

## Public Enterprise Administration for Sustainable Economic Development in Nigeria

**Michael Eugene Ekpo**

Department of Political Science and Public Administration

University of Uyo, Uyo

Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria.

Email: ekpomichael@gmail.com; michael Eugene091@gmail.com

Phone: +2348037609650

**Sunday Samuel Ating**

Email: sunnymartins5@gmail.com

Phone: +2348034213228

**Sylvester Effeom Nsa**

Department of Public Administration

University of Calabar, Calabar

Email: nsaslyvester@yahoo.com

<https://doi.org/10.61090/aksujacog.2025.004>

### Abstract

*The paper examined the Public Enterprise Administration (PEA) needed to reduce the high rate of poverty, enhance employment opportunities, impact economic growth and ensure Sustainable Economic Development (SED) in Nigeria. SED sought to ensure that the poor have access to sustainable and secured sources of livelihood through policy implementation, incentives and natural resources management. The Agency theory was adopted as a theoretical framework while the descriptive research method was employed to analyze secondary data contextually. The study revealed, among other things, that public enterprise administration has a significant direct relationship with sustainable economic growth and development in Nigeria and that public service delivery by most public enterprises in Nigeria was significantly hindered by corruption and other rent-seeking activities. It concluded that SED can be achieved through PEA by harmonizing the three core indicators of economic growth, social inclusion and environmental protection to promote the well-being of individuals in Nigeria. It recommended proper governance of public enterprises to promote transparency and accountability for sustainable economic growth and development, the building of new technology and innovation, Public-Private Partnership (PPP) to create more job opportunities, proper monitoring and evaluation of the governance process to limit corruption/frauds in PEA.*

**Keywords:** Administration, development, economic development, public enterprise and sustainable economic development.

### Introduction

In the contemporary world of public enterprise administration, the pursuit of sustainable governance and economic growth has become a critical mandate for nations across the globe. The establishment of public enterprises calls for urgent innovative strategies to secure prosperous and sustainable economic governance for a better tomorrow. These public organizations are not immune to challenges that continuously shape and reshape the global society. The surging tide of

globalization, the imperatives of ecological responsibility, the swift progress of technology, and shifting demographic patterns are just a few of the factors compelling the study to re-evaluate the management and governance of public enterprises in Nigeria. Good governance therefore involves the identification of an optimal governance system targeted at promoting efficiency and long-term economic prosperity in the state. World Bank (2012) enumerated six dimensions of good governance including control of corruption, political stability and absence of violence, government effectiveness, regulatory quality, rule of law, citizens' voice and accountability.

Studies by Ekpo & Umoh (2022) and Ekpo et al. (2024) show that the absence of effective leadership and institutions in the state can become a major obstacle to development. They are of the view that proper governance in public enterprises is needed for the socioeconomic development of Nigeria, to limit the rate of poverty, and to enhance employment opportunities that impact economic growth in the country. Hence, the primary concern of sustainable economic development is to ensure that the poor have access to sustainable and secure sources of livelihood through policy implementation, incentives and natural resources management (European Union, 2024).

For sustainable economic development to be achieved through public enterprise administration, there is a need to harmonize the three core indicators of economic development such as economic growth, social inclusion and environmental protection to promote the well-being of individuals and society at large (United Nations, 2023). Also, the economic development of a nation can be measured by Gross Net Product (GNP) and gross Domestic Product (GDP) while, at the individual level, per capita income can be used in line with the availability of goods and services to support the living standard of the people and increase the economic condition of the country (United Nations, 2024). Thus, sustainable development indicators are a good road map for financial, social and economic development in any country. Some of the indicators include improved economic development, sustainable consumption, production, climate change and energy, transportation and vibrant financial policies etc. and these factors act as measures for economic performance and social progress of the country (United Nations, 2024).

As observed by Okereke (2002), the need to catalyze balances in the area of development, maximize citizens' participation, and stimulate government responsiveness to service delivery to the people necessitates the creation of public enterprises. To this effect, enterprise value for a firm's effective performance can be influenced by the choice of capital structure which is determined by several factors such as market forces, type of industry, internal policies of the firm, size of the firm, profitability, corporate tax and bankruptcy cost etc. (Ajayi & Obisesa, 2020). In the words of Amartya Sen, quoted in Doll (2022), development entails the elimination of various forms of constraints that limit people's choices and their ability to make reasoned decisions. Our exploration today is rooted in the belief that sustainable governance serves as a means to cultivate such autonomy, empowering individuals and communities. This, in turn, sets the stage for economic growth that is all-encompassing, fair, and adaptable to steer the nation towards economic prosperity and sustainability.

### **Conceptual Review**

A public corporation or enterprise is created by the law with defined powers and functions and independently having a clear-cut jurisdiction over a specified area or a particular type of commercial activity such as the production of goods and services to make profits (Ekhatior, 2003, cited in Agu, 2016). Some public corporations are established and placed under public ownership of the State for social reasons, one of which is to help provide essential services or products to the public at affordable prices and also prevent private sector monopoly and exploitation. Such services include utilities (gas, potable water, electricity, etc.), broadcasting, telecommunications,

and transport companies, which are examples of public enterprises (Ekpo & Umoh, 2022). Public corporations are by definition, intended to operate in the public interest, but the reverse is the experience in Nigeria.

### **Rationale for Establishment of Public Enterprises in Nigeria**

The rationale behind the establishment of public enterprises includes the need to provide essential services at affordable prices to the people; to enhance effective and efficient planning of the economy of the state, provide infrastructure to promote industrialization in the state; provide avenues for investing in heavy industries (where private hands find it difficult to finance); foster the advancement of public utilities; enhance production and development of backward regions; enhancing more employment opportunities in the state; promote economic growth and prevent the concentration of economic power in the hands of few persons (monopoly) in the country.

Okpata (2004) quoted by Chinyere et al. (2019) further enumerate the reasons for the government going into business to include ensuring government control over a strategic sector of the economy such as banking, road construction, broadcasting and other essential services; ensuring control of key profitable enterprise with the aims of generating revenue to enhance national capital for developmental projects and other economic development of the country. Public enterprises are seen as viable instruments of employment generation in the country to complement the limited employment opportunities offered by the private sector. Since the advent of the idea of public enterprises, many economies, particularly developing countries like Nigeria, have embraced the developmental roles of public enterprises in the administration or management of the economy.

As a result, huge amounts of money have been sunk into public enterprises, and several reforms have been carried out to ensure that they operate in line with global standards and best practices as obtainable in the USA, Britain, New Zealand, and the Asian miracle states of Taiwan, China, Singapore, etc. The modern best practices in public corporations or enterprises combine both the ideologies of the market-driven economy and state-driven economy which discusses price mechanisms (forces of demand and supply) as well as the state's control and regulation of the economy by providing a viable economic blueprint and enabling environment for economic development (Udoikah & Ndaeyo, 2021; Ekpo & Umoh, 2022).

### **Business or Firm Performance**

Assessing the business performance of a public firm is an increasingly important though difficult task for managers and other corporate stakeholders (Ogebe et al., 2013). The term 'business performance' refers to the effectiveness of organisations in fulfilling their purpose. While some public firms trade to return financial benefits to their stakeholders, others have non-financial benefits as their returns. The purpose of business performance measurement is ultimately an improvement in the financial outcome in a commercial organization, whereas service improvements are for public organizations.

However, measuring financial outcomes alone does not provide sufficient information on how to help direct the decision-making that will achieve performance improvement (Adiele et al., 2011). On the other hand, Asiegbu et al. (2011), in measuring the marketing performance of Nigeria's domestic and industrial product organizations, adopted profitability, sales volume and market share as measures or indicators of Organizations' Performance (OP). Also, Adiele et al. (2011) used profitability as a variable in measuring corporate citizenship's impact on business performance. The use of market share to proxy business performance is also invoked.

Ogebe et al. (2013) state that the performance of a firm reflects how effective and efficient a firm has been in managing resources more judiciously or prudently to meet its goals without any

form of economic wastage. It can also be measured in terms of profitability. To them, the efficiency and profitability of a firm can be used to determine its performance. They further outlined measures of performance to include Return on Investment, Return on Equity, Operating Expenses Ratio, Asset Turnover, etc.

### **Development**

Development refers to the general improvement in economic, social and political conditions of the whole society in terms of the reduction or elimination of poverty, inequality, injustice, insecurity, ecological imbalance and unemployment within the context of a growing economy (Filani, 2000, as cited in Ajayi et al., 2024). It also involves eliminating various forms of limitations that curtail people's choices and their ability to engage in reasonable decision-making, hence, development means freedom in the views of Sen (1999), quoted in Doll (2022). Therefore, economic development requires the ability of the socioeconomic system to interact with the environment to deepen how well people comprehend natural principles, how well they put that understanding into effect by creating tools (technology), and how well people organize their labour (production) (Ibanga, 2016; Ajayi et al., 2024).

Furthermore, economic development connotes a consistent rise in prosperity and quality of life, employment rate, GDP, innovation, and the use of capabilities for the ethical production and distribution of products and services. It involves effective institutions based on transparency, risk tolerance, appreciation of variety, and faith in the realization of mutual gain for the public and private sectors necessary for economic progress (Tom et al., 2021). Lin & Wang (2017) defines economic development as a process of structural change accompanied by ongoing industrial upgrading and technological innovation which increases labour productivity in the state. Additionally, economic development is accompanied by advancements in infrastructure and institutions that lower transaction costs in the state.

On the other hand, sustainable development refers to the development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs (UN, 2015). The International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD) cited in Erinsakin et al. (2022) conceives it to mean activities or actions taken to improve the economic and social well-being of persons as well as environmental sustainability for today and future generations, to include such elements as equality between ages, gender, classes and races; social development, inclusiveness of everyone, human and environmental harmony that promotes environments' interdependency and transfer of technology; and cooperation among developing and developed countries.

Additionally, sustainable governance represents a fundamental shift in the way governments and public enterprises approach decision-making and policy implementation. At its core, sustainable governance seeks to balance economic, social, and environmental considerations to ensure the long-term well-being of current and future generations (UNDP, 2024). It acknowledges that traditional models of governance often prioritize short-term economic gains at the expense of environmental and social sustainability. Hence, the key principles underpinning sustainable governance include transparency, accountability, participation, and responsiveness (Ibrahim, 2018). Transparency ensures that decision-making processes are open and accessible to the public, allowing for scrutiny and accountability. Accountability holds public officials and institutions responsible for their actions and decisions. Participation encourages citizens and stakeholders to engage in shaping policies and programmes, while responsiveness ensures that government actions align with the needs and preferences of the people (Ibrahim, 2018).

## **Public Enterprises and Economic Growth in Nigeria**

Public enterprises, spanning diverse sectors such as transportation, energy, healthcare, and education, wield substantial influence over a nation's economic growth. Grasping the intricate connections between public enterprise and economic advancement is vital for shaping effective policies and strategies that nurture sustainable prosperity. Additionally, public enterprises often function as pivotal drivers of economic growth, delivering essential infrastructure, services, and employment prospects. For instance, investments in public transportation infrastructure can reduce transportation expenses for both businesses and individuals, invigorate economic activity, and heighten productivity (United Nations, 2015a).

Others include the desire to use the public enterprise as an instrument of effective plan implementation in a context where it appears futile to devise a development plan for the private sector; the need to secure economic independence; the urgent desire to assure government control over "strategic" sectors of the economy (examples are central banking, broadcasting, iron and steel, roads, shipping, etc.); the need to separate some activities from the civil service and allow more autonomy in their running; the perceived need to provide employment for the citizens in context where the private sector offers very limited employment opportunities; the need to ensure state control of key profitable enterprises with a view to generating revenues that will add to available national capital for financing development programmes and projects; the desire of some socialist-orientated regimes to use state control of key profitable enterprises to pursue the objectives of preventing the concentration of wealth or the means of production and exchange in the hands of few individuals or of a group, that is promoting equitable distribution of wealth (European Union, 2024).

The development of public enterprises in Nigeria dates back to the colonial era when the colonial government established public enterprises to provide essential services such as railways, electricity, water corporations, transportation services, etc. Among the early established public enterprises were the Nigeria Produce and Development Board (1950); the National Electric Power Authority (NEPA) in 1952, and the Nigeria Railway Corporation (1955), among others.

Worthy of note is that public enterprises are often managed and supervised by a board of directors appointed by the government for specific service delivery. It is headed by the chairman, the duration of the board is stipulated, and they are accountable to the government and the citizens as major stakeholders. PEs are expected to make a profit for self-sustenance, but profit-making is not the sole aim for setting up public enterprises; rather, service provision is the main aim of PEs (Akpan et al., 2023; Muktar et al., 2018).

In the post-independence era, public enterprises were established to promote the socio-economic development of the people in Nigeria and to guard against foreign dominations, exploitations and control of the nation's economy. This forms the reason for voting a huge amount of the country's resources during budgeting for the sustenance of public enterprises in Nigeria (Anike et al., 2017). In the early 1980s, the Nigerian government established about 110 public enterprises, it increased to about 275 in the 1990s, and presently over 600 public enterprises have been set up in major sectors of the economy to assist in service provisions and they include National Universities Commission (NUC), Nigerian Communication Commission (NCC), Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC), Nigerian Railway Corporation, Federal Radio Service Corporation (FRSC), Nigerian Television Authority (NTA), Nigerian Port Authority (NPA), Power Holding Company of Nigeria (PHCN), Transportation corporation, Aviation, Oil and Gas, Vehicle assembly etc. (Muktar et al., 2018). The question is how impactful are the present-day public enterprises in Nigeria?

To this effect, in 2022, PEs consisting of telecommunication, financial and other services sectors contributed about 52% of the nation's GDP. Also, agriculture, being the highest employment sector of about 70% of the population in the country, contributed about 22% of the GDP as against 21.42 % in 2021.

According to Muktar et al., (2018), public enterprises in Nigeria contributed over 35% to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and employed over 20% of the total workforce in the country. In a similar vein, Ejechi (2024) reported that a total of 48 government-owned enterprises were projected to have made a sum of N2.9 trillion collectively as internally generated revenue for the 2024 fiscal year in Nigeria, considering the huge amount of money invested by the government in PEs to enhance their revenue-generating capabilities. The 2024 budget proposal showed that the Nigeria Port Authority (NPA) had the highest IGR projection with N373.52 trillion, followed by the Federal Airport Authority of Nigeria (FAAN) and Nigerian Communication Commission (NCC) with N285.20 billion and N265.55 billion, respectively. Other PEs and their IGRs were also listed. These PEs were directed to remit 50% of the revenues to the federal government while the remaining 50% was to be used as expenditure and another running cost.

Consequently, Ekong (2015) and Anike et al, (2017), drawing inference from the World Bank Report (1991) observe that the problem of most public enterprises in Nigeria is that of gross mismanagement of resources which often results in inefficiency in the use of productive capital, high rate of corruption, and nepotism which weakened enterprise performance. Ekong (2015) opined that corruption, viewed in his work as “the use of public offices to gain personal benefits at the expense of the generality of the people”, has been a major problem in the development of the nation. He traced the root cause of corruption in Nigeria's public enterprises to the British colonial administration in Nigeria which led to the introduction of the Royal Niger Company (RNC) for trade purposes and the subsequent deployment of the president of RNC as Governor. Hence, the economic exploitative tendency of the British administration in Nigeria opened room for corrupt practices in public enterprises, which persist to date.

Public enterprises often assume a role in nurturing innovation, a pivotal engine of economic growth. Government-funded research institutions, universities, and collaborative ventures between the public and private sectors nurture innovation ecosystems that contribute to economic development (Boschma & Frenken, 2011). Moreover, public enterprises can function as test beds for innovative technologies and practices that can subsequently be adopted by the private sector, further heightening economic competitiveness (Baker & Haddad, 2024). As the intricacies of the linkages between public enterprise and economic growth are navigated, it becomes apparent that this relationship is multifaceted. Public enterprises can both directly invigorate economic activity through their operations and indirectly bolster growth by fostering innovation, enhancing infrastructure, and creating conducive investment conditions.

### **Challenges of Public Enterprises in Nigeria**

Public enterprises in Nigeria are often faced with the problems of governance, accountability, transparency, return on investment and management challenges due to corruption. In reality, corruption poses a negative impact on the economic growth of the country and reduces the level of investment in the state. Foreign investors are also discouraged from investing in corrupt economies for fear of losing their investments. Corruption in public enterprises has contributed to an increase in poverty levels and inequalities in the country.

Bureaucratic corruption in most public enterprises takes the form of inflated contract prices, bribery, embezzlement of public funds, and extortion from the public. Indeed, the causes of corruption in public enterprises in Nigeria are traced to a lack of accountability, inequality in

the distribution of resources, ethnicity, nepotism, marginalization and inconsistency in public policy implementation. Weak public enterprise structures result in poor policy implementation as well as policy failures, thereby increasing the poverty rate and corresponding resort to crime and general insecurity in the country. Fodol (2021), quoting from World Bank (2009) identified corruption as one of the biggest obstacles to economic growth, social development and poverty reduction in Nigeria. The paper added that corruption impact negatively on the performance of public enterprises, and this affects service delivery to the people of Nigeria. In the opinion of Fodol (2021), performance connotes the ability of public enterprises to satisfy the principal stakeholders of the enterprise. Also, Enterprise asset plays an important role in the overall performance of public enterprises. The growth in fixed assets and the increase in their value are positive indications of firm growth and give them the ability to obtain appropriate financing to perform their duties.

### **Some Cases of Corruption in Nigerian Public Enterprises**

Eze & Mbah (2024) opined that corruption in public enterprises in Nigeria exacerbates social disparities, fosters political instability, and hampers economic growth. It impedes development by stifling investment, eroding public services, and perpetuating increases in poverty and inequality rates in the state.

According to Ezeamalu (2014), Sanusi L. Sanusi, a former Central Bank Governor of Nigeria, accused the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) of corruption in the non-remittance of about \$20 billion in oil revenue to the federal government. Similarly, other reported cases of corruption in NNPC include Maikanti Baru, Ibe Kachikwu, Diezani Alison Madueke, Jide Omokore, Godswill Akpabio and others who have been accused of mismanagement of funds in NNPC and Niger-Delta Development Commission (NDDC) with about \$1 billion per year for the NNPC and \$2.5 billion for NDDC respectively and these allegations are under investigation since 2010 till date, without any conviction (BBC News, 2012; The Nation, 2020; Premium Times, 2022) as cited in (Eze & Mbah, 2024).

Another case of corruption in NNPC was reported by the Punch (2021, September 28th), revealing an alleged bribery scandal in lifting crude oil in the national corporation. The allegation shows that many traders paid millions of dollars as bribes to NNPC officials to ensure crude oil lifting contracts. The report indicated that the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission is still prosecuting some individuals and firms as accomplices in the theft of \$115 million from NNPC and its deployment for the 2015 elections in Nigeria (Punch, 2021). The same paper also revealed in 2013 that the NNPC officials and accomplices siphoned about \$6.8 billion from 2009 to 2011 through fraudulent crude and refined petroleum shipments and subsidy payments, and also about N1.7 trillion subsidy overpayment scandal in 2011. However, up until date, the major culprits have never been prosecuted.

Consequently, Transparency International, in a report, mentioned the NNPC among the world's eight most corrupt national oil companies and the paper called for a judicial investigation to uncover the facts about the scandals and clean up the odorous corporation (Punch, 2021). As of 2024, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) investigated bribery and tax-related charges against Mr Paulinus Inheanacho Okoronkwo, a General Manager of the NNPC, in a California Court. FBI found that Mr. Okoronkwo used his position within the NNPC's upstream department to obtain about \$2.1 million in bribes (ANEIJ, 2024).

In the same vein, the National Electric Power Authority (NEPA) which was established in 1952 and known presently as the Power Holding Company of Nigeria (PHCN) to help generate and supply electricity, has also been accused of corruption ranging from high estimated billing, reconnection fees, epileptic power supply and poor service delivery to the populace, hence the

PHCN's nick-name, 'Problem Has Change Name' as against the former name NEPA – 'Never Expect Power Always'. The implication is that Nigerians have lost faith in the workability of the power sector. Also, a survey conducted by Proshare (2022) reported PHCN as one of the most corrupt institutions in Nigeria. In line with this, Eze & Mbah (2024), quoting the Afrobarometer (2023), argued that weak administration of Nigerian public enterprises often leads to inefficiency, inequality, and susceptibility to corruption.

### **Theoretical Framework**

The study adopts the Agency Theory propounded by Jensen and Meckling in 1976 to explain the relationship between principals and agents in a business environment. In this context, agents are the government/its employees, while the public is the principal. An agency relationship arises whenever the populace called 'principals', through social contract, hires government/its employees called agents, to perform some service and then delegate decision-making authority to the agents.

The basic tenets of the theory see citizens (Principals) as customers who deserve the best services, while public servants as managers of public businesses (agents) are to be accountable for job results. It emphasizes a result-oriented public sector which is based on effectiveness, efficiency, economy, increased productivity, and performance. It entails the devolution of management control in public to bring about the efficiency of public enterprises in service delivery with improved monitoring, evaluation and reporting mechanisms/feedback to the administrative system (Dike, 2019). Therefore, adopting the theory enables the study to evaluate the performance and efficiency of public enterprises in Nigeria. It demands proper transparency and accountability in public expenditure, good governance, technological innovation and democratization as watchwords for effective service delivery.

Agency theory is concerned with so-called agency conflicts, or conflicts of interest which arise due to differences in the goals or desires between the principal and agent. Based on the economic concept called the principal-agent problem, it assumes that the problem of corruption is one of bureaucrats and other public employees ('agents') not following the rules and failing to fulfil the expectations of the public 'principals'. Agents are delegated the responsibility to implement and enforce rules and regulations, but they can choose to pursue their private interests instead of the public interest of the principal. They can do this because principals in complex organizations don't necessarily have access to all the information about what goes on, and agents can withhold key information so that principals may not be able to monitor and control what agents do, and this creates opportunities for corruption. Therefore, the desire for personal gain has always been seen as the primary motive for public sector corruption, which simplifies the complex relationship between individuals and the State.

However, in reality, the agents often serve their interests, which are frequently different from the interests of the principal. This theory is relevant for this study as it takes into consideration one of the aims, which is to examine the impact of corruption on public enterprise administration in Nigeria as those employed to serve the citizenry and were entrusted to manage the commonwealth may be guilty of irregularities. The implication is that public enterprises in Nigeria are faced with challenges of bureaucratic bottleneck, corruption and environmental problems resulting in low performance. This places a high premium on the need for good governance, technological innovation and democratization. Achieving the goal of PEs in Nigeria requires institutional and organizational restructuring to combat corruption and raise the performance of public enterprises, which will in turn lead to a better and improved service delivery in Nigeria.



## **Method and Materials**

The study adopts a descriptive research method. Given the nature of public firms in Nigeria, a descriptive approach is suitable since it enables the study to make use of secondary data from World Bank reports, United Nations Organization, European Union, Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), United Nations Development Programmes (UNDP) reports among other such as textbooks, Journals, Government publications and internet material to provide a vivid contextual explanation of the cause-effect relationship that exist between the variables of study to conclude.

## **Results and Discussion of Findings**

The study result drawn from secondary data revealed the following:

- i. Public enterprise administration has a significant direct relationship with sustainable economic growth and development in Nigeria as deduced from the survey of literature.
- ii. Public service delivery by most public enterprises in Nigeria is significantly hindered by corruption and other rent-seeking activities aimed at serving the interest of a few against the interest of the public.
- iii. Public enterprise administration has the potential of improving the three pillars/dimensions of sustainability, such as environmental, social and economic development to vibrant policy implementation in Nigeria.

Further discussion shows that the first findings revealed that public enterprise administration has significant direct relationship with sustainable economic growth and development in Nigeria, and this supported by studies conducted by Ibrahim (2018), Ekpo & Umoh (2022), United Nations (2023), Ekpo et al. (2024), European Union (2024) and UNDP (2024), as these various studies show direct and significant link between public enterprise governance and sustainable economic growth and development in many economies.

The second finding found that public service delivery by most public enterprises in Nigeria is significantly hindered by corruption and other rent-seeking activities. This is supported by studies conducted by Agu (2016), Ibrahim (2018), Nwekeaku & Obiorah (2019), Dike (2019) and UNDP (2024), indicating that public enterprises in Nigeria are faced with challenges of bureaucratic bottleneck, corruption and environmental problems resulting in low performance. This places a high premium on good governance, technological innovation and democratization.

The third finding shows that public enterprise administration has the potential of improving the tree pillars/dimensions of sustainability such as environmental, social and economic development to vibrant policy implementation in Nigeria, and this is supported by United Nations (2015, 2023), European Union (2024) and UNDP (2024), revealing that proper governance in public enterprises is needed for socio-economic development of Nigeria to limit poverty rate, enhance employment opportunities and impact economic growth. Hence, the primary concern of sustainable economic development is to ensure that the poor have access to sustainable and secure sources of livelihood through policy implementation, incentives and natural resources management (Ekpo et al., 2024; European Union, 2024).

## **Conclusion and Recommendations**

The study examined the prospect of public enterprise administration as an approach for sustainable economic development in Nigeria. The study revealed, among other things, that public enterprise administration has a significant direct relationship with sustainable economic growth and development in Nigeria; public service delivery by most public enterprises in Nigeria is

significantly hindered by corruption and other rent-seeking activities. It shows that public enterprise administration has the potential of improving the three pillars/dimensions of sustainability, such as environmental, social and economic development.

The study made the following recommendations:

- i. Governments and public enterprises should embrace sustainable governance principles which give paramount importance to the principles of transparency, accountability, participation, and responsiveness in their operational and decision-making processes. This approach will foster trust, enhance governance, and ensure that economic growth is both sustainable and just.
- ii. Improve on building new technology and innovation to harness the potential of emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence and automation. Encouraging partnerships between the public and private sectors can expedite technological progress while ensuring alignment with sustainability objectives
- iii. Promote inclusive growth by aligning with sustainable governance principles, policies and initiatives to champion inclusive growth by adoption of a popular oriented participatory approach to public service delivery in Nigeria's economy.
- iv. Institutionalization of a robust and result-oriented monitoring and evaluation framework to assess the extent of programmes and projects implementation in public enterprises by involving government, private sector and Civil Societies Organizations (CSOs) in the activities of monitoring and evaluation to limit fraud related activities and the right to penalized corrupt officials.
- v. Public-private partnerships should also be adopted by the government to increase efficiency in the area of public service delivery.

## References

- Adiele, K. C. Revd. J. M. & Didia, J. U. D. (2011). The impact of corporate citizenship on business performance: Marketing implications for Nigerian organizations. *Benin Journal of Social Sciences*, 19(2),319-330.
- Agu, S. (2016). Instrumentalities for effectiveness of measures of public accountability in Africa: The Nigeria perspective. *Sage Open*. <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/2158244015627189>.
- Aina, D. (2024, 12th July). Public officials received N721bn bribe in 2023 – NBS report. *Punch News Online*. <https://punchng.com/public-officials-received-n721bn-bribe-in-2023-nbs-report/>.
- Ajayi, L. B. and Obisesan, O, G. (2020). Impact of capital structure on firm performance in Nigeria. *International Journal of Economics, Commerce and Management*, 8(3):414 – 428.
- Ajayi, A. O., Olaniran, H. D. & Adeleke, F. G. (2024). The rural development agenda: What is the future for Nigerian communities? [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/383370061\\_the\\_Rural\\_Development\\_Agenda\\_What\\_is\\_the\\_Future\\_for\\_Nigerian\\_Communities](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/383370061_the_Rural_Development_Agenda_What_is_the_Future_for_Nigerian_Communities).
- Akpan, I. M., Ibok, E. E., Ibanga, S. E. & Atakpa, O. E. (2023). Public enterprises and employment generation in Akwa Ibom State: A study of Greenwell Technologies. *AKSU Journal of Administration and Corporate Governance (AKSUJACOG)*, 3(3), 242-252.
- Anike, H.O.O., Okafor, C.N. and Udejinta, N. B. (2017). The role of public enterprises in economic development. *International Research Journal of Management, IT & Social Science*, 4(2), 179-189.
- Asiegbu, F. I., Awa, H. O., Akpotu, C. & Ogbonna, U. B. (2011). Sales force competence development and marketing performance of industrial and domestic products firms in Nigeria. *Far East Journal of Psychology and Business*, 2(3):43-59.
- Baker, N. B. & Haddad, C. (2024). Private ownership and management control decisions in infrastructure from the perspective of transaction cost theory: Evidence from emerging economies. *Economics and Politics*, Wiley Blackwell, 36(2), 764-791.
- Boschkma, R., & Frenken, K. (2011). The emerging empirical agenda on the geography of innovation. *Economic Geography*, 87(2), 129150.
- Chinyere, N., Davidson, A. & Ibe-enwo, G. (2019). Developing the vision and mission of public enterprises in Nigeria: Paradigm shift from status quo to global best practices. *African Journal of Politics and Administrative Studies (AJPAS)*, 12(2), 55 – 67.
- Dike, E. (2019). The new public administration and service delivery in public organizations in Nigeria. *International Journal of Academic Multidisciplinary Research (IJAMR)* 3(4), 22-27, <https://philarchive.org/archive/DIKTNP>.
- Doll, K. (2022). Amartya Sen on development: The value of freedom. <https://www.shortform.com/blog/amartya-sen-on-development/>.
- Ejechi, V. (2024, January 8). At a glance: 48 agencies, government owned enterprise target N2.9trn IGR in 2024. *The Cable*. <https://www.thecable.ng/at-a-glance-48-agencies-government-owned-enterprises-target-n2.9trn-igr-in-2024/>.
- Ekong, C. N. (2015). Corruption in Nigeria: An attempt at modelling eradication strategies. *International Journal of Innovative Science, Engineering & Technology*, 2(12), 972 – 992.

- Ekpo, M. E. & Umoh, U. E. (2022). Corporate governance process and management of public corporations in Akwa Ibom State: A study of Akwa Ibom water company limited. *AKSU Journal of Administration and Corporate Governance (AKSUJACOG)*, 2(4), 82 - 93.
- Ekpo, M. E., Atakpa, O. E. & Umoh, U. E. (2024). Political leadership and economic development in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria. *International Journal of Research and Innovation in Social Science (IJRISS)*, 8(3), 2574-2589. <https://rsisinternational.org/journals/ijriss/articles/political-leadership-and-economic-development-in-akwa-ibom-state-nigeria/>.
- Erinsakin, M. O., Erinsakin, O. & Olalekan, A. O. (2022). Impact of environmental analysis on planning of entrepreneurial and vocational skill acquisition in Niger-Delta, Nigeria. *Global Scientific Journals (GSJ)*, 10(2), 1899-1912.
- Estache, A., & Martin, R. (2019). Infrastructure PPPs and government guarantees. World Bank. European Union (2024). Economic governance framework. <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/policies/economic-governance-framework/>.
- Eze, F. O. & Mbah, P. C. (2024). Governance, corruption and development in Nigeria. *AKSU Journal of Social Sciences (AKSUJOSS)*, 5(1), 35-46.
- Ezeamalu, B. (2014, March 12). Nigeria's NNPC missing \$20 billion oil money. *Premium Times News*. <https://www.premiumtimes.ng.com>.
- Fodol M. Z. (2021). The impact of corruption on Nigeria's Enterprises' performance: An empirical study. *Bilgi Quiz*, 23(2), 341-363.
- Ibanga, S. E. (2016). Transnational corporation and the development of host communities in Akwa Ibom State a case study of ExxonMobil Nigeria limited. *AKSU Journal of Management Sciences (AKSUJOMAS)*. 1(1), 45-52.
- Ikechi, K. S., Kenedunium, O. H. & Chinedum, A. H. (2021). Impact of public sector financial management on the economic growth of Nigeria. *International Journal of Management Science and Business Administration*, 7(4), 45-59. <https://researchleap.com/impact-of-public-sector-financial-management-on-the-economic-growth-of-nigeria/>.
- Ibrahim, M. (2018). Public service in Nigeria. Ibrahim forum report Mo Ibrahim foundation <https://mo.ibrahim.foundation/sites/default/files/2019-03/2018-Forum-Report.pdf>
- Jensen, M. C. & Meckling, W. H. (1976). Theory of the firm: Managerial behaviour, agency costs and ownership structure. *Journal of Financial Economics*, 3, 305-360
- Lin, J. Y. & Wang, Y. (2017). Development beyond aids. <https://www.project-syndicate.org/commentary/china-development-patient-capital-by-justin-yifu-lin-and-yan-wang-2>.
- Muktar, M., Abdul, A. M. & Keffi, M. A. (2018). The role of public enterprises in economic and social development in Nigeria. *Lapai Journal of International Politics*, 5(2), 104-112.
- National Bureau of Statistics [NBS] (2024). National corruption survey: Public experience with corruption. <https://nigerianstat.gov.ng/elibrary/read/599>
- Nwekeaku, C. and Obiorah, K. B. (2019). Public service reforms and effective service delivery in Nigeria. *International Journal of Developing and Emerging Economies*. 7 (4), 30-40, <https://www.eajournals.org/wp-content/uploads/Public-Service-Reforms-and-Effective-Service-Delivery-in-Nigeria.pdf>.
- OECD (2010). Accountability and transparency: a guide for state ownership. *Journal of OECD 'better policies for better lives'*. [www.oecd-library.org/governance/accountability-and-transparency-a-guide-for-state-ownership-9789264056640-en](http://www.oecd-library.org/governance/accountability-and-transparency-a-guide-for-state-ownership-9789264056640-en).

- OECD (2024). Ownership and governance of state-owned enterprises. [https://www.oecd.org/en/publications/ownership-and-governabce-of-state-owned-enterprises-2024\\_395c9956-on.html](https://www.oecd.org/en/publications/ownership-and-governabce-of-state-owned-enterprises-2024_395c9956-on.html).
- Ogebe, O. P., Ogebe, J. O. & Alewi, K. (2013). The impact of capital structure on firms' performance in Nigeria. A Paper Presented to Munich Personal RePEc Archive.
- Olusadum, N. J. (2017). Application of emerging technologies to enhance public service delivery: The place of Nigerian public service. <http://eprints.covenantuniversity.edu.ng/10243/1/Paper005FINAL%20Num3.pdf>.
- Ojugbo, P. A. & Ojugbo, G. O. (2021). Tourism and socio-economic development in Nigeria's Fourth Republic: A study of Cross River State. *AKSU Journal of Social Sciences (AJSS)* 1(1), 227 – 244.
- Okereke, O.O. & Ekpe, A, E. (2002). *Development and underdevelopment: Politics of the North-South divide*. John Jacob's Classic Publishers Ltd, Enugu. pp. 1 – 28; 117–128.
- Stern, N. (2016). Better growth, better climate. Brookings Institution Press.
- The Punch (2021, September 28<sup>th</sup>). Crude Lifting scandal: NNPC has case to answer. <https://punchng.com/crude-lifting-scandal-nnpc-has-case-to-answer/>.
- The African Network for Environment and Economic Justice [ANEEJ] (2024). ANEEJ hails FBI for slapping charges against to nnpc official for accepting \$2.1 million in bribes. <https://www.aneej.org/aneej-hails-fbi-for-slapping-charges-against-top-nnpc-officials-for-accepting-2-1million-in-bribes/>
- Tom, E. J., Bassey M. E., Ekpo, M. & Ebong, I. B. (2021). The politics of derivation principle and socio-economic development of the Niger-Delta region. *AKSU Journal of Social Sciences, 1(1)*,162-175.
- Udoikah, J. M. & Ndaeyo, E. A. (2021). Small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and the economic growth of Nigeria. *AKSU Journal of Administration and Corporate Governance (AKSUJACOG)*, 1(1), 152-11.
- Ukaeje, O. (2022). Institutional corruption as the bane of critical infrastructure protection in Nigeria. *Journal of Security and Defence Quarterly*, 39(3):63-75. <https://securityanddefence.pl/Institutional-corruption-as-the-bane-of-critical-infrastructure-protection-in-Nigeria,147652,0,2.html>.
- United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime [UNODC] (2024). NBS launches 3rd National Corruption Survey in Nigeria. UNODC Country Office Nigeria. <https://www.unodc.org/conig/en/stories/nbs-launches-3rd-national-corruption-survey-in-nigeria.html>.
- UNDP (2024). Global multidimensional poverty index (MPI). <https://www.undp.org/arab-states/publications/2024-global-multidimensional-poverty-index-mpi>.
- United Nations (2015a). Sustainable development goals: United Nations framework convention on climate change. United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs.
- United Nations (2015b). Open government data and services in public institutions. <https://publicadministration.desa.un.org/topics/digital-government/ogd>.
- United Nations (2015c). The road to dignity by 2030: Ending poverty, transforming all lives and protecting the planet. UN.
- United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA). (2018). Public administration for sustainable development. UNDESA.
- United Nations (2023). The 3 pillars of sustainability: Environmental, social and economic. <https://www.enel.com/company/stories/articles/2023/06/three-pillars-sustainability>

- Williams, A. A. & Ordu, A. U. (2023). Can we change the narrative on corruption in public procurement in Nigeria? <https://www.brookings.edu/articles/can-we-change-the-narrative-on-corruption-in-public-procurement-in-nigeria/>.
- World Bank (2012). World development indicators. World Bank publication
- World Bank (2024). Nigeria: Overview. <https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/nigeria/overview>.
- World Data Info (2024). Corruption in Nigeria. <https://www.worlddata.info/africa/nigeria/corruption.php>.