

Evaluating The Resilience of Internally Displaced Persons in Addressing Modern Slavery in IDP Camps in Federal Capital Territory, Abuja, Nigeria

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Abstract- Modern slavery remains a critical yet underexplored challenge within Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) camps in Nigeria. This study evaluates the resilience of internally displaced persons (IDPs) in addressing modern slavery within informal camps in the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Abuja, Nigeria. Drawing on primary data from 400 respondents, it examines demographic and socioeconomic characteristics, prevalent forms of exploitation, awareness levels, and resilience strategies. Findings reveal high self-perceived resilience (69.0% reporting very or somewhat resilient) and confidence (87.0%), primarily through social networks (33.0%) and religious practices (30.0%). Chi-square analyses confirm significant deviations from uniform distributions ($p < 0.001$ across variables), high lighting reliance on relational and spiritual coping mechanisms over economic or informational strategies. However, structural vulnerabilities poverty, low education, and ineffective protection systems perpetuate risks of forced labour, sexual exploitation, and trafficking. The study concludes that while IDPs exhibit remarkable agency, systemic interventions are essential to dismantle root causes. Recommendations emphasise livelihood programmes, rights-based education, community-led protection, and enhanced institutional accountability to empower IDPs and combat modern slavery effectively.

Keyword: Modern Slavery, Eternally Displaced Persons, FCT, Resilience, Nigeria

I. INTRODUCTION

Modern slavery remains one of the most persistent human rights and development challenges globally, encompassing practices such as forced labour, human trafficking, debt bondage, forced marriage, sexual exploitation, and other forms of exploitation that deprive individuals of their freedom and dignity. According to the joint estimates of the International Labour Organization (ILO), the International Organization for Migration (IOM), and Walk Free, approximately 50 million people were living in situations of modern slavery in 2021, including 28

million in forced labour and 22 million in forced marriage. Women, children, migrants, and displaced populations remain disproportionately affected due to heightened socio-economic vulnerabilities (ILO, IOM, & Walk Free, 2022).

Nigeria continues to face significant challenges relating to modern slavery despite the enactment of anti-trafficking legislation and the establishment of the National Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons (NAPTIP). The 2023 Global Slavery Index estimates that about 1.6 million people in Nigeria were living in conditions of modern slavery in 2021, representing approximately 7.8 victims per 1,000 population. The report further identifies Nigeria as one of the countries in Africa with a high prevalence of modern slavery, driven largely by poverty, armed conflict, unemployment, weak social protection systems, irregular migration, and inadequate law enforcement (Walk Free, 2023).

One of the groups most vulnerable to modern slavery in Nigeria is internally displaced persons (IDPs). Internal displacement has increased considerably over the past decade as a result of insurgency, banditry, communal conflicts, farmer-herder clashes, kidnapping, and climate-related disasters such as flooding. According to the International Organization for Migration (IOM) Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM), Nigeria continues to host millions of internally displaced persons, particularly across the North-East, North-West, North-Central regions and the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Abuja (IOM, 2025). Many of these displaced persons reside in informal settlements that lack official recognition, adequate infrastructure, healthcare, education, water supply, sanitation facilities, and social protection services.

Within the Federal Capital Territory, informal IDP settlements such as Durumi Area 1, New Kuchingoro,

Wassa, Karmajiji, and other emerging communities have become home to thousands of displaced households, many of whom fled violent conflicts in Borno, Adamawa, Yobe, Benue, Plateau, Kaduna, Niger, and other affected states. Unlike formally managed camps, these settlements receive limited governmental assistance and humanitarian interventions, exposing residents to severe socio-economic deprivation and multiple forms of exploitation (IOM, 2025; United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees [UNHCR], 2024).

Displacement significantly increases the risk of modern slavery by disrupting livelihoods, weakening traditional family and community protection systems, limiting access to education and decent employment, and increasing dependence on informal survival strategies. Several studies have shown that internally displaced persons are vulnerable to trafficking, forced labour, domestic servitude, child labour, forced marriage, sexual exploitation, and other exploitative practices. Women and girls are particularly exposed to gender-based violence and sexual exploitation, while children face increased risks of child labour, recruitment by armed groups, forced begging, and trafficking (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime [UNODC], 2024; ILO et al., 2022).

Despite these vulnerabilities, internally displaced persons are not merely passive victims but also demonstrate remarkable resilience in coping with displacement and resisting exploitation. Resilience refers to the ability of individuals and communities to adapt positively to adversity, recover from shocks, mobilize available resources, and develop protective mechanisms that reduce vulnerability. Among displaced populations, resilience manifests through community solidarity, self-help initiatives, informal leadership structures, livelihood diversification, social networking, skills acquisition, and collective advocacy for improved living conditions (Ekezie et al., 2022; UNHCR, 2024).

Studies conducted among internally displaced communities in Northern Nigeria indicate that displaced persons often establish community leadership committees responsible for security coordination, conflict resolution, equitable distribution of humanitarian assistance, and awareness

creation on protection issues. Many households engage in petty trading, vocational activities, urban agriculture, casual labour, and cooperative savings schemes to enhance economic self-reliance and reduce dependence on humanitarian aid. Social cohesion within these communities also facilitates information sharing, mutual support, and reporting of suspicious activities that may expose vulnerable individuals to trafficking and other forms of exploitation (Ekezie et al., 2022; IOM, 2025).

Nevertheless, resilience efforts among IDPs remain constrained by numerous structural and institutional challenges. Informal settlements in the FCT frequently experience threats of eviction, inadequate access to humanitarian assistance, poor integration with host communities, insufficient educational and healthcare services, limited livelihood opportunities, and weak enforcement of anti-trafficking laws. Furthermore, inadequate awareness of modern slavery, cultural acceptance of certain exploitative practices, poverty, and limited institutional presence reduce the effectiveness of community-based prevention strategies. The limited outreach activities of agencies such as NAPTIP and humanitarian organizations within informal settlements further weaken protection mechanisms for displaced populations (NAPTIP, 2024; Walk Free, 2023).

Evaluating the resilience of internally displaced persons in addressing modern slavery is therefore important for several reasons. First, it shifts policy attention from viewing displaced persons solely as victims toward recognizing them as active participants in preventing exploitation and strengthening community protection systems. Second, understanding resilience mechanisms provides evidence for designing interventions that emphasize empowerment, economic inclusion, community participation, and sustainable livelihoods rather than prolonged humanitarian dependency. Third, resilience assessments contribute to the implementation of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) Target 8.7, which seeks to eradicate forced labour, end modern slavery and human trafficking, and eliminate the worst forms of child labour by 2030 (United Nations, 2024). Despite increasing literature on internal displacement and human trafficking in Nigeria, relatively few empirical studies have specifically examined

resilience against modern slavery among IDPs residing in informal settlements within the Federal Capital Territory. Existing research has focused predominantly on humanitarian conditions and protection concerns in the North-East, leaving significant knowledge gaps regarding the unique urban experiences of displaced populations in Abuja. Informal settlements in the FCT present distinct challenges arising from urban poverty, social exclusion, insecure land tenure, inadequate access to public services, and the constant risk of secondary displacement due to urban development policies. These contextual differences necessitate location-specific evidence capable of informing policies and interventions that address both vulnerability and resilience.

Against this background, this study evaluates the resilience of internally displaced persons in tackling modern slavery within selected informal IDP camps in the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja. Specifically, the study examines the resilience strategies adopted by displaced communities, identifies barriers limiting their effectiveness in preventing exploitation, and explores opportunities for strengthening institutional and community responses toward reducing the risks of modern slavery among internally displaced populations.

Hypothesis

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between forced migration experiences and the resilience of IDPs in addressing modern slavery.

Literature Review

Demographic and Socioeconomic Characteristics of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs)

Internally displaced persons (IDPs) are among the most vulnerable populations globally due to the effects of armed conflict, violence, disasters, and environmental crises. Their demographic and socioeconomic characteristics significantly influence both their vulnerability to modern slavery and their ability to recover from displacement. According to the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC, 2024) and the International Organization for Migration (IOM, 2025), women and children constitute more than half of the global displaced population. In Nigeria, women account for

approximately 54% of IDPs, while children under 18 years make up over half of the displaced population, exposing them to greater risks of human trafficking, forced labour, child labour, forced marriage, and sexual exploitation.

Education remains a major challenge among displaced populations. Forced displacement often interrupts schooling due to insecurity, poverty, repeated migration, and inadequate educational facilities. UNHCR (2024) and UNICEF (2024) report that displaced children, particularly girls, are less likely to complete primary and secondary education because of financial constraints, early marriage, domestic responsibilities, and insecurity. Similarly, Idowu et al. (2024) found that most IDPs in selected camps in the Federal Capital Territory possessed only informal, religious, or primary education, limiting their employment opportunities and increasing their vulnerability to exploitation.

Livelihood disruption is another defining socioeconomic characteristic of internally displaced persons. Many households were previously engaged in farming, livestock rearing, or petty trading before displacement. However, displacement often results in the loss of productive assets and employment, forcing many IDPs into informal occupations such as casual labour, domestic work, street vending, construction, and petty trading (Blitz, 2023). Although these activities provide temporary income, they are frequently characterized by poor wages, unsafe working conditions, and limited legal protection, thereby increasing the risk of labour exploitation (ILO, IOM, & Walk Free, 2022).

Poverty and inadequate living conditions further compound the vulnerability of displaced populations. Most informal IDP settlements in Nigeria lack adequate housing, healthcare, sanitation, clean water, and educational facilities (IOM, 2025). Food insecurity and limited humanitarian assistance often compel households to adopt harmful coping strategies, including child labour, early marriage, and acceptance of exploitative employment (World Food Programme [WFP], 2024). Women, widows, and female-headed households are particularly affected because they bear significant caregiving responsibilities while facing limited livelihood opportunities (Idowu et al., 2024).

Despite these challenges, IDPs continue to demonstrate resilience through community support systems, cooperative groups, livelihood diversification, and informal leadership structures. Such initiatives enhance social cohesion, improve access to resources, and strengthen community capacity to withstand exploitation and recover from displacement (UNHCR, 2024; IOM, 2025).

Modern Slavery and Vulnerability among Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs)

Modern slavery is a broad concept encompassing forced labour, human trafficking, debt bondage, forced marriage, sexual exploitation, child labour, and other forms of exploitation in which individuals are deprived of their freedom for personal or commercial gain (International Labour Organization [ILO], International Organization for Migration [IOM], & Walk Free, 2022). Internally displaced persons (IDPs) are among the populations most susceptible to modern slavery because displacement disrupts livelihoods, weakens social protection systems, separates families, and increases dependence on informal sources of income and humanitarian assistance.

Recent studies indicate that conflict-induced displacement significantly increases exposure to trafficking and labour exploitation. The loss of homes, productive assets, employment opportunities, and community support networks forces many displaced persons into precarious survival strategies, including hazardous informal employment and irregular migration (UNODC, 2024). Women and children are particularly vulnerable to sexual exploitation, forced marriage, domestic servitude, child labour, and trafficking due to economic hardship, insecurity, and limited access to education and protection services (Walk Free, 2023).

In Nigeria, prolonged insurgency, banditry, communal violence, and natural disasters have created conditions that heighten the vulnerability of IDPs to modern slavery. According to the IOM (2025), many displaced households reside in informal settlements with inadequate security, limited livelihood opportunities, and insufficient institutional protection. These conditions expose residents to exploitative labour practices in agriculture, construction, domestic work, street vending, and other informal sectors. NAPTIP

(2024) further reports that traffickers increasingly target vulnerable women, children, and displaced persons through deception, coercion, and false promises of employment.

Socioeconomic deprivation further compounds these risks. Poverty, unemployment, low educational attainment, and food insecurity often compel displaced persons to accept exploitative working conditions as survival strategies rather than recognizing them as forms of modern slavery. Consequently, strengthening social protection, livelihood opportunities, education, and institutional responses remains essential for reducing the vulnerability of internally displaced persons to exploitation.

Resilience Strategies of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs)

Resilience refers to the ability of individuals and communities to withstand, adapt to, and recover from adverse situations while maintaining their well-being and livelihoods. Among internally displaced persons, resilience involves developing coping mechanisms that reduce vulnerability to exploitation and improve long-term self-reliance (UNHCR, 2024).

Livelihood diversification is another important resilience strategy. Many IDPs engage in petty trading, tailoring, hairdressing, vocational training, urban farming, and other income-generating activities to reduce dependence on humanitarian assistance and improve household income (Ekezie et al., 2022). Skills acquisition programmes implemented by government agencies and humanitarian organizations have further enhanced the economic resilience of displaced populations by promoting self-employment and entrepreneurship.

Despite these adaptive strategies, resilience among IDPs remains constrained by inadequate funding, weak institutional support, poor access to education and healthcare, unemployment, and limited enforcement of anti-trafficking laws. Strengthening community participation, expanding livelihood opportunities, improving access to social services, and enhancing collaboration between government agencies, humanitarian organizations, and host communities are critical for building resilient IDP

communities capable of preventing modern slavery (UNDP, 2024; NAPTIP, 2024).

Challenges to Resilience among Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs)

Although internally displaced persons (IDPs) demonstrate remarkable resilience through self-help initiatives and community support systems, several structural and socioeconomic challenges continue to undermine their capacity to withstand exploitation and recover from displacement. One of the major challenges is persistent poverty and unemployment. Displacement often results in the loss of livelihoods, productive assets, and income sources, forcing many IDPs to depend on humanitarian assistance or engage in informal employment characterized by poor wages and exploitative working conditions (IOM, 2025). Such economic hardship increases vulnerability to human trafficking, forced labour, and other forms of modern slavery.

Inadequate institutional support further constrains resilience. Although agencies such as the National Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons (NAPTIP), the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA), and humanitarian organizations provide protection and relief services, coverage remains insufficient, particularly in informal settlements that lack official recognition. Weak enforcement of anti-trafficking laws, inadequate awareness campaigns, and limited access to legal and psychosocial services reduce the effectiveness of protection mechanisms (NAPTIP, 2024).

Poor living conditions within informal settlements also undermine resilience. Overcrowded shelters, inadequate sanitation, poor healthcare services, food insecurity, and limited access to clean water contribute to poor health outcomes and increased dependency. Women and children are particularly affected due to heightened exposure to gender-based violence, child labour, forced marriage, and sexual exploitation (UNICEF, 2024; UNODC, 2024).

Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored on Resilience Theory, originally developed by Norman Garmezy (1973) and later expanded by Ann Masten (2014). The theory explains how individuals and communities adapt

positively to adversity by utilizing available resources, social support, and coping mechanisms. It emphasizes that resilience is a dynamic process influenced by personal, social, and environmental factors rather than an inborn trait.

Resilience Theory is relevant to this study because internally displaced persons (IDPs) experience multiple challenges such as poverty, unemployment, insecurity, and social exclusion, which increase their vulnerability to modern slavery. Despite these challenges, many IDPs develop adaptive strategies such as community leadership, mutual support networks, livelihood diversification, and skills acquisition that enable them to cope with displacement and reduce exploitation (UNHCR, 2024).

The theory is appropriate for this study because it provides a framework for examining how resilience strategies adopted by IDPs contribute to preventing modern slavery in informal camps in the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja. It also highlights the importance of government and humanitarian support in strengthening the resilience of displaced populations.

Empirical Review

Recent empirical studies have examined the vulnerability and resilience of internally displaced persons across different contexts. Blitz (2023) investigated labour exploitation among displaced populations across several countries and found that displaced persons were predominantly employed in informal sectors such as agriculture, domestic work, construction, hospitality, and street vending. The study concluded that insecure employment and weak labour protection significantly increase the risk of forced labour and exploitation.

Methodology

3.2 Study Area

The study was conducted in the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Abuja, Nigeria. The FCT is located in the central part of the country between latitudes 8°25'N and 9°20'N and longitudes 6°45'E and 7°39'E, covering a land area of approximately 7,315 km². It comprises six Area Councils, namely Abaji, Abuja Municipal Area Council (AMAC), Bwari, Gwagwalada, Kuje, and Kwali (Figure 1). The

Territory shares boundaries with Niger State to the west and northwest, Kaduna State to the north, Nasarawa State to the east and south, and Kogi State to the southwest.

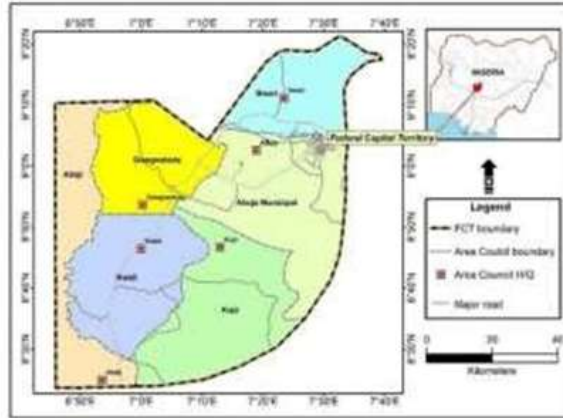


Figure 1: Map of the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja.

Source: Google Maps (2025).

The Federal Capital Territory (FCT) has a tropical savanna climate with distinct wet and dry seasons, Guinea savanna vegetation, and major rivers that support water supply and agriculture but also contribute to seasonal flooding. With an estimated population of over 4 million, the FCT is a rapidly urbanizing and cosmopolitan territory that attracts migrants from across Nigeria. The influx of internally displaced persons (IDPs) fleeing insurgency and communal conflicts has led to the establishment of camps such as Durumi Area 1, New Kuchingoro, Wassa, and Karmajiji. These camps are characterized by inadequate access to basic services, livelihoods, and social protection, thereby increasing residents' vulnerability to poverty, human trafficking, forced labour, and other forms of modern slavery.



Figure 2: Map showing selected IDP camps in the Federal Capital Territory.

Source: National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA, 2023).

The selection of the FCT as the study area was justified by the concentration of informal IDP camps within the Territory and the growing vulnerability of displaced populations to modern slavery and exploitation. Furthermore, the presence of key government institutions, including the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA), the National Commission for Refugees, Migrants and Internally Displaced Persons (NCFRMI), and the National Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons (NAPTIP), provides an appropriate context for assessing resilience strategies and institutional responses to modern slavery among internally displaced persons. The selected camps—Durumi Area 1, New Kuchingoro, Wassa, and Karmajiji—represent major informal settlements with diverse demographic and socioeconomic characteristics, making them suitable for investigating the resilience of IDPs in tackling modern slavery.



a



b



c

Plates Ia, b, c: IDPs Camp at Durumi Area 1, Abuja:
Source: Researcher's Fieldwork, 2025



Plates II: IDPs Camp at Wassa. Source: Researcher's
Fieldwork, 2025



Plate III: IDPs Camp at New Kuchingoro. Source:
Researcher's Fieldwork, 2025

Types and Sources of Data

This study employed both primary and secondary data. Primary data were collected through questionnaires administered to 400 IDPs, semi-structured interviews with 20 IDPs, and 10 key informant interviews involving NAPTIP officials, camp leaders, NGO representatives, and government officials. Secondary data were sourced from reports published by NAPTIP, IOM, Walk Free, the U.S. Department of State, and relevant books and journal articles. The combination of both data sources enhanced the credibility, reliability, and validity of the study by integrating firsthand evidence with authoritative published information.

Sample and Sample Size Determination

Out of the 18 formal and informal IDP camps in the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), four camps were purposively selected for this study. These are Durumi Area 1 (1,730 IDPs), Wassa (7,000 IDPs), New Kuchingoro (2,700 IDPs), and Karmajiji (1,250 IDPs), with a combined estimated population of 12,650 IDPs.

The camps were selected because they have relatively large IDP populations, accommodate displaced persons from different conflict-affected states, and are accessible for data collection. In addition, the camps have benefited from varying levels of government and humanitarian interventions, making them suitable for assessing the resilience of IDPs in tackling modern slavery. The sample size for the study was determined from the estimated population of 12,650 IDPs using an appropriate sample size determination technique to ensure adequate representation of the study population.

Table 3.1: IDPs Camps in the FCT and Population Estimates

Camp	Population	Category of Camp
Karmajiji	1,250	Informal
Wassa	7,000	Formal
New Kuchigoro	2,700	Formal
Gongola	1,926	Informal
Karshi	2,204	Informal
Kabuba	1,157	Informal
Zinda	1,243	Informal
Takushara	1,642	Informal
Abaji	815	Informal
Area 1 Durumi	2,730	Formal
Dakwa	780	Informal
Bwari	1,650	Informal
Kuje	315	Informal
Kwali	120	Informal
Dako, DogonGada	430	Informal
Malaysia Garden	300	Informal
TOTAL	26,262	

Source: Researcher's Fieldwork, 2025

Sample Size Determination

The sample size was determined using Taro Yamane's (1967) formula to obtain a representative sample from the study population.

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e^2)}$$

Where: n = Required sample size

N = estimated population size of the selected IDPs camps in FCT Abuja

e = margin of error, set at 0.05 (5%)

For this study, the total population of IDPs in selected camps are Durumi Area 1, Wassa, New Kunchingoro, and Karmajiji in FCT Abuja is estimated at 20,000 (NBS, 2022). Using the formula: 20,000

$$n = \frac{20,000}{1 + 20,000(0.05^2)}$$

$$n = \frac{20,000}{1 + 20,000(0.0025)} = 392.156 \sim 400$$

The calculated sample size was 392 respondents. To account for non-responses and incomplete questionnaires, the sample size was increased by 8%, resulting in a final sample of 400 respondents for the questionnaire survey. In addition, 20 IDPs participated in in-depth interviews, while 10 key informants were purposively selected for key informant interviews (KIIs) to provide comprehensive qualitative insights.

Procedure for Data Collection

Data were collected between February and May 2025 after obtaining ethical approval from the relevant authorities, including the National Commission for Refugees, Migrants and Internally Displaced Persons (NCFRMI). Participation was voluntary, and informed consent was obtained from all respondents.

Structured questionnaires were administered by trained research assistants, while in-depth and key informant interviews were conducted in private locations within the camps and relevant offices. Interviews lasted between 45 and 60 minutes, were audio-recorded with participants' consent, and supplemented with field notes. This approach ensured the collection of reliable quantitative and qualitative data.

Method of Data Analysis

Quantitative data were analyzed using SPSS Version 26. Descriptive statistics (frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations) were used to summarize the data, while Chi-square and logistic regression were employed to test relationships among variables at the 0.05 level of significance. Qualitative

data were transcribed and analyzed using thematic analysis to identify and interpret key themes relating to resilience strategies, modern slavery, and institutional responses.

Results and Discussions

This chapter presents and discusses the findings of the study based on data collected from 400 respondents selected from internally displaced persons (IDP) camps in the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Abuja. The presentation begins with the demographic and socio-economic characteristics of the respondents, followed by the analysis of findings on the resilience of IDPs in tackling modern slavery, their perceptions of government policies and programmes, and the effectiveness of interventions aimed at addressing modern slavery in the selected camps.

Table 1: Age Distribution of the Respondents (N=400)

Characteristics	Frequency	Percent
Age:		
1-10 years	8	2.0
11-20 years	112	28.0
21-30 years	176	44.0
31-40 years	92	23.0
50 years and above	12	3.0
Total	400	100

Source: Researcher's Fieldwork, 2025

Sex Distribution of the Respondents

The findings in Table 2 indicate that 54.0% of the respondents were male, while 46.0% were female, showing a slight predominance of males in the selected IDP camps. Although males constituted the majority of the respondents, female IDPs remain particularly vulnerable to modern slavery due to their heightened exposure to sexual exploitation, human trafficking, forced marriage, and other forms of gender-based violence. These vulnerabilities are often exacerbated by displacement, poverty, inadequate protection mechanisms, and limited livelihood opportunities within the camps. Consequently, interventions aimed at combating modern slavery should prioritize the protection and empowerment of women and girls through targeted livelihood programmes, awareness campaigns, and access to appropriate support services.

Table 2: Sex Distribution of the Respondents 400

Characteristics	Frequency	Percent
Sex		
Male	216	54.0
Female	184	46.0
Total	400	100

Source: Researcher's Fieldwork, 2025

Marital Status of the Respondents

The analysis of marital status among the 400 respondents (Table 2) reveals that a significant proportion were single, accounting for 42.0% of the sample. This was closely followed by married individuals at 40.0%, while widowed respondents constituted 18.0%. This distribution indicates that nearly half of the respondents were unmarried. The relatively high percentage of single individuals 42.0% suggests that a substantial portion of the Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in the study belong to a young and potentially economically active population. Such individuals may be particularly vulnerable to exploitation and modern slavery due to limited family support structures and heightened economic instability. Furthermore, the 18.0% of respondents who were widowed may face compounded economic and emotional challenges, particularly when responsible for dependents with minimal support systems.

Table 3: Marital Status of the Respondents

Characteristics	Frequency	Percent
Marital Status		
Single	168	42.0
Married	160	40.0
Widowed	72	18.0
Total	400	100

Source: Researcher's Fieldwork, 2025

Educational Background of the Respondents

The educational profile of the respondents (Table 3) reveals a predominantly secondary-level attainment, with nearly half 46.0% having completed secondary school. This category constitutes the most common educational level among the surveyed population. Primary school education follows, reported by 23.0% of respondents, while university degree holders account for 13.0%. Post-secondary qualifications

representing tertiary education below degree level comprise 11.0% of the sample. A further 7.0% of respondents indicated having no formal education.

Table 4: Educational Background of the Respondents

Characteristics	Frequency	Percent
Educational Background:		
No Formal Education	28	7.0
Primary School	92	23.0
Secondary School	184	46.0
Post-Secondary	44	11.0
University Degree	52	13.0
Total	400	100



Plate IV: Poor educational facilities at New Kuchingoro IDPs Camp.

Source: Researcher's Fieldwork, 2025

Resilience of IDPs in Tackling Modern Slavery

The variables included degree of resilient to modern slavery, resilience strategies, and life rebuilding confidence among IDPs.

Table4: Distribution of Respondents 'Resilience in Tackling Modern Slavery

Variables/Categories	Frequency	Percent
Degreeof Resilience		
VeryResilient	136	34.0
Somewhat Resilient	140	35.0
Not VeryResilient	64	16.0
Not At All Resilient	60	15.0
Total	400	100.0
ResilientStrategies Adopted		
SeekingSupport fromFamilyand Friends	132	33.0

Engagingin GeneratingActivities	96	24.0
AccessingInformation	52	13.0
ReligiousorSpiritualPractices	120	30.0
Total	400	100.0
ConfidenceofResilience		
VeryConfident	204	51.0
Somewhat Confident	144	36.0
Not VeryConfident	16	4.0
Not At All Confident	36	9.0
Total	400	100.0

Source: Researcher's Fieldwork, 2025

The findings in Table 4 show that 35.0% of the respondents perceived themselves as somewhat resilient, while 34.0% considered themselves very resilient in tackling modern slavery. In contrast, 16.0% reported being not very resilient, and 15.0% indicated that they were not at all resilient. This finding was corroborated during the Focus Group Discussion (FGD), where a female participant emphasized that economic empowerment was central to her resilience: *"I feel confident because I am taking action. I am not just waiting. I use the little skills I have to make soap and sell it inside the camp. The money is small, but it means I don't have to beg and I can say 'no' to a man who offers me money for sex or an exploitative job. True resilience is being able to provide for yourself. All the training and awareness are good, but without a way to earn a living, we are still vulnerable. My resilience is my small business."* (Female IDP, FGD, 2025).

The respondent's account demonstrates that livelihood opportunities and skills acquisition play a crucial role in reducing vulnerability to modern slavery by promoting economic independence and self-reliance. The finding supports Resilience Theory, which posits that resilience is strengthened through access to protective resources such as livelihood opportunities, social support, and institutional interventions. It also aligns with Ekezie et al. (2022), who found that income-generating activities and community support significantly enhanced the resilience of internally displaced persons in Northern Nigeria by reducing dependence on exploitative survival strategies.



Plate V: An NGO conducting training on detergent making in one of the DurumiIDPs Camp

Source: Researcher's Fieldwork, 2025

A female participant during the Focus Group Discussion (FGD) further reinforced the findings by emphasizing the strength, determination, and adaptability demonstrated by internally displaced persons in coping with displacement and resisting exploitation. She stated:

"We have been through hell, but we are not broken. We have learned how to protect ourselves and our families, and we will never give up." (Female IDP, FGD, 2025).

This statement reflects the psychological resilience and determination of many IDPs despite the severe hardships associated with displacement. It suggests that resilience extends beyond material resources to include hope, perseverance, and the ability to develop protective strategies against exploitation. The finding supports Resilience Theory, which views resilience as a dynamic process through which individuals adapt positively to adversity by drawing on personal strengths and available social resources. It also corroborates the findings of Masten (2014) that resilience is fostered through adaptive capacities that enable vulnerable populations to recover from adversity and sustain their well-being despite challenging circumstances.



Plates XI: An IDP woman frying beans cake (akara) at New Kuchingoro IDPs Camp

Source: Researcher's Fieldwork, 2025

The findings indicate that the majority of IDPs demonstrate a positive level of resilience despite the challenges of displacement and modern slavery. This suggests that many respondents possess the confidence and ability to adapt to adverse circumstances. Furthermore, support from family and friends (33.0%) and religious or spiritual practices (30.0%) emerged as the most common resilience strategies, while income-generating activities (24.0%) and access to information (13.0%) were less frequently adopted. These findings underscore the importance of social support and faith-based coping mechanisms in enhancing resilience among IDPs, particularly where formal institutional support is limited. The results are consistent with UNHCR (2024), which emphasizes that social networks and community support are essential in strengthening resilience among displaced populations.

A male participant during the Focus Group Discussion (FGD) highlighted the importance of community support as a key resilience strategy among IDPs. He stated:

"How do we stay strong? We stay together. My resilience does not come from inside me alone; it comes from my neighbour who watches my children, from my friend who shares her food when my ration runs out. We are a network. If one of us hears about a dangerous job offer, we warn the others. Our strength is our community. Without each other, we would have been picked off one by one long ago." (Male IDP, FGD, 2025).

This response reinforces the quantitative finding that support from family and friends (33.0%) is the most

widely adopted resilience strategy among IDPs. It demonstrates that resilience is strengthened through collective action, social cohesion, and mutual support, which enable community members to share information, identify potential threats, and protect one another from exploitation. This finding is consistent with UNHCR (2024), which emphasizes that strong social networks and community participation are essential for enhancing resilience and reducing protection risks among displaced populations.

The findings further revealed that 51.0% of the respondents were very confident and 36.0% were somewhat confident in their ability to tackle modern slavery, while only 13.0% expressed low confidence. This suggests that most IDPs possess a positive sense of self-efficacy despite the challenges associated with displacement.

Supporting this finding, a female participant remarked:

"You ask if I am confident? My confidence is not in myself, but in God. When I pray, I find a peace that the camp cannot take away... Without my faith, I would have given up." (Female IDP, FGD, 2025).

This statement illustrates the important role of religious and spiritual practices in strengthening psychological resilience among IDPs. Faith provides emotional stability, hope, and motivation to cope with hardship, particularly where formal support systems are inadequate. The finding corroborates Okeke-Ihejirika et al. (2020), who found that social support networks and faith-based coping mechanisms are important sources of resilience and psychological well-being among internally displaced persons.

Test of Hypothesis

Ho1: There is no significant relationship between forced migration experiences and the resilience of IDPs in addressing modern slavery.

Table5: Chi-Square of Resilience in Tackling Modern Slavery

Variable	Categories (df)	χ^2 Value	p-value	Statistical Significance
Degree of Resilience	4 (df=3)	57.92	<0.001	Significant
Resilience Strategies Adopted	4 (df=3)	37.44	<0.001	Significant
Confidence in Resilience	4 (df=3)	239.04	<0.001	Significant

Degree of Resilience	4 (df=3)	57.92	<0.001	Significant
Resilience Strategies Adopted	4 (df=3)	37.44	<0.001	Significant
Confidence in Resilience	4 (df=3)	239.04	<0.001	Significant

Significance level set at $p < 0.05$

The Chi-square results indicate that the three dimensions of resilience degree of resilience, resilience strategies adopted and confidence in resilience were all statistically significant ($p < 0.05$). This suggests that the observed response patterns were not due to chance but reflect meaningful differences in the resilience characteristics of IDPs.

The significant Chi-square value for degree of resilience ($\chi^2=57.92$) indicates that most respondents perceived themselves as either very resilient or somewhat resilient despite the challenges associated with displacement. Similarly, the significant result for resilience strategies ($\chi^2=37.44$) shows that respondents relied more on social support and religious or spiritual practices than on other coping mechanisms, highlighting the importance of community networks in reducing vulnerability to modern slavery. Furthermore, the high Chi-square value for confidence in resilience ($\chi^2=239.04$) demonstrates that the majority of respondents expressed confidence in their ability to cope with exploitation and adversity. These findings support Resilience Theory, which emphasizes that individual confidence, social support, and adaptive coping mechanisms are essential resources for overcoming adversity. However, sustained resilience requires strengthened institutional support, livelihood opportunities, and effective anti-trafficking interventions to address the structural factors that continue to expose IDPs to modern slavery.

CONCLUSION

The study concludes that internally displaced persons (IDPs) in the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Abuja, exhibit considerable resilience in tackling modern slavery despite the socioeconomic challenges associated with displacement. The findings revealed that 69.0% of the respondents perceived themselves as either very resilient or somewhat resilient, while

87.0% expressed confidence in their ability to resist exploitation. The predominant resilience strategies adopted were support from family and friends (33.0%) and religious or spiritual practices (30.0%), demonstrating the importance of social cohesion and faith-based coping mechanisms in mitigating vulnerability.

The Chi-square analysis further indicated significant differences in respondents' levels of resilience, resilience strategies, and confidence ($p < 0.05$), suggesting that resilience among IDPs is influenced by identifiable social and economic factors rather than occurring by chance. Nevertheless, the study found that poverty, unemployment, limited education, weak institutional protection, and inadequate livelihood opportunities continue to expose many IDPs to modern slavery. Therefore, while individual and community resilience provides an important protective mechanism, sustainable prevention of modern slavery requires stronger institutional support, improved economic opportunities, and effective implementation of anti-trafficking policies.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made:

1. Government and humanitarian agencies should strengthen livelihood programmes by providing vocational training, skills acquisition, micro-credit facilities, and start-up grants to improve the economic resilience of IDPs and reduce vulnerability to exploitation.
2. NAPTIP, the National Commission for Refugees, Migrants and Internally Displaced Persons (NCFRMI), and non-governmental organizations should intensify awareness campaigns on modern slavery, human trafficking, labour rights, and safe migration using local languages and community-based approaches.
3. Community-based protection mechanisms should be strengthened through the establishment of community watch committees and the training of camp leaders to identify, prevent, and report cases of exploitation and trafficking.

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