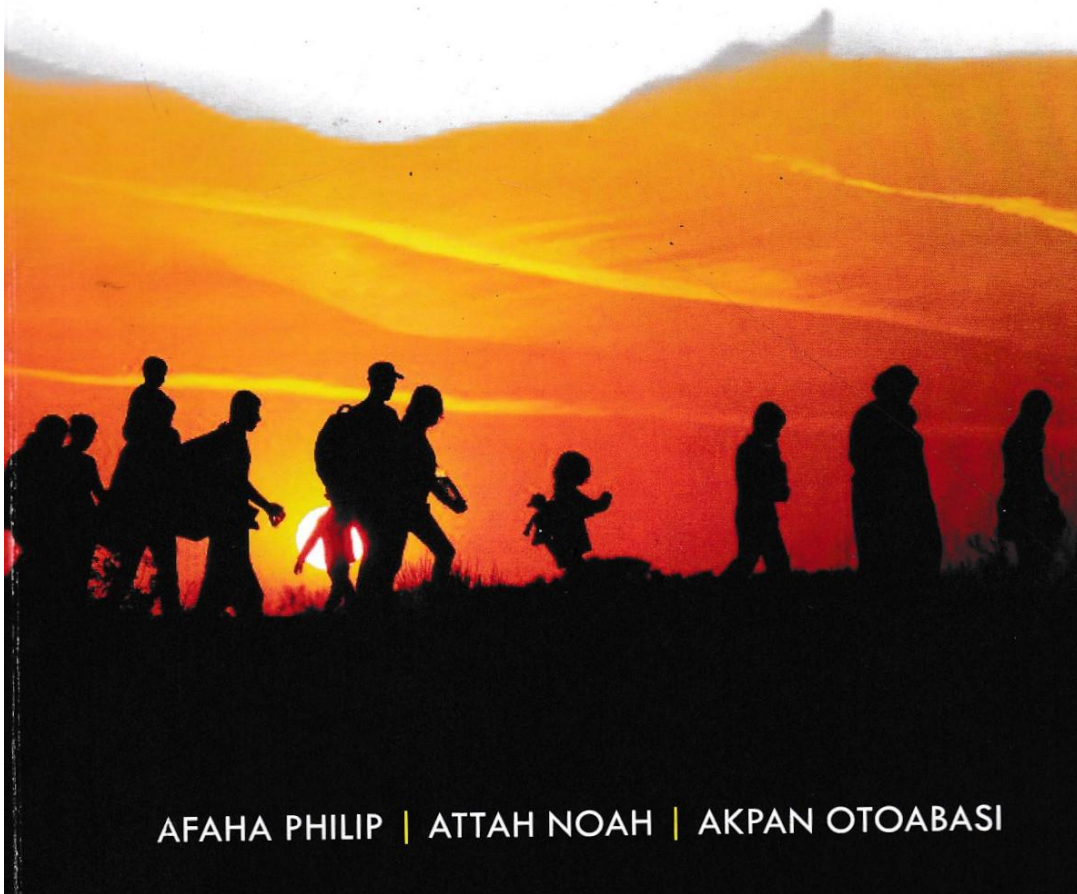


# FORTRESS OF TENTS:

DYNAMICS OF POPULATION DISPLACEMENTS IN NIGERIA



AFAHA PHILIP | ATTAH NOAH | AKPAN OTOABASI

Printed and published in Nigeria by:

**BRANDMORE COMMUNICATION**  
Block A6, Suite 5, Commerce Plaza,  
Off Federal Secretariat, Area 1,  
Garki Abuja, Nigeria | 08165557485

© Copyright: Afaha Philip, Attah Noah, Akpan Otoabasi

#### WARNING!

All rights are reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without prior permission of the Copyright Owner.

ISBN: 978-978-993-199-6

## CHAPTER NINE

### MINORITY ETHNIC NATIONALITIES: VICTIMS OF POPULATION DISPLACEMENT IN NIGERIA

Etim O. Frank

#### ABSTRACT

*The study examined the faith of the Minority ethnic nationalities in and posited that they are often the victims of population displacement, in all situations of conflict in Nigeria, especially in the Northeastern part of Nigeria, where there are several minorities per square kilometre. Minority ethnic nationalities are in this study defined by the five paradigm of Joe Feagan (1984) categorization. The study was conducted through the descriptive research design with focus on the situation in the Northeast, but with cross references to all the other such cases wherever found in Nigeria. The approach revealed that majority-minority conflicts are often ignited by political, social, economic and religious sentiments, often ending with the minorities being displaced into Internally Displace People's camps. The contradictions which often fuel the conflicts are that, in the states where these conflicts seem endemic, economic resources are often located in the land areas occupied by the minority ethnic nationalities, but desired by the majority ethnic group. This situation creates fragile potentials of conflict where very little issue would conflagrate into major conflict. The significant of this study highlights the reluctance of returning the refugees to their ancestral land after many years in the camps. The outcomes of the situation are often the inter-communal crisis, wherein kidnapping, destruction of the farmlands of the minorities are witnessed, intermittent killings as seen in Plateau and Southern Kaduna, Benue, Taraba states respectively as well as the arrest of the elites of the minority ethnic nationalities and labelled as gun-runners and the instigators*

*of the conflict. In the final analysis the land of the minority ethnic nationalities is taken over. It concluded that the population in all the IDP and refugee camps are made up of that of the minority ethnic nationalities, wherever they are in Nigeria. Genuine leadership, education, nation and state building are required to address this situation in Nigeria.*

#### INTRODUCTION

It is natural that in every human cluster there must be majority and minority groups among the people. Even in states which are homogenous such as Somalia, there are conflict. This is managed through skillful act of governance to ensure justice prevail, nation and state building galvanize the citizens into a united-state. In Nigeria the crisis of majority/minority is everywhere in the country but, very pronounced in the northeast. The northeastern states (southern Borno, southern Yobe, northern Adamawa, southern Kaduna is perhaps the area in the whole of Nigeria, where there is minority group per every kilometre of land. The minority are often the victims of kidnapping, farmland devastation by herdsmen, identity conflict and targets of Boko Haram attacks. Joe Feagin averred that minority ethnic nationalities could be described by five main criteria, those (i) suffering discrimination and subordination (ii) Physical and/cultural traits that set them apart and which are disapproved by the dominant group. (iii) A shared sense of collective identity and common burdens (iv) Socially shared rules about who belongs and who does determine minority status (v) Tendency to marry within the group (1984). This is true of the minorities ethnic nationalities everywhere.

It is a fact that every human species was borne into a village, town local government, state or province, precinct and of course a country, no matter how it came to be. They do change country of origin following international protocols, these does not apply in-country. Constitutionally, rights are conferred on citizens who have settled in another state but this does not convert them to indigenes of a community. In Nigeria, there are no citizens but indigenes of a community, indigene is someone whose genealogy can be traced to a particular geo-ethnic space within a local council or state in which he/she is resident. In contrast, a non-indigene, settler or stranger is a

someone who is not a member of the native community living in the area of its authority (Bello, 2019 p.25). Chapter 111, section 31 of the 1999 constitution as amended, described a Nigerian citizen, to be one where a parent or grandparent of a person had a title as a Nigerian before October 1, 1960, the person is automatically a Nigerian. Chapter 4 section 43, every citizen has the right to acquire and own immovable property anywhere in Nigeria. These provisions fall short of addressing the vexed issue of indigenes and settlers which *ab initio* account for much of the conflict which victimizes minority ethnic group and displaces them into camps.

The population of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in the Northeastern part of Nigeria had risen to about 2.2 million, according to the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR). In its 2015 report, it said that regaining control of territory by the military opened access for humanitarian services. UNHCR is working to ensure that IDPs have their basic rights, especially the right to existence, food, shelter, education, security, amongst other amenities. (Nation, Nov 20, 2015). If in 2015 UNCHR reported, the number at about 2.2 million, then in 2020 this figure would have geometrically grown higher, given that Boko Haram incidences and conflict have been continuous in the northeast. It is this problem that *this study* addresses in its entirety.

The minority ethnic nationalities marginalization in Nigeria, is ingrained in the nature of the state and the poverty of governance in Nigeria. Before the problem of Boko Haram, there had been cases of community conflict which displaces mostly ethnic population into temporary camps. This problem is not confined to the Northeast but customary to the nature of countries in most post-colonial states. However, Boko Haram, identity conflict, indigene versus settler crises, desertification and differences in culture has intensified incident of attacks on them and made them inmates of almost all the IDP camps in the Northeast and beyond.

Nigeria history books are replete with the history of seven Hausa states, Kanem Borno, Nupe Biroms, the Tivs the Yorubas with the

sprawling Oyo empire, the Kingdoms of the South East, the province of King Jaja of Opobo, the Benin Kingdom, Chief Eyo Honesty, the blood King of old Calabar etc. These people were having little to do with others in their various territories created by their nation builders for themselves. The empire builders created the Sokoto caliphate which subsumed the seven Hausa states to the Northwest. The North East, had already arisen one of the oldest empire, the Kanem Borno. These were created out of conquest, and as expected, subsumed many small nations that were either defeated or annexed into their fold and remain vassals.

The Europeans then came, one stream through the Guinea on the river Niger and landed at Lokoja and headed northward, while the other, berthed at Badagary and headed eastward. At the time of their arrival, there was no Nigeria, those who later became Nigerians had little or no relations among them, they belonged to several kingdoms, autonomous communities, the Oyo, Sokoto and the Kanem Borno empires among others. These two streams of explorers turned colonialists conquered the existing empires and kingdoms and had northern and southern protectorates. On January 1, 1914, the state of Nigeria was formally borne, and in October 1960 it obtained independence with three and later four regions respectively.

On May 27, 1967, it was divided into twelve (12) states and now thirty-six (36), with seven hundred and seventy-four (774) local government areas. It is currently a democratic country after a long spell of military rule. This structure of the country, the ethnic composition of states, the three main religious practices (Christianity, Islam and Paganism) coupled with the absent of nation-builders lack of good governance have left the nation with great potentials with no one to harness and convert these potentials into greatness. Today, at sixty (60) years after independence, Nigeria have not been able to provide existential needs to its population. One of the problems confronting the Nigerian state is the problem of conflict, which is accentuated by herdsman attack, rural banditry, climate change and identity crises.

The chapter, sought reasonable answers to why minority ethnic nationalities often become victims of ethnic conflict in states with special attention to the northeast. Do these states not embark on state



and nation-building to create unity among the various nations within the state? When there is United Nations Declaration of Human Rights most of which principles are reflected in the constitution of Nigeria. Why do government of these states look away when minority ethnic nationalities are being attack? The study would provide robust analysis to these issues. On specific terms it would explicate the incidences in the northeast and provide qualitative data on the nature and structure of the conflict and affirm the proposition that in many conflict and specifically in the northeast, all inmates of IDP camps, majority of which are women, men and children of minority ethnic nationalities of the states where they come from. The other objective of the narrative was to propose countervailing measures to reduce incidences which make minority ethnic groups in the northeast victims of population displacement in every conflict. These countervailing measures should serve as the substance of orientation for Nigeria. It is expected to aid the drafting of social study program in schools to obliterate historical animosities which trigger these conflicts some of which are myths.

It is also the ambition of the chapter to create a systematic awareness of the factors which drives and trigger violence against minority ethnic nationalities in the northeast occasioning population displacement from ancestral to temporary abode with the attendant socio-economic dislocation of the lives of the population. These linkages would enhance the resolution of conflict to enable Nigerians live in peace which has eluded the northeast zone in the last eight (8) years.

Let it be stated *ab-initio* that the study focus is the North-Eastern states of (Borno, Yobe, Adamawa, Gombe, Taraba and Bauchi states) respectively where the bulk of the IDPs are made up of minority ethnic groups displaced by conflict from their ancestral homes.

### Conceptual Clarifications

**I)** Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs), are those who 'have been forced or obliged to flee or to leave their homes or places of habitual residence, in particular as a result of or in order to avoid the effects of armed conflict, situation of generalized violence, violation of human rights or natural or human-made disasters, and who have not crossed

an internationally recognized state border. IDPs instead rely on national legal framework and the state for protection (UNOCHA, 2004).

**ii)** According to the 1951 Convention relating to the status of refugees as amended by the 1967 protocol, a refugee is a displaced person who has been forced to cross national boundaries and who cannot return home safely. Such a person may be called asylum seeker until granted refugee status by the contracting state or the UNHCR if they formally make a claim for asylum.

**iii)** Refugees often flee persecution for political or religious beliefs, ethnicity, membership of a particular social group.

**iv)** The Northeastern states in this discourse consists of Borno, Yobe, Adamawa, Taraba, Gombe, Bauchi and Kaduna, Plateau and Benue states though these last three are not within the geographical locale of the study, however, references would be made to them.

**v)** Minority Ethnic Nationality- are people of sub-culture from the dominant one in the state, often denied civil and collective rights, prone to differential treatment, discriminated against, are religious minority, subjected to low social status compare to the dominant group and are displaced for the reasons stated in (iii) above.

### Situation Analysis

It is a fact of Nigerian history that social violence had always been there between ethnic groups in Nigeria, such as that between the Yakurr and Idomi of Ugep local government area of Cross River State, Tiv-Jukun, Ife-Modakeke, Zango-Kataf and many others, but they did not generate the social and economic burden which similar cases in the northeast and its attendant population displacement had generated in the last eight (8) years in Nigeria. These cases particularly in the Northeast coupled with Boko Haram has made it mandatory for several persons to be forced to leave their ancestral homes, abandoned their sources of livelihood, disrupt their children education to flee from consisted violence meted by another group on them and the Boko Haram.

The nature of empire created by the nation builders of old as well as the States created in Nigeria, has pitched a lot of ethnic minorities with



major ethnic groups in ways and manner which has placed the minority ethnic as the victims of almost all the conflict everywhere and especially in northern Nigeria. The northern minorities first of all are desirous of minority rights and protection of their ancestral lands. Secondly, they want fair use of religion. This is because religion has been used unfairly against the northern minorities. Because of religion they have lost many of their rights. When Christians want to build churches in some of the predominantly Islamic states, they don't find it easy. In some cases, they do not get the land. These people who demand the right to build churches are also indigenes. The definition and use of religion against them makes them foreigners in their own ancestral land.

These considerable mismatched of minority/majority ethnic groups, all over the north, in Kaduna, Southern Borno, Southern Yobe, northern Adamawa where the ethnic minorities in these states have been under the domination and control of the Kanuri engender numerous crises make conflict probable.

The scenario here is such that in the Northwest is the Hausa/Fulani, in the Northeast is the Kanuri/Shuwa Arab, the in Kaduna you have numerous ethnic groups under the majority Hausa/Fulani, there the culture, religion and language differs but that of the majority group prevailed and above all the minority group losses all civil and collective rights. The empires builders brought them under their control. The first two empires that were built in the north were the Sokoto (Sultanate) caliphate, which came after the Sultanate of Kanem Bornu. When the British came in 1900, and imposed British rule, they took the minority ethnic nationalities of the Middle Belt who were not Muslims, and who were not also Christians at the time and subordinated them to Hausa/Fulani rulers and called it 'indirect rule'. When they granted political independence in October 1, 1960, not every Nigerian was free. There are some ethnic nationalities in the north, which till today, do not have traditional rulers of their own ethnic group, but have some imposed on them. They have different religion, culture and ethnicity yet, people are imposed upon them as rulers. *Every ethnic nationality in Nigeria is equal to the other and should be free to determine their own political state by themselves.* The British

took both their ethnicity and ancestral lands and handed them over to the lordship of the Muslim Hausa/Fulani/Kanuri.

It is edifying to note that there had been states creation and boundary adjustment over the years which would have corrected these seeming colonial imbalance. The authorities that have ruled over the entity Nigeria, appeared not to be guided by ethnicity, culture, religion, linguistic commonality and land which would have theoretically reduced the chances of the problem. This is the scenario which led to Boko Haram and the constant attacks on the minority ethnic groups which has created 2.2 million IDPs by 2015 and an increase of about 45 per cent of that figure at the time of this study 2020.

During this period, there have been the exponential growth of the phenomenon of internally Displaced Population, who are not covered under the 1951 Refugee convention. The customary international Law of 1951 convention, defined a refugee as a displaced person who has been forced to cross national boundaries and who cannot return home safely. Such a person might be called an asylum seeker until granted refugee status by the contracting state (UNHCR, 1967). By this provision of the law, those IDPs are not really refugees whose responsibility rests with UNHCR, who then is to care for them? According to the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian affairs (UNOCHA, 2020), there are IDPs camps in and outside the affected states.

The problematic of this chapter is that there are majority/minority everywhere, who are religious occupational, cultural and linguistic minorities. They are often referred to as minority ethnic nationalities and very often they experience relative deprivation compared to members of the dominant group within the same state. Minority ethnic group are further distinguished by limited civil and collective rights, and are prone to differential treatment and silence discrimination in the societies where they belong. In the Nigerian context, each time conflict occurs, the minority ethnic nationalities as in northern Nigeria, are always the victims. They are neither present in government, security forces nor have numbers for group defense. Ever since the outbreak of Boko Haram, herdsmen and farmers attack, climate change and identity conflict, all the victims who become displaced

from their lands, are members of the minority ethnic groups in the focus states of the northeast.

This phenomenon constitutes but a huge problem when cognizance is taken of the fact that, they are citizens and indigenes of the various states, yet they have limited civil and collective rights, and are prone to differential treatment in the provisions of social, economic and infrastructural amenities. In all they have low social status compare to the dominant group in the state under the same constitutional provisions. To crown it all, they have traditional rulers imposed on them in some places. In all these, the states reactions in most cases smack complicity while they run helter skelter to safety. At the other end, poor public policy of the state has the minority ethnic nationalities as victim as the case of people of Bakassi illustrated. Why was this not a scene in the military era, could it be that the liberty, fraternity and freedom of speech and actions embedded in democratic culture and values are responsible for these overt actions? Are the trouble shooters taking advantage of their kith and kins now with political authority? Why are these act localized in the northeast, Plateau and Benue states? Why must all such actions lead to population displacement from ancestral homes into the IDPs camps, could it be that the lands occupied by the minorities were being sought for?

Does history of the development of the earlier empires have anything to do with this phenomenon in which these minority ethnic nationalities are now being made scapegoats? These questions have made it imperative to interrogate and have an appreciation of the manifest variable and drivers as well as latent manifest triggers which often escalate conflict to the degree which culminate in the displacement of minority ethnic groups with its associated challenges.

The phenomenon is conflict, why do conflict elsewhere in the country not led to population displacement of the minority ethnic nationalities except in the regions in focus? In some cases, the aggressors occupy the ancestral homes of the victims. Are there structural issues which are often not addressed, which repeatedly trigger the re-occurrence of the conflict? What attempts have been made by the state to resolve the crises permanently safe for having the victims lodged in IDP camps? How comprehensive have the attempt by the states been to resolve the problem if any?

The structural issues are that most of the time the minority ethnic nationalities are indigenous people subdued by empires builders who came later, but because they decided to hold onto their cultures, and are not present in government and do not want to relinquish their lands, the government in the context administers latent policy of relative disadvantages on them and their localities and when crisis happen around the minority ethnic nationalities, they are slow to respond. The minority ethnic group become victims of all conflicts.

The elements of the majority ethnic groups rise and prey on minority groups feeling relatively deprived by way of attack, kidnapping, killings and devastation of their farmlands, the trigger is identity conflict. In order to stay alive, the minority ethnic groups migrate to IDP camps. The kidnap of the Chibok and Dapchi school girls in the northeast state of Yobe are manifestations of the nature of the crisis. The victims were all of minority ethnic nationality in their state of origin, where differences exist in culture, religion and languages. In all of these instances, the Nigerian state was lukewarm in its responses. It would be recalled that 'Leah Sharibu' is still in captivity five years after her abduction, whereas the government had negotiated for other's release safe for her.

The implication of the problem if not addressed, would become a new social norm. But why are minority ethnic nationalities in other states of the federation not suffering the same faith? What social capital have been use to prevent this from happening? What can be derived from other states for application in the northeast states to reduce incidences of minority population displacement and its economic dislocation of livelihood? These are some of the issues to be resolved herein.

### **Nature of the Problem**

It is imperative to note that ethnic conflicts are often accentuated by political, social, economic or religious considerations, while the dramatis personae individually and collectively use the conflict for their benefits. The minority ethnic group for inexplicable reasons do not often have personalities to stand for them in and out of the government. Where they do, they are in such minority position that they cannot muster support to drive home a plan. Ironically, in these

states most of the time, economic resources are often located in the lands occupied by the minority ethnic groups, whether as natural resources, renewable resources or agricultural opportunities. The tendency is to play-up identity conflict that one group is either a settler and the other a non- indigene. This is with the intention to permanently displace the minority, and take over their land and the inherent resources. This is classically demonstrated in Nigeria between the north/south and in many other places, however, this is very prominent in the northeastern states where agriculture is the mainstay of the economy, while the fertile land is held by the minority ethnic nationalities. The nature of the problem is now clear.

The problem is of triad nature, persistent attack by Boko Haram, herdsmen attack and identity conflict. Again, why do conflict elsewhere in the country not led to minority population displacement except in the region in focus? In some cases, the aggressors occupy the ancestral homes of the victims lending credence to the thesis of this study.

It creates added challenges to the UNHCR to incur expenditure which would have been spent on the Refugees captured in the 1951 convention and the 1967 Protocol which does not cover the IDPs. The IDPs created in the situation, in the eye of international Humanitarian law are not Refugees hence are not covered in the Protocol. This leave the states and the central government with the responsibility for their care, which often do not come easily. Eighteen years (18) years after Bakassi, the IDPs were on their own until recently aided by the state in 2020.

Another dimension of the problem is that wherever camps are sited, they were built for specific purposes. Those purposes become suspended to accommodate the IDPs. In Borno state for instance, the Arabic Teachers college, Teachers village, NYSC camp had to be converted to IDPs homes. The social development which these facilities were initially created to serve have to be halted or additional fiscal resources have to be sought to continue them at another location.

The continuity of the problem, challenges the capacity of the Nigeria state to deal with it. This is because good governance system should be able to track problems in the state before they turn into one which displaces the citizens, because all problems flow through a paradigm of 'initiation, escalation, control and maintenance, abatement, termination and resolution (Otite, 2007 p.4). Each of these stages have their early warning signals. A grasp of these would have assisted in managing many of the conflict and preventing their occurrence and the attendant challenges.

The problem of the IDPs in the age of COVID 19 is better imagined because in normal time, they are faced by lack of everything in the right measure from all the stakeholders. It is conjectured that until the actual causes and triggers of minority displacement, are isolated and objectively dealt with, Nigeria may have to live with the problem.

The whole gamut of the conflict was scrutinized through the Descriptive study design. This design included the application of observation and recording the events, case-studies for in-depth grasp of particular cases while the surveys module obtained the feeling, opinion/appraisal and the attitude of the participants of the situation (Ndiyo, 2005). This strategy essentially defined the physiognomies (characteristics) of the population involved in the occurrences. It interrogated the sample population of the victims of these conflict in the IDP camps, the nature of the demography, the situation in which the conflict occurred, the sociology and history of the area, in order to isolate what would have accounted for the conflict.

This approach was basically qualitative hence incapable of establishing 'causes and effect' correlations, hence we followed the pattern of 'causes drivers and the triggers'. The observation component recorded several occurrences. The record of occurrences since 2014 were observed and examined. The shrinking of Lake Chad and the resultant internal immigration of cattle herders were noted and consequent social conflict it generated. The case-studies part enabled the study to isolate specific character of each conflict to get to the root of variables which accounted for it. It further provided the



detailed causal and multivariable elements of specific conflict (Black and Champion, 1976). The approach challenged the simplistic assumption that Boko Haram is just against western Surveys assisted the work to obtain data from sample of IDPs, to know their characteristics, views, opinion, attitude and appraisal of the conflict which sent them to the IDP camps. It revealed that it was constant attacks, insecurity of their lives, destruction of their farmlands and the seeming incapacity of the state to guarantee their safety, which pushed and pulled them out from their original homes.

The application of the study design revealed that the cases of attack by Boko Haram has continued in spite of the repeated promises by the government to bring it under control. It has lasted for ten years. All the promises and expectation that President as ex-military would expedite the resolution of the conflict has ended as a ruse. The victims now include 'aid workers which at the last count were over 37, according to the United Nations Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA, 2014). Observation also showed that on daily basis, there are widespread kidnapping (Chibok and Dapchi school kidnaps), banditry and herdsmen and farmers fracas. The case-studies part, exposed the fact that most of the victims of the crises are of the minority nationalities groups in the various states of the northeast who are not of the major culture of the area. Those who were surveyed and interviewed in the camps, identified themselves as members of the minority ethnic groups, different religion, different language without traditional rulers selected among them.

The justification for the application of the descriptive design hinged on the fact that the occurrence of conflict and population displacement in Nigeria and the subsequent creation of IDP camps had been on the rise in this democratic era, starting with Odi-massacre Bayelsa state, Bakassi –Cross river, then northeast where it is now domiciled since 2014. There have been several written reports on the incidents both from the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Human Affairs (UNOCHA) and United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) and several research papers in-country on mitigation measures which should be taken by the state and federal government.

There are several secondary data out there that were consulted. All data drawn from the composite of descriptive design were then triangulated into concrete one for analysis of the problem across the states.

### **Explanatory Theory**

Pursuant to the proposition herein that the majority of the inmates of the various camps in the northeast consists of men, women and children of minority ethnic nationalities in Borno state (the Bura, Margi, Chibok and Dapchi), Yobe (Kerekere, Bolawa, Terawa), minorities of northern Adamawa state, Gombe (Tangale, Tula, Waja, Lungunda, Awak and Jukun –not of Taraba), Bauchi (Seyawa, Jarawa, Kaduna (Adara, Bajju, Atypa, Kagoro, Jaba and Koro) people respectively.

Clifford Geertz (1974) canvassed the Primordialist theory which averred that where certain social 'givens' are shared by a people in a region, kin, sharing religion, language and other social practices-cultural determinism. The belief of originality (indigene) creates a strong ties of kinship among members of ethnic group patenting from the idea of arising from a putative common father. This create a sense of unity within and hatred for others who may have come to contaminate the purity of the group. This perception creates the 'we' and 'they' distinction and make nation-building difficult. It creates a cleavage for social conflict to strive. These are the situation in the northeastern, South-west (Ife vs Modakeke), South-South (Yakurr vs Ugep-Cross River) respectively. We shall however, refer most often to the northeast situation for in-depth analysis herein where the 'we' on the one hand, preyed on 'they' on the other to avoid the desecration of a group's purity. The politicians then exploit the social cleavages to their advantage. This is why the 'we' and 'they' majority ethnic group masterminded by politicians' prey on the minorities ethnic groups.

The assertion is further founded in the 'Instrumentalist' theory, of Anthony Smith (1987) which avowed that ethnic groups often become the platform for the mobilization of the constituencies in the competition for power and resources. In order to achieve this, ethnic

identification become more effective than the social classes the politicians belong. Ethnicity becomes the instrument and platform to achieve specific objectives. It proclaimed that ethnic differences are not enough ground for conflict, but that there are people seeking advantages through ethnic platform for continuous relevant. This become functional when both nation and state-building are weak or non-existent and the leadership failed to galvanize the 'we' and 'they' into organic whole or a nation. This creates cleavages for the persistent of insurgency in the northeast.

### **Perspectives of Analyses**

To further appreciate why the minority ethnic nationalities are often the victims, we elected to look at it from the perspective of nation-building and leadership. Nation-Building- Nigeria is a plural society which require voluntary acceptance to co-exist with others. This is the creation of unity in the state, it has it processes. This involves creating horizontal unity between and among the nations which reside in the state. It basically involves creating a national identity, and unity among the various nations conscripted intended for a people to have common symbol and destiny even with diversity. It rest on 'social justice' for all ethnic nationalities in the union.

Andreas Wimmer (2018) professed that the act of nation -building consists essentially of three (3) major components;(i) early development of civil-society organizations that would drive the common values which would generate the sense of belongingness. (ii)The rise of the state capable of providing public goods evenly across territory- this could only be referring to social justice, irrespective of majority/minority religious status and faith. (iii) The emergence of a shared medium of communality. A critical evaluation of these principles of nation-building would indicate that the Nigeria state, is in deficit of all these social indicators of nation building. Consequently, there is the Nigeria state, without Nigerian nation, similarly, there are Nigeria indigenes without Nigerian citizens. The deficit is out rightly due to the fact that since independence, Nigeria has had no nation-builder but empire and ethnic builders in the past. Nigeria has no 'common value, and is currently not able to provide public good equitably among the various nations in the state.

The failure of nation-building in Nigeria means there is no common value and no common destiny. In the states of the northeast and the entire Nigeria, nothing has been done consciously to mould the majority/minority nationalities together. The Muslim/Christian cleavages endured, animist/Christian/Muslim differences keep the social divides alive, nothing connects them. The absence of nation-building leave social cleavages to be exploited by politicians to achieve their aims. Conflict between them seeks the elimination of the opponents to acquire his space. This is the situation in the northeast where minority ethnic nationalities are always the victims.

Leadership was considered a critical factor in nation-building. The theory and empiricism of leadership indicate that he is one who does not shape only the present but also future of a people with the vision to lead his people to a better future for he had seen something no one else has seen. The leader must have the ability to lead from the front, to take the initiatives and take the blame for wrong decisions and credit success to the team. He should empower people, and consult with others and engage in dialogue, above all, gain knowledge from their acquaintances. Beside setting clear goals for himself and the team, he shall have mental and physical qualifications to carry out his duties.A leader should be the symbol of a society and a living example to the younger generation leadership is about the capability to make decisions, successful leadership is about successful decisions, behind major failure lies a failed decision and behind every failed decision lies a government that failed its people (Maktoum, 2015).These never played out in the association between majority/minority in the northeast. Nigeria is in deficit of all these elements of leadership, hence no one to bond together the various nations in the northeast hence the gaps exploited by politicians to cause insurgency.

### **Implications of Victimization**

It is imperative to state that in every conflict, or contest, there is always the winner and the loser. The winner often oppresses the loser, the losers are often displaced. This scenario played out in the following cases;

**I) Lake Chad**-Climate change has caused high degree of evaporation and the shrinking of the lake. Pastures used for agriculture which provided food for animals disappeared. The Sahel weather caused movement of pastoralists to the Southern part of the northeast serviced by rivers, which basins development failed. This is compounded with the failure of North-East Arid Zone Development Programme (NEAZDP). These failures made the contest for existentialism a fierce one. Internal migration brought the migrants pastoralist to the southern part of Borno and Yobe states into the lands of the agriculturalists. The people of southern Borno, Yobe and northern Adamawa states who are not of the same culture with the majority ethnic groups, whose land were 'relatively-green' but became the victims of the contest for pastures with the pastoralists. They had to be displaced by generating crisis even when there was no need for it. Herdsmen/farmers crisis, Boko Haram became the cover through which the goal displacement was carried out. The outcome has been putting the erstwhile indigenes in IDP camps while their land become grazing fields.

#### ii) Kanem Borno Empire

There were two main empires in the Northern part of Nigeria, the first was the Kanem Borno empires circa (1380s-1893) which became an Islamic state about the 11<sup>th</sup> century ([www.britannica.com](http://www.britannica.com)). One of its leaders Al-Kanemi was a Muslim scholar who had a closer connection with the Muslim world. Al-Kanemi had made the pilgrimage and stayed for long periods in the Medina and Egypt. With a small but well-organized force of Kanembu and Shuwa Arabs he had successfully prevented any Fulani risings on the western shores of Lake Chad where he was residing. Al-Kanemi drove Ibrahim Zaki back to his war camps south of Teshena, thereafter the Fulani had scarcely any significant success in the military engagements in Borno. Bello and other Fulani leaders had accused the Kanuri, as they had the Hausa, of reversion to heathenism.

Al-Kanemi regime promoted the extensive propagation of Islam in various parts of Borno. As for Muniyo, Damagaram and Daura, they would continue vassals of the Sultan of Borno, who will in turn would

surrender to you all his claims to Gobir and Katsina. *One lasting effect of the Fulani invasion and the rise of Al-kanemi has been the legacy of jealousy and hostility which was bequeathed to the Bornu and Sokoto empires.*

*Bornu's influence embraced two types of territory –extended Bornu (Bilal Kukawa) ruled directly, and vassal states, ruled by their own chiefs and subjects to tribute of produce and slaves. All Kanuri proper were, of course, expected to be Muslims (Ifemesia, 1981 p 289-298).*

A content analysis of the above would expose the following fact; that Kanem Borno empire was established earlier than the Sokoto empire; that it became an Islamic state long before Sokoto empire; Kanembu/Shuwa armed forces continuously prevented the Fulanis from conquering Kanem Borno empire and its vassal states; from this experience, there have been jealousy, hostility and rivalry between elements of Kanem Borno and Sokoto caliphate till this day because the hegemony of the Fulani never extended to the areas of the Kanem Borno empire. This probably explain why after six years the Boko Haram terrorism has managed to avoid its extension into the areas of the northwest by government strategies, where the seat of the caliphate was established, but confined to the old Kanem Borno empire.

#### The other expositions

are that, the vassal states of Kanem Borno, ruled by their own chiefs, who were supposed to pay tribute of produce to Kanem Borno, are certainly the areas occupied by the minority ethnic groups in the states of the former empire. The fact here is that they were vassal states which were to pay tribute, invading their land constantly, for pastures is a form of tribute payment and they should not complain if ab initio they did not complain when they were located outside the main city with the responsibility to pay tributes and other form of taxes.

**iii) Terrorism** (herdsmen attacks, rural banditry) and kidnappings where they occurred are localized within Southern Borno and the victims are mainly the Bura, Margi Chibok (recall the legendary Chibok kidnap and the resultant 'Bring Back Our Girls') and Dapchi school who have not been brought back till this day. In Yobe state, the



Kerekere, Bolawa and Terawa ethnic minorities are at the receiving end, while in Adamawa state the people of northern part of the state Michika, Gwoza, Akira Uba, Marghi are mainly the victims. In Gombe state, the Tangale, Tula, Waja, Logonda, Jukun (not of Taraba) and the Awak people are mostly affected while in Bauchi state, Seyawa and Jarawa, whereas, Kaduna state victims are Adara, Bajju, Atypa, Kagoro, Jaba and the Koros. One common denominator of these minorities areas is that the areas are richly blessed with fertile land and forestry while the people's occupation is agriculture. This is desired by others who made them the object of attacks, kidnapping etc.

#### **iv) Indigenes vs. Settlers Dichotomy**

Sociologically, an Indigene refers to (i) first people or the first nations or the aborigines or native people or autochthonous people or earliest known inhabitants of an area. This confer on them legally the 'de jure rights' or ownership entitlement or claims to the commonwealth of the area occupied by them. In terms of 'de facto' right, they autochthonous peoples are there physically and really seen as occupant of the area hence entitled to the possession of the commonwealth within and above the space area occupied by them. This practice has become a norm in both municipal and international law. The provision of chapter III section 31 of the 1999 Constitution as amended is silent on the concept of indigenship thereby upholding the sociological interpretation deposed to herein. This effectively mean in Nigeria there are both 'indigenes and non-indigenes all over the country who, while holding rights as 'citizens' of Nigeria, do not hold the same rights within certain territories, depending on their autochthonous claims (Ochoche, 2004 p 104). This is the reality of the Nigerian situation which the failure of nation-building have created. This claim ignite conflict everywhere in Nigeria.

In the old Kanem Bornu empire two types of territory existed, the area ruled directly by El-Kanemi and the vassal states ruled by their own chiefs but subject to paying tribute to the metropole. This translated into 'sabon-gari' occupied by settlers as distinguished by the 'inner-cities controlled by the indigenes. The outer-cities or lands are seen as an extension of the inner-city but occupied by people of other religion. People of the outer city and different religion become target and victim of attacks, kidnapping and other crimes.

#### **v) Access to lands**

It is one of the factors of production which is inelastic in nature. It cannot be increased except it is reclaimed from the ocean, filled a valley or displaced others from their land. In each of these forms of land acquisition process, strategic conflict is imminent. It was against this challenge that Nigeria state in 1978 enacted the 'Land Use Act' to FastTrack development which were being hindered by obtaining lands from their owners. The Act placed the custody of lands in the various states on the governors. Why have the governors of the northeastern states not provided land for the-herdsmen to graze their herds? It could be because of historical rivalry between the empires builders but would stand and watch in silent complicity, attacks on minority ethnic groups by herdsmen.

#### **vi) Governance as a factor**

Ever since men progressed from the state of nature into political community, human society have been administered by a set of people with organized force referred to as the government. The way and manner in which power and authority is distributed and exercised through the structure and the processes of the state to achieve 'public good' is often termed governance. Governance in Nigeria at the moment locate political power in the hands of Northeast and the Hausa/Fulani political elites since 2015. Governance is often driven by different motivation, it is safe to observe tentatively that perhaps the conflict is allowed to fester because of the economic expediencies that accrue and the fact that the victims are not of the mainstream population of the states where they occur.

#### **vii) Nigeria Conflict Management System**

The theories of conflicts revealed three strategic management protocols namely; 'avoidance, confrontation and problem-solving' but the dominant paradigm for conflict management in Nigeria appear to be the 'avoidance approach. This entails that the group in the conflict situation which alleges injustice or discrimination is denied recognition to have their complaints addressed by those being accused and who have the capacity for restitution. Wilmot (1998 cited in Albert, 2007 p 34), maintained that this approach to conflict consists of denial

of the conflict, equivocation, changing and avoiding the topics as well as being non-committal and joking rather than dealing with the conflict. The party that is avoided seek other means of being listened to, so the vicious circle continues.

The 'avoidance' system work like this stage; (i) deployment of the Nigeria Mobile Police Force (MPF), sometimes with Nigeria army for essentially police duty. (ii) The setting up of a Panel of Inquiry (POI), while temporary peace would return to the area. (iii) The third stage is usually a relapse into conflict, because people have waited for the white paper to no avail and the rumor-mill would release what it terms the content of the report in favor of a party to the conflict. (iv) There would be conflagration of the conflict again, and the circle continue and human lives keep being wasted. Several reports on community conflicts in Nigeria abound which are yet to have white papers stating the government position on them. This pattern of conflict management applies mostly when interested party in the conflict are in government, this is the case of the binary Boko Haram and herdsmen attack of minority ethnic groups in the states of the northeast.

### **The IDP Camps: The Challenges**

The IDP camps by description are locations provided by the state to host those stranded out-of-their homes by violence occasioned by natural or man-made forces which make their lives very unsafe in their ancestral homes. It is important to state that IDPs are not Refugees by the operational municipal and international legal framework. The IDPs are protected by human right laws and associated instrument since they are civilians within the national boundaries of state. The protocols and fiscal resources for use on Refugees cannot be deployed to assist them. However, the creation of the Ministry for Humanitarian Affairs is in the right direction. The camps creation does not follow 'set-up plan, care, maintenance and closure'. This is because no government budget for it, hence the inmates are often in inhuman environment. Food Security-is often the victims of Boko Haram and herdsmen attacks on farmers who occupy the fertile plains of their various states. Their displacement disrupts the food production chain. Their farmlands become grazing fieldsfor cattle. Health and Nutrition-

can never be adequate, education is disrupted and people with special need suffer (CMT.2015 p 14) the most.

### **Reducing: Minority Ethnic Victimization**

The Nigeria state require leadership and the populace require education to ensure that the people are made to understand their common humanity and accept other ethnic groups as having rights as they do. This should be followed by considerable nation-building. Good governance and social justice is yet another critical issue for unification of the people and the creation of commonly shared goals. It instructive to state herein that following the thesis of this study, the rights of minority ethnic nationality in the Riyom, Barakin-Ladi, Mangu, Bokkos areas of Plateau state are daily being violated. The chiefs are daily being kidnapped, banditry is rampant even with the military being stationed in this locations. This is true of Benue, Taraba, southern Borno, Yobe and northern Adamawa states where minority ethnic nationalities are dominant the areas.

Leadership recruitment processes must be overhaul- Ordinary men and women regrettably do not build nations. Where national leaders or acclaimed leaders serve with mentalities and mindset that are at once sectional and divisive, as they always done, with either northern or eastern or western mentalities or complexes, national ideals become secondary considerations. Operating and fronting as frontiers of power for either the Igbo nation or Yoruba nation or Hausa nation (Alli, 2001p.151), but nation builders and leaders do, followed by state -building, social justice and rule of law, to give all a sense of belonging.

### **Conclusion**

There are minority ethnic nationalities everywhere, no one chooses to be one. Government has a critical role in wielding every ethnic group into a unified nation through nation and state building, and ensuring social and economic justice for everyone. Once the sense of common destiny and national symbol is shared, and good governance become the ethos, then the war which victimizes the minority ethnic nationalities group is half won.

The instrument for this include mass education, educated, because educated people are hardly manipulated but uneducated would be tool for manipulation by politicians who cannot compete in their social class but on ethnic cocoon.

A 'benevolent dictator leader' with functional skill would be needed to drive the processes in Nigeria who would ignore religion in the course of uniting the nation. Minorities ethnic nationalities whether in the northeast or anywhere in Nigeria, must not be victims of conflicts to be displaced from their ancestral homes anymore. Government at all levels must be alive to their responsibilities to ensure 'restorative justice for all. Social change must be embraced and cultural- lag must give way for harmonious co-habitation.

### References

- Alli, M. C. (2001) The Republic of Nigerian Army, Lagos: Malthouse Press Ltd
- Bello, K (2019) Who is Nigeria Citizen? 15<sup>th</sup> Inaugural Lecture –National Open University of Nigeria –delivered at the NOUN Headquarters –Abuja.
- Black, J.A & Champion, D. (1976) **Methods and Issues in Social Research**. New York, NY: Wiley
- Camp Management Toolkit (2015) [www.cmtoolkit.org](http://www.cmtoolkit.org)
- Feagan, J. (1984). Racial and Ethnic Relations. Englewood Cliffs., N.J: Prentice-Hall
- Geertz, C. (1974). The Interpretation of Cultures. NY: W.W. Norton & Company
- Ifemesia, C. C. (1981) Bornu Under the Shehus in **A Thousand Years of West African History A Handbook for Teachers and Students** – (edited) J.E. Ade Ajayi and I. Espie Ibadan: Ibadan University Press and Nelson
- Maktoum, M. R. (2015) **My Vision –Challenges in the Race for Excellence**. Motivate Publishing: United Arab Emirate-Dubai
- Ndiyo, N.A. (2005). Fundamental of Research in Behavioral Sciences and Humanities Calabar: Wusen Publishers
- Nwosu, I., & Itua, F. (2014, May 22) Northern ethnic minorities suffocating under Hausa/Fulani Domination-Prof. Turaki- Daily Sun Newspaper,( [www.sunnewsonline.com](http://www.sunnewsonline.com)) Thursday, May 22, 2014 p.50
- Ochoche, S. A. (2004) Between Indigenship and Citizenship: The Challenge of Peace and Harmony in Nigeria. DG-Institute of Peace and Conflict Resolution –the Presidency Abuja in University of Jos Alumni Association (Abuja Chapter) Lecture Series Vol. 1 ED. M. L. Mefor and D. Abdullahi pp 98-106
- Otite, O. and Albert, I. O. (ed) (2007). Community Conflicts in Nigeria- Management, Resolution and Transformation –Ibadan: Spectrum Books Ltd
- Smith, A. (1987). The Ethnic Origin of Nations UK: B. Blackwell Publishers
- The Nation Newspaper, 'Boko Haram: IDPs Population rises to 2.2m, says UNHCR' November 20, 2015 p.3
- The UN Refugee Agency (1951), Convention Protocol Relating 1967/1951 Refugee Convention
- UNOCHA (2004). Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement.
- UNOCHA (2012, June)
- Wimmer, A. (2018). 'Nation –Building: Why Some Countries Come Together While Others Disintegrate Doi.1080/00396338.2018.1495442