

Revisiting Transitional Justice as a Mechanism for the Rehabilitation of Conflict-induced Internally Displaced Persons in the Northeast Nigeria

إعادة النظر في العدالة الانتقالية كآلية لإعادة تأهيل النازحين داخليًا بسبب الصراع في شمال شرق نيجيريا

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Abstract:

Objectives: This study focused on how transitional justice mechanism can be used to achieve the rehabilitation of IDPs back in their community of origin in the Northeast Nigeria after safe return.

Methods: The study employed mixed method through the administration of questionnaire on one hundred and seventy (170) randomly selected IDPs at Marte camp in Maiduguri, Borno State and validated the results by further conducting key informant interview with ten (10) purposively selected key informants.

Results: The findings of the study revealed a strong relationship. This implies that there is a positive link between transitional justice mechanism and IDPs willingness to rehabilitate. Specifically, the selected transitional justice mechanism like criminal prosecutions, truth commissions, reparations programs, and various kinds of institutional reforms accounted for a modest 68.2% (O.R =0.682; p<0.05) change in the willingness of the IDPs to accept a voluntary rehabilitation.

Conclusions: The study concluded that transitional justice mechanism is a factor and should be viewed as a major solution for promoting rehabilitation in a post-conflict context. The study recommended that governments and policymakers should also prioritize the full restoration of peace and safety of the rehabilitated IDPs and their communities in the Northeast Nigeria.

Keywords: Transitional justice mechanism; terrorism, internally displaced persons; rehabilitation; displacement.

المخلص:

الأهداف: ركزت هذه الدراسة على كيفية استخدام آلية العدالة الانتقالية لتحقيق إعادة تأهيل النازحين داخليًا في مجتمعاتهم الأصلية في شمال شرق نيجيريا بعد عودتهم الآمنة.

المنهجية: استخدمت الدراسة منهجية مختلطة من خلال إدارة استبيان على مائة وسبعين (170) نازحًا داخليًا تم اختيارهم عشوائيًا في مخيم مارتى في مايدوجوري بولاية بورنو وتم التحقق من صحة النتائج من خلال إجراء المزيد من المقابلات مع المخبين الرئيسيين مع عشرة (10) مخبرين رئيسيين تم اختيارهم عن قصد.

النتائج: كشفت نتائج الدراسة عن وجود علاقة قوية، مما يدل على وجود ارتباط إيجابي بين آليات العدالة الانتقالية واستعداد النازحين داخليًا للانخراط في برامج إعادة التأهيل. وبشكل أكثر تحديدًا، فإن آليات العدالة الانتقالية المختارة، مثل الملاحقات الجنائية، ولجان الحقيقة، وبرامج جبر الضرر، وأنواع مختلفة من الإصلاحات المؤسسية، أسهمت بنسبة معتدلة بلغت 68.2% (O.R = 0.682 p < 0.05) في التغيير في استعداد النازحين داخليًا لقبول إعادة التأهيل الطوعية.

الخلاصة: خلصت الدراسة إلى أن آلية العدالة الانتقالية تُعد عاملاً ويجب اعتبارها حلاً رئيسيًا لتعزيز إعادة التأهيل في سياق ما بعد الصراع. وأوصت الدراسة بأن تعطي الحكومات وصانعي السياسات أيضًا الأولوية لاستعادة السلام والأمان الكاملين للنازحين داخليًا الذين أعيد تأهيلهم ومجتمعاتهم في شمال شرق نيجيريا.

الكلمات المفتاحية: آلية العدالة الانتقالية؛ الإرهاب؛ النازحون داخليًا؛ إعادة التأهيل؛ النزوح.

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1 Introduction

The drivers of displacement in Nigeria are multi-faceted, complex and often overlapping. These include competition between herdsmen and farmers, terrorism, banditry, drought, flooding, religion violence, communal and ethnic clashes among others. However, in the specific context of Northeastern part of Nigeria, terrorism by Bioko Haram, has caused more tensions than any other displacement factor, culminating in significant level of violence and forceful ejection of people from their community of origin where they were previously engaged in farming and provided food security among other benefits to the nation.

The violent attacks by Bioko Haram have led to internal displacement of 4.4 million people between the year 2009 and 2023 (Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre [IDMC], 2024). According to Nigeria's National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA), as far back as January 9, 2015, Nigeria had recorded a total number of 873,703 internally displaced persons (IDPs) in the Northeast as a result of Boko Haram activities (Ayegba, 2022.) The figure has been increasing rapidly as a result of unrelenting attacks by the terror group (NEMA, 2023; Akpan, Ekanem & Olofu-Adeoye, 2023). The NEMA report also noted that about 254 schools were destroyed, and 120,077 students were forced out of school as of the end of 2014 (NEMA, 2015). The attacks by Boko Haram sect have rendered many Nigerians exiled in their own home (Ibeanu, 2023; Tajudeen & Adebayo, 2023). The main operational base of this terrorist group is situated in the six (6) states that comprise Nigeria's Northeast region: Borno, Adamawa, Bauchi, Yobe, Taraba, and Gombe. In 2023, the estimated population of this region was 18.9 million, in contrast to Nigeria's total population of 218.5 million (Population Reference Bureau [PRB], 2023). This collective population represents roughly 12% of Nigeria's total populace. The main occupation of this population is farming, and the region serves as the food basket to the entire nation, hence the need for enhanced transitional justice mechanism for the displaced people in the region to enhance rehabilitation in order to guarantee food security among other benefits to the country.

On the economic front, Nigeria's Northeastern region had suffered an estimated U.S. nine billion dollar, or N274.5 billion loss as a result of the Boko Haram insurgency as of 2017. Borno State suffered the highest loss of U.S. \$5.9 billion dollars (N180 billion), according to Quick and Demetriov (2017). The loss of agricultural production in the northeast caused by Boko Haram activities was valued at U.S. \$3.5 billion dollars (N107 billion), (Quick & Demetriov, 2017). Borno State in the Northeastern Nigeria had a greater part of resident homes damaged by Boko Haram in the region. Also destroyed were schools, hospitals, bridges, and other critical infrastructures (Akpan, Ekanem & Olofu-Adeoye, 2023).

Consequently, the number of displacement camps has continued to increase in the Northeast region of Nigeria despite various governmental efforts on rehabilitation and resettlement. For instance, IDP Camps in Borno state alone contain 1,434,149 people as at Dec 2023 (NEMA 2024). The need for redress to the above various human right abuses and inhumanity calls for transitional justice mechanism consisting of judicial and non-judicial measures implemented to redress legacies of human rights abuses. Such measures "include criminal prosecutions, truth commissions, reparations programs, and various kinds of institutional reforms". (Bamidele, 2022; Harris, 2020).

Giving sociological explanation to the study's problem from the perspective of relative deprivation theory to explain the problem of internal displacement, Walker and Smith (2022) argued that an individual or a group of people may feel deprived if there is a perception of denial of their legitimate rights and benefits. This may lead to a feeling of discontent among the affected individual(s) when they come to the realization that their prevailing circumstance is worse than anticipated relative to those of other groups or persons around them. This tenet explains the background to the problem of internal displacement caused by Boko Haram sect in the Northeast Nigeria. Another relevant theory is Recognition Theory. The basic tenet is identity, respect, equality and justice. It is a social justice theory that looks beyond the principle of ethical self-actualization and self-realization. The tenet also includes accommodation of distributive justice based on participatory gender relations in society. Distributive justice, on the other hand, is a theory of equality (Lamont & Favor, 2023). Recognition theory considers equal treatment across community to be an important part of a just society.

Transitional justice is enacted at a point of political transition from violence and repression to societal stability and it is informed by a society's desire to rebuild social truce, repair a fractured justice system, and build a democratic system of governance. The core value of transitional justice is the very notion of justice — which does not necessarily mean criminal justice. The vulnerable in the Northeastern part of Nigeria have mostly been the victims of the incessant attacks and inhumanity (Adger, 2006; Bamidele, 2023). Therefore, it is essential to look at transitional justice mechanism as a factor in enhancing and motivating the affected conflict-induced internally displaced persons to return and allow voluntary rehabilitation. It is also imperative to

investigate challenges confronting voluntary rehabilitation and proffer solutions in order to guarantee food security among other benefits to the Nigeria nation.

2 Methods

This section provides details of the statistical test and analysis carried out to generate the results. The total number of internally displaced persons in the camp as at the time of study was one thousand and seven hundred (1700) IDPs according to camp register, (2024). On the method of sampling selection from the population, purposive sampling method was employed. This sampling technique can be justified based on its strength for efficiency and effectiveness in selecting participants. Simple random sampling based on the justification for its convenience was also adopted to identify the respondents for key informant interview. There are thirty-four (34) tents across the camp. Five (5) respondents were selected from each tent purposively as not all IDPs in the camps were displaced from their community of origin by Boko Haram. Snowballing sampling method based on the justification of its referral strength was earlier adopted to recruit the required number of participants for the study.

The study further determined its sample size by applying the Cochran (1977) method (published in 2009) for estimating sample size when margin of error and confidence interval for the true estimates of the population value are known and the proportion of attribute is unknown but can be estimated:

$$n = \frac{Z^2 P(1-P)}{e^2}$$

Where:

z = the standard normal value corresponding to 95% confidence level for 2-tail test; $z = 1.96$.

p = the proportion of at-risk population of displacement

e = level of significance (acceptable degree of error) = 5% or 0.05

Existing literature established that one in every twenty (5%) residents are at the risk of being displaced in the northern Nigeria where insurgency is rife (Uzodike & Maiangwa, 2022). Therefore, the proportion of at-risk persons is taken to mean that a person living in the insurgency-ridden northern part of Nigeria has a chance of $p=0.05$ of risk exposure to displacement; while q is also 0.95 that a person is not exposed to the risk. Therefore, the sample size for the margin of error of 0.05 with the 95% confidence level is determined as follows:

$$n = \frac{(1.96^2)(0.05)(0.95)}{0.05^2}$$

$$n = \frac{0.1825}{0.0025}$$

$$n = 73$$

By making allowance for 15 per cent non-response rate because of high level of illiteracy among the IDPs, the estimated sample size n is divided by: $(100-15)\% = 85\% = 0.85$. Thus:

$$= \frac{73}{0.85} = 85.88 \approx 86$$

(Because Marte IDP camp was segmented to two clusters.)

Therefore, the study covered one hundred and seventy (170) IDPs who were selected, and questionnaire were administered on them. while a total of eight (8) participants in accordance with some inclusion criteria were further selected as key informants. Therefore, the total number of respondents for this study is one hundred and seventy-eight (178) IDPs. This sample figure meets the requirement for adequacy and representativeness which are qualities of a good sample from a defined population.

Mixed method of data collection was adopted. These included both quantitative method and qualitative method. The quantitative method was through the use of questionnaire. The adoption of questionnaire as a data collection instrument can be justified on the ground that survey through questionnaire has the advantages of time efficiency and cost-effectiveness. The questionnaire contained both open and close-ended questions. The second method which is qualitative was through the use of key informant. The adoption of key informant interview as a data collection procedure in this study can be justified because of its merit in providing in-depth details about the subject of study.

On the method used for data analysis, both quantitative and qualitative methods were also adopted. The quantitative method was through the use of Chi-square and binary logistic regression while the qualitative method was through content and thematic analysis. These methods selection can be justified based on their advantages of effective and detailed analysis. Thematic method of analysis was used to analyze qualitative data obtained from the key informants. Themes were coded and subsequently structured into groups for each

transcription and thereafter combined. Themes were then developed by adding more themes, combined or split. Responses that proved difficult to be directly grouped into the themes were regrouped after the discussions among the reviewers. The significance of responses by respondents and the relationship with the adopted themes were deliberated on.

The study further generated three (3) levels of data analysis, which are univariate, bivariate, and multivariate. At univariate level, the responses of the sampled respondents were tabulated into frequency and percentage distribution. At bivariate level, the relationships between the selected independent factors and the IDPs' desire to rehabilitate were examined by employed Chi-square test at 0.05 level of significance. The choice of Chi-square was informed by the nature of the dependent and independent variables which are categorical variables. The multivariate level employed binary logistic regression to test further the significance of the relationships between IDPs' desire to rehabilitate and the independent variables that are found to be significant at the bivariate level. The choice of binary logistic regression can be justified because the model is used when the dependent variables are dichotomous, and the independent variables are of any type.

The general logistic regression model used for this study is according to Newman (2001):

$$P(Y = 1/\beta) = \frac{e^{\beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \dots + \beta_n X_n}}{1 + e^{\beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \dots + \beta_n X_n}}$$

Which computes the probability that the response variable Y is equal to 1 subject to the covariate vector: X = (X₁...X_n) and parameter vector and parameter vector $\beta = (\beta_1, \dots, \beta_n)$. Logistic regression does not predict the value of the dependent variable; it rather gives the expected probability that the dependent variable is unity subject to the settings of the covariates and their estimated parameters.

The logistic regression model is also expressed in linear approximation as:

$$\text{Log}[p/1-p] = a + b_1 X_1 + b_2 X_2 + \dots + b_n X_n + e$$

The regression models were developed to predict the likelihood of IDPs' desire to rehabilitate back in their communities. The main assumption of Binary Logistic Regression Model is obeyed by the nature of the dependent variable. That is, the desire to rehabilitate is a categorical variable with dichotomous responses coded as "have desire=1" and "have no desire=0". All analyses were conducted using the statistical software called STATA Version 15 for its benefits of ease in analyzing, managing and examining data patterns. STATA is also a reliable software in analyzing small data as it is the case in this study.

3 Results

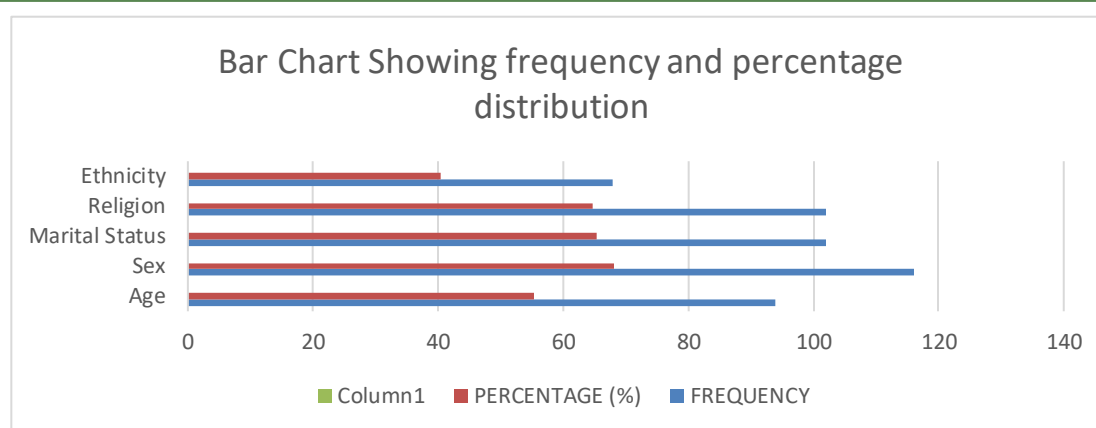
This section details the main findings and outcomes of the study using tables to show frequency and percentage distribution.

The main objective and purpose of this sub-section is to illustrate and present the socio-demographic attributes of the respondents, such as age, sex, marital status, religion and ethnicity in tabular format to show the frequency and percentage distribution.

Table 1: Socio-demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Socio-demographic Characteristics	Frequency n=170	Percentage %
Age		
52–64	94	55.3
65–74	76	44.7
Sex		
Male	116	68.2
Female	52	31.8
Marital status		
Currently in union	102	65.4
Separated/divorced/widowed	52	34.6
Religion		
Muslim	102	64.6
Christians/others	56	34.4
Ethnicity		
Fulani	68	40.5
Hausa	96	57.1
Kanuri	4	2.4

Source: Field survey 2024.



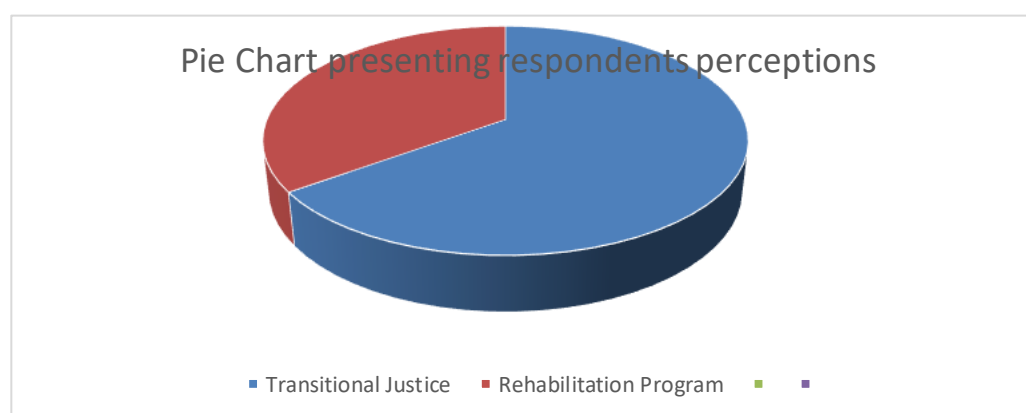
The major findings from the socio-demographic characteristics of respondents reveal the age distribution of two primary groups: those aged 52–64 years (55.3%) and those aged 65–74 years (44.7%). This distribution highlights a predominantly middle-aged to elderly demographic among respondents.

This sub-section illustrates and presents virtually perceptions and levels of awareness of existing rehabilitation program in the Northeast Nigeria using table and pie chart.

Table 2: Knowledge about the existing rehabilitation programs in the Northeast Nigeria

Feelings and perceptions	Frequency	Percentage
Do you have any knowledge about transitional justice?		
Yes	156	92.9
No	12	7.1
Do you know of any existing rehabilitation process in your community of origin?		
Yes	84	53.9
No	72	46.1

Source: Field survey 2024.



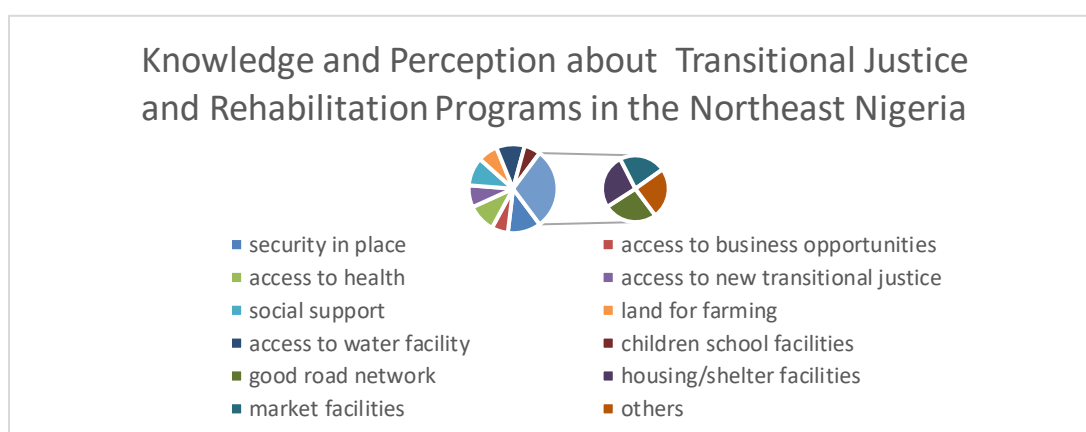
The table and the pie chart above virtually illustrate knowledge about the existing rehabilitation programs in the Northeast Nigeria, the knowledge and awareness of the respondents was first documented. A substantial majority of IDPs (92.9%) have knowledge about transitional justice aimed at supporting their rehabilitation. However, awareness of existing rehabilitation programs in their communities of origin is lower, with only 53.9% indicating awareness, while 46.1% are not aware. This gap highlights the urgent need for better communication and outreach regarding the existing rehabilitation programs. This result is very significant because it proffers insight on how best transitional justice mechanism can be adopted as an approach to provide rehabilitation of the internally displaced persons (IDPs).

The table and the pie chart underneath virtually illustrate respondents' perception towards means by which transitional justice can enhance rehabilitation of returnee IDPs in the Northeast Nigeria

Table 3: Feelings and Perception towards means by which transitional justice can enhance rehabilitation of returnee IDPs in the Northeast Nigeria

What would you like to have in your place of origin to aid your rehabilitation?		
security in place	166	98.8
access to business opportunities	82	48.8
access to health	142	84.5
access to new transitional justice	110	65.2
social support	142	84.5
land for farming	100	59.5
access to water facility	142	84.5
children school facilities	82	48.8
good road network	106	63.1
housing/shelter facilities	108	64.3
market facilities	92	54.8
others	100	59.5

Source: Field survey 2024.



The table and pie chart above show virtually the respondents' feeling and perception towards the means by which transitional justice could enhance rehabilitation of returnee IDPs in the Northeast Nigeria. According to the responses analyzed, the top priority among the means is security, desired by 98.8% of respondents. Other critical needs include access to business opportunities (48.8%), healthcare (84.5%), new transitional justice (65.2%), making coefficient $r=0.65$, social support (84.5%), land for farming (59.5%), water facilities (84.5%), children's school facilities (48.8%), good road networks (63.1%), housing/shelter facilities (64.3%), and market facilities (54.8%). The key findings is that this comprehensive list whose summation makes $O.R=0.682$ underscores the multifaceted nature of successful rehabilitation through all-encompassing transitional justice

The frequency table below shows distribution of IDPs according to responses on challenges confronting rehabilitation. From their responses, these challenges are numerous and hydra-headed.

Table 4: Frequency and percentage distribution of IDPs according to responses on challenges confronting rehabilitation

Feelings and perceptions	Frequency	Percentage
Reason Still in Camp		
Insecurity at place of origin	166	97.6
Access to business opportunities in camp	34	20.0
Access to healthcare services in camp	120	70.6
Access to food aid in camp	94	55.3
Social support in camp	118	69.4
Central/local government directives	48	28.2
Lack of land in area of return	108	63.5
Lack of water in area of return	86	50.6
Poor road network in area of return	126	74.1
Protection/safety in camp	138	81.2
Children in school in camp	60	35.3
Access to safe water in camp	114	67.1
Housing/shelter facilities in camp	88	51.8
Poor health of household members	78	45.9
Lack of seeds and tools	60	35.3
Land conflicts in area of return	62	37.7
Lack of shelter in area of return	84	49.4

Lack of market in area of return	88	51.8
Presence of mines in area of return	44	25.9
Lack of social support in area of return	38	22.4
Do you fear landmines in the area of return?		
Yes	162	97.6
No	4	2.4
Is trauma like memories from massacres, abduction, rape, and other war crimes affecting		
Yes	166	98.8
No	2	1.2
Which of these would you like government to secure in your community of origin?		
Home	84	52.5
Farmland	76	47.5
Do you think other stakeholders should participate more in transitional justice to		
yes	108	71.1
no	44	28.9

Source: Field survey 2024.

The key patterns and trends emerging from table 3.4 above are the challenges to a successful rehabilitation program through the transitional justice in the Northeast Nigeria.

Table 5: Chi-square test of relationship between existing transitional justice mechanism and desire to return and rehabilitate

Perception about existing transitional justice mechanism	Desire to Return			χ^2	p-value
	Desired	Not desired	Total		
Perception about existing transitional justice mechanism					
Perfect	40(65.2)	3(23.1)	52	0.682	P>0.05
Fair	80(63.0)	9(31.0)	116		
Poor	88(62.9)	13(30.1)	140		

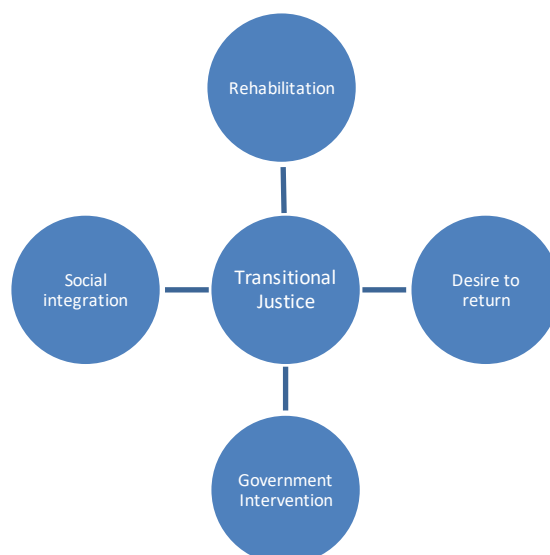
Source: Field survey 2024.

This sub-section illustrates the test of influence of the transitional justice mechanism on the IDPs' desire to rehabilitate.

Table 6: Binary Logistic Regression test of influence of the independent variables of the IDPs' desire to rehabilitate back into their communities

Desire to return	Odd ratio	P-value	95% confidence interval
Length of stay in camp			
5 years or less	(Referent)		
More than 5 years	0.6821	0.057	0.0681 – 1.0423
Reason still in camp: Government directive?			
Yes	(Referent)		
No	2.6748	0.080	0.8879 – 8.0581
Reason still in camp: Children in school in camp?			
Yes	(Referent)		
No	0.3778	0.107	0.1158 – 1.2327

Source: Field survey 2024.



The key findings from the response, as shown in the diagram above, is that effective transitional justice system has influences on the IDPs desire to return and voluntarily accept rehabilitation in their community of origin. Justice delay is justice denied.

4 Discussion

This section discusses the significance of the results of the study and endeavours to compare them with previous work using relevant references. Discussing table 3.1, the major findings from the socio-demographic characteristics of respondents reveal the age distribution of two primary groups: those aged 52–64 years (55.3%) and those aged 65–74 years (44.7%). This distribution highlights a predominantly middle-aged to elderly demographic among respondents. Gender distribution shows that males significantly outnumber females in leadership roles within the camps, with 68.2% of respondents being male and 31.8% female. Marital status data indicates that a majority of respondents are in stable unions, with 65.4% currently in union. In contrast, 34.6% of respondents are separated, divorced, or widowed, reflecting a notable proportion who have experienced marital disruption. Religious affiliation among respondents predominantly comprises Muslims (64.6%), with Christians and others making up 34.4%. This distribution reflects the dominant religious composition within the camps. The ethnic composition of respondents includes 40.5% Fulani, 57.1% Hausa, and 2.4% Kanuri. The Hausa ethnic group is the most represented, followed by Fulani and a smaller presence of Kanuri respondents.

Discussing table 3.2 which examine knowledge about the existing rehabilitation programs in the Northeast Nigeria, the knowledge and awareness of the respondents was first documented. A substantial majority of IDPs (92.9%) have knowledge about transitional justice aimed at supporting their rehabilitation. However, awareness of existing rehabilitation programs in their communities of origin is lower, with only 53.9% indicating awareness, while 46.1% are not aware. This gap highlights the urgent need for better communication and outreach regarding the existing rehabilitation programs. This result is very significant because it proffers insight on how best transitional justice mechanism can be adopted as an approach to provide rehabilitation of the internally displaced persons (IDPs). Comparing the result with the previous studies, this study results bears similarities to the successful rehabilitation programs witnessed in Iran, Uganda, Liberia and Bosnia which encouraged IDPs to return home even before the full cessation of conflict (Sliwa & Wiig, 2016). The voluntary return of IDPs is regarded as an essential step toward re-establishing normalcy, peace, and stability in regions afflicted by conflict (Rosenberg, 2004; Salama, 2001). As shown by similar study in Colombia, some IDPs have actively engaged in community development initiatives within conflict-affected areas. Replicating this model in Northeast Nigeria could prove transformative and empowering for IDPs.

Similarly, discussing table 3.3 which centers on the respondents' feeling and perception towards the means by which transitional justice could enhance rehabilitation of returnee IDPs in the Northeast Nigeria. According to the responses analyzed, the top priority among the means is security, desired by 98.8% of respondents. Other critical needs include access to business opportunities (48.8%), healthcare (84.5%), new transitional justice (65.2%), making coefficient $r=0.65$, social support (84.5%), land for farming (59.5%), water facilities (84.5%), children's school facilities (48.8%), good road networks (63.1%), housing/shelter facilities (64.3%), and market facilities (54.8%). This comprehensive list whose summation makes $O.R=0.682$ underscores the multifaceted nature of successful rehabilitation through all-encompassing transitional justice.

Further discussing the responses about the role of the government in securing essential resources in their communities of origin, 52.5% of IDPs prioritized securing homes, while 47.5% prioritized securing farmland. Additionally, 71.1% of respondents believe that other stakeholders should participate more in transitional justice to facilitate their rehabilitation, indicating a strong desire for collaborative efforts involving multiple actors.

Another study's objective is to examine the challenges in the rehabilitation of IDPs back in their community of origin in the Northeast Nigeria. The responses are tabulated in table 3.4. Part of the reasons why IDPs are still in camps and the relative reliefs they are having constitute challenges to voluntary return. The reasons for IDPs remaining in camps are diverse and multifaceted. Insecurity at the place of origin is the predominant reason, cited by 97.6% of respondents. This also constitutes a challenge towards successful rehabilitation. Other significant reasons include access to business opportunities (20%), healthcare services (70.6%), food aid (55.3%), and social support (69.4%) in the camps. Government directives (28.2%), lack of land for farming (63.5%), lack of access to water (50.6%), and poor road networks (74.1%) at the place of return are also notable barriers. Safety and protection in camps (81.2%), children's education (35.3%), access to safe water (67.1%), and housing/shelter facilities (51.8%) further highlight the complexities involved in the decision to remain in camps. Additional factors such as poor health of household members (45.9%), lack of seeds and tools (35.3%), land conflicts (37.7%), and presence of mines (22.4%) also contribute to the prolonged stay in camps, and they are challenges to successful rehabilitation. Fear of landmines is prevalent, with 97.6% of IDPs expressing concern about landmines in their areas of return. Furthermore, trauma from past experiences such as massacres, abduction, rape, and other war crimes affects 98.8% of IDPs, indicating a critical need for psychological support and trauma-informed care in rehabilitation efforts. The results can also be linked to the relative deprivation theory earlier mentioned as a sociological explanation in this study.

Another discussion of results and findings as contained in table 3.5 is the relationship between IDPs' perception towards transitional justice mechanism in their places of origin and their desire to return and rehabilitate. The results reveal an interesting yet non-significant pattern between perceived transitional justice mechanism levels and the desire to return.

IDPs who perceive transitional justice mechanism as "perfect" exhibit the highest desire to return, with 65.2% ($r = 0.65$; $P > 0.05$) indicating a willingness to rehabilitate. This suggests that a strong belief in robust transitional justice mechanism may positively influence the desire to return. However, the decline in this desire is notable as the perception of transitional justice mechanism decreases. Among those who view transitional justice mechanism as "fair," 63.0% expressed a desire to return, and this percentage drops to 62.9% for those who perceive the investment as "poor." While these percentages indicate a trend where better perceived transitional justice mechanism is associated with a higher desire to return, the overall relationship is statistically significant.

The Chi-square test value ($\chi^2 = 0.682$) and the associated p-value ($p > 0.05$) indicate that the observed relationship between perception of transitional justice mechanism and the desire to rehabilitate could not be due to random chance. This statistical insignificance suggests that the perceived level of transitional justice mechanism ($O.R = 0.682$; $P > 0.05$) might be more influential in determining the desire of IDPs to rehabilitate into their communities. The main interpretation of these results is that while new transitional justice mechanism is essential, it alone may not be sufficient to influence the decision to return. IDPs may consider a variety of factors, including security, economic opportunities, family ties, and the overall quality of life, which are not captured merely by perceptions of transitional justice mechanism. Therefore, although improving transitional justice mechanism could be beneficial, it should be part of a broader strategy that addresses multiple facets of IDPs' lives to effectively encourage their return and rehabilitation.

Furthermore, the slight significant relationship also highlights the complexity of the rehabilitation program. Policymakers and aid organizations should be cautious in assuming that enhancing transitional justice mechanism will directly lead to increased return rates. Instead, a more holistic approach that includes improving security, creating economic opportunities, and fostering social cohesion might be necessary to support IDPs in their decision to return. This analysis underscores the need for a comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing IDPs' desire to rehabilitate and this result can be linked explicitly to the recognition theory earlier mentioned in this study. While perceptions of transitional justice mechanism play a role, they are part of a more complex web of considerations. Future study should aim to identify and address these multifaceted influences that better support IDPs in their journey toward rehabilitation. Comparing the significance of the results above with the previous similar studies in mitigating the pitfalls of unsuccessful rehabilitation due to the exclusion of IDPs, the rehabilitation template of other successful countries can be

adopted. Countries like Iran and Colombia have adopted effective strategies. They have engaged key informants among the returnees to facilitate community mediation and provide psychological support for those grappling with post-traumatic stress upon their return. This approach has yielded positive outcomes for sustainable rehabilitation (Mohammadi et al., 2018). Beyond involving returnees, community leaders play a vital role in mediating between returning IDPs and local populations, fostering social cohesion through their leadership skills and personal networks, which also extend to social media. Moreover, study funded by the World Bank on internal migration has shown that sustainable return and rehabilitation is more likely when there is strong social cohesion between returnees and local populations, and the involvement of community leaders in facilitating this process is integral (Mohammadi et al., 2018).

Comparing the findings across different demographic groups and existing studies, in Nigeria, there are only two specific studies on this matter. The first, conducted by Afolabi et al. (2018), used housing as an incentive to encourage IDPs to return and rehabilitate, but it faced significant challenges due to political partisanship among those in charge. The second study, carried out by Adekola et al., (2019a, 2019b, 2019c), explored whether the restoration of water sources, which had been destroyed during the peak of the insurgency in the Northeast region, could motivate a return and rehabilitation, with affirmative results. However, these existing studies focused on individual aspects of demonstration of transitional justice mechanism.

Moreover, discussing table 3.6 which explains the predictors of the IDPs' desire to return by employing Binary Logistic Regression to test the significance or otherwise of the influence of the independent variables indicated as significance from the Chi-square test. The binary logistic regression analysis aimed to evaluate how different factors influence the IDPs' desire to rehabilitate back into their communities. The independent variables considered in this analysis were the length of stay in the camp, whether the reason for staying in the camp was a government directive, and whether the presence of children in school within the camp affected their desire to return for rehabilitation. The length of stay in the camp was categorized into two groups: those who had been in the camp for five years or less and those who had been there for more than five years. The odds ratio for IDPs who had stayed in the camp for more than five years was 0.6821, with a p-value of 0.057. This result, although statistically significant at the 0.05 level, suggests a trend where IDPs who have stayed in the camp for a longer duration are likely to desire to return to their place of origin compared to those who have been in the camp for a shorter period. The latter could be due to the development of new social ties, adaptation to the camp environment, or diminished confidence in the conditions back home over time. The nearly significant p-value highlights the need for further study to explore this potential relationship more deeply. Similarly, another variable examined was whether the reason for remaining in the camp was due to a government directive. The odds ratio for those who were not in the camp due to a government directive was 2.6748, with a p-value of 0.080. Although this result is not statistically significant, it indicates that IDPs who are not compelled by government directives to stay in the camp might be more willing to return to their communities and rehabilitate. This could reflect a sense of autonomy and personal agency among these IDPs, making them more likely to consider rehabilitation when not bound by external mandates. This finding suggests that policy changes allowing more freedom of movement could potentially increase the desire to return and rehabilitate among the IDPs.

The presence of children attending school in the camp was another factor analyzed. The odds ratio for IDPs without children in school in the camp was 0.3778, with a p-value of 0.107. This suggests that IDPs with children enrolled in school within the camp are less likely to desire to return to their original communities. While this result is also not statistically significant, it points to the crucial role that education plays in the decision-making process of IDPs. The stability and continuity of their children's education likely contribute to their reluctance to leave the camp, highlighting the importance of educational opportunities in rehabilitation strategies. Ensuring that educational needs are met in the place of origin could be key to encouraging returns. The binary logistic regression analysis provides insights into the factors influencing the desire of IDPs to return to their communities. While none of the examined variables showed statistically significant results at the 0.05 level, the trends indicated by the odds ratios and p-values suggest important considerations for policymakers and aid organizations. The length of stay in the camp, government directives, and children's schooling in the camp each have potential implications on the decision to return, albeit with varying degrees of influence. The results emphasize the complexity of the rehabilitation program and the need for multifaceted approaches that address not only economic and transitional justice mechanism but also personal and familial considerations.

Future study should continue to explore these and other variables to develop a more comprehensive understanding of what drives the desire to return and rehabilitate among IDPs. By addressing these factors

holistically, strategies can be better tailored to support the successful rehabilitation of IDPs into their communities.

On thematic report and interpretation of findings from key informants and in analyzing the qualitative data generated from the key informant interviews, concepts were coded and subsequently structured into groups for each transcription and thereafter combined. Themes were then developed by adding more concepts, combined or split. Responses that proved difficult to be directly grouped into the themes were regrouped after the discussions among the reviewers. The significance of responses by respondents and the relationship with the adopted themes were deliberated on. In other words, the steps taken to analyze qualitative data included the collection and organization of data, the development of a coding system, the identification of themes, the analysis of the data for insights and lastly the report of the insight from the analysis.

Below are the key responses from the selected key informants on some of the questions asked during the key informant interview session. A response by a key informant to the question on the challenges facing the execution of transitional justice in the Northeast is:

'The major challenges are lack of funds for implementation arising from budgetary allocation, partisanship on the part of stakeholders, nonchalant attitude, high level of illiteracy in the North, continuous violence and attacks. Of all these, the major challenge in the Northeast region is inclement security situation'.

Interpretation: The above response, when triangulated from the response to the same question from the questionnaire administered is the same. The interpretation of the above response is that inadequate funding as provided in the budget by the government for the implementation of transitional justice is the major obstacles to smooth execution to take care of the need of the targeted population. This implies that with the adequate budgetary provision, large scale return and rehabilitation of internally displaced persons back in their community of origin is expected to take place in the Northeast region. This analysis of the key informant response also aligns with the findings on the similar issue using the quantitative study instrument to solicit response from the respondents.

Another question that was directed to a key informant during another interview session at the office of National Transitional justice mechanism was How do you think transitional justice mechanism programmes should be applied to enhance rehabilitation programmes of IDPs to their community of origin, the responded by saying:

'The Ministry of Justice should do more to see that we the internally displaced persons get redress for injustice and inhumanity arising from government failure to secure us and our acquired property in our community of origin. We cannot return for any possible rehabilitation if safety of lives cannot be guaranteed by the government. Therefore, possible rehabilitation might not be achievable'.

Interpretation: The response aligns with the response on the same question in the questionnaire. This response can be interpreted to mean that the delivery of justice and redress is the sole responsibility of the Ministry of Justice. The implementation is the duty of the government. The above response also indicts that government of failure in providing adequate security for the people in the Northeast Nigeria.

The findings from key informant interviews also align with the responses gathered through the questionnaire. The major themes and emerging concepts from the two instruments further consolidate major findings from the study.

5 Conclusions

This study would like to conclude that IDPs in the Northeast Nigeria will willingly return home, become engaged economically, socially, psychologically and politically and be sustainably rehabilitated if, for instance, the Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs and Disaster Management, and other allied social agencies in Nigeria, collaborate with other concerned stakeholders. This position fully aligns with the theoretical and methodological strengths as well as variables strength of this study. This study is significant, and any future related studies might concentrate on this specific issue of how social institutions can collaborate with government agencies to evaluate and raise funds to finance rehabilitation, since it is a costly exercise which must be monitored and properly mitigated among interested stakeholders.

This study is novel and is highly significant. To the best knowledge of the authors knowledge, there are only two related existing studies in Nigeria. The first, conducted by Afolabi et al. (2018), used housing as an incentive to encourage IDPs to return and rehabilitate, but it faced significant challenges due to political partisanship among those in charge. The second study, carried out by Adekola et al., (2019a, 2019b, 2019c), explored whether the restoration of water sources, which had been destroyed during the peak of the insurgency

in the Northeast region, could motivate a return and rehabilitation, with affirmative results. However, these existing studies focused on individual aspects of transitional justice mechanism. None of this existing literature specifically examined transitional justice as a mechanism for the rehabilitation of conflict-induced internally displaced persons (CIIDPs) in the specific context of Northeast Nigeria.

The significance of the study to the Nigerian government, its partners, and civil societies concerned with providing redress to the inhumanity and sufferings of the IDPs, ameliorate this suffering caused through displacement by Boko Haram cannot be over-emphasized. The result from this study is relevant as it has provided insight into the knowledge about transitional justice mechanism and how it can be adopted to provide redress to the victims of conflict-induced displacement in the Northeast Nigeria. The study also proffers insight on how best transitional justice mechanism can be adopted as an approach to provide rehabilitation of the internally displaced persons (IDPs).

The findings from the study are also useful to future studyers in the academic field of counter - insurgency. Most importantly, the study will serve as a guide to present and future generations in the field of security. This study will add to knowledge on transitional justice as a peace building mechanism in the Northeast Nigeria.

5.1 Recommendations

In light of these findings, some actionable recommendations are proposed:

- The government should prioritize the restoration of social infrastructure in post-conflict communities, particularly emphasizing the restoration of water and electricity, as these were significantly linked to successful rehabilitation.
- To address the reluctance among IDPs, the government should ensure the presence of peacekeeping forces before facilitating the return and rehabilitation of IDPs in the Northeast. This is important because the return of a large number of IDPs to post-conflict areas can potentially pose a threat to peace if returnees struggle to establish sustainable livelihoods or if community infrastructure and services become insufficient or overburdened due to an influx of returnees.
- Commercial activities in the conflict-affected communities in the Northeast region should be resuscitated. The re-opening of commercial activities will augment the region economics of buying and selling, marketing, business activities and aid in fast-tracking a return to pre-displacement life.
- The internally displaced persons who have already demonstrated willingness to rehabilitate should be assisted in monetary term in-line with International Organization for Migration regulation, that is, by providing USD 580 for every formerly displaced person who wants to return to their home of origin where they were formerly forcefully ejected. Because of the economic situation of the Nigeria nation, If the government could not afford to make the entire amount available, a based amount should be provided by the Nigerian government, possibly half of what IOM regulates.
- This study would similarly like to recommend economic opportunities for the returnee IDPs, especially in terms of job creation or encouragement to practice skills that were hitherto acquired in the camps. The creation of these economic opportunities would go a long way to induce the desire of the internally displaced persons to return and rehabilitate. This recommendation is supported by the human capital theory which posits that education and skills training increases individual capacity to become productive which, in turn, impacts their ability to secure a place in the job market and earn wages.
- Moreover, since most of the returning IDPs are farmers, the government should assist them with improved and subsidized seed stocks. As found in the results of this study work, this type of assistance would help to induce their willingness for voluntary return as a large portion of the respondents worked as farmers before their displacement.
- The issue of internally displaced persons and rehabilitation should be included at the local government level especially now that local government in Nigeria can function independently following the Supreme Court judgement on Thursday 11th July 2024. affirming financial autonomy of this third tier of government in Nigeria. The local government authorities especially in the Northeast region of Nigeria should establish offices for internally displaced persons and rehabilitation at the local government level with representatives of internally displaced persons occupying positions in these offices. The local government is the third tier of government which is the closest arm of the government to the people. This way, the government will find it very easy to access the displaced persons and evaluate their rehabilitation rate. It would be much more difficult for the government to cater for these people especially at the federal level and sometimes the state level unlike the local government. Moreover, these displaced persons would find it easy to respond to the government through the local

government since this arm of government is the government that the people know very well because of their grass root involvements in development and rendering services to their communities.

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