the risk of developing mental health disorders, including post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and depression (Mollica et al., 1998; Neuner et al., 2004; Silove et al., 1997). Furthermore, post-migration stressors—such as adapting to a new environment—further influence the mental health of refugees, compounding the effects of past trauma (Chu et al., 2013; Li et al., 2016). The intricate complexities that arise from multiple displacements and repetitive trauma—especially within the context of prolonged conflict as endured by Sudanese and South Sudanese refugees—demand deeper exploration. Current studies often fail to differentiate the psychosocial stressors and mental health effects associated with repeated displacement from those of single trauma events (Miller & Rasmussen, 2010). A holistic understanding of the psychosocial challenges faced by these populations is crucial.

2.3 Contributing Factors for Psychological and Social Problems among Displaced People

A comprehensive understanding of the constellation of factors contributing to the emergence of psychological and social problems among displaced populations is vital. These factors intersect and compound, affecting the well-being and resilience of individuals and communities. Some factors include, among others, exposure to trauma, loss of social support networks, limited access to healthcare and education, socioeconomic disparities, discrimination, and cultural dislocation (Ager & Strang, 2008). The following key factors deserve attention:

1. Exposure to Trauma:

- Displaced individuals often experience traumatic events related to conflict, violence, and forced migration. These experiences can lead to post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), anxiety, and depression (UNHCR, 2023; Taylor & Kaplan, 2023).

2. Loss of Social Support Networks:

- Displacement disrupts established social connections, leaving individuals isolated and vulnerable. The absence of family, friends, and community networks exacerbates mental health challenges (UNHCR, 2023; Taylor & Kaplan, 2023).

3. Limited Access to Healthcare and Education:

- Displaced populations face barriers to essential services, including healthcare and education. Lack of access contributes to physical and mental health disparities (World Bank Group, 2022).

4. Socioeconomic Disparities:

- Economic instability, unemployment, and poverty are common among displaced communities. These disparities impact mental health and social well-being (World Bank Group, 2022).

5. Discrimination and Stigmatization:

- Displaced individuals often encounter discrimination based on their status, ethnicity, or nationality. Stigmatization further isolates them and affects mental health (UNHCR, 2023; Taylor & Kaplan, 2023).

o

6. Cultural Dislocation:

- o The loss of cultural context, traditions, and familiar environments disrupts identity and exacerbates feelings of displacement (UNHCR, 2023; Taylor & Kaplan, 2023).

Understanding these characteristics holistically allows for the development of more effective interventions and support systems that are tailored to the specific requirements of this vulnerable population(WHO,2022).

2.4 The Effect of Displacement on the Mental Health of Refugees

Displacement and refugee status bring manifold and complex challenges, significantly impacting mental health, overall functioning, and quality of life. The enduring effects of multiple displacements are evident through the range of traumatic events endured by refugees, leading to profound mental and physical consequences (Steel et al., 2017). Beyond the immediate experience of conflict and displacement, these challenges extend to various aspects of daily life, including family relationships and overall well-being (Fegert et al., 2018; Riggs et al., 1998; Clark et al., 2010).

A comprehensive understanding of the aforementioned challenges is critical for developing effective interventions and support systems to meet the various needs of the targeted population4 (Blackmore et al., 2020). The World Health Organization (2024) highlights the overall mental health risks and psychosocial support needs of refugees, asylum seekers, and migrants on the move, emphasizing the importance of tailored interventions. Recent research has begun to shed light on the developmental impacts of forced displacement on young children, revealing diverse outcomes in areas such as peer relations, prosocial behavior, and cognitive development

(Bernhardt et al., 2024). Additionally, studies have identified factors influencing these outcomes, including repeated exposure to adverse experiences and the quality of resettlement in the host country (Bernhardt et al., 2024).

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) emphasizes the importance of Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) in emergency situations (UNHCR, 2024). Understanding effective support mechanisms is essential for promoting well-being among forcibly displaced populations.

2.5 Resilience and Post-Traumatic Growth

Despite the profound tragedy faced by displaced individuals, the possibility of resilience and post-traumatic growth remains a remarkable aspect of the mental health landscape. While negative mental health outcomes are well-documented, the literature inadequately captures the potential for positive psychological changes.

Remarkably, even in the face of horrific conditions, some refugees exhibit **remarkable resilience and post-traumatic growth**. They adapt and make positive psychological adjustments following difficult circumstances (Tedeschi & Calhoun, 2004; Ssenyonga et al., 2013; Park & Fenster, 2004; Acquaye, 2017). These adaptive responses serve as a testament to human strength and resilience.

Protective factors play a crucial role in promoting resilience, particularly among refugee children. These factors include individual characteristics, attachment, social support, caregiver mental health, and access to childcare and schools (Masten, 2014). Understanding these protective elements is essential for fostering resilience and facilitating positive outcomes.

In light of these findings, it becomes evident that a nuanced exploration of the factors contributing to resilience and post-traumatic growth is not only critical but also essential for informing effective interventions and support mechanisms.

2.6 Theoretical Framework

The theoretical foundation for this study adopts a multidisciplinary standpoint, combining insights from two key theories: the **Social-Ecological Model** (Bronfenbrenner, 1979) and the **Post-Traumatic Growth Theory** (Tedeschi & Calhoun, 2004). By integrating these theoretical approaches, our framework aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the psychosocial constraints and opportunities for positive psychological change among Sudanese and South Sudanese refugees who have experienced repeated displacement.

1. Social-Ecological Model:

- This model allows for a holistic analysis of refugees' individual and communal experiences.
- It considers interconnected environmental settings that influence mental health and coping methods.
- Researchers explore dynamic connections across individual, relational, communal, and societal categories.
- Layered social environments impact refugees' stress, trauma, and resilience (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Zimmerman, 2014).

2. Post-Traumatic Growth Theory:

- This theory helps identify and assess adaptive, transformative changes resulting from traumatic events.
- Individuals can generate new meanings, boost personal strength, cultivate stronger relationships, discover new life directions, and experience spiritual development following adversity (Tedeschi, Park, & Calhoun, 1998).
- It acknowledges that growth can emerge from adversity, even in the aftermath of trauma (Tedeschi & Calhoun, 2004).

3. Integrated Approach:

- The current framework outlines how individuals interact with a complex system of interactions and cope with stress.
- It illustrates the relationship between loss, traumatic stress, and the development of resilience and post-traumatic growth outcomes (Taku et al., 2008).
- Additionally, it considers the complex interaction between social support, community solidarity, and both micro and macro factors influencing psychological well-being and growth (Ungar, 2013).
- This integrated approach recognizes that the refugee experience, characterized by recurrent displacements, is not solely defined by vulnerability but also holds the potential for significant personal and social psychological development (Hutchison, 2019; Walsh, 2007).

By grounding our study in this theoretical framework, we aim to explore the intricate interplay of factors shaping the mental health trajectories of the populations with multiple displacement experiences. This understanding will guide the research questions, interpretation of findings, and recommendations for supporting resilience and growth among Sudanese and South Sudanese refugees.

2.7 Summary

The literature on the mental health of refugees sheds light on the profound impact of multiple displacements on psychological well-being. Refugees frequently endure trauma, loss of social support, and other stressors, which significantly elevate their risk of developing mental health disorders such as PTSD, depression, and anxiety. However, it is crucial to recognize that not all refugees experience mental disorders, many exhibit remarkable resilience and post-traumatic growth. Protective factors, including social support networks and cultural practices, play a pivotal role in promoting positive mental health outcomes.

In summary, this review provides a comprehensive understanding of the literature concerning the mental health of displaced populations, with a particular focus on refugees. It underscores the urgent need for further research to explore a diverse array of factors contributing to resilience and post-traumatic growth.

Chapter Three

Research Methods

This chapter delineates the methodological approach adopted for conducting the current study. It explains the research design, including the rationale behind the selection of qualitative research and its suitability for the study. The chapter details the selection criteria for participants, the research site, and the sample size. It outlines the methodologies for data collection and analysis and discusses the data quality assurance and the ethical considerations integral to the research process.

3.1. Research Design

This study used a qualitative research methodology, specifically Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) for its ability to delve deeply into the lived experiences and subjective interpretations of the Sudanese and South Sudanese refugees in the Sherkole Refugee Camp. Through qualitative methods, the researcher captured the rich narratives, nuanced emotions, and contextual meanings that quantitative data alone could not provide. The IPA approach aligns with the research aim and allows the researcher to vividly capture and interpret the deeply personal and subjective experiences related to psychosocial challenges faced by the participants, their coping strategies, and the resilience they demonstrated in the face of multiple displacements.

Moreover, the rationale for using IPA is due to the fact this approach enables the exploration of cultural nuances connected with trauma, as highlighted in the literature (Mattar and Vogel, 2014). By utilizing this qualitative method, the researcher was able to engage in open-ended discussions, listen to the voices of the participants, and interpret their narratives in a way that honored their lived realities.

3.2 Research Site

The Sherkole refugee camp, located in the BenishangulGumuz Region of Ethiopia, serves as the research site for this study given its longstanding history of hosting South Sudan and Sudanese refugees since 1997. The rationale for choosing Sherkole camp included its diverse refugee population, which provides a broad spectrum of displacement experiences. This diversity facilitated a rich exploration of mental health experiences, making it an optimal location for investigating the experiences of refugees from Sudan and South Sudan, particularly providing a rich context that was essential for addressing the research questions regarding trauma and resilience in the face of multiple displacements.

3.3 Research Participants and Selection Criteria

Research Participants and Selection Criteria

This study delves into the psycho-social challenges and coping mechanisms of Sudanese and South Sudanese refugees with multiple displacement experiences within the context of the Sherkole Refugee Camp. The participant selection process, guided by purposeful sampling, was strategically designed to enrich the understanding of these intricate narratives.

Justification for Purposeful Sampling Approach:

- Understanding the Purpose: Purposeful sampling was chosen to deliberately select participants based on specific criteria aligned with the study's research objectives. This method allows for a focused exploration of psycho-social challenges and coping strategies among refugees with multiple displacement histories.
- Targeting Relevant Participants: By employing purposeful sampling, individuals who could offer comprehensive insights into the research questions were intentionally chosen. Selecting

Sudanese and South Sudanese refugees with multiple displacement backgrounds ensures the sample's relevance to the study population.

- Variety and Depth: This sampling approach facilitated the inclusion of participants with diverse backgrounds, including sex, age, and ethnicity, enhancing the breadth and depth of the study findings. By capturing a wide range of experiences, the study aims to uncover a comprehensive understanding of psycho-social issues and coping mechanisms among refugees.

Participant Selection Process

Participant Criteria

- Duration and Experience: Participants must have resided in the Sherkole Refugee Camp for at least six months and have histories of multiple displacements from Sudan and South Sudan. While the six-month criteria is not a conventional guideline for selecting participants using a purposeful sampling approach, it was utilized to ensure that they had enough time to reflect on and articulate their experiences. The six-month criterion strikes a balance between the need for reflection and practical feasibility, taking into account the transitory nature of refugee populations.

- Demographic Inclusion: The participant pool includes both males and females aged 18 and above, representing diverse ethnic, religious, and cultural backgrounds.

Refugee Leaders' Involvement:

Refugee leaders within the Sherkole Camp, including members of the Refugee Central Committee (RCC) and zone leaders, played a pivotal role in identifying individuals with multiple displacement experiences from Sudan and South Sudan. Transparent discussions with the leaders

helped clarify the selection criteria and exclusion factors, ensuring a clear and ethical participant selection process.

Selection and Consent

Refugee leaders led the participant recruitment process, explaining the study's purpose and obtaining informed consent from potential participants. The chosen participants received detailed information about the research, including potential discussions on sensitive topics. Confidentiality, anonymity, and the right to withdraw from the study were emphasized.

Participants were assured of confidentiality and informed about their rights within the study, ensuring a respectful and participant-centric research approach.

3.4 Sample Size

In the current study, with guidance from refugee leaders, a total of 10 individuals were selected for individual interviews and 16 participants for focus group discussions, each comprising eight individuals. This deliberate selection process aimed to capture diverse perspectives and enrich the study's insights. The sample size rationale prioritizes the quality of data over sheer quantity. The sampling strategy prioritizes relevance, depth, and diversity, essential elements in unraveling the complexities of the participants' experiences and coping strategies within the context of multiple displacements.

3.5 Methods of Data Collection **In-Depth Individual Interviews**

To mitigate potential biases and ensure a more culturally sensitive approach to data collection, in-depth interviews were conducted by a refugee social worker trained in facilitating interviews with refugees. The interviews were conducted in Arabic, the common language spoken by both

Sudanese and South Sudanese refugees, within a psychosocial center in the Sherkole Refugee Camp. This approach aimed to provide a more contextualized understanding of the refugees' experiences and coping strategies. A total of 10 individuals were interviewed, with the following demographic breakdown:

Summary of Individual Interviews Participants' Demographics:

Sex	Nationality	Age group
Male:5	Sudanese:5	18-30 :1
Female:5	South Sudanese:5	31-40:3
		41-60:3
		61-80:3

The interviews were guided by the provided In-Depth Interview Guide question in Appendix B, structured according to the standard of a semi-structured interview (Rutledge & Hogg, 2020). Rutledge, P., & Hogg, J. L. (2020). In-Depth Interviews (pp. 1-7).

Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)

Focus group discussions, integral to the study, were conducted to facilitate structured dialogues among groups of eight individuals with a gender-balanced composition. These discussions encouraged peer interactions and deeper exploration of participants' experiences and perspectives. Two FGDs were organized and facilitated by the IRC Mental Health and Psychosocial Support Officer in the IRC multipurpose center within the Sherkole Refugee Camp. Conducted in English with interpretation assistance from a refugee social worker, these discussions involved a total of 16 participants, spread across two groups of eight, as outlined below:

Summary of FGD Participants' Demographics:

Sex	Nationality	Age group
Male :12	Sudanese :5	21-30 :4
Female :4	South Sudanese :5	31-40:6
		41-50:4
		51-60:2

The FGDs were facilitated using the provided Focus Group Discussions guiding questions, adhering to guidelines for the FGD method (Krueger, 1998).ework.

3.6 Method of Data Analysis

Data from interviews and FGDs were meticulously transcribed to capture the nuances of participants' experiences. Following the principles of Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) as outlined by Smith, Flowers, and Larkin (2009), the analysis process was guided by an in-depth exploration of participant interpretations.

Step-by-Step Overview of Data Analysis with IPA:

- 1. Immersion:** Engaged deeply with each interview transcript to immerse in the participants' experiences and gain a nuanced understanding of their narratives.
- 2. Deduction:** Identified key themes and patterns by deductively analyzing participants' narratives to uncover underlying meanings and experiences.
- 3. Interpretation:** Made sense of the themes by interpreting their implications within the context of the refugee experiences, emphasizing the subjective nature of their accounts.

Incorporating Thematic Analysis with IPA:

1. Data Transcription: Transcribed interview and focus group discussion data verbatim to preserve the richness and subtleties of participants' narratives, ensuring a comprehensive analysis.

2. Initial Coding: Commenced the analysis with initial coding by highlighting significant statements and phrases, followed by reflective labeling to capture descriptive codes that denote key themes and experiences.

3. Theme Development: Identified overarching themes that emerged organically from the data, refined through iterative readings and discussions to ensure reliability and consistency in interpretation. Themes were developed based on the personal meanings ascribed by participants (IPA) and overarching patterns across multiple narratives (thematic analysis).

4. Coding Iteration and Refinement: Evolved coding iteratively by revisiting, revising, and merging codes as new insights surfaced from the data. Focused coding narrowed down specific themes, while pattern coding identified recurring patterns across interviews, resulting in a rich thematic framework.

5. Data Saturation and Thematic Analysis: Actively pursued data saturation to reach a point where no new themes or insights emerged, ensuring a comprehensive understanding of the diverse experiences and coping mechanisms of refugees with multiple displacement histories

3.7 Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations were of paramount importance in this study to respect the rights, dignity, and well-being of all participants. The study adhered to ethical norms and values outlined by the American Psychological Association (APA, 2010). Participants were provided with a comprehensive explanation of the study's nature, objectives, and implications. Written informed consent was obtained from all participants before data collection to ensure their full understanding and voluntary participation. Findings were presented in aggregated narratives without references to specific individuals, maintaining participant anonymity. All participant information and recorded data were securely stored and accessible only to the primary researchers involved in the project. Data management followed guidelines provided by the Data Protection Act (DPA, 2018). After the study's completion, the data would be retained for a specified period as per university policy and then securely discarded. By adhering to these ethical considerations, the study aimed to uphold the respect, dignity, and well-being of the refugee participants, thereby ensuring the production of reliable and credible findings.

Chapter Four

Result of the study

This chapter presents the findings from individual interviews and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), which were analyzed using interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) and thematic analysis. The findings are structured around themes that emerged through the use of IPA and thematic analysis. Participants' vivid experiences were included throughout each theme through particular citations that demonstrated how thoroughly the research questions were addressed.

4.1 Findings from Findings from Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)

Below is a summary of the main themes and interpretations from the focus group discussion data.

1. Traumatic Experiences:

- Participants across both FGDs shared harrowing experiences of violence, loss, and brutality, such as witnessing killings, torture, and imprisonment. These traumatic events have deeply impacted their emotional and psychological well-being.

Quotes from participants:

- FGD 1 - Quote from P5: "I have seen people being shot in front of my eyes."
- FGD 1 - Quote from P1: "I have witnessed my brother and father killed in front of me."
- FGD 2 - Quote from P4: "I have seen people being shot, while soldiers were exchanging gunfire."

2. Social and Daily Life Impacts:

- The traumatic events disrupted social networks, leading to feelings of loneliness and stress about basic needs like food, shelter, and safety. Participants faced challenges in rebuilding social structures and adapting to new environments.

Quotes from participants:

- FGD 1 - Quote from P1: "Our social life is disrupted as we run from the war."

- FGD 1 - Quote from P3: "Children are not going to further education. There is a shortage of food."

- FGD 2 - Quote from P5: "We lost our social setup when the war broke out."

3. Challenges Faced:

- Cultural adjustments, lack of access to essential services, economic dependency, difficulties with marriage customs, and risks of gender-based violence were highlighted as significant challenges faced by the participants in both FGDs.

Quotes from participants:

- FGD 1 - Quote from P4: "It is difficult to adjust for the cultural differences of different tribes."

- FGD 1 - Quote from P7: "Young ladies who are separated from their husbands go outside looking for a job leaving their children alone."

- FGD 2 - Quote from P7: "Coming to the new place for the first time is really difficult because you are not familiar with the life."

4. Coping Strategies:

- Participants employed various coping mechanisms such as seeking resettlement opportunities, engaging in community activities, finding strength in faith, and supporting each other through shared experiences and initiatives.

Quotes from participants:

- FGD 1 - Quote from P5: "Elderly gather to visit people who have difficulty in accessing services and need help."

- FGD 1 - Quote from P3: "Hope for the resettlement for the 3rd world countries."

- FGD 2 - Quote from P4: "When getting a job with a well-paid... laughing with children helps me to forget what happened."

5. Mental Health Impacts:

- Exposure to multiple traumatic events led to negative mental health outcomes such as stress, mental disorders, and suicidal thoughts. Some participants expressed resilience, while others struggled with the psychological toll of displacement.

Quotes from participants:

- FGD 1 - Quote from P4: "Some people get mental illness. Some people got through it."

- FGD 2 - Quote from P1: "It leads to mental disorder; you never stop thinking of traumatic events."

- FGD 2 - Quote from P6: "It gives me bad dreams, losing hope, losing appetite and sometimes it results in others committing suicide."

6. Positive Transformations:

- Despite the challenges, some individuals showcased positive transformations through educational opportunities, community support, and personal growth, demonstrating resilience and adaptability in the face of adversity.

Quotes from participants:

- FGD 1 - Quote from P8: "There are people who got a better chance of further education."

- FGD 2 - Quote from P6: "There are some people able to get a better education and now they are supporting the community on how to live peacefully."

- FGD 2 - Quote from P2: "It makes people dependent and hopeless."

7. Overall Well-being:

- The collective experiences of trauma and displacement significantly impacted mental health and overall well-being, highlighting the necessity for continued support, community engagement, and resilience-building activities.

Quotes from participants:

- FGD 1 - Quote from P4: "The multiple displacements cost lives."

- FGD 2 - Quote from P5: "It creates mental health problems because when you try to change your lifestyle, but the effort you make is wasted because someone has destroyed it."

- FGD 2 - Quote from P1: "Despite multiple displacement and traumatic events, we should not fear life but be strong in life."

This comprehensive analysis provides insights into the complex challenges faced by individuals with multiple displacement experiences and emphasizes the importance of addressing mental health needs, fostering resilience, and supporting positive transformations within refugee communities.

follows.

4.2 Findings from Individual Interviews:

Below is a summary of the main themes and interpretations from the individual interview data.

1. Traumatic Experiences and Psychological Impact:

Participants from both individual interviews shared poignant accounts of trauma and its psychological effects, shedding light on the following aspects:

Lived Experiences:

- Participants recounted harrowing experiences of armed conflict, loss, separation, forced migration, and challenging camp conditions.

- These experiences deeply impacted their emotional well-being and left lasting scars on their mental health.

Ongoing Emotional Distress:

- Persistent emotional distress manifested in depressive states, intrusive thoughts, and sleep disturbances among participants.
- The trauma extended beyond immediate harm, affecting their daily lives and mental well-being profoundly.

Quotes from participants:

- Participant A: "I escaped from our village due to the Sudanese government's war against South Sudanese people..."
- Participant B: "I witnessed violence against church leaders during displacement..."

2. Coping Strategies: Navigating Adversity:

Despite facing overwhelming challenges, participants displayed remarkable resilience and employed various coping mechanisms to navigate adversity. These strategies acted as vital supports amidst the chaos, fostering a sense of normalcy and community connectedness.

Coping Mechanisms:

- Participants found solace in faith practices, relied on family support, engaged in community initiatives, and accessed professional mental health services.

- These coping strategies exemplified the resilience and adaptability of the refugees in the face of adversity.

Quotes from participants:

- Participant D: "I spend time chatting with other women in the community..."

- Participant E: "I put everything in God's hands and look forward to a brighter future..."

- Participant F: "Teaching others not to dwell on the past and actively participating in the community..."

3. Resilience and Growth:

Despite the challenges, a theme of resilience and growth emerged prominently among the participants. They demonstrated an unwavering determination to rebuild their lives and create a hopeful future, tapping into internal and external resources to drive positive change.

Transformation and Hope:

- Participants showcased post-traumatic growth, adaptive capacity, and aspirations for a better future.

- Factors like social support networks, meaningful goals, education opportunities, and mental health programs were instrumental in fostering resilience and growth.

Quotes from participants:

- Participant I: "Becoming an elder to solve problems showed the development of peaceful coexistence and leadership within the camp..."

- Participant J: "Long-term residents have achieved stability and awareness, with some establishing small businesses..."

By examining the themes of traumatic experiences, coping strategies, and resilience from individual interviews, a nuanced understanding of the challenges faced by Sudanese and South Sudanese refugees in the Sherkole Refugee Camp is revealed. Their stories highlight not just the adversity endured but also the strength, resilience, and determination to overcome despite the odds

Chapter Five

Discussion

This chapter discusses how individual and focus group results relate to study questions and objectives. It also covers the research results from the theoretical framework point of view. It also serves to highlight the study's theoretical and practical implications, as well as a point of reflection, identifying and addressing potential biases that may have unconsciously influenced the initial knowledge and underlining the ethical underpinnings that guided the research.

5.1 Discussion of individual and focus group results connected to research questions and objectives:

Research Findings versus Research Questions

1. Specific Traumatic Events Experienced by Sudanese and South Sudanese Refugees:

- The individual interviews and FGDs revealed a range of traumatic events encountered by Sudanese and South Sudanese refugees in the Sherkole Refugee camp across multiple displacement episodes. Participants shared vivid accounts of their experiences, ranging from atrocities in their home countries to the challenges faced during the journey and upon arrival in the host country. Examples included witnessing killings, bombings, rape, and witnessing family members being killed or separated.

Quotes from participants:

Interview Participant X: "I escaped from our village because the Sudanese government commenced the war toward the South Sudanese people. They started in my village and eventually intensified in different places in South Sudan. They have burned the churches and houses, putting many people in prison in our village."

2. Psychosocial Problems Induced by Repeated Displacement and coping strategies:

- The interviews and the FGD illuminated how the unique experiences arising from repeated displacement led to profound psychosocial issues among Sudanese and South Sudanese refugees. Participants shared insights into the emotional distress, loneliness, and challenges in adapting to changing environments. The unique experiences arising from repeated displacement induced psychosocial problems such as stress about basic needs, feelings of loneliness, sleep difficulties, nightmares, and emotional distress. Coping strategies employed by refugees like engaging in activities that they enjoyed, engaging with community members, seeking resettlement opportunities, and finding solace in faith were highlighted.

Quotes from participants:

"I lost all of my family and it is very difficult to live alone because there is nobody, I can share my problems with. When I think of what happened, it gives me bad dreams, and sometimes it results in others committing suicide." - Participant 6

3. Resilience and Post-Traumatic Growth Among Sudanese and South Sudanese Refugees:

- Despite the ongoing psychosocial challenges, the individual interviews and the FGD showcased the resilience and post-traumatic growth exhibited by Sudanese and South Sudanese refugees in the face of adversity. Participants shared stories of rebuilding their lives, some individuals showcased positive transformations through education, community engagement, and support initiatives within the refugee.

Quotes

from

participants:

Interview Participant U: " I learned how to live peacefully in the camp with other communities and was selected to be an elder in our zone to solve some problems that may happen at the zonal level.."

Research Findings vs Research Objective:

1. Documenting and Analyzing Traumatic Experiences:

- The study documented and analyzed a range of traumatic experiences, including witnessing violence, loss, and separation during multiple displacements. These experiences significantly impacted the mental well-being of the refugees.

2. Uncovering Psychosocial Problems and Coping Strategies:

- Psychosocial problems arising from repeated displacement included stress, emotional distress, and challenges in adapting to new environments. Coping strategies included seeking support through community initiatives, engaging in religious activities, and fostering social connections.

3. Examining Resilience and Post-Traumatic Growth:

- The study examined how Sudanese and South Sudanese refugees exhibited resilience and post-traumatic growth amidst ongoing challenges. Positive psychological changes were evident as some individuals found strength in community support and educational opportunities.

4. Providing Insights for Mental Health Support Interventions:

- The study's insights are aimed at informing evidence-based mental health and psychosocial support interventions tailored for Sudanese and South Sudanese refugees with histories of

multiple displacements. The findings can guide the enhancement of support programs to address the unique needs of this population.

By aligning the research results with the research questions and objectives, the study provides a nuanced understanding of the traumatic experiences, psychosocial challenges, coping strategies, and resilience exhibited by Sudanese and South Sudanese refugees in the Sherkole Refugee Camp.

5.2. Research results from the theoretical framework point of view:

Social-Ecological Model:

- The lived experiences shared by participants in this study, detailing armed conflicts, loss, forced migration, and camp conditions, align with the Social-Ecological Model's emphasis on interconnected environmental settings influencing mental health and coping mechanisms.
- The narratives of ongoing emotional distress among refugees, including depressive states, anxiety, intrusive thoughts, and sleep disturbances, underscore the impact of layered social environments on stress, trauma, and resilience as outlined in the Social-Ecological Model.

Post-Traumatic Growth Theory:

- Participants' coping strategies, such as faith practices, family support, community engagement, and accessing professional mental health services, resonate with the Post-Traumatic Growth Theory's focus on adaptive, transformative changes following traumatic events.
- The theme of resilience and growth observed among participants, where they demonstrated a relentless pursuit of opportunities and positive psychological changes despite adversity, aligns with the Post-Traumatic Growth Theory's concept of individuals generating new meanings, personal strength, and discovering new life directions following trauma.

5.3 Implications of Findings

5.3.1 Theoretical Implications

The findings of this study challenge existing paradigms that view trauma as a singular event, offering new perspectives on the compounding effects of multiple traumas. This expands the understanding of trauma as not just a singular incident but also as a layered experience with cumulative effects and understanding of trauma as a series of interactions across various social ecologies and potential for transformative growth. Additionally, the concept of resilience within the stress-coping paradigm is broadened by this research. The current study highlights the necessity of re-evaluating how resilience is conceptualized within refugee populations, drawing attention to diverse, culturally informed coping mechanisms and underscoring the roles played by social support and community networks across different ecological layers. The emergence of growth alongside resilience also emphasizes the significance of post-traumatic growth theories in understanding the full spectrum of psychological responses to repeated displacement. The findings emphasized the importance of enhancing personal growth opportunities and leveraging survivors' narratives of strength and resilience, advocating for a shift in focus from exclusively trauma-based perspectives to those that also recognize the potential for significant post-traumatic growth.

5.3.2 Practical Implications

Practically, the in-depth narratives of refugees emphasize the need for mental health practitioners to account for the complexity of trauma histories when designing interventions, rather than addressing each traumatic event in isolation. The reported coping strategies signal the significance of community-focused and culturally sensitive mental health services and the importance of supporting informal social networks, education opportunities, and employment as

part of psychosocial support programs for refugees. Interventions should consider the complexity of each refugee's social ecology, and programs should be developed that support individual coping mechanisms while fostering community resilience and integration. Ensuring cultural sensitivity and bias awareness remains a cornerstone in designing such interventions, affirming the importance of practices that resonate with the refugees' lived experiences and socio-cultural dynamics. Mental health programs in the refugee camps prove to be crucial in not just mitigating mental health issues but also in nurturing post-traumatic growth, compelling a redesign and enhancement of these services to be culturally adaptive and growth oriented.

5.4 Addressing Personal Biases

5.4.1 Influence of Personal Biases on the Research Process

While conducting this research, it is important to acknowledge the potential influence of personal biases on the data collection, analysis, and interpretation. As the primary researcher, my own experiences and assumptions regarding the resilience and coping strategies of individuals who have experienced trauma and displacement may have unconsciously shaped the inquiries and the interpretation of the responses gathered from the interviews and focus group discussions.

Management of Personal Biases: To manage these biases, specific measures were taken throughout the research process. Firstly, reflexivity was employed as a constant practice, allowing for continuous reflection on personal assumptions and potential biases that could impact the research. This involved critically examining how personal experiences and preconceptions may have influenced the form and direction of the interviews and focus group discussions. Secondly, to mitigate potential biases, a refugee social worker was engaged to facilitate the individual interviews. This social worker, who was appropriately trained, aided in contextualizing the experiences of the refugees, thus offering a unique and alternative lens through which the data collection process was governed. Moreover, the two focus group

discussions were orchestrated by the IRC Mental Health and Psychosocial Support Officer. Their involvement allowed for an additional layer of neutrality and cultural sensitivity in the facilitation of these discussions, ensuring that the narratives and insights gained were unbiased and reflexive of the participants' lived experiences and perceptions. Efforts were made to maintain methodological neutrality and to balance the interpretation of the data. To achieve this, peer debriefing and discussions with colleagues and supervisors were conducted regularly to gain alternative perspectives and insights into the findings. This allowed for a broader understanding of the potential biases at play and enabled the integration of varying viewpoints into the interpretation of the data.

5.4.2 Reflection /Insights Gained from Personal Biases

Reflecting on the potential biases introduced by personal assumptions has proved to be a critical aspect of this research. Acknowledging these biases has led to a deeper awareness of the need for impartiality and neutrality in the gathering and analysis of the data. My awareness of these biases, and the involvement of the refugee social worker and the IRC Mental Health and Psychosocial Support Officer, has allowed for a more structured and balanced approach to interpreting the findings, allowing for greater objectivity in understanding the complex narratives of the refugees involved in the study. In hindsight, the recognition of personal biases has not only enriched the research process but has also led to a more transparent and comprehensive understanding of the circumstances and experiences of the study participants. While the biases are inevitable, their recognition has fostered an environment for continuous improvement and refinement in the way the research findings and narratives are presented, ensuring a more authentic and valid representation of the experiences of the refugees at the Sherkole Refugee Camp.

Chapter Six

Conclusion and recommendation

This chapter presents the contributions, and recommendations that emerged from an in-depth assessment of the participant experiences at the Sherkole Refugee Camp. Furthermore, this chapter serves also as the research's conclusion to highlight the vivid narratives of resilience and strength that have emerged from the lives of people who have encountered great hardship, thereby indicating the road for further important research.

6.2 Contributions to the Field

This study adds qualitative depth to the continuum of refugee mental health experiences, offering a vivid depiction of their challenges, coping mechanisms, and journeys toward growth. It contributes nuanced understandings that influence the redesign of programs to be more adjusted to the details of repeated trauma and displacement. The research justifies shifting from a deficit-focused perspective to one that recognizes and nurtures the inherent strengths and potential for growth in the refugee population. It contributes to the field by advocating a comprehensive and culturally responsive research methodology that considers biases. The incorporation of reflexivity and the management of biases throughout the research process have contributed to a more comprehensive and authentic understanding of the lived experiences of the refugees. The recognition and acknowledgment of potential biases have enhanced credibility and trustworthiness.

6.3 Recommendations for Future Research

Future research should continue to utilize frameworks that account for the various ecological levels influencing refugee experiences, alongside the consideration of post-traumatic growth.

Comparative research within different displacement contexts and among varying refugee populations is also recommended to validate the generalizability of findings and to account for contextual nuances.

Additionally, research into the development and effectiveness of culturally responsive, community-based mental health interventions is recommended to bridge the gap identified between refugee needs and current psychosocial support structures. Additionally, integrating quantitative methods with qualitative research to measure the prevalence and impact of identified coping strategies and growth metrics is highlighted for future exploration.

6.4 Final Thoughts

In conclusion, it is crucial to underscore the significance of recognizing personal biases within the research process, particularly in interpreting the emotional narratives recounted by refugees. Having interviewed numerous refugees with histories of multiple displacements, a personal bias emerged in assuming the fortitude demonstrated by individuals when describing their traumatic experiences. Additionally, there is an acknowledgment of the potential cognitive dissonance concerning the complexity of experiences transcending the sheer multiplicity of traumatic events affecting the refugees' mental well-being. This acknowledgment not only serves to maintain the authenticity of the findings arising from individual interviews and group discussions but also highlights the necessity for continued introspection in future research endeavors, ensuring greater objectivity and fidelity to the participants.

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Appendices A

Informed Consent

My name is Kalab Eshetu, and I am a graduate student at Addis Ababa University, College of Education and Behavioral Studies School of Psychology for the purpose of partial fulfillment for my Master's Degree. I am conducting a qualitative study on Psycho-social problems and coping mechanisms of Sudanese and South Sudanese refugees with multiple displacement histories in Sherkole Refugee Camp, Benshangul-Gumuz Region. The purpose of this study is to gain the knowledge on multiple displacement impacts the psychosocial behavior of refugees. While you are reading this, it is important to make you aware that it is voluntary, and you are free to withdraw at any time and can skip any questions that you are feeling uncomfortable. While being part of the study, your identity will not be revealed, and no identifier will be attached with your responses. There will be no incentive I will provide for being part of the study and there will be no risk for you and for the refugee community. The data collected will be kept confidential.

Following what have been written and you agreed to take part in the study please sign and write your name as you feel comfortable to be part of the participants.

Participant's name

Name: _____

Signature _____

Date _____

Appendices B

In Depth Interview Guide

Participant Information:

1. Gender: _____

2. Age: _____

3. Duration of displacement: _____

4. Number of Displacement: _____

1. Can you please describe your experiences with displacement? How many times have you been displaced and for what reasons?
2. Reflecting on your experiences, what specific traumatic events have you endured? Please provide detailed descriptions of these events.

3. How have these traumatic events affected your daily life and overall well-being? Can you explain the emotional, psychological, and social impacts?
4. Have you witnessed or experienced any acts of violence or conflict during your displacement? If so, please provide details and describe the impact it had on you.
5. What are the main challenges you have encountered as a result of multiple displacements? (e.g., loss of social networks, adjustment difficulties, emotional distress)
6. How have these challenges impacted your mental health and well-being? Can you provide specific examples or instances where you have felt particularly affected?
7. Share any coping strategies or resilience strategies you have employed to mitigate the challenges posed by displacement and traumatic events.
8. Do you feel that exposure to multiple traumatic events has influenced the development of mental disorders or led to any positive psychological changes? Please elaborate on your experiences in this regard.
9. Have you noticed any personal growth or positive transformations as a response to the traumatic events? If yes, please explain how the events have impacted you in a positive way.
10. Is there anything else you would like to share about your experiences with multiple displacement, traumatic events, and their impact on your mental health and overall well-being? Any additional Point?

Appendices C

Focus Group Discussions guiding questions.

Participant Information:

1. Gender: _____
2. Age: _____
3. Duration of displacement: _____

Questions

1. As a group, please share your experiences with displacement. How many times have you been displaced and for what reasons?
2. Individually, reflect on your experiences and share specific traumatic events that you have endured. Feel free to provide detailed descriptions of these events.

3. How have these traumatic events commonly affected the daily lives and overall well-being of individuals in the group? Can you highlight the emotional, psychological, and social impacts?
4. Discuss any acts of violence or conflict that members of the group may have witnessed or experienced during displacement. Share the impact these incidents have had on individuals and the group as a whole.
5. Collective discussion: What are the main challenges encountered by the group as a result of multiple displacements? This can include loss of social networks, adjustment difficulties, emotional distress, and other challenges mentioned by the group.
6. Share coping strategies or resilience strategies commonly employed by individuals in the group to mitigate the challenges posed by displacement and traumatic events.
7. Based on group members' experiences, discuss whether exposure to multiple traumatic events has influenced the development of mental disorders or led to any positive psychological changes among individuals.
8. As a group, share instances of personal growth or positive transformations that group members may have experienced in response to the traumatic events. Discuss the ways in which these events have impacted individuals positively.
9. Discuss any additional insights or observations related to the impact of multiple displacements, traumatic events, and coping strategies on mental health and overall well-being.
10. Is there anything else the group would like to share about their experiences with multiple displacement, traumatic events, and their impact on mental health and well-being?