Bureaucratic Corruption and Service Delivery in the Edo State Civil Service: A Study of Selected Ministries

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ABSTRACT
The study examined bureaucratic corruption and its effect on public service delivery in the Edo State Civil Service. In the course of carrying out this study, the correlational research design was adopted and the survey method of data analysis was utilised to elicit responses from the respondents via a structured questionnaire and results were analysed with chi-square. The study revealed that was no significant relationship between embezzlement of public funds and health care services rendered by the Edo State Ministry of Health. The study also revealed that there was no significant relationship between public sector fraud and electricity power supply to the citizens of Edo State. The data confirmed that there is a significant relationship between bribery and corruption and the deplorable states of roads in Edo State. The data also demonstrated that there was no relationship between nepotism and general service delivery in the Edo State Civil Service. The paper concluded that bribery and corruption had the most negative impact on the delivery of public service to citizens of Edo State. The study recommended that the mechanism of transparency and accountability in all institutions of government must be strengthened especially in the procurement process and that there should be adequate remuneration, improved incentives and a good working environment for employees.

INTRODUCTION
Bureaucratic corruption as a variant of corruption is ubiquitous, multifaceted and systematic in Nigerian public bureaucracy. It has eaten deeply into the blood and societal life of officials who not only personalised public offices but also personifies it (Ibeogu & Ulo, 2017). In other words, bureaucratic corruption has been entrenched in

virtually all sectors of the Nigerian economy and manifests in the form of bribery, embezzlement, extortion, fraud, favouritism, nepotism, auto-corruption, subsidy abuse, deliberate waste and legalised corruption (Amundsen, 1999; Okekeocha, 2013; Page, 2018).

The behavioural patterns exhibited by corrupt actors could be covert (clandestine), overt and disguised. Collection of bribes at road blocks is overt in nature. The misappropriation of funds or embezzlement could be done in a clandestine manner and inflated budget allocations of ministries could be executed in a disguised manner (Page, 2018). Bureaucratic corruption like other forms of corruption has both the demand and supply sides. According to Amundsen (1999), the demand side of corruption is perpetuated by the "*corrupted*". These are public officials who demanded bribes and engaged in other opportunistic behavior. The supply side of corruption is perpetuated by the "*corrupters*". They are those who offer bribes to gain undue advantages. They include the general public or the non-state society actors such as the non-public officials and corporate bodies.

It is instructive to note that, numerious empirical and theoretical studies had been conducted by scholars to pinpoint causes of bureaucratic corruption or why bureaucratic corruption thrives in states? Some scholars had attributed these causes to the nature and character of the state (Onuigbo & Eme, 2015; Amundsen, 1999); regularisation and authorisation (Tanzi, 1998; Nwankwo, Ananti & Madubueze, 2015); disregard for ethical standard throughout agencies of government and business organisations (Ibeogu & Ulo, 2017); low civil servant salaries, low incentives and poor working conditions (Ola, Mohammed & Audi, 2014).

Consequently, the effects of bureaucratic corruption are devastating, as it affects all spheres of human endeavours. As rightly observed by Lipset and Lenz (as cited in Omede & Ngwube, 2019, p. 894)

> *A bureaucratic corrupt government would shift government expenditure to areas where they can collect bribes. It increases the cost of governance*

this underscores the reason why Nigeria spends huge sums of money in her service yet no meaningful results are achieved. It has reduced public revenue and increased public expenditures. It distorts markets, reduces investments in critical infrastructure, creates monopolies that makes goods and services more expensive and puts off foreign investors. It distorts public choices in favour of the wealthy and powerful and reduces the state's ability to provide a social safety net. It disembowels the poor beyond the generally received notion of failure of governance and pinches the pockets of the poor in favour of the rich.

More so, the effect of bureaucratic corruption on service delivery is captured aptly by Bearse (2000, as cited in Bukar, 2021, p. 10). "*When services become inaccessible as a result of corruption, the quantities decline and revenue is lost leading to poor service delivery*". This is an indication of the deleterious effect; corruption could have on public service delivery. No doubt, attempts had been made by successive governments in Nigeria to address bureaucratic corruption and other forms of corrupt practices in the public sector. This was evident in the plethora of commissions of inquiry and panels set up in the past decades by successive Governments. This includes the Abebo's Salary and Wage Commission of 1971, the Udoji's reforms of 1972, Civil Service Reform of 1992 (Ayida's panel), Oronsaye's Committee Report of 2012 among others. These reforms failed because of lack of political will to implement the reforms on the part of the political leadership, politics, sentiments and mediocrity (Eneanya, 2013).

Additionally, governments had established the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), the Independent Corrupt Practices Commission (ICPC), Code of Conduct (CCB) and the Bureau of Public Procurement (BPP) to address corruption in the public sector. Unfortunately, the creation of Anti-Corruption

Agencies (ACAs) had not yielded concrete results because of undue influence by successive governments which had led to selective prosecutions, lack of accountability and transparency in asset recovery among other factors (Laiatu, Ibrahim, Fatai and Fadare, 2023). Other attempts to curtail bureaucratic corruption are the introduction of Integrated Payroll and Personnel information system (IPPIS) and whistle blowing initiative.

The research, therefore, was carried out to close the methodological gap identified in Bukar's (2021) study, in which the researcher examined the effects of bureaucratic corruption on service delivery in Maiduguri Metropolitan Council (MMC), Borno State using descriptive statistics (Percentage and frequency). This was improved upon the introduction of Chi-square, a non-parametric test and inferential statistics to test for significant relationships among the variables of embezzlement, public sector fraud, bribery, nepotism and public service delivery.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The cardinal objectives of a responsible government are the maintenance of law and order and provision of public goods and services through its institutions. Sadly, in Nigeria, government bureaucracy which is the engine room of governmental activities and main implementer of public policies, had failed to live up to its responsibilities such as the maintenance of law and orders, provision of social amenities and other public goods (Gafar, 2017). In other words, government bureaucracy has not been able to live up to its mandate of effective and efficient implementation of policies due to organisational pathologies such as corruption, its over-bloated nature and poor professionalism of the public sector (Okekeocha, 2013 & Eneanya, 2013).

Despite attempts made by government at all levels to address bureaucratic corruption in Nigeria such as administrative reforms, establishment of anti-corruption agencies (the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission, the Independent Corrupt Practices

Commission and Code of Conduct Bureau and Tribunal) and other institutional checks, bureaucratic corruption remains systematic and constitute a bane to the socio-cultural, economic and political development of Nigeria. Its effects on individuals, state and society is deleterious and one of its consequences is the poor quality service delivery experienced by Nigerians that are decrepit, deficit, comatose, inaccessible, untimely, unreliable and at times non-existent (Gafar 2017). Such services include epileptic power supply, poor health care services, deplorable state of our roads and national assets, poor housing scheme, lack of access to clean drinking water among others. This has resulted to "japa" Syndrome, brain drain syndrome, medical tourism, low Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) and relocation of businesses to neighbouring countries like Ghana and other parts of the world.

Nevertheless, it is pertinent to state that most literature on bureaucratic corruption tend to focus on the effects of bureaucratic corruption on good governance, economic growth, development and national development such studies included Asaju and Ayeni (2021), who carried out a study on public bureaucracy and national development in Nigeria: Issues and Challenges; Adelabu (2021) study on the manifestations of grand corruption in Nigeria's fourth Republic and its implications on nation development and Ola *et al.* (2014) study on the effects of corruption on economic development in Nigeria. Other scholars, who examined bureaucratic corruption on service delivery centered most of their studies on Local Governments such as Bukar's (2021) study on the effects of bureaucratic corruption on service delivery in Maiduguri Metropolitan Council (MMC), Borno State and Nwobi, Ike Chujwuma and Chukwurah (2021) study on the epitome of administrative corruption and public service in Dunokofia Local Government (2015-2018).

Furthermore, almost all empirical studies on bureaucratic corruption have not critically investigated the effect of the variables of bribery, favouritism, nepotism, subsidy abuse and deliberate waste on general service delivery (health care services, infrastructure, education and

utilities). This suggests that sufficient empirical studies should be carried out to enhance the understanding of how the different forms of bureaucratic corruption could impact on the quality of public service delivery.

In a nutshell, this study examined the effects of bureaucratic corruption on service delivery in the Edo State Civil Service, using selected ministries (Ministry of Environment and Sustainability, Ministry of Health and Ministry of Roads and Bridges) while introducing the variables of bribery and nepotism along with embezzlement and public sector fraud. The choice of these ministries was informed by the components of service delivery such as poor health care services, epileptic power supply, deplorable state of road infrastructure and national assets in Edo State.

RESEARCH METHODS

The correlation research design was adopted to test for significant relationship among variables while the survey method of inquiry was utilised to obtain primary data from participants through the use of a structured questionnaire.

Population of the Study

The population is the summation of staff members in the Ministry of Environment and Sustainability, Ministry of Health and Ministry of Roads and Bridges. In other words, it is the totality of staff strength in the aforementioned ministries. Thus, the population of the study was three hundred and seventy five (375). A breakdown of the staff strength of the three (3) ministries was provided below:

Table 1: Population

Ministry	Population (Staff Strength)
Ministry of Environment and Sustainability	97
Ministry of Health	118
Ministry of Roads and Bridges	160
Total	375

Source: Office of the Director of Shared Services of the Edo State

Ministry of Environment and Sustainability (2024); Office of the Director of Human Resources and Administration of the Edo State Ministry of Health (2024); Office of the Director of Administration and Supplies of the Edo State Ministry of Roads and Bridges (2024)

Sample Size

The sample size is the subset of the population (staff strength) in the three ministries. 50 % of the population of each ministry was utilised to calculate the sample size. Thus, the sample size of the study was one hundred and eighty eight (188). 50 % was utilised in determining the sample size because some of the staff members were either in outstations or field works or seconded to other ministries. Consequently, some offices were locked and staff members unavailable. A breakdown of how the sample size was derived was tabulated below:

Table 2: Sample Size

Ministry	Population (Staff Strength)	Sample Size (50% of the each ministry's population)
Ministry of Environment and Sustainability	97	49
Ministry of Health	118	59
Ministry of Roads and Bridges	160	80
Total	375	188

Source: Researcher (2024)

Note: The sample size in the Ministry of Environment and Sustainability was approximated to the nearest whole number.

Sampling Technique

The simple random sampling technique was utilised for the study which gave every participant an equal chance of being represented in the administration of questionnaire to staff members of the three ministries.

Research Instrument: Validity and reliability

The questionnaire was organized into two (2) sections. The first section was the bio data or demographic characteristics of the population and the second section covers statements centered on the postulated hypotheses for this study. The options of the statements were expressed in a 5-point Likert scale. The options were agree, strongly agree, disagree, strongly disagree and undecided.

Content validity was utilised to validate the research instrument to ensure that the questionnaire covered all relevant aspects of the subject it intended to measure. For an objective assessment of the research instrument, after the questionnaire was drafted by the researcher, it was given to some research experts for scrutiny and to make insightful inputs. Consequently, the scholars made some useful suggestions which resulted in the modification of the questionnaire to make certain that all aspects of the subject were adequately covered.

On the other hand, test-retest reliability was the adopted reliability method. 19 copies of the questionnaire were administered to staff members in one of the ministries and few weeks later, the remaining copies of questionnaire were administered to staff members in the three ministries.

DATA ANALYSIS

H_o : There is no significant relationship between embezzlement of public funds and health care services in the Edo State Ministry of Health.

H_o : There is no significant relationship between public sector fraud and electricity power supply to the citizens of Edo State.

H_o : There is no significant relationship between bribery and corruption and the deplorable state of roads in Edo State.

H_o : There is no significant relationship between nepotism and the general service delivery in the Edo State Civil Service.

Table 3: Return rate of Questionnaire

Questionnaire	Respondents	Percentage (%)
Retrieved	168	89.36
Not Retrieved	20	10.64
Total Distributed	188	100

Source: Field survey, 2024

Table 3 shows that out of the 188 copies of questionnaire distributed to staff members of the three ministries, 168 copies of the questionnaire representing 89.36% were retrieved while 20 copies of the questionaire representing 10.64% were not retrieved. Thus, the return rate of the questionnaire was 89.36%. It is worthy of note, that upon processing the questionnaire, 13 copies of the questionnaire were inadequate for data analysis while 155 copies of the questionnaire were adequate and utilized for data analysis.

Test of Hypotheses
Chi-square was utilised to test the earlier postulated hypotheses and the formular was provided below:

$\chi_2 = \Sigma\ (o\text{-}E)\ ^2/\ E)$

Where, Σ=Summation; O=Observed values and E=Expected values

Table 4: Embezzlement of Funds and Health Care Services

Classes of the Nigerian Civil Service	Agreed	Strongly Agreed	Disagreed	Strongly Disagreed	Undecided	Total
Administrative	13	9	1	0	0	23
Executive	5	3	0	0	0	8
Professional	31	60	0	1	1	93
Clerical	8	4	0	0	0	12
Auxiliary	1	1	0	0	0	2
Others	6	11	0	0	0	17
Total	64	88	1	1	1	155

Source: Computed from Field Survey, 2024

CELL	O	E	O-E	$(o-E)^2$	$(o-E)^2/E$
A	13.00	9.50	3.50	12.25	1.36
B	9.00	13.06	-4.06	16.48	1.26
C	1.00	0.15	0.85	0.72	4.80
D	0.00	0.15	-0.15	0.02	0.13
E	0.00	0.15	-0.15	0.02	0.13
F	5.00	3.30	1.70	2.89	0.88
G	3.00	4.54	-1.54	2.37	0.52
H	0.00	0.05	-0.05	0.00	0.00
I	0.00	0.05	-0.05	0.00	0.00
J	0.00	0.05	-0.05	0.00	0.00
K	31.00	38.40	-7.40	54.76	1.43
L	60.00	52.80	7.20	51.84	0.98
M	0.00	0.60	-0.60	0.36	0.60
N	1.00	0.60	0.40	0.16	0.27
O	1.00	0.60	0.40	0.16	0.27
P	8.00	4.95	3.05	9.30	1.88
Q	4.00	6.81	-2.81	7.90	1.16
R	0.00	0.08	-0.08	0.01	0.13
S	0.00	0.08	-0.08	0.01	0.13
T	0.00	0.08	-0.08	0.01	0.13
U	1.00	0.83	0.17	0.23	0.28
V	1.00	1.14	-0.14	0.02	0.02
W	0.00	0.01	-0.01	0.00	0.00
X	0.00	0.01	-0.01	0.00	0.00
Y	0.00	0.01	-0.01	0.00	0.00
Z	6.00	7.02	-1.02	1.04	0.15
A2	11.00	9.65	1.35	1.82	0.19
B2	0.00	0.11	-0.11	0.01	0.09
C2	0.00	0.11	-0.11	0.01	0.09
D2	0.00	0.11	-0.11	0.01	0.09
					$\Sigma = 16.97$

Calculated value $(\chi 2) = 16.97$

Degree of Freedom (D/F)

D/F = R-1 * C-1

Where, R = Row

C = Column

R = 6

C = 5

D/F = 6-1 * 5-1

D/F = 5 * 4

D/F=20

Using level of significance at 0.005, table value=40

In this situation, we accept the null hypothesis and reject the alternative hypothesis. Then conclude that, there is no significant relationship between embezzlement of public funds and health care services rendered by the Edo State Ministry of Health.

Table 5: Public Sector Fraud and Electricity Power Supply

Classes of the Nigerian Civil Service	Agreed	Strongly Agreed	Disagreed	Strongly Disagreed	Undecided	Total
Administrative	9	6	4	0	4	23
Executive	3	1	4	0	0	8
Professional	39	36	15	1	2	93
Clerical	4	3	3	1	1	12
Auxiliary	0	2	0	0	0	2
Others	7	7	1	1	1	17
Total	62	55	27	3	8	155

Source: Computed from Field Survey, 2024

CELL	O	E	(O-E)	$(o-E)^2$	$(o-E)^2/E$
A	9.00	9.20	-0.2	0.04	0.00
B	6.00	8.16	-2.16	4.67	0.57
C	4.00	4.01	-0.01	0.00	0.00
D	0.00	0.45	-0.45	0.20	0.44
E	4.00	1.19	2.81	7.90	6.64
F	3.00	3.20	-0.20	0.04	0.01
G	1.00	2.84	-1.84	3.39	1.19
H	4.00	1.39	2.61	6.81	4.90
I	0.00	0.15	-0.15	0.02	0.13
J	0.00	0.41	-0.41	0.17	0.41
K	39.00	37.20	1.80	3.24	0.09
L	36.00	33.00	3.00	9.00	0.27
M	15.00	16.20	-1.20	1.44	0.09
N	1.00	1.80	-0.80	0.64	0.36
O	2.00	4.80	-2.80	7.84	1.63
P	4.00	4.80	-0.80	0.64	0.13
Q	3.00	4.26	-1.26	1.59	0.37
R	3.00	2.09	0.91	0.83	0.40
S	1.00	0.23	0.77	0.59	2.57
T	1.00	0.62	0.38	0.14	0.23
U	0.00	0.80	-0.80	0.64	0.80

V	2.00	0.71	1.29	1.66	2.34
W	0.00	0.35	-0.35	0.12	-0.34
X	0.00	0.04	-0.04	0.00	0.00
Y	0.00	0.10	-0.10	0.01	0.10
Z	7.00	6.80	0.20	0.04	0.00
A_2	7.00	6.03	0.97	0.94	0.16
B_2	1.00	2.96	-1.96	3.84	1.30
C_2	1.00	0.33	0.67	0.45	1.36
D_2	1.00	0.88	0.12	0.01	0.01
					$\Sigma = 26.84$

Calculated value (χ_2) =26.84

Degree of Freedom (D/F)

D/F= R-1 * C-1

Where, R=Row

C=Column

R=6

C=5

D/F=6-1 * 5-1

D/F=5 * 4

D/F=20

Using level of significance at 0.005, table value=40

In this situation, we accept the null hypothesis and reject the alternative hypothesis. Then conclude that, there is no significant relationship between public sector fraud and electricity power supply to citizens of Edo State.

Table 6: Bribery and Corruption and Deplorable Roads

Classes of the Nigerian Civil Service	Agreed	Strongly Agreed	Disagreed	Strongly Disagreed	Undecided	Total
Administrative	8	9	3	0	3	23
Executive	4	2	1	1	0	8
Professional	33	42	12	0	6	93
Clerical	8	3	1	0	0	12
Auxiliary	0	1	0	1	0	2
Others	7	9	0	0	1	17
Total	60	66	17	2	10	155

Source: Computed from Field Survey, 2024

CELL	o	E	o-E	(o-E)²	(o-E)²/E
A	8.00	8.90	-0.9	0.81	0.09
B	9.00	9.79	-0.79	0.62	0.06
C	3.00	2.52	0.48	0.23	0.09
D	0.00	0.30	-0.30	0.09	0.30
E	3.00	1.48	1.52	2.31	1.56
F	4.00	3.10	0.90	0.81	0.26
G	2.00	3.41	-1.41	1.99	0.58
H	1.00	0.88	0.12	0.01	0.01
I	1.00	0.10	0.90	0.81	8.10
J	0.00	0.52	-0.52	0.27	0.52
K	33.00	36.00	-3.00	9.00	0.25
L	42.00	39.60	2.40	5.76	0.15
M	12.00	15.81	-3.81	14.51	0.92
N	0.00	1.20	-1.20	1.44	1.20
O	6.00	6.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
P	8.00	4.65	.3.35	11.22	2.41
Q	3.00	5.11	-2.11	4.45	0.87
R	1.00	1.32	-0.32	0.10	0.08
S	0.00	0.15	-0.15	0.02	0.13
T	0.00	0.77	-0.77	0.59	0.77
U	0.00	0.77	-0.77	0.59	0.77
V	1.00	0.85	0.15	0.02	0.02
W	0.00	0.22	-0.22	0.05	0.23
X	1.00	0.03	0.97	0.94	31.33
Y	0.00	0.13	-0.13	0.02	0.15
Z	7.00	6.58	0.42	0.18	0.03
A2	9.00	7.24	1.76	3.10	0.43
B2	0.00	1.86	-1.86	3.46	1.86
C2	0.00	0.22	-0.22	0.05	0.23
D2	1.00	1.10	-0.10	0.01	0.00
					Σ=53.40

Calculated value $(\chi 2)$ = 53.40

Degree of Freedom (D/F)

$D/F = R\text{-}1 {}^{*} C\text{-}1$

Where, R = Row

C = Column

R = 6

C = 5

$D/F = 6\text{-}1 {}^{*} 5\text{-}1$

$D/F = 5 {}^{*} 4$

D/F=20

Using level of significance at 0.005, table value=40

In this situation, we reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative hypothesis. Then conclude that, there is a significant relationship between bribery and corruption and the deplorable state of roads in Edo State.

Table 7: Nepotism and General Service Delivery

Classes of Nigerian Civil Service	Agreed	Strongly Agreed	Disagreed	Strongly Disagreed	Undecided	Total
Administrative	14	7	0	0	2	23
Executive	3	4	1	0	0	8
Professional	56	32	2	0	3	93
Clerical	7	2	2	0	1	12
Auxiliary	0	1	0	0	1	2
Others	10	4	3	0	0	17
Total	90	50	8	0	7	155

Source: Computed from Field Survey, 2024

CELL	O	E	O-E	$(o-E)^2$	$(o-E)^2/E$
A	14.00	13.35	0.65	0.42	0.03
B	7.00	7.42	-0.42	0.18	0.02
C	0.00	1.19	-1.19	1.42	1.19
D	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
E	2.00	1.04	0.96	0.92	0.88
F	3.00	4.65	-1.65	2.72	0.58
G	4.00	2.58	1.42	2.02	0.78
H	1.00	0.41	0.59	0.35	0.85
I	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
J	0.00	0.36	-0.36	0.13	0.36
K	56.00	54.00	2.00	4.00	0.07
L	32.00	30.00	2.00	4.00	0.13
M	2.00	4.80	-2.80	7.84	1.63
N	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
O	3.00	4.20	-1.20	1.44	0.34
P	7.00	6.97	-0.03	0.00	0.00
Q	2.00	3.87	-1.87	3.50	0.90
R	2.00	0.62	1.38	1.90	3.06
S	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
T	1.00	0.54	0.46	0.21	0.39
U	0.00	1.16	-1.16	1.35	1.16

V	1.00	0.65	0.35	0.12	0.18
W	0.00	0.10	-0.10	0.01	0.10
X	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Y	1.00	0.09	0.91	0.83	9.22
Z	10.00	9.87	0.13	0.02	0.00
A2	4.00	5.48	-1.48	2.19	0.40
B2	3.00	0.88	2.12	4.49	5.10
C2	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
D2	0.00	0.77	-0.77	0.59	0.77
					$\Sigma = 28.14$

Calculated value $(\chi 2) = 28.14$

Degree of Freedom (D/F)

$D/F = R\text{-}1 {}^* C\text{-}1$

Where, R=Row

C=Column

R=6

C=5

$D/F = 6\text{-}1 {}^* 5\text{-}1$

$D/F = 5 {}^* 4$

$D/F = 20$

Using level of significance at 0.005, table value=40

In this situation, we accept the null hypothesis and reject the alternative hypothesis. Then conclude that, there is no significant relationship between nepotism and general service delivery in the Edo State Civil Service.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The analysis of the first hypothesis revealed that there was no significant relationship between embezzlement of public funds and health care services rendered by the Edo State Ministry of Health. The study also revealed that there was no significant relationship between public sector fraud and electricity power supply to citizens of Edo State. The data demonstrated that there was no significant relationship between nepotism and general service delivery in the Edo State Civil Service. Contrary to the three analysed hypotheses, the fourth hypothesis confirmed that there was significant relationship between bribery and corruption and the deplorable state of roads in Edo State.

The implications of the above results were that apart from bribery and corruption, other factors could be responsible for the poor quality services experienced by citizens. In other words, bribery and corruption was a significant determinant in the provision of service delivery in Nigeria while embezzlement of public funds, public sector fraud and nepotism were not significant determinants in the provision of service delivery in Nigeria. Further, factors such as issues of funding, quality of the workforce/personnel, poor implementation of policies, poor incentives, poor working conditions and lack of political will among others could impact greatly on the quality of service delivery in Nigeria (Okekeocha, 2013; Gafar 2017).

CONCLUSION/ RECOMMENDATIONS

Notwithstanding, a bureaucracy with less bureau-pathology like entrenched corruption with merit based recruitment and promotion systems, adequate compensations, adequate resources, expertise and sanctions would ensure that quality services were delivered and gains of governance felt by the public. In the final analysis, the paper concludes that bribery and corruption had the most negative impact on the delivery of public service to citizens of Edo State.

The following recommendations were put forward to address bureaucratic corruption and improve the quality of service delivery in Edo State Civil Service and Nigerian institutions at large.

i)   Adequate remuneration, improved incentives and a good working environment for employees should be prioritised by the government. Thus, there should be consistent review of their salaries in line with current realities.

ii)   Value re-orientation driven by the government and its agencies like the National Orientation Agency (NOA) and other institutions such as educational establishments, religious establishments and families all have critical roles to play in fighting corruption

iii) There should be proper investigations and adequate sanctions for corrupt public/civil servants to act as a deterrent to others. Thus, agencies of government such as the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) and the Independent Corrupt Practices

Commission and Code of Conduct Bureau and Tribunal (ICPC), the Bureau of Public Procurement (BPP) and judiciary must be independent, well funded, compensated and supported by all and sundry.

iv) The mechanism of transparency and accountability in all institutions of government must be strengthened especially in the procurement process.

v) The need for the introduction of new and relevant laws, reforms of some existing laws and institutions (Englebert & Mbaku, 2001). Strong, effective and efficient institutions should be the goal of a responsible and competent government.

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