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Original Research

The Social Effect of Development-Induced Displacement on Community Structures and Individual Well-being: Evidence from East Wallaga Zone, Ethiopia

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Abstract

Development ventures in East Wallaga Zone such as industrial park, sugar factory, Airport, road construction etc. adversely affected the community structure and household wellbeing. This study aims to investigate how community structures and personal well-being are affected socially by displacement brought on by development. Limited empirical research has examined the social effects of development-induced displacement in East Wallaga Zone. The study employed qualitative approach, exploratory types of research as a study design. Non-probability sampling is the methods through which the researcher met participants of the study. 25 informants selected as participants of the study through purposive and snow ball sampling. Thematic data analysis employed as data analysis method. FGD, Key informants, observation and in-depth interview utilized as the tools of data collection. The finding of the study indicated that the prevalence of negative social effects among the population being studied. The observed patterns highlight the need for integrated, culturally sensitive interventions that address both social and economic dimensions of displacement. Recognizing the intertwined nature of community structures and individual well-being is essential for designing effective policies that promote resilience and social cohesion in displaced populations. While development is important, it must be people-centered rather than project-centered.

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INTRODUCTION

Development-induced displacement is the term used to describe the forced relocation that results from these projects, which not only deprive people of their livelihoods but also of their homelands and long-standing ancestral ties, even though they greatly increase productivity and production (Butle, 2021). Development emerged gradually as a result of

being born and reborn several times under different circumstances. Therefore, rather than direct genealogical continuities from a single origin, its history is composed on analogies produced by similar structural circumstances (Koponen, 2020).

According to Das (2013) development literature has historically portrayed

development as a rise in wealth and income, living standards, enhances technology, and industrial progress through the creation of investment incentives. Those impacted by development projects have historically suffered due to the practice of development-induced displacement (Tsietsi, 2018). Destruction will unavoidably happen during development if we do not manage well (Overton et al, 2006). Internal displacement, one of the most severe human catastrophes globally, leads to death, property destruction, famine and food insecurity, family disruption, and various physical and mental health challenges (Bayu & Sunjo, 2023).

In particular, urban development results in the annual displacement of millions of people, and the percentage of displaced urban residents is steadily increasing. With 2018 alone registering the highest numbers of displacement to date, with an estimated 70.8 million people forcibly displaced globally (Hirsh, Eizenberg & Jabareen, 2020). According to the WBED, which estimates that 10 million people are uprooted annually as a result of dam construction, urban development, transportation, and infrastructure programs, millions of people are moved and resettled each year to make room for massive development projects around the world (Gogoi et al., 2022).

Women bear many of the most severe effects of DiD, a global issue that seriously impairs people's and communities' rights to decent housing, means of subsistence, and essential services (Oriri, 2023). The majority of development initiatives in developing nations still have a detrimental effect on the populace, with women typically suffering the most from these problems, which include unequal labor division, marginalization, lack of decision-making ability, lack of social cohesiveness, and lack of access to land, housing, and employment (Melketo, Seibe & Bonatt, 2023).

According to Admasu et al (2021), there are notable distinctions between host and

displaced communities in every nation except Nigeria. The findings regarding how urbanization affects income diversification and the general well-being of farm households close to Adama City align with the study conducted in Ethiopia, according to Dadi, Simie, and Mulugeta (2024). Further Egze, Zeleke and Seyoum (2023), documented that involuntary displacement brought on by a railway project in Ethiopia has a substantial and detrimental effect on the livelihoods of displaced households. There are numerous interconnected elements that contribute to the vulnerability of refugees, internally displaced people, and host communities. These include, among other things, the depletion of natural resources, a lack of knowledge and experience in agriculture, poor land-use practices, limited livelihood assets, and pressures brought on by drought, floods, deforestation, and climate change (Mekuria et al, 2024).

From this, we can understand that development is the enhancement of something. It comprises all aspects of human being. Those are economic aspects, environmental aspects, social aspects, and political aspects of a human being. Indeed, a small number displaced households benefit based on their management abilities. If the issue is managed in a good effectively, it results in a positive spillover effect, allowing the concerned body of government agencies and NGOs, to help nearly all affected households escape their welfare uncertainties. Thus, the study explored the situation of the social influence of development-induced displacement on household welfare in the study area and made feasible recommendations to further solutions.

The effect of development-induced displacement on household welfare is one of the critical issues that require an effective, urgent response and ongoing investigation globally, especially in developing countries. The study conducted by Randel in the USA identified several critical issues associated with

development-induced displacement, including a high risk of poverty, landlessness, unemployment, food insecurity, poor health, loss of community resources, increased psychological stress, inadequate compensation, and destruction of cultural heritage (Randell, 2022). The study concentrates on the social and economic components of the tow under investigation identify many other things. Sikka's research on large-scale development projects India identified eight risks associated with large-scale development projects: landlessness, joblessness, homelessness, marginalization, increased morbidity and mortality, food insecurity, loss of access to common property and services, social disarticulation, and increased violence against women (Sikka, 2020).

Research by Koch-Weser and Guggenheim highlighted that the primary risk associated with development-induced involuntary population resettlement is the poverty faced by displaced people despite the global success of development in reducing poverty (Koch-Weser & Guggenheim, 2021). Additionally, the research conducted by Chen, Vanclay and Yu on China identified relocation as a difficult and traumatic process that causes project-induced of living (Chen, Vanclay & Yu, 2021).

The study conducted by Mandishekwa and Mutenheri on Zimbabwe identified that mining projects have caused significant displacements, leaving displaced households in poverty with women disproportionately impacted compared to men (Mandishekwa & Mutenheri, 2020). While the author in this paragraph emphasized the economic and social difficulties, other community issues, were also thoroughly examined. The study conducted by Bekele et al in Ethiopia identified that the majority of households experiencing moderate to severe land degradation a significant drop in

crop and livestock productivity due to large-scale land investment (Bekele et al., 2021).

One of Ethiopia's zones, East Wallaga, is situated in the western portion of the nation. Numerous development initiative projects are in the process of being established in this study region. Many of them have been finished and are in the process of performing their duties. Others are under construction and will fulfill their role in the future. Even if the initiatives are essential for development, the welfare of the households that are relocated as a result of them faces significant challenges. The households live in a state of destitution throughout their lives. Most of them feel resentment. The government now offers no compensation for any lost property, particularly in relation to the development of corridors. All of the aforementioned challenges had a detrimental effect on these demographic groups.

Although a lot of study has been done on the effects of development-induced displacement worldwide and in other contexts (such as the USA, India, Zimbabwe, and China), there are not many studies that particularly look at Ethiopia's East Wallaga Zone. This region has seen tremendous development endeavors, although the particular social and economic effect on displaced households have not been thoroughly investigated.

Prior research has mostly concentrated on the economic effects and wellbeing of individual households, frequently ignoring the wider ramifications for social cohesion and communal structures. The connection between individual well-being and community dynamics in the setting of displacement remains under-researched. In the context of East Wallaga, the psychological and emotional effects of displacement, such as sentiments of loss and resentment, have not been fully examined.

The social implications of development-induced displacement on household welfare in the East Wallaga Zone often receive less attention, and very few studies have specifically drawn attention to this disparity. In order to close the gap found qualitatively, the researcher has started this study that thoroughly examines the social impact of development-induced displacement on household welfare. A comprehensive understanding of how displacement affects people's well-being must take these factors into account. By filling in these gaps, the study hopes to offer insightful information about the unique difficulties experienced by displaced households in East Wallaga, adding to the larger conversation about displacement brought on by development and influencing regional policy and practice. The basic objective of this study is to explore social effects of development-induced displacement on community structures and individual well-being

MATERIALS AND METHODS

As scholars identified and employed in their studies', there are many theories of development in our globe (Ziai, 2007; Pieterse, 2009; Islam, 2018; Olatunji & Bature, 2019; Munck, 2021; Ellis, 2003; Haan, 2012; Serrat&Serrat, 2017; Bajpai, 2000). The main theories include modernization theory, dependency theory, post-development theory, social capital development theory, the human security framework, and the livelihood approach. Among these theories, the research utilized the human security framework to guide the overall investigation process, as it directly addresses the needs of individuals (Bajpai, 2000).

According to Gabisa et al. (2020), displacement affects displaced people on a social, economic, and psychological level and results in social integration and economic fragility. The authors went on to describe the difficulties faced by displaced households,

including social isolation, diminished access to opportunities for economic growth, deteriorating health, limited housing options and lack of infrastructure, and the loss of memories, specific landscapes, holy places, cultural assets, and natural resources. According to Verme and Schuettler (2021) found that forced relocation led to both public spending shock and population shock, which is a sudden increase in the population brought on by an influx of individuals in a certain geographic area.

According to Gogoi et al (2022), "development" should be interpreted as the overall enhancement of society's welfare in all domains, including the political, social, and economic ones, even though it is the process through which the material and living standards of the average person increase. It was discovered that there are gender differences, with households headed by women consuming less than those headed by men (Tesgera, Beyene & Wakjira, 2024). Adugna and Gezahegne (2024) found that there is a risk to social cohesion between the displaced and host communities.

The study employed an exploratory research design because its feature is an exploratory in which existing situations or phenomena are investigated. An exploratory research is carried out for a research problem when the researcher has no prior information or only a few studies for references (Thomas & Lawal, 2020). An instrumental case study will be utilized in the study, particularly for qualitative research questions. An instrumental case study is a types of case study in which a number of people witnessed a phenomena (Laframboise & Shea, 2009). Cross-sectional research is relevant in finding experience of a phenomenon, situation, problem, attitude or issue by taking a cross- section of the population which is useful in obtaining an overall picture as it stands at the time of the

study on a cross-section of a population at one point in time (Chery, 2016).

There are different arguments in terms of the sample size in case of qualitative approach. For instance, Groenewald (2004) recommended that ten individuals are relevant as participants under a given study in case of qualitative. On the other hand, Mason (2010), by taking different scholars' ideas in to account, agreed on the point that five to twenty five individuals are important as participants in qualitative study. By taking this all input the study employed 25 individuals as participants of the study qualitatively. From these, 5 individuals employed as key informants, 14 individuals as Focus Group Discussion (FGD) and 6 individuals as the in-depth interview informant of the study. These informants don't get 2nd chance in quantitative. The idea of data saturation got serious attention in this study.

Non-probability sampling, purposive sampling and snow ball employed to meet participants of the study due to the fact that qualitative research tends to use non probability or non-random samples (Hancock, Ockleford & Windridge, 2001). Through purposive sampling the researcher met key and few displaced household informants in order to obtain robust data about the social-effect of development-induced displacement on their welfare of the population under study. Through snowball sampling the researcher met participants by using the few participants who met the researcher purposively. The displaced households do not reside in a single camp or area, which is why the researcher chose snowball sampling. Since it is challenging to find them for availability sampling, it should require a small number of households to provide information (by calling others) to the researcher on purpose.

Researchers define data analysis as a methodical quest for meaning, and it is one of the most crucial phases in the research (Leech

& Onwuegbuzie, 2007). Thematic data analysis is one of the methods in which data analysis through the process of coding and encoding. Therefore, the researcher adopted thematic data analysis method, which was developed by Braun and Clark (2006), in which the data obtained through observation, FGD and in-depth interview are analyzed. The researcher applied the six prominent stages of thematic data analysis developed by Braun and Clark in investigating the social effect of development-induced displacement on household welfare in East Wallaga Zone. Data triangulation in qualitative research approach is one of an appropriate means in the process of assuring the validation of a given study (Morales, 2008). Accordingly, the data obtained from informants of the study triangulated with data collected from different individuals. In addition, the data collected through in-depth interview triangulated with the data will obtain through observation, FGD and key informant interview. Furthermore, the researcher employed peer debriefing as quality assurance in the study process as identified by different scholars, and in which the relevance and validity of a given study is realized (Anney, 2014; Billups, 2014).

The researcher took care on exploiting informants in the name of research, and then the study processed in appropriate time and manner. Brief pre-interview introduction held to introduce the purpose, benefits, and risks of the study; the confidentiality of the participants and their general rights. Then the participants asked their willingness to participate in the study. Those who were willing to participate in the study gave their verbal consents, and those who didn't have interest to participate in the study excluded. All the names that represented the participants of the study are pseudonyms.

RESULTS

The result comprises the presentation of social effect overall effect of development-induced displacement on household welfare in East

Wallaga Zone as it is investigated. All the households who involved in the study as participants of the study are vulnerable in different way. Some of them are those who live in critical life situation and entangled with depression since they haven't any other option for their welfare. Others are those who are in a serious life struggle to survive the challenge even if hardship. Some households are those who are in a serious health challenge and aging. Still others are those who attempted to resist the challenge through different coping strategies. In addition, some of these informants are educator where as some of them are uneducated in their educational backgrounds. Gender issue is one of the areas where the researcher gave a attention in the study. Thus, the informants of the study are included both male and female who affected as a result of development projects at study area.

The informants in this study reported that the displacement they endured has adversely affected both the social fabric of their community and their personal well-being. Specifically, the robust and supportive community connections that were vital during periods of joy and hardship have been interrupted as a result of this displacement. Furthermore, informants Sorome and Gichile explained that, although social participation in the new settlement necessitates financial resources, their sources of income have been eradicated. They also emphasized that the valued and culturally accepted concept of "social life" has shifted toward individualism, which is not an accepted way of life within their culture. Atomsa, another informant who was the first to encounter the researcher, stated that "the remaining social interaction consists solely of greetings when we meet in various locations."

The data obtained through in-depth interviews as a general revealed that development-induced displacement has significantly altered the community structure in

various ways. All informants reported that previously valuable social ties and kinship networks such as 'Dabo,' 'Idir,' 'Iqub,' and neighborhood connections have been broken because they are now scattered across different locations. Additionally, it has been difficult to establish new kinship networks in the new village due to the loss of income sources. Furthermore, informants noted that despite the importance of contributing to community leadership in the new area, they are often regarded as ordinary people, limiting their participation in leadership roles.

The data obtained from participants through FGD One regarding how displacement has changed household interactions within the community indicated that strong social ties existing before displacement have been broken due to several reasons. First, previous community interactions were disrupted because households were settled in different villages. Second, forming new social ties in the new village requires extra money, but income sources have been destroyed, leaving no alternatives for earning. Third, the residential land allocated for some households is unsuitable for living, as it lacks basic infrastructure. Fourth, initially, the government promised that all children aged 18 and above would receive land for house construction near their parents, but this commitment has not been fulfilled. However, this promise was broken after their displacement from their original location. When they raised complaints, officials dismissed them and treated them as obstacles to development. Officials had also assured the displaced households that they would be given employment opportunities in the project based on their abilities and professions. Yet, once the project began, their concerns were ignored. The group expressed their grievances by requesting permission from Wallaga University Referral Hospital to operate a dry 'Injera' business and to provide food, coffee, tea, and related items in the

hospital café as a group to generate income. However, the manager rejected their request and instead gave the café to hospital staff who already have permanent salaries and stable incomes as an additional source of income.

Similar to the findings from FGD One, FGD Two indicated that community interactions during times of both risk and celebration require financial resources. However, since the sources of income have been lost, fulfilling these social obligations has become difficult for displaced households.

The data from FGD One about the sense of belonging in the new location revealed a lack of belongingness due to two main reasons. First, resource shortages have led to conflicts between displaced households and the host community's children. Second, the lack of income prevents displaced households from participating in the community's social life. Similarly, data from FGD Two indicated that displaced households do not feel a sense of belonging, largely because of financial hardship and the fact that they are settled in unstable villages where many residents are involved in violations and substance abuse.

The informants Gadise and Kebebus highlighted significant health challenges faced by displaced households and issues with accessing health services. Some households reported serious health problems due to lack of basic necessities. Others pointed out that living in a slum environment, where waste is improperly disposed of and accumulates, further worsens their health conditions. Although health service facilities are located near their settlement, accessing care is difficult because of financial constraints. While some possess health insurance cards, renewing them annually is challenging due to the loss of income. Additionally, several informants mentioned that even when using their insurance to visit health facilities, doctors often inform them that the necessary medications are

unavailable and direct them to private pharmacies where prices are prohibitively high.

The observational data revealed the widespread destitute living conditions of the population under study, reflected in their physical appearance, such as their clothing and injuries, as well as their inadequate housing. Additionally, many exhibit feelings of hopelessness, stress about the future, and other psychological depression. Overall, these observations highlight the deeply challenging and impoverished circumstances faced by households affected by development-induced displacement. The multifaceted nature of these challenges calls for urgent and comprehensive responses to support their welfare.

The data from both FGD One and FGD Two regarding the effect of displacement on access to education, health care, and religious/cultural institutions indicated that these institutions are located near the displaced households' village. Despite the proximity of schools and health care facilities, financial constraints restrict access to their services. Many children attend school irregularly, with frequent dropouts. Few displaced households have health insurance, but they face two major challenges: difficulty renewing their insurance due to lack of funds, and doctors often referring them to private pharmacies where medicine prices are prohibitively expensive. Regarding religious and cultural institutions, both FGDs reported no significant negative effect on displaced households.

The study paid particular attention to the quality of social services, such as schools and hospitals, compared to those in the original community. Data from FGD One indicated that there is no significant difference in quality. However, when living in their original location, it was relatively easier to access health care and other social services. In the current situation, lack of income poses a major challenge to accessing health services. Similarly, FGD Two

highlighted a serious risk due to sewage discharge from the nearby hospital, which affects their residence and living conditions. Contaminated plastic waste is carelessly discarded and accumulates in unattended areas. Children collect these contaminated plastics for use at home, and cattle feed on them, mistaking them for grass, which may lead to serious health problems.

The data collected from the population revealed a significant difficulty in political participation among displaced households. Although there are no formal restrictions on political involvement, the depth of their vulnerability has led to widespread dissatisfaction and disengagement from political activities. Kumsa, one of the study participants and a village leader (Dura ta'aa Gare) appointed by the government, shared his observations about the political situation in his village:

I am one of the village leaders assigned by the government. When I announce meetings or other political matters, no one accepts or participates. When I ask why they are absent, they always complain that they have no interest in politics because they feel hopeless and powerless.

Similarly, Wasihun, one of the study's core interviewees, said that although displaced households will inevitably be marginalized in new settlements, political involvement is a serious problem. Additionally, Boja, the study's other important informant, stated that nobody is working to address the problem of displaced households. Displaced households received unfair compensation or none at all as a result of DID's vulnerability, which sparked complaints. As a result, they view themselves as powerless citizens and detest becoming involved in politics.

The data obtained through in-depth interviews with study participants, particularly women from displaced households, revealed the widespread and serious challenges affecting their welfare in multiple ways. First, these women bear the primary responsibility for their families. Although family matters depend largely on them, they have no income to meet their families' needs since their assets have been taken away, leading to frustration and hopelessness. Second, they face a dual burden: managing household responsibilities while also working as domestic laborers in other homes, often facing violence, as this is their only means to generate income. Third, the situation becomes especially difficult during pregnancy and after childbirth until the child grows older, mainly because working outside the home as daily laborers is particularly challenging during this period.

Bekeshe, one of the informants, shared her challenge as follows:

Before having my child, I worked as a domestic worker in other people's homes to support my family, even though the income was small. Currently, I am caring for my infant at home, but there is no subsistence available, and my child cries because I have lost milk due to a breast condition.

The data from the FGDs highlighted the widespread serious challenges faced by vulnerable groups within displaced households, including women, people living with disabilities, and children. Women struggle with dual roles: managing family responsibilities while working as domestic laborers in other households to support their families. According to FGD One, people living with disabilities face significant social and economic difficulties because the assets they relied on for their livelihood have been lost. Unlike others, they find it hard to earn

temporary income through daily labor due to their disabilities. Consequently, these groups are experiencing a life of hardship. Similar to FGD One, data from FGD Two confirmed that these vulnerable populations face comparable challenges. Additionally, some children from displaced households have become involved in substance abuse and delinquency due to a lack of hope for their future. Regarding older people, there was traditionally a cultural practice at their place of origin where community members helped elders who had no support with farming and harvesting. However, with the loss of assets, destruction of the village, and neighbors relocating to different areas, the subsistence of older people is now at serious risk.

Similarly, the data obtained from key informant Wasihun indicated that the most vulnerable group of people in this displacement process are rural youths, who are simply classified as members of their family for compensation due to the asset that was given to them by their parents and registered by their parent's Green Card. The proclamation stated that urban youths should have access to 200 m² of land for building homes, but it made no mention of rural youth. In the case of displacement, women are the other vulnerable demographic. Some husbands choose not to use their extra money for the family's subsistence after receiving their compensation, instead spending it at undesirable establishments like beer shops in the nearby town. However, other women suffered because their husbands had two or more wives. Some husbands who have multiple wives collect their compensation under the name of just one wife and use the funds with this woman in a nearby town; the other husbands suffer greatly with their kids.

The individuals interviewed in detail express their most significant psychological struggles, which include hopelessness, isolation, depression, trauma, confusion

(madness), and stress. Among all these psychological challenges, hopelessness and stress have been recognized as the most pressing issues for the population being studied in the designated area.

The information gathered from in-depth interviews regarding the frequency of conflict between displaced households and the host community, as well as how that conflict was resolved, revealed that conflict arises from various shortages. Discussion and tolerance between the displaced household and the host community, especially among believers, can sometimes lead to a solution. Additionally, village and religious elders mediated the dispute. Additionally, the conflict was resolved by the village's government-appointed leaders.

The information gathered from FGD One regarding the state of traditional networks, including kinship, neighbors, religious groups, etc. showed that, due to the households' individual lifestyles brought on by their lack of income, they are both weak and on the path to disappearing. In fact, religious groups still make up the majority of traditional social networks. The information gathered from FGD Two regarding the state of traditional networks, including kinship, neighbors, religious groups, etc. demonstrated that, despite its precarious state, the community still has a social network.

When examining the social effect of development-induced displacement on household welfare, it is important to consider how it affects traditional customs, festivals, or communal practices. The prevalence of the detrimental effect on traditions, celebrations, or group activities was revealed by the data gathered from both FGD One and FGD Two. According to FGD Two, during festivals in their original village, neighbors would prepare food in one household house during the harvesting of crops, especially 'teff' crop, and everyone would eat (enjoy) it together, from young children to elderly people. In addition to eating and enjoying food, this festival has an

important social component. However, in the post-displacement scenario, this important festival was ruined because the households dispersed throughout various villages and lost their possessions.

Examining how the relocation impacted community cohesion and trust through disputes, the loss of customs, etc. is the main focus of the research. As a result, information gathered from NGOs' key informants revealed that conflict arises from various situations with new neighbors. Additionally, since they scattered across various villages, it became more difficult to carry out religious ritual ceremonies. Additionally, it is extremely difficult for the church to promptly visit displaced households in various locations.

The other important aspect of the study is examining how displacement affected customs related to their original land, such as festivals, ceremonies, or burial customs. According to key informants Mohamed and Aklilu, there is no bolded difficulty with the ceremonies mentioned. However, key informant Taresa responded in the affirmative, saying that in order to receive full church services, a single believer should contribute in a variety of ways. Due to their lack of funds, displaced households make any kind of membership contribution, even though multiple contributions are required to receive full church services.

One of the most important issues for a household that has been uprooted from their place of origin and has lost various assets that they used for their welfare many years ago is the emotional challenge. The information gathered from the first focus group discussion regarding the most prevalent emotional difficulties faced by displaced households revealed that stress and despair were prevalent because their children were at grave risk for the future. In a similar vein, the data from FGD Two showed that the most prevalent emotional challenge is stress and frustration for their

children's future and their own subsistence because they have no other choice. According to Wasihun, a key informant, the most prevalent emotional challenges faced by displaced households are grief, anger, and hopelessness.

The other important aspect of this study is examining the distinct spiritual or emotional needs that displaced communities express. The key informant Mohamed then talked about how social attachment, acceptance, respect for their ideas (complain), encouragement as a hero, inclusion, and so on are regarded as spiritual or emotional needs for displaced households. Another important aspect of the study is how displaced households feel about freely practicing their faith in resettlement areas. According to Taresa, one of the key informants, there are no bolded rumors regarding the detrimental effect on religious practices in the new village.

One area that received significant attention in the study was the effect of displacement on family dynamics. The information gathered from FGD One and FGD Two showed that family dynamics are frequently challenged. In the past, the wife made money by gathering animal products like milk, butter, and cheese, as well as by growing vegetables like cabbage and carrots and fruit trees like avocados around the homes. In the present, however, they merely wait for their husbands' daily labor as breadwinners and work as domestic helpers. Additionally, the FGD One talked about how family dynamics affected the group's initial (during displacement) petty trade, in which the group's wife built a very small shed as a source of income for the family's welfare. Instead of promoting the creation of jobs, the officials destroyed the shed and put people in jail. Following the family's survival, the group became embroiled in a severe psychological disturbance.

The study also focuses on the largest gaps that impede the effectiveness of the social support system after displacement. According to the data gathered from both FGD One and FGD Two, this population's lack of attention is the largest gap in the social support system. Because of compensation, NGOs, officials, and other stakeholders believe that this population is wealthy.

One of the necessary areas of the study is comprehending how religious institutions and non-governmental organizations assist displaced households prior to, during, and following displacement. As a result, nothing is available, according to key informants Mohamed and Akililu. However, Taresa answers in the affirmative. Even though basic necessities are gathered from believers and provided to displaced households solely for church members' post-displacement needs, the support is inconsistent.

Recognizing the effect of displacement on access to places of worship (e.g. The g. houses, churches, mosques, and temples) is crucial to understanding DID in the study area. Key informants from non-governmental organizations explained that issues are as prevalent as those that are bolded.

The study looks into the circumstances of women, children, people with disabilities, and the elderly. In light of this, the data gathered from FGD One revealed that older adults, women, people with disabilities, and children faced particular difficulties as a result of displacement. Many children from displaced families are forced to leave school and enter the workforce on a daily basis. The elderly are utterly perplexed about their means of subsistence. Some elderly people rent their land and other assets to support themselves prior to being relocated. Others share their land and other assets equally with the people who work there on a yearly basis. However, since they lost their asset and were unable to participate in the workforce after being

displaced, they have been living in a dark situation their entire lives.

One of the most important aspects of the study is examining the frequency of reports of increased substance abuse, domestic violence, or suicide after relocation. According to information gathered from key informants from non-governmental organizations, substance abuse, domestic violence, and suicide are recognized. Recognizing how access to places of worship has been impacted by displacement (e. The g. houses, churches, mosques, and temples) is crucial to understanding DID in the study area. Key informants from non-governmental organizations explained that issues are as prevalent as those that are bolded.

Descriptive Observation

Informants, including Sorome and Gichile, highlighted that displacement has eradicated their income sources, thereby limiting their capacity for social participation, especially in activities requiring financial contributions. Additionally, the cultural shift towards individualism has altered the traditional concept of “social life,” which was previously characterized by collective engagement and mutual support. Further, social interactions are now limited to superficial greetings, and their roles in community leadership are diminished, with them being regarded as ordinary members rather than leaders.

Analytical Interpretation

The loss of income sources directly affects individuals' ability to participate socially and economically within their community. The shift towards individualism signifies a cultural transformation that undermines collectivist values, potentially leading to social alienation and reduced community cohesion. The marginalization of displaced community members from leadership roles indicates a decline in social agency and participatory governance. This can lead to decreased

community empowerment and hinder collective decision-making processes essential for community development.

Implications

These findings suggest that displacement not only impacts economic stability but also cultural identity and mental well-being. Addressing individual well-being requires integrated approaches that restore economic livelihoods and reinforce culturally rooted social practices. The erosion of community structures could lead to increased social isolation, diminished collective efficacy, and potential difficulties in mobilizing community resources for development or crisis response. Policy interventions should prioritize rebuilding social capital through community-based programs that foster new networks and support systems. To foster social inclusion and effective community participation, development programs should incorporate leadership capacity-building initiatives and create platforms for displaced individuals to engage meaningfully in local governance.

Overall Significance and Broader Implications

The findings underscore that development-induced displacement in East Wallaga has profound social consequences, disrupting traditional community structures, diminishing individual well-being, and marginalizing community members from leadership roles. These patterns reflect a broader trend where displacement undermines social cohesion, cultural identity, and social capital, which are vital for sustainable community development.

Policy and Practice Recommendations

Initiate community-driven programs to rebuild kinship and social ties in new settlements. Economic Support and Livelihood Programs: Facilitate access to income-generating activities to restore economic stability. Promote cultural activities that reinforce traditional social values and practices. Create avenues for

displaced community members to participate in local governance and decision-making. Generally, the detrimental social effect of displacement brought on by development on household welfare is often a major concern for all parties involved. According to several informants, the problem is heartbreak and a significant burden on the population being studied. Everyone must respond to it promptly and appropriately.

DISCUSSION

This finding is consistent and extends existing empirical research by highlighting the devastating effects of displacement on community cohesion and individual well-being. Previous studies, such as those of Cernea (2000) and Oliver-Smith (2010), have shown that displacement often disrupts social networks, kinship networks, and cultural traditions, leading to social fragmentation and psychological distress. As a result, participants reported the dissolution of important social institutions such as the 'dabo', 'idir', and 'ikbu', which have historically played an important role in social support and resource sharing.

This study confirms previous findings that displacement leads to social disintegration and reduces participation in public life, especially in leadership positions. However, a unique aspect observed is a change in cultural conceptions of 'social life', moving from a communal orientation to a more individualistic approach, although this adaptation has not been well documented in similar contexts. While some studies (e.g., Adams et al., 2015) emphasize the resilience and rebuilding of communities after displacement, our results suggest that social fragmentation continues, at least in the short term, and new social networks are difficult to establish. This discrepancy highlights the importance of context-specific factors in influencing recovery trajectories.

From a theoretical perspective, this result reflects social capital theory (Putnam,

2000), according to which social networks and community participation are essential for individual and collective resilience. It is thought that social capital has decreased significantly due to evacuation, leading to a decline in community cohesion and individual well-being. Furthermore, the concept of cultural continuity is also relevant (Kirmayer et al., 2009). The shift towards individualism and the loss of culture-based social practices involves the destruction of cultural identity and can have long-term psychological consequences. The shift from collective social participation to individualistic interaction reflects the collapse of the social structures that support cultural norms and practices.

The results have important ramifications for policies related to displacement. They propose that social networks and community institutions should be preserved and rebuilt in addition to physical relocation as a top priority for resettlement efforts. To promote social cohesion and cultural continuity, policies should use participatory methods that include displaced populations in planning. Furthermore, it is critical to manage economic disruptions because the loss of sources of money impedes leadership engagement and social participation. Designing interventions that respect local norms and promote the restoration of social capital can be made easier by acknowledging the cultural aspects of social life.

By offering complex, situation-specific insights into the social repercussions of development-induced displacement in Ethiopia, this study adds to the expanding corpus of literature. It highlights how social structures and human well-being are intertwined, showing how relocation affects both the collective and individual domains. The results emphasize the necessity of policies that promote social cohesiveness and economic stability in order to lessen negative consequences, as well as the significance of

including social and cultural factors into displacement management.

CONCLUSIONS

The study conducted on the social effects of development-induced displacement on household welfare as other studies identified several social challenges in which displaced households are threatened. The informants in this study reported that the displacement they endured has adversely affected both the social fabric of their community and their personal well-being. The study's in-depth interviews revealed that the population being studied had a variety of psychological difficulties. Among all these psychological challenges, hopelessness and stress have been recognized as the most pressing issues for the population being studied in the designated area. Some households reported serious health problems due to lack of basic necessities. Others pointed out that living in a slum environment, where waste is improperly disposed of and accumulates, further worsens their health conditions.

Many children attend school irregularly, with frequent dropouts. In the current situation, lack of income poses a major challenge to accessing health services. Although there are no formal restrictions on political involvement, the depth of their vulnerability has led to widespread dissatisfaction and disengagement from political activities. Women from displaced households, revealed the widespread and serious challenges affecting their welfare in multiple ways.

Discussion and tolerance between the displaced household and the host community, especially among believers, can sometimes lead to a solution. Additionally, village and religious elders mediated the dispute. Additionally, the conflict was resolved by the village's government-appointed leaders. Social attachment, acceptance, respect for their ideas

(complain), encouragement as a hero, inclusion, and so on are regarded as spiritual or emotional needs for displaced households.

Generally, various social challenges are persisted with the population being studied. No significant attempt is made neither from government nor NGOs in which social challenges of displaced households are addressed. The observed patterns highlight the need for integrated, culturally sensitive interventions that address both social and economic dimensions of displacement. Recognizing the intertwined nature of community structures and individual well-being is essential for designing effective policies that promote resilience and social cohesion in displaced populations. The study concluded that while development is important, it must be people-centered rather than project-centered. So, the issue of displaced households as a result of different development initiatives is multifaceted and need urgent and furthers investigation, recommendation as well as any one response.

CRedit authorship contribution statement

Kassahun Ayele: Conceptualization, methodology, Investigation and writing

Semeneh Bessie: Visualization, validation and supervision, review and editing

Getachew Magnar: Validation. Supervision, review and editing

Declaration of competing interest

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest.

Data availability

Data will be made available on request

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