

Development Administration and Survival Strategies of the Urban Poor in Two Major Cities in Nigeria: Implications for Urbanization and National Development

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Abstract

Development administration as a field of specialization in public administration can only be effective and efficient in the provision of development projects and programmes for the improvement of the living standard of the Nigerian citizens, especially the urban poor when the government make provisions for good alternative settlements, means of livelihood and other basic infrastructure in the process of transforming certain locations to urban centres in the country for national development. The study investigated reasons that lead to continuous rural-urban migration and the survival strategies of the urban poor in some cities in Nigeria. The methodology adopted in the study was survey method with interview as a means of gathering data and documentary review of concepts based on existing literature for critical and contextual analysis. Modernization theory was used to explain the phenomenon of study. The findings revealed that majority of migrants to the urban areas were non-indigenous in search of better means of livelihood, education advancement and marriage. It further revealed that some slum dwellers were graduates that could not afford accommodation in the city centres, while some settler have to strategize for additional means of income to keep up the present economic realities in the country. The study recommended the development of the rural areas through industrialization and construction of access roads from the city centres to the rural communities, provision of basic social facilities and livelihood empowerment facilities that will enhance the livelihood of the rural people, etc.

Keywords: *Development administration, survival strategies, urbanization, urban poor, national development, livelihood, education, marriage*

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Introduction

The paper is an attempt to examine development administration within the survival strategies of urban poor in two major cities of Nigeria. It also seeks to interrogate the implications of these issues on urbanization and national development. For the purpose of conceptual clarification, the paper starts with a look at the concept of development administration.

Development administration as a concept and its practice becomes effective with the role public administration plays to bring about development. Okereke (1999), posit development administration as all the activities of government and its agencies directed towards achieving higher level of development. He further describe it as the process where developing countries utilize institutions of state bureaucracy as an instrument for the provision of indices of government. Ofoeze (1997), opined development administration as the tendency towards a system of administration in which the state penetrates the grassroots using civil servants to

achieve developmental goals of government. Development administration activities are geared in improving physical development level in the society including social welfare provision thereby elevating the living standard of the people.

According to Ekot and Ndoh (1999) cited in Onichakwe (2016), development administration entails efforts and innovations adopted by development strategist that will enable government to coordinate efficiently and effectively human and material resources in achieving development goals aimed at reducing limitations towards achieving higher standard of living as witnessed in developed nations. Considering the views of these scholars, development administration is the process of initiating and executing prospects such as roads, healthcare centres, electricity, educational facilities, housing and provision of social welfare services for the needy to improve their living conditions. In furtherance to examining development administration, there is need to evaluate its origin.

Origin of development administration

The origin and growth of development administration is traced to comparative public administration. Comparative public administration is associated with the study of various cultures and social settings in different climes (Obi and Obikweze, 2004). Goswami in 1955 coined the term development administration, it was popularized by Fred Riggs, Edward Weidner, Albert Waterson, etc. According to Ekpe and Awofeso in Okereke (1999), development administration strategy is a bourgeoisies-oriented approach for rural transformation. In developing countries there are wide range of problems like under-development in the areas of health, housing, education and there are also social exclusion, social insecurity, and economic stagnation, etc. poor institutional framework and its administration as it was in 1960s that made development become the focus of developing countries like Nigeria, India, etc. This attracted the attention of the western countries to their development challenges. Foreign experts in administration and academia were sent to administer economic programmes and strengthen the public administration institution of some newly independent countries (Obi and Obikweze, 2004).

The position of the proponents of development administration is that the best development channel for emerging new nations is to strengthen the administrative capabilities of public bureaucracy and using it as an instrument for development through strategies, approaches and actions that meets situational circumstances. Development administration possesses certain features and these include;

1. Change-oriented: The central aim of development administration is towards socio-economic change, and this dynamism makes it different from conventional administration of maintenance of status quo.
2. Result-oriented: It is strictly result oriented to bring about productivity through performance.
3. Client-oriented: It is committed to meeting the needs of marginal farmers, rural artisans and landless agricultural labourers in developing countries to enhance socio-cultural and politico-economic progress.
4. Citizen participation oriented: Citizens are encouraged to participate in the formulation and execution of development plans, policies and programmes that directly or indirectly affects them.
5. Commitment to fulfill public demands: It is committed to fulfilling the dreams and aspirations of the people as these affect the political and administrative development of any country.
6. Concern with innovation: It is concerned with the replacement or improvement of existing governmental architecture and norms with the ones that conform with changes in political and social environment

7. Administration of industrial societies: It brings changes to a society that is industrially and economically progressive. The standard fixed by industrial society determines administrative behaviour and performance of functions which become models for development administration.

Several sub-Saharan African major cities and most Asian cities are rapidly undergoing the process of urbanization which involves restructuring and physical transformation with perceived quest for integration into global economic system. Africa is believed to be the 21st century destination for economic advancement by the World Bank, United Nations and top economic investors. The rise of the Asian tigers like Hong Kong, South Korea, Singapore, Taiwan and now China in industrial, technological and infrastructural development has propelled African leaders to engage in repositioning of their major cities for physical urban transformation. Goldman (2011) asserts Africa as “rising”, the second fastest-growing region in the world and “last frontier of development”.

Nigeria presently has a population of about 200 million people, over 70% percent of these populations are urban dwellers. These urban areas are densely populated due to constant rural-urban migration. The struggle by government to manage the population explosion in these cities precipitate social problems such as lack of shelter due to demolition of previous settlements, arm robbery, drug abuse and other social vices by the youths. Most times, the government does not make alternative shelter provisions for these displaced people, thereby resulting in the emergence of slums in nearby locations (Gandy, 2006).

Uyo as a city and the capital of Akwa Ibom State is cut in the struggles of managing population growth, urban development challenges and the need for urban modernity. The unprecedented population growth and socio-economic composition of its population is not unconnected to its centrality and accessibility by neighbouring states like Cross River, Rivers, Abia and through the Atlantic Ocean is the Cameroon. The establishment of the Uyo Capital City Development Authority (UCCDA) for the proper planning of the state capital in terms of roads, housing, transportation and commerce due to influx of people and materials (UCCDA, 1991). The implementation of the city plan has resulted in the demolition of some formal and informal structures that were inhabited by citizens and created slums and cluster of shacks in suburbs of the city. The inhabitants of these areas have become the urban poor who developed survival strategies within their environment.

Abak is fast becoming a city with the numerous presence of government institutions for the daily routine of governing processes and also the migration of people from neighbouring local governments and states to settle in this location. Abak gives easy and faster access to Uyo for bureaucrats, businessmen, students and transporters in their daily transactions and other activities. There are streams of restructuring and transformation overtime within the city centre which has caused initial settlers to resettle in nearby locations. These new settlements are mostly informal structures that depicts slums. The occupants of these informal structures embrace survival strategies for their livelihood since they find themselves as the urban poor.

The aforementioned cities under investigations by the researcher is aim at examining the survival strategies of the urban poor in Nigeria and its implications for urbanization and national development.

Literature review

Survival strategies

The urban poor who mostly are displaced people from their initial settlements due to restructuring and transformation of cities by government make up informal economy. They strategize to survive in their new settlements, predominantly slums and clusters of shacks. Urban planning is one major tool through which a sustainable urban transformation can be attained (UN-HABITAT, 2009). It is however disturbing to note that the approach and current urban planning policy implementation in many sub-Saharan African countries, albeit UN-HABITAT (2009) refers to as 'modernist dream' have failed due to its absolute variance with livelihood realities of the majority of the population. These realities are that the urban poor take refuge in informal settlements and earn their daily living through informal economic engagements. The quest for urban modernity in most sub-Saharan African countries tend to increase socio-economic exclusion and relative inequality in the urban areas, predicated by poor urban planning policies and prospects resulting in hiding or sweeping away the poor (Tibaijuka, 2006).

For the urban poor to have a means of livelihood, they adopt survival strategies which include hawking, food vending, keke and motorbike riding, daily pay labour, scavenging and drug dealing. The urban poor are actively involved in industry and other services, but these economic contribution to urban and national economy is rarely pronounced (UNHSP, 2003).

Livelihood for survival accounts for rural-urban migration as found noticeable in Nigeria. This often culminates in the presence of urban poor, who are ready to do anything for survival. Many involve in the following as strategies for survival while in urban cities.

- i. Hawking: Hawking in Nigeria is a prominent means by which many families survival depends on. Mostly, women and children are found hawking all types of food, clothes and fruits along major streets of towns with expected population that can patronize them (UNSP, 2003). It is lamenting that the female hawkers end up victims of rape and kidnapping. Scholars of humanitarian services have reported hawking to be one of the resort base of the urban poor.
- ii. Motorbike riding: This is almost an exclusive reserve of male who are jobless but need to survive in urban cities. According to Planet FM (Uyo), security agents in their 2019-2020 report, captured that many crimes committed are traced to keke riders who have shifted their line of business upon "operation no bike policy" in Akwa Ibom State. They also express concerns that many are doing this keke ridding as a source to survive their families, winning the sympathy of government to stop their operations.
- iii. Drug dealers: Many young men and women alike are into different kinds of drug-pushing. Many who are caught in the act confess that they are doing it for survival even when they know it is a wrong thing to do (Tibaijuka, 2006).
- iv. Hard labour: Many are subjected to hard labour such as manual evacuation of soakaways, truck pushing and workmen at building sites for survival. Many in this category are ready to do any hard job in town than going back to their rural communities, their belief is that things will become better someday, as urban cities are considered to be high in opportunities and fortunes than rural areas.

Informal settlements/slums

The United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (UNCHS, 2002) defines a slum as "a wide range of low-income settlement and/or poor human living condition". According to Abang (2019), the term slums by UNCHS however has come to be an aggregate of vast informal

settlements that are rapidly becoming a visual myriads of urban poverty. These settlements are characterized with poor sanitation and hygiene, lack of good source of water, erratic power supply and non availability of other basic services. UN-HABITAT (2003) asserts that a slum household is any household that lacks one or more of the following:

- Access to improve water
- Access to improve sanitation
- Security of tenure (the right to effective protection by the state against arbitrary, unlawful eviction).
- Durability of housing (including living in non-hazardous location) and
- Sufficient living area (no overcrowding)

The urbanization of poverty

The perception that people living in the cities are spontaneously better off than their counterparts in the rural areas is becoming more of a myth due to life realities especially in regards to consistent restructuring and transformation of major cities in Nigeria. UN-HABITAT (2003) statistic show that 924 million people, or 31.6% of the world's urban population, are living under unacceptable conditions, and there is the tendency for this figure to increase unless holistic measures are adopted by development agencies to improve the living conditions of present and future urban dwellers.

The continuous migration into the urban areas will only catalyze poverty growth rate in these cities. Poverty will steadily become urbanized across the world, while the current policies on development are not addressing present social problems. According to Kumata (1996) infrastructural development, creation of good jobs and the provision of public services in the process of these cities transformation have been neglected by the government. The UN-HABITAT (2003) asserts that sub-Saharan Africa host the second largest proportion of the urban population residing in slum (71.9 per cent); 166 million out of a total urban population of 231 million are classified as slum dwellers. South-Central Asia has 262 million of its population living in slums (81.9 percent). In Nigeria of about 200 million people, 79.2 percent of the population live in informal settlements and slums.

Demolition without solution

Migration has been a universal phenomenon with social and economic implications that plays a significant role in shaping the social, economic and other relevant structural indices of population of a particular country or region (Khan, 2010). Rural urban migration has increased tremendously with the passage of time due to broadening gap in the socio-economic development levels between rural and urban areas, especially in developing countries (Sorensen, Hear and Pederson, 2002).

The migration can be as a result of certain factors such as war, livelihood, education and marriage. These migrants find themselves mostly in informal settlements hoping to start up a new life in their present environment, but unfortunately their sojourn is shortened due to restructuring and transformation of major cities by government leading to the demolition of their make-shift structures and other forms of informal settlements. According to Abang (2019) managing migration and development should be targeted at harnessing development potentials of migration for both migrants and the society. The policy framework for migrants in developed countries should also be applicable to countries in Africa, especially Nigeria where demolition of informal settlements is put in motion without providing alternative shelter for the displaced individuals. The government should always provide solution to the displacement of the inhabitants of such settlements.

It is worthy of note, that after World War II, Britain realize that in rebuilding the country, displaced population must be provided with adequate alternative shelter and also be employed for them to earn an income that will sustain them and their families. In South Africa, the government rather embarked on the upgrading of slums and tackling of poverty instead of demolition after realizing that the emergence of slums was as a result of government failure in good governance. Fourth Geneva Convention, Article 53 of 1949 states:

“Any destruction by the occupying power of real or personal property belonging individually or collectively to private persons, or to the state... is prohibited, except where such destruction is rendered absolutely necessary by military operations”.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights also states clearly that “No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his property”. In Nigeria, international conventions and agreements are treated with levity. For instance, the demolition of Otodo Gbame, a water front slum and Maroko all in Lagos was done without reference to existing International Act and Laws, thus rendering the displaced persons homeless exposing women and children to danger. Restructuring and transformation of major cities in any country becomes applaud able when adequate alternative shelter has been provided by government to the original occupants of the location. The absence of alternative shelter for the displaced leads to increased urban poverty that can result to multiplicity of societal ills.

Theoretical framework

Modernization theory

The theory has Walt Rostow as its main proponent. This theory asserts that the rest of the world needs to take a cue from the western model of modernity and adopt its pattern in their society to progress. According to Parsons (1937), modernization is a transformative process; in order for a society to move into modernity, its traditional structures and values must be totally replaced by a set of modern values. Modernization involves the transformation from a traditional, rural, agrarian society to a secular, urban, industrial society. The premise is that for third world countries to record any progress in their societies, there is need for them to engage in modernization. This involves the transformation and industrialization of the societies. A modernized society is an urbanized society, and the urbanization of major cities causes migration from the rural areas to the urban centres. The migration leads to over population of the urban areas resulting in pressure on available natural resources, social facilities, housing problems, insecurity and environmental hazards. These challenges must be address by government through its relevant agencies because challenge and response are the essence of modern society. The government therefore has the responsibility of restructuring, transforming and industrializing the rural areas and provide basic social facilities, low-cost housing, clean environment and employment opportunities in these rural areas to repel the causes of migration and congestion in the urban areas.

Implication for urbanization and national development

The inhabitants of informal settlements like slums and shacks are mostly low income earners who cannot afford the high cost of living in the city centres, thus seeking shelter in these areas for their livelihood. Some of the slum dwellers are victims of circumstance who became helpless and no choice but to seek for alternative shelter. It is interesting to note that some of the slum dwellers are graduates who left their villages for greener pasture in the city but could not afford the high cost of accommodation in the city centres. They rather prefer to stay in the slums and work in the city centre, hoping one day they will save enough money and pay for a befitting accommodation in the city.

It is imperative for government to understand that demolition of slums and other informal settlements is not the answer, rather the upgrading of these slums for them to be more habitable by providing basic social services and tackling urban poverty. The upgrade of slums, bringing healthcare facilities, schools, good source of drinking water and electricity to these environments will impact positively on urbanization and national development. The inhabitant of these slums are integrated into the city centres with an improved standard of living condition and sense of belonging. This helps in reducing insecurity to life and property as idle youths can engage in small scale businesses while others enroll in schools.

In South Africa, the government realized that poverty was a menace and influenced the emergence of slums all over the country, it decided to undertake various intervention programmes to address this problem. The government engaged in upgrading of the slums rather than demolishing them, built low cost housing and provided social services to the poor. Demolition of slums will only lead to more proliferation of such settlements because the inhabitants have not been given a formal alternative settlements by the government. Urbanization and national development is threatened in the face of restructuring and transformation of major cities where demolition is carried out on informal settlements without formal alternative settlements for the inhabitants.

Challenges of urban settlements

Urban centres are becoming densely populated globally due to daily migration to these cities from rural areas it has become a social problem for the government in controlling the population and providing adequate social services for them. UNCHS (1992) estimated that about 100,000 additional housing units are required each year to address housing problem. In Nigeria between July 2010 – September 2014, only about 43,126 housing units were added to the national stock (PSR 2015). This figure is far below the projection of UNCHS on housing units on yearly basis. The paucity of affordable or low-cost housing units in the country has contributed to increase in the number of informal settlements, especially slums around major cities. The poor and low income earners inhabit these settlements which become highly congested with lack of infrastructural facilities, lack of water supply and power, and unhealthy disposal of waste. Lagos, for instance is highly populated and has witnessed several demolition by various government without alternative settlement for the initial settlers causing multiplicity of slums and illegal occupancy of vacant lands, and same is applicable in other major cities in Nigeria.

Methodology

The study adopted survey method, and interview was utilized as a major means to elicit information and relevant data from the respondents. The study undertook a random selection of settlements in two (2) cities and towns as indicated below:

TABLE 1: Cities and settlements

S/N	Cities/towns	Settlements
1.	Uyo	Urua Ekpa Obio Offot Aka Obot Idim
2	Abak	Ndot Midim waterside Usung idim

Source: Field work, 2021

According to the table above, 6 settlements were randomly selected in these cities and the researcher also randomly approached the residents of the settlement for responses to questions bordering on their biodata and how long they have lived in these settlements.

TABLE 2: Indigenes and non-indigenes distribution

	Cities of Settlement	
	Uyo	Abak
Indigene	9	7
Non-indigene	21	23
Sex	M(24) F(6)	M (26) F (4)
Marital status	S (nil) M (27) W (3)	S (Nil) M (29) W (1)
Total	30	30

Source: Field work, 2021

According to the table 2 above, indigenes in Uyo among the respondents were 9 while non-indigenes were 21, making a total of 30 respondents. 24 of the respondents were male, while 6 were female. Those that were married among them were 27 while widowed were 3. From the same table, indigenes in Abak among the respondents were 7, while non-indigenes were 23, making a total of 30 respondents. 26 of the respondents were male, while 4 were female. Those that were married among them were 29 while widowed was 1. The total number of respondents in the two cities was 60 in respect to this study.

TABLE 3: Educational qualification

Educational qualification	Cities of settlement			
	Uyo	(%)	Abak	(%)
Primary (FSLC)	10	33.3	7	23.3
Secondary (SSCE)	12	40	17	56.6
Tertiary (B.Sc)	8	26.6	6	20
Total	30	100	30	100

Source: Field work, 2021.

According to the table 3 above, in Uyo 10 respondents representing 33.3 percent hold FSLC, 12 respondents representing 40 percent possess SSCE while 8 respondents representing 26.6 percent were B.Sc holders. From the same table above, in Abak 7 respondents representing 23.3 percent hold FSLC, 17 respondents representing 56.6 percent possess SSCE while 6 respondents representing 20 percent were B.Sc holders.

TABLE 4: Reasons for migration

Reasons for migration	Cities of settlement			
	Uyo	(%)	Abak	(%)
Livelihood	21	70	24	80
Education	6	20	4	13.3
Political instability	-	-	-	-
Marriage	3	10	2	6.6
Natural disaster	-	-	-	-
Total	30	100	30	100

Source: Field work, 2021

According to the table 4 above, several reasons were advanced by the settlers why they migrated to the cities. In Uyo, 21 respondents representing 70 percent migrated to the city in search for better means of livelihood, 6 respondents representing 20 percent migrated to the city for quality education, while 3 respondents representing 10 percent migrated to the city to seek opportunity to meet a preferred life partner.

In Abak, 24 respondents representing 80 percent migrated to the city in search for better means of livelihood, 4 respondents representing 13.3 percent migrated to the city for quality education, while 2 respondents representing 6.6 percent migrated to the city with the intention of getting married.

Questions asked during interactive session with respondents

1. Are you an indigene or not?
2. What do you do for a living?
3. Are you married?
4. How many children do you have?
5. Why are you and your family living here?
6. Do you have any other source of income?
7. What will you want the government to do that will improve your living condition and your family?

Discussion of findings

In the course of carrying out this study, it was revealed that majority of the settlers are non-indigenes who migrated to the cities from the rural areas. The findings showed that the reasons for their migration had a nexus with opportunities for better means of livelihood, for educational advancement and marriage since there is a perception that life is better in the cities. The search for better means of livelihood and other life enhancement opportunities is adjudged as the major reasons for constant rural-urban migration globally. The study also revealed that the settlers have to strategize for an alternative means of income different from their main occupation to keep up with the present economic realities in the country. Some of the settlers engage in keke riding, okada riding, taxi services, daily labour and food vending before or after work.

Furthermore, the study revealed that some of the slum dwellers were graduates who are in search of white collar jobs in the cities rather than go back to the rural areas to meet the same peer group they left behind years ago. They decided to live in these slums. The findings also showed that these urban poor do not have access to quality education, healthcare, steady power supply and their hygienic condition/waste disposal is very poor thereby exposing them to contracting diseases. Finally, the study revealed that the settlers are highly exposed to insecurity of lives and property due to rampant crime rate around such environment. From the findings, the survival strategies of the urban poor have resulted in excessive pressure on available natural resources and social facilities in the cities. It has led to congestion in the city centres and increase in crime rate due to high level unemployment. Arising from the study, the settlers made suggestions on what the government should do for them to improve their standard of living. These include:

- i. Building new functional industries which will give employment to the teeming youths, and revitalizing the ailing ones. These will help in reducing youth restiveness and crime rate in the cities.
- ii. The government should provide functional health care facilities, educational infrastructure, stable power supply to improve their standard of living
- iii. The government should provide soft loans to the youths and women who are ready to engage in small and medium scale enterprise.

The findings further revealed that for government to attain sustainable development in the area of infrastructure through development administration, the interest and livelihood of the urban poor must be prioritized by the government.

Conclusion

Developing administration can only be effective and efficient in the provision of development projects and programmes for the improvement of the living standard of the citizens especially the poor when there are provision for good alternative settlements, means of livelihood and other basic infrastructures. The survival strategies of the urban poor in Nigeria has a direct effect on urbanization and national development due to the excessive pressure on the available natural resources and social facilities in the cities, there is congestion in the city centres, insecurity and crime rate has also increased as a result of the constant rural-urban migration. The situation in Nigeria is not different from other developing countries across the world, especially in Africa and Asia. It is therefore imperative for the government to look inwards and develop the rural areas and make them habitable. Since development administration is geared towards improving physical development level in the society including social welfare provision that elevates the living standard of the people, it is only pertinent that the government and its institutions do not neglect this core values and plunge the urban poor into more hardship.

Recommendations

1. The government should develop the rural areas through industrialization and construction of access roads from the city centres to the rural communities.
2. Government should provide basic social facilities and livelihood empowerment facilities that will enhance the livelihood of the rural people in these communities e.g schools, hospitals, clean drinking water, stable power supply, market and lockup shops.
3. There is need for government to build affordable low-cost houses in the rural areas to enhance depopulation of the urban centres.
4. Government should engage in the upgrading of slums by building new structures and renovating others rather than demolition of the settlements.

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