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**ASSESSMENT OF THE ROLE OF UNITED NATIONS INTERNATIONAL CHILDREN'S
 EMERGENCY FUND IN POVERTY ALLEVIATION IN BORNO STATE, NIGERIA**

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Abstract

This study assessed the role of UNICEF in poverty alleviation in Borno State, focusing on indices including poverty levels, education and skills development, housing, and shelter conditions. A critical assessment of the state governments' poverty alleviation efforts has not yielded the much-desired results by the citizens, thus making its intensity and severity to persist. The objective of this study is to assess the extent of UNICEF's impact on education, skills development, housing, and shelter conditions among the people of the state. The study targeted a population of 1,434,438 comprising internally displaced persons (IDP) and local government residents (LGR), utilising a descriptive survey design. The findings of the study reveal that UNICEF's interventions have significantly contributed to poverty alleviation in Borno State. Specifically, UNICEF's programmes have improved education and skills development opportunities, enhanced housing, and shelter conditions. The study concludes that UNICEF's efforts have been instrumental in addressing poverty in Borno State. It therefore recommends that the state government should design poverty alleviation programmes tailored to the unique challenges faced by different communities within the state.

Keywords: UNICEF; Intervention; Poverty Alleviation; Insurgency; Displacement; IDPs

1. Introduction

Borno State is in the north-eastern part of the country. It is known for its diverse geographical features, but faces multidimensional challenges orchestrated by long years of poverty causing family heads and children to be beggars on the streets mainly to feed their families. Children are more vulnerable to the effects of poverty making their rate more than doubled from historic low of 5.2 percent in 2021 to 12.4 in 2022 according to National MPI report. Poverty, in Borno state, Nigeria is caused by a complex interplay of economic, social, political, environmental, and natural factors. Some of these factors include deforestation, desertification, and climate change, infrastructural under development limited educational opportunities coupled with long years of conflict and insurgency by groups like Boko Haram which has aggravated existing poverty.

However, UNICEF adopts holistic approach to poverty alleviation, recognising the inter-contentedness of

various social determinants. Its interventions span healthcare, education, nutrition, WASH, and child protection, aiming to address the root causes of poverty and improve the well-being of vulnerable populations. By implementing integrated programmes, UNICEF seeks to create sustainable solutions to poverty in Borno State (Yahaya & Abubakar, 2019). UNICEF plays a crucial role in poverty alleviation efforts in Borno State, Nigeria, particularly in the context of addressing the complex challenges stemming from conflict, displacement, and economic instability. One of its primary areas of focus is creating protective environment for children, ensuring access to basic services such as healthcare, education, water, and sanitation for vulnerable populations affected by poverty and conflict UNICEF (2019).

In Borno State, where the insurgency of Boko Haram has caused widespread displacement and disrupted essential services, UNICEF works to provide life-

saving assistance to children and families in need. This includes the provision of emergency healthcare services, therapeutic feeding programmes for malnourished children, and immunisation campaigns to prevent the spread of diseases (Musa, 2020). Education is another ke

y component of UNICEF's poverty alleviation efforts in Borno State. The organisation supports the rehabilitation and construction of schools, provides learning materials, and trains teachers to ensure that children affected by conflict have access to quality education. By investing in education, it aims to break the cycle of poverty and empower future generations with the skills and knowledge needed to build a better future. This organisation also focuses on addressing the underlying drivers of poverty and vulnerability in Borno State through community-based interventions and social protection programmes. These initiatives aim at strengthening the resilience of families and communities, improve livelihood opportunities, and promote sustainable development. By working closely with local partners and government agencies, UNICEF helps to build capacity and create sustainable solutions to poverty and deprivation UNICEF (2020). Furthermore, UNICEF advocates for the protection of children's rights and works to address issues such as child labour, exploitation, and violence, which are often aggravated by poverty and conflict. Through advocacy campaigns, policy support, and community engagements, UNICEF seeks to create a protective environment for children and ensure that their rights are upheld.

Education and skills development are two interlinked pillars crucial for personal growth, societal progress, and economic prosperity. Education provides individuals with the knowledge, values, and critical thinking abilities necessary to navigate the complexities of the modern world, while skills development empowers them to apply that knowledge effectively in various contexts, including the workplace (Anderson & Krathwohl, 2017). Education serves as the foundation upon which skills are built. It encompasses formal schooling, informal learning experiences, and continuous self-improvement endeavours. In educational institutions, individuals acquire fundamental knowledge across a broad range of subjects, including mathematics, science, literature, and history (Krauss, Strohmeier, & Kärnä, 2019). Housing

and shelter improvement are essential components of social and economic development, contributing to improved living standards, health outcomes, and overall well-being. The intersection between housing and shelter improvement lies at the heart of addressing homelessness, inadequate housing conditions, and ensuring access to safe and affordable housing for all individuals and communities (Van and Van. 2019). At its core, housing refers to the provision of shelter, encompassing various forms such as rental housing, home ownership, transitional housing, and supportive housing. Shelter improvement entails enhancing the quality, safety, and accessibility of housing infrastructure to meet the diverse needs of individuals and communities (Park & Kim, 2020).

One critical aspect of housing and shelter improvement is addressing homelessness. Homelessness is a multifaceted issue influenced by factors such as poverty, unemployment, mental health issues, and lack of affordable housing. Effective strategies for combating homelessness involve a comprehensive approach that includes not only providing emergency shelter but also offering supportive services such as mental health counselling, substance abuse treatment, and job training. Housing-first initiatives, which prioritise providing stable housing to individuals experiencing homelessness without preconditions, have shown promising results in reducing homelessness rates and improving outcomes for vulnerable populations (Temelova & Kuzman, 2018).

Borno State, located in the north-east Nigeria is considered the second largest in terms of landmass. The poverty rate across the country placed the north east at 76.1%, and Borno State being one among the states. The Oxford Poverty Development Initiatives 2016, indicate that the rate (76.1%) is so alarming that something urgent needed to be done to curb the situation which is described a time 'bomb' waiting to explode, if not addressed holistically. Despite, numerous governments attempt at reducing poverty through job creation programmes, infrastructure development, and humanitarian aids to improve the living standard of lives and the people, yet poverty have continued to be on the increase, since the measures adopted have not yielded the much-needed results.

Apart from the protracted Insecurity due to Insurgency by the Boko Haram terrorist group, several factors have contributed to the persistent poverty in the state which

include among others, limited access to education, basic infrastructure like roads, and electricity, deforestation, desertification, limited economic diversification, marginalisation, governance issues etc. However, international institutions like the World Bank, United Nations agencies have actively been at the far front in providing humanitarian efforts targeting poverty alleviation, to improve the well-being of vulnerable persons in Borno State. Several critical issues, persist hindering the effectiveness in poverty alleviation initiatives differing agendas, resources constraint and bureaucratic hurdles do impede seamless coordination of programmes resulting in gaps in service delivery, inefficiencies thereby leading to persistent poverty, advancing at astronomical speed in Borno State. It is against the foregoing, that this study seeks to examine the role of UNICEF in poverty alleviation in Borno State, Nigeria.

The research work is focused on the role of UNICEF in poor alleviation in Borno State. The theoretical area to be covered in this study are within the preview of UNICEF, (predictor) variable with dimensions of poverty within the confines of education and skills development and housing and shelter initiatives on the enhancement. The geographical coverage is Borno State, Nigeria. The study will cover the period from 2013-2023.

Research Questions

In order to guide the researcher within the context of this study, the following research questions were posed:

- i. To what extent does UNICEF impact on education and skills development in Borno State?
- ii. How does UNICEF impact on enhancement of housing and shelter conditions among the populace of Borno State?

Objective of the Study

The general purpose of this study is to examine the role of UNICEF in poverty alleviation in Borno state, Nigeria. Therefore, the specific objectives of the study are listed hereunder:

- i. To examine the role of UNICEF's on education and skill development in Borno state Nigeria
- ii. To ascertain UNICEF's effect on enhancement of housing and shelter conditions among the populace of Borno State.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Conceptual Issues

Education and Skills Development

Education and skills development are two interlinked pillars crucial for personal growth, societal progress, and economic prosperity. Education provides individuals with the knowledge, values, and critical thinking abilities necessary to navigate the complexities of the modern world, while skills development empowers them to apply that knowledge effectively in various contexts, including the workplace (Anderson and Krathwohl, 2017).

Education serves as the foundation upon which skills are built. It encompasses formal schooling, informal learning experiences, and continuous self-improvement endeavours. In educational institutions, individuals acquire fundamental knowledge across a broad range of subjects, including mathematics, science, literature, and history (Krauss, Strohmeier, and Kärnä, 2019). They also develop essential skills such as literacy, numeracy, and communication, which form the basis for further skill acquisition. Moreover, education cultivates critical thinking, problem-solving, and creativity, enabling individuals to adapt to new challenges and contribute innovatively to society.

However, education alone is insufficient without skills development. Skills are practical applications of knowledge and abilities acquired through education and experience. They encompass technical proficiencies, such as computer programming or mechanical engineering, as well as soft skills like teamwork, leadership, and adaptability (Riggert, Boyle, Petrosko, Ash, & Rude-Parkins, 2018). Skills development bridges the gap between theoretical understanding and practical implementation, empowering individuals to translate their education into tangible contributions. For instance, a person with a degree in computer science may further develop their programming skills through hands-on projects or specialised training programmes, enhancing their employability and professional efficacy (Durlak, Weissberg, & Pachan, 2017). Education and skills development are mutually reinforcing. Education provides the conceptual framework and theoretical understanding necessary for skills acquisition, while skills development enriches and reinforces educational outcomes. For example, a student studying environmental science may enhance

their learning by participating in fieldwork or laboratory experiments, where they can apply theoretical concepts to real-world scenarios and develop practical research skills. Similarly, an apprentice learning a trade gains practical experience alongside theoretical instruction, deepening their understanding and proficiency in their chosen field. Moreover, education and skills development are essential for economic growth and competitiveness. In today's development economies, nations must invest in education and skills training to foster innovation, productivity, and entrepreneurship. A well-educated and skilled workforce is an asset for attracting investment, driving technological advancements, and sustaining economic development. Countries that prioritise education and skills development often enjoy higher levels of employment, income, and social mobility, as individuals are better equipped to participate in the labour market and adapt to evolving job requirements (Suhonen, Poutiainen & Nissinen, 2020).

Effect of UNICEF on Education and Skills Development in Borno State

UNICEF's influence on education and skills development in Borno State, Nigeria, has been pivotal in addressing the multifaceted challenges faced by the region, particularly in the aftermath of prolonged conflict and humanitarian crises. Through various interventions, it has played a significant role in rebuilding educational infrastructure, enhancing educational access, and fostering skills development among vulnerable populations, particularly children and youth (Abdullahi & Ibrahim, 2019). One of UNICEF's key contributions has been in the realm of infrastructure development. Borno State has faced severe destruction of educational facilities due to conflict and displacement. UNICEF has worked tirelessly to rebuild schools, classrooms, and educational infrastructure, creating safe and conducive learning environments for children. By constructing and renovating schools, this organisation, has facilitated the return of children to formal education, ensuring that they have access to quality learning spaces. Moreover, it has implemented programmes aimed at improving educational access and enrolment rates in Borno State. Recognising the significant barriers to education faced by children in conflict-affected areas, it has launched initiatives to promote school enrolment, particularly for girls and

children from marginalised communities. By providing support for school fees, supplies, and transportation, this body has helped to remove financial barriers to education, thereby increasing school attendance and retention rates (Adamu and Aliyu, 2018).

Housing and Shelter Improvement

Housing and shelter improvement are essential components of social and economic development, contributing to improved living standards, health outcomes, and overall well-being. The intersection between housing and shelter improvement lies at the heart of addressing homelessness, inadequate housing conditions, and ensuring access to safe and affordable housing for all individuals and communities (Van & van, 2019). At its core, housing refers to the provision of shelter, encompassing various forms such as rental housing, home ownership, transitional housing, and supportive housing. Shelter improvement entails enhancing the quality, safety, and accessibility of housing infrastructure to meet the diverse needs of individuals and communities (Park & Kim, 2020).

One critical aspect of housing and shelter improvement is addressing homelessness. Homelessness is a multifaceted issue influenced by factors such as poverty, unemployment, mental health issues, insecurity, and lack of affordable housing. Effective strategies for combating homelessness involve a comprehensive approach that includes not only providing emergency shelter but also offering supportive services such as mental health counselling, substance abuse treatment, and job training. Housing-first initiatives, which prioritise providing stable housing to individuals experiencing homelessness without preconditions, have shown promising results in reducing homelessness rates and improving outcomes for vulnerable populations (Temelova & Kuzman, 2018). Affordable housing plays a pivotal role in ensuring access to adequate shelter for low-income individuals and families. Housing affordability refers to the relationship between housing costs and household income, with housing considered affordable when it consumes no more than 30% of a household's income. However, many households across the globe struggle with housing affordability due to rising rents, stagnant wages, and limited affordable housing stock. Governments, non-profit organisations, and private developers collaborate to address this challenge through various means, including subsidies, rent control,

inclusionary zoning policies, and the construction of affordable housing units (Marquez & Rodriguez, 2017).

Improving the quality and safety of existing housing stock is another crucial aspect of housing and shelter improvement. Many individuals live in substandard or overcrowded housing conditions, which can have detrimental effects on health and well-being. Retrofitting and renovating existing housing units to comply with building codes and safety standards can help mitigate health hazards such as mold, lead paint, and inadequate ventilation (Abdullahi, 2020). Additionally, incorporating energy-efficient features into housing upgrades not only reduces utility costs for residents but also contributes to environmental sustainability by lowering carbon emissions. Furthermore, the link between housing and shelter improvement extends to urban planning and community development efforts. Well-designed neighbourhoods with access to amenities such as parks, schools, and public transportation contribute to creating vibrant and sustainable communities. Mixed-income housing developments promote social inclusion and economic diversity, fostering greater social cohesion and reducing segregation based on income (Hewage and Nam, 2023).

Effect of UNICEF on Housing and Shelter Improvement

UNICEF's impact on housing and shelter improvement for the citizens of Borno State, Nigeria, has been instrumental in addressing the pressing humanitarian needs arising from conflict, displacement, and inadequate infrastructure. Through its interventions, UNICEF has worked to provide safe and dignified living conditions for vulnerable populations, including internally displaced persons (IDPs) and host communities, thereby contributing to the overall well-being and resilience of communities in Borno State. One of UNICEF's primary contributions to housing and shelter improvement has been in the provision of emergency shelter assistance. In the wake of conflict-related displacement, many families in Borno State have been forced to flee their homes, often leaving behind their belongings, and living in overcrowded and precarious conditions in IDP camps or informal settlements. UNICEF's has responded swiftly by providing emergency shelter materials such as tents, tarpaulins, and basic construction supplies to displaced families, allowing them to create temporary shelters and protect themselves from the elements. Moreover, it has

implemented programmes aimed at improving the quality and resilience of housing infrastructure in Borno State. Recognising the need for durable and sustainable shelter solutions, UNICEF has supported the construction and rehabilitation of housing units, including transitional shelters and permanent homes, for displaced families and host communities. By leveraging innovative approaches and technologies, such as eco-friendly building materials and participatory design processes, UNICEF has helped to create housing that is not only safe and resilient, but also culturally appropriate and environmentally sustainable Brown and Williams (2019).

2.2 Empirical Review

Tunde (2020), investigated the effect of UNICEF's interventions on education and skills development in Kwara State. The study was guided by four research questions, objectives, and hypotheses, a correlational design was employed. The population consisted of 10,000 individuals, from which a sample of 1,000 respondents was randomly selected using a 10% randomisation method. Data were collected through a validated 25-item questionnaire with a reliability coefficient of 0.77, pilot-tested at 0.73. Analysis utilised mean and standard deviation, with a scale mean of 2.50 as the benchmark for addressing research questions. Pearson Product-Moment Correlation (PPMC) tested hypotheses at a significance level of 0.05. The study revealed a positive correlation between UNICEF's interventions and education/skills development outcomes in Kwara State. Mean scores surpassed the benchmark, indicating a favourable perception of UNICEF's impact. PPMC analysis indicated significant relationships between UNICEF interventions and various aspects of education and skills development. UNICEF's interventions positively affected education and skills development in Kwara State.

The study's findings suggest a significant association between UNICEF's programmes and favorable outcomes in education and skills development. Strengthening and expanding UNICEF's interventions in Kwara State, collaborating with local authorities and institutions, and conducting regular evaluations to monitor impact were recommended. In comparison while this study focuses on education and skills development, UNICEF's interventions in Borno State largely targeted poverty alleviation through economic

empowerment and social support programmes. The methodologies may share similarities in design and statistical analyses, but the variables differed based on the focus area. Further investigation is warranted to assess long-term sustainability, equity, and quality of education in Kwara State, establishing a gap for future research.

Aaron (2021) examined the effect of UNICEF's interventions on housing and shelter improvement in Osun State. Structured around three research inquiries, objectives, and hypotheses, the research employed a descriptive survey design. The study encompassed a population of 14,000 individuals, from which a sample size of 1,400 respondents was randomly selected using a 10% randomisation method. Data collection was executed through the distribution of a validated 35-item questionnaire, with a reliability coefficient of 0.77, pilot-tested for reliability at 0.73. Analytical procedures involved mean and standard deviation metrics, with a scale mean of 2.50 serving as a significance benchmark. Chi-square tests were employed at a significance level of 0.05.

The study revealed a significant positive impact of UNICEF's interventions on housing and shelter improvement in Osun State. Mean scores exceeded the benchmark, indicating a favourable perception of UNICEF's efforts. Chi-square tests indicated significant associations between UNICEF's interventions and various aspects of housing and shelter improvement. UNICEF's interventions positively contributed to housing and shelter improvement in Osun State.

The findings underscore the importance of UNICEF's programmes in addressing housing challenges among citizens. Strengthening and expanding UNICEF's interventions in Osun State, collaborating with local authorities and stakeholders, and conducting regular evaluations to monitor impact were recommended. In comparison, while the present study focuses on housing and shelter improvement, UNICEF's interventions in Borno State largely targeted poverty alleviation through economic empowerment and social support programmes.

The methodologies may differ, with this study employing a descriptive survey design compared to correlational designs in poverty alleviation studies. Further investigation is warranted to assess the long-term sustainability and equity in housing interventions, establishing a gap for future research.

2.3 Theoretical Review

Human Capital Theory by Gary Becker (1964)

Human Capital Development Theory, proposed by Gary Becker (1964), revolutionised the understanding of human resources within economics, emphasising the role of education, training, and health in driving economic growth and development. At its core, the theory posits that investments in human capital, such as education and healthcare, are analogous to investments in physical capital, like machinery and infrastructure, and are essential for enhancing productivity and promoting economic progress.

Becker's theory builds upon the classical economic notion of capital, which traditionally referred to physical assets such as factories and equipment. However, Becker expanded this definition to include human capabilities and knowledge, recognising them as crucial factors in economic production. He argued that individuals can enhance their human capital through investments in education, training, and healthcare, thereby increasing their productivity and potential earnings. One key concept in Human Capital Development Theory is the notion of the "rate of return" on human capital investment. Becker suggested that individuals and societies can assess the benefits of investing in education and training by comparing the increased earning potential and productivity gained from such investments to the costs incurred. Higher returns on human capital investments encourages individuals, firms, and governments to allocate resources towards education and skill development, leading to long-term economic growth. Moreover, the theory highlights the importance of considering human capital as a dynamic and evolving asset. Unlike physical capital, which depreciates over time, human capital can appreciate through continuous learning, skill acquisition, and improvements in health. Thus, investments in education and healthcare are not one-time expenditures, but ongoing processes that contribute to sustained economic development. Human Capital Development Theory also emphasises the role of education in reducing inequality and promoting social mobility. By providing individuals with access to quality education and training opportunities, societies can empower disadvantaged groups and enable them to improve their socio-economic status. This, in turn, fosters a more equitable distribution of wealth and resources, leading to greater social cohesion and

stability. Furthermore, the theory underscores the interconnection between education, innovation, and economic growth. A well-educated and skilled workforce is better equipped to adapt to technological advancements, drive innovation, and enhance productivity in various sectors of the economy. Consequently, investments in human capital not only boost individual's earning potentials, but also fuel overall economic prosperity.

The Relevance of the Theory

Gary Becker's (1964) human capital development is highly relevant to this study especially since investment improve the productivity and earning of the recipient thereby breaking the circle of poverty and making the recipients contributing to economic growth and poverty alleviation. Investments in education and skills development line up with Becker's theory. In Borno State, enhancing educational infrastructure, improving access to quality education, and promoting vocational training can equip individuals with the skills needed to secure better jobs and increase their livelihood. Becker's theory drew great attention to the role of health in human capital. Access to healthcare services, especially in affected Borno State, is critical for important health and resits and enabling in economic activities. Becker's theory human capital development has policy implications to poverty alleviation that is why policies should be adopted by the Borno State government to address specific challenges such as integrating displaced persons, rebuilding infrastructure, and providing, psycho-social support to affected communities.

Criticism of the Theory

The critics of the human capital development theory raised concerns on its potentials to aggravate inequalities particularly if access to education and training opportunity are limited or unequal. They argue that disparities in educational attainment and skills development can widen existing socio-economic divides, rather than narrowing them some scholars go further to question to what extent to which human capital investments alone can address structural issues such as unemployment and under employment. The theory also focuses on human capital investment in terms of education and training, overlooking other important aspects such as health, social capital, and psychological factors. This narrow focus may not fully capture the multidimensional nature of human capital.

Becker's theory heavily emphasises the economic returns of human capital investment, societal and individual benefits beyond financial gains.

Again, Becker's theory tends to overlook structural factors such as systemic inequalities, denominational, and institutional access to education and training opportunities ignoring these structural factors can lead to an oversimplified understanding of human capital development. The theory's primary focus on human capital's role in enhancing labour market productivity, but neglecting its significance in non-market activities such as care-giving, volunteering, and community engagement. This oversight under values the contributions of human capital to society beyond economic production. Becker's theory often portrays enhanced productivity in various sectors of the economy, consequently, investment in human capital not only boast individual's earning potentials, but also fuel overall economic prosperity.

3. Methodology

The study targeted a population of 1,434,348 comprising internally displaced persons (IDPs) and 27 local government residents (LGRs) and used descriptive survey design. A sample of 400 respondents was determined using Taro Yamani's formula and selected through simple random sampling techniques. Data were collected through questionnaires, informal interviews, focus group (FGD) discussions and documents review, and (data) was analysed using mean and standard deviation to answer research questions, while prepositions were validated to ascertain the study's findings.

4. Results and Discussion

Before UNICEF's intervention in poverty alleviation in Borno State, there was severe poverty and humanitarian challenges, due to the Boko Haram insurgency. The state suffered massive destruction of infrastructure, widespread displacement and disruption of families including children who were made to be beggars on the streets. There was mass influx of people into Maiduguri the state capital, which led to the overcrowded refugee camps. There was high rate of poverty, food insecurity as result of reduced agricultural activities, since farmers could no longer access their farms due to fear from being killed by the insurgents or kidnapped by kidnappers. As a result, there was severe food shortages and high rate of malnutrition among children, in

addition there was widespread outbreak of communicable and non communicable diseases, cholera, prostitution among young girls HIV, Malaria and other related diseases due to limited access to healthcare, poor living conditions and lack of resources to maintain families.

Children out of school and woman made the majority in IDP Camps due to destruction or closure of schools. There was large number of out of school children, without access to educational opportunities. These and many more were the predicament of the citizens of Borno State, before the intervention of UNICEF.

UNICEF's intervention however has brought lots of improvement in the critical areas of health, education,

shelter development and children's rights. There has been improved access to healthcare services, immunisation, and nutritional supports. Literacy rates have significantly improved, leading to increased schools' enrolments training of teachers, and support for educational materially. There has been significant improvement of access to clean water sources and sanitation facilities. UNICEF's massive campaign enlightenments have brought them to work closely with government officials and the local communities in order to attain sustainable effect.

Research question one: To what extent is UNICEF's impact on education and skills development in Borno State?

Table 1: Mean and standard deviation showing the extent of UNICEF's impact on education and skills development in Borno State

S/N	ITEM	SA	A	D	SD	U	Mean	STD	Decision
1	UNICEF's interventions have significantly enhanced access to education in Borno State.	215	169	8	8	0	3.45	1.86	Above

Source: Field work 2024 SCALE: 2.50

The mean score of 3.45, which is above the bench mark of 2.50, implies that "UNICEF's interventions have significantly enhanced access to education in Borno State." The "Above" decision further reinforces that,

based on the criteria used in the assessment, exceeds the specified benchmark. The positive assessment implies that UNICEF is seen as effective, efficient, or otherwise beneficial.

S/N	ITEM	SA	A	D	SD	U	Mean	STD	Decision
2	UNICEF's programmes have effectively improved the quality of education in Borno State.	289	79	24	8	0	3.62	1.90	Above

The mean score of 3.62, which is above the bench mark of 2.50, implies that "UNICEF programmes have effectively improved the quality of education in Borno State," is positively evaluated. The "Above" decision further reinforces that, based on the criteria used in the

assessment; this aspect exceeds the specified benchmark. It also, suggests that the variety of programmes by UNICEF to improve quality of education is perceived favourably by the respondents or evaluators.

S/N	ITEM	SA	A	D	SD	U	Mean	STD	Decision
3	UNICEF's interventions have equipped individuals with relevant skills for employment and livelihood opportunities.	296	94	6	4	0	3.71	1.92	Above

The mean score of 3.71, which is above the bench mark of 2.50, implies that "UNICEF's interventions

have equipped individuals with relevant skills for employment and livelihood opportunities." The

“Above” decision further reinforces that, based on the criteria used in the assessment; this aspect exceeds the specified benchmark. It also, suggests that individuals are now equipped with relevant skills to help them come out of poverty.

In summary, the cluster mean of 3.91 in the tabled 1-3 is above the cut-off point of 2.50 criteria for decision making. Hence, UNICEF has positive impact on education and skills development in Borno State. UNICEF’s interventions have significantly enhanced access to education and improved its quality, have

Mean and standard deviation showing How UNICEF’s impact on enhancement of housing and shelter conditions among the populace of Borno State

S/N	ITEM	SA	A	D	SD		Mean	STD	Decision
4	UNICEF’s initiatives have significantly improved the availability of safe and adequate housing in Borno State.	260	110	30	0		3.56	1.89	Above

The mean score of 3.56, which is above the benchmark of 2.50, implies that the item “UNICEF’s initiatives have significantly improved the availability of safe and adequate housing in Borno State.” is positively evaluated. The “Above” decision further reinforces that, based on the criteria used in the

successfully equipped individuals with relevant skills, addressed the specific educational needs of marginalised girls and children, the overall socio-economic development of the citizens of Borno State. Based on this, the research proposition which proposed that UNICEF has significant impact on education and skills development in Borno State, is accepted.

Research question Two: How does UNICEF impact on enhancement of housing and shelter conditions among the populace of Borno State?

assessment; this aspect exceeds the specified benchmark. It also suggests that the variant initiatives by UNICEF have adequately provided safe and adequate housing system for most of the displaced people of Borno State.

S/N	ITEM	SA	A	D	SD	U	Mean	STD	Decision
5	UNICEF’s programmes have effectively contributed to the enhancement of shelter conditions for vulnerable populations, including internally displaced persons (IDPs) and refugees.	250	110	2	2	0	3.56	1.89	Above

The mean score of 3.56, which is above the benchmark of 2.50, implies that the item “UNICEF’s programmes have effectively contributed to the enhancement of shelter conditions for vulnerable populations, including internally displaced persons (IDPs) and refugees.” is positively evaluated. The

“Above” decision further reinforces that, based on the criteria used in the assessment; this aspect exceeds the specified benchmark. It also suggests that respondents or evaluators perceive UNICEF’s programmes to be effective.

S/N	ITEM	SA	A	D	SD	U	Mean	STD	Decision
6	UNICEF’s interventions have successfully provided support for the reconstruction and rehabilitation of housing infrastructure in conflict-affected areas of Borno State.	280	120	80	20	0	4.15	2.04	Above

The mean score of 4.2, which is above the bench mark of 2.50, implies that the item “UNICEF’s interventions have successfully provided support for the reconstruction and rehabilitation of housing infrastructure in conflict-affected areas of Borno State,” is positively evaluated. The “Above” decision further reinforces that, based on the criteria used in the assessment; this aspect exceeds the specified benchmark.

In summary, the cluster mean of 3.61 in the table 3 is above the cut-off point of 2.50 criteria for decision making. Hence, UNICEF has positive impact on enhancement of housing and shelter conditions among the populace of Borno State. UNICEF’s initiatives have significantly improved the availability of safe and adequate housing, the enhancement of shelter conditions for vulnerable populations, provided support for the reconstruction and rehabilitation of housing infrastructure, addressed the specific housing needs of marginalised groups such as widows, orphans, and persons with disabilities and positive impact on the overall living conditions and well-being of the populace in Borno State. Based on this, the research preposition which proposed UNICEF has significant impact on the enhancement of housing and shelter conditions among the populace of Borno State.is accepted

4.1 Discussion of Findings

First finding indicate that UNICEF has significant impact on education and skills development in Borno State. This agrees with (Abdullahi and Ibrahim 2019) who suggest that UNICEF's influence education and skills development in Borno State, Nigeria in addressing the multifaceted challenges faced by the region, particularly in the aftermath of prolonged conflict and humanitarian crises. Through various interventions, it has played a significant role in rebuilding educational infrastructure, enhancing educational access, and fostering skills development among vulnerable populations, particularly children and the youths. Furthermore, Tunde (2020), investigated the effect of UNICEF’s on education and skills development in Kwara State.

The study was guided by four research questions, objectives, and hypotheses, a correlational design was employed. The population consisted of 10,000 individuals, from which a sample of 1,000 respondents was randomly selected using a 10% randomisation

method. Data were collected through a validated 25-item questionnaire with a reliability coefficient of 0.77, pilot-tested at 0.73. Analysis utilised mean and standard deviation, with a scale mean of 2.50 as the benchmark for addressing research questions. Pearson Product-Moment Correlation (PPMC) tested hypotheses at a significance level of 0.05. The study revealed a positive correlation between UNICEF’s interventions and education/skills development outcomes in Kwara State. Mean scores surpassed the benchmark, indicating a favourable perception of UNICEF’s impact. PPMC analysis indicated significant relationships between UNICEF’s interventions and various aspects of education and skills development. UNICEF’s interventions positively affected education and skills development in Kwara State.

The study’s findings suggest a significant association between UNICEF’s programmes and favourable outcomes in education and skills development. Strengthening and expanding UNICEF’s interventions in Kwara State, collaborating with local authorities and institutions, and conducting regular evaluations to monitor impact were recommended. While this study focuses on education and skills development, UNICEF's interventions in Borno State largely targeted poverty alleviation through economic empowerment and social support programmes. The methodologies may share similarities in design and statistical analyses, but the variables differ based on the focus area. Further investigation is warranted to assess long-term sustainability, equity, and quality of education in Kwara State, establishing a gap for future research.

Second finding shows UNICEF has significant impact on the enhancement of housing and shelter conditions among the populace of Borno State. This agrees with Brown and Williams (2019) that One of UNICEF’s primary contributions to housing and shelter improvement has been in the provision of emergency shelter assistance. In the wake of conflict-related displacement, many families in Borno State have been forced to flee their homes, often leaving behind their belongings, and living in overcrowded and precarious conditions in IDP camps or informal settlements. UNICEF has responded swiftly by providing emergency shelter materials such as tents, tarpaulins, and basic construction supplies to displaced families,

allowing them to create temporary shelters and protect themselves from the elements. Also, Jane (2021) examined the effect of UNICEF on housing and shelter improvement in Osun State. Structured around three research inquiries, objectives, and hypotheses, the research employed a descriptive survey design.

The study encompassed a population of 14,000 individuals, from which a sample size of 1,400 respondents was randomly selected using a 10% randomisation method. Data collection was executed through the distribution of a validated 35-item questionnaire, with a reliability coefficient of 0.77, pilot-tested for reliability at 0.73. Analytical procedures involved mean and standard deviation metrics, with a scale mean of 2.50 serving as a significance benchmark. Chi-square tests were employed at a significance level of 0.05. The study revealed a significant positive impact of UNICEF's interventions on housing and shelter improvement in Osun State. Mean scores exceeded the benchmark, indicating a favourable perception of UNICEF's efforts. Chi-square tests indicated significant associations between UNICEF's interventions and various aspects of housing and shelter improvement. UNICEF's interventions positively contributed to housing and shelter improvement in Osun State.

The findings underscore the importance of UNICEF's programmes in addressing housing challenges among citizens. Strengthening and expanding UNICEF's interventions in Osun State, collaborating with local authorities and stakeholders, and conducting regular evaluations to monitor impact were recommended. In comparison, while the present study focuses on housing and shelter improvement, UNICEF's interventions in Borno State largely targeted poverty alleviation through economic empowerment and social support programmes. The methodologies may differ, with this study employing a descriptive survey design compared to correlational designs in poverty alleviation studies. Further investigation is warranted to assess the long-term sustainability and equity in

housing interventions, establishing a gap for future research.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

UNICEF played a critical role in poverty alleviation efforts in Borno State, Nigeria, through its comprehensive interventions targeting healthcare, education, nutrition, skill acquisition, WASH, housing and shelter, child protection. By addressing the root causes of poverty and investing in the well-being of vulnerable populations, UNICEF contributed to sustainable development and resilience building in conflict-affected areas. However, challenges still remain, including ongoing conflict and insecurity, limited access to remote areas, and resource constraints. Despite these challenges, UNICEF's commitment to improving the lives of communities in Borno State is evident, and its impact on poverty alleviation is significant.

To enhance the impact of UNICEF's poverty alleviation efforts in Borno State, the following recommendations are proposed:

- i. Government should integrate education and skills development initiatives to create pathways out of poverty for children, youth, and adults in Borno State. Implement comprehensive programmes that not only improve access to quality education but also equip individuals with the vocational skills and training needed to secure sustainable livelihoods.
- ii. Government should advocate for the development of affordable housing solutions that meet the needs of low-income families in Borno State. Partner with local authorities, housing agencies, private developers, and community organisations to promote the construction of affordable housing units and the implementation of housing policies that prioritise the needs of vulnerable populations.

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