

# Epitome Of Administrative Corruption And Public Service Delivery In The Dunukofia Local Government (2015 – 2018)

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**Abstract:** *This study investigated administrative corruption and public service delivery with particular reference of Dunukofia local government council from 2015 to 2018. The specific objectives of the study includes to; determine the extent to which administrative corruption has affected effective public service delivery; ascertain the forms of administrative corruption; and assess the relationship between administrative corruption and public service delivery. Relevant conceptual, theoretical and empirical literatures were reviewed. The study was anchored on New Public Management (NPM) Theory. The study adopted descriptive survey design. The population for this study is 143 employees of Dunukofia local government council. Questionnaire was employed as the major instrument of data collection. Simple percentages and chi-square statistical technique were employed in analyzing the data. The study found administrative corruption has affected effective public service delivery in Dunukofia local government council to a great extent. The study also found that there are forms of administrative corruption ravaging in Dunukofia local government council. The study further found that there is a significant relationship between administrative corruption and public service delivery in Dunukofia local government council. The study recommends amongst others that the anti-corruption agencies must not only be made to function independently of government apparatus but must also have the capacity to institute and effectively execute sanctions, without recourse to the personality involved.*

**Keywords:** Accountability, Administrative Corruption, Professionalism, Public Service Delivery, Transparency

## Background to the Study

One of the greatest threats to economic and political development of any nation is administrative corruption. Administrative corruption has been a burning issue in Nigerian. Therefore, the challenges of corruption remain a major devastating issue facing Nigeria since the colonial period, although, this phenomena has become a cankerworm that has eaten deep into the fabrics of our system. Nevertheless, its solution rests in our hands and cannot be put off to another day. That is why many countries have put in place different mechanisms for checkmating the spate of administrative corruption. In Nigeria for example, the menace of corruption has been discussed at different levels, yet this ugly incidence keeps surviving with us at all facets of our endeavours (Usman, 2013).

In Nigeria, it surprises many as to why a country so endowed, both in human and mineral resources, is as well ridden and riddled with underdevelopment in perpetuity. Yet, in any analysis of why Nigeria's greatness is being delayed or slowed down, and why majority of her people have failed to see democracy as a means to development, corruption has remained a chief variable (Tunde, 2008). Administrative corruption is endemic and one of the many unresolved problems that have critically skewed and hobbled growth and development. It remains a long-time major political and economic challenge for Nigerians (Sachs, 2007). It is the cankerworm that has eaten deep into the fabrics of the country and had stunted growth in all sectors (EFCC, 2005). It ranges from petty corruption to political/bureaucratic corruption or systemic corruption (International Centre for Economic Growth, 1999).

According to Adamu (2007), administrative corruption exists in one form or the other in all societies. The major difference in the case of Nigeria is the extent of its pervasiveness and its implication for good governance, its value system and political culture in particular. To him (Adamu, 2007), an average Nigerians has accepted administrative corruption as inevitable and uncontrollable, believing that the society as a whole is corrupt and beyond remedy. Additionally, Nigerians believed that nothing meaningful will ever get done to correct or punish those perpetuating these crimes.

At the inception of the Fourth democratic era in 1999, corruption had reached such an alarming rate and had eaten deep into every facet of Nigerian society. It has indeed become an integral part of the administrative, political, socio-economic and cultural system as well as a way of life of the citizenry. The situation in the Nigeria Public Service was succinctly described thus: Government officials had become progressively indifferent to propriety of conduct and showed little commitment to promoting the general welfare of the people and the public goods. Government and all its agencies had become thoroughly corrupt and reckless.

Members of the public have had to bribe their way through in ministries and parastatals to get attention and government had to bribe another government agency to obtain the release of their statutory allocation of funds (Obasanjo, 1999). Despite the structures (reforms) put in place to combat the malaise or at least reduce it to its barest minimum, corruption still continues to be endemic, particularly in the Nigerian Public Service with its attendant implications for effective service delivery and welfare of the people. The effect of this is that majority of Nigerians are yet to enjoy the dividends of democracy and good governance.

Service delivery in the public sector is complex as it is not just about meeting expressed needs, but finding out the needs that are not expressed, setting priorities, resource allocation and publicly justifying and accounting for what has been done (Gowan, Seymour, Ibarreche & Lackey, 2001). In most developing countries, the public sector plays significant role in service provision as it controls much of the economic resources. In today's globalizing and competitive world, the delivery of quality service is strategic for success and survival. In view of this, public agencies have come under pressure and debate in recent years in terms of their efficiency and effectiveness in service delivery with respect to the needs and rights of the citizens. But the incidences of administrative corruption have reduced the ability of public sector to delivery services effectively.

The prevalence of these activities in various aspects of our lives has a tremendous adverse effect on the quality of life of this country, our living standards and national psyche. Administrative corruption brings a nation no good (Nwabuzor, 2005). The resources meant for water supply, roads, education, health and other basic and social services that are captured and stolen by a handful of Nigerians through corrupt acts stultify economic and social development hence creeping poverty all over the place (Keeper, 2010). Strategies to limit corruption have to be realistic and achievable and tailored to the needs of particular countries. In other words, policies intended to address corruption have to be consistently implemented over the long term. Administrative corruption is essentially a governance issue. Increased governmental accountability and transparency, enhanced public participation in decision making, strengthened public sector and civil society institutions and greater adherence to the rule of law will not only improve governance but will help counter corruption. Free and open competition is ultimately the greatest weapon against corrupt practices - whether political, economic or bureaucratic (Policy Forum - Document on Corruption and Development in Africa, 1997).

Obviously, in the case of developing country like Nigeria, where limited resources that are initially allocated for industries, hospitals, road construction, schools and other infrastructure are either out rightly siphoned, embezzled, misappropriated, or otherwise severely depleted through kickbacks and over invoicing by government officials. Sadly, Nigeria has consistently been classified as a leading icon among the most corrupt nations of the world based on the assessment of the annual Corruption Perception Index (CPI) of the Transparency International (TI). Hence, the pressing need for the government, policy makers, academicians and religious leaders to pay enthusiastic attention to the issue of corruption and its attendant effects in Nigeria especially as pertain to the economy. Once administrative corruption becomes deep-rooted and institutionalized in a society it penetrates into the value-system, it becomes an acceptable norm and culture of the people and subsequently goes into the realm of behaviour, its harmful effects multiply. It induces cynicism, because people begin to regard it as the norm. It undermines social value system because people find it easier and more lucrative and attractive to engage in corruption than to seek legitimate employment and genuine productive efforts. It corrodes governmental legitimacy because it hampers the effective delivery of public goods and services.

The main objective of the public sector is to provide and serve as catalyst for affordable and quality service delivery to the citizens. Basic needs of life such as food, shelter, education, power and energy, health and water supply, but above all, peace and security are needed to live a decent and productive life. This cannot be possible without the provision/delivery of services that are capable of ensuring and enhancing human security and welfare by government. But, the manifestation of service delivery in Nigerian public sector is quite below average. This is so, because the culture of effective and efficient public service delivery has not been fully entrenched as expected since Nigeria gained her independence in 1960, as government works is widely regarded as no man's work.

### **Objectives of the Study**

The main objective of the study is to examine administrative corruption and public service delivery in Dunukofia local government council. The specific objectives include:

1. To determine the extent to which administrative corruption has affected effective public service delivery in Dunukofia local government council.
2. To ascertain the forms of administrative corruption ravaging in Dunukofia local government council.

3. To assess the relationship between administrative corruption and public service delivery in Dunukofia local government council.

### **Conceptual Explanation**

#### **Administrative Corruption**

Like most concepts in the social science, administrative corruption does not have a single-all agreeable definition. Igwe (2010) had argued that administrative corruption is universally decried and constitutes a phenomenon in itself and invariably the outcome of a conglomeration of discrete failure such as failure of institutional control over bureaucrats or a failure of the legal system that checkmates the behaviour of those who perpetrate the crime; corruption is a system of deep institutional weakness that leads to inefficient economic policies. Administrative corruption involves the injection of additional but improper transactions aimed at changing the moral course of events and altering judgments and positions of trust. It consists in the doer's and receiver's use of informal, extra legal or illegal act to facilitate matters.

Andrig and Fjelstad (2001) view administrative corruption as a “complex and multifaceted phenomenon with multiple causes and effects, as it takes on various forms and contexts”. Ofoeze (2004) sees administrative corruption as referring to “any action or inaction of any person, or group (public) deliberately perpetrated to secure advantages for oneself, a relation, associate or group(s) in a manner that detract from the accepted regulations, morals, and/or ethical standard or code and hence constituting a travesty of justice, equity and fair play”. Administrative corruption is an act which deviates from the formal rules of conduct governing the actions of someone in a position of authority because of private motives such as wealth, power or status (Khan, 1996). Black and Camer (2000) affirm administrative corruption as an official person who unlawfully or wrongfully uses his station or character to procure some benefit for himself or for another person, contrary to duty and rights of others. The Act went further to posit that corruption covers any illegal use of power by any person(s) for personal or arbitrary purposes.

Pauw, Woods, Van der Linde, Fourie & Visser (2009) defined administrative corruption as the abuse of position for personal gain or for the benefit of an individual or a group to whom one owes allegiance. They view administrative corruption as a two way process that involve members of both the public and the private sector, who engage in illegitimate and unethical actions that diminish the country's economic prospects and degrade social and political institutions. To this end, the term administrative corruption refers to “a diversion from the set or accepted norms in the course of performance of one's public duties, for selfish personal gain” (Bitarabeh, 2003). De Graaf (2007) defines administrative corruption as the sale by government officials of government property for personal gain. For example, government officials often collect bribes for providing permits and licenses, for giving passage through customs, or for prohibiting the entry of competitors. In these cases they charge personally for goods that the state officially owns. A spectrum of corrupt behaviour exists, from petty corruption, which may include bribes or illicit payments for routine bureaucratic processes, to grand corruption, which involves leaders, politicians, and senior officials diverting public resources on a large scale to serve their private interests. Both petty and grand corruption damage public trust and accountability, and distort the allocation of public resources, thus reducing economic growth and increasing poverty (Australian Agency for International Development (AusAid, 2007).

Azelama (2012) defines corruption as any action or omission enacted by a member of an organization, which is against the rules, regulations, norms, and ethics of the organization, and the purpose is to meet the selfish end of the member at the detriment of the organization. The World Bank (World Bank Independent Evaluation Group, 2006) defines administrative corruption as “the abuse of office for private gains.” Public office is abused for private gain when an official accepts, solicits, or extorts a bribe. Agbu (2003) observes that public office can be abused for selfish gain even if bribery does not take place. This implies that political corruption could be defined in the form of patronage, election rigging, and voters register manipulation, favoritism in the award of contract, procurement scam, tribalism and nepotism in recruitment and promotion, unfair punishment/sanctions for public officials.

Ogbuke and Enojo (2007) see “administrative corruption as a dishonest illegal behaviour”, especially of people in authority or the act of making somebody change from moral to immoral standards of behaviour.” This view adds an ethical /behavioural dimension to this discourse, and it suggests that unless sound moral principles anchored on enduring cultural values and practices are imbibed, the anti-graft campaign could amount to chasing shadows, especially in a country like Nigeria. These authors asserted unequivocally that “administrative corruption is often controlled by hidden networks and represents the sum of various levels and types of irregular behaviour including abuse of power, conflict of interest, extortion, tribalism, nepotism or fraud”. Bello-Imam cited in Onwuka, Okoh and Eme (2009) see administrative corruption as the abuse of public office through the instrumentality of private agents, who actively offer bribes to circumvent public policies and process for competitive advantage and profit. Beyond bribery, public office can also be abused for personal benefit through patronage and nepotism, for example the theft of state assets or the diversion of state revenues.

The World Bank (1997) defines administrative corruption as the abuse of public office for private gains. Public office is abused through rent seeking activities for private gain when an official accepts, solicits, or extorts a bribe. Public office is also abused

when private agents actively offer bribes to circumvent public policies and processes for competitive advantage and profit. Public office can also be abused for personal benefits even if no bribery occurs, through patronage and nepotism, the theft of state assets or the diversion of state resources. A public official is corrupt if he accepts money for doing something that he is under duty to do or that he is under duty not to do. Administrative corruption is a betrayal of trust resulting directly or indirectly from the subordination of public goals to those of the individual. Thus a person who engages in nepotism has committed an act of corruption by putting his family interests over those of the larger society (Gire, 2009).

In an elaborate analysis, Alatas (2010) divides corruption into seven distinct types: autogenic, defensive, extortive, investive, nepotistic, supportive, and transactive. Autogenic corruption is self-generating and typically involves only the perpetrator. A good example would be what happens in cases of insider trading. A person learns of some vital information that may influence stocks in a company and either quickly buys or gets rid of large amounts of stocks before the consequences arising from this information come to pass. Defensive corruption involves situations where a person needing a critical service is compelled to bribe in order to prevent unpleasant consequences being inflicted on his interests. For instance, a person who wants to travel abroad within a certain time frame needs a passport in order to undertake the journey but is made to pay bribes or forfeit the trip. This personal corruption is in self-defense. Extortive corruption is the behavior of a person demanding personal compensation in exchange for services. Investive corruption entails the offer of goods or services without a direct link to any particular favour at the present, but in anticipation of future situations when the favour may be required. Nepotistic corruption refers to the preferential treatment of, or unjustified appointment of friends or relations to public office, in violation of the accepted guidelines. The supportive type usually does not involve money or immediate gains, but involves actions taken to protect or strengthen the existing corruption. For example, a corrupt regime or official may try to prevent the election or appointment of an honest person or government for fear that the individual or the regime might be probed by the successor. Finally, transactive corruption refers to situations where the two parties are mutual and willing participants in the corrupt practice to the advantage of both parties. For example, a corrupt business person may willingly bribe a corrupt government official in order to win a tender for a certain contract.

The focus of this study is on the extortive, nepotistic, and transactive corruption, not only because they appear to be at the core of the administrative corruption phenomenon, but also because the other forms appear to be the offshoot of these three fundamental types. There would be no defensive corruption in the absence of the extortive type. Administrative corruption is like cancer, retarding economic development. According to Eigen (2001) administrative corruption is seen as a "daunting obstacle to sustainable development", a constraint on education, health care and poverty alleviation, and a great impediment to the Millennium Development Goal of reducing by half the number of people living in extreme poverty.

### **Service Delivery**

Before we go into what service delivery is all about, let conceptualize service. American Society for Marketing has defined service as the activities or benefits offered for sale or offered due to its association with specific commodity (Azzam, 2008). Kotler and Armstrong (2014) defined service as any activity or benefit provided by one party to another party which is basically intangible and does not lead to any ownership. Lovelock (2014) defined service as perceived benefit by senses, either alone, or associated with something physical tangible and is interchangeable nor entail ownership, and mostly intangible. Zeithmanl and Bitner (2010) argues that services are acts, operations, and achievements or actions, therefore, services include all economic activities that their outputs are not physical products. A service is a commodity with no physical existence, usually created and consumed at the same time. Gronroos (2001) described a service as a process resulting in an outcome in a partly simultaneous production and consumption process. This definition points to the fact that service provision and consumption are simultaneous activities. Finn and Kayande (2016) conceptualize service as an activity or a series of activities of more or less intangible nature that normally, but not necessarily, takes place in interactions between the customer and service employees and/or systems of service providers, which are provided as solutions to customer problems

Service delivery implies tangible and intangible goods and services provided by the government in order to improve the well being of the citizenry (Kayode, Adagba & Anyio, 2013). Kayode et al (2013) also conceptualized Service Delivery as the relationship between policy makers, service providers and poor people. According to them, it encompasses services and their supporting systems that are typically regarded as a state responsibility. These include social services (primary education and basic health services), infrastructure (water, sanitation, roads and bridges). Bello-Imam & Roberts (2011) quoted in Agba, Ogwu and Chukwurah (2013) agree with this understanding of Service Delivery when they noted that local service delivery is the provision of services intended to alleviate human suffering and by extension, enhance the quality of life of the citizens.

Service delivery can be taken to be an outcome of performance depending on the context in which it is used (Ayeni, 2012). Samuel (2012) maintained that service can be expressed in terms of capacity to deliver desired services and from which customers get satisfaction. A service delivery gap is that gap between the established delivery standards and the actual service delivered (Crosby, 2010). It is an inconsistency between service design/quality specifications and the actual service quality by the service delivery

system. Effective engagement between citizens, service providers and elected representatives is essential to democratic service delivery.

In the relationship between government institutions and the citizens, service delivery is very central, because it could either boost or marred the confidence of the citizens in the government and its institutions. The recognition that citizens symbolized customers to their government over the past ten years has continued to influence the way governments think and act in relation to its citizens. This realization portends a good sign of responsiveness on the part of government, particularly in developed democracies. The realization is based on the assumption that every customer have right to request quality services that suit their timely needs at modest cost from their service providers and all packaged in friendly manner. This is applicable to the scenarios between citizens and the government: in this regard government is seen as service provider key public services (Jean, 2007).

It is instructive to note that, the existence of any government is presumed on its ability to fulfill the basic necessity of lives of its citizens. Put differently, the existence of government is justifiable on the basis that it supplies crucial services such as security of lives and properties, maintaining orderliness, providing social amenities and infrastructure, and offer legal framework for conflicts prevention and resolution and acceptable system of justice. The conventional wisdom deduced here is that, the government fulfillment of its own part of social contract agreement with its citizen will automatically confer legitimacy on government, its activities and strengthen its institutions (Gafar, 2017).

#### **The Extent Administrative Corruption Affect Public Service Delivery in Dunukofia local government council**

Administrative corruption and inefficiency are characteristics of service delivery in Nigeria, although private companies seem to perform more efficiently and less corruptly than public enterprises (Amadi, 2014). Corruption has become so blatant and widespread that it appears as if it has been legalized in Nigeria (Imohe, 2015). A number of factors have been identified as instrumental to enthrone corrupt practices in Nigeria. These include, briefly, the nature of Nigeria's political economy, the weak institutions of government, and a dysfunctional legal system. Absence of clear rules and codes of ethics leads to abuse of discretionary power make most Nigerian vulnerable to corrupt practices. The country also has a culture of affluent and ostentatious living that expects much from "big men" extended family pressures Maduagwe (1996), village/ethnic loyalties, and competitive ethnicity. The country is also one of the very few countries in the world where a man's source of wealth is of no concern to his neighbours, the public or the government. Once a man is able to dole out money, the churches, the Mosques pray for him, he collects chieftaincy titles and hobnobs with those who govern. Also, low civil service salaries and poor working conditions, with few incentives and rewards for efficient and effective performance, are strong incentives for corruption in Nigeria. Other factors are: less effective government works with slow budget procedures, lack of transparency, inadequate strategic vision and weak monitoring mechanisms make Nigeria a fertile the environment for corrupt practice.

The overall culture of governance has also played an important role. Most of Nigeria leaders and top bureaucrats are setting bad examples of self-enrichment or ambiguity over public ethics thereby promoting the lower level officials and members of the public into corrupt practices, (I.M.F, 2005). Also, informal rules are found to supercede formal ones, thereby making stringent legal principles and procedures to loose their authority. Hence, bribery and corruption are taken by many Nigerians as norm even in the face of anti-corruption crusades intended to support clean governance.

Agboola (2009) opines that the causes of administrative corruption in Nigeria are multi-faceted and diverse, these includes, low salary of public officials, job insecurity, problem of extended family, lack of transparency and accountable political process, lack of effective incentive mechanism for public officials, lack of effective reporting system cultural aspects and lack of independent and effective media. Nigeria's reward system is perhaps the poorest in the world. The salary paid to public officials is so low that the basic needs of officials cannot be met. The influence of extended family system and pressure to meet family obligations are more in Nigeria than in any other country. This however coupled with the cost of transportation, housing, feeding and education for the children makes it difficult for a public official to make a living thereby seeking corrupt means to meet his needs.

Anifowose (2012) opines that another situation favourable to administrative corruption is when bribes serve as incentive payments for bureaucrats to do their jobs well because of low pay and inadequate monitoring. Queue managers/administrators and documentation officers for instance could accept pay-offs to work quickly and to favour those who value their time highly. The situation could arise when private individuals and firms seek to lower costs of taxes, duties and regulations imposed on them by government, especially where such payments are considered high. Individuals and firms may pay for relief from these costs for example, by colluding with tax collectors and customs officials to lower the sums collected. Contract awards and concessions are further incentives to corrupt practices.

Bello-Imam and Obadan (2014) sees sociological factors as the causes of administrative corruption and they explained further that multi-ethnic societies are more likely to be corrupt as they tend to favour non-quantifiable criteria like relations in determining "who gets what, when and how" especially where family ties are very strong. These days, social recognition and rewards are no



more based on individual's positive contribution towards the development of his community. A public official who leaves the service at retirement without "making it" while in government is adjudged a failure by his immediate community. Your community wants you to succeed without bothering how you do it. In fact, they have their standards of measuring success. All these are as a result of the neglect of those ethical principles which regulated social rewards and sanctions in the distant past. The contemporary experience of Nigerians in this connection gives added credence to this point. Also prominent in the Nigerian case are some unfortunate developments like the notion of "big manism" who is above the law, with numerous clients, retainers and hangers on, the misplaced perception that government property is no one's property and hence it could be plundered by the "lucky few" and the wrong perception of the inexhaustible "national cake" which everyone strives to gain access to by all means.

Ijewereme (2013) agrees that regardless of causes of administrative corruption, corruption results in the leakage of resources needed for national development, it leads to wasteful government and stagnant growth and development. As an informal supplementary system of taxation, it increases costs and deters growth in both the private and public sectors. Widespread corruption in governance makes it impossible for the leadership to command respect for its plans and judgement and to enlist the support of the people for development programmes, or to ask the people to commit themselves to efforts and sacrifices necessary for development. Corruption gives a bad image to Nigeria and discourages genuine foreign investors from country in to do business in the country. The long-term effect is the continued dependency status of Nigerian economy and attendant social consequences like unemployment and crime. Corruption distorts the role of government in the polity as well as the operation of services and other economics activities.

### **The Major Forms of Administrative Corruption Ravaging in Dunukofia Local Government Council**

Understanding the dimensions of administrative corruption entails also understanding what corruption is. Administrative corruption is often described interchangeably with maladministration, incapacity and inefficiency, especially because public resources are being used. Although administrative corruption is perceived differently from one territory and geographical location to another, the following behaviors are regarded as forms of corruption in Nigeria: acceptance of gratification; succumbing to inducement and undue influence; embezzlement; conflict of interests, for example, the award of contracts by public office holders to cronies, family members, and personally held companies; bribery; fraud; nepotism and tribalism in recruitment/appointment, promotion; kickback on contract; rigging of elections; misappropriation and conversion of public funds for personal gains; procurement scam; leaking tender information to friends and relations; diversion and misappropriation of funds through manipulation or falsification of financial records; payment for favorable judicial decisions, and so on (Azelama, 2002; Ijewereme, 2013; Waziri, 2010).

**Bureaucratic Corruption:** Bureaucratic corruption can be manifested in a variety of ways. Bribery is the payment (in money or kind) that is taken or given in a transaction (Dike, 2008). In the public sector, bribery is prevalent in the execution of government services such as, lower taxes, licenses, and legal outcomes. Bribes can influence the government's choice in contracting, in the allocation of government benefits, such as subsidies to private companies or individuals and access to pensions or unemployment insurance. Bribes can vary in size, type, and how much the public official will benefit from such a transaction (Moseley, 1999). Another type of bureaucratic corruption is known as grand corruption which involves international business transactions, and bureaucrats and politicians are often accomplices to such a deal. Petty corruption is when individuals seek a license or a service from the government. Even though, this might seem less influential on the country, petty corruption can negatively impact Nigeria because a pooled group of individuals can retain bribes in an elaborate sharing arrangement. This can limit the resources that are available to all citizens in the country. Most of the time, people involved in grand corruption are the ones that make media headlines, although when analyzed, the total cost of petty corruption based on economical and political distortions is of even greater cost than that of grand corruption (Moseley, 1999).

Furthermore, public sector fraud is also another type of bureaucratic corruption where individuals seek to take advantage of government grants and services for their personal gain, this type of fraud involves stealing public funds, which affects all taxpayers. Public officials who partake in such schemes exploit public funds and hinder the delivery of appropriate goods and services to citizens (Moseley 1999). Also, bureaucratic embezzlement is when public officials steal resources from the public institution where they are employed. In Nigeria, the embezzlement of public funds is one of the most common ways in which individuals accumulate national wealth which can be attributed to the lack of strict regulatory systems in the country. Likewise, public sector extortion is a type of bureaucratic corruption that deals with the extraction of public funds and other resources by coercion, violence or the use of force, the police and custom officials usually use this means to collect money from civilians

**Abuse of Power:** This involves a public servant using his/her vested authority to improperly benefit another public servant, the person or entity (or using the vested authority to improperly discriminate against another public servant, a person or entity).

Example: During a tender process but before the actual selection of a successful contractor, the head of department expresses his/her wish to see the contract awarded to a specific person (Ajayi, 2008).

**Conflict of Interest:** This involves a public servant acting or failing to act on a matter where the public servant has an interest or another person or entity that stands in a relationship with the public servant has an interest. Example: A public servant considers tenders for a contract and awards the tender to a company of which his/her partner is a director (Lawal & Tobi, 2006).

**Insider Trading/Abuse of Privileged Information:** This involves the use of privileged information and knowledge that a public servant possesses as a result of his/her office to provide an unfair advantage to another person; or entity to obtain a benefit, or to accrue a benefit himself/herself. Example: A local government official has, as a result of his/her particular office, knowledge of residential areas that are to be rezoned as business areas. He/She informs friends and family to acquire the residential properties with a view to selling these as business properties at a premium (Anazodo, Okoye, & Chukwuemeka, 2012).

**Budgeting Corruption:** This is a form of corruption where management of a public organization in connivance with governing council or board minister/commissioner bribes some members of the legislature to approve inflated estimate for the institution during budgeting. In a situation where the budget is already approved, the management is expected to give tips or gratifications to the government functionaries whose duty it is to release money to the institutions (Azelama, 2005).

**Procurement Scam:** This refers to over invoicing of government contracts or corruption related to purchases. That is, the purchase price of an item is inflated so that the difference between the inflated price and actual price is shared between the person who does the purchasing and the sellers or it is taken by the purchaser alone with the seller conniving. (Azelama, 2002)

**Ghost-Workers Phenomenon:** This is a practice where the management of a public organization deliberately inflates the payroll by including fictitious names to get more subventions for salary. The excess is siphoned by the members of management in connivance with some members of governing councils or boards (Azelama, 2005).

**Favouritism:** This involves the provision of services or resources according to personal affiliations (for example ethnic, religious, party political affiliations, etc.) of a public servant. Example: A regional manager in a particular area ensures that only persons from the same tribe are successful in tenders for the supply of foods in the manager's geographic area of responsibility.

**Nepotism:** This involves a public servant ensuring that family members are appointed to public service positions or that family members receive contracts from State resources. This manifestation is similar to a conflict of interests and favouritism. Example: A head of department appoints his/her sister's child to a position even when more suitable candidates have applied for the position.

The above illustration of the manifestations of corruption is by no means complete or exhaustive. Corruption appears in permutations and in degrees of intensity. Degrees of intensity vary from the occasional acceptance of bribes to systemic corruption where bribery is the accepted way of "doing business" and large-scale looting of a country's resources takes place. Thus corruption also manifests as personal and political corruption. Corruption increases if left unattended to and once this has culminated in systemic corruption it further creates a bigger challenge to address.

### **Relationship between Administrative Corruption and Service Delivery**

Administrative corruption is no doubt a global phenomenon that has threatened and still continues to threaten the developmental efforts in many nations. In Nigeria, eradicating administrative corruption has been a major concern of successive government in the country because of its negative impact on good governance and effective service delivery. According to Adamu (2007), corruption exists in one form or the other in all societies. The major difference in the case of Nigeria is the extent of its pervasiveness and its implication for good governance, its value system and political culture in particular. To him (Adamu, 2007), an average Nigerian has accepted corruption as inevitable and uncontrollable, believing that the society as a whole is corrupt and beyond remedy. Additionally, Nigerians believed that nothing meaningful will ever get done to correct or punish those perpetuating these crimes.

At the inception of the Fourth democratic era in 1999, administrative corruption had reached such an alarming rate and had eaten deep into every facet of Nigerian society. It has indeed become an integral part of the administrative, political, socio-economic and cultural system as well as a way of life of the citizenry. The situation in the Nigeria Public Service was succinctly described thus: Government officials had become progressively indifferent to propriety of conduct and showed little commitment to promoting the general welfare of the people and the public goods. Government and all its agencies had become thoroughly corrupt and reckless. Members of the public have had to bribe their way through in ministries and parastatals to get attention and government had to bribe another government agency to obtain the release of their statutory allocation of funds (Obasanjo, 1999).

Government exists primarily to provide services that will make life worth living. It is the general agreement of most scholars and professionals that local governments in Nigeria have not justified the reasons for their creation through the delivery of cutting edge services to the rural people. The public service constitutes the major service provider in Nigeria. It is the machinery charged with the responsibility of implementing government policies and programmes geared towards providing essential services for the people. The demands of globalisation, MDGs among other international agenda has placed the Public Service in a more pressing pressure to provide/render these services more effectively and efficiently. However, corruption in Nigeria has continued to be a major impediment hindering the Public Service ability to provide these services. Corruption in Nigeria is more endemic in the Nigerian Public Service with its attendant implication for effective service delivery as substantiated by Obasanjo (1999) as quoted in Adegoroye (2016).

The Nigeria State is characterized by prebendalism. This is a situation where public office is held first, for the interest of the officer and second, for the interest of the public. This situation has greatly encouraged corrupt practices at every government agency in Nigeria. Corruption means absence of accountability, transparency and civic engagement. It means selfish service; an attitude in public affair (Arowolo, 2008). Adeyemi (2012) also opined that, hard earned and limited resources accrued to and raised by government ministries are always mismanaged. Priorities are misplaced; projects are done not according to or as demanded by the people but regrettable in tune with the selfish end and aggrandizement of political leadership in collaboration with senior bureaucrats at government ministries. Generally wide-scale embezzlement by officials of the grassroots has made the need development of grassroots a tall dream and has rendered them financially incapable to discharge their constitutionally assigned responsibility. Oviasuyi, et al (2010) observed that "as in all levels of government in Nigeria, corruption is predominately widespread, undiluted and unambiguous in the local government". It is a fact that in government ministries, corruption has become all pervading, unabashed, uncontrolled and persistent. This perhaps explains the ineffectiveness in government ministries in Nigeria. The system has virtually become superfluous and redundant as (Oviasuyi et al, 2010) emphasized that some of the areas where corruption thrives in government agencies include Inflation of prices of bought items, over estimation of cost of projects; ghost workers syndrome; award of contracts and subsequent abandonment; and outright payment of huge sums of money to political godfathers.

There is no doubt that the high rate of corruption in the Public Service has great implication for effective service delivery. This is because the Public Service is the major implementer of government policies and programmes geared towards providing essential services that impact on the well-being of the general citizenry. It is however unfortunate that the citizens that are suppose to enjoy the benefits of these services are rather subjected to all forms of ridicule and frustration. For example, Public officials collect bribes from the citizens before accessing some of the services. They are equally, ridiculed and frustrated should they refuse to give the bribes. Beside the skeletal nature of the services provided, they are also most times denied even services they pay for (Dike, 2010).

### **Theory**

This research work is anchored on New Public Management (NPM) Theory. New Public Management (NPM) is an approach to running public service organizations that is used in government and public service institutions and agencies, at both sub-national and national levels. The term was first introduced by academics in the UK and Australia to describe approaches that were developed during the 1980s as part of an effort to make the public service more "businesslike" and to improve its efficiency by using private sector management models. NPM theory focused on the centrality of citizens who were the recipient of the services or customers to the public sector.

NPM reformers experimented with using decentralized service delivery models, to give local agencies more freedom in how they delivered programs or services. Key themes in NPM were "...financial control, value for money, increasing efficiency..., identifying and setting targets and continuance monitoring of performance, handing over.. power to the senior management" executives. Performance was assessed with audits, benchmarks and performance evaluations. Some NPM reforms used private sector companies to deliver what were formerly public services.

The New Public Management theory which calls for adoption of alternative service delivery is the new focus recommended in public service delivery. It is accepted world-wide that the public sector also has consumers who need to be cared for and satisfied, hence the call for adoption of alternative service delivery. Alternative service delivery will make the public sector pursue the following:

1. Satisfaction of needs and wants more efficiency, effectively, economically and timely;
2. Improvement of quality of services delivered to the public;
3. Adherence of public focus principles;
4. Reduction of inflexibility, rigidity and other forms of bureaupathology in service delivery;
5. Involvement of public in service delivery system design and packaging;



6. Focus on consumer relationship management.

Alternative service delivery requires the adoption of private sector initiatives and practices. Public Managers will have no choice but to embrace entrepreneurship, managerialism and quasi-market mechanisms. The adoption of alternative service delivery calls for new bureaucratic values among public managers and their subordinates. These values are transparency, accountability, responsibility, stewardship, fairness, equity, creativity, innovation, teamwork, loyalty and decentralization which provide customer care and satisfaction. This means that public servants should avoid conflict of interest, selfishness, political partisanship and moonlighting. They should place the public and the government at the top of their work rather than the desire to enrich themselves at the expense of their principal stakeholders.

### Findings

The findings of the study are summarized below:

1. Administrative corruption has affected effective public service delivery in Dunukofia local government council to a great extent.
2. There are forms of administrative corruption ravaging in Dunukofia local government council.
3. There is a significant relationship between administrative corruption and public service delivery in Dunukofia local government council.

### Conclusion

This study covered administrative corruption and public service delivery with particular reference to Dunukofia local government council from 2015 to 2018. The study found that Administrative corruption has affected effective service delivery in Dunukofia local government council to a great extent. The study also found that there are forms of administrative corruption ravaging in Dunukofia local government council. Furthermore, the study found that there is a significant relationship between administrative corruption and public service delivery in Dunukofia local government council.

Therefore, the leaders have a lot of role to play by shunning administrative corruption so that the junior officers too can avoid this. The on-going reform in the public sectors should be handled with seriousness and that the anti-graft agencies should not be used as an instrument by the ruling party against opposition or perceived enemies. Rather, the Commission should be empowered to carry out its constitutional duties without any interference from the government. The focus and the best way to tackle corruption is to prevent it from happening. Therefore, all the public loots should be thoroughly investigated and the offenders, once found guilty should be prosecuted and the loots taken back on the face value of what has been stolen.

Based on the findings of the study, it is concluded that administrative corruption in the Nigerian public service has actually affected service delivery negatively. This incidence of corruption is manifested in all facets of the public sector resulting in poor service delivery. In order to prevent corruption from happening at all, Nigerian should emphasis transparency, integrity, and accountability in all their private and public transaction.

### Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following are suggested:

1. The public institutions must be characterized by meritocracy and professionalism, a high morale cum reform-minded public servants, with a sense of patriotism and commitment to fighting corruption, as well as ensuring transparent management and instituting more effective corruption-reporting mechanism.
2. The anti-corruption agencies must not only be made to function independently of government apparatus but must also have the capacity to institute and effectively execute sanctions, without recourse to the personality involved.
3. There should be a reform on criminal procedure and evident rules to remove archaic laws and incorporate electronic evidences. Special court should be established and designated for corruption cases, and judges working on high-profile corruption cases should be provided with adequate security and financial incentive.

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