

Investigating challenges among the families of children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) in Internally Displaced People (IDP) camps in South East and North Central regions of Nigeria.

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Abstract : The challenges faced by families of children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) in Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) camps are exacerbated by the unique context of displacement. In Nigeria, the ongoing humanitarian crisis due to conflicts, natural disasters, and other socio-political factors has led to a significant increase in the number of IDPs, with many seeking refuge in camps across the South East and North Central regions. The study adopted a descriptive survey design to explore challenges faced by families of children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) in IDP camps in South East and North Central Nigeria. A sample of 80 participants was drawn using a stratified sampling technique. Data were collected through a validated and reliable questionnaire, capturing demographic details and relevant challenges. Descriptive statistics, including mean, standard deviation, variance, and harmonic mean, were used to summarize findings, while hypotheses were tested using Analysis of Variance (ANOVA). Among 80 participants, most caregivers were younger than 35 years (67.5%) and unemployed (46.3%). Financial, emotional, and social challenges varied by caregivers' age and camp duration. Families staying over 12 months reported higher financial challenges (mean = 18.67, SD = 3.98). Emotional challenges were highest for parents aged 46+ years staying 3 months (mean = 21.67). Social challenges followed similar patterns. ANOVA results showed no significant differences in challenges across groups, emphasizing universal difficulties faced by families. The findings emphasize the urgent need for targeted interventions, including increased awareness campaigns, capacity-building programs for caregivers, and improved access to essential services such as therapy, education, and mental health support within IDP camps.

Keywords: Autism Spectrum Disorder, Internally Displaced Persons, IDP Camps, Nigeria, Families, Challenges

1. INTRODUCTION

Families of children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) face numerous challenges, a reality that becomes exacerbated in Internally Displaced People (IDP) camps. These camps, characterized by precarious living conditions, limited resources, and psychological stress, pose significant hurdles for families already dealing with the complexities of raising a child with ASD. Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) is a complex neurodevelopmental condition that affects how individuals perceive and interact with the world (Lan et al, 2025). It is characterized by persistent difficulties in social communication, restricted interests, and repetitive patterns of behavior. The manifestation of symptoms varies significantly, ranging from mild to severe, thus making it a "spectrum" disorder. Individuals with ASD may exhibit unique strengths and challenges, requiring tailored interventions and support systems to address their developmental, social, and educational needs (Biegel, 2014).

One of the primary challenges identified is the lack of access to adequate healthcare and specialized services for children with ASD. According to Kumswa, S., & Best, K. (2022), IDP camps are often ill-equipped to provide the necessary diagnostic and therapeutic interventions,

leaving children without critical early intervention services. Internally Displaced People (IDPs) are individuals or groups who are forced to flee their homes due to armed conflict, generalized violence, human rights violations, or natural or man-made disasters, but who remain within their country's borders. Unlike refugees, IDPs do not cross international boundaries and thus lack the same legal protections under international law (Gerasymenko et al, 2022). IDPs often face severe challenges, including inadequate shelter, limited access to healthcare, education, and basic services, as well as heightened vulnerability to exploitation and abuse. Their displacement disrupts social networks and livelihoods, compounding the difficulties of rebuilding their lives in uncertain and unstable environments. This gap in care exacerbates the developmental challenges associated with ASD, potentially leading to worsened outcomes for the child. Furthermore, health workers in IDP camps frequently lack the training or resources needed to address the unique needs of children with ASD (Kumswa & Best, 2022).

Economic hardship is another significant issue for families of children with ASD in IDP camps. Displacement often results in the loss of livelihoods, leaving families struggling to meet basic needs, let alone afford the additional costs associated with ASD care. These costs may include transportation to healthcare facilities, specialized diets, or educational materials. Kitara et al, (2019) noted that financial strain is a common theme among displaced families, further compounded for those with children requiring specialized care. The psychological toll on parents and caregivers in such settings cannot be overlooked. Studies have highlighted the heightened levels of stress, anxiety, and depression experienced by caregivers of children with ASD in IDP camps (Samadi et al, 2022). This stress is often driven by feelings of helplessness, social isolation, and the stigma associated with ASD. In many cultures, ASD remains poorly understood, leading to judgment and discrimination from the community, which adds to the emotional burden on families (Milner et al, 2019).

Education is another critical challenge for children with ASD in IDP camps. Access to inclusive education is often limited or entirely unavailable, leaving children with ASD excluded from learning opportunities. According to Genovese and Butler (2020), even when education is provided, the lack of trained teachers and appropriate learning materials means that children with ASD do not receive the support they need. This exclusion not only hinders their development but also isolates them further from their peers. Social support networks are vital for the well-being of families but are often disrupted by displacement. Families in IDP camps frequently report feeling isolated, with limited access to community support systems (Ngwu et al, 2023). This isolation is particularly detrimental for families of children with ASD, who may rely heavily on extended family and community networks for emotional and practical

support. The cumulative effect of these challenges underscores the urgent need for targeted interventions.

The study on challenges faced by families of children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) in Internally Displaced People (IDP) camps in South East and North Central Nigeria is essential due to the intersection of displacement and disability. Families in IDP camps experience compounded adversities, including inadequate healthcare, limited education, and socio-economic instability, which exacerbate the challenges of caring for children with ASD. Autism prevalence in low-resource settings is under-researched, leaving critical gaps in understanding how conflict, displacement, and cultural stigma uniquely affect families in these regions (Rizzi et al, 2023).

Existing studies highlight that caregivers of children with ASD in stable environments already face stress from financial burdens and limited resources (Frehiwot, 2024). However, the dynamics in IDP camps—characterized by overcrowding, poor sanitation, and minimal access to specialized care—are scarcely explored. Moreover, cultural misconceptions about ASD often lead to stigma, further isolating affected families (Bernier, 2021). Addressing these gaps is crucial for designing targeted interventions to support families, enhance access to care, and promote inclusion. This study aims to fill these gaps, shedding light on the unique challenges faced by families in IDP camps while advocating for informed policy and practice.

Objectives

- To determine the financial challenges among the families of Children with ASD in IDP camps in South East and North Central regions of Nigeria;
- To ascertain the emotional/behavioral challenges among the families of Children with ASD in IDP camps in South East and North Central regions of Nigeria;
- To establish the social challenges among the families of Children with ASD in IDP camps in South East and North Central regions of Nigeria;

Research questions

- What are the financial challenges among the families of Children with ASD in IDP camps in South East and North Central regions of Nigeria?
- What are the emotional/behavioral challenges among the families of Children with ASD in IDP camps in South East and North Central regions of Nigeria?
- What are the social challenges among the families of Children with ASD in IDP camps in South East and North Central regions of Nigeria?

2. METHODS

The study employed a descriptive survey research design to investigate the challenges faced by families of children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) in Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) camps. This design was chosen as it allowed for a detailed examination of the experiences of these families within their natural settings. The research was conducted in IDP camps located in the South East and North Central regions of Nigeria, areas selected for their significant population of displaced families and the unique socio-cultural and environmental factors impacting the caregivers of children with ASD. Specifically, the study focused on parents, guardians, or primary caregivers who had been living in the camps for a minimum of six months. A total sample of 80 families was drawn from this population using purposive sampling. This method was used to ensure that participants included individuals who could provide relevant understanding into the challenges and coping mechanisms associated with raising children with ASD in the IDP context.

Data for the study were collected using a structured questionnaire designed to capture essential information about the participants. To ensure the instrument's validity, it was subjected to face and content validation by three experts in special education, psychology, and research methodology. Their feedback was incorporated to enhance the clarity, relevance, and comprehensiveness of the items. Furthermore, a pilot study involving 10 families from a different IDP camp was conducted to assess the reliability of the questionnaire. The Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient was calculated to be 0.87, confirming the instrument's high level of internal consistency. Data collection involved face-to-face interviews conducted by trained research assistants. This approach was adopted to accommodate participants with varying literacy levels and to ensure accurate and complete responses. The entire process was carried out ethically, with informed consent obtained from participants and strict adherence to confidentiality and anonymity.

The analysis of data combined descriptive and inferential statistical methods. Descriptive statistics, including mean, standard deviation, variance, and harmonic mean, were used to summarize the data and provide an overview of the participants' experiences. Hypotheses were tested using Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) to identify significant differences in the challenges faced by families based on demographic and other variables.

3. RESULT

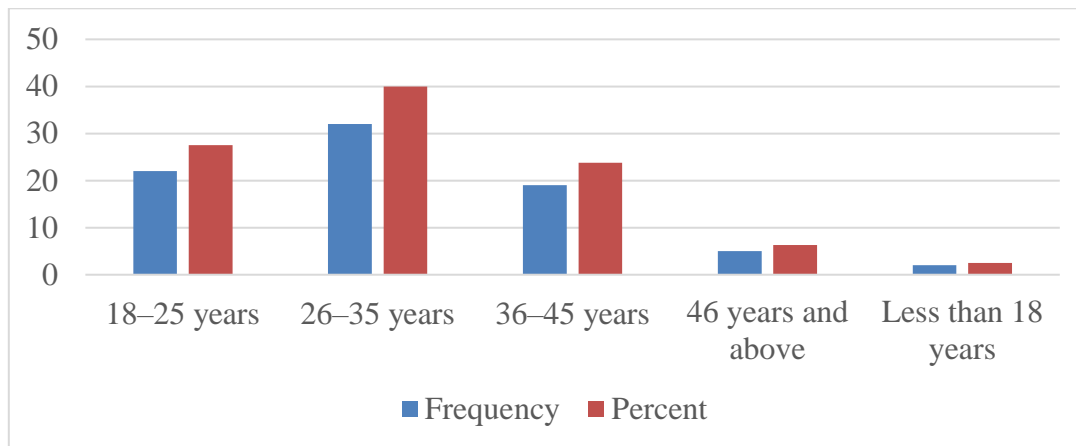


Figure 1: Distribution of Parents/Caregivers by Age Group

The age group analysis of parents/caregivers ($N = 80$) in Figure 1 revealed that the majority (32, 40.0%) were between 26–35 years, followed by those aged 18–25 years (22, 27.5%). Parents aged 36–45 years accounted for 23.8% (19), while those 46 years and above comprised 6.3% (5). A small proportion (2, 2.5%) were less than 18 years. The cumulative percentage shows that 67.5% were aged 35 or younger, indicating a younger caregiver population overall.

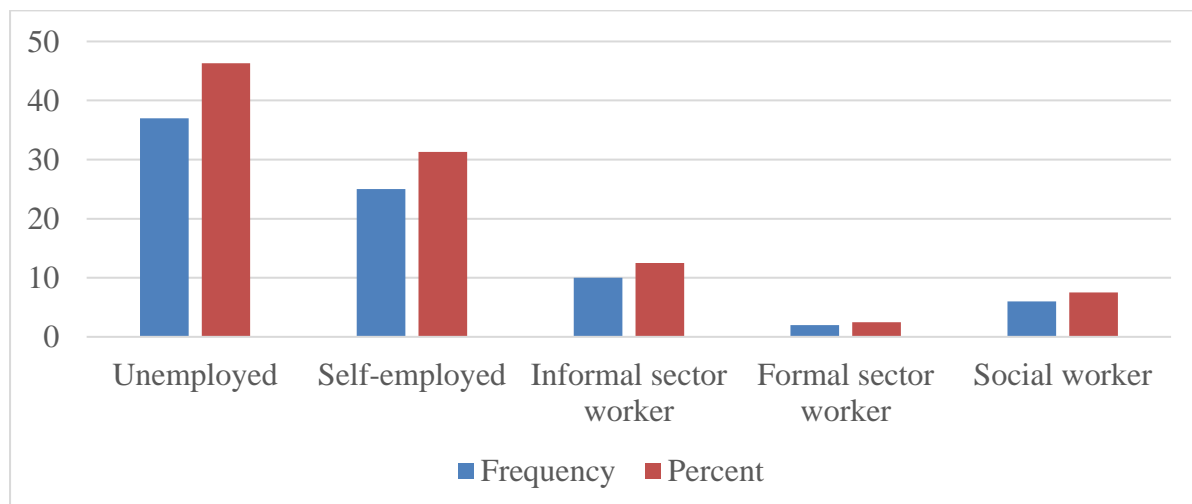


Figure 2: Distribution of Parents/Caregivers by Occupation

Among the surveyed parents/caregivers ($N = 80$) in Figure 2, the largest group was unemployed individuals, comprising 46.3% (37). Self-employed caregivers followed at 31.3% (25). Informal sector workers made up 12.5% (10), while formal sector workers were only 2.5% (2). Social workers accounted for 7.5% (6). The cumulative percentages indicate that 77.5% of the participants were either unemployed or self-employed, suggesting that most caregivers had non-formal employment.

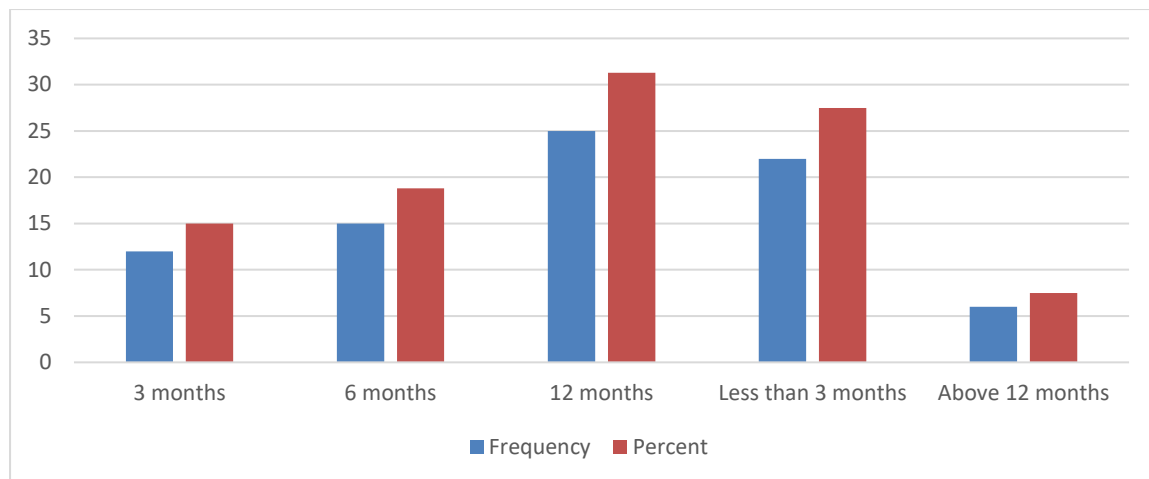


Figure 3: Distribution of IDP Camp Residents by Duration of Stay

The duration of stay in IDP camps among participants (N = 80) in Figure 3 showed that the highest proportion (25, 31.3%) had stayed for 12 months, followed by 22 individuals (27.5%) who had stayed for less than 3 months. Those with a 6-month duration comprised 18.8% (15), while 15.0% (12) reported a 3-month stay. Only 7.5% (6) had stayed for over 12 months. The cumulative percentages reveal that most residents (92.5%) had stayed for 12 months or less, indicating a predominantly short- to medium-term duration.

Research question one: What are the financial challenges among the families of Children with ASD in IDP camps in South East and North Central regions of Nigeria?

Table 1: Financial Challenges Among Families of Children with ASD in IDP Camps Based on Duration of Stay and Age Group of Parents/Caregivers

Duration of Stay in IDP Camps	Age Group of Parents/Caregivers	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Variance	Harmonic Mean
3 months	18–25 years	16.0000	5	4.00000	16.000	15.1899
	26–35 years	15.0000	3	2.64575	7.000	14.6587
	36–45 years	12.0000	1	.	.	12.0000
	46 years and above	18.0000	3	2.64575	7.000	17.7202
	Total	15.9167	12	3.34279	11.174	15.2583
6 months	18–25 years	14.6667	3	2.30940	5.333	14.4000
	26–35 years	19.4286	7	1.71825	2.952	19.2948
	36–45 years	12.0000	1	.	.	12.0000
	46 years and above	16.5000	2	.70711	.500	16.4848
	Less than 18 years	12.0000	2	.00000	.000	12.0000
	Total	16.6000	15	3.37639	11.400	15.9160
12 months	18–25 years	16.1000	10	3.57305	12.767	15.3294
	26–35 years	17.1333	15	3.70071	13.695	16.3308
	Total	16.7200	25	3.61156	13.043	15.9149

Less than 3 months	18–25 years	14.5000	4	2.88675	8.333	14.0690
	26–35 years	18.2857	7	1.70434	2.905	18.1665
	36–45 years	17.1818	11	4.60040	21.164	16.0426
	Total	17.0455	22	3.72223	13.855	16.2324
Above 12 months	36–45 years	18.6667	6	3.98330	15.867	17.8229
	Total	18.6667	6	3.98330	15.867	17.8229
Total	18–25 years	15.5909	22	3.27558	10.729	14.9238
	26–35 years	17.6875	32	3.06318	9.383	17.1006
	36–45 years	17.1053	19	4.45838	19.877	15.9800
	46 years and above	17.4000	5	2.07364	4.300	17.2045
	Less than 18 years	12.0000	2	.00000	.000	12.0000
	Total	16.8125	80	3.55461	12.635	16.0266

The financial challenges among families of children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) in Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) camps as captured in Table 1 vary across regions, duration of stay, and age groups. Families staying above 12 months reported the highest mean financial challenge score (18.67, SD = 3.98), while those staying less than 3 months had a lower mean (17.05, SD = 3.72). Across age groups, parents aged 26–35 years consistently reported higher challenges (overall mean = 17.69, SD = 3.06), compared to those aged 18–25 years (mean = 15.59, SD = 3.28). The least challenges were observed among parents aged below 18 years (mean = 12.00, SD = 0.00).

Research question two: What are the emotional/behavioral challenges among the families of Children with ASD in IDP camps in South East and North Central regions of Nigeria?

Table 2: Emotional/Behavioral Challenges Among Families of Children with ASD in IDP Camps Based on Duration of Stay and Age Group of Parents/Caregivers

Duration of Stay in IDP Camps	Age Group of Parents/Caregivers	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Varian ce	Harmonic Mean
3 months	18–25 years	16.20	5	4.550	20.700	15.22
	26–35 years	17.33	3	5.508	30.333	16.16
	36–45 years	12.00	1	.	.	12.00
	46 years and above	21.67	3	4.041	16.333	21.10
	Total	17.50	12	4.927	24.273	16.22
6 months	18–25 years	14.00	3	1.732	3.000	13.85
	26–35 years	20.43	7	3.409	11.619	19.95
	36–45 years	12.00	1	.	.	12.00
	46 years and above	19.50	2	3.536	12.500	19.18
	Less than 18 years	12.00	2	.000	.000	12.00
	Total	17.33	15	4.499	20.238	16.27
12 months	18–25 years	16.60	10	4.115	16.933	15.63

	26–35 years	17.80	15	3.968	15.743	16.84
	Total	17.32	25	3.987	15.893	16.33
Less than 3 months	18–25 years	13.50	4	2.887	8.333	13.04
	26–35 years	18.43	7	1.813	3.286	18.28
	36–45 years	15.00	11	3.406	11.600	14.25
	Total	15.82	22	3.361	11.299	15.05
Above 12 months	36–45 years	17.33	6	3.830	14.667	16.58
	Total	17.33	6	3.830	14.667	16.58
Total	18–25 years	15.59	22	3.800	14.444	14.75
	26–35 years	18.47	32	3.628	13.160	17.68
	36–45 years	15.42	19	3.626	13.146	14.61
	46 years and above	20.80	5	3.564	12.700	20.29
	Less than 18 years	12.00	2	.000	.000	12.00
	Total	16.94	80	4.026	16.211	15.95

The table 2 reveals emotional/behavioral challenges experienced by families of children with ASD in IDP camps. Among parents aged 46 years and above staying for 3 months, the highest mean score (21.67) was observed, indicating significant challenges. Families staying 6 months reported a mean of 20.43 for ages 26–35 years, while those over 12 months had a mean of 17.33 for ages 36–45 years. Families staying less than 3 months had the lowest mean (13.50) for ages 18–25 years. Overall, the total mean score across all categories was 16.94 (N=80; SD=4.03), showing moderate emotional/behavioral challenges.

Research question three: What are the social challenges among the families of Children with ASD in IDP camps in South East and North Central regions of Nigeria?

Table 3: Social Challenges Among Families of Children with ASD in IDP Camps Based on Duration of Stay and Age Group of Parents/Caregivers

Duration of Stay in IDP Camps	Age Group of Parents/Caregivers	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Varian ce	Harmonic Mean
3 months	18–25 years	17.60	5	5.505	30.300	16.17
	26–35 years	16.00	3	3.464	12.000	15.43
	36–45 years	12.00	1	.	.	12.00
	46 years and above	21.67	3	3.215	10.333	21.32
	Total	17.75	12	4.808	23.114	16.49
6 months	18–25 years	16.00	3	3.464	12.000	15.43
	26–35 years	21.86	7	2.734	7.476	21.54
	36–45 years	12.00	1	.	.	12.00
	46 years and above	20.00	2	2.828	8.000	19.80
	Less than 18 years	12.00	2	.000	.000	12.00
	Total	18.47	15	4.673	21.838	17.23
12 months	18–25 years	15.10	10	3.725	13.878	14.42
	26–35 years	16.80	15	4.313	18.600	15.80

	Total	16.12	25	4.096	16.777	15.22
Less than 3 months	18–25 years	13.50	4	2.887	8.333	13.04
	26–35 years	17.43	7	3.309	10.952	16.84
	36–45 years	15.55	11	3.984	15.873	14.59
	Total	15.77	22	3.715	13.803	14.90
Above 12 months	36–45 years	16.67	6	3.327	11.067	16.10
	Total	16.67	6	3.327	11.067	16.10
Total	18–25 years	15.50	22	3.997	15.976	14.63
	26–35 years	17.97	32	4.154	17.257	16.98
	36–45 years	15.53	19	3.702	13.708	14.69
	46 years and above	21.00	5	2.828	8.000	20.69
	Less than 18 years	12.00	2	.000	.000	12.00
	Total	16.75	80	4.202	17.658	15.72

The table 3 illustrates social challenges experienced by families of children with ASD in IDP camps. Parents aged 46 years and above staying for 3 months reported the highest mean (21.67), indicating significant social challenges. Families staying 6 months had a mean of 21.86 for ages 26–35 years, while those staying less than 3 months reported lower social challenges (mean = 13.50) for ages 18–25 years. Overall, the total mean score across all categories was 16.75 (N=80; SD=4.20), reflecting moderate social challenges. Variance values suggest differences in the experiences of social challenges among the age groups and durations.

Hypotheses

H₀₁: There is no significant difference in the financial challenges among the families of children with ASD in IDP camps in the South-East and North-Central regions of Nigeria based on the duration of stay in IDP camps and the age group of parents/caregivers.

Table 4: Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) for Financial Challenges Among Families of Children with ASD in IDP Camps Based on Duration of Stay and Age Group

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Financial challenges among the families of Children with ASD in IDP camps * Duration of Stay in IDP Camps	Betwe (Combined)	32.343	4	8.086	.628	.644
	en Linearity	24.939	1	24.939	1.937	.168
	Group Deviation from Linearity	7.404	3	2.468	.192	.902
	Within Groups	965.845	75	12.878		
	Total	998.188	79			

The ANOVA table 4 indicates no significant difference in financial challenges among families of children with ASD in IDP camps across different durations of stay and age groups of parents/caregivers ($F = 0.628$, $p = 0.644$). The combined sum of squares for between-group differences was (32.343), while the within-group variation was substantially higher (965.845), with a mean square of (12.878). The lack of linearity significance ($p = 0.168$) further confirms the absence of a consistent trend. This suggests financial challenges were similar across groups, irrespective of duration in camps or parental age groups.

H_{02} : There is no significant difference in the emotional/behavioral challenges among the families of children with ASD in IDP camps in the South-East and North-Central regions of Nigeria based on the duration of stay in IDP camps and the age group of parents/caregivers.

Table 5: Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) for Emotional/Behavioral Challenges Among Families of Children with ASD in IDP Camps Based on Duration of Stay and Age Group

			Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Emotional/behavioral challenges among the families of Children with ASD in IDP camps * Duration of Stay in IDP Camps	Between Groups	(Combined)	38.308	4	9.577	.578	.679
		Linearity	14.219	1	14.219	.858	.357
		Deviation from Linearity	24.089	3	8.030	.485	.694
	Within Groups		1242.379	75	16.565		
	Total		1280.688	79			

The ANOVA results as captured in Table 5 show no significant difference in emotional/behavioral challenges faced by families of children with ASD in IDP camps based on the duration of stay and age group of parents/caregivers ($F = 0.578$, $p = 0.679$). The combined between-group sum of squares was (38.308), while the within-group variation was higher (1242.379) with a mean square of (16.565). The lack of linearity significance ($p = 0.357$) confirms no consistent trend. This indicates that emotional/behavioral challenges were uniform across groups regardless of the duration of stay in camps or the parents' age categories.

H_{03} : There is no significant difference in the social challenges among the families of children with ASD in IDP camps in the South-East and North-Central regions of Nigeria based on the duration of stay in IDP camps and the age group of parents/caregivers.

Table 6: Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) for Social Challenges Among Families of Children with ASD in IDP Camps Based on Duration of Stay and Age Group

			Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Social challenges among the families of Children with ASD in IDP camps * Duration of Stay in IDP Camps	Between Groups	(Combined)	87.180	4	21.795	1.250	.297
		Linearity	48.028	1	48.028	2.754	.101
		Deviation from Linearity	39.152	3	13.051	.748	.527
	Within Groups		1307.820	75	17.438		
	Total		1395.000	79			

The ANOVA results as captured in Table 6 indicate no significant difference in social challenges faced by families of children with ASD in IDP camps based on the duration of stay and age group of parents/caregivers ($F = 1.250$, $p = 0.297$). The between-group sum of squares was (87.180), while the within-group variation was higher at (1307.820) with a mean square of (17.438). The linearity analysis ($p = 0.101$) and deviation from linearity ($p = 0.527$) confirm no substantial trends. This suggests that social challenges were consistently experienced across groups, regardless of the duration of stay or parents' age.

4. DISCUSSION

Children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) in Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) camps face profound challenges, placing significant strain on families and limited resources. These challenges are multifaceted, encompassing financial, emotional, and social dimensions. High costs associated with raising children with ASD in IDP camps exacerbate resource constraints. Accessing therapy, specialized education, and meeting daily needs is often unaffordable for families. For instance, therapy costs in IDP camps are disproportionately high compared to household incomes, limiting access to essential services. In contrast, a related study by Baasansuren et al, (2021) highlighted that urban families also face high therapy costs but have more external support options, such as subsidies and community programs. Similarly, Samadi et al, (2022) agreed that financial burdens are universal for families with ASD, but IDP camps' lack of systemic support intensifies these challenges. Parents in IDP camps often lack financial assistance, leaving them to shoulder the burden alone. This finding aligns with research by Voznyak et al, (2024), which reported that financial hardships are exacerbated in humanitarian crises. However, in contrast, suburban families in developed regions have access

to financial aid programs, providing a comparative advantage. Specialized education for children with ASD in IDP camps is another unmet need due to unaffordability, a finding mirrored in rural studies by Roshchyk et al, (2024), who identified similar barriers in low-resource settings.

Families of children with ASD in IDP camps face severe emotional stress and exhaustion. Emotional stress is often driven by financial hardships, behavioral outbursts, and the stigma surrounding ASD. This finding is supported by Frehiwot (2024), who noted that caregivers in crisis zones often exhibit heightened anxiety compared to those in stable environments. In contrast, a study by Rizzi et al, (2023) found that urban families benefit from broader mental health support systems, mitigating caregiver burnout. Behavioral challenges, such as frequent outbursts among children with ASD, create additional tension within families. This finding aligns with observations by Ngwu et al, (2023), who reported similar struggles in refugee camps. However, in contrast, rural families in non-conflict zones experience fewer external stressors, allowing more focus on managing ASD-related behaviors. Families also grapple with stigma; this finding is echoed by Genovese and Butler (2020), who documented similar experiences among displaced populations in South Asia. However, in urban settings, public awareness campaigns have reduced stigma, as highlighted by Milner et al, (2019).

Social exclusion significantly impacts families of children with ASD in IDP camps. Limited community acceptance and discrimination hinder their integration into camp life. This finding agrees with research by Bernier (2021), who observed similar challenges among displaced families. In contrast, suburban families in stable regions often experience higher levels of community engagement and support, as noted by Kitara et al, (2019). Children with ASD in IDP camps also struggle with social interactions due to a lack of structured support systems. This finding aligns with a study by Kumswa and Best (2022), which highlighted the importance of peer networks for social development. However, urban families often have access to inclusive educational programs, providing better opportunities for social integration, as reported by Collado (2019). Families in IDP camps often lack peer support networks, exacerbating feelings of isolation. This finding parallels observations by Kisindja et al, (2017), who noted similar trends in other crisis-affected populations. In contrast, families in urban areas benefit from organized support groups, as documented by Biegel (2014).

5. CONCLUSION

This study provides significant understanding into the challenges faced among families of children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) living in Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) camps in the South East and North Central regions of Nigeria. It highlights the multifaceted struggles these families encounter, including limited access to healthcare and specialized education, socio-economic hardships, stigma, and emotional distress. The findings emphasize the urgent need for targeted interventions, including increased awareness campaigns, capacity-building programs for caregivers, and improved access to essential services such as therapy, education, and mental health support within IDP camps. Collaboration among government agencies, non-governmental organizations, and community stakeholders is essential to address these challenges and create a more inclusive and supportive environment for children with ASD and their families. Focusing on the needs of these families can help policymakers and humanitarian organizations improve their quality of life, foster greater social inclusion, and contribute to the broader development and stability of these regions. This study serves as a foundation for further research and action to support vulnerable populations affected through displacement and developmental disorders in Nigeria and beyond.

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