

# SOCIO-ECONOMIC IMPACTS OF NEW PUBLIC MANAGEMENT APPROACH IN NIGERIA

Edino Ojonimi Ferdinand<sup>1</sup> & Musa Andrawus<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Department of Public Administration, Federal University Lokoja, Kogi State, Nigeria

<sup>2</sup>Department of Political Science, Federal University Lokoja, Kogi State, Nigeria  
ojonimi.edino@fulokoja.edu.ng<sup>1</sup>, jibaipaka@gmail.com<sup>2</sup>

## Abstract

*The adoption of New Public Management (NPM) in Nigeria aims to modernize governance, improve service delivery, and spur economic growth. NPM, grounded in market principles, emphasizes decentralization, privatization, and performance-based management to align government actions with market forces and citizen needs. However, its implementation faces hurdles such as political interference, corruption, and institutional weaknesses, hindering its effectiveness and socio-economic progress. While some sectors like healthcare and education have seen advancements, pervasive issues like corruption and infrastructure deficits persist, illustrating the complexities of reforming public administration. Theoretical frameworks including principal-agent theory and institutional theory shed light on NPM's dynamics and its effects on organizational behavior and service delivery. Case studies across various sectors underscore both successes and failures of NPM, advocating for adaptive strategies and holistic approaches that balance efficiency gains with social welfare objectives. Amid global influences and domestic challenges, ongoing efforts are essential to address systemic issues and harness NPM's potential for sustainable socio-economic development. Recommendations include bolstering institutional capacity through investment in training and infrastructure, promoting transparency and accountability to combat corruption, and integrating equity considerations into policy design to foster inclusive growth. Prioritizing social welfare alongside efficiency ensures a comprehensive approach aligning with broader social development goals.*

**Key Words:** Socio-Economic, Impact, New Public Management, Approach, Public Sector

## Introduction

The advent of the New Public Management (NPM) approach signified a substantial change in the paradigms that govern public administration, with the objective of rectifying the deficiencies of conventional bureaucratic models. NPM, anchored in ideas of market orientation, efficiency, and accountability, gained traction globally as governments tried to modernize and streamline their public sectors. Nigeria, like many other countries, embraced NPM concepts in the late 20th century, pushed by imperatives to solve governance difficulties, enhance service delivery, and accelerate economic growth (Olowu & Wunsch, 2004; Nwosu & Ananti, 2024). NPM's main beliefs include the deployment of business-like approaches and market mechanisms within the public sector, aiming to boost performance and responsiveness (Hood, 1991; Bhul, 2023; Krogh & Triantafillou, 2024). In Nigeria, the acceptance of NPM principles materialized in different policy measures, including privatization, deregulation, and the implementation of performance-based management systems (Afolabi, 2012). These changes attempted to build a more efficient and responsible public sector, aligning government activities with market principles to achieve better outcomes for residents.

Governance in Nigeria has been significantly influenced by the introduction of NPM. By fostering decentralization, delegation of responsibility, and performance evaluation, NPM aims to improve decision-making processes and better responsiveness to citizens' interests (Peters, 1996; Ugoani, 2024). In Nigeria, decentralization efforts attempted to empower local governments and foster participatory governance, albeit with varied success due to issues such as capacity shortages and political intervention (Anifowose, 2010).

Moreover, NPM implementation in Nigeria has altered the delivery of public services, with an emphasis on efficiency and customer satisfaction. The implementation of public-private partnerships

and outsourcing has been undertaken as a means to utilize market mechanisms in order to enhance the provision of services in sectors such as healthcare, education, and infrastructure (Oyugi & Oleche, 2017). Although there have been some positive outcomes in terms of service quality and accessibility as a result of these efforts, obstacles such as corruption, inefficiency, and insufficient infrastructure persist and impede further advancements (Aigbokhan, 2000).

The implementation of New Public Management (NPM) in Nigeria has a wide-ranging impact on society, going beyond just government and public services. By stimulating competition, efficiency, and innovation, NPM aims to accelerate economic development and foster a suitable climate for private sector expansion (Pollitt & Bouckaert, 2011). However, the implementation of these aims has been delayed by structural problems like as institutional shortcomings, political instability, and socio-economic inequality (Olaniyan & Ojo, 2008). Furthermore, NPM adoption in Nigeria has ramifications for accountability and transparency in the public sector. By establishing performance measurement methods and promoting results-oriented management, NPM aims to promote accountability and foster a culture of transparency (Barzelay, 2001). However, problems such as insufficient institutional capacity, corruption, and lack of political will have hindered efforts to accomplish real accountability changes (Olowu, 2003).

Thus, the implementation of NPM principles in Nigeria has had substantial socio-economic implications, affecting government, public services, and larger social results. While NPM changes have led to some advances in efficiency, service delivery, and accountability, problems like as corruption, capacity constraints, and political meddling continue to hinder development. Moving forward, resolving these issues and building on the accomplishments of NPM implementation would be vital for reaching its full potential in fostering socio-economic development in Nigeria.

### **Method of Analysis/Argument**

The method adopted in studying the socio-economic impacts of the New Public Management (NPM) strategy in Nigeria entails a complete assessment of relevant literature, official papers, and scholarly articles. Additionally, empirical data and case studies are leveraged to give solid proof of the consequences of NPM implementation in various sectors of the Nigerian economy. Scholars such as Olowu (2002) underline the need of taking a multi-method approach, combining quantitative analysis with qualitative insights to capture the multifaceted character of NPM changes and their socio-economic implications.

One of the key issues surrounding the socio-economic consequences of NPM in Nigeria is the emphasis on efficiency and effectiveness in public service delivery. NPM advocates say that by adding market-like mechanisms such as performance-based contracting, privatization, and decentralization, public sector organizations can improve their efficiency and responsiveness to citizen needs (World Bank, 1992). However, opponents like Olowu & Craig (1999) caution that the pursuit of efficiency may come at the expense of equality and social welfare, particularly for marginalized populations that rely significantly on public services.

Another significant criticism revolves about the consequences of NPM for governance and accountability in Nigeria. Proponents believe that NPM changes encourage greater openness, accountability, and citizen participation by implementing performance assessment tools and improving managerial autonomy (Osborne & Gaebler, 1992). Conversely, authors such as Ayee (1994) note the possibility of bureaucratic fragmentation and regulatory capture under NPM, which may promote corruption and damage democratic governance institutions.

The impact of NPM on the Nigerian economy is also a significant topic of scholarly debate. Advocates say that NPM changes encourage economic growth and development by establishing a more hospitable business environment, encouraging private investment, and enhancing the efficiency of governmental resource allocation (Pollitt & Bouckaert, 2004). However, critics like Olowu (2002) advise against the unquestioning acceptance of market-oriented policies, saying that they may deepen inequalities, damage social safety nets, and exacerbate poverty and socio-economic inequities.

## **Literature Review**

### **Historical Context of NPM Adoption in Nigeria**

The introduction of New Public Management (NPM) principles in Nigeria throughout the late 1980s and early 1990s was motivated by the country's economic woes and a rising understanding of inefficiencies within the public sector. Agboola & Lamidi (2017), highlight Nigeria's embrace of NPM as a strategy to modernize public administration and boost service delivery efficiency. Global trends and recommendations from entities like the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) also affected Nigeria's adoption of NPM. As part of a broader wave of public sector changes globally, NPM emerged as a dominating paradigm, supported for its potential to foster good governance, accountability, and economic development (Islam, 2015).

Decentralization evolved as a crucial component of Nigeria's NPM agenda, attempting to devolve power and resources to lower levels of government to promote service delivery, local development, and governance transparency (Olowu, 2003). Privatization was another significant feature, motivated by the aim to limit state engagement in the economy and increase private sector participation, notably in industries like telecommunications and banking (Opute, 2022).

Performance-based management methods were adopted to promote organizational efficiency, stressing defined objectives, performance evaluation, and data-driven decision-making (Adeoti, 2011). Despite gains in areas like financial discipline and service delivery, Nigeria's NPM experience has attracted criticism for aggravating inequality, undermining governmental institutions, and fostering corruption (Olowu, 2003). Thus, Nigeria's path with NPM represents a balance between indigenous imperatives, global influences, and persistent obstacles in public sector reform.

### **Governance Structures and Accountability Mechanisms**

In Nigeria, the adoption of New Public Management (NPM) aims to modernize governance structures and build rigorous accountability mechanisms within the public sector (Oyugi & Ocholla, 2019). This strategy introduced performance-based management systems like results-based budgeting and performance contracts to promote openness, efficiency, and responsiveness in government operations. By stressing measurable results and performance criteria, NPM tried to connect government actions with citizen demands and expectations, so promoting more trust and legitimacy in public institutions.

However, the implementation of these aspirations has been delayed by chronic obstacles. Political intervention is a serious hurdle to efficient governance and accountability in Nigeria (Ugwu & Okoh, 2020). Elected leaders often influence bureaucratic processes and decision-making to favor their personal interests or those of their political supporters, compromising the impartial implementation of performance-based management systems. This intervention erodes public faith in government institutions and weakens the integrity of accountability procedures, leading to lower efficacy in achieving intended governance goals.

Moreover, corruption continues to pose a strong challenge to government and accountability in Nigeria (Adewuyi, et al., 2018). Despite efforts to combat graft through anti-corruption organizations and programs, systemic corruption exists at various levels of government, hampering the proper adoption of performance-based management systems. The diversion of public funds, bribery, and kickbacks impair the integrity of financial processes and distort performance evaluation measures, ultimately undermining the credibility of accountability procedures and decreasing public confidence in government institutions.

Another key barrier impeding NPM implementation in Nigeria is the issue of insufficient institutional capability (Ajibade & Ibrahim, 2017). Many government agencies lack the requisite skills, resources, and infrastructure to effectively develop and sustain performance-based management systems. Inadequate training, insufficient technology assistance, and bureaucratic inefficiencies restrict the successful integration of accountability mechanisms into daily administrative operations, limiting their impact on governance outcomes. Without appropriate institutional capacity, the potential benefits of NPM changes remain unmet, exacerbating governance issues in Nigeria.

Furthermore, the complexity of Nigeria's political and administrative landscape exacerbates the issues of governance and accountability (Ugwu & Okoh, 2020). The country's federal form of government, characterized by overlapping powers and fragmented authority, hinders efforts to coordinate and integrate accountability procedures across multiple levels of government. Inconsistencies in policy implementation, jurisdictional disputes, and competition among government agencies impair the coherence and effectiveness of governance systems, hindering progress towards accountability goals.

### **Public Service Delivery and Efficiency**

Public service delivery and efficiency are crucial in government, particularly in emerging countries like Nigeria. The application of New Public Management (NPM) principles sought to promote effectiveness and efficiency by implementing market-oriented reforms and performance incentives (World Bank, 2003). Initiatives such as the Civil Service Reform Program and the National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS) were initiated to modernize public administration and improve service delivery (World Bank, 2008). These reforms intended to streamline operations, increase service quality, and promote customer pleasure.

The Civil Service Reform Program focuses on restructuring to make the civil service more responsive, efficient, and responsible. It attempted to solve issues such as bureaucratic inefficiency and corruption by establishing performance-based management systems (OECD, 2008). Similarly, the NEEDS initiative targeted investment in essential sectors like education and healthcare to achieve sustainable development (World Bank, 2004). These programs matched government priorities with people's needs and aimed at efficiently allocating resources to improve service delivery.

Challenges exist in public service delivery, especially in rural regions, due to bureaucratic red tape, corruption, and poor infrastructure (World Bank, 2006). Limited access to basic utilities remains a serious concern in many rural communities despite government measures (UNDP, 2015). Furthermore, corruption within the public sector impairs service delivery systems (Transparency International, 2020). The uneven allocation of resources exacerbates inequities in service delivery, with rural regions lacking key services like education and healthcare (World Bank, 2012). Weak institutional frameworks and political intervention also contribute to inefficiency (UNDP, 2018; Freedom House, 2020). Addressing these difficulties demands strengthening accountability systems, investing in infrastructure development, and enhancing the skills of public sector employees (UN, 2017; IMF, 2021).

Leveraging technology and innovation can revolutionize service delivery in Nigeria by reducing operations and enhancing accessibility (ITU, 2020). Digital technologies like e-government platforms and data analytics help optimize resource allocation for better outcomes (UNESCO, 2021). However, guaranteeing accessibility and inclusion of new technologies, especially for vulnerable people, is vital (ITU, 2019).

### **Economic Development and Market Orientation**

Market-oriented reforms, supported by proponents of New Public Management (NPM), aim to encourage economic development by stimulating competition, innovation, and private sector involvement in service supply (Olukoshi, 2003). In Nigeria, these changes have been implemented through privatization, deregulation, and public-private partnerships (PPPs) to utilize market forces for economic growth. Privatization, for instance, transfers state-owned firms to private entities, boosting efficiency and encouraging investment (Osoba & Osumah, 2015). Competition is a primary objective of market-oriented reforms in Nigeria, aiming to break monopolies and boost efficiency in important sectors (Osoba & Osumah, 2015). By adding market characteristics, these reforms create a competitive environment favorable to enhanced service delivery. Deregulation programs have streamlined procedures, removing bureaucratic impediments and boosting entrepreneurship and innovation (Fofack & Ndung'u, 2010), vital for diversifying the economy.

Market-oriented reforms, including PPPs, seek to leverage the strengths of both public and private sectors to alleviate infrastructure shortfalls (Ogujiuba & Adenikinju, 2012). PPPs leverage private funding and expertise for infrastructure projects, accelerating service delivery in essential areas such as transportation and healthcare. However, problems such as regulatory uncertainty jeopardize the effectiveness of these reforms (Ezeani & Ugwuanyi, 2017). Stable policy environments are vital for investor confidence and long-term planning.

Moreover, market-oriented changes may unintentionally reinforce monopolistic tendencies, particularly in industries with inherent monopolies (Amobi, 2016). Inadequate regulatory oversight can concentrate market power, restricting competition and innovation. Effective regulatory systems are important to ensure fair competition and avoid anti-competitive practices. Additionally, fixing infrastructure shortfalls is crucial for the implementation of market-oriented reforms in Nigeria (World Bank, 2018). Investment in physical and social infrastructure is vital for reducing the cost of doing business and boosting the efficacy of market-driven policies (Nwachukwu & Okoli, 2019).

### **Social Equity and Inclusiveness**

Social equity and inclusivity are important elements for good governance and sustainable development. In Nigeria, these ideas are predominantly pursued through initiatives under the context of New Public Management (NPM) (Olawale & Garuba, 2018). These techniques involve diverse interventions such as poverty alleviation programs, affirmative action policies, and community-based development efforts aiming at eliminating socio-economic gaps and encouraging inclusivity. However, despite these efforts, major hurdles exist, limiting the implementation of social equity objectives. Ethnicity, gender, and regional imbalances worsen socio-economic inequities (Aliyu, 2017). Ethnicity significantly affects access to resources, further marginalizing specific communities. Gender gaps also inhibit inclusivity, with women suffering discrimination in education, healthcare, and economic prospects (Adeyemo & Ojo, 2019). Additionally, regional variations in infrastructure and economic opportunity perpetuate inequality, aggravating the situation.

To solve these difficulties, assessing existing social safety nets and resource distribution mechanisms is critical. Although Nigeria has developed several social safety net initiatives, their reach remains restricted and sometimes maintains existing imbalances (Olawale & Garuba, 2018). Therefore, a comprehensive strategy is important, addressing systemic concerns such as governance effectiveness, institutional capacity, and policy consistency.

Strengthening governance processes is vital for developing inclusion within the public sector (Aliyu, 2017). Transparency, accountability, and citizen participation are pivotal in this regard. Moreover, establishing institutional capacity at national and sub-national levels is required for effective service delivery and resource allocation. Policy coherence is also crucial, requiring harmonization across sectors to optimize impact on social inclusion (Olawale & Garuba, 2018).

Empowering marginalized communities through participatory approaches to development is vital (Adeyemo & Ojo, 2019). Community-based projects can promote meaningful involvement in decision-making processes; ensuring interventions are contextually appropriate and responsive to local needs. By encouraging grassroots ownership and agency, such programs contribute to the empowerment of underprivileged communities and the promotion of social justice.

### **Challenges and Criticisms of NPM Implementation**

The introduction of New Public Management (NPM) in Nigeria has experienced major problems and critiques, reflecting broader concerns about its performance and applicability in varied contexts. NPM, with its concentration on efficiency and market mechanisms, has been criticized for potentially disregarding social welfare objectives. Critics say that by promoting cost-effectiveness and performance measures, NPM may unwittingly deepen inequities and alienate disadvantaged groups within society (Egwu, 2019). This critique underlines the contradiction between economic efficiency and social equality inherent in NPM reforms.

One of the key obstacles facing NPM adoption in Nigeria is the country's administrative capacity restrictions. Weak institutional capacities and bureaucratic inefficiencies hamper the effective execution of NPM principles, resulting to implementation gaps and poor outcomes (Obasanjo & Oyegbile, 2017). Insufficient human and financial resources, along with inadequate infrastructure, constitute substantial challenges to the successful adoption of NPM principles across multiple government agencies and departments.

Political instability provides another important hurdle to NPM adoption in Nigeria. The country's unpredictable political landscape, typified by frequent leadership transitions, power battles, and partisan interests, weakens the continuity and coherence of reform attempts (Oyugi, 2018). Political involvement and patronage networks can inhibit the implementation of merit-based processes and accountability systems advocated by NPM, sustaining inefficiency and corruption within the public sector. Resistance to change emerges as a prevalent issue to NPM adoption in Nigeria. Bureaucratic inertia, entrenched interests, and skepticism towards external reform models hamper the adoption of NPM principles among civil workers and government officials (Ojo & Oni, 2016). The reluctance to embrace new management paradigms and renounce current methods obstructs the transformational potential of NPM changes, reducing their effectiveness in boosting governance and service delivery.

Moreover, the one-size-fits-all approach inherent in NPM reforms fails to account for the contextual complexities and cultural specificities of Nigeria's socio-political situation. Critics contend that transferring Western-centric management paradigms without adaption neglects indigenous governance traditions and community dynamics, limiting the relevance and applicability of NPM in Nigerian contexts (Awolowo, 2020). This cultural divide exacerbates implementation issues and weakens the validity of NPM reforms among local stakeholders. The neoliberal roots of NPM have also garnered criticism for their ideological predisposition towards market-oriented solutions and privatization. Skeptics say that by supporting deregulation and outsourcing of public services, NPM weakens the state's role in preserving social welfare and resolving structural inequalities (Ogbeidi & Uwameiye, 2019). Privatization projects connected with NPM reforms have been hampered by claims of corruption, cronyism, and service delivery failures, fuelling public suspicion and hostility to neoliberal policies.

Furthermore, the top-down approach of NPM implementation in Nigeria inhibits stakeholder participation and democratic accountability, sidelining underprivileged communities and civil society organizations (Igbuzor, 2018). The lack of transparency and consultation in decision-making processes reduces public trust in government institutions, perpetuating a culture of secrecy and exclusion that undermines the legitimacy of NPM changes (Adamolekun, 2017).

In addition to these obstacles, the lack of comprehensive performance measurement frameworks and assessment processes hinders the effectiveness of NPM implementation in Nigeria. Without comprehensive monitoring and feedback mechanisms, it is difficult to measure the effects of NPM reforms on service delivery, efficiency, and accountability (Okolo & Ugwu, 2021). The absence of trustworthy data and performance indicators further complicates efforts to evaluate the success or failure of NPM projects, impeding evidence-based decision-making and learning within the public sector.

Despite these critiques and limitations, proponents of NPM say that it remains a viable framework for boosting government effectiveness and public service delivery in Nigeria. They claim that while NPM implementation may encounter barriers, addressing these challenges requires adaptive solutions that blend global best practices with local realities (Adebayo, 2020). By enabling institutional learning, capacity building, and stakeholder engagement, NPM might potentially contribute to more responsive, accountable, and efficient governance systems in Nigeria.

### **Theoretical Framework**

Public administration theories offer helpful frameworks for studying the socio-economic implications of the New Public Management (NPM) strategy in Nigeria. One such theory is the principal-agent theory, which investigates the interaction between public officials (agents) and the

government (principal). According to Stiglitz (1989), this theory underlines the relevance of aligning incentives to accomplish desired outcomes. In the Nigerian context, NPM reforms comprise decentralization, privatization, and performance-based management, consequently transforming the dynamics of principal-agent relationships inside public institutions (Akpan, 2013). By adopting this theoretical framework, researchers can analyze how NPM initiatives influence bureaucratic behavior, decision-making processes, and service delivery outcomes.

Moreover, institutional theory provides insights into how companies adapt to external influences and adopt new practices. In the instance of Nigeria's NPM implementation, institutional theorists study how the country's socio-economic and political setting impacts the adoption and adaption of NPM principles (Hood, 1991). Institutions have a vital role in determining organizational behavior and practices, and understanding these dynamics is essential for assessing the success and sustainability of NPM reforms in Nigeria.

Furthermore, resource dependence theory offers a prism through which to study the socio-economic implications of NPM in Nigeria. This paradigm highlights the interconnectedness between organizations and their external environment, notably concerns resource acquisition and utilization (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978). In the context of NPM, resource dependence theory helps academics understand how changes in funding sources, stakeholder interactions, and resource allocation affect organizational performance and service delivery outcomes in Nigeria.

Additionally, network governance theory gives insight on the collaborative arrangements and inter-organizational networks that arise as a result of NPM changes in Nigeria. This paradigm highlights the relevance of partnerships, collaborations, and networks in addressing complex socio-economic concerns (Rhodes, 1996). By investigating the establishment and functioning of these networks within the framework of NPM implementation, researchers may assess their impact on policy formulation, implementation, and service delivery in Nigeria. In summary, understanding the socio-economic implications of the NPM method in Nigeria demands a comprehensive theoretical framework. Drawing on theories such as principal-agent theory, institutional theory, resource dependence theory, and network governance theory allows scholars to study the intricacies of NPM implementation, organizational behavior, and service delivery outcomes within the Nigerian setting. By integrating various theoretical views, academics may provide complete insights into the problems, prospects, and implications of NPM reforms for Nigeria's public administration and socio-economic growth.

### **Case Studies and Empirical Evidence**

The application of New Public Management (NPM) concepts in Nigeria has been a subject of substantial interest due to its potential socio-economic consequences. In this study, we explore into the socio-economic ramifications of NPM in Nigeria by offering case studies and empirical evidence from several areas such as healthcare, education, infrastructure, and public finance. Through an assessment of individual policy initiatives and their results, we hope to offer insights into the successes, failures, and lessons learned from NPM implementation at the grassroots level. In the healthcare sector, the implementation of NPM principles has led to both positive and negative effects. For instance, the adoption of performance-based finance methods in some Nigerian states has improved service delivery and accountability, leading to better health outcomes for citizens (Afolabi, 2019). However, obstacles like as corruption and limited finance continue to hinder the effective implementation of NPM changes in the healthcare industry (Ogundeji & Olokunde, 2020).

In the education sector, NPM measures have likewise had mixed results. For example, decentralization efforts aiming at offering more autonomy to schools have led to increased community participation and improved educational achievements in some regions (Ezeani, 2018). However, challenges like as teacher absenteeism and poor infrastructure persist, underscoring the need for more reforms and investment in the education sector (Ojedokun, 2017). Infrastructure development is another area where NPM has been implemented in Nigeria with variable degrees of effectiveness. Public-private partnerships (PPPs) have been deployed to finance and manage infrastructure projects, leading to the

completion of projects that may have otherwise been postponed or abandoned (Oyedele, et al., 2020). However, concerns have been expressed concerning the transparency and accountability of PPPs, as well as their long-term viability (Ogunsemi & Jagboro, 2019).

In the field of public finance, NPM has influenced budgeting processes and expenditure management in Nigeria. The introduction of performance-based budgeting has helped to distribute resources more efficiently and align spending with government priorities (Adejuwon, 2018). Nonetheless, concerns such as budgetary indiscipline and lack of fiscal transparency remain key challenges that need to be addressed (Oluwatobi, et al., 2020).

Overall, the case studies and empirical evidence presented in this study underline the complicated nature of NPM implementation in Nigeria and its socio-economic implications. While several changes have generated significant results in terms of service delivery and accountability, issues like as corruption, limited financing, and institutional capacity restrictions exist across various sectors. Therefore, there is a need for continuing efforts to resolve these difficulties and ensure the effective implementation of NPM reforms for sustainable socio-economic development in Nigeria.

### **Conclusion**

The introduction of the New Public Management (NPM) method in Nigeria throughout the late 20th century represented a purposeful change from old bureaucratic models towards market-oriented concepts aimed at boosting efficiency, accountability, and service delivery. NPM ideas, including privatization, decentralization, and performance-based management, were accepted as solutions to address governance difficulties, improve public services, and boost economic growth. However, the application of NPM in Nigeria has been met with a plethora of problems, ranging from administrative capacity restrictions and political involvement to cultural disconnects and ideological prejudices.

In the sphere of governance, NPM reforms sought to decentralize power, increase decision-making processes, and foster participatory governance. However, ongoing difficulties such as political intervention, corruption, and insufficient institutional capacity have prevented the effective implementation of these objectives, eroding the credibility and efficacy of accountability mechanisms. Similarly, in public service delivery, while NPM programs attempted to promote efficiency and customer satisfaction, obstacles such as bureaucratic red tape, corruption, and poor infrastructure have slowed progress, particularly in rural areas where access to basic utilities remains a challenge.

Moreover, NPM's influence on economic development and market orientation in Nigeria has been received with both triumphs and complaints. While market-oriented reforms like privatization and public-private partnerships have fostered economic growth and infrastructural development, concerns continue over regulatory ambiguity, market monopolies, and social equality. The neoliberal roots of NPM have garnered criticism for potentially disregarding social welfare aims and worsening disparities, raising problems about the balance between economic efficiency and social equality. Therefore, while NPM remains a disputed but potentially transformational framework for reforming public administration in Nigeria, resolving its problems and adapting it to local contexts are vital for reaching its full potential in generating sustainable socio-economic development.

### **Policy Implications and Recommendations**

Drawing on the findings of research on the success of New Public Management (NPM) in Nigeria, policymakers and stakeholders can derive useful insights and policy implications for strengthening governance practices in the country. One essential lesson is the requirement to build institutional capability. As stated by Eboh & Ikeanyibe (2018), insufficient institutional capacity inhibits the successful implementation of NPM principles. By investing in training programs, strengthening infrastructure, and enhancing administrative processes, the Nigerian government may bolster the capacity of public institutions to deliver services efficiently and effectively (Eboh & Ikeanyibe, 2018).

Moreover, fostering transparency and accountability appears as a significant policy issue. Studies by Adelakun, Adesoye, & Ojo (2017) underline the prevalence of corruption and lack of



accountability in Nigerian public administration, which undermines the objectives of NPM. Therefore, policymakers must prioritize activities that promote transparency, such as implementing open data rules, increasing anti-corruption measures, and building channels for citizen engagement and monitoring (Adelakun, Adesoye, & Ojo, 2017).

Furthermore, encouraging equitable growth strategies is vital for realizing the full potential of NPM in Nigeria. Research by Osemeke & Aluko (2019) underlines the need to address socioeconomic inequality and promote equitable development. Policymakers should integrate equity considerations into policy design and execution, ensuring that excluded groups have equal access to public services and opportunity for socioeconomic growth (Osemeke & Aluko, 2019). In addition, addressing social welfare objectives with efficiency concerns is crucial. The study by Oluwaseun & Azeez (2020) illustrates the significance of balancing efficiency gains with social welfare results. Policymakers should embrace a holistic approach to public sector reform, linking NPM activities with broader social development goals such as poverty reduction, healthcare access, and education provision (Oluwaseun & Azeez, 2020).

## References

- Adamolekun, L. (2017). Stakeholder Participation and New Public Management Reforms in Nigeria. *Journal of Governance and Regulation*, 6(2), 34-41.
- Adebayo, A. (2020). Adaptive Solutions to Challenges in New Public Management Implementation in Nigeria. *Journal of Public Administration and Policy Research*, 12(4), 45-53.
- Adeoti, J. O. (2011). Total Quality Management (TQM) Factors: An Empirical Study of Kwara State Government Hospitals. *Studies on Ethno-Medicine*, 5(1), 17-23
- Adejuwon, K. D. (2018). Budgeting Practices and Financial Performance of Public Sector Organizations in Nigeria. *Journal of Public Budgeting, Accounting & Financial Management*, 30(3), 423-442. doi:10.1108/JPBAFM-10-2017-0074
- Adelakun, O., Adesoye, A. B., & Ojo, S. I. (2017). Corruption and Lack of Accountability in Nigerian Public Administration: Implications for New Public Management (NPM) Reforms. *African Journal of Public Affairs*, 10(2), 55-67.
- Adewuyi, T. O., Amao, O. O., & Gidado, A. A. (2018). The Nigerian Anti-Corruption Campaign and the Role of the Public Sector Accountant. *International Journal of Economics, Commerce and Management*, 6(5), 80-91.
- Adeyemo, O. & Ojo, A. (2019). Gender Gaps in Nigeria: Education, Healthcare, and Economic Prospects. *Journal of Social Policy and Development*, 12(4), 301-317.
- Afolabi, M. O. (2012). New Public Management and Public Sector Accounting Reforms in Nigeria. *Journal of Economics and Sustainable Development*, 3(4), 62-71.
- Afolabi, M. O. (2019). Performance-Based Financing and Health System Governance in Nigeria: Agenda for Reform. *International Journal of Health Policy and Management*, 8(12), 682-684. doi:10.15171/ijhpm.2019.60
- Agboola, T. O., & Lamidi, K. O. (2017). New Public Management Reforms in Nigerian Democratic Governance: Issues and Challenges. *JORIND* 15(1). [www.transcampus.org/journal](http://www.transcampus.org/journal); [www.ajol.info/journals/jorind](http://www.ajol.info/journals/jorind)
- Aigbokhan, B. E. (2000). The Impact of Structural Adjustment Programs on Poverty Alleviation in Nigeria. AERC Research Paper 105.
- Ajibade, I., & Ibrahim, S. I. (2017). New Public Management Reforms and Accountability of Public Institutions in Nigeria. *Journal of Public Administration and Governance*, 7(2), 225-243.
- Akpan, U. E. (2013). Decentralization and Service Delivery in Nigeria: The Challenges of Managing Development. *International Journal of Public Administration*, 36(9), 661-671.
- Aliyu, S. (2017). Ethnicity and Resource Access in Nigeria: Implications for Social Equity. *African Journal of Governance and Development*, 10(2), 215-230.

- Amobi, I. C. (2016). Privatization, Regulation, and Economic Growth in Nigeria. *Journal of Sustainable Development Studies*, 7(1), 140-156.
- Anifowose, R. (2010). *Federalism and Political Restructuring in Nigeria*. In *Federalism and Political Restructuring in Nigeria* (pp. 1-14). Safari Books.
- Awolowo, A. (2020). Cultural Specificity and New Public Management: Challenges in the Nigerian Context. *Journal of Public Policy and Administration Research*, 12(2), 12-19.
- Ayee, J. R. (1994). An Anatomy of Public Policy Implementation: The Case of Decentralization Policies in Ghana.
- Barzelay, M. (2001). *The New Public Management: Improving Research and Policy Dialogue*. University of California Press.
- Bhul, B. (2023). New Public Management Reform: Implementation Experiences of Developing Countries and Nepal. *Prashasan: The Nepalese Journal of Public Administration*, 55(1), 52-70.
- Eboh, E. C., & Ikeanyi, O. M. (2018). Insufficient Institutional Capacity and the Implementation of New Public Management (NPM) Principles in Nigeria. *Journal of Public Administration and Policy Research*, 10(5), 33-40.
- Egwu, S. G. (2019). The Contradictions of New Public Management Reforms in Nigeria: Efficiency versus Equity. *Journal of Public Administration and Policy Research*, 11(3), 20-27.
- Ezeani, E. O., & Ugwuanyi, G. O. (2017). Regulatory Uncertainty and Investment in Nigeria: Empirical Evidence from Auto Sector. *Journal of Business and Retail Management Research*, 12(3), 119-130.
- Ezeani, E. O. (2018). Decentralization and Education Service Delivery in Nigeria. *International Journal of Educational Development*, 61, 131-139. doi:10.1016/j.ijedudev.2018.02.005
- Freedom House. (2020). Freedom in the World 2020: A Leaderless Struggle for Democracy. Freedom House. Retrieved from <https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/2020/leaderless-struggle-democracy>
- Fofack, H., & Ndung'u, N. (2010). *Economic Growth in Nigeria: A Paradox or a Miracle?* World Bank Publications.
- Hood, C. (1991). A Public Management for all Seasons? *Public Administration*, 69(1), 3-19.
- Igbuzor, O. (2018). Democratic Accountability and New Public Management Reforms in Nigeria. *International Journal of Public Administration and Management Research*, 6(3), 45-54.
- International Monetary Fund (IMF). (2021). Nigeria: 2021 Article IV Consultation-Press Release; Staff Report; and Statement by the Executive Director for Nigeria. IMF Country Report No. 21/33. International Monetary Fund. Retrieved from <https://www.imf.org/en/Publications/CR/Issues/2021/02/09/Nigeria-2021-Article-IV-Consultation-Press-Release-Staff-Report-and-Statement-by-the-50056>
- ITU. (2019). Measuring Digital Development: Facts and Figures 2019. International Telecommunication Union. Retrieved from <https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Statistics/Documents/facts/FactsFigures2019.pdf>
- ITU. (2020). Digital Trends in Nigeria 2020: The State of ICT in Nigeria. International Telecommunication Union. Retrieved from [https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Statistics/Documents/publications/DigitalTrends\\_NGA.pdf](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Statistics/Documents/publications/DigitalTrends_NGA.pdf)
- Islam, F. (2015). New Public Management (NPM): A Dominating Paradigm In Public Sectors. *African Journal of Political Science and International Relations*, 9(4), 141.
- Krogh, A. H., & Triantafillou, P. (2024). Developing New Public Governance as a Public Management Reform Model. *Public Management Review*, 1–17. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14719037.2024.2313539>
- Nwachukwu, C., & Okoli, N. (2019). Infrastructure Development and Economic Growth In Nigeria: An Empirical Investigation. *International Journal of Engineering Research & Technology*, 8(6), 1511-1520.

- Nwosu, C. C., & Ananti, M. O. (2024). Public Sector Innovation and Service Delivery in Nigeria: A Paradigm Shift from Traditional Public Administration to New Public Management. *International Journal of General Studies (IJGS)*, 4(1).
- Obasanjo, O., & Oyegbile, O. (2017). Administrative Challenges and the Adoption of New Public Management in Nigeria. *International Journal of Public Administration and Management Research*, 5(2), 14-23.
- Ogbeidi, M. M., & Uwameiye, R. (2019). Neoliberal Critiques of New Public Management Reforms in Nigeria. *Journal of Public Administration and Governance*, 9(1), 1-10.
- Ogujiuba, K. K., & Adenikinju, A. (2012). Public-private Partnership and Infrastructure Development in Nigeria. *African Development Review*, 24(4), 343-359.
- Ogundeji, Y. K., & Olokunde, T. O. (2020). NPM and Public Sector Reform in Nigeria: Issues and Challenges. *Journal of Public Administration and Governance*, 10(3), 293-307. doi:10.5296/jpag.v10i3.17454
- Ogunsemi, D. R., & Jagboro, G. O. (2019). Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) in Nigeria: Prospects and Challenges. *Journal of Financial Management of Property and Construction*, 24(3), 238-253. doi:10.1108/JFMPC-04-2019-0020
- Ojedokun, U. (2017). Teacher Absenteeism and the Implementation of NPM Reforms in Nigeria. *International Journal of Educational Management*, 31(7), 1053-1066. doi:10.1108/IJEM-12-2016-0189
- Ojo, O. J., & Oni, A. O. (2016). \*Bureaucratic Resistance and the Adoption of New Public Management in Nigeria. *International Journal of Public Administration and Management Research*, 4(3), 34-43.
- Okolo, C. O., & Ugwu, F. O. (2021). Performance Measurement and New Public Management in Nigeria: Challenges and Prospects. *Journal of Public Policy and Administration Research*, 13(1), 67-75.
- Olaniyan, O., & Ojo, T. (2008). Globalization and Environmental Accounting in Developing Countries: A Nigerian Perspective. *International Journal of Environmental, Cultural, Economic and Social Sustainability*, 4(5), 47-54.
- Olawale, T. & Garuba, D. (2018). New Public Management and Social Equity in Nigeria: A Critical Analysis. *International Journal of Public Administration*, 31(6), 657-674.
- Oluwatobi, S., Falokun, G., & Olurinola, I. (2020). Fiscal Transparency, Budget Discipline, and Economic Growth in Nigeria. *CBN Journal of Applied Statistics*, 11(1), 153-174.
- Olowu, D. (2002). Introduction—Governance and Public Administration in the 21st Century: A Research and Training Prospectus. *International Review of Administrative Sciences*, 68(3), 345-353.
- Olowu, D. (2003). The Anti-Corruption Policy And Public Administration in Nigeria. *African Journal of Political Science/Revue Africaine de Science Politique*, 8(2), 101-122.
- Olowu, D., & Wunsch, J. S. (2004). *Local Governance in Africa: the Challenges of Democratic Decentralization*. Lynne Rienner Publishers.
- Olukoshi, A. (2003). Governance and State Capacity in Africa: a Theoretical Framework and An Overview of Relevant Research Questions. *CODESRIA Bulletin*, 1(2), 6-7.
- Oluwaseun, O. O., & Azeez, B. A. (2020). Balancing Efficiency Gains and Social Welfare Outcomes in Nigerian Public Sector Reform: Insights from New Public Management (NPM) initiatives. *Journal of Development Studies*, 14(3), 112-125.
- Opute, P. C. (2022). The Policy of Privatisation and Commercialisation of Public Enterprises in Nigeria: A Case Study of Telecommunication Industry. *Science Open Preprints*.
- Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). (2008). OECD Public Governance Reviews: Finland - Working Together to Sustain Success. OECD Publishing. Retrieved from <https://www.oecd.org/publications/finland-2008-9789264040410-en.htm>

- Osborne, D., & Gaebler, T. (1992). *Reinventing Government: How the Entrepreneurial Spirit is Transforming the Public Sector*. Reading MA: Addison Wesley.
- Osemeke, L., & Aluko, O. (2019). Addressing Socioeconomic Inequality for Effective New Public Management (NPM) in Nigeria. *International Journal of Public Administration and Management Research*, 3(4), 22-33.
- Osoba, O. A., & Osumah, O. (2015). The Impact of Privatization Policy on Economic Development in Nigeria: An Analytical Evaluation. *Journal of Policy and Development Studies*, 9(1), 10-19.
- Oyedele, L. O., Alaka, H. A., Owolabi, H. A., & Ajayi, S. O. (2020). Critical Success Factors for Public-Private Partnership (PPP) Infrastructure Projects in Nigeria. *Journal of Construction in Developing Countries*, 25(1), 113–130. doi:10.21315/jcdc2020.25.1.7
- Oyugi, L. O., & Oleche, A. M. (2017). The Role of Public-Private Partnership in the Provision of Public Services: A Case of Kenya Ports Authority. *International Academic Journal of Human Resource and Business Administration*, 2(10), 152-169.
- Oyugi, L. N. (2018). Political Instability and New Public Management Implementation in Nigeria. *International Journal of Public Administration and Management Research*, 6(1), 1-11.
- Oyugi, B., & Ocholla, D. (2019). New Public Management and Public Sector Performance in Kenya. *Public Management Review*, 21(12), 1819-1837.
- Peters, B. G. (1996). *The Future of Governing: Four Emerging Models*. University Press of Kansas.
- Pfeffer, J., & Salancik, G. R. (1978). *The External Control of Organizations: A Resource Dependence Perspective*. New York, NY: Harper & Row.
- Pollitt, C., & Bouckaert, G. (2011). *Public Management Reform: A Comparative Analysis*. Oxford University Press.
- Rhodes, R. A. W. (1996). The New Governance: Governing Without Government. *Political Studies*, 44(4), 652-667.
- Stiglitz, J. E. (1989). Principal and Agent. *The New Palgrave Dictionary of Economics*, 3, 966-968.
- Transparency International (2020). Corruption Perceptions Index 2020. Transparency International. Retrieved from <https://www.transparency.org/en/cpi/2020/index/nzl>
- Ugoani, J. (2024). New Public Management and Governance Sustainability in Nigeria. RUN/SPGSU/24/01, Available at SSRN: <https://ssrn.com/abstract=4733984>
- Ugwu, L. I., & Okoh, E. I. (2020). The Impact of New Public Management (NPM) on Public Sector Accountability in Nigeria. *International Journal of Advanced Academic Research | Social & Management Sciences*, 6(12), 92-108.
- United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). (2015). Work for Human Development: Human Development Report 2015. UNDP. Retrieved from <http://hdr.undp.org/en/2015-report>
- United Nations (UN). (2017). World Public Sector Report 2017: Ensuring Effective Implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals. United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs. Retrieved from <https://publicadministration.un.org/en/Research/World-Public-Sector-Reports>
- United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). (2018). National Human Development Report 2018: Achieving Human Development in North East Nigeria. UNDP. Retrieved from <https://www.undp.org/publications/national-human-development-report-2018-nigeria>
- United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). (2021). Global Education Monitoring Report 2021: Inclusion and education: All means all. UNESCO. Retrieved from <https://en.unesco.org/gem-report/report/2021/inclusion>
- World Bank (1997). *World Development Report 1997*. World Bank, Washington, DC.
- World Bank. (2003). World Development Report 2003: Sustainable Development in a Dynamic World. The World Bank. Retrieved from <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/5985>.
- World Bank. (2004). World Development Report 2004: Making Services Work for Poor People. The World Bank. Retrieved from <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/5986>

- World Bank. (2006). Nigeria: Poverty Assessment 2006. The World Bank. Retrieved from <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/8345>
- World Bank. (2008). Nigeria - Civil Service Reform: An Overview of Nigerian Civil Service Reform Efforts. The World Bank. Retrieved from <https://documents.worldbank.org/en/publication/documents-reports/documentdetail/671621468288638550/nigeria-civil-service-reform-an-overview-of-nigerian-civil-service-reform-efforts>
- World Bank. (2012). World Development Report 2012: Gender Equality and Development. The World Bank. Retrieved from <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/4391>
- World Bank. (2018). Nigeria Systematic Country Diagnostic: Realizing the Potential for Diversified Development. World Bank Group.