



IMPACT OF COMPULSORY LAND ACQUISITION FOR PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE ON PROJECT COMMUNITIES' LIVELIHOODS AND ENVIRONMENT IN DELTA STATE, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT: *Land acquisition for the construction of road infrastructure in Delta State always faces resistance from the affected communities, especially related to the results of the assessment of compensation. This protest from project communities is an indication of a gap on the impact on the quality of life of the affected claimants. This paper examines the impact of land acquisition on the livelihood and environment of people whose lands were acquired as a consequence of accelerating road infrastructural development policy in Delta. The study uses data collected from secondary sources and questionnaires administered on 180 affected claimants in Delta State selected from nine (9) communities across the state using a multistage sampling procedure. The study found that acquisition has a negative effect on affected people's livelihood such as landlessness, joblessness, homelessness, marginalization, increased morbidity, food insecurity, loss of access to common property, and social disarticulation. The study recommended that the government should ensure that some of these vexed issues on compulsory land acquisition related to landlessness, joblessness, homelessness, marginalization, increased morbidity, food insecurity, etc. are addressed.*

KEYWORDS: Compulsory Acquisition, Infrastructure, Project Communities, Livelihood.



INTRODUCTION

Land is a natural resource that is recognized as property belonging to the people of a specific community or district (Fabian, 2013). It is viewed as the social, political, and economic cornerstone of the people's survival since it is a resource that belongs to the community. Land is crucial for agricultural development and for any country aiming for food self-sufficiency. Land is a precious asset that improves the living conditions of the most disadvantaged people of any society. According to Udoekanem et al. (2014), land is a fundamental component of production in traditional Nigerian culture and the source of all physical wealth. Land is the primary source of income in any agricultural economy (Parwez & Sen, 2016).

Land is seen as a trust held for the benefit of future generations, which makes it important as a cultural icon. Land is useful to humans because it is a valuable resource for farming, housing, interring the dead, and other communal purposes. Wide areas of land were acquired by Nigerian kings, who understood that land could not be taken away forever and needed to be shared for the benefit of all (Odiase-Alegimenlen, 2001). Indigenous Nigerians still do not fully comprehend that the government's permanent seizure of land was an importation of the colonial authorities. As noted by Nuhu and Aliyu (2009), "Apart from the frequently emboldened economic importance of land, it remains the fulcrum of life and a symbol of pride and identity to the inhabitants." The government's land acquisition procedure was drawn out due to the people's attachment to their property and the customary land tenure system, which caused a delay in "public/government" initiatives and required customary interests to be informed before title could be transferred. Due to the inability to define a firm timeline for the land acquisition procedure, development projects were typically delayed in their implementation. Akpan (2005) notes that the government had to use a different strategy in order to obtain access to property for development projects because of the dispute between the people and the state on who owned the land. The Land Acquisition laws, and later the Land Use Act (LUA), provided a remedy. Even if the customary land holding system persisted, numerous public infrastructure development projects would have been delayed in the absence of these legislation. The concept of "eminent domain" of the sovereign from English common law served as the foundation for the practice of taking private property for public use, even though there are many arguments that justify it. As Larbi (2008) asserts, eminent domain refers to "the power possessed by the state over all properties within the state, specifically its power to appropriate private properties for public use." Lindsay (2012) expands the acquisition theory further when he notes that, "Compulsory acquisition is the power of government to acquire private rights in land for a public purpose, without the willing consent of its owner or occupant (Keith, 2008). This power is known by a variety of names depending on a country's legal traditions, including eminent domain, expropriation, takings and compulsory purchase."

Compulsory purchase, also known as compulsory acquisition, is a term used when a public authority seeks access to and control over a specific parcel of land through a public policy tool. The government purchases land on a coercive basis if it is required for public use. Land acquisition by the government is global, and the government's police force is typically used in the process. The majority of the time, this conduct is legal. Land purchase by the government is a global issue, albeit it varies by country (Oghenekevwe, 2016). Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO) (2009) defines compulsory acquisition as "the capacity of the government to acquire private rights in land without the willing permission of the owner or occupant to benefit society." It is a power that all modern governments wield in some capacity that is frequently required for social and economic development, as well as natural resource



conservation. According to Ding (2007), “land acquisition has been widely employed by local governments to fuel urban development and finance infrastructure provision, resulting in increased social conflict and unfairness, which may represent a long-term danger to stability and sustainability.” Compulsory land acquisition is an important tool for the government to acquire private property in order to create public infrastructure for the benefit of citizens (FAO, 2009).

In Nigeria and other nations across the world, land and landed properties are compulsorily acquired for a variety of developmental public interests, such as building public parks and roads, supplying services and utilities like sewage and drainage, and setting up social facilities like schools and hospitals. As a result, compensation for the impacted parties is necessary. The main problem is whether or not the outcomes of land acquisition match the expectations of the people.

Dispossessed property owners are compensated in such cases (Sule, 2014). However, according to Famuyiwa and Omirin (2011), it usually comes with some kind of suffering, as it frequently results in either displacing people economically or physically. Some researchers have found that land acquisition and relocation will bring a series of livelihood security problems to the dispossessed owners.

In Delta State, the majority of infrastructural development projects performed through land acquisition are problematic. Land acquisition for the construction of road infrastructure in Delta State was practically met with opposition from impacted communities, particularly in light of the outcomes of compensation assessments. Community protests will undoubtedly arise as a result of the compensation dilemma. This shows that there is still a research gap on the impact on the quality of life of the indigenous people, especially the dispossessed owners. This article will examine the impact of land acquisition and compensation on the livelihoods and environments of individuals whose lands were seized as a result of Delta State's accelerated road infrastructural development policies.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Compulsory Land Acquisition

Compulsory acquisition is the government's ability to acquire private rights in land without the owner's or occupant's agreement in order to benefit society (FAO, 2009). Shehu and Nuhu (2022), citing Umeh (2002), define it as “the forced acquisition of private lands (individual or communal) or estates and their interests for public reasons.” In the same line, the popular Arnold Encyclopaedia for Real Estate defines compulsory acquisition as the seizing of privately owned land for public purposes. Compulsory land acquisition is the process by which the government, by legal powers vested in it, compulsorily removes individuals' or communities' property for public use.

In this process, Ndjovu (2016) notes that the dispossessed people are “forced to sell their properties for public use against their will and in so doing transferring land ownership from private individuals or communities to the government or its agency or authorized organizations in return for compensation.” Compulsory land acquisition is an activity dominated by the government transferring the land ownership or interest in land from privately owned to state



owned, where the public interest is involved. The need to provide social and economic amenities like hospitals, schools, police stations, markets, airports, harbours, roads and highways, open spaces, public parks, waste treatment sites, and other uses for the overall benefit of society that are unlikely to be provided privately are among the reasons why governments may acquire land compulsorily, according to Creswell and Miller (2000). Other reasons include the perception of economic and social inefficiencies in the private market (Akujuru & Ruddock, 2015).

Compulsory land acquisition necessitates “balancing the public demand for land on the one hand, and providing land tenure stability and protecting private property rights on the other. In order to achieve this balance, countries should adopt norms that ensure that this authority is used for the benefit of society, for public use, for public purpose, or in the interest of the public” (Egbenta & Udoudoh, 2018). Therefore, the process of compulsory land acquisition involves paying compensation to landowners for the losses they suffer as a result of giving up their property for a public project. When lands are acquired via compulsory powers, the acquiring authority acquires an unrivalled title free of any previous securities, liabilities, or conditions.

Concept of Livelihood

The concept of livelihood is gaining prominence in talks about rural development, poverty alleviation, and natural resource management. Over time, livelihood analysis has evolved from its initial definition and strategy for reducing poverty. It was limited because it ignored other important factors including shock and social concerns in favour of concentrating on certain features or consequences of poverty, such as low income (Krantz, 2001). It is widely acknowledged that elements and conditions that limit or increase people's ability to make a living must prioritise social, economic, and environmental considerations. In this perspective, livelihood is a complete and important term.

Livelihood comprises “the assets (natural, physical, human, financial and social capital), the activities and the access to these (mediated by institution and social relations) that together determine the living gained by individuals or households” (Ellis, 2000). Livelihood is characterised by the ability to be adapted for survival. Thus, livelihood is dynamic rather than static. The livelihood framework aids in the examination of a certain context (policy, history, agro-ecology, and socioeconomic conditions), the mix of livelihood resources (capitals), and the capacity to follow what combination of livelihood methods results in what outcome.

Suhendi *et al.* (2023) cites The World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED) which defines livelihood as “the availability and flow of food and money adequate to meet and secure fundamental requirements. In this context, security refers to guarantees of ownership or access to resources and income-generating activities, as well as asset reserves that can cushion risks and shocks” (WCED, 1987). Similarly, Chambers and Conway (1992) redefine livelihood as “the talents, assets (savings, resources, ownership, access), and activities needed to sustain one's means of subsistence.” When livelihoods can adapt with and recover from stressors or shocks by increasing capacity and asset ownership and providing opportunities for the following generation, they are considered sustainable chambers. Conway (1992), Ian Scoones (1998) and Suhendi *et al.* (2023) present a brief collection of terms that can be employed in empirical studies, including:



(a.) Natural capital refers to the provision of natural resources (soil, water, air, genetic resources, and so on) and environmental services (hydrological cycles, pollutants, and so on) from which the flow of resources and services useful for livelihoods originates. (b.) Economic or financial capital refers to the basic capital (currency, credit/debit, savings, and other economic assets such as basic infrastructure, production equipment, and technology) required to follow any livelihood plan. (c.) Human resources - the skills, knowledge, and ability to work, as well as good health and physical abilities, that are required to realize different livelihood objectives. (d.) Social capital refers to the social resources (networks, social claims, social relationships, affiliations, and associations) that people use to pursue a variety of livelihood options that require concerted effort (Scoones, 1998). Tanner (2015) defines livelihood resilience as “the ability of all persons across generations to sustain and increase livelihood prospects and human well-being in the face of environmental, economic, political, and social disruptions.”

Effect of Land Acquisition on Livelihood

According to Suhendi *et al.* (2023), citing Cernea (1995), there are eight phases of impoverishment created by involuntary relocation and resettlement that occur in various places with varying intensities, namely: (i) “land acquisition and eliminating land-based main sources of livelihood (landlessness); (ii) losing their jobs and displacing landless workers from land-based productive systems (joblessness); (iii) loss of residence and temporary residence (homelessness); (iv) marginalization with the loss of economic power of a person or group in a very poor economic condition (marginalization); (v) serious deterioration in health conditions caused by infectious diseases and/or stress due to psychological trauma (increased morbidity); (vi) forced withdrawal of land-based productive systems increases the risk of chronic food insecurity (food insecurity); (vii) loss of access to shared resources for those who may lose access to livelihoods (loss of access to common property); (viii) dismantling social organizational structures and social cohesion which causes a decline in social capital assets (social-disarticulation) (Cernea, 1996; Dwivedi, 1999). As the pioneer international development organization to adopt guidelines for involuntary resettlement (Terminski, 2013), the World Bank highlighted in the Environment Social Framework (ESF) that the livelihood conditions of impacted households following resettlement ought to be as good as or better than prior to the project (World Bank, 2018), as in prior studies on relocation programmes owing to the construction of the Cirata dam in West Java, Indonesia, which promotes farming operations as part of household economic recovery (Nakayama, Gunawan, Yoshida, & T. Asaeda, 1999). Similarly, research on the long-term consequences of the construction of the Saguling dam in West Java, Indonesia, has found that the majority of resettlers believe their livelihoods have improved since resettlement. However, leaving their occupations and shifting their income to less profitable activities still has an impact on their degree of contentment with their current living situation. (Gunawan *et al.*, 2013).

In recent years, the issue of land acquisition and relocation and the resettlement of residents has also received widespread attention. The issue of demolition and relocation is one of the important research topics that must be faced in the process of social development in China, and the reasonable conduct of demolition and relocation is not only related to economic and social development, but also involves the vital interests of the general public. After the demolition and relocation, the lives of the local indigenous people have undergone a radical change and their quality of life has been affected as a result. While the evicted residents have been paid a generous amount of compensation for the demolition and relocation of their homes, they are



also faced with the dilemma of having no land for farming and no job for work, especially when they face a change of identity and the problem of adapting to their own situation, which has led to a series of social problems. In China, Zhuzhi (2013) observed that getting rich through demolition and relocation is perhaps a popular way for farmers to get rich nowadays. As reported by Xuemei (2018), the state reclaims land that cannot be circulated in the market and gives the people a generous demolition subsidy, so that the affected farmers can lead a richer life overnight. Similarly, Xing (2017) said that by leaving the land they had been working on day and night, the skills these farmers relied on were no longer available and their lives were suddenly empty, while they also lost their most basic livelihood security. These peasants became landless peasants overnight and were unable to adapt to such a new identity and truly integrate into urban life, seemingly with demolition compensation and resettlement housing, but in reality, their standard of living has not been substantially improved (Sun Qian, 2013). Moreover, most indigenous people have no skills other than their ancestral farming skills, as they have not received a good education since childhood. As a result, they are faced with the daunting challenge of not being able to re-enter the workforce (Ding Yangyue, 2018).

Study Area

Delta State was established on February 18, 2004, from the old Bendel State. Physical, economic, and socio-cultural factors have formed and influenced Delta residents' lives. It is therefore important to put these difficulties into context in order to have a fair assessment of the current situation of the state. There are basic natural and anthropogenic elements that have influenced economic production, consumption, reproduction, health, sanitation, and the overall welfare of the inhabitants of Delta State.

Delta State was specifically chosen for this study due to the high prevalence of land acquisition in the state's rural areas. The state is located approximately between Longitude 5°00 and 6°.45' East and Latitude 5°00 and 6°.30' North. Its borders are as follows: Edo State to the north; Anambra State to the east; Bayelsa State to the south-east; and, on the state's southern flank, the Bight of Benin on the Atlantic Ocean, which stretches across around 160 km of the state's coastline.

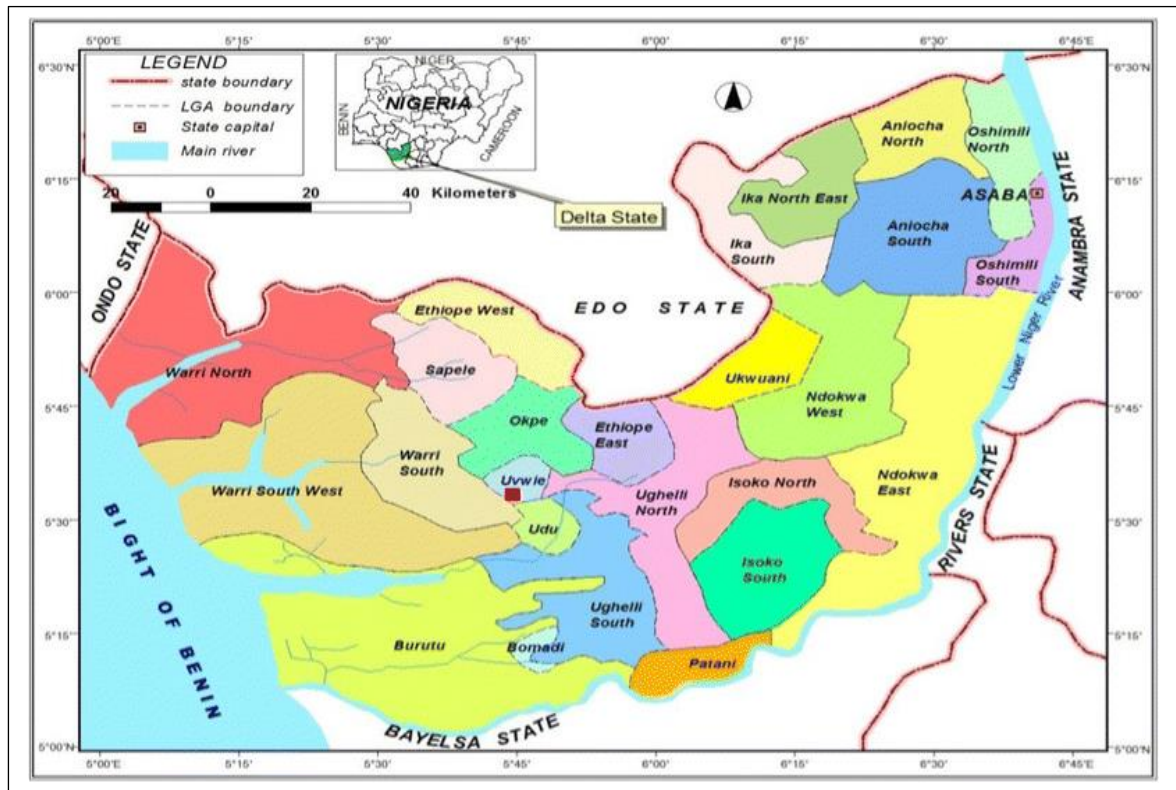


Figure 1.0: Map of Delta State Showing Local Government Areas and the Locations of the Study

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The data for this study were collected through secondary sources and questionnaire administration on affected claimants in Delta State. The respondents were selected using a multistage sampling technique. In the first stage, one local government area (LGA) from each senatorial district was purposefully chosen based on reported domestic land acquisitions in Delta State. The second stage entailed the random selection of two communities in each local government, while in the third stage, 30 homes were randomly picked in each community in the local government areas, to make a total of 180 respondents. The study communities included Emevor and Owhe Communities in Isoko North Local Government Area, Enerhen and Ekpan Communities in Uvwie Local Government Area, and Ute-Okpu and Idumuesah in Ika North-East Local Government Area, all in Delta State.

Thus, questionnaires were administered to 180 respondents (affected claimants). However, due to incomplete questionnaire answers, only data from 167 respondents, representing 92.8% response rate, were considered adequate and were included for analysis in the study. Descriptive statistics, and Likert scale were the analytical tools employed in the study.



RESULTS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

When the state government acquires land for infrastructural projects, it leads to changes in the livelihoods of people, especially farmers, who depend on agricultural activities. This section presents results and findings of the questionnaire administered to the affected claimants of compulsory acquisition in Delta State, Nigeria. The presentation of results was done in tabular form and bar graphs. The descriptive statistics show the varying percentage figures of the variables analysed. Results are shown below:

Table 1.0: Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Option	Frequency	Percentage
<u>Sex :</u>		
Male	123	73.7%
Female	44	26.3%
Total	167	100.0%
<u>Age:</u>		
18-40 Years	11	6.6%
41-50 Years	63	37.7%
51-60 Years	52	31.1%
>60 Years	41	24.6%
Total	167	100.0%
<u>Educational Attainment:</u>		
No formal education	23	13.8%
Primary	63	37.7%
Secondary	47	28.1%
Tertiary	34	20.4%
Total	167	100.0%

Source: *Field Survey, 2024*

Table 1.0 reveals the characteristics of affected respondents households, whose main source of livelihoods were displaced by government acquisition for infrastructural development in Delta State, Nigeria. The table above shows that about 73.7% (majority) of the respondents were males while 26.3% were females. This means that lands in the study area are mainly owned by males. The study also indicates that the majority of the respondents (about 37.7%) were at their prime age within the age bracket of (41-50), followed by the age bracket of (51-60) having 31.1% respondents. The distribution according to educational attainment shows a high dominance of respondents having some form of formal education from primary (37.7%) to secondary (28.1%), and up to tertiary level (20.4%) respectively* and only (13.8%) had no formal education.

**Table 2.0: Socio-economic and Livelihood Status of Respondents before Acquisition**

Option	Frequency	Percentage
<u>Employment before acquisition:</u>		
Farming only	92	55.1%
Petty Business	37	22.2%
Skill based work	30	18.0%
Employed	8	4.8%
Total	167	100.0%
<u>Monthly household income before acquisition:</u>		
< N30,000	18	10.8%
N30,001 – N60,000	57	34.1%
N60,001 – N100,000	61	36.5%
> N100,000	31	18.6%
Total	167	100.0%

Source: *Field Survey, 2024*

The results in Table 2.0 above show that before the government acquired their land, only 55.1% (Nr 92) of the respondent households engaged only in farming, while 22.2% (Nr 37) of the respondents engaged in petty business. Other occupations include skill based work (18.0%, Nr 30) and the employed in either government or private sector (4.8%, Nr 8). Table 2.0 further shows the income earned before the government acquired their land and displaced the households. The table reveals that about 34.1% (Nr 57) of the respondents earned between N30,001 and N60,000, 36.5% (Nr 61) of the respondents earned between N60,001 and N100,000, 10.8% (Nr 18) of the respondents earned between below N30,000, while about 18.6% (Nr 31) of the respondents earned above N100,000.

Table 3.0: Socio-economic and Livelihood Status of Respondents after Acquisition

Option	Frequency	Percentage
<u>Employment after acquisition:</u>		
Farming only	52	31.1%
Petty Business	49	29.3%
Skill based work	47	28.1%
Employed	19	11.4%
Total	167	100.0%
<u>Monthly household Income after acquisition:</u>		
< N30,000	77	46.1%
N30,001 – N60,000	56	33.5%
N60,001 – N100,000	24	14.4%
> N100,000	10	6.0%
Total	167	100.0%

Source: *Field Survey, 2024*



The results in Table 3.0 above show that the acquisition has a negative effect on affected people's livelihood. The results show that the respondents' response rate for those who said affected households engaged only in farming changed considerably to a lesser percentage of 31.1% (Nr 52) from 55.1% (Nr 92), while respondents' response rate of those who said claimants now engaged in Petty Business increased from 22.2% (Nr 37) to 29.3% (Nr 49) respondents, and those who said claimants are engaged in skill based work increased from 18.0% (Nr 30) to 28.1% (Nr47) respondents, and those who claimed they were either employed in public or private sector increased from 4.8% (Nr 8) to 11.4% (Nr 19). This implies that compulsory land acquisition has pushed many of the affected persons to engage in other occupations rather than relying only on farming. Unfortunately, most affected persons have no skills other than their ancestral farming skills, as they have not received a good education since childhood. As a result, Ding Yangyue (2018) noted that they are faced with the daunting challenge of not being able to re-enter the workforce.

After household displacement, almost 70.5% of the respondents experienced a loss in income, particularly those earning between N60,001 and N100,000, which fell from 36.5% to 14.4%. The share of households earning between N30,001 and N60,000 fell dramatically from 34.1% to 33.5%. The share of households earning more than N100,000 reduced from 18.6% to 6.0%. The data also demonstrates a huge disparity between the income earned by the affected persons before and after acquisition, and confirms that coercive land acquisition has deprived project affected community members of their enormous income from farming activities.

Impacts of Acquisition on Livelihood and Environment

The impacts of acquisition on livelihood and environment were identified from literature; an 11 items scale was developed to identify the impacts of acquisition and compensation associated with livelihood and environment in Delta State. This is descriptively illustrated in Table 4.0.

Table 4.0 shows the impacts of acquisition on livelihood and environment in Delta State, Nigeria. Table 4.0 reveals that 61.1% (Nr 102) of the respondents strongly agreed that compulsory acquisition eliminates land-based main sources of livelihood leading to landlessness in Delta State, Nigeria, 44 (26.3%) of the respondents agreed, 13 (7.8%) of the respondents were unsure, 4 (2.4%) of them disagreed, while 4 (2.4%) strongly disagreed. Likewise, it was observed that 55.7% (Nr 93) of the respondents strongly agreed that compulsory acquisition leads to loss of jobs and displacing landless workers from land-based productive systems (joblessness) in Delta State, Nigeria, 24.6% (Nr 41) of the respondents agreed, 10.8% (Nr 18) were unsure, 4.8% (Nr 8) disagreed, while 4.2% (Nr 7) strongly disagreed.

**Table 4.0: Response Rate on Impacts of Acquisition on Livelihood and Environment**

Impacts of acquisition on livelihood and environment	SA	A	U	D	SD
Leads to the elimination of land-based primary sources of subsistence (landlessness).	102 61.1%	44 26.3%	13 7.8%	4 2.4%	4 2.4%
Loss of jobs and displacing landless labourers from land-based productive systems (joblessness)	93 55.7%	41 24.6%	18 10.8%	8 4.8%	7 4.2%
Loss of residence and temporary residence (homelessness)	97 58.1%	50 29.9%	10 6.0%	6 3.6%	4 2.4%
Loss of economic power of a person or group in a very poor economic situation (marginalization)	87 52.1%	62 37.1%	11 6.6%	2 1.2%	5 3.0%
Health conditions deteriorated as a result of psychological trauma (increased morbidity)	66 39.5%	43 25.7%	23 13.8%	22 13.2%	13 7.8%
Forced withdrawal of land-based productive systems increases the danger of chronic food insufficiency (food insecurity)	77 46.1%	51 30.5%	9 5.4%	19 11.4%	11 6.6%
Loss of access to shared resources for individuals who may lose their livelihoods (loss of access to common property)	50 29.9%	30 18.0%	38 22.8%	28 16.8%	21 12.6%
Dismantling social organizational structures and social cohesion which causes a decline in social capital assets (social-disarticulation)	62 37.1%	23 13.8%	36 21.6%	24 14.4%	22 13.2%

Source: *Field Survey, 2024*

On loss of residence and temporary residence, 58.1% (Nr 97) of the respondents strongly agreed that compulsory acquisition leads to loss of residence and temporary residence (homelessness) in Delta State, Nigeria, 29.9% (Nr 50) of the respondents agreed, 6.0% (Nr 10) of them were unsure, 3.6% (Nr 6) disagreed, while 2.4% (Nr 4) strongly disagreed.

Regarding loss of economic power of a person or group in a very poor economic situation, 52.1% (Nr 87) of the respondents strongly agreed that compulsory acquisition leads to loss of economic power of a person or group in a very poor economic situation (marginalization) in Delta State, Nigeria, 37.1% (Nr 62) of the respondents agreed, 6.6% (Nr 11) were unsure, 1.2% (Nr 2) disagreed, while 3.0% (Nr 5) strongly disagreed.

Regarding health condition deteriorated as a result of psychological trauma (increased morbidity), 39.5% (Nr 66) of the respondents strongly agreed that compulsory acquisition causes deterioration in health conditions of affected person due to psychological trauma leading to increased morbidity in Delta State, Nigeria, 25.7% (Nr 43) agreed, 13.8% (Nr 23) were unsure, 13.2% (Nr 22) disagreed, while 7/8% (Nr 13) strongly disagreed.

When asked regarding forced withdrawal of land-based productive systems increases the danger of chronic food insufficiency, 46.1% (Nr 77) of the respondents strongly agreed that compulsory acquisition forced withdrawal of land-based productive systems which increases the danger of chronic food insufficiency (food insecurity) in Delta State, Nigeria, 30.5% (Nr 51) agreed, 5.4% (Nr 9) were unsure, 11.4% (Nr 19) disagreed, while 6.6% (Nr 11) strongly disagreed.



Regarding loss of access to shared resources for those who may lose access to livelihoods, 29.9% (Nr 50) of the respondents strongly agreed that compulsory acquisition leads to loss of access to shared resources for those who may lose access to livelihoods (loss of access to common property) in Delta State, Nigeria, 18.0% (Nr 30) agreed, 22.8% (Nr 38) were unsure, 16.8% (Nr 28) disagreed, while 12.6% (Nr 21) strongly disagreed.

Finally, on if acquisition causes dismantling social organizational structures and social cohesion leading to a decrease in social capital assets, 37.1% (Nr 62) of the respondents strongly agreed that compulsory acquisition dismantling social organizational structures and social cohesion leads to a decrease in social capital assets (social-disarticulation) in Delta State, Nigeria, 13.8% (Nr 23) agreed, 21.6% (Nr 36) were unsure, 14.4% (Nr 24) disagreed, while 13.2% (Nr 22) strongly disagreed.

From the findings, it is clear that land acquisition causes landlessness, increases food insecurity, leads to joblessness and homelessness of affected project communities, and dismantling of social organizational structures and social cohesion. These findings corroborate the research by Xing (2017) that by leaving the land they had been working on day and night, the skills these farmers relied on were no longer available and their lives were suddenly empty, while they also lost their most basic livelihood security. These peasants became landless peasants overnight and were unable to adapt to such a new identity and truly integrate into urban life.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

It is obvious from this study that there is discrepancy between the socio-economic livelihood status of affected persons before and after compulsory land acquisition in Delta State, Nigeria. Data analysis reveals wide disparity between the income earned by the affected persons before and after acquisition. This implies that compulsory land acquisition has not only dispossessed project affected community members of their enormous income from farming activities but has pushed many of the affected persons to engage in other occupations rather than relying only on farming. Further, the findings in Table 4.0, clearly confirm that land acquisition causes landlessness, joblessness and homelessness of affected project communities, and increases food insecurity, loss of access to common property, dismantling of social organizational structures and social cohesion. It is therefore proper to find guidelines that will improve the acquisition process and socio-economic and livelihood status of project communities in the compulsory acquisition process. There is a need for a legal coherence and an improved version of the acquisition act that would strengthen the rights of landowners and potential livelihood losers. The study thus recommended that government should take responsibility to ensure that affected communities gain from the development that is taking place on their land by making sure that some vexed issues on compulsory land acquisition related to landlessness, joblessness and homelessness of affected project communities, increased food insecurity, loss of access to common property, and dismantling of social organizational structures and social cohesion are addressed.



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