THE ROLE OF SOCIAL SUPPORT IN THE RETURN OF INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS IN A POST CONFLICT CONTEXT: AN EXPERIENCE OF SRI LANKAN MUSLIMS

by

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

DS   Divisional Secretariat

DSD   Divisional Secretariat Division

FG   Focus Group

GN   Grama Niladhari

GND   Grama Niladhari Division

HRF   Human Rights Focus

HRW   Human Rights Watch

ICG   International Crisis Group

IDMC   Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre

IDIP   In-depth Interview Participants

IDP   Internally Displaced Persons

IOM   International Organization for Migration

IRIN   Integrated Regional Informational Network

KI   Key Informant

LTTE   Liberation Tigers of Tamil Ealam

MFCD   Muslim Foundation for Cultural Development

MIC   Muslim Information Centre

NGO   Non-governmental Organization

NRC   Norwegian Refugees Council

PS   Pradesha Shaba

PTF   Presidential Task Force

SFRD   Serendip Foundation for Relief and Development

UNDP   United Nations Development Program

UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugee
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UTHR	University Teachers for Human Rights
UXO	Unexploded Ordnance
WB	World Bank
WFP	World Food Program

PERANAN SOKONGAN SOSIAL DALAM KEPULANGAN PELARIAN DALAMAN DALAM KONTEKS PASCA KONFLIK: PENGALAMAN ORANG ISLAM SRI LANKA

ABSTRAK

Konflik bersenjata tempatan selama 30 tahun di Sri Lanka antara pihak kerajaan dengan Harimau Pembebasan Tamil Ealam (LTTE) telah menyebabkan 500,000 orang menjadi pelarian. Pada tahun 1990, lebih 70,000 orang Islam di wilayah utara negara ini diusir secara paksa oleh LTTE dari rumah mereka. Sejak itu, umat Islam hidup sebagai orang pelarian dalaman (IDPs). Konflik bersenjata di negara ini berakhir pada tahun 2009, dengan kejayaan pihak kerajaan mengalahkan LTTE. Dengan tamatnya konflik ini, ramai pelarian Islam ini telah kembali ke tempat asal mereka bagi memulakan hidup baru. Objektif umum kajian ini adalah untuk: i) mengkaji masalah yang dihadapi oleh pelarian Islam dan jenis sokongan yang mereka usahakan, ii) mengkategorikan bantuan sosial yang diperlukan oleh mereka, dan iii) mencadangkan model intervensi sokongan sosial untuk menangani masalah dalam membina semula kehidupan mereka. Kajian ini merupakan satu kajian berbentuk kualitatif. Data telah dikumpul daripada temubual menyeluruh 20 peserta (IDIPs), tiga kumpulan fokus (FGs) dan lapan pembekal maklumat utama (KIs) melalui kaedah persampelan bertujuan. Temubual secara bersemuka dengan soalan berstruktur separa telah dijalankan. Data dianalisis secara manual. Hasil kajian mendapati bahawa para pelarian Muslim menghadapi pelbagai masalah untuk membina semula kehidupan di kawasan asal mereka seperti: Keselamatan fizikal, penempatan haram, penghidupan, perumahan, air, kebersihan, penjagaan kesihatan, pendidikan, dan infrastruktur. Para pelarian mengusahakan sokongan instrumental

dan bermaklumat untuk meneruskan kehidupan mereka. Kajian ini turut

mencadangkan model sokongan campur tangan sosial bagi menangani masalah

pelarian dalam membina semula kehidupan di kawasan mereka.

THE ROLE OF SOCIAL SUPPORT IN THE RETURN OF INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS IN A POST CONFLICT CONTEXT: AN EXPERIENCE OF SRI LANKAN MUSLIMS

ABSTRACT

A 30-year local armed conflict in Sri Lanka between government and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Ealam (LTTE) displaced at least 500,000 people. When the conflict was at its height, about 72, 000 Muslims from the North of the country were forcibly displaced by the LTTE in 1990s. These Muslims since lived outside their places of origin as internally displaced persons (IDPs). The armed conflict came to an end in 2009 after government defeated the LTTE. In this post-conflict context, many of these Muslim IDPs returned home to renew their life in their places of origin. The general objectives of his study were: i) to examine the problems of displaced Muslims and support they sought to rebuild their life in their areas of origin, ii) to categorize social support needed for them, and iii) propose a social support intervention model to address their problems. This was a qualitative study. Data were collected from 20 in-depth interview participants (IDIPs), three focus groups (FGs) and eight key informants (KIs), who were recruited by purposive sampling. Face to face interviews with semi-structured questions were conducted. Data were analyzed manually. The findings showed that in rebuilding life in their places of origin, Muslim IDPs faced several problems: Physical security, illegal property occupation, livelihood, housing, water, sanitation, healthcare, education and infrastructure. IDPs sought an instrumental and informational support to continue their life. The study proposed a social support intervention model to address their problems to rebuild life in their areas.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

Internal displacement is a global phenomenon that has been recurring almost across the world over time. Displacement of People has been caused by two sources: Natural and man-made disasters. If people are displaced by incidents such as earthquake, flood, landslides, volcano eruption and famine, their displacement is occasioned by natural disaster. The potential negative effects of this natural disaster on their life leave people displaced (Baron, Jensen & Jong, 2003; Christensen & Harild, 2009). If people are displaced by armed confrontation, generalized violence and human rights violations, it means that they are displaced by man-made disaster. They are called internally displaced persons (IDPs). In this displacement, people flee their places of origin voluntarily or involuntarily (forcibly) and take refuge elsewhere in their country. The possible killing, abduction, torture, detention, disappearance and abuse this man-made disaster has turn people into IDPs. The displacement inflicted by man-made disaster, mainly by armed conflict, has been a widespread global experience today. The IDPs have been one of the world's most vulnerable groups of people today (Human Rights Watch [HRW], 2013; Risser, 2000). This study was about Muslims forcibly displaced by local armed conflict in Sri Lanka.

Global Trend of Conflict-induced Internal Displacement

Conflict induced displacement of people has hardly drawn any attention of the globe up to the late 20th century. When a large number of people were displaced systematically by their home governments, particularly Germany and former Soviet Russia at the time of World War II, the people's internal displacement received due attention of international community. Three main reasons led to a global response to

this conflict-induced internal displacement of people. The first was that the number of internally displaced persons (IDPs) continued to increase over time due to armed conflict across the world. The second was that internal displacement deeply disturbed a normal life of the people by producing several psycho-socio-economic problems. The third was that addressing such problems was seriously hard due to limited capacities and resources of the countries that had IDPs (Baron, Jensen & Jong, 2008; Kumar, 2006).

At the end of 2012, an estimated 28.8 million people were internally displaced by armed conflict, generalized violence and human rights violations in at least 42counties of the world. Africa seemed to have the world's largest displaced populations, hosting 10.4 million IDPs. It was followed by Middle-east and North Africa, which shared six million. The next was Americas with 5.8 million displaced people. South and South East Asia was of 4.1million IDPs after Americas. Europe and Central Asia was found to have at least 2.5 million displaced people (Internal Displacement Monitoring Center [IDMC], 2013).

IDPs in Africa

Africa was a region largely affected by local armed conflict. Political power, natural resources, ideological dominance and ethnic divide all contributed to a prolonged local armed conflict in Africa (IDMC, 2009; UNHCR, 2010). At least 18 countries in the region experienced chronic local armed conflict, leaving over 10 million displaced. Mali and Somalia were the worst hotspot of displacement by armed conflict in Africa (IDMC, 2013). A local armed struggle launched by militant groups -National Liberation Movement of Azawad (MNLA), Al-Qaeda in Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) to establish an Islamic state displaced at least 250,000 people in Mali. Among displaced Malians, women and children were in large scale. The

displaced faced several difficulties to access their basic needs. Lack of livelihood, malnutrition, poor water and sanitation and physical insecurity all made put their life at serious risk. Government in Mali was underfunded to respond to IDPs' problems. Meanwhile, insurgents also denied humanitarian organizations access to help displaced Malians. This situation left IDPs' needs unmet. Displaced people of the country were yet to return home due to renewed conflict (UNICEF, 2013).

The local armed conflict lasting for two decades between state security forces and rebel movement Al- Shabaab caused mass displacement of the people in Somali. There was an estimated 1.4 million Somalis displaced by this local armed conflict. The displaced lacked basic necessities to continue life and were faced with sexual attacks, gender-based violence and forced marriage. Because of its poor financial ability, the Somali government was no longer capable of responding to the needs of its displaced populations. NGOs were also not able to provide their support to IDPs as only few of them were permitted to access IDPs by militants. Government inability and restriction of access to NGOs all made IDPs vulnerable. Many of their basic needs and problems still remained unaddressed. The escalation of the conflict after the ongoing government military campaign increased displacement even further (HRW, 2013).

IDPs in Middle East and North Africa

Popular uprising that birthed Arab spring against long-standing rulers in the countries of North Africa and Middle East also produced displacement of people simultaneously. An armed battle pursued by opposition forces against 40 –year long Qadhafi regime in Libya left about 250,000 Libyans displaced in 2011. Even though the conflict ended soon after the regime was toppled, more than 50, 000 displaced Libyans were yet to go back home. Severe destruction of basic facilities in their areas

of origin, such as houses, electricity, roads and possible reprisals for their side of the conflict made IDPs' return unlikel. They lived in at least 132 camps and in few rented apartments. The IDPs were exposed to extra judicial killings, arbitrary arrests, torture, detention and other insecurity risks (IDMC, 2013).

Popular agitation seeking a regime-change and prolonged armed conflict between government and insurgent movement Ansar al-Sharia triggered a displacement in Yemen. At the end of 2012, at least 385,000 people were displaced in the country. Even though a transitional government of the country that came after the 2011 popular upheaval facilitated the return of displaced populations, over 200,000 IDPs were still unwilling to return home. A presence of landmines and unexploded ordnance (UXO), zero livelihood access and lack of infrastructure in their places of origin effectively blocked their return. Meanwhile, IDPs faced several difficulties to continue their life after displacement. They stayed in public schools, temporary shelters and informal structures that were poorly built and disproportionately overcrowded. They were also disturbed by poor access to potable water, sanitation, livelihood and public services in their places of displacement (IDMC, 2013).

In Syria, an armed struggle that broke out in 2011 between government armed forces and rebel organization Free Syrian Army (FSA) displaced an estimated 3.6 million Syrians. Displaced fled their homes and lived at houses of friends, relatives and acquaintances outside their places of origin. A significant number of IDPs lived in rented accommodations elsewhere in the country. Vast majority of displaced people took shelter in public places such as mosques, universities, schools and municipal parks in the country due to their financial difficulties to afford an accommodation. However, those staying in the places like school were later forcibly

evicted by the authorities when schools reopened for educational activities. The evicted IDPs were not provided any alternative and therefore stranded not knowing where to find their stay. Shelter, livelihood, healthcare, water and sanitation were most serious problems effectively challenging IDPs' daily life. Government was not equipped enough to address these problems. Even though government had allowed only few humanitarian organizations to help displaced population, such organizations were also not able to respond to all IDPs because of their limited funding. More than two –third of IDPs remained unsupported to access their basic needs (International Committee of the Red Cross [ICRC], 2013).

IDPs in South and South Asia

South and South East Asia was also a region battered by international and local armed conflicts, and communal violence. Myanmar, Afghanistan, Pakistan and Sri Lanka were the countries of the region known as epicenter of displacement because of their ongoing armed conflict and ethnic violence. A prolonged local armed conflict between government armed forces and militant group Kachin Independence Army (KIA) displaced people in Myanmar. In 2012, there were an estimated 350,000 people displaced by armed conflict in the country. IDPs were not able to return home because their areas were widely mined and lacked access to housing, clean water, sanitation, livelihood and other basic needs. In multi ethnic-populated Myanmar, which consisted of at least 135 ethnic groups, Inter-ethnic violence was another source of displacement. The ongoing ethnic riots unleashed in 2012 by Rakhine Buddhist ethnic group against Rohingya Muslim ethnic minority of the country displaced more than 200,000 Rohingyas. This number was in addition to the number of those already displaced by armed conflict in the country.

Myanmar government simply failed its obligation to preempt this communal violence and further displacement of country's ethnic minority. Government also restricted humanitarian organizations from accessing Rohingya IDPs. This restriction largely compromised IDPs' very basic needs. Even though there were few NGOs helping IDPs, they also pulled out their support after their staffs received a life threat. Displaced Rohingyas lived in temporary camps, which were poorly built and overcrowded. They also struggled to meet their basic needs: livelihood, clean water, sanitation, and healthcare and children education. Their return still remained uncertain due to lack of physical security, a total destruction of their homes and livelihood sources in their areas (Integrated Regional Informational Networks [IRIN], 2013; Norwegian Refugee Council [NRC], 2013).

US-led international armed conflict in Afghanistan against Taliban in the name of war on terror produced displacement of people perennially. At the end of 2012, at least 50,000 people were displaced by this armed conflict. The IDPs lived in relatives' homes, IDPs camps and shelters built illegally in private and state lands. They experienced lack of durable shelter, food, water, healthcare, land and employment. Those living unlawfully in private and state lands faced a serious risk of anytime evacuation. IDPs children, sharing 64% of total IDPs, were most vulnerable. Most of them lacked access to proper education. Despite these difficulties, IDPs chose not to go back home. Renewed conflict, threats from conflict parties and lack of basic facilities in their areas of origin all forced them to postpone their return (IDMC, 2013).

In Pakistan, the sporadic armed confrontation between state security forces and local militant groups caused a mass displacement of people. In the late 2012, about 724,000 Pakistanis were displaced from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) province

and the Federal Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) of the country. Displaced people lived in relatives' homes, rented accommodations and IDP camps. More than 60% of IDPs still struggled to meet basic needs such shelter, food and lacked employment and economic opportunities to ensure their livelihood. Widowed women and children were most vulnerable group of IDPs, lacking access to livelihood and education. Even though government implemented several measures to promote their return, less than 200,000 people were able to return home so far. Majority of displaced people were undesired to go back home. The renewed armed conflict, physical security risk and poor public services in their areas of origin all discouraged IDPs from returning (United Nation High Commissioner for Refugees [UNHCR], 2013).

The focus of the present study was on the people, particularly Muslims, displaced by a local armed conflict in Sri Lanka. A 30-year local conflict in Sri Lanka left at least 100,000 people dead and 500, 000 displaced. In 1990s, over 70,000 Muslims living in the north Sri Lanka were forcibly displaced from their homes by LTTE, an armed group which was involved in the conflict against government. In 2009, the three – decade old armed conflict came to end after Sri Lankan government demolished the LTTE by a military campaign. In this post-conflict context, these displaced Muslims had returned to their places of origin to renew their life after 20 year of their displacement. This study was to examine the return of such Muslim IDPs after conflict termination

Armed Conflict and Internally Displaced Persons in Sri Lanka

Sri Lanka (an Island) is a country representing an ethnic, religious and linguistic diversity. About 20 million populations of the island are shared by three ethnic groups: Sinhalese, Tamils and Muslims. Major ethnic group of the country remained Sinhalese, making up 74%. They were predominantly Theravada Buddhists

and spoke Sinhala. The country's first ethnic minority was Tamils, accounting for

18%. They were mainly Hindus and spoke Tamil and vast majority of them lived in

the north and east of the country. The second ethnic minority of Sri Lanka was

Muslims, sharing 8% of population in the country. Muslim community was dispersed

across the country. Two-third of Muslims (about 62%) lived in the south of the

country, as one third of them (38%) were concentrated in the north and east of Sri

Lanka. Muslims living in the south spoke Sinhala as their first language, while their

counterparts living in north and east spoke Tamil as their first language. They

practiced their religion of Islam (McGilvray, 2011a; McGilvray, 2011b).

Root Causes of the Conflict

Relations among ethnic groups in Sri Lanka were not necessarily cordial

since before independence of the country. Ethnic groups in the country have lived in

fear and suspicion over each other. Sinhalese ethnic majority feared that minorities

would be a potential threat to Buddhist-dominated political system of Sri Lanka,

which they always considered the only holy land in the world to Buddhism.

Minorities, meanwhile, felt that their rights were being abused and that they were

systematically marginalized from every social, economic and political development

(McGilvray & Raheem, 2007). In colonial Sri Lanka, British colonizers effectively

implemented a "divide and rule" policy, which was totally communal, in local

governance and political system. For example, colonial authorities appointed Sri

Lankans as members to their Ceylon Legislative Council of that time ethnically.

They adopted this ethnicised policy to prevent any united threat from all three ethnic

groups against their colonial regime.

This colonial treatment cemented this mutual fear and suspicion of ethnic

groups further and deepened the gap between them even more (Mayilvaganan, 2008).

The more developed fear and suspicion at times appeared in the form of violence affecting ethic groups' interests seriously. The 1915 ethnic riot between Sinhalese and Muslims was one such violent attack on ethnic relations of pre-independent Sri Lanka. This infamous communal violence was systematically unleashed by Sinhalese against Muslim minority. Radical Sinhala-Buddhist forces who always interpreted Muslims as aliens and a threat to Buddhist political system of the country were behind this riot. Not only did this violence bring hundreds of deaths of Muslims and their economic destruction. It badly damaged Sinhala –Muslim amity too (Ali, 1997; Ali, 2004).

In post independent Sri Lanka, almost every successive government also continued the same ethnicised political system of colonial predecessors but in reformed ways. Governments, always formed by Sinhalese, settled large number of Sinhalese in Tamil and Muslim areas mainly in the north and east of the country. This government-sponsored Sinhala settlement project soon redefined demography of minority areas in favor of Sinhalese. It also largely reduced minorities' political influence in their areas. Government also implemented an education policy with district-based quota system for university admission. The policy increasingly diminished university entrances of minorities. In order to reduce the growing economic influence of minorities, their businesses were also restricted by government implementing new laws. The development programs government pursued periodically in the country also ignored minority areas. All these developments widened the gap between communities further and contributed to violent practice also. In 1983, the Sinhala Buddhist nationalistic elements once again violently rioted against Tamil minority this time. The Sinhala –Tamil riot of 1983 claimed hundreds of Tamil lives and destroyed dozens of their business

establishments. This riot soon turned a source of a well organized local armed conflict to the country in future. Youths belonging to Tamil community who were frustrated by this alleged discrimination and marginalization pursued an armed struggle as a solution to their grievances (Imtiyaz & Hoole, 2011).

In the late 1980s, an armed conflict broke out in Sri Lanka between government and Liberation Tigers of Tamil Ealam (LTTE), an armed organization represented by Tamils largely. The LTTE sought to establish a separate Tamil homeland covering entire north and east of the country for Tamil minority. The movement strongly believed such homeland was the only means to end the alleged discrimination against Tamils and enjoy their rights. To achieve this homeland, LTTE also believed an armed resistance was the only way. To attain this goal, the organization pursued an intensive armed battle against government security forces.

Internal Displacement as a Legacy of Armed Conflict

The armed conflict of the country, meanwhile, brought several problems and human sufferings. It widowed at least 40,000 women (IRIN, 2012). It abused the basic rights of over 10,000 children in the name child soldiers (IRIN, 2010). The conflict severely collapsed social capital and social network of the people, disintegrating families. It almost totally destroyed people's economic life. The armed conflict deeply damaged the relations among ethnic groups of the country, creating mutual suspicion and fears over each other (Imtiyaz & Hoole, 2011). It also left at least 100,000 people dead (ICG, 2007; ICG, 2012).

The most vulnerable consequence of this armed conflict was the internal displacement of the people. An estimated 500,000 people were displaced by the Sri Lanka's local armed conflict. The displaced were mainly from both Tamil and Muslim communities living in the north and east provinces of the country. While the

renewed armed confrontation and the fear of being killed, abducted, tortured and detained all displaced people, a forcible expulsion was also another source of their displacement. In 1990, about 72,000 Muslims living in the north were forcibly expelled from their homes by the LTTE. After their forced displacement, These Muslims took refuge elsewhere in the country and lived as internally displaced persons (IDPs). They faced several difficulties to access their very basic needs (Haniffa, 2010; Jeyaraj, 2005; Rauff & Hatta, 2013).

In 2009, the Sri Lanka's three- decade old local armed conflict permanently ended after government wiped out the LTTE. This termination of armed conflict raised a serious hope among these displaced Muslims to return home ending their 20 years of displaced life. Many of Muslim IDPs had today returned to their place of origin to continue their life in this post-conflict context. After their return, these IDP today faced several problems and challenges in continuing their life in their areas. They needed social support to rebuild their life in their areas of origin. This study was to examine their problems and support needed to them to rebuild their life in their places of origin in a post-conflict context.

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Problem Statement

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The 30 years of local armed conflict in Sri Lanka had several bitter episodes. Deaths, displacement, rights' abuses and violations, economic destruction and social network breakdown were such various occurrences seriously disturbing peoples' normal life. A forced displacement was a part of the vulnerable consequences of this conflict. This was caused systematically against Muslim community by the LTTE to materialize its political aspiration. Even though all other episodes of the conflict received attention enough both locally and internationally, this coerced displacement of Muslims and their problems remained the unnoticed side of the conflict. The

problems of Muslim IDPs were neither discussed nor debated nor studied enough to recognize them (ICG, 2007; Hasbullah, 2001; Johansson, 2007).

Today, the local armed conflict of the country was over in 2009. The Muslim IDPs who experienced a vulnerable displaced life for 20 years were supposed to go back home to continue their life in this post conflict context. Yet, about 70% of them were yet to return home so. Even though 30% of Muslim IDPs had gone back home, more than 50% of such returnees had left their places of origin soon after their return. Meanwhile, 90% of displaced people from their opposite community (Tamil) had already returned and continued their life in their places of origin. Why vast majority of Muslim IDPs were still unable to go back home? Why half of them who had already gone back left their places of origin soon after their return? If their opposite community could almost totally return, why such return remained still unlikely only to Muslim community? The reasons needed to be examined and answers remained to be traced. . Like the protracted displacement of Muslims was left unspoken in the past, their return should not be neglected from any investigation. Their return needed to be examined to recognize their problems in rebuilding life in their places of origin (Hasbullah, 2013).

In this post-conflict context, Muslim IDPs were willing to go back home. In their eyes, their return was most important than everything else. However, their return would undoubtedly be disturbed by several problems and challenges involving rebuilding their life in their places of origin. Such problems and challenges needed to be reported. This effort would draw serious attention of different actors (government and NGOs) to help their return. More studies on IDPs' return, therefore, were essential to help IDPs deal with their difficulties after their (Fatima, 2010).

Literature shares very little information on Muslim IDPs and their problems because there were only few studies taking place so far. Even these studies discussed their problems largely in political and human rights perspectives. Socio-economic factors of the problems remained unaddressed in their discussions. To get a clear picture on Muslim IDPs' problems, socio-economic implication of their problems were also equally important. Therefore, the problems of Muslim IDPs were essential to be investigated in socio-economic point of view also (Ali, 2004; Mcgilvray & Raheem, 2007; Mohideen, 2009; NRC, 2010). This study was to examine the problems of Muslim IDPs in rebuilding their life in their places of origin in a post-conflict context. It was to address their problems even further. The study was also to document their problems and difficulties in rebuilding their life in their areas of origin. The present study was also to expand the understanding of Muslim IDPs' problems beyond its political and human rights perspectives.

Research Objectives

The study had five objectives: 1) to examine problems facing displaced Muslims in rebuilding their life in their places of origin in a post-conflict context, 2) to assess types of support displaced Muslims received to rebuild their life in their places of origin in a post conflict context, 3) to determine types of support displaced Muslims sought to rebuild their life in their places of origin in post-conflict context , 4) to categorize social support needed for them to rebuild their life in their places of origin in a post conflict context, and 5) to propose a social support intervention model to address their problems and needs in rebuilding their life in their places of origin in a post conflict context.

Research Questions

This study proposed three research questions: 1) what are the problems of displaced Muslims to rebuild their life in their places of origin in a post-conflict context? 2) What types of support are they receiving to rebuild their life in their places of origin in a post conflict-context? 3) What types of support are they seeking to rebuild their life in their places of origin in a post-conflict context?

Significance of the Study in Social Work

In a context where displaced Muslims have returned to their places of origin after the termination of a 30-year local armed conflict in Sri Lanka, this study has taken place. This context has led the present study to have significance in the field of social work. First, displaced populations are today recognized as vulnerable group of people. They are acknowledged to be helped and their problems and needs to be addressed effectively. As a helping profession, social work with displaced communities still remains a new field with very little intervention (Nash, Wong & Trlin, 2006). This field needs to be expanded with further researches and practices. The knowledge acquired by researches and experiences gained by practices help expand this field. This expansion is essential for social work to effectively respond to the problems of this vulnerable group. This study was a contribution to such expansion of this field further. By producing some new knowledge, this study has expanded the field of social work with IDPs.

Second, this was the first study examining the return of displaced Muslims in post-conflict Sri Lanka in social work perspective. A totally collapse of their institutional network was partly an obstacle for Muslim IDPs to address their problems. The weakening of their capacity in handling their difficulties and making viable decisions also disturbed them in rebuilding their life in their areas. These facts

were not understood enough by these displaced people. A rebuilding of their institutional network and a nurturing of their capacities for problem-solving and decision- making were the important areas to be helped Muslim IDPs rebuild their life. It was an obligation of social work to be active in solving the issue. This was a professional intervention of social work. This study has exhibited that this intervention was an integral part of the support to be provided for IDPs to rebuild their life in their places of origin. .

Third, in the field of social work with displaced populations, this study has for the first time defined social worker's role in helping IDPs rebuild their life in their places of origin in Sri Lankan context. Such role was to be a prominent support provider. The support social worker should provide was to empower the poorly disempowered IDPs to channel their problems themselves in formal ways. The support by social worker was also to empower such IDPs to devise solution or make decision on their problems themselves. This study has shown that this empowerment support of social worker was essential for IDPs after their return. This kind support, study also demonstrated, could not be provided by any agency or institution other than social worker.

Fourth, displaced people needed a decisive social support to rebuild their life in their places of origin. Such social support was instrumental and informational. As the instrumental support (financial, material and services) was vital, the informational support (guidance, advice and awareness) was also equally essential for displaced people to continue their life. This instrumental support was on the part of professional social work. This fact has been emphasized in this study.

Fifth, while recognizing the informational social support as an obligation of social work, this study also found government, NGOs and own community to be

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bound to provide instrumental support to IDPs. However, they largely failed their responsibilities. This study may constitute an opportunity to influence them to help these displaced people. This study may also remain an attempt to convince law and policy makers to enact and implement social policies to respond to IDPs' problems and needs in rebuilding their life in their places of origin.

Finally, the literature shared a very limited knowledge on the problems of displaced Muslims from socio-economic point of view. Now that Muslim IDPs have returned home in a post-conflict context, an analysis of their problems based on such point of view was important (Ali, 2004; Mcgilvray & Raheem, 2007; Mohideen, 2009; NRC, 2010). As a research with social work contents, this study has done it and also filled the gap in the literature by adding some relevant knowledge.

Organization of the Study

This study is of six chapters: Introduction, literature review, theoretical framework, methodology, research findings and discussion and conclusion. Chapter one (introduction) speaks about background of the study, global trend of internal displacement armed conflict and internal displacement in Sri Lanka, problem statement, research objectives, research questions and significance of the study in social work.

Chapter two – literature review- describes Sri Lankan Muslims' forced displacement and other victimization by armed conflict of the country. Chapter also includes the findings of previous studies involving problems displaced people experienced after their return in a post conflict context.

Chapter three (theoretical framework) presents conceptual definitions where six concepts widely employed in this study are defined. The chapter also speaks about theories that apply to this study. Five theories are included: Theory of return,

safety climate theory, adjustment theory, social support theory and community empowerment theory.

Chapter four – methodology- describes the research design of the study, which is qualitative approach. The elements employed in the methodology of this study are described in this chapter. Such elements include: Population, area, sample, data collection and data analysis.

Chapter five is research findings, which is organized based on information (data) gathered from all three groups of research participants: In-depth interview participants (IDIPs), Focus groups (FGs) and key informants (KIs). The findings includes IDPs' problems, supports they received and support they sought to rebuild life in their areas of origin after their return.

Finally, chapter six is discussion and conclusion, which is built on the findings of chapter five. The discussion rather critically analyses IDPs' problems and support for them to rebuild their life in their areas of origin. As a research contribution, a social support model is also proposed and discussed in this chapter Apart from these, research contribution to social work, future direction and limitation of the research are also described the chapter as part of discussion.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

This chapter describes the literature on people displaced by local armed conflict. The description was the problems of displaced people and support they sought to rebuild their life in their places of origin after having returned home in a post conflict context. For this, the chapter has included the results of previous studies undertaken among displaced people of European, African and Asian countries experiencing local armed conflict. Initially, local armed conflict and Muslim victimization, including displacement, in Sri Lanka has been highlighted in the chapter. This is followed by the problems and supports needed for IDPs to continue their life in their areas of origin after a conflict termination. Finally, chapter has also demonstrated the role of government, NGOs and civil communities to help IDPs in this respect.

Victimization of Muslims by Armed Conflict in Sri Lanka

Muslims in Sri Lanka – a second largest ethnic group of the country- have been a dispersed community across the country. Two-thirds (62%) of Muslims were living in the Sinhala -dominated south of the country. The remaining 38% or one third of them lived in Tamil-majority north and east of the country. While Muslims in the south used Sinhala as their first language, their counterparts in the north and east spoke Tamil as their first language. Compared to other ethnic groups of the country (Sinhalese and Tamils), it was Muslim community to use both local languages widely as a result of their demographic dispersion (Ali, 2004; Imtiyaz & Hoole, 2011).

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In the late 1980s, when the local armed conflict broke out between government and the LTTE in the north and east, Muslims in the north and east had not been a party of the conflict. Yet, they were the direct victims of such conflict, experiencing several persecutions throughout the conflict. Muslims were vulnerably targeted by LTTE with a violent campaign to achieve its political ideal to turn the north and east into a Tamil homeland with zero Muslim presence. LTTE used different tactics to destroy Muslim existence in the north and east. In the east, such tactics were massacre, slaughter, abduction, extortion, illegal taxation, property destruction and prevention. In the north, it was an ethnic cleansing with forced displacement (Ali, 1997; ICG, 2007; UTHR, 1990).

Violence Against Muslims of the East

LTTE effectively advanced an anti-Muslim campaign to purge Muslims from the entire east, which consisted of three districts: Ampara, Batticaloa and Trincomalee. In July 1990, in Akkaraipattu of Amapara District, 14 Muslims were shot dead by LTTE while working in their paddy fields. In August of the same year, 17 Muslims from Mulliankadu in the same district were gunned down by LTTE while working in their paddy fields. A day after this incident, another 33 Muslims were shot and killed by LTTE guerillas in Ampara (Jaffna Muslim, 2012). In July 1990, more than 60 Muslim pilgrims from Kattankudi of Batticaloa District were abducted and murdered by LTTE on their way back home ending hajj from Saudi Arabia. Their bodies were buried as opposed to their religious values in an undisclosed place not giving them to their families for funeral.

In August 1990, some 118 Muslims, including boys, were massacred and 70 heavily injured by LTTE armed men while performing their sunset prayer at two mosques of Husainiya and Meera Jumma in Kattankudi, Batticaloa (ICG, 2007).

Barely nine days after these killings, a further 147 Muslims from villages of

Surattayankuda, Michnagar, Meerakerni, Saddam Husssein and Pannakuda in Eravur

of Batticaloa were slaughtered by LTTE while sleeping in the night at homes. They

were hacked to death regardless of pregnant women and little children. The dead

included 51 men, 36 women and 60 children (Jaffna Muslim, 2012). A most

deplorable occurrence of this Muslim genocide was that a pregnant mother's stomach

was cut and her baby pulled out and stabbed (UTHR, 1991). In May 2006, about 100

Muslims form Mutur of Trincomalee District travelling home were separated from

women and children, and murdered by LTTE (UTHR, 2006).

Abduction, extortion was another aspect LTTE practiced against Muslim

existence. Hundreds of Muslim businessmen, civil servants and bureaucrats were

abducted while in their outlets, offices, homes and on their way. They were tortured

for their wealth and professional role to their community. Even though they were

extorted for their release, only some of abductees had been freed. Many of them were

yet to be released and their fate still remained unknown (Ali, 1997; Jeyaraj, 2005).

The property of Muslim was also destroyed by LTTE. In 1990, the Muslim market of

Akkaraipattu in Amapara was completely torched by LTTE (McGilvray, 2011b). In

June 2003, some 100 business establishments belonging to Muslims were totally

destroyed by LTTE in Valaichenai in Batticaloa (Subramaniyan, 2003). Muslims'

agricultural land was also confiscated. They denied access, threatening that they

would face death if continued cultivation in their land. Muslims in the east lost

63,000 acres of paddy land as a result (Muslim Information Centre [MIC], n.d.). An

illegal tax was also collected from Muslim traders. Those refusing to pay were

threatened by LTTE with abduction, death and destruction of their business, saying

that they would be shot like dog and thrown in the streets (Rauff & Hatta, 2013).

Forced Displacement on Muslims of the North

LTTE campaign against Muslims in the north was totally varied from that of their counterparts in the east. It was purely an ethnic cleansing with forced displacement. In 1990, at the time when the armed conflict was its height, LTTE asked Muslims in all five districts of Jaffna, Kilinochchi, Mullaitivu, Vavuniya and Mannar in the north to rally in their nearby public spaces (schools and play grounds). The LTTE made this announcement over loudspeakers in every Muslim neighbourhood, village and town in all five districts. Muslims who gathered so were ordered to leave the entire north within 48 hours or face death. Muslims in Jaffna were given only two hours for their departure (Hasbullah, 2001). Muslims were also ordered to take only a pair of cloth and Rs 150 (US$ 1.40 at 1990 rate) when leaving. One displaced Muslim later recounted his experience of expulsion thus:

> While working in the fields, LTTE gunmen came asked us to leave the place within two hours. We took few cloths in plastic carrier bags and walked a long way. (Imtiyaz & Iqbal, 2011, p.377).

In October 1990, some 72, 000 Muslims or 14, 400 families from all five districts of the north left their homes. In 1990, there were 38, 000 persons or 7,600 families living in Mannar, 20, 000 persons or 4,000 families in Jaffna,and Kilinochchi, 9,000 persons or 1,800 families in Vavuniya, and 5,000 persons or 1,000 families in Mullaitivu. They were all forcibly displaced their places of origin (Jaffna Muslim, 2012).

Table 1

Muslims of the north forcibly displaced by LTTE in 1990

District	Persons	Families
Mannar	38,000	7,600
Jaffna and Kilinochchi	20,000	4,000
Vavuniya	9,000	1,800
Mullaithivu	5,000	1,000

At the time of their expulsion, LTTE was seriously busy ensuring that the leaving Muslims did not take any of their belongings with them beyond permitted ones. For example, if one Muslim man wore a sarong, he was permitted to take one further sarong and shirt only. If one Muslim woman wore a sari, she was permitted to take only one further sari. All their belongings, even their national identity cards, were confiscated by LTTE. Muslim women were not allowed to leave even with jeweled ears. LTTE women combatants stripped of jewels in ears of Muslim women and girls. They at times forcibly wrested their earrings to the scale of blood spurting (Jeyaraj, 2005). Muslim lost 13, 978 acres of paddy land, 18,907 acres of coconut estate and 2,395 business establishments during their forced displacement. They also lost 128 mosques, 26 shrines, 139 Madrasa (religious school) and 65 Muslim government schools. An estimated US$110 million worth properties (at 1990 rates) were confiscated from Muslims and they were driven out of their homes (Haniffa, 2010).

Following expulsion, Muslims took refuge in Anuradhapura, Puttalam, Kurunagal and Colombo. They reached these places walking long distance with difficult terrain. Some of them went by sea risking their lives (ICG, 2007). Vast majority of displaced Muslims went to Puttalam . There were two reasons for their choice of this. One was that Puttalam was a district where Muslims relatively lived in large number outside the north and east. Therefore, the displaced Muslims hoped that their plight would be appreciated and that they would be helped by their brethren due to a religious bond. The other reason was that Puttalam was their neighbor district. Therefore, they could regularly and easily access their areas of origin if they stayed in the district (Brun, 2003).

After Displacement

In Puttalam, they were housed in 150 IDP camps built by *cadjans* in Kalpitiya, Nuraicholai, Palavi, Madurankuli, Aalamkuda and Puthukudiyiruppu areas. Initially, they were greatly helped by their Puttalam counterparts, providing food, cooking utensils and material to build temporary structures to stay. Muslims of Puttalam often encouraged their people to help their displaced brethrens insisting that doing so was a religious obligation. They viewed their counterparts' forced displacement as *Hijrah* (flight) something their prophet Mohamed (PBUP) experienced in his time when disbelievers tried to destroy Islam and him (Jaffna Muslim, 2012). Some local and INGOs also helped Muslim IDPs access their needs. Red Cross Society replaced their shelters' *cadjans* when they expired. This support continued to be provided for some time. UNICEF, UNHCR, FORUT, OXFAM, Save the Children, Sarvodaya, the Consortium of Humanitarian Agencies, Muslimath, the Rural Development Foundation and the Community Development Fund all provided support for potable water, sanitation, clothing, healthcare, children education and kitchen utensils. On its part, government also distributed dry rations to them as a livelihood support since the beginning of their displacement. This government support was sponsored by the World Food Programme' (WFP) of UN (Imtiyaz & Iqbal, 2011). Meanwhile, IDPs also made efforts to build their life with minimum effects. Women went to work like onion-planting, weeding and salt-drying in Puttalam. Men worked as taxi driver, fishermen and wage laborer in paddy fields and saltrens in the area. Initially, these all helped them continue their life without major disturbances.

However, the situations later on started to change. The support IDPs received from NGOs did not continue long even until sustaining their life to some extent.

NGOs stopped their aid and services as their funding were apparently limited. Dry ration distribution was also gradually reduced and later totally ceased by the WFP. The relations between IDPs and hosts were also no longer similar as was in the beginning. The hostility started growing between them. The rivalry between them for employment, economic, education and development opportunities in Puttalam produced their hostile relations. Hosts viewed IDPs as occupying their resources - apparently limited - in the area disproportionately in these fields. Hostile relation compromised IDPs' employment and economic opportunities. They lost work in paddy fields and saltren and they were also not able to fish, which affected their livelihood and accesses to other needs also (Brun, 2003).

The cutting of NGOs and government support, and hostile relation all made IDPs life further vulnerable. Their temporary shelters lacked *cadjans* to be replaced and therefore leaked. During rainy seasons, IDPs struggled to stay in the shelters because their sand floors were badly soggy. Families with small kids were stranded without a place for their kids even to sleep. Water and sanitation were also inadequately accessible and IDPs seriously struggled to satisfy basic needs. They received water that had an erratic supply and walked dozens of kilometers to fetch water. IDPs who worked in paddy fields, vegetable gardens and saltrens lost their jobs after their hostile relations with host community. The joblessness badly inflicted their livelihood, which was exacerbated further by the government cutting of dray ration. Education of their children was also difficult to be accessed. Because of limited resources, schools conducted morning and evening sessions. Children of the hosts studied in the morning period and children of the IDPs attended even session. In the even session, schools were over flown with children of IDPs. They struggled