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Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder in the Epicenter of the Boko Haram Insurgency: Prevalence and Psychosocial Correlates

Trouble de Stress Post-traumatique au Coeur de L'insurrection de Boko Haram: Prévalence et Corrélats Psychosociaux

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ABSTRACT

BACKGROUND: The 'Boko Haram insurgency' is one of the most devastating armed conflicts that the Nigerian State has experienced in the post-civil war era. The quantum of destruction in terms of lives and property is beyond rational comprehension as it left in its trail both physical and psychological traumata. Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) is one of the psychological sequelae of violent conflicts globally, with prevalence rates of up to 72% in sub-Saharan Africa.

OBJECTIVES: The main objectives of this study were to assess the prevalence rate of PTSD as well as to examine its psychosocial correlates among the residents of Maiduguri, which is the epicentre of the armed insurrection.

METHODS: This was a multi-staged, cross-sectional, community-based random study conducted among the residents of Maiduguri. A total of 378 residents of Maiduguri Metropolitan Council were interviewed in 2017, eight years after the onset of the insurgency. Predesigned Sociodemographic Proforma, Modified version of the Communal Traumatic Events Inventory (CTEI), PTSD checklist civilian version (PCL-CV), PTSD Module of the Composite International Diagnostic Interview (CIDI), Rosenberg Self-Esteem scale (RSES), and the Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale (CD-RISC) were administered. Bivariate analyses were used to explore the associations between the psychosocial variables and PTSD diagnosis, while Binary logistic regression was conducted to determine the independent predictors of PTSD.

RESULTS: The prevalence of PTSD among the residents of Maiduguri was 54.49% using the PTSD Module of CIDI. The study also found that 57.2% (CI 53.4 - 60.1) of the study participants had experienced between 5 to 10 traumatic events. PTSD was significantly associated with; gender, exposure to multiple traumatic events ($P < 0.001$), history of Abuse ($p = 0.032$), lower self-esteem ($p < 0.001$), and lower levels of resilience ($p < 0.001$).

CONCLUSION: Sub-syndromic PTSD was experienced by over two-thirds of the study participants, while over 50% of them had CIDI-diagnosable and clinically matched PTSD based on the ICD-10 criteria. This study, therefore, recommends the need for the incorporation of mental health and psychosocial support and the prioritization of the mental health of populations exposed to any form of armed insurrection.

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KEYWORDS: Boko Haram insurgency, Prevalence, Psychosocial correlates, Post Traumatic Stress Disorder

RÉSUMÉ

CONTEXTE: L'insurrection de Boko Haram est l'un des conflits armés les plus dévastateurs que l'État nigérian ait connus depuis la guerre civile. L'ampleur des destructions en termes de vies humaines et de biens dépasse l'entendement rationnel, laissant derrière elle des traumatismes physiques et psychologiques. Le trouble de stress post-traumatique (TSPT) est l'une des séquelles psychologiques des conflits violents à l'échelle mondiale, avec des taux de prévalence pouvant atteindre 72 % en Afrique subsaharienne.

OBJECTIFS: Les principaux objectifs de cette étude étaient d'évaluer le taux de prévalence du TSPT ainsi que d'examiner ses corrélats psychosociaux parmi les résidents de Maiduguri, qui est l'épicentre de l'insurrection armée.

MÉTHODES: Il s'agit d'une étude aléatoire communautaire, transversale et multi-étapes menée auprès des résidents de Maiduguri. Un total de 378 habitants du Maiduguri Metropolitan Council ont été interrogés en 2017, huit ans après le début de l'insurrection. Les outils utilisés comprenaient un formulaire sociodémographique préétabli, une version modifiée de l'Inventaire des événements traumatiques communautaires (CTEI), la liste de contrôle du TSPT version civile (PCL-CV), le module TSPT de l'Entretien diagnostique international composite (CIDI), l'échelle d'estime de soi de Rosenberg (RSES) et l'échelle de résilience de Connor-Davidson (CD-RISC). Des analyses bivariées ont été utilisées pour explorer les associations entre les variables psychosociales et le diagnostic de TSPT, tandis qu'une régression logistique binaire a été réalisée pour déterminer les prédicteurs indépendants du TSPT.

RÉSULTATS: La prévalence du TSPT parmi les résidents de Maiduguri était de 54,49 % selon le module TSPT du CIDI. L'étude a également révélé que 57,2 % (IC 53,4 - 60,1) des participants avaient vécu entre 5 et 10 événements traumatiques. Le TSPT était significativement associé au sexe, à l'exposition à plusieurs événements traumatiques ($p < 0,001$), aux antécédents de maltraitance ($p = 0,032$), à une faible estime de soi ($p < 0,001$) et à de faibles niveaux de résilience ($p < 0,001$).

CONCLUSION: Un TSPT sous-syndromique a été observé chez plus des deux tiers des participants à l'étude, tandis que plus de 50 % d'entre eux présentaient un TSPT diagnostiquable selon le CIDI et cliniquement conforme aux critères de l'ICD-10. Cette étude recommande donc l'intégration du soutien psychosocial et de la santé mentale ainsi que la priorisation de la santé mentale des populations exposées à toute forme d'insurrection armée. WAJM 2024; 42 (2): 104-113

MOTS-CLÉS: Insurrection de Boko Haram, Prévalence, Corrélats psychosociaux, Trouble de stress post-traumatique

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ABBREVIATIONS: CD-RISC: Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale; CIDI: Composite International Diagnostic Interview; CTEI: Communal Traumatic Events Inventory; EAD: Enumeration Areas Demarcated; IDP: Internally Displaced Person; IED: Intermittent Explosive Device; PCL-CV: PTSD checklist civilian version; PTSD: Post Traumatic Stress Disorder; RSES: Rosenberg Self Esteem scale