Exploring public policy on the challenges of internally displaced persons in Nigeria

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Abstract
The major objective of this study is to investigate the effects of public policies toward mitigating Internally Displacement in Nigeria. These are groups of persons forced to leave their places of habitual residence due to violation of human right, situations of generalized violence natural or human made disasters. These people suffer high rates of mortality than the peaceful or normal environment as they are frequently deprived of adequate shelter, education, food and health service. Even these displaced are not in peaceful relationship with the host communities due to the destruction and violation of their economy and cultural lives. Consequently, there are more incidence of cases relating to poverty within the locality. Efforts of the public policy targeted to mitigate the conflicts, yielded little or no result. The paper indicated the causes to the low level of accountability of the leaders, bad governance, poverty, corruption, insecurity amongst others. The study adopted a historical approach to the political research and used secondary sources of information. The study applied conflict management theory which focuses on bargaining strategies and negotiating process as means to improve the relationship between the government institutions and the citizens. The study found that the inability of the government to come up with good policies has led to bad governance which exacerbates agitation of even development in the society. In sum up lack of sustainable development were the main problem to conflicts that led to displacement of persons from their environment. It is therefore recommended that the entire reviewing of the government policies with a view in making impact for sustainable development in the country.

Keywords: Corruption, Governance, Institutions, Public policy, Security

1. Introduction

Governance, of late, is complicated and burdensome for the governing class and the governed. The complication is attributed to the ever- changing nature of human beings and the dissolution of the erstwhile United Socialist Soviet Republic (USSR) which led to the spread of ideologies and systems of governance especially in the Eastern Europe. (Berger (1986), Governance to an average member of the western bloc is a democracy where citizens through periodic elections, elect their representatives and as well reserve the right to recall if they fail to do their bidding. (UNGP 2013). This idea of governance places a lot of powers in the citizens both in the political and economic scenes. Thus, this system is totally different in the eastern bloc where the state is a

major determinant to 'who gets what, when and how' (Itah, 2012).

In Africa, it is undeniable that the continent has had some difficult moment during the last fifty years (Itah 2012). Broadly-speaking, in all the cases of political instability, it is evident that the major problem is leadership (Itah 2012). These countries including Nigeria has seen their freedom heroes turn into dictators, by plundering their natural resources into politics of exclusion and deprivation. Today, almost every country of Africa is still haunted by historical injustices and oppressive structures created by the post-colonial leadership. Such situation has provided weak institutions, flawed legislative system and struggles for political power to the detriment of

development as part of modern societies (Berger, 1986). This leadership dilemma and many other governance related malpractices are being challenged from within, as people began to understand the broader implications of bad governance and the governance structures that are autocratic and oppressive. The end result is armed conflict, human rights violations and generalized violence excluding natural disasters and development which has put the estimated number of IDPs in Africa to 15 million (Berger 1986).

Tracing the evolution of governance and government in Nigeria, Ugoh (2016) argues that the problem of legitimacy in governance was laid during the emergence of the independence. According to him, the colonial system and its agencies exploited the people to the extent that they do not see to known how to adopt. In a simplest form, anything that reduces the quality of life or infringes on human security (conflict, security of vital resources, environmental degradation that leads to displacement of persons from their homes) is considered a threat to human security. According to the United Nations Guiding Principles (2013) a group of persons that were forced to flee or leave their homes or place of habitual residence as a result of, or in order to avoid the effects of armed conflict, situations of generalized violence, violations of human rights or natural or human-made disaster, and have not crossed an internationally recognized state border are called the IDPs (UNGP 2013). At present, such displacement of persons remains the most significant humanitarian challenges facing the world today including Nigeria. For example, the Boko Haram insurgency attacks, the farmers-herders crisis, the bandits' attacks in the northern part have increase the number of IDP in the country. Efforts of the government policies towards addressing the crisis have not yielded much positive result. The paper therefore, examines the effects of the internally displaced persons and the policies towards mitigating the conflicts

Objectives of the study
The main objective of the study is to examine the various governmental issues in relation to insecurity and causes of displacement of persons in Nigeria. Also, evaluate the economy and level of poverty in the land, which possibly are some of the causes shall be evaluated. Furthermore, the work, assesses the impact of IDPs and government policies in term of protection and assistance for socio-economic development. Finally, the paper seeks to investigate the relationship between the IDPs and the host communities hereby, proffer solutions toward ameliorating the crisis.

2. Methodology
A qualitative cum theoretical research was adopted. In this work, and thus, relied on secondary data. In other words, the work obtained information by using published and unpublished materials such as textbooks, journals, seminar and conference paper as well as other printed materials. It is also pertinent to mention that this work obtained some data through personal interviews of workers to get various information related to the work.

2. Literature Review
Conceptual clarification
Governance
Governance, to some scholars means the actions and policies towards proper implementation by members of the governing body of a government. (Itah 2012; Onah 2005) It involves the mechanisms to balance the powers of the members and their duty of enhancing the prosperity and viability of an organization of government. Governance, therefore, implies a mutual watch by both the agencies of government. It is the process which elements in society wield power, authority and influence to enact policies

and decisions concerning the public life and social upliftment.

Governance as a concept is the command mechanism of a political system that encompasses the formulation and implementation of policies, goals and activities. According to UNESCO (2007), governance comprises the traditions through which economic, political and social authority is applied. It asserts that the central purpose of governance is human security and, maintenance of public welfare, law and order. Kaufmann et al (2015) interrogates issues in governance. They opine governance to be the process by which governments are selected, monitored and replaced. Further, they emphasize governance on the capacity of the government to effectively formulate and implement public policies and respect for institutions.

The conventional opinion on governance in Nigeria focused on power, domination, oppression, force and control which existed as sole authority to enact laws. Hence, the contemporary concept of governance as explicated by the World Bank is suggestive of shared rule in public administration. According to the World Bank (2019) the purpose of political power was to deliver acceptable socio-economic outcomes in terms of effective management of national resources, poverty reduction and sustainable development. The UNDP also delineated governance in societal terms of participation, consensus orientation, equity, etc (UNDP 2012).

Development scholars have conceived governance as formal and informal institutional relationships that exercise power mainly to manage the collective affairs of a political community (Gisselqiust 2012) and articulate legal rights, civil obligations and shared prosperity (Weiss 2010). (Peters and Pierre 2007) posit governance as political mechanism based not only on bureaucratic authority and sanction, but public service effectiveness. The definition depicts governance clearly as multi-level and multi-sectoral activities that emanated from achievement of the purposes of the state and promotion of common good. The convergence of these experts consistently portrayed governance as the exercise of state authority in ways that advance capacities for the poor and better livelihood for all. The OECD (2014) and Economist Intelligence Unit Report (2017) explicate the nature of governance based on the existential imperative need to direct authority decisions toward accomplishment of common goals. These perceptions predicated on societal progress, engendered fresh perspective in governance debate especially among developing nations.

The sum up derived from these studies suggested that public officials exercise state power for political and economic emancipation, as well as to accelerate human development. This study intellectualized good governance as responsive exercise of public authority to formulate and administer citizen-friendly policies that satisfy socio-economic needs. From the above, this paper has tried to look at governance, its various meanings, variants and failures expected of it in an ideal society. The role of environment has also been explored in shaping the concept of governance. An existence of good governance is almost useless if the idea of public policy is separated from such a society as both concepts are inter-related. Good governance can only foster in a society where public policy makers ought to address problems caused by social phenomenon and bad governance. It follows therefore, in a quest to find good governance there is need to formulate and implement policies towards sustainable development of the society.

Theoretical framework

The paper applies the use of conflict theory which is relevant to this study. Dahrendorf (1959) rightly observes that in spite of the various institutional or organization efforts

made to recruit suitable workers, the workers always display strange habits. He therefore attributes these factors like environment, localism, orientation as the main causes of conflict in the society.

Conflict also arises in the organization or institution between the management and the workers. In spite of the set of rules and objectives guiding sides, these rules and objectives may be violated especially in the welfare matters which led to conflict of interest.

Conflict therefore, is an advanced form of intense disappointment over values between two parties or governance and the governed. The culmination of the unresolved dissatisfaction, complaint and grievance can be dangerous. Conflict theory, according to (Otite and Ogionwo 1979) is a theory of society that is open to problem of Social Stratification as in the case of the displacement of people. Karl Marx has related this to economics theory and state that the force of production determines other relations such as political, religion and judicial (cited in Imhanlahimhim1999). In fact, the forces of production which determines the relation, if stretched, may led to conflict. The disequilibrium between parties over demand and refusal to grant the request may result in dissatisfaction and grievance conflict. Nigeria has been dealing with conflicts with Boko Haram which is a terrorist group. Such conflict forces people to leave their homes and seek refuges to safety environment (UNHCR et al, 2023). Apart from this fighting over land crisis especially farmers and herders has also caused conflict that driven many people out of their homes (Blench et al, 2019).

Changes in the environment, like floods also plays a role not only in forcing people to move (IOM et al, 2022), but created poverty among the IDP who struggle to survive in an unfamiliar place. In fact, most of the Nigerian citizens are displaced due to violent conflicts to control territories and imposition of extreme religious laws (Onuoha et al, 2020).

Thus, conflict as a concept is related to dissatisfaction, complaints and grievance which involves problem and discontent prone in a society (Imnanlahimhin, 1999). Conflict theory is a theory of society open to problems of social stratification which include political, religious and economic. This theory however, has been criticized, on the fact, that other forces, such as ideology, political structure and processes might be the determinants of other relations in the society.

In Nigeria, there are large number of IDP scattered across various states as a result multiplicity of causes. Still there is no reliable datable to give a comprehensive detail of their profile in the country. Infact, the number of IDPs which continued to increase due to conflict induced internal displacement led the government to come up with national policy on IDPs. The policy which is a reflected of the realities provided by the Kampala convention for the protection and assistance of IDPS induced the government to sign and ratify it in 2012. (Abubakar 2023).

Whatsoever, every organization or society experiences conflict but how to manage the conflict is the concern of this paper.

4. Results and Discussion
Analysis of Internally Displaced Person in Nigeria

Nigeria was a colony of the British government, a strong adherent of the capitalist system of government which abandoned the parliamentary system in 1979 for the presidential system of government. The decision to follow this system of government comes from the fact that it is contingent and convenient to accommodate the ethnic makeup of the society. It was also a response to weaken the regions that were initially strong during the parliamentary system. At present, power and public policy is centralized and embodied into the federal with a creation of

lists detailing the powers and areas controlling the different items of governance.

Economically, the country is one of the leading states in the African continent. Nigeria has been able to modernize her economy and emerge as one of the prosperous nations, although a vast potential in economic field still remains unexploited. The country is a leading oil producing nation in Africa and the tenth largest in the world (Ugoh 1996). Ironically, oil being its main source for earning foreign exchange has emerged as a dominant political issue intensifying the strike between the oil producing communities and the federal government. On this basis, one may hypothetically agreed that the more limited the scope of the government, the more intensively and extensively ethnic groups scramble for available resources even to the point of strife. Thus, the scarcity of vital resources in the land is one of the major factors for displacement of persons as a result of conflict and crisis that may arise within the environment.

Another issue leading to the displacement of persons is as a result of conflict with ethnic-religious undertones. The tremendous rise of Boko Haran insurgency which has recorded un-presidented killings especially in the northern part of the country further increased the high level of IDPs. According to Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre Report (IDMC) 2015, there are over 2,152,000 displaced persons in that part of the country (IDMC2015) as table wise shows.

No	States and FCT	No. of IDPS
1.	Abuja (FCT)	13,481
2.	Adamawa	136,010
3.	Bauchi	70,078
4.	Benue	55,393
5.	Borno	1,434,149
6.	Gombe	25,332
7.	Kaduna	36,976
8.	Kano	9,331
9.	Nasarawa	37,553
10.	Plateau	77,317
11.	Taraba	50,227
12.	Yobe	131,203
13.	Zamfara	44,929

Source: National Emergency Monitoring Agency (NEMA 2018) Internally displacement monitoring centre December

Incidence of dashes between Herdsmen and the farmers as well as the government forces and bandits added to the high levels of IDPs. Moreover, the inability of the federal government to provide a permanent home to over 400, 000, 00 Bakassi returnees from the oil-rich Bakassi Peninsula ceded to the Cameroonians by the International Court of Justice in 2008 increased the figures of the IDPs in the land (Nyong 2008). Again, the natural disaster including flooding annually has accounted to 2.5 percent of the displacement of persons across the country. The recent flooding disaster with the displacement of people across the country is an ample example (NEMA 2018).

Besides, the extreme poverty, lack of equal access to socio-economic resources and unbalance infrastructural development has not only increased the levels of IDPs but also created the high unemployment rate among the skilled and unskilled youths

(Laden 2009). Indeed, the high rate of political corruption in the society and environmental induced displacements has become the norms to social vices (Nwanegbo and Odigbo 2013). Similarly, internally displaced persons may occur during and after any general election as reported that about 65,000 displaced persons were witnessed in 2015 due to post-election conflicts and violence mainly in northern states of Nigeria (NEMA 2015) Surprisingly enough, the government undue emphasis to respond or mitigate on these plights because of the low-attention on disaster-induced displacement has resulted to mainly disaster risk reduction. The approach therefore lacks strategic idea to respond the high rate of displaced people and remedies. As stated in the constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, it is the duty of the government to promote among other thing the security and welfare of the people (The constitution1999). Consequently, most IDPs leave their houses and properties to the neighbouring communities to take refuge in alternative places like schools, military and police barracks including places of worships. In fact, their vulnerability affected access to health care delivery, education, employment, information to decision, etc. These displaced persons encounter all manners of abuse including rape insecurity, and exploitation to women and children, the sick and elders, pregnant women among others.

This apart, these IDPs are denied, access to justice in every ramification such as discrimination against ethno-religious issues, marginalization, recovering of property by widows and cases of human rights violations.

Interestingly, most of these IDPs are accommodated by host communities where they experience pressure due to overcrowding of the former in areas of social basic amenities such as water clinics, housing etc. On occasions, these IDPs cut down trees for firewood and the use of charcoal burning for cooking resulting to hazardous environment. Often, IDPs over burden the host community services and economic livelihood opportunities which arises tensions making integration difficult between both parties. Be as it may, these large number of IDPs scattered across many states as a result of multiplicity of crises which has led to the Nigerian government to consider a national policy in 2006.

Public Policies and Strategies for Mitigating the Challenges of IDPS
Internally displacement as observed affects not only the lives of displaced people but also the host communities on socio-economic development. Through the harm of causes of the people, their ability to livelihood and access to security, education, housing and other basic infrastructure has weighed heavily on individual, community and national economy. Broadly-speaking, the governments of the states where internally displaced persons are predominant has not done much to protect the lives of these people while the international community role is only complementary. Notably, no international organization has been assigned to protect and assist the IDPs, rather they are to compliment with local agencies to help their needs.

The National policy endorsed by government on IDPs is mainly to prevent and protect the vulnerable people from incidence of arbitrary forms of internal displacement. Similarly, this policy draws guidelines from the International Conventions and Treaties on the prevention of internal displacement of people. In addition, this policy incorporated the African Union Convention popularly known as Kampala Convention, the UN Guiding Principles and the sphere minimum standards for Humanitarian Assistance which importantly has specified the guidelines to protect and assist the internal displacement in Nigeria.

Nevertheless, Nigeria has approved a national policy for IDP in determination to bring succour to them in 2012. The policy serves as a milestone in government's determination to ameliorate the plights for the conflict. Also, it is to provide a platform for various relevant actors in the humanitarian and development arena to involve towards achieving a common goal. Another important aim of the policy is to strengthen the institutional mechanism for the realization of the vulnerable people through the mitigation of impact and achievement of solutions to the displaced (Abubakar, 2023).

Thus, if government is responsible of preventing internal displacement and the protection of IDPs, it also means that government is to stop the on-going violations and provide redress for past violations as stipulated in the international human rights law. In line with this, the government ensures the realization of the rights of IDPs on the basis of the principle of humanity, neutrality, impartiality, independence and protection from harm and abuse (Handbook 2010).

However, efforts by both governments and humanitarian organizations toward mitigating IDPs crisis yielded little or no result. Government endorsement on IDPs policy has actually demonstrated a political will, which does not suggest the solutions. In a nutshell, the government policy is merely a commitment to take actions, strategies and mechanisms for ameliorating the challenges of internal displacement. It is, therefore, a commitment of the government and its ministries and agencies to put in measures and strategies for the preventing all causes of displacement; raising awareness of the problems of displacement; implementing a national policy on IDPs. The other strategies include ensuring the active participation of IDPs in decision makeup; to allocate adequate resources to tackle the IDPs crisis; to seek and strengthen cooperation with the host communities and international communities among others (The Sphere Project 2004). Nevertheless, the policy is merely to achieve solution to the crisis of internal displacement. As the Inter-Agency standing committee (ASC) Stated that a solution is achieve when internally displaced persons no longer have any enjoy their human right without discrimination (Abubakar 2023). It is therefore the responsibilities of all government agencies to provide measures to ensure that IDPs achieve a permanent solution.

Evidently, the government has not provided enough in terms of preventing the problems of internal displacement and, thereby lacks the capacity to provide enough resources to achieve development. This non-availability of essential needs and basic amenities to the citizens has contributed to IDPs crisis. Nigeria is a signatory to International policies for the protection of IDPs, yet the effectiveness in dealing with the spread seems to be problematic. At the local level, established NEMA in 1999 in a bid to address and respond to emergency situations including IDPs, however the agency has been accused of doing little or nothing towards mitigating the crisis. The fact still remains that most of the humanitarian aids provided to cater for the IDPs are mainly from the voluntary organizations and individuals in the society. Recently, the Stephen Ugoh foundation donated some items worth of millions, of naira to Gidan Yan Gudun Hijira IDPs camp in Katsina, Katsina State. (See www. stephen ugoh.com) Corruption on occasions, has affected the capacity to mitigate the high level of IDPs because most of the items provided for distribution to the camps are; stolen among the government officials feed fat from these items. These officials due to the unmeasurable means to check the commodities and the failure of the government to provide legitimate needs resulted into their allegiance to the more

responsive groups like religion or ethnicity to the point of identifying with terrorists.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

Attempts have been made in the research work to investigate various factors that have cause internally displacement in Nigeria. The paper noted that the inability to provide equal resources among the people has resulted into conflicts. Even the public policies targeted to mitigate the problems yielded little or no results due to corruption among the worker. The work also showed that the IDPs and host communities were in conflicts as a result of environment and economic violations. Most often, the government intervention targeted only the displaced populations by neglecting the needs of the host communities. Thus, effect of these crisis is pointing to lack of government low budget allocations to most sectors of the economy, which lead to poverty in the land, and has, resulted into formations of terrorist group.

General Recommendations

Having discussed the IDPs and the government policies on the crisis, the following recommendations have been propagated towards mitigating the high increase of IDPs.

Firstly, there is need to increase the budgetary allocation to education, health, agriculture and housing sectors. Such increments would provide adequate amenities for the citizens, and hence, provide sustainable development in the country.

Secondly, there is need for the government to provide security and shelter for the farmers against the bandits for adequate food productions. The government should decentralize the IDP camps to different government levels for easy accessibility and communication free from hostilities among host communities

Thirdly, policies should be formulated for the protection and recognition of old persons and widows who are more resistant to displacement. Also, there is need for policy formulation to the disability persons to receive medical care and to women who are vulnerable to attacks and other form of vices.

Fourthly, most children lose their parents during communal conflicts and disaster. These children should be made to enjoy the Child Right Act' and other similar laws as contains in the Nigeria constitution. In fact, internal displacement interrupt children's education and separates them from their familiar school environment making them to lose focus while managing the stress and trauma associated with their displacement. In this case, there is need to avoid every conflict that may led to crisis in a society.

Fifthly, most population movements have visible effects on the environment as a result of natural disaster. The loss of livelihoods also has indirect consequences by forcing IDPs to engage in unsustainable income. The government at this point should ensure that natural disaster areas are adequately taken care of before any damage is done.

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