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DEMOGRAPHIC AND PSYCHO-SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF FORCED EVICTION IN NIGERIA'S MEGACITY

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Abstract

This paper investigates the pattern and processes of forced eviction and homelessness among former residents of Aiyetoro, Lagos, Nigeria. Data were collected through questionnaire survey; in-depth interviews, unobtrusive observation and case-studies. The findings show that 89.7% of adult respondents reported different negative effects on their jobs; another 68.2% revealed their inability to pay children's school fees post-eviction, while 46.7% of these children never attended school after the displacement episode. A high rate of family separation (27%) with its concomitant effects was also reported. The study argues that forced eviction hardly contributes to urban development and renewal often cited as justification. These evictions rather expose victims to harmful social, physical and mental processes and mal-adjustments that impinge on the health and demographic status of evictees culminating ultimately in expansion of the property-base of the rich through a reallocation strategy that excludes the poor.

Keywords: Displacement; Eviction; Megacity; Development; Migrants.

Introduction

Studies have repeatedly shown that Lagos is densely populated in relation to available resources; unprecedented migration into the city creates a burden for prospective migrant-recipients both at micro household and macro society levels in a non-regulatory system such as Nigeria (Obono 2007; Nwokocha 2007; Packer 2006; Olukoju 2003). Among most low income in-migrants, residing in suburbs is usually a mechanism for coping with the housing challenge and high rent regime that characterize Lagos.

High inflow of such category of migrants into Lagos has led to recurring development of "emergency communities" that are bereft of social and physical amenities that are peculiar features of cities. Perhaps more problematic is the stigma that such communities attract to the city as a result of deviant groups that spring up in these areas to cushion the effects of frustration borne out of socioeconomic powerlessness (Nwokocha 2007).

Research shows that forced eviction and demolitions in the state dates back to the 1920s when the then Lagos Executive Development Board demolished slum communities following the outbreak of bubonic plague (Agboola and Jinadu 1997).

Since that first incident, demolitions and sudden evictions have become common in the state. In 1990 for instance, over 300,000 people were evicted from Maroko in a massive displacement exercise (SERAC, 2006). This study aims at investigating the sudden displacement of over 3,000 people from Aiyetoro Lagos in 2005 which could have led to the emergence of several other unplanned suburbs among these displaced people, thereby defeating the manifest goal of such displacement in the first place. In addition, the implications of homelessness for the health and socio-demographic status of individual victims will be critically examined. The present research is an attempt at understanding whether these demolitions, and in particular the most recent, have impacted positively on the social and physical development of Lagos on one hand, or accounted for its further degeneration on the other.

Perhaps, contrary to some presumption, simultaneous growth and decay of Lagos are possible; a view also canvassed by Obono (2007). However, this study notes that attaining equilibrium between development and underdevelopment of the city has been difficult to achieve. For the most part, Lagos has consistently bolstered more in the realm of the latter in the face of poverty, frustration, apathy, ignorance and violence that pervade the city.

It is in the light of the above that this study seeks to examine the demographic and psycho-social implications of forced eviction in Nigeria using Lagos as the case study.

Population Growth and Forced Eviction

Housing problem in Nigeria and most less developed societies is an urban phenomenon (Adeniyi, 1981). This situation is explained mainly by rapid urbanization and a high population growth rate that characterize cities in relevant countries (Anyanwu et al. 1997). Population density in most of these cities has reached suffocating proportions as well as a level far more than available resources. Consequently, various governments devise different means of dealing with the situation, including evictions and demolitions. Nigeria, for instance, has a long history of forced evictions, with Lagos State recording the highest incident rate (Agboola & Jinadu 1997).

Study reveals that Lagos presently is demographically listed as the sixth largest megacity in the world and is expected to rank third by 2015

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(Obono, 2007). The above insight largely agrees with the description of Packer (2006):

...In 1950, fewer than three hundred thousand people lived in Lagos. In the second half of the twentieth century, the city grew at a rate of more than six percent annually. It is currently the sixth-largest city in the world, and it is growing faster than any of the world's other megacities (the term used by the United Nations Center for Human Settlements for "urban agglomerations" with more than ten million people). By 2015, it is projected, Lagos will rank third, behind Tokyo and Bombay, with twenty-three million inhabitants...(p.3).

Migration into Lagos is a function of several factors. For the most part, a large number of prospective migrants into this city are psychologically positioned, ironically at times by people who may not have stepped into Lagos, to perceive their intended destination as a solution to poverty and powerlessness. Such intense falsity gives the impression that the streets of Lagos are littered with fortunes, what has been aptly described by Obono (2007, p.36) as deluded confidence. This delusion later results in frustration that creates two categories of aggressors in the Lagosian society. The first group consists of those whose disappointments serve as catalyst for discovery of inherent potentials, while the second comprises individuals who are unable to adjust to the hard reality of the city and as a result strive to subvert the system in protest for their perceived marginalization even when they were not invited to reside in Lagos, in the first place.

Nwokocho (2007, p.4) had highlighted the patterns and processes of such migration and the implications for population size, norms, health and general wellbeing of individuals and groups in rural and urban centres:

The people's agony is visible in frustrations arising from avoidable diseases and deaths, lack of access to portable water, subsistent economic activities, various kinds of unemployment, child abuse in all its ramifications and dwindling emphasis on societal norms and values... given that individuals are culture-bearing, in-migrants do not immediately adjust sufficiently to cultures at destinations, while others are for very long time guided by ethnocentric orientations hardly adapting to the realities of new locations. High crime rate has also been linked to rural-urban migration due to the anonymity provided by urban environments...

rural communities share this burden through loss of manpower necessary for agricultural activities and production. The impoverishment of rural areas in Nigeria is partly explainable by out-migration of able youths in search of employment in cities.

This paper argues that any objective analysis of poverty and its components including rural to urban migration must indicate the influence of systemic decay in the dilemma. What most individuals who become victims of systemic failure do in most cases represent a reaction, even at times unwittingly, to society inflicted inadequacies. For as we note, rational humanism does not constitute in supporting acts that represent encumbrances to development; constructing emergency and unplanned houses in and around cities, in a non-regulatory internal migration system, is an act that usually derives from necessity. The United Nations' fact sheet No. 25 on forced evictions noted the cost of such act in the following statement:

Evicted people not only lose their homes and neighborhoods in which they have often invested a considerable proportion of their incomes over the years, but ... also lose the often complex reciprocal relationships which provide a safety net or survival network of protection against the cost of ill health, income decline or loss of a job, and which allow many tasks to be shared. They often lose one or more sources of livelihood as they are forced to move from the area where they had jobs or sources of income (Fact Sheet No. 25, Paragraph 8).

This observation does not only demonstrate the level of social disorientation that these evictees face but also their economic estrangement. Ngwakwe (2002) further stated that women bear the greater burden of forced evictions relative to men given their vulnerability to sexual assault including rape and other forms of abuse. That notwithstanding, efforts at mitigating the effects of eviction have been monolithic. The lumping of all categories of evictees into one derives from earlier experiences in which homeless populations were viewed as fairly homogenous to the extent that the provision of emergency food and shelter was sufficient to address their primary concern (Blau 1992). Events have shown that populations, especially in urban centers, are heterogeneous with diverse set of needs which must be taken into cognizance in policy formulation.

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Homelessness arising from forced eviction may last as long as eleven months to as short as thirty-two days (Blau, 1992) for reasons such as unemployment and very limited financial capability. While these factors are strongly associated with prolonged homelessness in several contexts, victims of eviction in Lagos may however remain homeless for a long time as a result of population density occasioned by scarcity of rentable apartments that characterize the city.

Theoretical Framework

Forced eviction and homelessness in Lagos are examined within the context of the functionalist theory with particular reference to the works of Talcott Parsons and Robert Merton. The perspective generally emphasizes the functions of parts in maintaining the whole system by acknowledging the interdependence of component units. As a corollary, dislocation of any of the parts will not only affect it, but also the entire system. This necessary integrative feature of society was well represented in Parsons AGIL model (Haralambos & Holborn 2004). By this model, Parsons highlights the underlying currents behind systemic equilibrium that finds expression in four major components.

Adaptation is related to a society's ability to adjust to changes without, at the same time, infringing on the collective aspirations of the relevant community. As such, a society in adjusting to circumstances must be able to *attain the goal* of supporting individuals and sub-groups to realize their potentials as members of such community. In so doing, *integration* of these parts is achieved; presupposing that component units, separately and jointly, relate effectively for the success of the system. Thus, chances are remote that any unit could strive to exist in isolation of other parts. By pooling resources together, the likelihood of attaining *latency or pattern maintenance or equilibrium* is higher than in situations where individualism is emphasized.

The eviction and consequent homelessness among former residents of Aiyetoro contradict functionalism due to emphasis on disintegration of individuals and groups from prior social and physical attachments and acquaintances. This study argues that forced eviction and homelessness constitute antithesis to adaptation given that unless individuals are well adjusted to changes, the adjustment that inheres only at macro-society level is at best cosmetic or peripheral. Such eviction is dysfunctional to the extent that it demobilizes attempts at urban renewal which it proposes to achieve. Consequently, integration and pattern maintenance become unattainable for eviction-victims and the local administration.

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the selection of respondents. First, generating a sampling frame of households in the area was impossible given that demolitions had taken place. As such, neither simple random nor systematic sampling techniques could be adopted. Second, members of the Aiyetoro Evictees Association are scattered all over Lagos and come together only once a month to discuss their eviction and possible action. Consequently, questionnaire distribution among these people took place on such meeting days on the basis of attendance. However, envisaging that questionnaire distribution would take place at different times, it was ensured that information on respondents was properly documented to avoid double/multiple participation. In all, 400 questionnaires were administered, out of which 370 were returned and used for analysis, representing a return rate of 92.5 percent.

The snowball technique was used in identifying respondents that participated in interviews given that their eviction inevitably altered the hitherto living arrangements. It therefore became necessary to first identify some former residents of the thematic area who then provided information on how to locate others. In-depth interviews were conducted among 19 respondents with adult male and female categories represented by 6 respondents each, while children less than 18 years of age were represented by three former young respondents of the area. Interviews were also conducted with an official from four groups – an international Non-Governmental Organization, a humanitarian relief organization, Community Development Committee of the Lagos Mainland Local Government Area and the Makoko/Aiyetoro Evictees Association. In order to guarantee the anonymity of respondents, which is in line with ethical requirements for social science research, pseudonyms were used rather than real names; and as such, information cannot be traced to any respondent.

The use of observation as a data collection technique was undertaken throughout the entire period of fieldwork due to unending emerging issues that characterized the situation in the study area. As such, information generated from this method was also utilized in designing the questionnaire schedule, as well as directly for qualitative analysis. We reasoned that the contentious nature of the issues under investigation would likely necessitate subjective responses from parties to the event and thus needed to employ observation as a tool. This technique led to direct and first-hand evidence of the situation in the study area. The specific areas observed included the sites of the evictions and temporary dwellings of some of these victims of eviction.

Four former residents of the area, also identified through the snow-ball technique, served as cases for the study. The method was adopted

to bring to bear concrete experiences of victims which represent the plethora of activities and events that they have had to contend with. To reflect gender and intergenerational balance, two respondents (male and female) who are former Aiyetoro residents above 60 years of age and two younger victims, less than 25 years old were studied closely by engaging them in unstructured interviews and retrospective narration of encounters specific to the thematic site. That way, it was easy to empathize with the situation. While the aged respondents were selected on the basis of their resettlement in the area from other locations, the younger were born and bred in the demolished suburb.

Qualitative data were analyzed using manual content analysis. The procedure began with the transcription and translation of tape recordings from in-depth interviews. The next step involved isolation of responses that were relevant to study objectives. This method ensured that aspects of qualitative data were imported into analysis only on the basis of their relevance to the discourse. Ethical considerations were emphasized throughout fieldwork; participation was based on informed and voluntary consent. Consequently, respondents were not only at liberty to discontinue their participation at any point during the exercise but also their confidentiality was fully guaranteed. The principle of beneficence was also emphasized as recommendations of the study may inform policy that could eventually benefit evictees and their significant others.

The limitation of this study was mainly on the reluctance exhibited by respondents who at the time of fieldwork were still traumatized. It was difficult to convince some of them on the essence of the research; some others were neither coherent nor consistent in their responses. Again, some of the questionnaire schedules were returned with some questions not answered and in particular those perceived as infringing on respondents' privacy.

Results and Discussion

(a) General Characteristics of Respondents

Table 1 shows the percent distribution of the respondents by selected socio-demographic characteristics. It indicates that approximately 42% of the respondents are males, while the remaining 52% are females. All the age categories are fairly well represented; each category was represented by more than 20 % of the total with the highest number of respondents (28.6 percent) coming from those age 41 and above. The marital status of the respondents is indicative of the predominance of currently married respondents (43.2 percent) relative to those who were previously married (27 percent) and single (29.7 percent).

Table 1: Percentage Distribution of Respondents by Selected Socio-demographic Characteristics

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Sex		
Male	155	41.8
Female	215	58.2
Total	370	100
Age		
10-19	93	25.1
21-30	82	22.1
31-40	89	24.0
41+	106	28.6
Total	370	100
Marital Status		
Single	110	29.7
Married	160	43.2
Divorced	20	5.4
Widowed	60	16.2
Separated	20	5.4
Total	370	100
Educational Attainment		
No formal education	70	18.9
Primary	170	45.9
Secondary	130	35.1
Tertiary	-	-
Total	370	100

On the educational status of respondents, Table 1 indicates that close to 19 % of the respondents did not have any form of formal education; thus about one respondent in every five was not involved in formal schooling. Nearly 50 % of the respondents had primary school education, while 35 % indicated that secondary school was their highest level of education. The table also shows that none of the respondents had tertiary education. Clearly, low educational attainment among former residents of Aiyetoro is a reflection of the artisan-related forms of occupation of a large majority and low socioeconomic status that characterize the situation of individuals in the area. A combination of these two factors indirectly explains the slum nature of the thematic area prior to eviction.

(b) Effects of Forced Eviction

Table 2 shows the effects of forced eviction on education for both parents and students/pupils. Apart from 2.5% of the respondents that reported that their education was not affected adversely by eviction, the rest identified different negative effects.

Table 2: Distribution of Respondents by Effects of Forced Eviction on Education

<i>Effects (1)</i>	Frequency	Percent
Unable to pay school fees	221	68.2
Moved from private to public schools	16	4.9
Poor performance (children repeating classes)	25	7.7
Generally negative	54	16.7
Not affected negatively	08	2.5
Total	324	100
<i>Effects (2):</i> Frequency of school attendance		
Every day	110	36.7
Weekly	50	16.7
Not at all	140	46.7
Total	300	100

Table 2 indicates that 68.2% of the respondents identified inability to pay their children's school fees as a major effect of displacement on education of their wards. This is to be expected given that beyond using Aiyetoro as a place of residence, some of the occupants of the area also engaged in different economic activities within the place. For the latter category of former residents, eviction translated to dual tragedy. Nearly 17 % of the respondents stated that the eviction affected their children's education generally; punctuality and regularity at school may be a function of the psychological disposition of students on the one hand and distance to institution on the other.

On the frequency of school attendance, only about 37% of the respondents stated that their children went to school every day of the week after eviction, while the rest were either irregular or did not go to school

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again. Specifically, respondents whose children never attended school after their eviction constituted about 47% of the total. Prolonged absence from school among students will exacerbate an already perilous educational situation in the country. Nwokocha (2007) had observed that Nigeria's educational system is embedded in a catalogue of inadequacies such as poor funding of teaching and research, pervading laziness and mediocrity among students and irregular and unpredictable academic calendar among others. Table 3 displays data on the consequences of forced eviction on respondents' job/economic activities. Except those that reported no effect on their jobs (10.3%), other respondents identified the negative effects of eviction on their jobs.

Table 3: Distribution of Respondents by Effects of Forced Eviction on Jobs

<i>Effects on jobs</i>	Frequency	Percent
Stopped work for a while	86	23.3
Could not continue work	103	27.9
Job became unattractive	142	38.5
No effect on job	38	10.3
Total	369	100

Table 3 also shows that while 23.3% of the respondents stopped work temporarily, about 28% could not continue work after the eviction. Incidentally, most individuals who resided and worked in the area lost out completely. The views expressed by a female IDI respondent are popular among most of the evictees:

Some of us for whom Aiyetoro meant everything could not cope with our displacement; residing as well as doing business there, we were more devastated than others. Most of us could no longer continue work; adjusting quickly in a densely populated place like Lagos is not easy. A few people have told us they are involved in some activity to keep them going... for others, the situation is so bad that they have become mere spectators in the socio-economic sphere of life.

About 39% of the respondents reported being involved in unattractive jobs resulting from having to engage in new economic activities or old ones but with the challenge of coping in a new environment. Another

interview respondent also seemed to capture the views of most others when she stated:

One of the most difficult challenges faced by many of us after we left there (Aiyetoro) was that we had to become apprentices in some activities because we could not continue with what we were doing in the former place... you know, Lagos is quite big and foresighted business people can only survive when they understand what best they can do in a particular environment.

Although the Spartan attitude of Lagos residents has already been complemented by Parker (2006, p.3) who noted that 'begging is rare ... everyone is a striver' in the megacity, this paper argues that a destabilized person would hardly have the psychological leverage to engage in meaningful socio-economic and familial activities, at least in the short-run. We maintain here, and in line with Maslow's needs analysis, that shelter and security are critical elements that define an individual's self-worth which in turn determines motivation to participate in some lofty activities. Thus displacement and homelessness may in some cases inevitably propel various degrees of begging as well as demobilize attempts at striving for higher ideals.

(c) Health Status and Eviction

Table 4 indicates the health status of respondents after their eviction. About 41% of the respondents stated that their health status remained the same after their eviction. We note here that such claim, of sameness, did not derive from medical examinations but respondents' feelings and assumption. One IDI respondent noted "I cannot identify the difference between my health condition during our stay in Aiyetoro and now that we have been evicted from the area... health is not our major concern but how to get accommodated and engaged in economic activities".

Table 4: Distribution of Respondents by Health Status After Eviction

<i>Health Conditions</i>	Frequency	Percent
The same	150	40.9
Slightly better	46	12.6
Worse	170	46.5
Total	366	100

Those who reported relatively better health status after the eviction incident constitute about 13% of the total, while approximately 47% of the respondents indicated that their situation became worse than what it was. A combination of mental, socioeconomic and environmental factors could explain perceived predisposition of these victims to negative health conditions. Indeed, the opinion of these respondents pertaining to their health status is embedded in psychology and mere speculation, given that they did not report any form of medical test to ascertain the conditions of their physical and mental health. Table 5 displays data on sources of medical care among respondents before and after eviction.

The percentage of respondents that undertook self medication or patronized chemists increased from about 40% prior to eviction to 45% after eviction. The 5% difference may be a function of several factors such as economic incapacity to defray the cost of medical treatment at health facilities, skepticism about the competences of personnel whom respondents are not familiar with and inability to locate relevant facility among other reasons. Table 5 also reveals an increase in percentage of respondents that utilized local herbs (7.3%). However, the percentage of those that patronized general hospitals decreased from 24.3%, before eviction, to about 18% after the incident.

Table 5: Percentage Distribution of Respondents by Health Care Utilization before and after Eviction

<i>Health Care Utilization</i>	Before eviction	Post eviction
Self medication/chemist	39.6	45.1
Local herbs	20.6	27.9
General hospital	24.3	17.7
Health centre	15.5	9.3
Total	100	100

Similarly, 9.3% of the respondents utilized health centres after their eviction compared to 15.5% that patronized the latter facility before eviction. The explanation for the decrease was captured by an IDI respondent:

Our eviction dislodged many of us that were so used to events and activities in Aiyetoro... coping outside that environment has not been easy. Most of us are now leaving far from medical facilities that we got registered and for that reason hardly patronize these. It

will take some time for evictees like me to adjust to other hospitals and health centres scattered all over Lagos other than the ones where we are familiar with the procedure and personnel... nobody would like to spend the entire day running after hospital staff who may never be interested in people they do not know.

Clearly, the bureaucratic bottlenecks described by the respondent constitute disincentives for non-patronage of orthodox health facilities among several individuals in different parts of Nigeria notwithstanding high prevalence of diseases that threaten lives in these locations. Research shows that on the average the life-expectancy at birth for Nigerians was 46 years (Population Reference Bureau 2007). Table 6 shows the coping strategies adopted by respondents after their eviction; nearly 41% of the respondents engaged their children in work for money or as beggars, a corroboration of the earlier position that begging could be adopted as a coping strategy even when it negates community norms and values. Child abuse increases the vulnerability of young persons to life threatening conditions and constitutes a major social and health issue in Nigeria.

More than a quarter of the respondents (27%) had their family members living separately since it is usually not easy to secure new apartments in a densely populated Lagos. The implication is that interaction at nuclear family level is minimized; in situations where this separation involved the very young, socialization into family norms and values is grossly undermined or undertaken by other persons or groups. It has been noted that anti-normative behavior could be learned through consistent interaction with members of a sub-culture (Pfohl 1994).

(d) Coping Strategies after Eviction

Table 6: Distribution of Respondents by Main Strategies Adopted to cope with Forced Eviction

<i>Coping Strategies</i>	Percent
Donation of food, mattresses and other essential items	18.4
Putting up with relatives and friends	13.5
Engaging children in work/begging	40.5
Family members living separately	27.0
Legal aid	4.6

About 14% of the respondents resorted to putting up with relatives and friends as the main strategy for coping with the eviction. Even though members of such families were together and could undertake activities as a unit, the cost to receiving households may have been severe. Nwokocha (2007) had noted that unplanned human additions to families and societies constitute a significant burden to these recipients who may be stretched beyond adjustment limits. Table 6 also indicates that a few of these respondents (4.6%) relied on legal aid as the coping mechanism. While this may seem an appropriate strategy, its long term implications wherein cases are decided after several years of judicial process discourage many individuals and groups in Nigeria from seeking redress even for a legitimate cause. The case-studies that follow reveal direct experiences of some former residents of the area.

Case studies

Case one

The first case was that of a carpenter who migrated from Benin, Edo State to Lagos in 1976, necessitated by a desire to experience improved life away from the experience at the former place of residence. Like other people, he believed that once he gets to Lagos, his socio-economic status would change. However, he was disappointed as he could not locate any of his relatives for initial accommodation on his arrival to Lagos. Being financially poor, he had to search for a cheap apartment which he got in Aiyetoro after squatting for about three years without any meaningful livelihood. He felt that his presence constituted some level of discomfort for the family that accommodated him. However, life became better when he started earning fairly regular income from carpentry in the new location and his wife and two children joined him. Over-time, he became acquainted with the place having made a number of friends who were like family members. The place became enjoyable for several reasons such as affordability of goods and services, security of lives and property and cultural diversity among others. The place also became home to him as well as other people in the same situation as they hardly travelled back to their home bases. Therefore, when the place was demolished and they had to be relocated after living there for nearly thirty years, they went through difficult times. Some died after a short period of relocation while others went through extremely difficult emotional, financial and social times. Many of these people can not return to their home base due to several reasons.

The above experience throws up a series of demographic, psychosocial and environmental issues. The delusion that Lagos holds the key to fortune explains high in-migration rate, population explosion, unwillingness of residents to migrate out of the city, congestion and emergence of slums. Homeless people are prone to hazards and may themselves constitute nuisance to social and environmental equilibrium. Decimating the physical space with human faeces is strongly associated with population size as well as the quality of citizenry. For instance, where a large proportion of people residing in a community are illiterate, unemployed and frustrated as is common in less developed societies, the essence of a clean environment is hardly emphasized.

As WHO/UNICEF (2008) have noted, 1 in 4 African practices open defecation; this translates to 228 million people. For additional reasons, such as proliferation of 'the area boy syndrome', poor physical planning and pervasive hustling, the ratio may be higher in Lagos. According to the State Governor "... we are doing about 9,000 metric tons of refuse daily, more than what Ghana as a country is generating" (Fashola 2008:73).

Case two

The second case was that of a twenty-year-old man who was born in Aiyetoro though his parents were from Osun State and he has not been there since birth. He found it difficult to cope outside the environment because he had always lived in the location throughout his life. Since he was evicted along with other people, he had lost contact with several friends who were together with him right from childhood. The pain of homelessness increases with every passing week with his parents squatting in some place while he and his seven siblings are scattered all over Lagos with relatives and family friends. This has largely distorted the family's unity as it is almost impossible to pray and eat together as was the tradition. Also, he could not go to school for about nineteen months because of the initial traumatic effect of the eviction and the fact that he and his immediate family did not see education as a priority, since immediate survival was more paramount. Secondly, his parents did not have the financial capacity to cater for the children's education having been dislodged from their business activities. The eviction experience was like beginning life afresh and trying to make new friends.

Clearly, the eviction of Aiyetoro residents was devastating with varied experiences among victims. It was natural that younger people, who may not have experienced life outside the thematic area, felt more devastated

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than older victims. The immediate implication of family members living separately is that inherent unity may be sacrificed.

Conclusion

Forced eviction and displacement of individuals and groups in Nigeria and Lagos in particular have been recurring. Although each eviction episode is unique, the common denominators are the consequences in terms of homelessness, socio-economic disequilibrium and exposure of victims to various kinds of risks. The immediate reason often cited for most demolitions in Nigeria is facilitation of urban renewal in recognition of pervasive *planlessness* that characterizes most Nigerian cities. Often however, demolished sites are allocated to the wealthy without consideration for the very poor whom by their economic status are incapable of possessing properties in such renewed areas.

However, the latter in the quest to remain in these cities erect structures, in the nearest suburbs, and thus contradict attempts at urban renewal and development. Even though some of the victims may quickly readjust, albeit weakly, to the sudden disequilibrium that trails their displacement, this study established that the effects of forced eviction on education, jobs, healthcare utilization and general welfare among others are multidimensional and may be counter-productive for individuals and societies in the long-run. At the macro-level, such eviction with its concomitant consequences contributes directly in extending the slum status of Lagos and undermines efforts at making it a global city with distinctive attractiveness that cities like Paris, London and New York conjure in the minds of migrants. Global cities are identified mainly by the internationalized status of residents and visitors rather than dense population that is largely constituted by nationals.

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