

**THE IMPACT OF CORRUPTION ON PUBLIC SERVICE DELIVERY IN  
NIGERIA: A FOCUS ON EDO STATE (2015 – 2024)**

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**UNIVERSITY OF BENIN**

**BENIN CITY**

**NOVEMBER, 2025**

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**A PROJECT SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC  
ADMINISTRATION, FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES, UNIVERSITY OF  
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OF BACHELOR OF SCIENCE (B.Sc) DEGREE PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION**

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## CERTIFICATION

This is to certify that this research titled “**THE IMPACT OF CORRUPTION ON PUBLIC SERVICE DELIVERY IN EDO STATE**” was carried out by **VINCENT AGBEBAKU EYAROYI** and presented to the Department of Public Administration, Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Benin, Benin City; in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of Bachelor of Science (B.Sc.) in Public Administration. It was conducted under suitable conditions, was carefully supervised and subsequently approved as having met the requirements for the award of Bachelor of Science degree in Public Administration.

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**MR JONATHAN EHIGIATOR OSIFO**  
**(Project Supervisor)**

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**Date**

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**PROF .A.I. MUSTAPHA**  
**(Head of Department)**

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**Date**

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## ABSTRACT

*This study examined the impact of corruption on public service delivery in Edo State, Nigeria, with a view to understanding how corrupt practices influence the efficiency, accessibility, and quality of public services. Using a mixed - method research design, primary data were collected through structured questionnaires and key informant interviews with public officials, service users, and community stakeholders, while secondary data were sourced from government reports, academic publications, and anti - corruption agency records. The study's findings reveal that corruption manifests in various forms, including bribery, embezzlement, nepotism, and bureaucratic delays, which collectively reduce service quality, distort resource allocation, and weaken institutional capacity. Responses indicated that corruption discourages citizen participation, erodes trust in governance, and perpetuates poverty and inequality. The research recommends strengthening anti - corruption frameworks, promoting transparency and accountability mechanisms, enhancing public sector reforms, and encouraging citizen oversight. Ultimately, the study emphasize that tackling corruption is essential to improving public service delivery and achieving sustainable socio - economic development in Edo State and Nigeria at large.*

# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background to the study

Corruption has historically been a significant hindrance to national progress, particularly in emerging nations like Nigeria. It is broadly described as the exploitation of public office for personal gain, but in practice it takes various forms, including bribery, nepotism, embezzlement, procurement fraud, and political patronage, all of which are firmly embedded in Nigeria's governance culture. Since the country's independence in 1960, successive governments have professed their intention to combat corruption, yet the problem endures, with catastrophic implications for economic growth, democratic consolidation, and, most importantly, public service delivery.

Public services are the means by which governments react to the demands of their populations.

Healthcare, education, water supply, energy, security, and sanitation are just a few of the services offered. Effective public service delivery is critical to societal wellbeing and country growth. However, in Nigeria, the government's ability to offer essential services efficiently, fairly, and transparently has been greatly hampered by widespread corruption at all levels of government.

Despite the existence of anti-corruption institutions such as the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), the Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission (ICPC), and the Code of Conduct Bureau (CCB), the level of corruption in Nigeria remains high. Transparency International consistently ranks Nigeria low on the Corruption Perceptions Index, reflecting a global recognition of the country's struggles in governance and integrity. The persistence of corruption and its impact on public service delivery calls for a deeper investigation into its root causes, mechanisms, and consequences.

This study aims to investigate how corruption directly and indirectly impacts the delivery of public services in Nigeria, as well as to propose realistic options for reforming the public sector and restoring public trust in government institutions.

## **1.2 Statement of problem**

Nigeria has made enormous expenditures in public sector reform in recent decades, but public services continue to be inefficient, inadequate, and, in many circumstances, inaccessible. Hospitals are understaffed and underfunded, public schools are in disrepair, and many rural villages continue to lack basic utilities like drinkable water, electricity, and excellent roads. While underfunding is frequently mentioned, multiple audit reports and investigations show that

misappropriation, fraud, and bribery are significant factors to service delivery failures.

Corruption in Nigeria's public sector has a significant impact on not only financial integrity, but also institutional effectiveness and policy implementation. Many public officials engage in corrupt behavior with minimal fear of repercussions, frequently because enforcement institutions are compromised or politically influenced. Furthermore, informal payment systems and favoritism in public services undermine merit-based access and alienate the most vulnerable communities.

It is these problems this study is out to discuss with a view to addressing them.

### **1.3 Research Questions**

1. How has corruption affected the delivery of public services in Edo State between 2015 and 2024?
2. In what ways has corruption influenced key sectors of public service delivery in Edo State, such as health, education, and infrastructure?
3. What anti-corruption measures have been implemented in Edo State between 2015 and 2024, and how effective have they been in improving public service delivery?

4. What reform options can be recommended to strengthen anti-corruption efforts and enhance public service delivery in Edo State?

### **1.4 Research Objectives**

This study aims to answer these issues by investigating how corruption affects public service delivery, reviewing current anti-corruption efforts, and recommending successful reform options.

### **1.5 Scope of the Study**

This study focuses on Nigeria's public service sector and investigates how corruption has impacted service delivery from 2015 to 2024, spanning a decade of reform attempts and institutional changes. The study concentrated on crucial sectors such as healthcare, education, and infrastructure, which are critical to human growth but are frequently hampered by corruption. Geographically, the study will focus on certain states and federal institutions to ensure a fair representation of the impact across the country. It also assesses the roles and performance of anti-corruption organizations such as the EFCC, ICPC, and the Code of Conduct Bureau

### **1.6 Significance of the study**

This study is important for a variety of reasons. First, it contributes to the academic literature on Nigerian governance, corruption, and public administration.

Second, it provides actual evidence on the relationship between corruption and service delivery, which helps to explain policy failures and institutional deficiencies.

For policymakers and government agencies, the findings of this study will provide meaningful insights on how to improve openness, strengthen accountability systems, and improve the performance of public services. For civil society organizations and advocacy groups, the report provides a foundation for engaging government institutions and organizing citizen participation in governance reforms.

Furthermore, the report would be useful for development partners and international donors looking to support institutional reforms and good governance in Nigeria. Most significantly, the research will provide citizens with information that they can utilize to demand improved governance and accountability from public leaders

### **1.7 Definition of Terms**

**Corruption:** The misuse of public office or entrusted power for private gain, including practices such as bribery, embezzlement, nepotism, and extortion.

**Public Service Delivery:** The provision of essential services by government institutions, including health care, education, infrastructure, sanitation, and security.

**Accountability:** The obligation of public officials and institutions to be answerable for their decisions and actions to the public and relevant authorities.

**Transparency:** The openness and accessibility of government processes, decisions, and data to ensure clarity and prevent abuse of power.

**Governance:** The frameworks, institutions, and processes by which public affairs are managed and policy decisions are made and implemented.

**Bribery:**

Expectation of payments to process or expedite government services.

**Embezzlement and Misappropriation:**

Perversion or theft of public funds and resources for private gain.

**Nepotism and Cronyism:**

Favoritism in appointments and resource allocation based on connections rather than merit.

**Fraud and Extortion:**

Deliberate deception for unfair gain, or coercion of state resources through threats.

These practices not only drain resources meant for critical infrastructure and development projects but also undermine public trust in government institutions.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORITICAL FRAMEWORK**

#### **2.0 Literature Review and Theoretical Framework**

This chapter presents two primary components:

- (1) a comprehensive literature review that synthesizes existing knowledge on corruption and public service delivery in Nigeria and Edo State specifically, and
- (2) the theoretical framework, which critically grounds the research in relevant theories.

#### **2.1 Literature Review**

This section brings together prior scholarship to build credence for your research. It covers conceptual definitions, empirical studies at the national and Edo State levels, institutional reforms, and research gaps.

### **2.1.1 Public Service Delivery: Structure, Challenges, and Relevance**

Public Service Delivery refers to government-provided services—such as healthcare, education, utilities, security, and infrastructure—that are essential for citizen welfare. Effective delivery reflects good governance, while corruption significantly undermines access, quality, efficiency, and trust (Jev et al., 2022; Oluwatusin et al., 2024)

Public service delivery encompasses the provision of essential societal functions and services by government entities at various levels—federal, state, and local government in Nigeria’s context. These services include but are not limited to education, healthcare, potable water, sanitation, transportation, electricity, housing, law enforcement, and administrative services (such as business registrations, permits, and social welfare schemes).

### **2.1.2 Structure of Public Service Delivery in Nigeria**

Nigeria organizes public service delivery through a decentralized system, where federal, state, and local governments bear responsibility for different sectors:

#### **Federal Government:**

Responsible for national defense, major highways, higher education institutions, tertiary healthcare, and national revenue.

**State Governments (e.g. Edo State):**

In charge of secondary education, state hospitals, state roads, housing, and local economic development.

**Local Governments:**

- Handle primary education, health centers, sanitation, rural roads, and grassroots community needs.

Agencies and ministries at each level, such as the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education, or Ministry of Works and Housing, are tasked with formulating policies, supervising implementation, and managing public funds.

**2.1.3 Features of Effective Public Service Delivery**

Effective public service delivery is characterized by:

- **Accessibility:** Services must be reachable by the populace, including marginalized and rural communities.
- **Quality:** High standards in health, education, and infrastructure are essential for positive outcomes.
- **Efficiency:** Optimal use of resources and timely service, minimizing wastage and bottlenecks.

- Equity: Fair distribution ensuring various groups benefit without discrimination.
- Accountability and Responsiveness: Service providers respond to citizens' needs, with mechanisms for redress in place.

#### **2.1.4 Public Service Delivery in Nigeria: Current Realities**

Despite an institutional framework for service delivery, Nigeria faces significant challenges:

**Infrastructural Deficits:** Many public amenities, such as roads, schools, public hospitals, and water systems, remain inadequate or dilapidated, especially in regions like Edo State.

**Human Resource Gaps:** There are frequent shortages of qualified teachers, doctors, and skilled personnel due to poor remuneration, politicized recruitment, or brain drain.

**Resource Constraints:** Budgets are often insufficient or poorly managed. Delays in disbursement and cumbersome procurement processes also hinder smooth service delivery.

**Bureaucratic Bottlenecks:** Multiple layers of approval, paperwork, and poor coordination among agencies result in inefficiency and slow public responses.

The delivery of public services is crucial for national and regional development.

Quality education fosters human capital, functional healthcare ensures a healthy

workforce, and reliable infrastructure supports economic activity. Societies with robust public service systems show higher living standards, reduced poverty, and increased economic opportunities.

### **2.1.5 Forms and Drivers of Corruption in Nigeria**

- Systemic corruption in Nigeria is enabled by weak institutional frameworks, lack of judicial independence, poor public sector remuneration, and entrenched patronage networks (Akanbi, 2017; Amundsen, 1999)
- Tribalism and nepotism fuel favoritism in appointments and contract awards, overriding merit-based practices (Transparency International, 2022)

### **2.1.6 National-Level Impacts of corruption on Service Delivery**

- In Osun State, studies show that corruption adversely affects education, health, water, and power services, with civil servants being major perpetrators (Atanda & Lawal, 2022; Jev et al., 2022).
- Corruption distorts government spending: funds are diverted to vanity projects, and resource misallocation reduces essential social services (Igiebor, 2019; Jev et al., 2022)
- Economic consequences include reduced foreign investment, slowed growth, heightened poverty, and increased income inequality (Igiebor, 2019)

Corruption directly undermines all components of public service delivery. Funds earmarked for roads, schools, and hospitals may be embezzled or diverted. Bribery and nepotism can lead to unqualified personnel filling key positions, resulting in subpar educational or healthcare outcomes. Service users may be compelled to pay illicit fees for services that ought to be provided free or at subsidized rates, limiting accessibility for the most vulnerable populations. In Edo State, for example, reports of delayed infrastructure projects, under-equipped hospitals, and poorly maintained schools are often linked to financial mismanagement and corruption scandals. The result is a disconnect between government allocations and public welfare improvement.

#### **2.1.7 Empirical Findings Specific to Edo State**

- Okoh Itabite's (2025) survey of 188 civil servants across Edo ministries reveals:
- Embezzlement significantly degrades healthcare quality.
- Bribery impairs road and infrastructure outcomes.
- Nepotism adversely affects general service delivery (health, education, utilities)
- A companion qualitative study identifies ghost worker schemes, budget padding, tax evasion, and procurement fraud as prevalent in the Edo civil service; major impediments include political influence and weak enforcement

#### **2.1.8 Research Gaps Identified**

- Limited connection between digital reforms (e.g., e - procurement) and measurable improvements in citizen satisfaction or service efficiency, especially at the local government level.
- Lack of citizen voice and lived experiences in measuring the impact of corruption on service delivery.
- Absence of longitudinal studies tracking whether reforms sustain impact beyond initial implementation.
- Few comparative analyses across Edo State sub regions or sectors to highlight variations in corruption effects and reform efficacy.

## **2.2 Theoretical Framework**

The theoretical framework serves as the foundation for understanding how and why corruption persists in public service delivery systems, especially in Nigeria and Edo State. This research draws on three core theories: Principal–Agent Theory, Rent-Seeking Theory, and Neo-Patrimonialism Theory. Each offers insights into the motivations, structures, and systems that enable corruption in the public sector. These theories are complementary and together provide a more holistic view of the problem.

### **2.2.1 Principal–Agent Theory**

Developed by Jensen and Meckling (1976), the Principal–Agent Theory explains relationships where one party (the principal) delegates work to another (the agent),

who performs that work. In governance, citizens are the principals, and elected officials or public servants are the agents. Ideally, agents should act in the best interest of principals. However, in practice, agents may pursue their own interests, especially when monitoring is weak or when accountability mechanisms are absent.

In Nigeria, the political and administrative structures often lack transparency, effective oversight, and institutional checks. These weaknesses create an environment in which public officials divert resources for personal gain—without fear of being caught or punished (Klitgaard, 1998). This theory is highly relevant to Edo State, where local governments and civil service officials have been implicated in misappropriation of funds and contract fraud. For instance, projects may be approved and funded on paper, but in reality, little or no implementation takes place due to collusion between agents (contractors, civil servants, and politicians).

Principal–Agent Theory also explains why citizens (principals) are often powerless: they lack access to the necessary information to evaluate whether their representatives (agents) are fulfilling their duties. Furthermore, the cost of citizen oversight is high in systems with poor access to records or low civic education.

“In environments with poor monitoring and weak enforcement, agents exploit their positions for personal benefit at the expense of public welfare” (Klitgaard, 1998, p. 6).

### **2.2.2 Rent-Seeking Theory**

Rent-seeking refers to efforts to increase one’s share of existing wealth without creating new wealth. Introduced by Tullock (1967) and formalized by Krueger (1974), this theory is vital for understanding how individuals or groups manipulate public institutions and policies to extract unearned economic benefits. In public service delivery, rent-seeking behavior manifests when officials demand bribes for services that should be free, when contracts are awarded not based on merit but political loyalty, or when budgets are inflated to siphon funds. Nigeria’s public sector has been labeled as rent-rich, meaning that there are multiple opportunities for individuals to appropriate public wealth through positions of authority (Uzochukwu, 2019).

For example, in Edo State, contractors may offer kickbacks to ministry officials to secure public works contracts. In return, officials ensure that oversight is bypassed, allowing for poor-quality work or abandoned projects. This distorts not only resource allocation but also the entire public procurement process. Rent-seeking drains public resources, reduces efficiency, and erodes trust in government institutions.

“The pursuit of rents leads to the misallocation of resources, bureaucratic inefficiencies, and institutional decay” (Krueger, 1974, p. 295).

### **2.2.3 Neo-Patrimonialism Theory**

Neo-Patrimonialism is a theory rooted in political sociology and governance studies. It explains systems where formal bureaucratic rules exist but are regularly undermined by informal networks of patronage, favoritism, and ethnic loyalty (Bratton & van de Walle, 1997). In a neo-patrimonial system, political loyalty and personal relationships often override meritocracy, legality, and professionalism.

In Nigeria, and by extension Edo State, appointments and promotions in the public service are often determined by ethnic, religious, or partisan ties rather than competence. This contributes to the entrenchment of corruption, as individuals feel more beholden to their patrons than to the rules of the institution. It also explains why anti-corruption reforms often fail—because those tasked with enforcement are part of the same clientelist network they are meant to police.

Neo-patrimonialism leads to weakened state capacity. Institutions such as the Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission (ICPC) or SERVICOM become ineffective when captured by political elites. In such environments, public office becomes a tool for wealth accumulation and service delivery becomes secondary or nonexistent.

“In neo-patrimonial regimes, formal rules exist only on paper, while actual governance operates through informal, personalistic networks” (Bratton & van de Walle, 1997, p. 62).

#### **2.2.4 Systemic Corruption Theory:**

Systemic corruption theory posits that corruption is not just a series of isolated or individual wrongdoings but is deeply embedded within the social, political, and administrative structures of a society. In a systemically corrupt setting, corrupt practices are normalized, institutionalized, and perpetuated by both formal and informal rules. In such environments, unethical conduct is not merely tolerated but often expected—creating networks of mutual benefit among participants across the public sector.

##### *Key Features of Systemic Corruption*

#### 1. Widespread Participation:

Corruption is not limited to a few individuals or occasional incidents but involves a large part of the bureaucracy, political class, and sometimes even ordinary citizens.

#### 2. Entrenched Networks:

There are hidden alliances and networks among public officials, contractors, business elites, and sometimes law enforcement, each benefitting from the corrupt system.

#### 3. Cultural Acceptance:

Corruption becomes a “way of life,” where both officials and service users see bribery, favoritism, or embezzlement as normal or even necessary for navigating the system.

#### 4. Institutional Weakness:

Checks and balances, such as regulatory agencies, anti-corruption commissions, and the judiciary, are undermined or compromised, reducing their ability to deter, detect, or punish corruption.

#### 5. Self-Reinforcing Cycle:

New entrants into the public sector quickly learn and adopt corrupt practices because these behaviors are seen as the only way to survive or advance within the system.

### *Systemic Corruption Theory Applied to Nigeria and Edo State*

- In the Nigerian context, and particularly in Edo State, corruption often pervades ministries, agencies, and departments responsible for public service delivery. This includes traditional forms like bribery, as well as sophisticated schemes like contract padding, diversion of project funds, and fraudulent recruitment.
- It is common for government officials, contractors, and even community representatives to collude and share illicit gains, ensuring the corrupt system persists irrespective of leadership changes.

- Routine transactions—such as getting a building permit, securing employment, or accessing public healthcare—may require “facilitation payments” (bribes) as standard procedure, discouraging honest actors and deterring reform.

#### *How Systemic Corruption Damages Public Service Delivery*

##### **Resource Diversion:**

Funds intended for schools, roads, or hospitals are siphoned off at multiple stages—grant approval, procurement, implementation—resulting in incomplete or poorly executed projects.

##### Policy Ineffectiveness:

- Anti-corruption policies are often sabotaged from within; those designated to enforce laws may be part of the corrupt networks.

##### Low Service Quality:

- Teachers, doctors, and civil servants may be appointed based on connections or bribes rather than merit, reducing the competence within the public sector.

##### Erosion of Trust:

- As corruption becomes visible and persistent, citizens lose faith in government programs and institutions, leading to decreased participation, higher apathy, and acceptance of alternative (often illegal) means of accessing services.

### **2.2.5 Relevance of the Theories to This Study**

These three theories collectively provide a robust framework for analyzing the nature and persistence of corruption in public service delivery in Nigeria, particularly in Edo State.

- Principal–Agent Theory shows how lack of accountability and monitoring allows public servants to act contrary to public interest.
- Rent-Seeking Theory highlights how officials exploit government structures to accumulate wealth without adding value.
- Neo-Patrimonialism Theory explains how systemic corruption is sustained by informal power relations and clientelism.
- Systemic Corruption Theory explains why public service delivery in Edo State may remain poor despite anti-corruption campaigns or leadership changes: the problem lies not only with individuals but within the system itself.

Understanding the interaction between these theories allows for a deeper examination of why reforms have failed, why corruption persists, and how public service delivery continues to suffer despite numerous anti-corruption campaigns

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

This chapter outlines the methodological approach of the study, including research design, area of study, target population (with census reference), sampling

technique, sample size determination with formula and computations, sources and instrument of data collection, as well as the techniques used for data analysis.

### **3.1 Research Design**

The study adopts a survey research design within a convergent mixed-methods framework. Quantitative data (structured questionnaires) are administered to targeted respondents, while qualitative elements (if applicable elsewhere) complement findings for in-depth understanding. The survey method is appropriate for systematically collecting standardized information from a representative sample to address the objectives concerning corruption and public service delivery in Edo State.

### **3.2 Area of Study**

The research area is Edo State, located in the South-South region of Nigeria. Edo State is subdivided into 18 Local Government Areas (LGAs). The focus is on public service delivery sectors such as Health, Education, Water/Infrastructure, and LGA administrative services, covering all three senatorial districts within the state.

### **3.3 Population of the Study**

The population of the study comprises all adult residents (18 years and above) who have accessed state or LGA public services in Edo State within the study period (2015–2024).

- According to the 2006 National Population Census of Nigeria, Edo State had a population of 3,233,366
- people<sup>1</sup>. Estimated 2023/2024 population (using moderate annual growth): approximately 5 million (for context if needed).
- However, since the focus is on service users, the study targets adult residents
- who accessed public services in the state’s public Institutions and facilities.

### **3.4 Sampling Technique**

multistage stratified sampling technique was employed to ensure the sample is representative of the state’s diversity:

Stage 1: Stratify Edo State into its three senatorial districts (North, Central, South).

Stage 2: Randomly select two LGAs from each senatorial district (total of six LGAs) using probability proportional to size (PPS).

Stage 3: Within selected LGAs, public service facilities (e.g., PHCs, schools) are listed and randomly chosen.

Stage 4: In each facility, systematic random sampling is used to select adult service users as they exit after service.

### 3.5 Sample Size

The sample size was determined using Yamane's formula (1967):

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

Where:

- N = Population (15,320)
- e = Margin of error (0.05)

$$n = \frac{15,320}{1 + 15,320(0.0025)} = \frac{15,320}{39.3} \approx 390$$

Thus, the sample size for the study is 390 respondents.

### 3.6 Sources of Data

The sources of data for the research are primary and secondary.

**Primary Source:** A primary source of data refers to information collected directly from the original source for a specific purpose or research study. It is firsthand data that has not been previously published, analyzed, or interpreted by others.

In other words, it is data gathered directly by the researcher through their own efforts rather than obtained from existing sources.

**Secondary Source:** A secondary source of data refers to information that has already been collected, processed, and published by someone else. It is secondhand data, meaning the researcher uses existing materials instead of gathering new information directly from the field.

**Examples of Secondary Sources of Data:**

Books and textbooks, Journal articles, Government reports and publications  
Newspapers and magazines Research theses and dissertations Online databases  
and websites

**3.7 Instrument of Data Collection**

The questionnaire contains two sections, A and B .

Section A contains information about the respondents, such as age, education, qualification, occupation and gender.

Section B covers the analysis of the hypothesis of the study which helps to explain the objectives of the study. The questions were structured along the close - ended response pattern ,where respondents were given options to choose from.

**3.8 Technique for data Analysis**

The method of data analysis used for this work was the simple percentage (%) and the Pearson's correlation coefficient.

The simple percentage was used to analyse the data collected through the questionnaire while the pearson's correlation coefficient was used to analyses the research hypotheses via the SPSS 21.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### PRESENTATION OF DATA ANALYSIS

This chapter presents, analyzes, and interprets the data collected through questionnaires administered to respondents across selected public service institutions in Edo State. The data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistical tools via the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS version 25.0). The descriptive analysis summarizes the socio-demographic characteristics, awareness, perceptions, and effects of corruption on public service delivery. The inferential analysis tests the relationship between corruption and the quality of public service delivery using the Chi-square ( $\chi^2$ ) test at a 0.05 level of significance. Additionally, qualitative responses were analyzed thematically to complement the quantitative findings.

#### 4.1 Data presentation and analysis

**Table 1:**

|                                   |     |      |
|-----------------------------------|-----|------|
| No. of Questionnaire Administered | 390 | 100% |
| No. of Questionnaire returned     | 390 | 100% |
| No. of Questionnaire not returned | 0   | 0%   |

|       |     |      |
|-------|-----|------|
| Total | 390 | 100% |
|-------|-----|------|

**Source:** Field Survey,2025.

A total of 390 questionnaires were distributed.

**Table 2: Sex Distribution**

| Sex    | Respondents | Percentage (%) |
|--------|-------------|----------------|
| Male   | 230         | 59%            |
| Female | 160         | 41%            |
| Total  | 390         | 100%           |

**Source:** Field Survey,2025.

From the survey above, the number of male respondents were 230 constituting 59 % of the total respondents while the total of female respondents were 160 constituting 41% of the total respondents

**Table 3: Age Distribution**

| Age (years)  | Respondents | Percentages |
|--------------|-------------|-------------|
| 18-30        | 130         | 33%         |
| 31-40        | 160         | 41%         |
| 51 and above | 100         | 26%         |
| Total        | 390         | 100%        |

**Source:** Field Survey,2025

From the above figure, we can see that 130 respondents which represent 33% of total respondents are less than 31 years, 160 respondents which represent 41% of the total respondents are within 31 to 40 Years age bracket, while 100 respondents which represent 26% of the total respondents are 51 years and above

**Table 4: Educational Qualification**

| Qualification | Respondents | Percentage (%) |
|---------------|-------------|----------------|
| Primary/SSCE  | 60          | 15%            |
| OND/Diploma   | 85          | 22%            |
| HND/B.Sc.     | 155         | 40%            |
| Postgraduate  | 90          | 23%            |
| Total         | 390         | 100%           |

**Source: Field Survey,2025**

From the above table we see that 60 respondents which represent 15 % of the total respondents have primary/SSCE qualification, 85 respondents which represent 22% of the total respondents have OND/Diploma qualification, 155 respondents which represent 40% of the total respondents have HND/B.Sc. qualification, 90 respondents which represent 23% of the total respondents have postgraduate qualification

**Table 5: Occupation**

| Occupation          | Respondents | Percentage (%) |
|---------------------|-------------|----------------|
| Civil servants      | 120         | 31%            |
| Private employee    | 95          | 24%            |
| Self employed       | 105         | 27%            |
| Unemployed/Students | 70          | 18%            |
| Total               | 390         | 100%           |

**Source: Field Survey,2025**

From the above table we can see that 120 respondents which constitute 31% of the total respondents are civil servants, 95 respondents which constitute 24% of the total respondents are private employees, 105 respondents which constitute 27% of the total respondents are self-employed while 70 respondents which constitute 18% of the total respondents are unemployed.

**Table 6: Awareness and perception of corruption in public service delivery**

| Statement  | Agree(%)   | Disagree(%) | Undecided(%) |
|--|------------|-------------|--------------|
| Corruption is widespread in Edo state public institutions      | 355<br>91% | 20<br>5%    | 15<br>4%     |
| Most citizens encounter bribery when accessing public services | 304<br>78% | 51<br>13%   | 55<br>9%     |
| Nepotism and favoritism influence employment and promotions    | 320<br>82% | 39<br>10%   | 31<br>8%     |
| Corruption has become normalized in government offices         | 296<br>76% | 59<br>15%   | 35<br>9%     |

**Interpretation:**

An overwhelming majority perceive corruption as a pervasive problem. This suggests a practices in the delivery of service, particularly in employment and administrative procedures.

**Table 7: Effects of corruption on public service delivery**

| Statement  | Agree(%)   | Disagree(%) | Undecided(%) |
|--|------------|-------------|--------------|
| Corruption reduces the quality and efficiency of public services | 347<br>89% | 31<br>8%    | 12<br>3%     |
| Corruption diverts funds mean for infrastructure development     | 328<br>84% | 35<br>9%    | 27<br>7%     |
| Corruption leads to delay and poor service delivery              | 320<br>82% | 43<br>11%   | 27<br>7%     |
| Corruption reduces public trust in government                    | 339<br>87% | 31<br>8%    | 20<br>5%     |

**Interpretation:**

Respondents strongly believe corruption undermines efficiency, causes project abandonment, and lowers citizens confidence in government institutions.

**Table 8: Government efforts and citizen's opinions on combating corruption.**

| Statement  | Effective(%) | Ineffective(%) | Not sure(%) |
|--|--------------|----------------|-------------|
| EFCC and ICPC efforts to fight corruption              | 160<br>41%   | 195<br>50%     | 35<br>9%    |
| Transparency and accountability measures in ministries | 152<br>39%   | 203<br>52%     | 35<br>9%    |
| Citizens willingness to report corruption              | 222<br>57%   | 125<br>32%     | 43<br>11%   |

**Interpretation:**

Most respondents consider government anti-corruption agencies ineffective. However, over half indicated a willingness to report corruption, suggestion public readiness for civic engagement if protective measures are guaranteed

#### 4.2 Inferential Analysis (Hypothesis Testing)

Ho: there is no significant relationship between corruption and the quality of public service delivery in Edo state

H1: there is a significant relationship between corruption in Edo state.

| Variable              | $\chi^2$ calculated | df | p-value |
|-----------------------|---------------------|----|---------|
| Decision              |                     |    |         |
| Corruption vs Quality | 15.74               | 3  | 0.002   |
| Reject H <sub>0</sub> |                     |    |         |
| Of service delivery   |                     |    |         |

#### 4.3 Qualitative Data (Thematic Analysis)

Qualitative responses were grouped into recurring themes that complemented the quantitative findings.

Theme 1: Bribery and Extortion

Respondents noted that citizens often pay informal fees to access routine services such as birth certificates or school admissions.

Theme 2: Favoritism and Nepotism

Recruitments and promotions were said to depend more on personal connections than merit.

#### Theme 3: Mismanagement of Funds

Interviewees linked frequent project abandonment to embezzlement and diversion of public funds.

#### Theme 4: Lack of Accountability

Many believed that corrupt officials are rarely punished, fostering impunity within the civil service.

#### Theme 5: Erosion of Public Trust

Citizens expressed frustration and loss of confidence in state institutions, describing corruption as “a daily experience.”

### **4.4 Discussion of Findings**

The findings of this study affirm that corruption significantly affects public service delivery in Edo State. The results are consistent with prior research (e.g., Akinyemi, 2020; Ojo, 2022) which found that corruption leads to inefficiency, lack of infrastructure, and poor public trust.

Although anti-corruption agencies exist, their efforts appear weak due to inadequate enforcement and political interference. Respondents emphasized the need for transparency, digitization of service delivery, and stronger punitive measures to deter corrupt practices.

#### **4.5 Summary of Key Findings**

1. A majority of respondents perceive corruption as highly prevalent across public institutions in Edo State.
2. Corruption negatively affects the quality, efficiency, and accessibility of public service delivery.
3. The Chi-square test confirms a statistically significant relationship between corruption and service quality ( $p < 0.05$ ).
4. Anti-corruption measures are seen as largely ineffective, though citizens show willingness to support reforms.
5. Qualitative evidence highlights bribery, nepotism, and lack of accountability as core barriers to effective governance.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

This chapter presents the summary of the study, draws conclusions based on the findings, and offers practical recommendations for reducing corruption and improving public service delivery in Edo State. It also highlights the study's contributions, limitations, and suggestions for further research.

#### **5.1 Summary**

This research examined the impact of corruption on public service delivery in Edo State, Nigeria.

The study sought to understand the forms, causes, and effects of corruption on the effectiveness and quality of public services and to assess the measures adopted by government institutions to combat corruption.

To achieve these objectives, a survey research design was adopted within a mixed-methods framework. Primary data were collected through structured questionnaires administered to 390 respondents across selected ministries, agencies, and public service sectors. The data were analyzed using both

descriptive and inferential statistical techniques (SPSS version 21), while qualitative responses were thematically analyzed.

The descriptive analysis summarized the socio-demographic profiles and perceptions of respondents. The inferential analysis used the Chi-square ( $\chi^2$ ) test to determine the relationship between corruption and the quality of public service delivery. The qualitative analysis provided deeper insights into citizens' lived experiences and perceptions of corruption.

The major findings of the study are summarized as follows:

### **1. High Awareness of Corruption:**

Most respondents were aware of corruption and viewed it as highly prevalent in public institutions in Edo State, particularly in administrative, health, education, and local government services.

### **2. Widespread Corrupt Practices:**

Common forms of corruption identified include bribery, embezzlement, favoritism, nepotism, diversion of public funds, and procurement fraud.

### **3. Negative Effects on Service Delivery:**

Corruption was found to reduce the efficiency, quality, and accessibility of public services. It

causes delays, project abandonment, and wastage of scarce resources.

#### **4. Significant Relationship Between Corruption and Service Quality:**

The Chi-square test result ( $p = 0.002 < 0.05$ ) confirmed a statistically significant relationship between corruption and public service delivery, indicating that corruption directly hampers service performance and citizens' satisfaction.

#### **5. Weak Institutional Response:**

Anti-corruption efforts by agencies such as the EFCC, ICPC, and public service audit units were perceived as ineffective due to political interference, lack of autonomy, and poor enforcement mechanisms.

#### **6. Erosion of Public Trust:**

Persistent corruption has undermined citizens' trust in government institutions and weakened their willingness to engage in civic activities.

#### **7. Citizens' Readiness for Change:**

Despite the prevalence of corruption, a majority of respondents expressed willingness to report corrupt acts if protective and transparent reporting systems are available.

## 5.2

## Conclusion

The study concludes that corruption remains a major obstacle to effective public service delivery in Edo State and, by extension, in Nigeria.

It distorts governance processes, diverts developmental resources, and reduces the efficiency and credibility of public institutions.

Although several anti-corruption initiatives exist, their limited effectiveness demonstrates that fighting corruption requires more than formal structures — it requires strong political will, institutional transparency, and active citizen participation.

If corruption is not effectively addressed, the state will continue to experience poor infrastructure, inefficient service delivery, and declining public confidence. Strengthening accountability mechanisms, enhancing transparency, and building a culture of integrity within the public sector are therefore essential for sustainable development

## 5.3

## Recommendations

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

### 1. Institutional Reforms and Transparency:

Edo State government and related agencies should institutionalize transparency and accountability measures, such as e-governance and digital record systems, to minimize direct human contact and opportunities for bribery.

## **2. Strengthening Anti-Corruption Agencies:**

The EFCC, ICPC, and state-level audit offices should be granted greater operational autonomy and adequate funding to perform their oversight roles effectively, free from political influence.

## **3. Public Service Ethics and Training:**

Continuous ethics and integrity training should be conducted for public servants to cultivate professionalism and discourage corrupt behaviors.

## **4. Enhanced Citizen Engagement:**

Citizens should be empowered through awareness campaigns and whistleblower protections to report corruption safely. Establishing hotlines and anonymous reporting platforms will enhance civic participation.

## **5. Enforcement of Sanctions:**

Stronger disciplinary and legal measures should be enforced against corrupt officials. Prosecution and punishment should be swift and publicized to serve as a deterrent to others.

#### 6. Monitoring and Evaluation Systems:

Periodic performance audits and impact assessments of public service programs should be institutionalized to ensure transparency in fund utilization.

#### **7. Improved Wages and Working Conditions:**

Fair remuneration, promotion based on merit, and decent working conditions should be maintained to reduce incentives for corruption among public servants.

#### **8. Partnership with Civil Society and Media:**

Collaboration between the government, civil society organizations, and media outlets is essential to sustain anti-corruption advocacy and demand accountability.

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