


2019

Managers' Views on Path-Breaking Interventions to Support Effective New Public Management in Nigeria

Chika Raymond Odimara
Walden University

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Walden University

College of Management and Technology

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Chika Odimara

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Review Committee

Dr. Daphne Halkias, Committee Chairperson, Management Faculty

Dr. Labrina Jones, Committee Member, Management Faculty

Dr. Kathleen Barclay, University Reviewer, Management Faculty

Chief Academic Officer

Eric Riedel, Ph.D.

Walden University

2019

Abstract

Managers' Views on Path-Breaking Interventions to Support Effective New Public

Management in Nigeria

by

Chika Odimara

MA, Arcadia University, 2008

MS, Springfield College, 2012

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of

the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Management

Walden University

February 2019

Abstract

Implementing public sector reform in Nigeria is complex. Although government effectiveness is important for citizens' welfare, little evidence links management practices for effective public service delivery for low-income populations in developing countries. The purpose of this qualitative, multiple case study was to explore views of public agency managers in Nigeria on putting progressive interventions into practice to improve public services and change social outcomes for this population. The conceptual framework of the proposed study was path dependency, defined as increasing returns, positive feedback, or self-reinforcing processes, which are significant in understanding the challenges of formal and intentional reform programs. Seven agency managers recruited from the Nigerian public sector completed semistructured interviews to give their perspectives to address the following research question: "What are the views of public agency managers in Nigeria, assigned agents of NPM reform, on implementing path-breaking interventions within their agencies to improve services and change social outcomes for the low-income population?" I used NvIVO software to develop the splitting up of common codes, phrases, and words in the responses of the participants. Fifteen themes were presented, including the categories of corruption, nepotism, marginalization, and poor service delivery to low income populations in Nigeria. Social change for the low-income population in Nigeria can only be realized when local NPM managers themselves can have a voice in Nigeria's national conversation on implementing effective interventions to improve services and change social outcomes.

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Dedication

I dedicate this study to God Almighty, my Creator, and my strong pillar, my source of inspiration, wisdom, knowledge, and understanding. He has been the source of my strength throughout this program and on His wings, I have soared. This study is also dedicated to my late father, Chief Aloysius Odimara, who taught me that the best kind of knowledge to have is that which is learned for its own sake. It is also dedicated to my mother, the late Lolo Franscisca Odimara, who taught me that even the largest task can be accomplished if it is done one step at a time. I also dedicate this work to my wife, Dr. Ursula Odimara, who has encouraged me all the way and has made sure that I give it all it takes to finish what I have started. I also dedicate this study to my children, Stephanie, Denzel, Olivia, and Jason who have been affected in every way possible by this quest as well as to my late little sister, Gloria Odimara-Igbokwe, whose death I still feel, and my two grandmothers, Madam Regina Odimara and Nwanyigbe Obi. I thank you. My love for you all can never be quantified. God will continue to bless and guide you all.

Acknowledgments

Dr. Daphne Halkias has been the ideal research chair. I greatly thank her for walking alongside me during the years of my study. She has guided me, placed opportunities in front of me, and showed me doors that are useful to open. Dr. Daphne's advice, insightful criticisms, and patient encouragement aided the writing of this study in innumerable ways. I would also like to thank Dr. Labrina Jones, second committee member, whose steadfast support of this study was greatly needed and deeply appreciated. I am grateful to all of those with whom I have had the pleasure to work during this process. My dissertation committee has provided me extensive personal and professional guidance and taught me a great deal about both scientific research and life in general. I would especially again like to thank my chair. As my teacher and mentor, Dr. Daphne has taught me more than I could ever give her credit for here. She has shown me, by her example, what a good scientist (and person) should be. God will continue to guide and bless her. Finally, I thank Walden University for this positive social change to my life.

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Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

While highlighting the complexity of reform implementation in the public sector in Nigeria, the new public management (NPM) literature neglects a vital viewpoint. Relatively little is known about NPM longitudinal processes and competencies of key public-sector actors, the public agency managers (Mahamadu et al., 2018; Porter & Watts, 2017; Rasul & Rogger, 2018). Despite the importance of government effectiveness for citizen welfare in the developing economies, there is little evidence linking management practices under which public agency managers operate to effective public service delivery for the low-income population (Goldfinch, DeRouen, & Pospieszna, 2012; Rasul & Rogger, 2018). Despite the importance of organizational change for public management practice, such change is generally not studied as an implementation problem in public management research (Van der Voet, Kuipers, & Groenwald, 2016).

Seminal scholars in administrative leadership theory have stated that NPM reform is a change project executed by managers through day to day organizational behaviors (Ikeanyibe, 2016; Van Wart, 2013). Like many change initiatives, NPM reforms attract resistance from those benefitting from the status quo and require effective leadership from managers at the micro/agency level to drive long-term changes and apply NPM principles (Kuipers et al., 2014). For Nigerian public policy designers to attain value through NPM, they must include feedback from stakeholders in relevant discourse to effectively minimize path dependence processes controlling public service delivery (Porter & Watts, 2017).

In this chapter, I provide insight into the role of public agency managers in Nigeria, assigned agents of NPM reform, in implementing path-breaking interventions to improve public services and change social outcomes for the low-income population. Chapter 1 includes the background literature leading to building the alignment among the problem, purpose, and central research question of the study. The foundational elements of the study are grounded in the framework of concepts supporting this empirical investigation. Finally, I present the significance, assumptions, and limitations of the study along with definitions of key terms used throughout this study.

Background of the Study

The Federal Republic of Nigeria is categorized as a developing nation situated in the south eastern corner of West Africa. Nigeria is the most populous nation in West Africa with about 181 million people. The country is a rich state blessed with mineral resources and endowed with oil wealth. It is among the richest oil producers in the world and ranked as the thirteenth largest producer of oil in the world (Ibietan & Joshua, 2015). Oil is the main source of Nigeria's income, but the country has other sources of income including agricultural exports, taxes, and other mineral resources. In the 2011 and 2014 fiscal years, Okwe (2015) posited that the country generated 41.6 trillion Niara (Nigerian currency) in revenues from crude oil earnings, taxes, and duties.

One of the end goals of public agency managers is service delivery, and they must be able to establish their department, distribution of time, and other resources for the accomplishment of inclusive and general objectives (Khan, 2018). The managers in the public sector are also supervisors and are responsible for the consequences of their

actions and decisions. The public sector is the foremost conduit for resource expenditure and policy administration in Nigeria and plays a key role as the regulator of the economy (Ajayi & Aluko, 2017). The public sector serves as a channel from which the resources narrow down to the private sector through the systems by which the federal government enhances its economic progressive goals (Edeme, Nkalu, & Ifelunini, 2017).

Management of the public sector fundamentally involves the application of government programs through the management of resources and service delivery to the nation's low-income population (Khan, 2018). Despite extensive imitation and adoption of NPM by sub-Saharan nations, most scholars find it is culturally and politically unsuitable for these developing economies (Aoki, 2016)

Adewole (2015) wrote that the Nigerian government was in serious need of structural reform in many areas of national life. The country needs structural reform to enhance its developmental perspective. This urgent need will help the country to reach needed growth and national development because the country has been faced with development obstacles since independence. There is an urgent need to face challenges such as poverty, economic structure, ethnicity, conflict, and uncontrolled pollution, which were caused by poor leadership, political corruption, and a weak institutional structure that hindered national development (Ibietan & Joshua, 2015). Managerial reforms closely associated to NPM help to enhance efficiency and accountability in government agencies by redirecting the ways in which things were done in public and private organizations in the country. Continuously addressing these issues for a wide variation of public and private services will help improve the reform process (Aoki, 2016). An efficiently run

country is important for broad development, and throughout the emerging world, government and international agencies are seeking to develop it through a multidimensional agenda of public sector reform that emphasizes political arguments promoting the development of effective policy (Bukenya & Yanguas, 2013). Future research is needed to identify underlying factors if NPM is to produce policy that is appropriate and effective (Porter & Watts, 2017).

The urgency for change in public organizations has resulted in the adoption of extensive innovations to contribute to performance and identification management (Campbell, 2015). The need to make use of performance information to enhance organizational production has been fundamental to the public reform agenda of past eras. Many scholars have started to focus on the relationship between public management and public organizational performance, yet less research has focused on the issue of its micro effect on employees. Researchers are looking at the need for public management reforms in public organizations and seeking to know how such management influences the behaviors and attitudes of some employees at the frontlines, particularly public agency managers (Porter & Watts, 2017).

Goldfinch et al. (2012) posited that substantial resources and attention have been given to current *good governance* (GG) public administration reform in low income and delicate states. Additionally, there is little indication as to what point this program has been implemented or if it has enhanced improvement of services and outcomes for the low-income population. There is some empirical evidence that reform in Nigeria has slightly improved or increased service delivery to the low-income population, but public

middle managers continue to be mired in problems with leadership, corruption, and inappropriate resource allocation (Hope, 2017). Pierson (2009) argued that it has become a collective belief for social scientists to pronounce political practices as *path dependent*. This notion is frequently engaged in the absence of cautious explanation. Path dependence as a collective practice has been criticized as self-motivated for increasing returns. To further knowledge of path dependence, scholars attempt to clarify how organizations turn out to be path dependent (Yanguas, 2017). Underlying forces of selfunderpinning mechanisms can push organizations towards a lock-in (Fadiran & Sarr, 2016).

Path dependency theory explains that a dependence on historical solutions to enact new reforms simultaneously influences and restrains reform processes from going forward (Pierson, 2000). In the context of developing economies, path dependency theory in management reform concedes that certain outdated laws, rules, and institutions can create heavy disincentives for change (Yanguas & Bukenya, 2016). Although scholars use path dependency theory to explain why NPM is hampered, public agencies in Nigeria continue to look to past solutions to respond to the current realities facing their nation's low-income population (Yanguas & Bukenya, 2016).

Problem Statement

Many sub-Saharan countries, including Nigeria, introduced NPM after 2000, a practice introduced in the United States and United Kingdom in early 1980, to reform the dismal performance their public sector to become a reliable, cost-effective service provider, particularly for the poor (Brinkerhoff & Brinkerhoff, 2015). Still, indicators

show that there is a mismatch between the management of reform practices in the private and public sectors and their envisioned outcome of efficient service delivery and poverty mitigation in developing states in sub-Saharan Africa (Goldfinch et al., 2012; Rasul & Rogger, 2018). In a recent study, Nigerian officials were asked the main reasons public projects were failing and reported insufficient funding and support (31%), ineffective management of public agencies and corruption in the public sector (60%), corruption in the local community (27%), and corruption in the private sector (17%; Hope, 2017). The general problem is that when substantial resources and consideration have been dedicated to new public management restructuring in developing states, there is little indication that these funds have led to improved services and social outcomes for the low-income population (Ikeanyibe, 2016; Yanguas & Bukenya, 2016).

More specific research targeting the effectiveness of NPM performance in Nigeria indicated that many failures in specific public agencies were due to the conflict between macro- and microlevel views and poor application of professional management principles leading to such organizational pathologies as poor organization, over-staffing, overcentralization, apathy, corruption, a sluggish bureaucracy, resistance to change by local public agency managers, and managerial incompetence (Aoki, 2016; Gualini, 2018; Ikeanyibe, 2016). According to Stuteville and Jumara (2011), there are literature sources on the importance of path dependence to explain how administration reforms are enacted or stalled. Each central government administration in Nigeria since 2004 initiated a personal development and NPM reform plan through a path dependence process while excluding public agency managers from developing new solutions for NPM delivery of

services to the communities their public agencies serve (Adewole, 2015; Rasul & Rogger, 2018). The specific problem is public agency managers in Nigeria, who are agents of NPM reform, are excluded in their country's public policy making process on how to improve public services and change social outcomes for the low-income population (Abubakar, Saidin, & Ahmi, 2016; Gualini, 2018; Porter & Watts, 2017).

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this qualitative, multiple case study was to explore views of public agency managers in Nigeria who are agents of NPM reform on implementing pathbreaking interventions to improve public services and change social outcomes for the low-income population (Gualini, 2018; Rasul & Rogger, 2018). Giauque (2015) stated that most research on public sector administration is presently conducted using quantitative, survey-based approaches, thus lacking in the approach needed to offer a deeper understanding of public agency managers' work experiences. To address this concern and meet the purpose of the study, the method used in this study, the multiple case study, provides a strong basis for theory building and a deeper understanding of the phenomenon under investigation (Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007; Yin, 2017). I intended this empirical study to advance knowledge on implementing change in public administration by public agency managers in developing countries, specifically in Nigeria.

Research Question

RQ: What are the views of public agency managers in Nigeria, assigned agents of NPM reform, on implementing path-breaking interventions within their agencies to improve services and change social outcomes for the low-income population?

Conceptual Framework

To transform their public sector, developing countries followed in the footsteps of developed countries. Historically, many developing countries have shown interest in transplanting the New Zealand model of reforming government operations that led to significant improvements in New Zealand (Schick, 1998). Accordingly, developing countries first introduced different public-sector reform programs that fall under the umbrella name of *new public management* (Pollitt, 2003, 2004). There are many definitions of NPM in the literature with significant overlaps among them. Pollitt (2003) further noted that researchers recognize various facets in NPM and that its emphasis will be different depending on the country and the timing. In NPM, management systems retarget their focus, shifting to outputs (instead of inputs and processes). NPM is characterized by a focus on more measurement and qualification, on service quality and consumer orientation, a move towards flat and autonomous organizational forms, a shift towards efficiency and individualism, a much wider deployment of markets, and a widespread substitution of contracts (Haque, 2007; Hope, 2017; Pollitt, 2003).

NPM embraces a wide range of approaches, each drawn out of the various tools often used by the private sector and later adopted by the public sector (Hope, 2017).

Principally, NPM means a fundamental modification of power relationships among the key government system actors. Further, it calls for significant changes in the attitudes and stances of bureaucrats. However, the different bureaucratic models of public sector restructuring (PSR) and NPM agendas show variation in evidence-based implementation results (Goldfinch et al., 2012). To address the problem, international organizations advised developing nations to introduce GG initiatives in the late 1990s alongside NPM (Goldfinch et al., 2012). Scholars stated that the bureaucratic model of NPM can be addressed by the GG agenda (Argyriades, 2006; Roy, 2008).

The GG agenda refers to a comprehensive objective of creating an effective state by expanding its resource base and enhancing the capacity, quality, and responsiveness of civil servants through transparency, participation, and democracy (Goldfinch et al., 2012). The major reason for the GG movement was general recognition by international organizations and researchers that corruption was the number one factor in underdevelopment (Bose, Capasso, & Murshid, 2008). To address this challenge, GG was implemented as an aspect of NPM reforms aiming at enhancing state capacity. According to Goldfinch et al. (2012), the GG agenda includes the following elements: (a) a focus on efficiency and doing “more with less”; (b) a move to outputs, outcomes, or results reporting; (c) decentralized structures with smaller, multiple, and often single-purpose agencies; (d) motivation based on financial incentives; and (e) marketization, including contractualism, privatization, and customer focus.

The concept of *path dependency* is broadly defined as increasing returns, positive feedback, or self-reinforcing processes. In this study, the concept of path dependence

means steps taken previously toward a goal will encourage increased movement along the path, the same as increasing returns, which will improve the likelihood that the steps will be accelerated down the same path (Pierson, 2000). Path dependency theory is significant in helping to comprehend the challenges of formal and intentional reform programs emanating from institutional inertia (Torfing, 2009).

The genesis of the concept of path dependence can be attributed to institutional and evolutionary subdisciplines of economics (Notteboom, De Langen, & Jacobs, 2013). Although the views of different writers are in support of the path dependency theory on why reform in the public sector is hampered, it is realistic to expect that organizations should not be stuck in the past if they are to respond to the prevailing realities of today's world (Yanguas & Bukenya, 2016). In this regard, political and social changes need governments and public managers to develop new paradigms to enter a new context of strategic thinking and action. Public managers should develop new paradigms towards path creation rather than path dependence; following this process would be ideal for government and public services to leave rigidity behind and develop complex adaptive systems (Torfing, Sørensen, & Røiseland, 2017).

In Nigeria, scholars have recommended political actions for more effective public management with evidence and insights garnered through engagement of public managers and citizens who transform policies into actions and outcomes on a day-to-day basis (Agundu, 2016). Economists recommend strengthening NPM by minimizing pathdependence processes (Bryson, Sancino, Benington, & Sarenson, 2017).

Policymakers have a greater chance of creating and improving the value of public management if they consider both insights from local environments and evidence from programs implemented in other areas as well as pertinent research (Torfing et al., 2017).

Nature of the Study

The nature of this study was qualitative. Thus, the method and purpose of the study are aligned, and such a method provides data for the research question. I used a multiple case study design (see Yin, 2017) to explore views of public agency managers in Nigeria, assigned agents of NPM reform, on implementing changes within their agencies to improve services and change social outcomes for the low-income population. In qualitative inquiry, researchers use the experiences of individuals to gain in-depth understanding of complex human experience (Maxwell, 2013; Merriam & Tisdell, 2015), and this approach is consistent with the social constructivist paradigm. As an extension of the traditional social development theories, the individual is at the center of the meaning, making a social constructivist paradigm (Kim, 2014). According to Burr (2003), there is no definitive feature that identifies a social constructionist position, but there are assumptions among individuals who identify with social and cultural processes in their environment. The researcher is the main instrument of study and reflection in qualitative research (Maxwell, 2013; Patton, 2014), and social constructivism requires a researcher's active involvement in the construction of meaning (Kim, 2014).

The need of a suitable qualitative methodology for any inquiry is grounded in the nature of the phenomenon that will be examined in the study (Maxwell, 2013; Yin,

2017). For a contemporary social phenomenon like public reform management, Yin (2017) argued that a case study design is the most appropriate methodology for exploring or examining such sociopolitical phenomena, where multiple sources of data can be gathered to strengthen credibility of the results. Three sources of data were utilized throughout this study: (a) a semistructured interview protocol (see Appendix C), the items of which have been designed and standardized by previous researchers; (b) archival data in the form of government reports (Yin, 2017); and (c) reflective field notes (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015), which were kept by the researcher throughout the entire data collection process.

Dissimilar to other qualitative methods such as phenomenology and grounded theory that have more coherent design schemes in literature, case studies are often uniquely designed to suit the specific focus of the case and the research questions (Yazan, 2015). In concentrating on present-day environments, the researcher can look at the phenomenon in different circumstances as well as embark on interviews with individuals acquainted with the phenomenon. The background and idea of any case study design offers the researcher the opportunity to focus on multiple cases in a single study. In a multiple case study, the case itself may be a person, event, entity, or other unit of analysis. When people are the unit of analysis, a single case focuses on one individual, whereas a multiple case study focuses on more than one person (Yin, 2017). Inasmuch as this study was exploratory in nature and focused towards theory building (see Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007), a multiple case study design was the most credible approach for building or extending theory on an organizational phenomenon in doctoral level research

(Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007).

Comprehending the unit of analysis is one of the ultimate choices that strengthens case study research (Yin, 2017). A unit of analysis can be individuals, groups, and organizations, among others (Yin, 2017). The unit of analysis for this study was at the individual level, and the cases were made up of a purposeful sample of public managers in Nigeria's civil service selected according to the following inclusion criteria: (a) adults over the age of 18, (b) public agency managers in the Nigerian civil service sector, (c) having more than 10 years in the Nigeria civil services, and (d) having specific knowledge through their experiences with the topic of the study (see Robinson, 2014; see Yin, 2017) The flexibility in multiple case study design was appropriate for this current study because it allowed me to align the research design with the specific focus of each case (see Yin, 2017) and with each separate case representing one unit analysis or one public agency manager in a purposeful sample of seven cases. The goal for using the purposeful sampling technique was to guarantee that the selected samples would offer rich information (Maxwell, 2013; Yin, 2017) that would answer the research question on the specific views of public agency managers in Nigeria.

The use of a multiple case study design helps to enhance data analysis within and across cases (Tsang, 2013), while guaranteeing representativeness and heterogeneity in the study population (Maxwell, 2013). In multiple case study research, Yin (2017) encouraged the use of cross-case synthesis as the most appropriate data analysis technique to explore convergence and divergence of data between cases. Cross-case synthesis is more proficient than content analysis for extending theory using a multiple

case study design, for researchers must also compare cases rather than only analyzing individual cases embedded within a single case study to extend theory (Yin, 2017).

Definitions of Terms

Effective interventions: This term refers to a strategy aimed at improving and supporting the social welfare of individuals or the entire population (Abubakar et al., 2016)

Effective new public management: This term describes the ability of managers and the nation to continue to fulfill the purpose of NPM into the future. However, effective NPM is also dissimilar from the old public administration approach where people related to the bureaucracy as clients and were treated as passive and reflexive recipients of topdown policy making and service delivery machinery (Ikeanyibe, 2016; Yanguas & Bukenya, 2016).

Good governance (GG): This term refers to a comprehensive objective of creating an effective state by expanding its resource base and enhancing the capacity, quality, and responsiveness of civil servants through transparency, participation, and democracy (Goldfinch et al., 2012).

Ineffective management: This term refers to corruption in the public sector, corruption in the local community, and corruption in the private sector that cause problems with the application of public projects through insufficient funding and support (Hope, 2017).

Macrolevel managerial views: Within the NPM domain, macrolevel managerial views focus on large-scale social processes, such as social stability and change (Notteboom et al., 2013).

Microlevel managerial views: Within the NPM domain, microlevel managerial views focus on small-scale interactions between individuals, such as conversation or group dynamics (Aoki, 2016).

New public management (NPM): This term refers to management practices and techniques pulled mostly from the private sector and seen as a global phenomenon. NPM practice moved service delivery from traditional public administration to public management. Major elements include various forms of decentralizing management with public services (Ikeanyibe, 2016; Yanguas & Bukenya, 2016).

Path-breaking interventions: This term refers to public management actions that break change-resistant and stagnant institutional and political processes (Dobusch & Kapeller, 2011; Gualini, 2018; Sydow, Schreyogg, & Koch, 2009).

Path-dependency: This term refers to the concept of path dependency in taking steps in public institutions that align with political, change-resistant processes. If institutions and political processes are change-resistant, public management actions and public service delivery follow a change-resistant path of institutional dependency and least resistance to political authority (Pierson, 2000).

Public managers: This term refers to civil service sector managers who perform different management functions in service to the public including governance,

implementation and service delivery of governmental contractual services to citizens for the wider public good (Robinson, 2014).

Reform: This term has established itself as the normal text in the field, offering a reasonable analysis of recent changes towards improved performance and cost-effective service delivery in public management and public administration in a range of countries in Europe, North America, and Australasia (Brinkerhoff & Brinkerhoff, 2015)

Assumptions

There were four assumptions in initiating data analysis strategies for the study. The first assumption was that there would be sufficient public manager enthusiasm to recruit participants for the study and that data collected from extensive interviews would provide straightforward, accurate, reliable, and well-expressed information on specific knowledge gaps among the low-income population on the delivery of goods and services (see Benington & Moore, 2011).

The second assumption of this study related to the truthfulness of the data analysis, processing, and collection process. Those recruited should have been able to have an in-depth knowledge about the purpose of the study, which should have been apparent in the recording, coding, and analysis of the data collected and reported.

The third assumption supporting this study was that the multiple case study design accepts that perspectives and insights documented during the interviews added to the information necessary for triangulation of data from various source outcomes (Benington & Moore, 2011; Patton, 2014). Looking at the fact that I, the interviewer in this study, am a Nigerian, similar cultural experiences would help establish

understanding, relationships, and trust during the interview practice so that participants would be comfortable in discussing their knowledge gaps in sustainable public management. It was presumed that the transcription of the interview data would be precise, correct, and the study design would include an individual examination to address this assumption.

The fourth assumption of this study was making use of a multiple case study design would help to enhance new knowledge of the conceptual framework of the research and its fundamental theories. Yin (2014) specified that the various case study designs in a qualitative study with the use of the cross-case synthesis method for evaluating qualitative data are chosen as a means for solidifying robustness and validity of qualitative research. Furthermore, data analysis results, with the use of multiple case study design, are used to extend theory (Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007).

Scope and Delimitations

This multiple case study was limited to a purposeful sample of public managers in Nigeria's civil service selected according to the following inclusion criteria: (a) adults over the age of 18, (b) public agency managers in the Nigerian civil service sector, (c) having more than 10 years in the Nigeria civil services, and (d) having specific knowledge through their experiences with the topic of the study (see Robinson, 2014). A definite boundary for the population was selected due to the need to close knowledge gaps on justifiable NPM practices to improve services and change social outcomes for a low-income society that cannot be explored by using other methodologies, including

assessments and surveys. This study excluded politician and government agency workers who had previous experience and practiced the old public management system.

This research is transferable towards making a positive social change for the low-income population and their communities and other communities because participants face similar economic, goods and service delivery, and security challenges as do those in many other cities in Nigeria. Formerly, researchers have been primarily focused on trainers, nongovernment agency workers, and government officials' roles in exploring the livelihood challenges of low-income population with service delivery in Nigeria. A qualitative methodology would give me in-depth access to low-income population service delivery through NPM ideas, with knowledge gaps in public management practices in Nigeria (see Giauque, 2015; Goldfinch et al., 2012; Tsang, 2013).

Limitations

Limitations are influences over which a researcher has no control. They are the conditions, shortcomings, and impacts that researchers cannot constrain that place restrictions on their conclusions and methodology (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). The first limitation of the study was that I am a Nigerian and from a marginalized area with less effective NPM, which may unconsciously add cultural bias in the study. Influences and motivations that are grounded on an individual cultural focus can generate ethnocentrism, which is adjudicating research participants and their responses exclusively by the standards and values of one's own culture (Mintrom & Luetjens, 2017).

The second limitation of the study was criticism the case study method receives for not proposing statistical generalization, which limits transferability of data results on the entire population from which the study samples originates (Yin, 2017). However, the multiple case study is not used for this determination. It is used instead to strengthen trustworthiness of data and safeguard against participant bias, advancing theory generation and cross-case comparison (Patton, 2014). While I made use of the multiple case study to enhance a profound understanding of specific knowledge gaps among public agency managers in Nigeria on sustainable, effective NPM practice, the data collection method was limited to ten participants and based on data saturation (see Maxwell, 2013).

The third limitation was participant willingness to answer the interview questions in an honest and straightforward manner, which helps to support the third research limitation, although it is expected that participants' responses to interview questions by the interviewee would be transparent and truthful (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). In the absence of disposition, uncertainty from fear of apparent untrustworthiness to the participants' separate region or state could be created (see Pollitt, 2003). Patton (2014) acknowledged that political anxiety, atmosphere, and individual bias could hold limitations on the interview development and accomplish potential misrepresentation in participants' responses. Naturally, I based my data collection on the consistency of their participants' common economic background to put them in a comfortable situation.

Significance of the Study

The significance of a study addressed the importance of filling a knowledge gap both for scholars and practitioners (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015).

Significance to Practice

From a managerial practice perspective, this study was important to address the views of excluded voices of NPM who are assigned agents of NPM reform, now lost in the ongoing conflict between macro- and micro-level views on how to apply NPM reforms effectively in Nigeria. These ongoing intra-governmental power conflicts have led to a lack of professional management principles in NPM agencies across the country, resulting in poor organization, over-staffing, over-centralization, apathy, resistance to change, corruption, a sluggish bureaucracy, and managerial incompetence in addressing the social services needs of Nigeria's low-income population (Aoki, 2016; Ikeanyibe, 2016). These issues underscore the need to build and strengthen institutions anchored to leadership values and processes and to leverage institutional capacities for effective service delivery and development outcomes (Ibietan & Joshua, 2015).

Significance to Theory

From a theoretical point of view, the findings of this study may be significant for theory building in the issue at hand through the multiple case study method which enables broader explorations of the research question and theoretical elaboration (see Yin, 2017). This study is important because it addressed an under researched area of public agency managers in Nigeria: assigned agents of NPM reform and their views on implementing path-breaking interventions to support improved services and social

outcomes for the low-income population within their agencies' jurisdictions (see Ikeanyibe, 2016; Yanguas & Bukenya, 2016). This research is needed to gain a deeper understanding of the views of public agency managers in Nigeria, assigned agents of NPM reform, on implementing changes within their agencies to improve services and change social outcomes for the low-income population (see Abubakar et al., 2016; Porter & Watts, 2017). Thus far, the views of public agency managers in Nigeria have been excluded in their country's public policy making process on NPM reform (Abubakar et al., 2016; Porter & Watts, 2017).

Significance to Social Change

From a social change perspective, policy makers and managers in the public agency community sectors are charged jointly to create public value (Bryson et al., 2017). It is germane to state that the Nigerian civil/public service, which came into existence in 1954, had witnessed a litany of reforms as corroborated, yet the reforms have not been as much a positive review of the civil service's original objectives as a form of damage control (Ikeanyibe, 2016). From inception, the attempt to graft a foreign structure on local realities presented the bureaucracy with problems that successive reforms sought to attenuate, and the consequences have been largely reverberating. It was also consistent with good reasoning to state that the Nigerian public service is still an evolving institution on a journey towards maturity (Ibietan & Joshua, 2015). Still, social change implications for the low-income population in Nigeria can only be realized when the agents of public reform, the local NPM managers themselves, can have a voice in Nigeria's national conversation on implementing path-breaking interventions on how best

to improve services and change social outcomes for the low-income population (Gualini, 2018; Ibietan & Joshua, 2015).

Summary and Transition

In Chapter 1, the introduction and background section presented the role of public agency managers in Nigeria, who are agents of NPM reform, on implementing pathbreaking interventions to improve public services and change social outcomes for the low-income population. Research questions were presented with combined framework for sustainability and the nature of the study that involved public agency managers discussing NPM and its application for service delivery to the low-income population. Definitions of key terms and assumptions of the study were also explained to validate the expected outcome of the study along with the presentation of limitations to explain why the sample for the case study was selected and the result of the outcome of similar study may differ.

Chapter 2 presented a literature review to clarify the need for NPM in reforming the public sector in Nigeria and the importance of public agency managers for decision making of goods and service delivery to low-income populations across the country. The need for public agency managers for the implementation and shifting from the old management to NPM were also discussed as well as the identified gaps in the literature.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

The specific problem is that public agency managers in Nigeria who are agents of

NPM reform are excluded in their country's public policy making process on how to improve public services and change social outcomes for the low-income population (Abubakar et al., 2016; Gualini. 2018; Porter & Watts, 2017). Research targeting the effectiveness of NPM performance in Nigeria indicated that many failures in specific public agencies are due to the conflict between macro- and microlevel views and poor application of professional management principles. Each central government administration in Nigeria since 2004 initiated a personal development and NPM reform plan through a path dependence process while excluding agency managers from developing new solutions for NPM delivery of services to the communities their public agencies serve (Adewole, 2015; Rasul & Rogger, 2018).

The purpose of this qualitative, multiple case study was to explore views of public agency managers in Nigeria who are agents of NPM reform on implementing pathbreaking interventions to improve public services and change social outcomes for the low-income population. Chapter 2 provides the literature search strategy along with the conceptual framework grounding this study. I present a synthesis of knowledge and critical examination of the literature on public management reform in Nigeria.

Literature Search Strategy

I researched the literature review with journals and articles that have been published by Google Scholar and Google search from Google Scholar, Google search engine, and Walden University Library database. I also used past scholarly papers kept for my study and retrieved others from scholars in the field of NPM. Some of the key words and phrases used were *effective interventions*, *effective new public management*,

improve dismal performance, ineffective management, macro- and micro-level, new public management, path-dependency, personal development, and reform.

The focus in the literature search strategy was to provide evidence of how NPM can enhance the provision of goods and services to the low-income population. I made use of research based on managers' views on effective NPM to further enhance my argument that NPM practice can bring positive social change in any community or organization. The second objective was to search for literature on NPM techniques and practices drawn predominantly from the private sector as a global phenomenon that shifts the emphasis from traditional public administration to public management. The last objective was to explore literature on how NPM system can offer a more decentralized control of goods and services delivery model to achieve a positive social change with a better structure where private and public service providers compete with one another to provide faster and better services. Most of the articles used for the literature review were written within the past 5 years during the completion of the study (2014-2018).

Conceptual Framework

To transform their public sector, developing countries followed in the footsteps of developed countries. Historically, many developing countries have shown an interest in transplanting the New Zealand model of reforming government operations that led to significant improvements in New Zealand (Schick, 1998). Accordingly, developing countries first introduced different public-sector reform programs that can fall under the umbrella name of NPM (Pollitt, 2003, 2004). There are many definitions of NPM in the literature with significant overlaps among them. Pollitt (2003) noted that “many

commentators allow that the NPM has a number of facets or ingredients, and that from one country and time to another the emphasis may vary between these” (p. 26). In NPM, management systems retarget their focus, shifting it to outputs (instead of inputs and processes). NPM is characterized by a focus on more measurement and qualification, on service quality and consumer orientation, a move towards flat and autonomous organizational forms, a shift towards efficiency and individualism, a much wider deployment of markets, and a widespread substitution of contracts (Haque, 2007; Hope, 2017; Pollitt, 2003).

According to Larbi (2003), the NPM model was adopted mainly out of existing pressures that entailed the need to change the traditional bureaucracy. These pressures included the restructuring process in the public sector of developed nations in the 1970s and early 1980s following fiscal stress. Such stress resulted in huge public-sector deficits, external trade imbalances and rising indebtedness, growing public discontentment of governments’ infective and inefficient bureaucratic structures, and the renaissance of the “new right politics in the late 70s and 80s (e.g. ‘Reaganomics’ and ‘Thatcherism’) that were pro-market and pro-private sector” (Larbi, 2003, p. 2). The structural adjustment programs prescribed by the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank for extending loans to most developing and transitional economies were also a driving force toward NPM elements in their reform initiatives (Larbi, 2003; Pollitt, 2003).

NPM embraces a wide range of approaches, each drawn out of the various tools often used by the private sector and later adopted by the public sector (Hope, 2017). Principally, NPM means a fundamental modification of power relationships among the

key government system actors. Further, it calls for significant changes in the attitudes and stances of bureaucrats. However, the different bureaucratic models of PSR and NPM agendas show variation in evidence-based implementation results (Goldfinch et al., 2012). To address the problem, international organizations advised developing nations to introduce GG initiatives in the late 1990s alongside NPM (Goldfinch et al., 2012).

The implementation gap of the bureaucratic model of NPM can be addressed by the GG agenda (Argyriades, 2006; Roy, 2008), which refers to a comprehensive objective of creating an effective state by expanding its resource base, enhancing the capacity, quality, and responsiveness of civil servants through transparency, participation, and democracy (Goldfinch et al., 2012). The major reason for the GG movement was general recognition by international organizations and researchers that corruption was the number one factor in underdevelopment (Bose et al., 2008). To address this challenge, GG as an aspect of NPM reforms aiming at enhancing state capacity was implemented. According to Goldfinch et al. (2012), the GG agenda includes the following elements: (a) a focus on efficiency and doing “more with less”; (b) a move to outputs, outcomes, or results reporting; (c) decentralized structures with smaller, multiple, and often single-purpose agencies; (d) motivation based on financial incentives; and (e) marketization, including contractualism, privatization, and customer focus.

GG reforms introduced as aspects of NPM in developing countries led to demands of huge amounts of money and resources (Goldfinch et al., 2012). GG aims to strengthen the capacity and institutions of state rather than simply transplanting NPM models in the context of developing countries (Hope, 2017). Although the expectations of

the PSR agendas were a tremendous enhancement in service delivery and would create attractive investment conditions for the private sector's role in boosting economic developments in low-income countries of sub-Saharan Africa (Schacter, 2000), PSR performance in the last two decades demonstrates failure (McCourt, 2013; World Bank, 2008). There is much research on NPM reforms that consider either specific elements like decentralization or that follow a holistic approach (Crosby, Hart, & Torfing, 2017). In both cases, although there are many findings regarding success or failures in implementing NPM programs in different parts of the world, no robust findings exist (Meier, Rutherford, & Avellaneda, 2017).

The concept of path dependency was broadly defined as increasing returns, positive feedback, or a self-reinforcing process. In this study, the concept of path dependence means steps taken previously toward a goal will encourage increased movement along the path, the same as increasing returns, which will improve the likelihood that the steps will be accelerated down the same path (Pierson, 2000). Path dependency theory was significant in comprehending the challenges of formal and intentional reform programs emanating from institutional inertia (Torfing, 2009). Beyond that, the study employed Sydow et al.'s (2009) framework of path dependence that offers insights into the possibilities and limitations of breaking out of organizational path dependence. Path breaking requires a thorough understanding of the social mechanisms driving the path process. Understanding these mechanisms in turn provides a platform for developing path-breaking interventions (Gualini, 2018; Sydow et al., 2009)

The genesis of the concept of path dependence and “lock-in” can be attributed to institutional and evolutionary subdisciplines of economics (Notteboom et al., 2013).

Although the views of different writers’ support path dependency theory on why reform in the public sector is hampered, it is realistic to expect that organizations should not be stuck in the past if they are to respond to the prevailing realities of today’s world (Yanguas & Bukenya, 2016). In this regard, political and social changes need governments and public managers to develop new paradigms to enter a new context of strategic thinking and action. Public managers should develop new paradigms towards path creation rather than path dependence and following this process would be ideal so that government and public services leave rigidity behind and develop complex adaptive systems (Torfing et al., 2017).

Public managers in Nigeria who operate service delivery frontlines constantly face complex practical challenges (Porter & Watts, 2017). In both the developed and developing world, policy design often takes place far from the populations where implementation happens, removed from the often-impooverished daily environments in which citizens live and where service managers are tasked with putting policy into action. In the case of Nigeria, policymakers do not obtain information important for policy design or ensure improved or targeted outcomes (Ikeanyibe, 2016). The different environments and experiences of policy designers and public managers lead to organizations having major differences in outcomes when implementing the same policy.

Policy outcomes are significantly impacted by Nigerian public managers' strategic choices and pursued actions. Against this background, it follows that those involved in policy design need to be cognizant of the environments in which policy changes will be implemented; however, this is not the case (Ikeanyibe, 2016; Porter & Watts, 2017).

In Nigeria, future empirical researchers should engage policy designers for more effective public management with evidence and insights garnered through engagement of public managers and citizens who transform policies into actions and outcomes on a day-to-day basis (Agundu, 2016). Researchers can make recommendations on how to strengthen NPM by minimizing path-dependence processes (Bryson et al., 2017). Policy designers have a greater chance of creating and improving the value of public management if they consider both insights from local environments and evidence from programs implemented in other areas as well as pertinent research (Torfing et al., 2017). For those set on achieving results out of social change and social justice initiatives, it was important to have recommendations that make policy designers aware of the harsh challenges facing public managers and their clients. Policy designers in developing countries who actively engage with public managers tasked with service delivery to their local, and often impoverished, populations may succeed in formulating new or enhanced policies that support the creation and improvement of public services management (Bryson et al., 2017; Mintrom & Luetjens, 2017).

Literature Review

New Public Management and Path Dependency: Defining Concepts

NPM is defined in the extant management literature as the transfer of private sector principles, grounded primarily in marketplace theories, to the public sector (Hope, 2012). According to Pollitt and Dan (2011), although there are many definitions of NPM, there are significant overlaps among them. NPM is hypothesized as a double-level procedure. During the upper level, it was observed as a universal concept or guideline that determines that the competence and efficiency of the public sector can be improved through the application of business doctrines and models in the public sector (Pollitt & Dan, 2011).

Through the observation of explicit activities and ideas, NPM symbolizes a bundle of performances and components, but presentation and prominence differ with the dissimilarities in countries and time (Goldfinch et al., 2012). In this regard, NPM is characterized by a shift in the focus of management systems; a shift of focus to outputs (instead of inputs and processes), more measurement on service quality and consumer orientation, and leaning into a flat and autonomous organizational model. Such a shift represents efficiency and individualism in the management of public sector organizations and a wider deployment of services across markets and contracts (Hope, 2012; Pollitt & Dan, 2011).

NPM supports an extensive choice of approaches. Every approach requires different tools that were used by the private sector and afterwards implemented by the public sector (Hope, 2012). The first criticism of NPM was aligned with the contradiction

and inconsistency of monopolization side by side with regionalization (Mongkol, 2011), which will inherently be the situation if adequate power is given to public managers to suitably and properly carry out their projects. In turn, their projects might focus on concentration of authority, conflicting with the primary assertion of regionalization in decision-making.

The second criticism was apprehension about presenting private sector organizational practices to the public sector. Inasmuch as the public and private sectors function in different contexts, it is very hard to directly displace the organizational techniques that have known to be effective in the private sector on dissimilar frameworks in the public sector (Rasul & Rogger, 2018). The third criticism was that although NPM focuses and supports limpidity in the public sector, it can as well lead to corruption (Hopper & Hopper, 2017). Lastly, NPM has grown to be contentious because of the way it delivers in the case of Western countries. Relating this to the frameworks of developing countries, NPM will obviously enhance the creation of more complications (Hope, 2012).

Path dependency is broadly defined as increasing returns, positive feedback, or a self-reinforcing process. In this study, the concept of path dependence means steps taken previously toward a goal will encourage increased movement along the path, the same as increasing returns, which will improve the likelihood that the steps will move more quickly down the same path (Pierson, 2000). Path dependency theory is significant in comprehending the challenges of public sector reform programs that originate in old institutional stagnation (Stuteville & Jamara, 2011). Beyond that, the study employed

Sydow et al.'s (2009) structure of path dependence that compromises perceptions into the likelihoods and restrictions of infringement out of managerial path dependence.

Path breaking requires a comprehensive knowledge of the social machineries pushing path development. Such knowledge will in turn create a platform for accelerating engagement in path-breaking (Gualini, 2018; Sydow et al., 2009). The creation of the theories of path dependence and “lock-in” can be credited to established and evolutionary self-restraints of economics (Notteboom et al., 2013). Although the views of various scholars are in support of the path dependency theory on why reform in the public sector is hampered (Jackson & Kollman, 2012), it is realistic to expect that organizations should not be stuck in the past if they are to respond to today's socioeconomic realities (Yanguas & Bukenya, 2016).

Inasmuch as leaders of public sector organizations want to accomplish the goals of public sector establishments through individuals, efficiency and usefulness of public sector establishments will communicate how the outcomes of such objectives measurably distress the public (Raczkowski, 2016). While privately-owned organizations are often accountable to a board of directors made up of shareholders, public sector organizations led by political leaders are accountable to their electorates or to the public. Management of public sector organization is guided by legislation, regulations, laws, and political support. Public satisfaction is the yardstick by which managerial effectiveness of public sector organizations is presently measured. Systemic public service problems begin when in an institutionally corrupt society, effective management of public sector organizations evades public accountability (Hope, 2017).

In its inception, NPM was a new process of merging private sector and traditional public administration principles, offering NPM managers public agency managers in Nigeria, assigned agents of NPM reform, on implementing path-breaking interventions, such as risk-taking, flexibility, performance measurement, and goal achievement to improve services and change social outcomes for the low-income population (Gualini, 2018; Porter & Watts, 2017). NPM was developed to bring together the best practices and processes of private sector organization and management as well as public-sector management, opening the door for new ways of conducting the business of national and local governments (Abubakar et al., 2016).

New Public Management: A Historical Review

Considering at the function of government in emerging countries, in the early 1950s and 1960s, the preferred argument was the improved function of government. This argument was reasonably accepted by the general conviction that the private sector was not developed in terms of understanding, finance, and capacity; therefore, it was good to give more functions to the government sector. However, starting in the 1980s and 1990s, it was evident that the assumptions conflicted with the prevailing realities on the ground (Tanzi, 1997). Accordingly, the role of the state started to decline in favor of the market in many countries. Consequently, developing countries were instructed to streamline the function and dimension of their government within the policy of structural modification programs. However, the presentation of the program was unproductive because it put many developing countries in Africa in permanent crises. Hence, the role of the state was reemphasized as crucial in development (Philip & Daganda, 2013).

The NPM model, with the view of changing the traditional bureaucracy, was adopted due to rising challenges (Larbi, 2003). According to Larbi (2003), the NPM model was adopted mainly because of existing pressures that entailed the need to change the traditional bureaucracy. These stresses included the restructuring process in the public sector of developed nations in the 1970s and early 1980s following fiscal stress. The results were huge public-sector deficits, external trade imbalances and rising indebtedness, growing public discontentment with governments' ineffective and inefficient bureaucratic structures, and the renaissance of the "new right politics in the late 70s and 80s (e.g. "Reaganomics" and 'Thatcherism') that were pro-market and pro-private sector"

(Larbi, 2003, p. 2).

According to the Report of the Economic Commission for Africa (2004), the structural adjustment programs prescribed by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank for extended loans to most developing and transitional economies, including Nigeria, were also a driving force to NPM elements in their reform initiatives (Larbi, 2003; Pollitt, 2003). This report reiterates the concern of these institutions for replicable ways of managing public service and redefinition of the state role in development. Accordingly, these institutions expected African states to be more open to markets, competition, and decentralization (Batley & Larbi, 2004; Philip & Daganda, 2013).

The advancement of views on development were carefully interrelated with the crucial objective of government in philosophies and theories of economics and political

science (Tanzi, 1997). Under this circumstance, the initial understanding with respect to the role of the state was branded by exciting debates of capitalism and communism (Dang & Pheng, 2015). Capitalism, backed by Smith (1776), emphasized private property, open trade, and competition. Consequent growth in the philosophies and theories in economics changed in the swing of views with respect to the function of the state. conventional economists supported the minimal function of government in the 19th century; beginning in the 20th century there was a steady and cumulative development in the function of the state in the economy.

The purpose for such a great change in the function of government as elucidated by Bukenya and Yanguas (2013) originates from the opinions and influences against conventional and established thinking by the government intercession advocates of early growth economists (Hirschman, 1958; Myrdal, 1957). elements influencing this state favored involvement in the economy were created for ideological and political reasons. the elements contributing to this change were Keynesian thinking, Marxist and socialist thinking, and technical growths in economics (like public goods and externalities) that enhance justifications for the improved role of government (Tanzi, 1997).

Notwithstanding the general propagation on the function of government as an instrument to improve development, there are unanswered debates on its expected outcomes and goals. <avoid unnecessary transitional wording-please review all text to remove where not necessary...almost all sentences can stand without these phrases although some advocate *best fit* interventions in developing countries, given context and

variations, it is better to go for *good enough* governance (Grindle, 2007). This concept was supported by the World Bank (2008) and Andrews (2013) as the best fit prescriptions to face implementation problems. Inasmuch as many developing countries presented NPM reforms in the public sector, issues of poverty, dishonesty, and private sector development continued to be unclear encounters and experiments. To buttress these developments, the third groundswell of reform has been presented. Regarding the third wave of PSR, Bukenya and Yanguas (2013) noted that an increase of poverty reduction and private sector development as the dominant organizing values of development during the time of the 21st century. Such an economic shift encouraged the reassessment and modification of public service reform within a third surge acknowledgment of the significance of the state in accomplishing pro-poor development (Bukenya & Yanguas, 2013).

Brinkerhoff and Brinkerhoff (2015) argued that with time passing by, the growth of experience, and the domination of the NPM, the NPM was longer a new initiative as the prevailing framework to public sector reform. It was debilitated and destabilized, more especially as functional to developing countries. It will be useful to highlight the consequence of functional impersonation, the challenges of determining results, the concrete difficulties in accomplishing contextual fit for the inherent insecurity in reform processes, the pressures between tenure and outside capability, and the unraveling of political economy changing aspects within several micro-contexts.

The current agenda of public service reform is a blend of the second and third generations focusing on three dimensions: effectiveness, transparency, and accountability

(Bukenya & Yanguas, 2013). The issue of GG is the current banner of the PSR as business environment and governance indicators of the World Bank and Transparency International confirm governance and corruption problems as topical in many countries (Abteu, 2017). Current public service reform has six major policy targets: administrative reform, civil service, anticorruption and transparency and financial management; participation and co-production; tax administration, and public expenditure and decentralization (Bukenya & Yanguas, 2013). Scholars recommend that instead of looking at a public services reform agenda as an isolated reform processes, one must evaluate its processes collectively to reform the way the state does business with its constituency through the lens of public management (Yanguas, 2017).

Path Dependence in the Public Sector

Accordingly, Stuteville and Jumara (2011) proposed a new approach to path dependence in public administration that strives to look beyond identifying constraints, as advocated by most researchers on path dependence, that takes a retrospective approach. In this regard, they recommend another theoretical view as a stand towards public administration research to contribute to path dependence literature (Stuteville & Jumara, 2011). Hence, Stuteville and Jumara proposed a prospective approach that addresses prescriptive research questions, concluding that although the thoughtful ground rules in many path dependence literatures reasoned on limitations towards current action, irrespective of history, the eventual ground rules we suggest has been the opposite. Despite stressing possibilities and choices, the idea (which is in line to path dependence

ideas) clarifies that many paths would have been attainable and that the future is not foreseen (Stuteville & Jumara, 2011).

Similarly, Roy (2008) concluded that there is a clear and visible agenda on public management reform present over the years. Groups advocating reform now engage more actors to allow institutional change machineries with analytical notions to expand indepth analysis. Rather than whole-sale change, they are focused on small and incremental changes in public management reforms (Roy, 2008). Accordingly, Pollitt (2004), stated apply modern reforms is no longer sufficient: “Government establishments have to follow their reform proposals with a strategy to accomplish change. The management of change elucidates, to a large extent, the accomplishment or failure of a reform initiative” (Pollitt, 2004, p. 14)

In this regard, Kuipers et al. (2014) specified areas of further research in managing change, like NPM. They emphasized that it is imperative to conduct in-depth empirical enquiries on implementing change management processes in public sectors in different contexts. Specifically, the research should focus on providing comprehensive accounts on change interventions and the roles and behaviors of those involved in change processes. An important approach in such studies is to work in cooperation with practitioners to explore the realities of change implementation in a variety of contexts. This approach is appropriate because there seems to be disagreement between those practicing change and outsiders seeking more knowledge about change. Consultants in both consulting and managerial roles are engaged in implementing change and the choices therein, which has been a welcome source of comprehensive data on the process

(Higgs & Rowland, 2005).

Similarly, looking at research findings in path dependence, Mahoney (2000) concluded that findings in path dependence create a challenge in producing robust findings emanating from their conceptual clarity on the meaning of path dependence. To support this condition, the same author supported the occurrence of path dependence “when a contingent historical event triggers a subsequent sequence that follows a relatively deterministic pattern” (Mahoney, 2000, p. 535). Lastly, the same author has tried to compare the two classifications. In structures that are self-reinforced, there are parallels between the provisional period and when a certain institutional procedure is implemented. At the same time, the deterministic structure is analogous to reproduction of the institution not undergoing change (Mahoney, 2000). Further, within distinction, “in the notion of a reactive sequence, the contingent period agrees with the main dividing line in history, while the deterministic framework agrees with chains of reactions that rationally trail from this breakpoint” (Mahoney, 2000, p. 535).

Beyond that, some consider a voluntary transfer, essentially a free choice (Pollitt, 2003). Pollitt (2003) noted that moving management technologies from one global place to another has become highly profitable (Pollitt, 2003). In other words, the transfer could be associated with some motives of the forerunners of the technology like prestige, legitimacy, influence, or pure business interest of consultants interested in earning money. Whatever the intentions of the transfer, there is a tendency to follow common organizational forms in both public and private sectors. Powell and DiMaggio (1991) had

a theoretical reason for how organizational forms converge in certain fields toward commonality.

According to the theoreticians, there are three types of organizational convergence: (a) coercive, (b) mimic, and (c) normative. Accordingly, the motives on which international transfers are based may be greater than just striving for more efficiency or good will (Pollitt, 2003). The other concern is that transfer of management technology involves different stakeholders and disciplines that demand team work and management. For the effective transfer of technology, it is often vital to engage local stakeholders, though that may be challenging; such a knowledge transfer goes beyond mere written or technological presentation materials. Rather complex processes that call for good management are needed (Pollitt, 2003).

Finally, Pollitt identified problems related to language as follows: Many people who can study or have taken part in international assignments of technologies and policies have stories to tell about obstinate or negative misunderstandings that have taken place because multiple languages are being used. Words can be very confusing due to translation into a common tongue; however, for those who do not have that as a first language, important words might have different meanings in their own languages (Pollitt, 2003). Based on the aforementioned reasons, Pollitt (2003) insisted that there should be a good path in the transfer of NPM technology because international professionals may be good in technology yet have little knowledge of the local context. Thus, they are unable to know much about important functions. It seems that the function and context of the

knowledge are more critical to the reform's success or failure than technological knowhow (Pollitt, 2003).

Thus, it can be implied that the implementation gap in NPM transfer and implementation could be filled by combining technical and functional knowledge and considering the local context. This approach was also supported by change management theorists who claim that it is no longer sufficient to adopt innovation just by answering social demands (Melchor, 2008). Beyond that, governments should devise appropriate intervention strategies to manage the change in the effective implementation of NPM programs (Melchor, 2008).

Barriers in Public Sector Reform in Africa

Boateng and Cox (2016) noted that some public-sector restructuring programs like liberalization and privatization were simply adopted through the PSR programs of NPM and GG but required challenging institutional and structural change. This phenomenon was evident because GG and NPM involve political settlement and broader consultation. Consequently, PSR programs have lost focus in creating long-lasting developments and progress in government performance, which obstructs promised enhancements in development outcomes (Crook, 2010). Such developments have shown that presenting attractive PSR designs is not adequate unless it is reformed to the given context in developing countries (Campbell, 2015).

In this regard, Yanguas and Bukenya (2016) contended that whether PSR was successful or not does not depend on access to resource or technical knowledge. Rather it depends on how ruling elites, bureaucrats, and social groups converse within structures

that are locally normative and incentivized, which is significantly political. In other words, agreeing with these authors, the major obstacles in PSR is associated to the negative assumptions about the capability of state in developing countries. In this respect, many developing countries are branded by poor state ability in terms of autonomy, rationality, and restraint. However, concerning the fundamental truths in developing countries, Yanguas and Bukenya (2016) posited that the moral economy and politics of PSR are confronted by public corruption, administrative patrimonialism and political apprehension.

Patrimonialism. One of the foremost challenges of PSR in developing countries is administrative patrimonialism, which was attributed to the fact that PSR was focused on crafting rational administrative mechanisms (Fukuyama, 2013; Hossan, Dixon, & Brown, 2013). Resourcefulness seems to be repelled by bureaucrats who are in support of kinship-based administration or personality. In other words, the idea or initiative of serving the public through a neutral and national approach was not present, and instead the government offices are measured as a basis of personal privileges and towards economic remuneration of office holders. Subsequently, the public servants in developing countries appraise reforms for their personal gains instead of rational efficiency (Ibietan & Joshua, 2015). In this context, research outcomes show that resourcefulness like NPM cannot come up with new institutional machineries that can substitute for the old way of doing things (Yanguas, 2017). However, most African countries do not have the leverage to advance the effectiveness of their government apparatuses irrespective on years of PSR resourcefulness (Larbi, 2003).

Considering the patrimonial features or appearances, the absence of participation by civil social order and other key stakeholders in PSR involvement can bring about absence of capability in decision-making and implementation power of improving agencies (Yanguas, 2017). The ugly environment in civil service organizations that encounter and defy government's capability of attracting and retaining qualified people obstruct their ability to implement and effectively formulate PSR policies and programs. In other words, to challenge this situation, advancements were made by some countries in enacting "special" ventures with attractive compensations hand in hand with government organizations. This resourcefulness could not enhance the impending capacity of governments, but instead generated temporary islands of excellence (Torfing, Sørensen, & Røiseland, 2017).

Public sector corruption. Abuse of professional duties for personal gain by using government funds, assets, or interests (Pollitt & Bouckaert, 2011) is the actual meaning and practice of corruption. Its fundamentals differ from embezzlement to common corruption (Rasul & Rogger, 2018). According to Yanguas and Bukenya (2016), as the simple level of private sector growth does not have the ability to create opportunities for wealth, corruption was seen as the roadway towards creating wealth for public officials, their friends, extended families, and networks, exclusively in developing countries. This is contrary to the Weberian philosophy of bureaucracy and the fundamentals of conventional administrative theory focused on clear obedience to administrative discipline and law in piloting official duties (Torfing, Sørensen, & Røiseland, 2017). The obstacle to corruption is when governments come up with

regulations to streamline corruption, the politics of corruption and restraints are lined up more toward stimulating resistance from state bureaucrats and also from their clients, family, and dependents, and all of these groups place an unreasonable pressure on them to source rents from their offices (Yanguas & Bukenya, 2016, p. 139)

Within the last few years, governments in different parts of Africa came up with initiatives to combat corruption in the public sector (Yanguas & Bukenya, 2016). Among others, with the aim of discovering inconsistencies in budget allocation and actual reporting of expenditures, public expenditure tracking surveys have been launched. However, there was no political commitment to act based on the information of the initiative. Accordingly, the public expenditure tracking survey initiative was not as effective as intended (Arney & Melese, 2016) Beyond the lack of political commitment to act, even in some countries, the governmental organs in charge of the initiatives were deliberately organized to become toothless lions (Yanguas, 2012).

In an effort to resolve the unproductive performance of central audit commissions, many African countries trailed the effective experiences of Singapore and Hong Kong by the introduction of autonomous anticorruption agencies. However, these agencies were established to combat corruption by scrutinizing and indicting corrupt officials as done by their counterparts. Still, study findings showed that they were not able to perform to the same degree of success in Africa (Doig, Williams, & Watt, 2005; Tangri & Mwendu, 2008). The reason for this development is that governments in Africa are making use of public corruption to strengthen and maintain their political grassroots and alliances, and it is same applied in the countries that are tracking and implementing

anti-corruption reforms (Johnsøn, Taxell, & Zaum, 2012). In this regard, Yanguas and Bukenya (2016) contended that corruption has hardly been a phenomenon of secrecy. Rather, corruption is part of a structure in which unlawful appropriation on the public stage is encouraged. A case in point was the obstacles that an anticorruption agency faces when it merely carries out its responsibilities (Yanguas & Bukenya, 2016).

Influence of politicians in public policy. The third obstacle to PSR originates from the relaxed and casual shadow of small political groups in public strategy (Yanguas & Bukenya, 2016). Although there are well known and pronounced policy formulation systems and mechanisms in political development in real practice, a few strong groups control and have tremendous influence in the administrative bureaucracy to express their political and economic interests or to gain political rents. The primary focus of constitutional disintegration of powers and other systems of control were implemented to fight political capture and improve accountability (Bose et al., 2008). There are political power controls that force professional bureaucrats to yield or submit to the preferences and interests of strong political elites who are better off in controlling the policy practice through their informal interferences and influences. To control these experiments, and lining towards the United Kingdom's (UK) *next steps* creativity, governments in developing countries joined to establish semiautonomous organizations to control some governmental activities with autonomy (Therkildsen, 2008). Irrespective of the difficulty in assessing their practice, largely only a few agencies have the ability to be effective in carrying their fundamental functions sustainably (Bright, 2013).

The downfall of such creativities is contingent upon the reform practice in establishing bureaucratic autonomy. The foremost issue was that the agencies that were put in place as autonomous failed to enjoy autonomy because their budget appropriations were placed in the hands of the government (Fjeldstad & Moore, 2009). Furthermore, the chief executives and the board of the semi-autonomous groups are in the hands of the high-ranking executives of the counties' political leadership (Therkildsen, 2008). Subsequently, they encounter the same challenges of support, discrimination, and rent seeking as that of old parastatal corporations (Therkildsen, 2008). In this regard, Yanguas and Bukenya (2016) contended that even though there is an idea that politics, the public, and the private sector can be seen as separate, those carrying out reforms in the public sector against bureaucratic sovereignty must accept that relationships among business people, bureaucrats, and politicians run deep. Thus, it may not be enough to use legal means to interfere with "private and motivation-compatible relationships"

(Yanguas &

Bukenya, 2016, p. 140).

The Role of Leadership and Management in Public Sector Reform in Africa

From the discussions on old challenges of PSR, it was generally understood that the failure in the reform initiatives were associated with lack of political commitment (Yanguas & Bukenya, 2016). The fundamental idea behind the leadership and management approach was to make a clear roadmap on how develop a commitment among political leadership to play a role in empowering and engaging public sector managers in fair practices for service delivery to the low-income population (Blair, 2010;

McCourt, 2003). The function of leaders in the long-term survival, sustainability, and development of effective organizations is a universally accepted management theory because leaders have roles in establishing, negotiating, and creating long-term sustainability in the essential institutions of effective states (Leftwich & Hogg, 2007). Therefore, there is a need for reinforcing the capability of top-level executives to lead the nucleus of PSR resourcefulness to come out as a new reform agenda (Yanguas & Bukenya, 2016). There, looking at the leadership-oriented PSRs, one can take an example from the Africa Governance Initiative (AGI).

In 2008, Tony Blair, former UK Prime Minister, came up with AGI as a *third-way* option to PSR, concentrating on precise program areas in government ministries or localities to streamline the problems of government institutions. The idea originated from the assumption that the main challenge to growth and progress in the prevailing lack of capabilities of developing nations is grounded on lack of leadership at all levels of the public sector (Blair, 2010). The inventiveness was focused at supplying technical assistance to top executives, which is considered as arm's-length aid by Booth (2012). The focus of the initiative was to establish a well-functioning structure that could support suitable political leadership for distributing development (Blair & Gross, 2013). Unlike other PSRs, this initiative accepted that patrimonialism is not easily eliminated, at least soon. Accordingly, instead of recommending bureaucratic ideas to eradicate patrimonialism, the initiative was an effort to establish optimal systems for the African framework by building capability on top-priority programs assisting African leaders in gaining their political commitment and support for effective reforms (Blair, 2010).

Still, the initiative was focused on establishing islands of distinction in some major government units, where success and failure stories exist (Blair, 2010). Notwithstanding the practical support given by the initiative, by 2012, this leadership approach began to exhibit negative performance. Within this outcome, the initiative's involvement in Rwanda was under scrutiny for establishing a dictatorial type of governance; likewise, in Sierra Leone, it was opposed because AGI does not have the ability to transform the efficiency of government, excluding such countries or organizations with conducive environments (The Tony Blair Governance Initiative, 2011). Later, facilitators of the initiative's established case studies realized that a distinct government champion is not sufficient (The Tony Blair Governance Initiative, 2011).

Notwithstanding the flaw in AGI, the initiative had been replicated in Malawi and Guinea. However, the results of a self-governing review in Sierra Leone revealed imbedded implementation problems coming from the usual symptoms of institutional coherence and policy, limited collective action, weak performance discipline, and local problem solving (Simson, 2013). Irrespective of that, the chairperson of the Sierra Leone Performance Management and Service Delivery Directorate that was sustained by Blair's resourcefulness was terminated on corruption-related allegations (Africa Confidential, 2014).

Organizational Barriers to Public Managers' Performance in Nigeria

Administrative factors, characterized by modern management function, clarify the necessity for similarity of values and goals of public sector managers and subordinates.

Similarly, it was important to appraise managers' performances using assessable performance and appraisal/evaluation review machineries as well as an inspiring remuneration system supported by merit and measurement performance in public sector organizations (Aoki, 2016). However, this protocol comprises the need to establish a favorable work environment for both subordinates and managers and to tailor detailed and common goals for employees, as well as help to intensify their confidence and self esteem with salary increases. These factors mentioned are some of incentives that make public sector organizations effective (Abubakar et al., 2016).

Appropriate employee motivation and having appropriate education, knowledge, trainings and skills corresponding to their jobs affect managers' capability to meet the mental and somatic demands of their jobs (Argyriades, 2006). These aspects of jobrelated employee qualities point out how the landscape of work accomplished by public managers shape effectiveness standards. Manager factors denoted by information/communication functions and social resource management are at the focus of supplementary effectiveness of NPM reforms (Bright, 2013), which are ideal in this study. Such factors focus on how managers organize other useful factors while performing their managerial job requirements to assure effective management of public sector organizations (Abubakar et al., 2016).

Looking at Nigeria, researchers argue on the practice of public sector managers who make public sector organizations effective or ineffective when they fail to harmonize other effectiveness factors appropriately during the performance of their managerial duties (Campbell, 2015). The managerial conduct that encourages

ineffectiveness and leads to distrust among subordinates in public sector management include depriving them of effective communication, negating and taking them for granted, extending disrespect and indecency, and bullying or intimidating them and failing to support them with noble leadership and encouragement (Adewole, 2015).

Nonetheless, introduction of information technology has helped to simplify and extend every piece of human resource management assignment that includes wage administration, placement, job creation, welfare administration, and so on (Lawler & Boudreau, 2015). In Nigeria, notwithstanding the international revolt in information technology, it was important knowing that more than half of public sector organizations in Nigeria do not have computers, internet facilities, etc. When they are available, they can only be seen at the national or state headquarters of limited Nigerian public-sector organizations and in the offices of top managers. In any case, technological availability was only in some strategic offices. Furthermore, the poor supply of electricity was another factor that impacts use of technology for the benefit of the organization.

Due to these obvious factors, Nigerian public-sector organizations have far to go to take advantage of the growth and improvement in information technology to enhance their effectiveness (Goldfinch et al., 2012). This situation regrettably has led to Nigerian public-sector organizations that are yet to make gainful use of developments in information technology to improve public service delivery in the country, and especially to low-income pollutions who also may not have access to electricity, much less technology (Hope, 2017). Materials like computers, internet facilities, telephones, intercom, and so on to help effective public service delivery are only found in a few

“privileged” offices. Unfortunately, the absence of electricity makes it difficult to use these facilities in most cases. This situation contributes to public sector ineffectiveness and indifference in many public-sector managers who believe their leadership has forgotten them in the far corners of the country (Meier et al., 2017).

Conflict Between Public Sector Managers and Policymakers in Nigeria.

A major challenge to public sector managers in Nigeria affecting NPM reforms were closely tied to ineffective communication with their political leadership who make policy and enforce it in the local regions. Policy makers’ inability to notice or understand public sector managers’ communication leads to resistance on the managers’ part and lack of empathy with the local, low-income population in need of public service delivery (Ikeanyibe, 2016). Researchers recommend that policymakers and political leaders offer a listening ear to the voice of public service managers and learn how to support them in facing their daily challenges within their public agencies. Policymakers’ insensitivity to public sector managers views in service delivery results in managerial *resistance* and a communication breakdown between public managers and their political leadership, leading to ineffective public agency performances. This convoluted social and political situation leads to public agency managers in Nigeria, excluded in their country’s public policy making process, not having enough understanding, knowledge, and motivation to improve public services and change social outcomes for the low-income population (Abubakar et al., 2016; Porter & Watts, 2017).

Public sector organizations in institutionally corrupt societies have typically operated within the framework of poor ethical standards, lack of accountability, poor

leadership, misplaced priorities, etc. (Onuorah & Appah, 2012). Therefore, in Nigeria, public sector employees are frequently owed arrears of salary, yet they are still expected to perform and be effective. This development has negatively affected ethical conduct of federal, state and local government employees across the country (Lawal, 2015). Another troubling aspect of public sector management ineffectiveness in Nigeria is the hope of retired public employees, who are denied access to their retirement benefits and pension that have accrued many years after they retired through the actions of some corrupt politicians and senior public managers.

Many of these retirees die without receiving their retirement funds. These circumstances and conditions have created fear in the minds of public managers who currently serve and lead them to envisage that they will inherit same situation after retirement. With these challenges in mind, they begin to look for other means of saving for a “rainy day” (Adeniyi, Oyinlola, Omisakin, & Egwaikhide, 2015). Adeniyi et al. (2015) posted that such circumstances have deepened ineffectiveness and institutional corruption in public sector organizations. A good example in this regard was that in 2015, twenty three out of the thirty-six states in Nigeria could not pay workers and pensioners their six-month salaries and pensions (Beedie, 2015).

Failure of New Public Management in Nigeria

The central argument on the future of NPM in Nigeria was to improve service delivery and change in social outcomes for the low-income population. Nigerian public bureaucracy can be positioned for effective service delivery and be a proactive agent of development for the Nigerian state if a good reform is put in place with strong discipline

by the elite government and political agents. NPM has replaced the termination of a change in public management in the Nigerian government (Central Bank of Nigeria, 2014). Many government organizations and her agencies have welcomed the NPM as a framework they can use to reengineer and modernize the public sector.

NPM has changed the outdated ways of service delivery. It offers an important analysis for public management in African nations including Nigeria in the developing implementation of the idea focused on achieving the outcomes personified in NPM. This goal can be achieved through a reform predisposition of NPM that tries to improve the failings and gaps in the old pattern of public administration (Haque, 2010). There was a good reason to believe that growing states will involve the mindful revolution of bureaucratic political leaders from destructive to positivist, developmental with activist alignment within their attitude regarding management and governance of community undertakings and service delivery.

Also, there should be additional reorganization of the administrative and political structures for prompt and improved service delivery of public services. The present creativity for institutionalizing public service improvements must be sustained and retained forever to halt the formation gaps that distinguish continuous reform activities/efforts (Agba, Ikoh, Ushie, & Agba, 2008). There should be an encouragement of conscious attempts to build and sustain administrative and political institutions for efficient service delivery to the low-income population, which will be an introduction to facilitate the recognition of the better anticipated growth in Nigerian service delivery.

There has been an excellent argument for positive social change on how the idea of NPM has encouraged the introduction of reforms to enhance public service delivery to the low-income population in Nigeria (Alohan, 2014). The underlining principle of NPM can be enlightened through present development in public administration to assign credible perceptions and principles from the private sector to the public, among which are effectiveness, efficiency, responsiveness, flexibility, competition, reckonable performance principles, and more dynamic influence grounded on stipulated result indicators, etc. These principles will help to support focused customer services (Pollitt & Bouckaert, 2014). The departure of policy implementation assignments is a fundamental part of the NPM that has continued to increase on the globe.

The central notion of NPM is the thought of identifying the people as *customers* of public services, which gives importance to the need to serve specific customers. Within the background of public sector reform, determinations to help sustain public service agencies to be more responsive to the people are part of the implementation of National Commission. This commission should be aware of the quality and level of services, and if need be, be given the ranges of services (Economic Commission for Africa, 2007), which goes with a notion that the customer is more important than helping organization. This approach has continued to be the primary emphasis of reforms in Malaysia, Singapore, Namibia and the United Kingdom. Looking at the service delivery ideal, citizens take part in decision-making processes that took the place of the top-down delivery model that is portrayed by most governments.

The critical emphasis was based on effective distribution of government services to the low-income population such as the citizen-focused and citizen-centric ideal that will enhance functions for people, thus substituting airing democracy with a better useful and instant model. To achieve this, the organization must have a standard operating procedure that will necessarily suggest the need for a real gap in modern concepts of governance and accountability. This procedure will involve many challenges like decision making, distribution of power, and accountability that are substantially contrary to many state organizations (Mittal, 2004). Also, Meier and O'Toole (2012) acknowledged four main ways of public service delivery approaches: governance, participation, government, and exchange.

In previous years, state organizations refused to give credence to service quality to the low-income population. However, NPM stressed corporations within the government, civil society and the private sector as agents of government service delivery. Nevertheless, the increasing requests of citizens has been a common occurrence for government to devise a fresh idea of doing business with its citizens (Hood, 2012). The approach is mostly focused on the effective delivery of public goods and services distributed by the government instead of the market, for is the people's entitlement and never be denied to those who do not have the opportunity to contribute to their provision. The status quo does seem to suggest that political culture was made up of self-concerned people that conjoin around organized benefits (Ayee, 2008).

It was a reality that customer satisfaction and productivity have remained at a low ranking in Nigerian public industry. Service delivery to the people has constantly

declined and the countries ranking of human development Index (HDI) by UNPD has remained at a low rank with different stages of deficiency, poor nutrition, poor sanitation, low quality of security, health crises, low literacy, and high mortality (Agba, Ushie, Bassey, & Agba, 2009). Irrespective of the enormous oil resources accumulating to Nigeria, the Human Development Index has remained abysmally low. However, there has been an increase in the country's HDI since 2006 from 0.434 to 0.471 in 2013. Still, Nigeria has remained low when it comes to the human growth classification that stands at 153 out of 187 territories and countries (UNDP, 2013).

With the absence of life improvement in the country, the need of concentrating on accomplishing results instead of processes and structure and providing acceptable service with associated acceptable performances by the state, has eluded the people. However, the clamor concerning making use of market competition in the delivery of public goods and services and the use of fresh service behavior of consumer alignment known as SERVICOM (Federal Ministry of Information and Culture, n.d.) does not seem to have any bearing in public service reforms in Nigeria. Commercialization and restrictions focused on recovering the cost of service provision have realistically increased the value and lowered the benefit of the previous service provided by the government, but the service offered by the government has not been proportionate to the high charges increased.

A good example was the attempt to erase subsidies given to the citizens through petroleum products provided by the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) and the increase of energy bills when there is no constant supply of electricity by the

denationalized Power Holding Company of Nigeria. The people have not seen any positive effect in their lives through the performance of these commercialized and privatized enterprises (Rosta, 2011). The cost of refined petroleum products was continuously increasing since the subsidy removal took effect. Still, the main issue of obtainability of products and amount reduction through the market were still very hard to achieve. Irrespective of the liberalization, petroleum purifying products have continued to be a political monopoly of the state with no new refineries being built by any organization to challenge the competition (UNDP, 2013).

The only significant viewpoint in Nigerian socioeconomic reforms in line with public administration method as its primary benchmark since early 1986, has been the eradication of subsidies that helped to save more money for the government in the absence of commensurate service delivery and equity consideration (Omitola, 2012). However, between 1999 and 2007, a total number of 122 enterprises have been allowed to go public by the government, which has earned the government a total sum of N251.5 billion (\$1.53 billion) and these stand as gross earnings for the government with no accountability (Alohan, 2014). These denationalized groups have been substituted with a massive group of unproductive people, and still, their exit from the government has not affected the size of the government or its procedures and practices.

As the processes unfold, the oppositions in politics, lack of transparent and open reform, and a weak enforcement apparatus have been the dominant factor that obstructs the many changes enacted. The inability of the government to address the relationship between independent agencies and ministries has created a significant shortfall of

organizational reformation in Nigeria (Rosta, 2011). Not given the fact that where regulatory agencies are in place as independent, the individual departments still control supervisory, policy formation, managerial and operational duties. In many instances, formed independent groups compete for importance with the departments, thereby growing to become big bureaucracies (Ikeanyibe, 2016).

Within this framework, it was essential to understand that what pushes organizational reform is a change project. In consideration of other changes, it always appeals to opposition from the people who enjoy the status quo. They will inherently need the political and leadership power to make the changes and also the traditional standard to withstand constant needs for a long time is necessary because institutions live longer than their founders (Barnett, 2010). To push out administrative reforms, what was needed is a reasonable permanent outline or design of improvement that has some legal acceptability and legitimacy with the institutional medium of management and direction. Some parts of this theory that have been posited by experts have explained that instead of looking at organizational modifications as coming from an individual, it is corporate power reacting to certain situations and directives. The institutional models emphasize the necessity to amend corporate values, structure, and moral values to make organizational dynamics more adaptive (Ikeanyibe, 2016).

Many traditional arrangements of reforms are preeminent, while in the case of Nigeria, these needs were addressed by the Bureau of Public Service Reforms in 2004 as a passage of public services improvements. The irony of the whole theory is that the administrations depended on establishing private growth with a reform idea that led to

opportunity for irregularities and prospects for career administrators to oppose modifications that will eventually affect them (Haque, 2010). Apparently, it was astonishing to believe that NPM reform is not favorable for emerging countries than to apportion guilt on the contradiction, absent of obligations, and misunderstanding of needs towards reform proposals. However, NPM reform direction does not have the power to eradicate many of the administrative gaps. Rather, it was more important to accept that many of the developing countries have not yet been able to agree on anything close to a reform package while some programs that have been put in place had contrary effects to those that were intended (Ikeanyibe, 2016).

Identifying the Gaps in the Research

Seminal scholars in the NPM literature have argued that strategies of reform are deeply set in administrative practices and norms systems; thus, strategies to carry out reform are more closely based on the status quo than on what public administrators desire (Peters & Pierre, 1998). Similarly, Pollitt and Bouckaert (2004) saw management reform as a phenomenon that was kept back and at the same time influenced by outside forces. Hence, they acknowledged the role that path-dependency theory takes in reforming management. Stuteville and Jumara (2011) determined that certain rules and institutions heavily discourage change.

Adewole (2015) posited that the government of Nigeria was in a desperate position looking for structural reform in many areas of its national life. The country has a desperate need for natural reform to meet its future developmental goals. Therefore, the Nigerian government must continually work on public policy to reach a desired economic

growth and national development. A serious need is present to address national problems like poverty, economic structure, ethnicity, conflict, uncontrolled pollution caused by poor leadership, political corruption, and weak institutional structure, all of which are important for national development (Ibietan & Joshua, 2015). NPM is one way the government has attempted to improve efficiency and accountability in government agencies by relaying ways in which actions have been carried out in public and private organizations around the country. Constantly focusing on these issues to understand the extensive disparity in public and private services will help to support and enhance the reform process (Aoki, 2016).

There have been few signs having practical evidence that reform in Nigeria has considerably improved, and that includes increased service delivery to the low-income population. However, public middle managers continue to be in a sludge-like state regarding problems with leadership, corruption, and inappropriate resource allocation (Hope, 2017). Pierson (2009) contended that it has become a combined conviction for social scientists to articulate political practices as *path dependent*. This impression is often tied up in the absence of guarded explanation. Within the background of developing economies like Nigeria, path-dependency theory in management reform acknowledges that certain anachronistic laws, rules, and institutions can generate enormous discouragement for change (Yanguas & Bukenya, 2016).

Though scholars use path dependency as a theory to explain why NPM was vulnerable, public agencies in Nigeria have continued to look to past clarifications and resolutions to respond to the present certainties experienced by the nation's low-income

population (Yanguas & Bukenya, 2016). More specific research targeting the effectiveness of NPM performance in Nigeria has indicated that many failures in specific public agencies are due to the conflict between macro- and micro-level views and poor application of professional management principles by local agency managers (Aoki, 2016; Ibietan & Joshua, 2015; Ikeanyibe, 2016). Gaps exist in the literature on how the central government administration in Nigeria can implement more effective NPM reform plans through a path dependence process that includes the feedback of stakeholders in the process, and most especially public agency managers responsible for NPM delivery of services to their communities (Adewole, 2015; Rasul & Rogger, 2018).

Summary and Conclusions

Ongoing and detailed research has targeted the effectiveness of NPM performance in Nigeria that has indicated many failures in specific public agencies caused by the conflict between macro- and micro-level views and poor presentation of professional management values. These circumstances are leading to such organizational pathologies as poor organization, over-staffing, over-centralization, apathy, corruption, a sluggish bureaucracy, resistance to structural adjustment by local agency managers, and managerial incompetence (Aoki, 2016; Joshua, 2015; Ikeanyibe, 2016). According to Stuteville and Jumara (2011), there are sources in literature on the significance of path dependence to explain how administrative reforms are ratified or stalled.

Every fundamental government administration in Nigeria since 2004 has introduced a personal development and NPM reform plan through a path dependence process while holding back agency managers from initiating new solutions for NPM

delivery of services to the communities within their public agencies (Adewole, 2015; Rasul & Rogger, 2018). Leaders must consider the need for management reforms in public organizations and understanding how public management impacts the behaviors and attitudes of some employees at the frontlines, more especially public agency managers delivering service to the low-income population (Porter & Watts, 2017).

Given the prevalence of path-dependent processes in NPM in developing economies, such as Nigeria, it was unsurprising that public managers encounter notable difficulties when attempting to engage with path-creation processes, including issues of trust (Boateng & Cox, 2016), motivation (Bright, 2013), sensitive group dynamics (Hossan et al., 2013), resistance to change (Kuipers et al., 2014), and structural factors (Van der Voet et al., 2016), to name but a few. For Nigerian policy designers to attain value through NPM, they must carefully consider input and feedback from stakeholders, and actively include them in relevant discourse as well as give weight to their experiences for the development of effective policies, whose goal is to minimize the path dependence process controlling service delivery (Porter & Watts, 2017).

In Chapter 3, the research method for qualitative, multiple case study research was discussed. Following that, procedures for recruitment, participation, and data collection are presented and applied to the present research strategy. The data analysis plan was addressed as well as issues of ethical procedures and trustworthiness of data within the study.

Chapter 3: Research Method

The purpose of this qualitative, multiple case study was to explore views of public agency managers in Nigeria who are agents of NPM reform on implementing pathbreaking interventions to improve public services and change social outcomes for the low-income population. Giauque (2015) stated that most research on public sector administration is presently conducted using quantitative, survey-based approaches, thus lacking in the approach needed to offer a deeper understanding of public agency managers' work experiences. To address this gap in the literature and remain consistent with the qualitative methodology, I used a multiple case study to meet the purpose of the study and collect data from multiple sources (Yin, 2017). This study is important because it addressed an underresearched area of public agency managers in Nigeria, which was the assigned agents of NPM reform and their views on implementing path-breaking interventions to support improved services and social outcomes for the low-income population within their agencies' jurisdictions (Abubakar et al., 2016; Ikeanyibe, 2016; Yanguas 2016). The findings of this study should be significant for theory building in the issue at hand by using the multiple case study method to enable broader explorations of research questions and theoretical elaboration (Yin, 2017).

The research goal of the present study was to contribute original, qualitative data from public agency managers in Nigeria, thus far excluded in their country's public policy making process, on how to improve public services and change social outcomes for the low-income population (Abubakar et al., 2016; Porter & Watts, 2017). This chapter provides detailed information on the research method and rationale for

conducting an exploratory multiple case study. I present the central RQ guiding this empirical investigation along with the participant selection strategy, data collection strategies and data analysis, the role of the researcher, ethical considerations, and a summary on the main points of the research method.

Research Design and Rationale

A researcher must ask the right questions in qualitative research to drive the research strategy and fulfill the purpose of the study (Browne & Keeley, 2010). Aligned with the conceptual framework, purpose of this study, and study design, the RQ is as follows:

RQ: What are the views of public agency managers in Nigeria, assigned agents of NPM reform, on implementing path-breaking interventions within their agencies to improve services and change social outcomes for the low-income population?

The purpose of this qualitative, multiple case study was to explore views of public agency managers in Nigeria who are agents of NPM reform on implementing pathbreaking interventions to improve public services and change social outcomes for the low-income population. In a multiple case study, the case itself may be a person, event, entity, or other unit of analysis. When people are the unit of analysis, a single case focuses on one individual, whereas a multiple case study focuses on more than one person (Yin, 2017). When the investigation contains views of more than one unit of analysis, it is more likely to result in findings that are “robust and reliable” (Yin, 2017). Based on Yin’s (2017) methodology and interpretation of the multiple case study, the case itself may be a person; this is often used in business and management studies in the

scholarly literature such as in Brown (2017), with airport managers; Hamlett (2014), with manufacturing managers; Komodromos (2014), with university employees; and Neubert (2016), with tech firm owners. Yin's (2017) multiple case study approach attempts to replicate the same findings across multiple cases by tracing the differences and similarities between and within cases; study results created in this way are considered "robust and reliable" (Yin, 2017). These strengths led to the choice of a multiple case study design, which allowed for the contrast, comparison, and synthesis of multiple viewpoints during the analysis phase (see Yin, 2017). The use of the qualitative method of research helps to facilitate the comprehensive study of a given phenomenon (see Patton, 2014). The circumstantial data of a true-life phenomenon can provide insights on why and how the phenomenon takes place in a setting (Yin, 2011).

Central Phenomenon

The NPM literature neglects a vital viewpoint on reform implementation in the public sector in Nigeria as relatively little is known about NPM longitudinal processes and competencies of key public-sector actors, the public agency managers (Mahamadu et al., 2018; Porter & Watts, 2017; Rasul & Rogger, 2018). NPM reforms in Nigeria have stalled due to those within the government benefitting from the status quo, a phenomenon that thwarts managers at the micro/agency level to drive long-term changes and apply NPM principles (Kuipers et al., 2014). For Nigerian public policy designers to attain value through NPM, they must include feedback from stakeholders in relevant discourse to effectively minimize path dependence processes controlling public service delivery (Porter & Watts, 2017).

NPM is compatible with new approaches and each approach was drawn from the private sector and embraced by the public sector (Hope, 2017). In any case, administrative models of PSR and NPM programs display some evidence-based application results (Goldfinch et al, 2012). To address the problem, in the late 1990s, international organizations advised developing nations to introduce GG initiatives alongside NPM (Goldfinch et al., 2012).

Any breaches in applying the bureaucratic model of NPM is something that can be addressed by the GG agenda (Argyriades, 2006; Roy, 2008). A GG agenda reflects a wide-ranging objective of building an operative state through the expansion of its resource base and improving the capability, quality, and responsiveness of civil servants through limpidity, participation, and democracy (Goldfinch et al., 2012). One of the major objectives for the GG movement was general recognition by international organizations and researchers that corruption was the number one factor in underdevelopment (Bose et al., 2008).

Research Tradition

The nature of this study was qualitative drawn on an interpretivist model in which individuals and groups create their own social certainty (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). Interpretivists, however, emphasize that viewpoints of others are entrenched and surrounded in biographical, organizational, and social frameworks that are implicitly associated from their understanding of a social phenomenon (Cooper & White, 2012). Qualitative research by its nature is “exploratory, data-driven, fluid and flexible and context sensitive” (Mason, 2002, p. 24).

I used an exploratory multiple case study as the research design for this study to generate new knowledge on implementing change in public administration by public agency managers in developing countries, and specifically in Nigeria (Yin, 2017). Qualitative research offers opportunities to analyze management decisions at an in-depth level and explore the reasons behind specific behaviors in organizations. Qualitative sampling strategies are purposeful, which ensures an in-depth understanding of a case study's phenomenon of inquiry (Klenke, 2016). I used various sources of evidence instead of being dependent on one source. I made use of journaling, interviews, government reports, and databases of NPM and service delivery for methodological triangulation to give meaning to the interview questions while adding trustworthiness and reliability to the results of the study. Looking at these rationales for building my study design, a qualitative method was suitable for my study.

There are five qualitative research traditions. The five qualitative research traditions are as follows: (a) for narrative research, to enhance personal stories; (b) for phenomenology, to define respondent's perspective or understanding; (c) for ethnography, to update or describe a situation from a respondent's environment; (d) for grounded theory, to ascertain or clarify a theory from data, and (e) for case study, to establish effectiveness (Lewis, 2015). Making use of a multiple case study was ideal for this research because provided a way to investigate in-depth how the views and behaviors of public agency managers in Nigeria implement path-breaking interventions to improve public services and change social outcomes for the low-income population. A multiple

case study design gives researchers an established instrument for achieving a deep understanding of a detailed phenomenon (Yin, 2017).

Qualitative. In qualitative method, there are five main traditions of inquiry. The five methods of qualitative research design are narrative, phenomenology, ethnography, grounded theory, and case study (Patton, 2014). The justification for the research tradition that grounded my study follows.

Narrative. A narrative research design is best for interpreting the stories individuals experience in their respective lives through an event (Clandinin, 2016). People's stories of lived experience could not answer the research question in this study and could not provide multiple viewpoints for cross case investigation. Based on this reason, a narrative research design would not have suited this study.

Phenomenology. The phenomenological research design is grounded in a central subject of people's lived experiences (Moustakas, 1994). When a researcher is able to apprehend a distinctive event and its framework, the researcher can understand participants in the formal setting (Yin, 2011). Considering my position as a researcher, I was not able to follow or try to understand what it means for the low-income population to be denied service delivery in various communities. For this reason, a phenomenological design was not suitable for my study.

Ethnography. An ethnographic research design involves the researcher as the data collection mechanism to study and understand cultural involvement within a group (Marshall & Rossman, 2016). During my study, each manager was important, and I interviewed each of the participants individually. Ethnography is the methodical study of

people and cultures. It is designed to explore cultural phenomena where the researcher observes society from the point of view of the subject of the study. For this reason, an ethnographic design of study was not suitable for this study.

Grounded theory. Grounded theory research design entails making use of all forms of human communication with respect to lived experiences of individuals to cultivate a theory (Engward, 2013). Grounded theory is a research methodology that operates inductively, in contrast to the hypothetic-deductive. This study was not focused on cultivating a theory or changing it. Considering that reason, grounded theory research design was not suitable for this study.

Case study. A case study research design helps people to understand a complex issue or object beyond what has been known previously, including evolving questions to explore the *why* and *how* of a real-life occurrence in its complexity and with a holistic understanding through data collection and inquiry (Yin, 2017). A case study is also a research method involving an up-close, in-depth, and thorough investigation of a subject of study (the case), as well as its interrelated background conditions. The benefit of case studies is the capability to conduct a reasonable and proportional analysis making use of a multiple case study design to enhance cross-sectional and cross-case studies that the researcher can simplify toward a theory (Tsang, 2013). This approach to inquiry was appropriate for supporting a holistic and in-depth understanding by exploring the views of public agency managers in Nigeria, assigned agents of NPM reform, on implementing path-breaking interventions in their agencies to improve services and change social outcomes for the low-income population.

Multiple case study design. Qualitative case studies today are an integral part of the business field and are widely used to trace business and management processes of various companies across industry sectors, countries, and cultures (Eisenhardt, Graebner, & Sonenshein, 2016). According to Eriksson and Kovalainen (2015), case studies are fundamental for creating holistic and contextual in-depth knowledge using various sources of data. Looking at various types of evidence and delineating the research outcomes by using a qualitative approach allows researchers to evaluate a particular case from numerous viewpoints while trusting the available data. The case study approach is most appropriate when asking a research question based on *how* and *why* and when the study is constrained by time (Yin, 2017).

A multiple case study can present a rich, powerful representation of human collaboration and intersecting viewpoints in comparison to a single case study (Stake, 2013). A multiple case study exploring a social phenomenon can be composed of individuals living very close to that social framework as distinct units of study or distinct cases, and it uses replication logic when ascertaining and selecting participants for the study (Yin, 2017). The single case may focus on a single unit of analysis or multiple units of analysis, whereas multiple case studies, which Yin (2017) described as multiple experiments, follow a replication logic in which each case is selected so that it either has similar results or has predictable reasons for the phenomenon of contrasting results. The concept of replication logic supports that each case serves as a distinct experiment that stands on its own merit and allows the researcher to compare and contrast results across cases (Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007; Yin, 2017). For this multiple case study, the unit of

analysis for each separate case was the public agency manager in Nigeria. Eisenhardt and Graebner (2007) recommended that researchers use a multicase study approach that includes more than one case when the goal of the study is to make an original contribution to a theoretical or conceptual framework.

Role of the Researcher

As a researcher, I was an observer and data collection agent. I was responsible for the quality, best practices, and trustworthiness of the study. Yin (2017) posited six capabilities of a researcher as listening, focusing on behaviors, asking relevant questions, understanding the research topic, paying good attention to the data, respecting participants, and using multitasking and ethical procedures. In this study, I did not have any relationship with participants to avoid bias or awkwardness and uneasiness that can be created towards their response.

My role as a researcher was to conduct interviews relevant to the topic that includes literature review of certain research topics, interviewing, and developing questions tailored towards the topic. The interviews were not held in my house, a place not conducive to the participants, or my work area. There was no incentive to participate to avoid conflict of interest, which I tried very hard to avoid because it could lead to bias. Conducting a rigorous case study requires time, focus, and the ability to understand participants' views and the skills of the researcher when it comes to enduring questions of credibility, reliability, and validity (Yin, 2017). For a case study researcher to be accomplished, research must be done with a high standard of professionalism within the

framework of an academic field. My participants had knowledge of the topic of study, and they were selected from public agency managers in Nigeria.

As a researcher, it was my utmost responsibility to make sure my participants received recruitment letters and consent forms before the study began and to highlight the adherence of ethical values in line with Walden University's IRB and the National Commission for the Protection of Human Subjects. I also made sure to facilitate my interviews in an atmosphere conducive to full participation so that they could be confident in their responses, which were in mutually quiet and confidential places via Skype. I also made sure to use codes for their respective names and keep the documents in a safe place for confidentiality, reliability, and credibility. Finally, I adhered to Patel and Buiting's (2013) suggestion that researchers should practice recording, documenting feelings of events, behaviors, and any condition could cause emotions through reflective journaling to remain as unbiased as possible.

Methodology

A qualitative multiple case study design was utilized in this study to address the literature gap on views of public agency managers in Nigeria, who are agents of NPM reform, on implementing path-breaking interventions to improve public services and change social outcomes for low-income people (Abubakar et al., 2016; Gualini, 2018; Porter & Watts, 2017). A multiple case study allows the in-depth study of holistic and meaningful characteristics of real-life events in more than one case and is applied to a research design when a study goal is to make an original contribution to a theoretical or conceptual framework (Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007; Yin, 2017). In a multiple case

study, the case itself may be a person, event, entity, or other unit of analysis. When people are the unit of analysis, a single case focuses on one individual, whereas a multiple case study focuses on more than one person (Yin, 2017). In such a research design approach based on Yin's (2017) methodology and interpretation of the multiple case study, the case itself may be a person, and is often used in business and management studies (Brown, 2017; Neubert, 2016). Cross-case synthesis as a data analysis technique is recommended when analyzing data in a multiple case study to strengthen trustworthiness of data and the methodological rigor of the study (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015; Yin, 2017).

Designing a case study protocol allows qualitative researchers to raise the reliability of their study (Baxter & Jack, 2008; Yin, 2017). The method and research design delineate the process and system of conducting the multiple case study. Three sources of data were utilized throughout this study: (a) a semistructured interview protocol (see Appendix C) whose items have been designed and standardized by previous researchers, (b) archival data in the form of government reports (Yin, 2017), and (c) reflective field notes (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015), which were kept by the researcher throughout the entire data collection process. The design rationale also included information on participant selection logic, data collection and field procedures, an identified data analysis technique, and a template to follow for reporting the multiple case study and augmenting the trustworthiness of the data (Noor, 2008). The research design for this study began with the participant selection logic.

Participant Selection Logic

Population. People, organizations, or events that represent the supra set of elements to qualify as possible cases for a multiple case study are recruited from the study's population (Yin, 2017). In Nigeria, there are four categories of public sector organizations and they include government ministries, extra/non-ministerial departments, government agencies and parastatals, and government corporations and enterprises (Olatunji, 2018). My research was focused on the population of public agency managers from public organizations in Nigeria who implement public policies and provide public services for citizens and government agencies and parastatals (Olatunji, 2018).

This multiple case study's population included 65% out of 100% (Ikeanyibe, 2016) public agency managers in the Nigerian civil service supervising the activities of government agencies and parastatals; parastatals in Nigeria are government-owned organizations set up to fulfil particular mandates and are governed by Public Service Rules issued by the Office of the Head of the Civil Service of the Federation (Abah, 2015). The population of public agency managers I used in recruiting my sample are supervised by local government's officials and considered to be the third tier of government in Nigeria. These local public agencies in Nigeria are part of the civil service sector and were created to bring GG closer to the mostly low-income population of rural communities (Abubakar et al., 2016).

Sampling criteria. The unit of analysis was the public manager in Nigeria's civil service, selected according to the following inclusion criteria established on their participant characteristics: (a) adults over the age of 18, (b) public agency managers in

the Nigerian civil service sector, (c) having more than 10 years in the Nigerian civil services, and (d) having specific knowledge through their experiences with the topic of the study (see Robinson, 2014). The assumption was that participants in this study would react positively and honestly by not holding back information that bridge the study results. To participate in the study, participants signed their consent and returned the forms through emails or online affirming their personal experience towards NPM and service delivery to low-income populations and their respective roles as public agency managers. There was a full demographic form that includes participants' addresses, emails, and work locations in Nigeria that also included their skills, experience, years of experience, and roles in service delivery. I informed the participants that all their information was to be kept confidential and not disclosed in any way. The need for participants' e-mails was for quick and constant communication. Participant's locations are in Lagos, Abuja, Owerri, Port Harcourt, Aba, and Enugu.

Sampling selection. The following inclusion criteria were used for the selection of this study's participants: (a) adults over the age of 18, (b) public agency managers in the Nigerian civil service sector, (c) having more than 10 years in the Nigerian civil services, and (d) having specific knowledge through their experiences with the topic of the study (see Robinson, 2014). With a small group of public agency managers, an additional benchmark for case selection of the purposeful sample was going to affect the sample size and would negate some managers and increase the process of data collection for the study. People that were not included in the study are those who would not meet the criteria for the study, and the goal was to provide in-depth knowledge and therefore,

target a certain group, type of individual, process, or events. To achieve this goal, qualitative researchers emphasize criterion-based sampling procedures to reach their target group (Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007; Yin, 2017).

In this qualitative study, I made sure that I could access my participants and that they had experience with the phenomenon under study. As data were collected through interactions with participants using interviews, surveys, questionnaires, or focus groups, I chose participants who were willing to speak about their experiences and share their thoughts at the heart of the proposed study. The best topic in the world cannot be explored without willing participants (Merriam & Tisdell, 2005; Yin, 2017).

Sampling Strategy. The inclusion for the sampling strategy of any study flows from the chosen research design and methods while considering research ethics (Baxter & Jack, 2008; Yin, 2017). I followed three steps in my sampling strategy: (a) determining which sampling techniques I selected the units that would define my sample, b) understanding the key terms and basic principles, and (c) considering the realities of choosing such a sampling strategy for my study. I was very cautious in choosing my sample because my population consists of people who would help minimize bias. Samples most times are biased when individuals volunteer to be included in a study (Ikeanyibe, 2016). Also, preference of certain individuals over others ultimately affects choosing a pre-selected individual and can also result in a negative characteristic of the general population (Noor, 2008). The sample strategy and size similar to my study vary due to the nature of the phenomenon and the topic understanding (Yin, 2017). Instead of an absolute number, Schram (2006) suggested a range of 5-10 participants for a typical

qualitative study, claiming that a large sample size could hinder a deeper investigation. I used 10 public agency managers but only seven completed the interview—clarify please—who have experienced NPM and service delivery to low-income populations in Nigeria to reach maximum variation sampling for cross-case and cross-sectional analysis of the data.

Instrumentation

The goal of using specific instrumentation in a case study was to gather data from multiple sources and provide sufficient data collection instruments to answer the research question (Yin, 2017). In consideration of the various forms of questions developed that related to the research topic, it was important to examine all of the responses along with the characteristics and selection of participants in the data analysis process. Thus, it was important to gather instrumentation protocols that aligned with the purpose of the study and could provide answers to the qualitative research question and contribute original data to the conceptual framework. Carefully choosing the appropriate instrumentation helped to produce themes to support insights that emerge from studying the views of public agency managers in Nigeria—who are agents of NPM reform—on implementing path-breaking interventions to improve public services and change social outcomes for the low-income population. Three sources of data were utilized throughout this study: (a) a semistructured interview protocol (see Appendix C) whose items have been designed and standardized by previous researchers, (b) archival data in the form of government reports (see Yin, 2017), and (3) reflective field notes (see Merriam & Tisdell, 2015), which I kept throughout the entire data collection process.

The interview protocol. This study's interview guide (see Appendix C) involved open-ended questions developed in Goldfinch et al.'s (2012) study and initially used in an investigation towards modern good governance public administration reform in low-income and delicate states. An open-ended interview technique helped to improve and increase my capability to understand a phenomenon or occurrences through the subject's point of view (see Kvale, 1995). Hence, in the case of this study, standardized, openended interviews were valuable in gaining an in-depth understanding of how public agency managers in Nigeria implement path-breaking interventions to improve public services and change social outcomes for the low-income population.

Goldfinch et al. (2012) established the questions in their ground-breaking study by reviewing the salient literature and the authors' understanding of NPM. The questions were aimed at stimulating and enhancing general assumptions on administrative reform to advise or notify policymaking overall, and for future use in qualitative and case-based studies of public administration reform in low-income and delicate states. Each section, as well as eliciting facts, used prompts to facilitate conversations around the facts, such as

“Can you give me an example of that?” and “Please tell me more about that.” While asking probe questions, generic questions can encourage in-depth examples and details of actions from participants. In asking about specific details, probes were customized to the specific dialogue with participants (see Merriam & Tisdell, 2015).

I reflected back to my understanding of what participants said to ensure accuracy and clarity. This process minimized potential interviewer-induced bias and provided

participants with opportunities to correct any inaccuracies in the transcripts. Specific interview questions aligned with three important umbrella issues to address when examining public administration, as designed by Goldfinch et al. (2012): (a) NPM reform agendas, (b) NPM reform implementation, and (c) outcomes of NPM reform as perceived by NPM public agency managers in Nigeria. This interview protocol also has been pilottested and used in a similar study by Mezgobo (2018) in interviewing public agency managers in Ethiopia. Given the development and previous usage of the interview protocol, a pilot test was deemed unnecessary.

Archival data. Triangulation is an analytic technique and a central aspect of casestudy research design utilized during fieldwork in addition to later data analysis (Yin, 2017). Triangulating plays a vital role during the qualitative research process; it is regarded as a methodological technique for corroborating or conflicting ideas and data (Guion, Diehl, & McDonald, 2011). I triangulated the results of the qualitative interviews with archival documents. The archival documents included government reports on public service delivery to low-income populations in Nigeria, and media reports from the domestic and foreign press documenting issues that were identified in the raw data from the interviews. I also reviewed databases of updated issues pertaining to new public management delivery of services to low-income populations in Nigeria. I utilized these three sources of archival data for methodological triangulation to answer the research question and add credibility and trustworthiness to the study results. This method has been used in similar studies such as that of Komodromos (2014) and Neubert (2016), in

which a multiple case study design used archival data to triangulate interview data to answer their study's research questions.

Reflective field notes. How observation is used in research depends on the research questions and the paradigm underlying a study. This study was grounded in the interpretivist paradigms and thus used unstructured observation in the form of reflective field notes as a source of data collection (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). Reflective field notes obtained from online data sources—the semistructured interviews to be carried out via Skype, in this case—are the third instrument used for data collection from the participants of this study (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). Skype may be useful in upholding a highly unbiased atmosphere and averting the researcher's personal reflexivity, by depriving the interview interaction of contextual information. By allowing the researcher to reach participants in distant locations, Skype additionally aids the process of replication (Janghorban, Roudsari, & Taghipour, 2014).

Interactions, interviews, and introspection may constitute online data collection, which is also referred to as netnography (Kozinets, 2017; Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). Because most if not all online data collection interactions are recorded and saved as they occur, reflective field notes were much more important than observational field notes in this case. During my Skype interviews, I recorded their participants' observations regarding pretexts, subtexts, personal emotions, and contingencies that take place over the course of their time online through these reflective field notes from online data collection (see Yin, 2017). Reflective field notes often provide key insights into how

online social interactions happen in real time and may detect the reasons behind the cultural values of the participants, rather than offer the more typical recording or description of them (Kozinets, 2017).

Drawing from their ethnographic work in online research, Boellstorff, Nardi, Pearce, and Taylor (2013) suggested certain techniques for keeping reflective field notes from online interactions. These include writing down interesting things that occurred while the researcher was engaged in online interactions and experiences; taking screenshots of activity and making small “scratch notes” soon after events occur; and using the “two-boxing” approach in which two computers, screens, or windows are open simultaneously—the netnographic engagement unfolding on one screen, while screen notes are taken in real-time on the other (Boellstorff et al., 2013).

I developed netnographic field notes prompts that I utilized as triangulation prompts during the data analysis process, a common practice in a study such as this that is driven by a qualitative study purpose and research methods (Kozinets, 2017). This method has been used in similar studies such as that of McKinlay, Morgan, Gray, Macdonald, and Pullon (2017), in which a multiple case study design using case study observational research methods is used to explore the research questions within realworld settings where the reflective field notes launch a sequential order of data collection, data analysis, and synthesis (Yin, 2017).

The strength of this study’s instrumentation depended on the matter of transferability. Transferability is comparable to external validity, for both concepts are tangled and contained with the extent to which the results of one study can be valuable

and beneficial in other settings (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). Transferability ultimately encourages a test or experiment for many qualitative studies, for outcomes are inherently grounded to explicit backgrounds and individuals, and as a result, it is conceivable that the conclusions from this research would be appropriate to individuals beyond the participant group (see Klenke, 2016; Shenton, 2004).

Procedures for Recruitment, Participants, and Data Collection

I used an interview practice to reach the maximum data reliability constantly throughout the data collection procedure with every participant. The interview process included the processes and techniques for the role of the researcher (Olatunji, 2018) in conducting semistructured, preliminary contact with the potential participants. As a researcher in this study and data collection instrument, I examined and paralleled the qualitative data in the cross-case analysis of the results of the study.

To understand how public agency managers provide service to low-income populations, I developed a set of interview questions grounded in the conceptual framework literature review. These questions were centered on revealing the specific attitudes and characteristics of public agency managers on service delivery as well as classifying specific tasks for prospective future unit coordinators. Hope (2017) recommended using an easy, quiet and safe environment to reduce background noise during the recording phase and increase the level of relaxation and security during the interview, which replicates profoundly the excellence of data produced during the time of the interview.

I sent my email address and recruitment letter on LinkedIn and to my professional network to solicit potential participants. Participants were public agency managers in the Nigerian public service who have served for 10 years or more and who have during their years of service acquired experience on service delivery to low-income populations in Nigeria. During this time, I expected to receive emails for more information with respect to the study and the process to participate. I also sent email invitations to the participants with the consent form certified by the University and the demographic form attached to the email invitation. The consent form included the risks and benefits of being a participant in the study, and the voluntary nature of the study along with information about privacy, questions, contacts, and informed consent details.

Looking at the size and the purposes of my study, the number of participants contacted for the qualitative multiple case study were 10 but seven completed the study. The saturation of a study is reached when everyone interviewed comes back with the same concepts and themes (Crosby et al., 2017); that is, when every interview question has been exhausted to a point that the participants begin to give the same answers. Saturation has been accepted as an extensive methodological principle in qualitative research. It is an indication that, on the center of the data that have been collected or analyzed, further data collection or analysis are unnecessary, and how it is based, new data and themes are no longer useful (Yin, 2017). As soon as saturation is reached, data collection will end.

I used LinkedIn to reach out 10 participants who were public agency managers in the Nigerian public sector. Again, participants who were chosen were invited to

participate in the study by means of a recruitment letter approved by the IRB. The participants who agreed to participate in the study were asked to provide their phone numbers, emails, and Skype information for access to communication. After IRB approved the application for the interview, I intensified my efforts and sent a recruitment letter to each of the participants through email with the consent form, which explained the purpose of the study, and if they had any need to withdraw, possible risk, procedure, time limit, statement to participate with no obligation, discomfort, no obligation to participate or refusing to participate and the need for the study and positive change the study would bring to society.

Again, data were collected through Skype. As the researcher, I was the one collecting data as an observer of the interview procedure. Collection of data continued every day up to the time I was able to have 10 participants or when data saturation was reached with new participants giving the same responses or potential themes as the previous participants. The data collection time frame was between 20 and 40 minutes, and the interviews were recorded through digital devices, emails, and observation sheets. I also made use of Microsoft Word to transliterate or write down participants' responses. However, if I was unable to recruit the number of participants needed for the study, I would have continued to search and invite public agency managers in the Nigerian public sector, until I was able to get 10 participants, or the study reached the point of saturation. There was not going to be any follow up interviews after the first interview was completed because I sent out transliterated responses to every one of the participants by email for authentication and clarification. When the interviews were completed, it was

important for me to make sure I assured the participants that their information would be used for only research purposes and only one time. Also, they were informed that their identities would be kept confidential and all the material used for the interview would also be kept confidential and destroyed after 5 years.

Triangulation is an analytic technique and a central aspect of case-study research design utilized during fieldwork in addition to later data analysis by comparing and contrasting multiple sources of evidence to strengthen trustworthiness of the data results (Yin, 2017). I triangulated the results of the qualitative interviews with archival documents. The archival documents included government reports on public service delivery to low-income populations in Nigeria, and media reports from the domestic and foreign press documenting issues that were identified in the raw data from the interviews. I also reviewed databases of updated issues pertaining to new public management delivery of services to low-income populations in Nigeria. I compiled reflective field notes obtained from online data sources—the semistructured interviews carried out via Skype, in this case—were the third instrument used for data collection from the participants of this study (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). During my Skype interviews, I recorded my observations of participants regarding pretexts, subtexts, personal emotions, and contingencies that took place over the course of their time online through these reflective field notes from online data collection (Yin, 2017). Reflective field notes often provide key insights into how online social interactions happen in real time and may detect the reasons behind the cultural values of the participants, rather than offer the more typical recording or description of them (Kozinets, 2017).

Data Analysis Plan

Data from the semistructured interviews were analyzed by me as the researcher, and they were based on the responses of the participants on how public agency managers assigned for the delivery of goods and services could make use of NPM to deliver goods and services to low-income populations. There is no need for demographics in the analysis of data because this study is about the use of NPM to improve service delivery to low-income populations irrespective of gender, race, ethnicity, or age. I also used NVivo qualitative software to fragment and categorize the transcribed responses from the participants, after which I presented the results.

Yin (2017) explained that Computer Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis Software (CAQDAS) software performs many interview tasks in a qualitative study that includes categorization and segmentation, search retrieval of data while allowing visual illustration. Any irregularity in observations would also be informed, and a probable clarification would be provided. Correct and truthful reporting, which is important in all phases of qualitative research methods, includes description of participants, recruitment details, inclusion and exclusion conditions and principles, and any unanticipated adaptation (Robinson, 2014). The determination of the interview code of behavior or questions is to address the main research question for the case study that is based on collective themes (Adewole, 2015).

I utilized thematic analysis by searching for themes that appeared to be important to the depiction of the phenomenon (Meier et al., 2017). This process entailed identifying themes over a careful reading and understanding of the data and a form of pattern

recognition within the data, in which the evolving themes became the classifications for analysis. In this case, cross-case synthesis analysis integrated both the data-motivated inductive methodology and the empirical priori prototype of codes approach defined by Yin (2017) that perfected the research question and confirmed that the philosophies and moralities of social phenomenology were fundamental to the process of deductive thematic analysis.

I used NVivo software to develop the splitting up or categorizing of common codes, phrases, and words within the participants' responses. It was my intention to use the cross-case synthesis analysis strategy (see Maher, Hadfield, Hutchings, & de Eyto, 2018; Yin, 2017). I, additionally, applied content analysis techniques for primary data. The first step was to identify codes in the main content through information coming from in-depth interviews, and then create categories from the identified codes. I continued to analyze content from primary and secondary data using a cross-case synthesis technique and then triangulation by exploring patterns of similarity or difference among themes generated by the analysis (Yin, 2017).

In this multiple case study approach, I attempted to replicate the same findings across multiple cases by exploring the differences and similarities between and within cases. When the study contains views of more than one unit of analysis, it is more likely to result in findings that are "robust and reliable" (Yin, 2017). These strengths led to the choice of a multiple case study design, which allowed for the contrast, comparison, and synthesis of multiple viewpoints during the analysis phase (Yin, 2017).

The data analysis of the study was structured using Yin's (2017) five phases of analysis and their interactions used to assemble, collect, interpret, disassemble, and conclude data. The sources of data were through interviews, analysis of physical artifacts, and journaling as in the government reports, and databases of Nigerian public agency managers' report for methodological triangulation to enhance the dependability of the results. The compilation of data entailed formulating a database in a professional way to prepare for the analysis (Stuteville & Jumara, 2011). Using NVivo, I formulated a case study database and downloaded this information for data management and storage (Maher et al, 2018).

Issues of Trustworthiness

In this section, I considered issues of trustworthiness in the outcome of the results.

Credibility

Credibility of a study can be comfortably guaranteed when the study has minimal bias and an ample amount of time that the researcher spent in understanding the responses of the participants. Credibility is determined by whether the results are truthful and believable enough to align with the phenomenon being undertaken, grounded on the researcher's continued commitment to understanding participants' viewpoints and consistent observations to circumvent researcher bias (Billups, 2014). I contacted all the participants over the phone or through email or Skype for 20-40 minutes and carefully explained to them that if need be, that they would be free to end the interview at any time if they were not comfortable. I audiotaped their responses and sent to them their transcribed responses as a checkmark so that everyone would be in line as far as

validating and confirming what was written. The adoption of this verification procedure would prevent any kind of reflexivity that would negate my views from affecting the responses of the participants. It was my obligation to suspend the study if I noticed similar forms of responses from the participants when more than half of the participants had responded to the questions of the study.

Transferability

I took time to address transferability without altering transferability strategies outlined in Chapter 3, using a purposeful sample of 15 public agency managers who have worked for 10 years or more and witnessed service delivery in the low-income population. To guarantee transferability, the research had to be impenetrable, deep, and profound in the narrative of the findings through the NVivo coding of themes, which were measured accurately and based on the responses of the participants in the study. The main framework of a study should be defined by the researcher in detail to contain the context accounts, methods of the research, findings, and samples of data so readers can conclude the transferability of its findings to their particular context (Houghton, Casey, Shaw, & Murphy, 2013). The research was comprehensive so that readers would be able to ascertain easily if the results could be moved to their own framework or background.

Dependability

I implemented dependability in the absence of adjusting dependability strategies stated in Chapter 3, which is to improve dependability by instituting stability in themes offered by the use of qualitative strategies to checkmate changes. To guarantee dependability, the recorded responses from the participants were very precise and truthful

before I coded them with NVivo software. Dependability is knowing if the results have reliable and constant themes, and also if similar research process and data collection procedures are applied (Yin, 2017). Dependability is grounded on a trail of audits of determinations made by the researcher through the study that explain the researcher's methodological justification, contextual data, and revealing decisions (Houghton et al., 2013). In this case, if another researcher undertakes a related case study with the same participants in a very short time frame, the second researcher ultimately will get a comparable result. Dependability can only be shunned if participants have different views based on an informed experience since the first study was done.

Confirmability

I implemented confirmability in the absence of adjusting that it was in line with consistency strategies as explained in Chapter 3 used to check any bias in a researcher by the use of reflective journalism grounded on reflectivity and increasing confirmability. To get precise and truthful answers from the participants, I made sure that the participants are relaxed and given the opportunity to speak without fear or favor. Confirmability means ensuring that the results are unbiased and truthful, and also can be validated and documented with no researcher bias or reflexivity (Billups, 2014). When I completed the interviews, I transcribed participants' answers and send a transcript to each of them for certification and confirmation, which is a participant check procedure. Validation of responses by participants is a useful practice to establish trustworthiness in qualitative research (Kornbluh, 2015). This practice helped to confirm that the answers were acceptable and correct for the participants as they were spoken and transcribed.

Ethical Procedures

Walden University's expectation is that all research to be done on humans is approved by Walden University's Institutional Review Board (IRB). The IRB application number was assigned and used to have access to participants. IRB is very concerned regarding the study of human subjects, and it upholds its policy to make sure that participants will not be in any danger of being harmed in any way (Jacob & Furgerson, 2012). The treatment of human subjects needs institutional approval that involves the IRB. I kept all materials that relate to recruitment and procedures to avoid any issues of privacy and confidentiality.

Billups (2014) posited that the major role of human participants in research is to function as a source of data. This obvious reason made it a duty for me to protect the life, dignity, integrity, health, privacy, right to self-determination and confidentiality of personal information of the participants. I adhered to the ethical principles of respect for persons, beneficence, and justice. I did not initiate any data collection activities until I received approval from the IRB. Once the study began, managers refusing to participate or yearning for premature withdrawal from the study were reminded that there is no risk or penalty for withdrawing, and their earlier responses given will not be retained. For those who participated in the full review, data collected were anonymous, and I kept all responses in a private and secure place under lock and key. I was the sole person to have access to all the material related to the study and it will be kept for 5 years by saving it with on a USB flash drive, password protected file before being destroyed.

Summary

In Chapter 3, I discussed research design and rationale, the role of the researcher, and methodology. The methodology included participant selection logic; instrumentation; procedures for recruitment, participation, and data collection; and a data analysis plan. Issues of trustworthiness were discussed to describe credibility, transferability, dependability, confirmability, and ethical procedures.

Chapter 4 comprises the data analysis and results for the qualitative single case study. Discussions include the research setting, demographics, data collection, data analysis, incompatible cases, evidence of trustworthiness, and the study results.

Chapter 4: Results

The purpose of this qualitative, multiple case study was to explore views of public agency managers in Nigeria who are agents of NPM reform on implementing pathbreaking interventions to improve public services and change social outcomes for the low-income population. This exploration was carried out through the lens of the managers' daily business experiences, their agency, and the community context. A research question was developed to give an answer in the context of the empirical setting (Giauque, 2015). In answering the research question and analyzing the views of public agency managers, I have been able to discover and offer understanding of effective service delivery in the public service to low income populations.

RQ: What are the views of public agency managers in Nigeria, assigned agents of NPM reform, on implementing path-breaking interventions within their agencies to improve services and change social outcomes for the low-income population?

The important question was initiated following an extensive review of existing literature to identify gaps in knowledge on effective service delivery to low income populations through NPM reform (Pollitt, 2003, 2004). I identified a literature gap on ways to effectively deliver service to low income populations in recent literature (Haque, 2007). This study may aid in providing a better definition of effective service delivery to low income populations in the public sector (Pollitt, 2003). The research may also help agency managers to better understand ways to deliver services to low income populations by following NPM reforms. The study is also important because the findings may

provide agency managers with knowledge on how to overcome leadership challenges in their daily work life and within their specific managerial context. The impact of this study can involve educating Nigerian agency managers on their economic contributions to the economy and their role in managerial leadership. The social impact is that the study might benefit low income and marginalized communities by contributing to enhanced service delivery and thereby possibly alleviating poverty, creating jobs, and aid economic growth in Nigeria.

The research design and approach were grounded in the conceptual framework built on two key concepts. The emphasis of NPM (Pollitt, 2003) can be different depending on the country and the timing. In NPM, management systems retarget their focus, shifting to outputs (instead of inputs and processes) on service quality and consumer orientation, a move towards flat and autonomous organizational forms, a shift towards efficiency and individualism, a much wider development of markets, and a widespread substitution of contracts (Hope, 2017; Pollitt, 2003). Another concept is path dependency (Pierson, 2000), broadly defined as increasing returns, positive feedback, or self-reinforcing processes. The steps that are taken towards a goal can encourage increased movement along the path, the same as increasing returns, which improves the likelihood that the steps will be accelerated down the same path (Pierson, 2000). The findings of this study are aimed at closing this conceptual gap by contributing original qualitative data to the study's conceptual framework and enhancing managers' understanding of effective service delivery to low income populations in Nigeria.

In this chapter, a description of the results of the multiple case study is provided and divided into two main sections. The first phase of the data analysis process was a thematic analysis of the collected data based on the study's multiple sources, as recommended by Yin (2017). This phase included the following: (a) a semistructured interview protocol (see Appendix) the items of which have been designed and standardized by previous researchers, (b) archival data in the form of government reports (Yin, 2017), and (c) reflective field notes (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015), which I kept throughout the entire data collection process. The second phase of the data analysis process was a cross-case analysis and synthesis in which the findings of the initial thematic analysis of data were synthesized to answer the central RQ. Boyatzis (1998) supported a variety of approaches to thematic analysis and argued that varied approaches have much to offer qualitative data analysis: "Thematic analysis is flexible and what researchers do with the themes once they uncover them differs based on the intentions of the research and the process of analysis" (Boyatzis, 1998, p. 63).

A multiple case study allows the in-depth study of holistic and meaningful characteristics of real-life events in more than one case and is an appropriate research design when a study goal is to make an original contribution to a theoretical or conceptual framework (Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007; Yin, 2017). In a multiple case study, the *case* itself may be a person, event, entity, or other unit of analysis. When people are units of analysis, a single case focuses on one individual, whereas a multiple case study focuses on more than one person (Yin, 2017). A research design approach based on Yin's (2017) methodology and interpretation of the multiple case study, the

case itself may be a person and is often used in business and management studies (Brown, 2017; Neubert, 2016). Cross-case synthesis as a data analysis technique is recommended when analyzing data in a multiple case study to strengthen trustworthiness of data and the methodological rigor of the study (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015; Yin, 2017).

Research Settings

The data for this multiple case study were collected through seven semistructured interviews with data saturation reached at six agency managers in the Nigerian public sector. One more interview was added to ensure data saturation. Participants were recruited using the LinkedIn online platform networking tool. Once the potential participants were selected, I contacted each one individually through e-mail. After they gave their consent to participate, an interview date and time were scheduled through email. The unit of analysis for this study was at the individual level, and the cases made up a purposeful sample of public managers in Nigeria's civil service selected according to the following inclusion criteria: (a) adults over the age of 18, (b) public agency managers in the Nigerian civil service sector, (c) more than 10 years work experience in the Nigerian civil services, and (d) having specific knowledge through their experiences with the topic of the study (Robinson, 2014; Yin, 2017).

The flexibility in multiple case study design was appropriate for this current study because it allowed me to align the research design with the specific focus of each case (see Yin, 2017), with each separate case representing one-unit analysis or one public agency manager with a purposeful sample of seven cases. The one-on-one interviews

were conducted in private settings chosen by the participants and with minimal interruptions. Along with the semistructured format, the private spaces allowed each participant to be fully engaged throughout the interview. The participants were fully aware of their rights to confidentiality, and they appeared to express themselves openly.

Demographics

All the interviews and responses were recorded on a digital audio recorder with reflective handwritten notes on an observer note sheet (Billups, 2014). The interviews were from 20 minutes up to 40 minutes in the natural settings of the participants. Seven participants took part in the study, all of whom were public agency managers. The participants had extensive managerial experience in service delivery ranging from 10 to 35 years in managerial positions. The managers were responsible for service delivery to low income populations, and they supervised a minimum of 15 to a maximum of 35 employees. They all possessed graduate level degrees: three had PhDs in management and accountancy and four had master's degrees in management. See Table 1 for participant demographics and characteristics.

Data Collection

The data collection procedure started on October 18, 2018, after IRB approval from Walden University. My approval number was 10-15-18-0541547. The data collection stage was concluded on November 2, 2018, when the data analysis of interviews and reflective notes reached saturation, at which point no new themes were forthcoming. Evidence of data saturation in themes emerged after the fifth and sixth semistructured interviews; the responses of P5 and P6 were related to those of P4. During

the seventh interview with P7, I did not notice any new data or themes emerging in the semistructured interview compared to earlier responses from P1, P2, and P3.

Table 1

Participants' Demographics and Characteristics

Participant	Age	Ethnicity	<i>N</i> years in management	Number of employees	Education level
P1	45	Nigerian	25	15	PhD
P2	42	Nigerian	15	21	MA
P3	58	Nigerian	35	18	PhD
P4	46	Nigerian	24	25	MA
P5	32	Nigerian	20	33	MA
P6	65	Nigerian	30	34	MA
P7	55	American	30	25	PhD

There was indication of saturation surrounding the raw data that came up in themes that included corruption, nepotism, marginalization, and poor service delivery to low income populations in Nigeria. Seminal literature also revealed evidence of saturation in these areas based on statistical data and testimonial accounts (Yin, 2017). Triangulation of the multiple resources as a data analysis strategy was useful in revealing common assertions among the participants combined with my familiarity of the topic under investigation (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011; Yazan, 2015). Details of the saturation process and emerging themes are discussed thoroughly in the results section of this chapter.

To get prepared for my interview protocols to meet my time frame, I focused on the required tasks: (a) recruiting participants, (b) scheduling interviews, (c) recording reflective notes, (d) reviewing semistructured interviews, (e) reviewing seminal literature, and (f) conducting member checks. Data collection also included a built-in audit trail to institute rigor. Data collection comprised seven in-depth one-on-one interviews by me, the researcher, in person. The interviews were conducted over a period of 2 weeks of intensive work with an average of three interviews conducted each week starting on October 18, 2018 and concluding on November 2, 2018. The interviews were scheduled after participants provided consent, and interview times were arranged according to each participant's preferences. Skype or telephone interviews were conducted in private settings, which included participants' homes or offices, while I was located in an office.

I recorded and retained reflective field notes from the time of my IRB approval by Walden University on October 18, 2018, to record my feelings, occasions of excitement, and reflections during the process of data collection. I recorded experiences and reactions to both formal and informal aspects of the data collection process, including participant responses to recruitment and receipt of consent forms. I thought I could complete the interviews far from Nigeria in a stable setting that would negate some typical scheduling conflicts and some delayed responses. I found out that it was not possible due to time differences and communication problems in Nigeria. Thus, I decided to travel to Nigeria to see that the interview scheduling would progress as expected. There were delayed responses to recruitment emails sent via LinkedIn attributable to sporadic log-in periods by individuals identified as potential participants. On many occasions, issues arose

regarding communication and electricity to power the laptop for the interviews at some participants' locations. I made use of a handheld back-up audio recorder to make sure I did not miss any responses. Traveling to meet the participants in person helped me to complete the interviews on time.

During the interview proceedings, participants described their experiences as agency managers in charge of service delivery to low income populations in Nigeria. During each interview, a definition of NPR reform and effective service delivery was provided for each participant to ensure that all participants had a similar interpretation of the concept. The interview questions were designed to elicit these managers' views on NPM interventions and service delivery issues related to low-income populations.

Initial Contact

I started my first contact on October 18, 2018, using inclusion criteria for the selection of this study participants via the LinkedIn online network, which were the following: (a) above 18 years of age, and (b) minimum of 10 years' experience as agency manager in the Nigeria public sector. The final participant formally consented to an interview on October 30, 2018, at which point I stopped the search for new participants. I followed the data collection plan as noted and established in Chapter 3. I sent messages to 10 public agency managers who have experienced NPM and service delivery to lowincome populations in Nigeria to reach maximum variation sampling for cross-case and cross-sectional analysis of the data. Many of the managers responded and followed up immediately, providing me with email addresses to send them the consent forms.

Many of the public agency managers who responded showed interest in the study and took time to request consent letters to start the interviews. They seemed happy to express their views on the study because it related to their position and their country. After I concluded the recruitment of my 10 participants, other managers to whom I sent emails asking for their participation replied, but it was too late because I firmed up the number I wanted for the study. I encountered problems with English and American choices of words. Many managers did not understand what NPM reform is because it was new to them, but I did provide them with some background, and they were able to understand the concept as it was practiced in Nigeria.

Interviews

After I found several potential participants and most of them agreed to take part in the study, they responded by providing consent in line with IRB protocol. Once I scheduled the interviews, I was able to contact most of them through Skype and telephone, but due to poor Internet connections and time difference problems, I decided to travel to Nigeria so as to be able to meet the participants and complete the interviews on time.

During the interviews, every participant agreed to be recorded so that I could review the interview recording with my written transcripts to aid replication (Yin, 2017). I made the participants feel free to respond to the questions as they wanted to and understand there were neither wrong nor perfect answers. The use of a semistructured design allowed the interviews to be conversational and confidential in nature (Yin, 2017) and aided me to grasp the essence of the participants' knowledge of and views on service

delivery to low income populations. This arrangement also allowed me to observe nonverbal cues in a less formal interview setting. Consequent to that, with reflective field notes, this approach improved construct validity by way of triangulation (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015).

Reflective Field Notes and Journaling

My notes during the interviews depended on the research question and the paradigm underlying the study, which was grounded in interpretivist paradigms and the use of unstructured observation in the form of reflective field notes as a source of data collection (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). I took time to reflect on the study and the participants with respect to whom to recruit and on what part of the country I should focus my interviews without being biased. Semistructured interviews were carried out by way of Skype as a third instrument used for data collection from the participants of this study (see Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). Skype was useful in upholding a highly unbiased atmosphere and averting my personal reflexivity, by depriving the interview interaction of contextual information. By allowing me to reach participants in distant locations, Skype aided the process of replication (Janghorban et al., 2014). During my interviews, I recorded participants' observations regarding pretexts, subtexts, personal emotions, and contingencies that take place over the course of their time through these reflective field notes from online data collection (Yin, 2017).

In taking reflective notes, I used certain techniques that involved writing down interesting things that took place during the interview, taking screenshots of activity, and jotting down small scratches of notes as the events occurred, as well as using the “twoboxing” approach in which two computers, screens or windows were open simultaneously—the netnographic engagement unfolding on one screen, as screen notes were taken in real-time on the other (Boellstorff et al., 2013). I was able to develop netnographic field notes that I utilized as triangulation prompts during the data analysis process, a common practice in a study such as this driven by a qualitative study purpose and research methods (Kozinets, 2017).

Transcript Review and Member Checking

When the interview transcripts were completed, I reflected on my understanding of what participants said to ensure accuracy and clarity. I audiotaped their responses and sent to them their transcribed responses so that everyone would have the same understanding to validate what was written, as a checkmark. The adoption of this verification procedure will prevent any kind of reflexivity that will negate my views from affecting the responses of the participants. This process minimized potential interviewer-induced bias and provided participants with opportunities to correct any inaccuracies in the transcripts.

The transcripts were sent through secured email to all the participants, so they could review and verify their responses, which helped to ensure accuracy and gave them an opportunity to assess their respective responses for clarity to some points they may not

have felt had been adequately documented or expressed. This process aided credibility and reduced any concern for accuracy of data (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). During the email exchange, small changes were made on the transcripts, mainly on how the participants understood reform practices as to NPM. After the exchange and validation of transcripts, the participants were happy with the outcome and affirmed data accuracy. Once the data analysis was complete, they received an abbreviated version of the data results for another round of confirmations. The files were later stored in a secured area in accordance with the data collection design in Chapter 3.

Data Analysis

In qualitative exploratory studies, coding is at the center of data collection. In this multiple case study, every case analysis contributed to emerging themes regarding what characterized the views of agency managers in service delivery to low income populations. Multiple case studies take place in natural settings to clarify the study topic, so the researcher can explore the phenomenon from the start of data collection up to the analysis process (Eisenhardt, 1989; Stake, 2013). Also, multiple case study design allows the researcher to be able to analyze data within cases because evidence created in this way is considered reliable and robust (Yin, 2017).

This multiple case study design approach is appropriate for replication, and it supported my exploration of the topic when comparing results among the study's seven cases. Following this approach, I used an inductive research approach to allow themes to emerge from the data; in this way, the data and agency manager's views were allowed to drive data analysis and recommendations for further research (Yin, 2017).

I utilized thematic analysis by searching for themes important to the depiction of the phenomenon (Meier et al., 2017). This process entails identifying themes over a careful reading and understanding of the data, a form of pattern recognition within the data in which the evolving themes become the classifications for analysis. In this case, I used cross-case synthesis analysis to integrate both the data-motivated inductive methodology and the empirical priori prototype of codes approach defined by Yin (2017). Such analysis addressed the research question and confirmed that the philosophies and moralities of social phenomenology were fundamental to the process of deductive thematic analysis.

I used NVivo software to develop the splitting up or categorizing of common codes, phrases, and words within the participants' responses. It was my intention to use a cross-case synthesis analysis strategy (Maher et al., 2018; Yin, 2017). Additionally, I applied content analysis techniques for primary data. The first step was to identify codes in the main content through information coming from in-depth interviews and then to create categories from the identified codes. I continued to analyze content from primary and secondary data using a cross-case synthesis technique and then triangulation by exploring patterns of similarity or difference among themes generated by the analysis (Yin, 2017).

In using this multiple case study approach, I attempted to replicate the same findings across multiple cases by exploring the differences and similarities among and within cases. When the study contains views of more than one unit of analysis it is more likely to result in "robust and reliable" findings (Yin, 2017). These strengths led to the

choice of a multiple case study design, which allows for the contrast, comparison, and synthesis of multiple viewpoints during the analysis phase (Yin, 2017).

The data analysis of the study was structured using Yin's (2017) five phases of analysis and their interactions used to assemble, collect, interpret, disassemble, and conclude data. The sources of data were through interviews, analysis of physical artifacts, and journaling as in the government reports, in addition to databases of Nigerian public agency managers' reports for methodological triangulation to enhance the dependability of the results. The compilation of data entailed formulating a database in a professional way to prepare for the analysis (Stuteville & Jumara, 2011). In using NVivo, I formulated a case study database and downloaded this information for data management and storage (Maher et al., 2018). Grouped themes and categories in multiple case studies together with examples of participant's responses, which explained the coding that took place for each category and theme. Fifteen themes were gleaned from thematic analysis under the following five categories based on the conceptual framework: (a) government communication about NPM to public agency managers, (b) NPM rhetoric moving to actual public service delivery, (c) NPM services quality and consumer orientation, (d) path dependence in public service delivery, and (e) reform the role of the public agency manager.

The 15 themes are (a) the goals of NPM, (b) how NPM can serve communities, (c) getting from rhetoric to design, (d) moving from design to delivery, (e) corruption at all levels is the greatest barrier to service delivery, (f) successful public service reforms, (g) insufficient public service reforms, (h) service delivery stagnant within the poorer and

marginalized populations, (i) path dependency actions that facilitate public service delivery, (j) improvement needed in path dependence actions to service low-income populations, (k) challenges faced by public agency managers within their agency, (l) empowering public agency managers to strengthen accountability and transparency within their agency, (m) proper budget implementation for services to rural communities, (n) empowering public agency managers with more control over service delivery to local communities, and (o) institutional reforms needed for more efficient path dependence to service low-income populations. Table 2 presents a synopsis of the coding and examples of themes.

Themes

Fifteen themes arose from thematic analysis, which I divided into five categories, based on the conceptual framework, in the paragraphs that follow.

Goals of NPM. The participants described the goals of NPM that agency managers should implement in service delivery to low income populations. All of the managers had graduate degrees. Out of the seven, three had doctoral degrees and four had master's degrees in their respective areas of study. Participant 1 described planned NPM reform as "inclinations that have been driven by a combination of factors, no one of which can be said to be responsible for driving the reform." He continued to explain that the extent of global markets, particularly those related to financial mixing, liberalization, and the resultant competition are pushing the public sector in most countries to reshape itself to keep pace with the emerging global economy and modern information technology. Participant 3 explained, "NPM practices and procedures are seen mostly

from the private sector and increasingly seen as a global occurrence.” He continued to argue that NPM reforms are shifting the emphasis from traditional public administration to public management.

How NPM can serve communities. This theme is described as shifting the emphasis from traditional public administration to public management to develop a more efficient, more adaptive service. Participant 2 expressed concern that “New Public Management and service delivery approach within the government are subjected to bringing reforms to improve efficiency and effectiveness of public sector by adopting private sector practices in Nigeria.” Participants 3, 4, and 5 agreed that “NPM is transmitted to the people through the local government, and it has been subjected to various abuses, neglect, and corruption which invariably has led to the underdevelopment and poor or no service delivery to the people along with zero reform practice.” Participants 1, 2, and 7 described using one or two of the components of NPM: “Local governments can provide infrastructures, services, personnel, and even goods at a highly subsidized rate and at the same time achieve efficiency and effectiveness and be transparent and accountable.”

Getting from rhetoric to design. This theme describes how the rhetoric is transmitted through decentralization, pay and employment reforms, integrity and anticorruption reforms, and bottom-up reforms designed to improve the development effectiveness of government agencies. Participant 2 argued that “rhetoric is transmitted through decentralization, pay and employment reforms, integrity and anti-corruption

reforms and bottom-up reforms that are designed to improve the development effectiveness of government agencies.”

From design to delivery. This theme described how reform has never been put into practice in the field and in actual practice because there have been many crises in governance due to corruption and nepotism plaguing several African Countries. Reform is only on paper and not practiced by most administrators, states, and local government.

Corruption at all levels is greatest barrier to service delivery. This theme described This theme described political instability in Nigeria as a stumbling block in reform practices due to corruption from top to bottom. Such corruption invariably has led to underdevelopment and poor or no service delivery to the people, along with zero reform practices.

Successful public service reform. This theme described how public service reform can be applied to improve the effectiveness of the public sector by adopting private sector practices in Nigeria and using components of NPM.

Insufficient public service reforms. This theme described how NPM reform policy in Nigeria has not taken the conventional reform approach to promote effective service that would result in good service delivery.

Service delivery stagnant within poorer and marginalized populations. This theme described how NPM reform practice for the people through local government has been subjected to various abuses and has been neglected and corrupted. Invariably, such abuse has led to underdevelopment and poor or no service delivery to marginalized populations as well as zero reform practices.

Path dependence actions that facilitate public services delivery. This theme described path dependence as highly relevant for analyzing and explaining the resilience and persistence of public policies in the face of intentional reform.

Table 2

Coding and Theme Examples

Participant	Interview excerpt	Category	Theme
P1	“NPM reform have been driven by combination of economic, social, political and technological factors.”	Government communication about NPM to public agency managers	1) The goals of NPM, 2) how NPM can serve communities, 3) getting from rhetoric to design
P2	“NPM reform has been transmitted to people through the local government and it has been subjected to various abuses, neglect and corruption”	From NPM rhetoric to actual public service delivery	1) Moving from design to delivery, 2) corruption at all levels is greatest barrier to service delivery
P3	“Reform has never been in practice due to corruption, crisis of governance and nepotism.”	Quality and consumer orientation of NPM services	1) Successful public service reform, 2) insufficient public service reforms, 3) service delivery stagnant within poorer and marginalized population

P4	“NPM has been developed as a handy shorthand and summary description of the way of reorganizing public sector in the old to the new approach.”	Path dependency in public service delivery	1) Path dependency actions that facilitate public service delivery 2) improvement needed in path dependency actions to service low-income populations, 3) institutional reforms needed for more efficient path dependency to service low-income populations
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(table continues)

Participant	Interview excerpt	Category	Theme
P5	“There are conflicting demands of the various stakeholders which is a big challenge to reform”	Reform the role of the public agency managers	Challenges faced by public agency managers within their agencies
P6	“Corruption and nepotism has been a major setback to reform practice by agency managers”	Government communication about NPM to public agency managers	Empowering public agency managers to strengthen accountability and transparency
P7	“Government should decentralize management authority within public agencies through reform practices and giving more agency managers clear responsibility”	Reform the role of public agency managers	1) Proper budgeting implementation for services to rural communities, 2) empowering public agency managers with more control over service delivery to local communities

Improvements needed in path dependence actions to service low-income populations. This theme described how to improve service delivery by decentralizing management authority within public agencies through reform practices and giving top management freedom to manage with clear responsibility, in the absence of nepotism and reduction of the management role of the center.

Challenges faced by public agency managers within their agencies. This theme described the agency manager's challenges regarding corruption and nepotism that have been a major setback to reform practice in Nigeria. Politicians and top military officers continuously divert funds and services meant for reform and negate the principal rules associated with reform practices by focusing on their friends and immediate families.

Empowering public agency managers to strengthen accountability and transparency within their agencies. This theme described how public managers can be empowered through NPM policy reforms for effective management of systems, services, and humans to achieve a safer environment and better life for all.

Proper budget implementation for services to rural communities. This theme described how proper budget implementation can translate to improvements in economic and development indicators including per capita, fiscal balance, rate of inflation, GDP, citizen welfare in terms of life expectancy, availability of adequate healthcare and other social services, as well as a good business climate needed to expand the economy.

Empowering public agency managers with more control over service delivery to local communities. This theme described empowering agency managers through the

process of enhancing feelings of self-efficacy among employees by identifying conditions that foster powerlessness. This empowerment can also occur by decreasing powerlessness by both formal organizational practices and informal techniques of providing efficacy information through a motivational construct of enabling performance conditions.

Institutional reforms needed for more efficient path dependence to service low-income populations. This theme described how institutional reforms are needed for more efficient path dependence to service low-income populations.

Evidence of Trustworthiness

Confirming trustworthiness helped to contribute importance to a qualitative study like the present one (Stake, 2010). I made sure that I could access my participants, and that they had experience with the phenomenon under study. As data were collected through interactions with participants using interviews, surveys, questionnaires, or focus groups, I chose participants willing to speak about their experiences and share their thoughts at the heart of the proposed study. The most important topic in the world cannot be explored without willing participants (Merriam & Tisdell, 2005).

Credibility

The credibility of a study is guaranteed when the study has minimal bias and a sufficient amount of time for the researcher to engage in understanding the responses of the participants. Credibility is determined by whether the results are truthful and believable enough to align with the phenomenon being undertaken, grounded in the researcher's continued commitment to understanding participants' viewpoints, and

consistent observations to circumvent researcher bias (Billups, 2014). All the participants were contacted over the phone or through email or Skype for 20-40 minutes. I carefully explained to them that if need be, they would be free to end the interview at any time if they were uncomfortable. As a checkmark, I audiotaped their responses and sent back their transcribed responses so that the participants would have a collective understanding as far as validating and confirming what was written. The adoption of this verification procedure prevented my own views from affecting the responses of the participants. It was my obligation to suspend the study if I noticed similar forms of responses from the participants when more than half of the participants must have responded to the questions of the study.

Transferability

I addressed transferability without altering transferability strategies outlined in Chapter 3, with the use of a purposeful sample of 15 public agency managers who have worked for 10 years or more and witnessed service delivery to the low-income population. To guarantee transferability, the research must be impenetrable, deep, and profound in the narrative of the findings through the NVivo coding of themes, which are measured accurately and based on participant responses. The main framework of a study should be defined by the researcher in detail to contain the context accounts, methods of the research, findings, and samples of data so readers can conclude the transferability of its findings in their particular context (Houghton et al., 2013). The research was comprehensive so that readers can ascertain easily if the results can be moved to their own framework or background.

Dependability

I implemented dependability in the absence of adjusting dependability strategies stated in Chapter 3, which is to improve dependability by instituting stability in themes offered by using qualitative strategies to verify changes. To guarantee dependability in the study, the recorded responses from the participants were very precise and truthful before transcription. Dependability is knowing if the results have reliable and constant themes, and if a similar research process and data collection procedures are applied (Yin, 2017). Dependability is grounded on a trail of audits of determinations made by the researcher through the study that explain the researcher's methodological justification, contextual data, and revealed decisions (Houghton et al., 2013). In this manner, if another researcher undertakes a related case study with the same participants in a short time frame, the second researcher ultimately will get comparable results. Dependability can only be shunned if participants have different views based on an informed experience since the first study was completed.

Confirmability

I implemented confirmability in the absence of adjusting it, and in line with consistency strategies as explained in Chapter 3 to check any researcher bias using reflective journalism. To get precise and truthful answers from the participants, I made sure they were relaxed and given the opportunity to speak without fear or favor. Confirmability ensures that the results are unbiased and truthful. They also can be validated and documented with no researcher bias or reflexivity (Billups, 2014). When I

completed with the interviews, I transcribed participants' responses and sent a transcript to each of them for certification and confirmation - a participant check procedure.

Validation of responses by participants is a useful practice to establish trustworthiness in qualitative research (Kornbluh, 2015). This practice helped to confirm that the answers were acceptable and correct for the participants as they were spoken and transcribed.

Ethical Procedures

Walden University's expectation is that all research to be done on humans is approved by Walden University's Institutional Review Board (IRB). The IRB application number was assigned and used to have access to participants. IRB has concerns regarding studies involving human subjects, and it upholds its policy to make sure that participants will not be in danger of being harmed in any way (Jacob & Furgerson, 2012). The treatment of human subjects needs institutional approval that involves the IRB. I kept all materials related to recruitment and procedures to avoid any issues of privacy and confidentiality.

Billups (2014) posited that the major role of human participants in research is to function as a source of data. This obvious reason made it a duty to protect the life, dignity, integrity, health, privacy, right to self-determination and confidentiality of personal information of the participants. I adhered to ethical principles of respect for persons, beneficence, and justice. I did not initiate any data collection activities until I received approval from the IRB. Once the study began, managers refusing to participate or yearning for premature withdrawal from the study were reminded that there would be no risk or penalty for withdrawing, and their earlier responses would not be retained. For

those who participated in the full review, data collected were anonymous, and I kept all responses in a private and secure place under lock and key. I am the sole person to have access to all the material related to the study, which will be kept for 5 years by saving it on a USB flash drive, password protected file before its eventual destruction.

In this study, I was responsible for the quality, best practices, and trustworthiness of the research. Stake (2013) posited seven capabilities of a researcher as listening, focusing on behaviors, asking relevant questions, understanding the research topic, paying good attention to the data, respecting participants, and using multitasking and ethical procedures. In this study, I did not have any relationship with participants; therefore, I was able to avoid bias, awkwardness, or the uneasiness that can be created towards their responses because there is proof of trustworthiness on the basis of credibility, dependability, transferability, and confirmability.

Study Results

In this body of multiple case research study, a specific research question guided the study (Stake, 2014). Through recording the views of agency managers, I was able to answer the following central research question: What are the views of public agency managers in Nigeria, assigned agents of NPM reform, on implementing path-breaking interventions within their agencies to improve services and change social outcomes for the low-income population? This multiple case study revealed agency managers' views on this topic, and patterns and themes developed from the raw data collected from the interviews and subsequent data analysis. The identification of these patterns and themes

took place across two phases: thematic analysis of the textual data and cross-case synthesis analysis.

The data analysis reflects all data collected comprised of interviews, field notes, member-checked transcriptions, and findings presented in the seminal literature (Patton, 2014). I categorized emerging themes and cross-referenced findings grounded to the foundation for cross-case analysis, which strengthens a researcher's ability to generalize the findings of their study (Eisenhardt, 1989; Yin, 2017).

First Phase: Thematic Analysis of the Textual Data

A thematic analysis has been a way of categorizing data from qualitative research, a type of study in which a researcher seeks to study a population's views, behaviors, or qualities in a natural setting to answer a research question (Yin, 2017). Qualitative data are gathered from observations, interviews, and case studies. The information is analyzed from similar themes and recorded in a report that states and interprets the research findings. Because there is no one procedure in the literature on how to develop a rigorous and relevant thematic analysis, the discussion of a thematic analysis should provide a logical, coherent, concise, non-repetitive, and unassuming account of the data within the cross themes (Yin, 2017). The thematic analysis piloted for this study followed Stake's (2013) argument. In the remainder of this section, the 15 themes that emerged from the thematic analysis are analyzed and offered in relation to the central research question, along with representative direct quotes from the participants that defined the complex views grounding each theme.

The goals of NPM. The teams described the goals of NPM that agency managers should implement in service delivery to low income populations. The participants are well educated in their respective fields of study with master's and doctoral degrees. Out of the seven participants, three had doctoral degrees and four had master's degrees in their respective areas of study. Participant 1 (P1) described planned NPM reform as "inclinations that have been driven by a combination of factors, no one of which can be said to be responsible for driving the reform." P1 continued to explain that the extent of global markets, particularly those related to financial mixing, liberalization, and the resultant competition are pushing the public sector in most countries to reshape itself to keep pace with the emerging global economy and modern information technology. Participant 3 (P3) explained, "NPM practices and procedures are seen mostly from the private sector and increasingly seen as a global occurrence." P3 continued to argue that NPM reforms are shifting the emphasis from traditional public administration to public management. Participant 2 argued on rhetoric regarding NPM reform,

NPM reforms are shifting the emphasis from traditional public administration to public management. New Public Management is unavoidable under this approach within the government and is subjected to bringing reforms to improve efficiency and effectiveness of public sector by adopting private sector practices in Nigeria. Four participants argued that NPM reform has not been put into practice in the field from rhetoric to actual design because of corruption. One participant said, "The reform has never been put into practice in the field and in actual practice because there has been a lot of crisis of governance due to corruption and nepotism plaguing Nigeria and many

African Countries.” Participant 7 accepted that one of the problems regarding Nigerian agency managers in service delivery to low income populations is corruption as well as problems of “accountability, transparency, probity, and budget implementation, which is at the heart of the developmental problems of the Nigerian economy, and as such there has to be effective and efficient reform practice in Nigeria to help practice NPM.”

This theme exemplifies that NPM is a way to change the role states play in society and economy reformation to encourage market-driven economies as opposed to states solely providing all services. Participant 1 stated that there is a need to observe a set of management techniques and practices, mainly associated with market and privateforprofit sectors, have been used to reform administration and management in government in a variety of countries, notably the United Kingdom, the United States, and China. Participant 6 went ahead to conclude that past years have seen some of these practices in different developing and transitional economies including Nigeria. P6 continued to argue for a need for NPM goals that can change for the greater good and to actually deliver services where they are intended. Having such goals is more of a marketbased approach than of human service. All the participants claimed that costs will be cut, and efficiency can be increased but these measures have not been realized in Nigeria.

How NPM can serve communities. This theme is described as shifting the emphasis from traditional public administration to public management to develop a more efficient, more adaptive service. Participant 2 expressed concern that “New Public Management and service delivery approach within the government is subjected to

bringing reforms so as to improve efficiency and effectiveness of public sector by adopting private sector practices in Nigeria.” Participants 3, 4, and 5 agreed that “NPM is transmitted to the people through the local government and it has been subjected to various abuses, neglect, and corruption which invariably has led to the underdevelopment and poor or no service delivery to the people and zero reform practice.” Participants 1, 2, and 7 explained that by using one or two of the components of NPM, “local governments can provide infrastructures, services, personnel, and even goods at a highly subsidized rate and at the same time achieve efficiency, effectiveness, and also be transparent and accountable.”

Getting from rhetoric to design. This theme describes how the rhetoric is transmitted through decentralization, pay and employment reforms, integrity and anticorruption reforms, and bottom-up reforms designed to improve the development effectiveness of government agencies. Participant 2 argued that “rhetoric is transmitted through decentralization, pay and employment reforms, integrity and anti-corruption reforms and bottom-up reforms that are designed to improve the effectiveness of development in government agencies.”

Participants 1, 2, 4, 5, and 6 strongly agreed that “rhetoric to practice has never been put into practice in the field and in actual practice because there has been a lot of crisis of governance due to corruption and nepotism plaguing Nigeria and many African Countries.” Later, on a follow up question, Participant 7 bitterly complained that “most reforms die within the office of the administrators or political leaders; hence, the people are negated.” When I asked Participant 3 to further buttress the argument, the response

was that the “local government is supposed to get information or instruction from the state, but the state Governors have failed the people to fully transmit the reform by failing to support the local Government in an effort to transmit the service through reform.”

From design to delivery. This theme described how reform has never been put into practice in the field and in actual practice due to the many crises in governance due to corruption and nepotism plaguing several African Countries. Participant 1 claimed also that “design is only on paper and not practiced by most administrators, states and local government.” Participants 2, 4, and 7 elaborated that “delivery efforts have been driven primarily by the fact that state bureaucracies in Nigeria and Africa are neglected and underperform; are invariably too large, corrupt and lack the sense of responsibility and accountability.” Participant 3 asserted, “Design to delivery has been neglected because it has never been checked by the people in charge of government, and I mean those that initiated the reform to see if the local government that is trusted to the practice is doing what they have been asked to do by putting reform into practice.”

Corruption at all levels is the greatest barrier to service delivery. This theme described political instability in Nigeria as a stumbling block in reform practice due to corruption from top to bottom, which invariably has led to the underdevelopment and poor or no service delivery to the people and zero reform practice. Participant 4 explained that “reform in Nigeria has never moved from design to actual practice because it has been a failure and disappointment to the people due to instability and corruption from the stakeholders and politicians within the government. All the participants agreed that government from the start of the NPM in the early 90s started privatization of

government-owned companies but have failed to put enduring policy statements and guidelines to regulate these entities effectively. Participants 3 and 4 agreed that “efficient service delivery has never been put into practice in the field and in actual practice because there has been a lot of crisis of governance due to corruption and nepotism plaguing many in the local, state and federal government of Nigeria.” Further questions helped to elicit more information from all seven participants who concluded that issues of corruption and nepotism have been a major setback to reform practice in Nigeria. Participant 7 said, “NPM reform will also help in so many ways to achieve a more responsive and accountable new public management within the background of democratic governance that will help to fight corruption and nepotism.” He concluded that “top military officers continuously divert funds and service meant for reform and negate the principal rules that are associated with reform practice by focusing on their friends and immediate families.”

Successful public service reform. This theme described how public service reform can be applied to improve effectiveness of the public sector by adopting private sector practices in Nigeria and using components of NPM. Participants 1, 3, 5, 6, and 7 argued that “there has never been a successful public service reform due to corruption, nepotism, centralized bureaucracies, inadequate mechanisms of accountability, waste and inefficiency in resource use, ethnic and religious differences, all of which are problems the new public management sought to address before a successful reform can take place.” Participants 2 and 4 contested, “Nevertheless, there are few disapprovals of the policies of NPM reform from the political perspective and few of the developing countries like

Nigeria have never succeeded in public sector reform because of the issues of nepotism and religious differences of killings in Nigeria.”

Insufficient public service reforms. This theme described how the NPM reform policy in Nigeria has not taken the conventional reform approach for improved service that would promote effective service delivery. In response to the question, Participants 1, 4, and 5 claimed “reform in Nigeria has never moved from design to actual practice because it has been a failure and disappointment to the people due to instability and corruption from the stakeholders and politicians within the government.” Out of the seven participants, five, in their own words, said that reforms should often be seen as dramatic one-off changes, and they may sometimes lead to changes. However, they agreed that reform in itself is more often a standard repetitive activity seen as routine rather than breaks in organizational life. However, they agreed that in Nigeria it is the opposite in their understanding.

Service delivery stagnant within poorer and marginalized populations. This theme described how NPM reform practice for the people through the local government has been subjected to various abuses, neglect, and corruption, which invariably has led to underdevelopment and poor or no service delivery to marginalized populations and zero reform practice. Participant 5 explained,

There has been a disparity in the interpretations of what that common response consists of. In any case, there is general agreement that the main focus has been the deregulation of line management; conversion of civil service departments into free-standing agencies or enterprises; performance-based accountability,

particularly through contracts; and competitive mechanisms such as contracting out and internal markets.

Participant 3 argued,

Service delivery efforts have been driven primarily by the fact that state bureaucracies in Africa underperform; are invariably too large and corrupt and lack the sense of responsibility and accountability. The reform has never been put into practice in the field and in actual practice because there has been a lot of crisis of governance due to corruption and nepotism plaguing many African Countries.

All participants (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7) agreed that the reason service delivery is stagnant is that the local government councils have been characterized by lack of quality service to the people like lack of good drinking water, poor drainage systems, lack of proper health care delivery systems, lack of efficient waste disposal systems, lack of electricity and efficient housing systems, lack of good schools and recreational facilities, and poorly constructed infrastructures such as markets, motor parks, and slaughter slabs to mention just a few.

Path dependence actions that facilitate public services delivery. This theme described path dependence as highly relevant for analyzing and explaining the resilience and persistence of public policies in the face of intentional reform. Looking at the arguments from all the participants, Participant 6 stated that “path dependency will help to explain the continued use of a product or practice based on historical preference or use.” P6 further claimed that it “holds true even if newer, more efficient products or

practices are available in Nigeria due to the previous commitment made to reform service delivery.” Participant 7 further added,

Path dependency is often easier or more cost effective to simply continue along an already set path than to create an entirely new one. Industries can become committed to path dependency as an initial concept, method, or innovation adopted as a standard that subsequent elements are derived from public policies in the face of intentional reform.

Improvements needed in path dependence actions to service low-income populations. This theme described how to improve service delivery by decentralizing management authority within public agencies through reform practices and giving top management freedom to manage with clear responsibility, in the absence of nepotism and reducing the management role of the center. All participants accepted that,

In order to ensure improved services, the local government that is responsible to service delivery should enjoy fiscal autonomy or decentralization and so as to become efficient and effective that will enhance service delivery. There will be a need for the reform of their administrative model to allow the younger administrators who know about NPM reform to take control by doing away with the traditional method of administration, called public/local government administration and adopt NPM.

Institutional reforms needed for more efficient path dependence to service low-income populations. This theme described how institutional reforms are needed for more efficient path dependence to service low-income populations. Participants 2, 3, 4,

and 6 had the same notion that more efficient service can be improved in subsidized medical services and the poor have equally benefitted through the establishment of modern health centers and general hospitals that cater to the needs of the poor, but the irony is that those health centers or hospitals are not well equipped. Participants 1 and 5 focused on the area of affordable housing for low income earners; the policy establishing mortgage banks for soft loans to low income populations has afforded many the opportunity of owning their own homes. When asked to further explain more on the efficient path dependency to service delivery, Participant 1 said, "I'm hopeful that there will be cleaning up of departments and the top government in the future because I for one was raised to serve my fellow man, but it's constant pushing against corruption and nepotism, which are unmovable forces."

Challenges faced by public agency managers within their agencies. This theme described agency manager's challenges with corruption and nepotism that have been a major setback to reform practice in Nigeria. Participant 3 argued that "politicians and the top military officers continuously divert funds and service meant for reform and negate the principle rules that is associated with reform practice by focusing on their friends and immediate families." Participants, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6 agreed that the challenges faced by agency managers are lack of adequate training for support and line staff who carry out the function of service delivery, a dearth of skilled manpower due to poor service remuneration, so many skilled personnel are unable to survive on the poor minimum wage public servants are paid so they look out for better paid jobs after a brief stay in the public sector. Participant 7 expressed, "Inadequate work tools for job

execution results in delayed service delivery to the public and poor staff attitude to work due to poor rumination of service.”

Empower public agency managers to strengthen accountability and transparency within their agencies. This theme described how public managers can be empowered through NPM policy reforms for effective management of systems, services, and humans to achieve a safer environment and better life for all. Empowering the managers will help, according to Participant 3, in “delegation because through delegation administrators will transfer functions to semi-autonomous organizations that are not subject to the federal government but accountable to it.” Participants 3, 6, and 7 agreed with the idea of transferring functions to managers either in public or public sectors, taking control from administrators, and stopping the central government from interfering with service delivery to low income populations if it indeed took place. Participant 5 argued,

NPM has never resulted in improved service because the state and local government has adamantly refused to respect and practice the reform because the old administrators in place have refused to allow the younger people to take control of the administration, thus putting the reform in place that will allow for improved service delivery and accountability.

To ensure improved services, Participant 5 elaborated,

The local government that is responsible to service delivery should enjoy fiscal autonomy or decentralization to become efficient and effective to enhance service delivery and there will be a need for the reform of their administrative model to

allow the younger administrators who know about NPM reform to take control by doing away the traditional method of administration, called public/local government administration and adopt the New Public Management.

Also, Participants 3, 6, and 7 said reform was a “good and effective idea because it will help to address the needs of the people while providing voice to them in decisions that concerns them.”

Proper budget implementation for services to rural communities. This theme described how proper budget implementation will translate to improvements in the economic and development indicators such as per capita, fiscal balance, rate of inflation, GDP, citizen welfare in terms of life expectancy, availability of adequate healthcare and other social services, as well as a good business climate needed to expand the economy. Participant 7 maintained, “I will surely support the adoption of New Public Management Nigeria because it will embrace variants of administration that reflect NPM to help in improving administrative efficiency and the provision of public services and service delivery to low income populations.” All participants, except for Participant 7, agreed that proper budget implementation allows for the creation of a good focus towards the direction to proper service delivery and provides targets that will help agencies grow.

It will also give the opportunity to stand back and review service delivery performance and the factors affecting the delivery of service. However, all participants agreed that planning can create a greater ability to make continuous improvements and anticipate problems, sound financial information on which to base decisions, and improved clarity and focus along with a greater confidence in decision-making. With

further explanation, Participant 7 stated, “I will say that the problems of accountability, transparency, probity, and budget implementation are at the heart of the developmental problems of the Nigerian economy, and such there has to be need for effective and efficient reform practice in Nigeria to help practice NPM.”

Empower public agency managers with more control over service delivery to local communities. This theme described how empowering agency managers through the process of enhancing feelings of self-efficacy among employees through the identification of conditions that foster powerlessness and through their removal by both formal organizational practices and informal techniques of providing efficacy information through a motivational construct of enabling and creating the conditions for performance.

NPM has never resulted to improved service because the state and local government has adamantly refused to respect and practice the reform because the old administrators in place have refused to allow the younger people to take control of the administration, thus put the reform in place that will allow for improved service delivery. In order to ensure improved services, the local government that is responsible to service delivery should enjoy fiscal autonomy or decentralization and so as to become efficient and effective that will enhance service delivery and there will be a need for the reform of their administrative model to allow the younger administrators who know about NPM reform to take control by doing away the traditional method of administration, called public/local government administration and adopt the New Public Management.

Participant 7 contributed, “My own reflection in adopting NPM is to decentralize management authority within public agencies through reform practices and giving top management freedom to manage with clear responsibility, in the absence of nepotism and reducing the management role of the center.” The same participant concluded that “decentralization and meaningful privatization of state-owned companies will promote effective and efficient service delivery if a robust framework is put in place. Also, to empower agency managers and local government to function without external interference.”

Second Phase: Cross-Case Synthesis and Analysis

The five coding categories that are based on the conceptual framework, and fifteen themes gleaned from the thematic analysis. Coding categories were (a) government communication about NPM to public agency managers, (b) NPM rhetoric moving to actual public service delivery, (c) NPM services quality and consumer orientation, (d) path dependence in public service delivery, and (e) reform the role of the public agency manager. The 15 themes are (a) the goals of NPM, (b) how NPM can serve communities, (c) getting from rhetoric to design, (d) moving from design to delivery, (e) corruption at all levels is the greatest barrier to service delivery, (f) successful public service reforms, (g) insufficient public service reforms, (h) service delivery stagnant within the poorer and marginalized populations, (i) path dependency actions that facilitate public service delivery, (j) improvement needed in path dependence actions to service low-income populations, (k) challenges faced by public agency managers within their agency, (l) empowering public agency managers to strengthen accountability and

transparency within their agency, (m) proper budget implementation for services to rural communities, (n) empowering public agency managers with more control over service delivery to local communities, and (o) institutional reforms needed for more efficient path dependence to service low-income populations. The categories are manager's views on service delivery to low-income populations on effective service delivery, the need to overcome obstacles to service delivery, strong work-related experience as agency managers, the need to service the low-income populations and effective, and efficient service to low-income populations.

In this study, I made use of cross-case synthesis and analysis as the method to synthesize sensitive findings from individual cases and after themes were created across the study's seven cases overall (see Yin, 2017). Comparing the fairly small number of cases, as approved for such a qualitative study, word tables enhanced the search for patterns across cases. Cross-case synthesis strengthened validity and allowable generalizations through the process of analysis (Yin, 2017). In an effort to consolidate and interpret the data, trustworthiness of the data was reinforced, and I could establish an evidence-based acceptance in analyzing through the study's conceptual framework (Cooper & White, 2012; Yin, 2017). Cross-case analysis was used as a follow up process as each of the seven cases was analyzed separately, and it helped to identify recurrent themes emerging from the data to meet the study purpose of exploring views of agency managers in that they are responsible to service delivery to low income populations in the Nigerian public.

The two particularly recurrent and dominant themes in this category were getting from design to rhetoric and from design to delivery. The first of these was built on data provided by the seven participants who used terms such as “reform is an essential and fundamental aim,” “good reform practice,” “getting from rhetoric to design,” and “from design to delivery.” The second theme in this category was identified through comments by four participants relevant to efficient service delivery, successful public service reform, corruption, nepotism, and marginalization. Another three themes produced by this category are “challenges faced by agency managers,” “proper budget implementation,” “empower agency managers to strengthen accountability,” and “empower agency managers with more control over service delivery.”

Second Phase: Cross-Case Synthesis and Analysis

Cross-case analysis required for multiple case studies is to be performed in two steps; the first is within-case analysis followed by cross-case analysis (Merriam, 2012). Seven semistructured interviews produced data that was collected and analyzed, conclusions derived, and results reported independently. A researcher conducting a qualitative, inductive, multiple case study seeks to shape abstractions across cases (Merriam, 2012). I worked to build a general explanation that corresponded to each individual case, though the cases varied in their details (see Yin, 2014). Cooper and White (2012) described cross-case analysis as tricky and requiring a careful look at the complex alignment of processes within each case. Merriam (2012) concluded, Cross-case

analysis varies little from analysis of data in a single qualitative case study . . . [it] suggests that results could differ from unified description across cases, which means that reinforcement was discovered across cases; to categories, themes, or concepts, or substantive theory from integrated framework. The use of cross-case analysis helps to extend the researcher's expertise beyond the single case study while provoking his or her imagination and encouraging new questions, revealing new dimensions (Yin, 2014).

Cross-case analysis helped me to delineate the combination of factors that may have contributed to the outcomes of the case, seek an explanation on why one case is different or the same as others, make sense of unique findings or further articulate the concepts or theories discovered from the case. In gaining deeper understanding of service delivery to low income populations in Nigeria by agency managers, cross case analysis helped to enhance my capacities to understand new relationships that exist among discreet cases, accumulate knowledge from the case, and refine and develop concepts while comparing cases from one or more settings, communities, or groups within the seven cases.

The important category within the seven cases was the national history or experience of nepotism and corruption at all levels that are rooted in service delivery to low income populations by agency managers. All participants agreed that the only way out for effective and efficient service delivery to low income populations in Nigeria is to meet the needs of the Nigerian people and the government mandate for greater efficiency, accountability, and effectiveness through a wide range of reforms or transformational

approaches to support and guarantee the government's successful transition to reorganization.

Another category that produced the most important information was how to reform the role of public agency managers to address corruption, nepotism, centralized bureaucracies, inadequate mechanisms of accountability, waste and inefficiency in resource use, as well as ethnic and religious differences, which are the problems NPM reform was established to address. Another category was path dependency in public service delivery that described how to improve service delivery by decentralizing management authority within public agencies through reform practices and giving top management freedom to manage with clear responsibility, in the absence of nepotism and reducing the management role of the center.

All seven participants of this study agreed that to ensure improved services, the local government responsible to service delivery should enjoy fiscal autonomy or decentralization. It should become more efficient so service delivery to low income populations is enhanced along with the need for the reform of the administrative model to allow the younger administrators who know about NPM reform to take control. That could happen by doing away with the traditional method of administration, known as public/local government administration while adopting the NPM system. The participants of the study described NPM service quality and consumer orientation captured within three themes, namely: (a) Successful public service reform, (b) insufficient public service reforms, and (c) stagnant service delivery within poorer and marginalized populations. The participants concluded that reform in Nigeria has never moved from design to actual

practice because it has been a failure and disappointment to the people due to instability and corruption from the stakeholders and politicians within the government. However, reform in itself is more often a standard repetitive activity, which is seen as routine rather than breaks in organizational life. In Nigeria, it is the opposite in their understanding.

Managers who participated in this study focused on decentralization and meaningful privatization of state-owned companies that would promote more effective service delivery if a robust framework is put in place as well as to empower states and local government to function without external interference. They agreed through their responses that Nigeria needs NPM policy reforms for effective management of systems, services, and humans to achieve a safer environment and better life for all because mass literacy, digital knowledge, and targeted education that addresses the modern needs of the nation are inevitable in arriving at the Nigeria of their dreams.

In recruiting participants and data collection, I made use of an interview practice to reach the maximum data reliability constantly throughout the data collection procedure with every participant. The interview process included the processes and techniques for the role of the researcher (Olatunji, 2018) in conducting semistructured, preliminary contact with the potential participants. As a researcher in this study and the data collection instrument, I examined parallels in the qualitative data in the cross-case analysis of the results.

To understand how public agency managers provide service to low-income populations, I developed a set of interview questions grounded in the conceptual framework literature review. These questions were centered on revealing the specific

attitudes and characteristics of public agency managers on service delivery as well as classifying specific tasks for future unit coordinators. Ighadalo (2018) recommended using an easy, quiet, and safe environment to reduce background noise during the recording phase and increase the level of relaxation and security during the interview, which according to Hope (2017) replicates profoundly the excellence of data produced during the time of the interview.

Looking at the size and the purposes of the study, the number of participants involved in the qualitative multiple case study were seven. Saturation of a study is reached when everyone interviewed came back with the same concepts and themes (Crosby et al., 2017); that is, when every interview question has been exhausted to a point that the participants begin to give the same answers. In the present study, the data collection process reached saturation by the time I interviewed the sixth participant. Saturation has been accepted as an extensive methodological principle in qualitative research. It is an indication that further data collection or analysis are unnecessary; thus, new data and themes are no longer useful (Yin, 2017). As soon as saturation is reached, data collection generally ends. Still, I conducted one more interview to ensure no new information would rise. Indeed, the seventh interview yielded no more data.

Triangulation is an analytic technique and a central aspect of case-study research design utilized during fieldwork in addition to later data analysis (Yin, 2017).

Triangulating plays a vital role during the qualitative research process; it is regarded as a methodological technique for corroborating or conflicting ideas and data (Guion et al., 2011). I triangulated the results of the qualitative interviews with archival documents.

The archival documents included government reports on public service delivery to low-income populations in Nigeria, and media reports from the domestic and foreign press documenting issues that were identified in the raw data from the interviews. I also reviewed databases of updated issues pertaining to NPM delivery of services to low-income populations in Nigeria. I utilized these three sources of archival data for methodological triangulation to answer the research question and add credibility and trustworthiness to the study results. This method has been used in similar studies such as those of Komodromos (2014) and Neubert (2016), in which a multiple case study design used archival data to triangulate interview data to answer the study's research questions.

During my Skype interviews, I recorded participants' observations regarding pretexts, subtexts, personal emotions, and contingencies that take place over the course of their time online through these reflective field notes from online data collection (see Yin, 2017). Reflective field notes often provide key insights into how online social interactions happen in real time and may detect the reasons behind the cultural values of the participants, rather than offer the more typical recording or description of them (Kozinets, 2017).

In my reflective field notes, the observations were dependent on the research question and the paradigm underlying the study. This study is grounded in interpretivist paradigms, and thus I used unstructured observation in the form of reflective field notes as a source of data collection (see Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). Reflective field notes obtained from online data sources—the semistructured interviews were carried out via

Skype, in this case—are the third instrument used for data collection from the participants (see Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). Skype was useful in upholding a highly unbiased atmosphere and averting my personal reflexivity, by depriving the interview interaction of contextual information. By allowing me to reach participants in distant locations,

Skype additionally aids the process of replication (Janghorban et al., 2014).

Interactions, interviews, and introspection may constitute online data collection, which is also referred to as netnography (Kozinets, 2017; Merriam & Tisdell, 2015).

Because most if not all online data collection interactions are recorded and saved as they occur, reflective field notes were much more important than observational field notes in this case. During my Skype interviews, I recorded observations via reflective field notes of the participants regarding pretexts, subtexts, personal emotions, and contingencies that took place over their time online from online data collection (see Yin, 2017). Reflective field notes often provide key insights into how online social interactions happen in real time and may detect the reasons behind the cultural values of the participants, rather than offer the more typical recording or description of them (Kozinets, 2017).

Drawing from their ethnographic work in online research, Boellstorff et al. (2013) suggested certain techniques for keeping reflective field notes from online interactions. These include the following: writing down interesting things that occurred while the researcher was engaged in online interactions and experiences; taking screenshots of activity and making small “scratch notes” soon after events occur; and using the

“twoboxing” approach in which two computers, screens, or windows are open simultaneously—the netnographic engagement unfolding on one screen, while screen notes are taken in real-time on the other (Boellstorff et al., 2013).

I developed netnographic field note prompts that I used as triangulation prompts during the data analysis process, a common practice in a study such as this that is driven by a qualitative study purpose and research methods (Kozinets, 2017). This method has been used in similar studies such as that of McKinlay, Morgan, Gray, Macdonald, and Pullon (2017), in which a multiple case study design using case study observational research methods is used to explore the research questions within real-world settings where the reflective field notes launch a sequential order of data collection, data analysis, and synthesis (Yin, 2017).

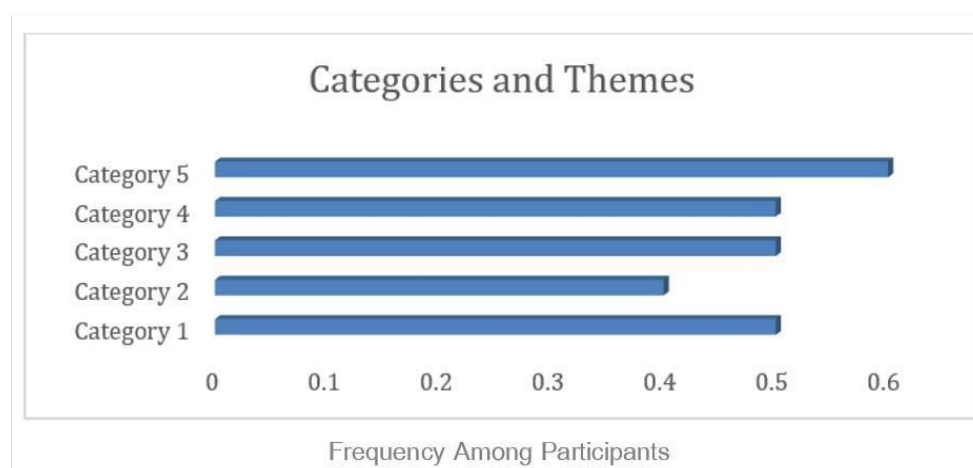
Data from the semistructured interviews were analyzed by me as the researcher, and they were based on the responses of the participants on how public agency managers assigned for the delivery of goods and services can make use of NPM to deliver goods and services to low-income populations. There is no need for demographics in the analysis of data because this study is about the use of NPM to improve service delivery to these populations irrespective of gender, race, ethnicity, or age. I also used NVivo qualitative software to fragment and categorize the transcribed responses from the participants, after which I presented the results.

I utilized thematic analysis by searching for themes that appear to be important to the depiction of the phenomenon (Meier et al., 2017). This process entails identifying themes over a careful reading and understanding of the data and a form of pattern

recognition within the data, in which the evolving themes become the classifications for analysis. In this case, cross-case synthesis analysis integrated both the data-motivated inductive methodology and the empirical priori prototype of codes approach defined by Yin (2017) that perfected the research question and confirmed that the philosophies and moralities of social phenomenology were fundamental to the process of deductive thematic analysis. Additionally, I applied content analysis techniques for primary data. The first step was to identify codes in the main content through information coming from in-depth interviews, and then to create categories from the identified codes. I continued to analyze content from primary and secondary data using a cross-case synthesis technique and then triangulation by exploring patterns of similarities or differences among themes generated by the analysis (Yin, 2017).

This multiple case study approach attempts to replicate the same findings across multiple cases by exploring the differences and similarities between and within cases. When the study contains views of more than one unit of analysis it is more likely to result in findings that are “robust and reliable” (Yin, 2017). These strengths led to the choice of a multiple case study design, which allows for the contrast, comparison, and synthesis of multiple viewpoints during the analysis phase (Yin, 2017). The data analysis of the study was structured using Yin’s (2017) five phases of analysis and their interactions used to assemble, collect, interpret, disassemble, and conclude data. The sources of data were through interviews, analysis of physical artifacts, and journaling as in the government reports, and databases of Nigerian public agency managers’ reports for methodological triangulation to enhance the dependability of the results.

The cumulative themes' frequency of occurrence by participants as they occurred during the interview are illustrated in Figure 1, offering a visual representation to the reader on how the themes congregated across cases based on this multiple case study.



Category 1. Government Communication about NPM to public agency managers
Themes: 1) The goals of NPM; 2) how NPM can serve communities; 3) getting from rhetoric to design.

Category 2. From NPM rhetoric to actual public-service delivery
Themes: 1) From design to delivery; 2) corruption at all levels is greatest barrier to service delivery

Category 3. NPM services quality and consumer orientation.
Themes: 1) Successful public service reforms; 2) insufficient public service reforms; 3) service delivery stagnant within poorer and marginalized populations.

Category 4. Path dependency in public service delivery
Themes: 1) Path dependence actions that facilitate public services delivery; 2) improvements needed in path dependence actions to service low-income populations; 3)

institutional reforms needed for more efficient path dependence to service low-income populations;

Category 5. Reform the role of the public agency manager

Themes: 1) Challenges faced by public agency managers within their agencies; 2) empowering public agency managers to strengthen accountability and transparency within their agencies; 3) proper budget implementation for services to rural communities; 4) empowering public agency managers with more control over service delivery to local communities

Figure 1. Categories and themes.

Summary

In this chapter, I presented a case-by-case analysis of a total of seven individual cases, followed by a cross-case analysis and synthesis that helped to provide answers for this multiple case study's central RQ: What are the views of public agency managers in Nigeria, assigned agents of NPM reform, on implementing path-breaking interventions within their agencies to improve services and change social outcomes for the low-income population? I identified and presented a total of five categories that comprise a total of 15 themes, leading to thick, rich data on the views of agency managers with respect to service delivery to low-income populations.

In the need to establish trustworthiness of the study's data, I engaged data triangulation of the following sources: interviews, journaling/reflective field notes, and literature (Guion et al., 2011). This triangulation enhanced sufficient thick, rich information for the study design to be replicated. I analyzed and interpreted study results in accordance with the conceptual framework and presented how study findings add to

the body of knowledge with respect to service delivery to low-income populations in Nigeria.

In Chapter 5, I present further interpretation of the findings with respect to how they compare or contrast with the literature reviewed in Chapter 2. Additionally, I describe how future research can build on the findings of this study and contribute to a better understanding of agency managers and service delivery to low income populations.

Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

The purpose of this qualitative, multiple case study was to explore views of public agency managers in Nigeria who are agents of NPM reform on implementing pathbreaking interventions to improve public services and change social outcomes for the low-income population (Gualini, 2018; Rasul & Rogger, 2018). The nature of this study was qualitative with the method and purpose of the study aligned, which provided data for the research question. I used a multiple case study design (Yin, 2017) to respond to the purpose of this study, to understand how public agency managers in Nigeria work to improve services and change social outcomes for the low-income population. This study was framed first by the concept of NPM (Pollitt, 2003, 2004) and, secondly, the concept of path dependency, which in this study was defined as steps taken previously toward a goal encouraging increased movement along a system's path and improving the likelihood that the steps would be accelerated down the same path (Pierson, 2000).

A multiple case analysis of seven interviews with thematic analysis and crosscase synthesis revealed 15 prominent themes reflecting the view of public agency managers in

NPM reforms in Nigeria: (a) the goals of NPM, (b) how NPM can serve communities, (c) getting from rhetoric to design, (d) moving from design to delivery, (e) corruption at all levels as the greatest barrier to service delivery, (f) successful public service reforms, (g) insufficient public service reforms, (h) service delivery stagnant within the poorer and marginalized populations, (i) path dependency actions that facilitate public service delivery, (j) improvement needed in path dependence actions to service low-income populations, (k) challenges faced by public agency managers within their agency, (l) empowering public agency managers to strengthen accountability and transparency within their agency, (m) proper budget implementation for services to rural communities, (n) empowering public agency managers with more control over service delivery to local communities, and (o) institutional reforms needed for more efficient path dependence to service low-income populations.

Interpretation of Findings

The results of this multiple case study confirm or extend current knowledge in the discipline, with each case presenting issues discussed in the literature review in Chapter 2. In this section, the study's findings are presented and reviewed in the context of the five categories that emerged from the data analysis: (a) government communication about NPM to public agency managers, (b) NPM rhetoric moving to actual public service delivery, (c) NPM services quality and consumer orientation, (d) path dependence in public service delivery, and (e) reforming the role of the public agency manager. I compared each of these five categories with relevant concepts from the conceptual framework and the extant literature reviewed in Chapter 2. I provided evidence from the

seven semistructured interviews to support how the study's findings confirmed, disconfirmed, or extended existing knowledge. Extension studies, such as this multiple case study exploring how public agency managers in Nigeria work to improve services and change social outcomes for the low-income population, can provide replication evidence as well as extend prior research results in new theoretical directions (Bonett, 2012; Gehman et al., 2017). Central to case studies is the notion of replication logic in which each case is analyzed on its own, rather than pooled with other cases into summary statistics such as means (Harkiolakis, 2017).

In my study, I followed Yin's multiple case study design and analyzed each case. The unit of analysis in this study was the views of a public agency manager in Nigeria as a standalone entity as well as comparing convergent and divergent data between cases. A multiple case study design generates new theoretical directions more likely to be accurate and generalizable than results gleaned from a single case study, which tend to lead to theory that is more idiosyncratic to the case itself rather than extending theoretical knowledge (Eisenhardt, Graebner, & Sonenshein, 2016; Stake, 2013).

Theme Categories

Government Communication about NPM to public agency managers. This study's findings helped to confirm those of Brinkerhoff and Brinkerhoff (2015), which discussed that the failure of models based on rules and procedures fostered the development of new paradigms of public management, which are still the object of a strong interdisciplinary debate. The general view of the NPM supposes that the use of good communication among the agency managers and technology will enhance

efficiency, policy effectiveness, and values. Based on the concept of public value developed by Adewole (2015) on how government policy impacts political agendas and service delivery to low income populations by agency managers, it can not only change the system used to serve public services but also the nature of these services. My findings confirmed that there has never been a successful public service reform due to corruption, nepotism, centralized bureaucracies, inadequate mechanisms of accountability, waste and inefficiency in resource use, and ethnic and religious differences, all of which are problems the NPM sought to address before a successful reform could take place.

The results of my study on government communication about NPM showed that there are few disapprovals of the policies of NPM reform from the political perspective and few of the developing countries like Nigeria have ever succeeded in public sector reform because of the issues of nepotism and religious differences resulting in killings in Nigeria. Based on a keen view, Agundu (2016) stated that several countries became exemplars of NPM, in particular the United States and Australia, which undertook significant public-sector change to break from the bureaucratic paradigm of public administration and service delivery. In recent times, flaws have appeared and the search for a new way of thinking about and enacting public management practice as it relates to agency managers and service delivery has begun, in part to address the supposed weaknesses of NPM.

From NPM rhetoric to actual public-service delivery. The research conducted by Hood (2013) showed how public service delivery accounts for a large portion of government expenditure, but increased expenditure has never been equal to improvement

in outcomes. The public service has been eroded by corruption, which has led to money budgeted for service delivery and infrastructure has been diverted to personal use. The results of my study revealed that public service delivery in Nigeria needs to be delivered with integrity focused on the citizens and responsive to their needs, especially disadvantaged groups. This argument is supported by Argyriades (2006), that public service delivery should be traditionally organized in such a way that puts the public in a passive role as the recipients of the standardized service.

Adewole (2015) explained that more findings suggest that citizens should be involved like never before and managers should have the skills and passion to solve problems when it comes to service delivery to low income populations. Involving citizens will help managers perform beyond expectations because the people know the solution to their problems but are rarely empowered by the bureaucratic process. Instead, they face public services that may be impersonal, irrelevant, and inefficient. Participants expressed their experiences on how it is difficult for government to translate information into action. It is a big challenge because the relationships among citizens, politicians, and agency managers and service delivery have been complicated and can rarely be altered due to corruption and nepotism.

NPM service quality and consumer orientation. The underlying forces of socioeconomic development, technology, and globalization have enhanced many changes in the organization in service quality and management in the public sector. There has been a great awareness and demands from the people that organizations should adopt new aspirations by moving away from a heavily bureaucratic approach to focusing on

improving the quality of services to their citizens. The results of this study support the need to incorporate consumer orientation, which is important to service delivery because it is one of the common principles of quality service delivery and management as referred to by both the industry standard and the total quality management (Bukonya & Yangua, 2013).

The study results showed that the issue of existing management and public management administration entities should have respect for the use of customer orientation to engage in ongoing activities, tasks, and procedures for the present needs and expectations of their clients. Bryson et al. (2017) advised that the first and most important step towards directing activities to satisfy the needs and aspirations of the customer should be their brand. In this study, all participants supported NPM service and consumer orientation because the adoption of New Public Management Nigeria will help in improving administrative efficiency and the provision of public services and service delivery to low income populations.

Path dependency in public service delivery. In service delivery to low income populations, path dependence is highly relevant for analyzing and explaining the resilience and persistence of public policies in the face of intentional reform (Torfing, 2009). All the participants in the study agreed that path dependency would help to explain the continued use of a product or practice based on historical preference, which is why it holds true even if newer, more efficient products or practices are available in Nigeria due to the previous commitment made to reform service delivery. Pierson (2000) explained that path dependency has been used by both political scientists and economists

to explain how common laws, rules, and institutions can help create certain changes because so much has been invested in the present ways of doing things. The participants agreed that the reason service delivery to low income populations is inefficient is that local government councils have been characterized by lack of quality service to the people in the areas of good drinking water, poor drainage systems, lack of proper health care delivery systems, lack of efficient waste disposal systems, lack of electricity and efficient housing systems, lack of good schools and recreational facilities, and poorly constructed infrastructures (e.g., markets, motor parks, and slaughter slabs; Adewole, 2015).

The participants agreed across the sample that, in an effort to improve service delivery to low income populations, path dependency would help in decentralizing management authority within public agencies through reform practices. It would give top management freedom to manage with clear responsibility in the absence of nepotism and reducing the management role of the center (Notteboom et al., 2013). Pollitt and Bouckert (2004) argued that path dependency in service delivery is an economic outcome on the path of previous outcomes, instead of simply on present conditions. The study also showed that in a path dependent process to service delivery, history matters because it has an enduring influence. Also, choices made on the grounds of temporary conditions can continue long after those conditions change (Yanguas & Bukenva, 2016), which suggests that the outcomes of path-dependent processes necessitate looking at history, instead of simply at present conditions of technology, preferences, and other factors that determine outcomes.

Reform the role of the public agency managers. My study findings suggest that the role of public agency managers can be reformed for effective management of systems, services, and personnel to achieve a safer environment and better life for all (Agunda, 2016). Empowering public agency managers would help in delegation because through delegation, administrators could transfer functions to semiautonomous organizations that are not subject to the federal government but accountable to it. This study showed that all the participants agreed on the outcome of the transfer of functions to managers either in the public or private sector, where the administrator would not have control there by removing the central government from interfering to service delivery to low income populations. Rasul and Rogger (2013) explained that reforming the role of agency managers would help for leadership engagement, set clear goals, measure progress, analyze progress, and constantly review progress to find and encourage what works and fix or eliminate what does not work, which is the main foundation to success and enhancing service delivery.

Stuteville and Jumara (2011) proposed a new approach to path dependence in public administration to look beyond identifying constraints, as advocated by most researchers on path dependence, that takes a retrospective approach. This study showed the need for another theoretical view as a stand towards public administration research to contribute to path dependence literature. Roy (2008) explained that there is a clear and visible agenda on public management reform present over the years. Groups advocating reform now engage more actors to allow institutional change machineries with analytical notions to expand in-depth analysis. Rather than whole-sale change, they are focused on

small and incremental changes in public management reforms. All the participants in this study agreed that there should be further research in managing change, like with NPM. They emphasized that it is imperative to conduct in-depth empirical enquiries on implementing change management processes in public sectors in different contexts. Specifically, the research should focus on providing comprehensive accounts on change interventions and the roles and behaviors of agency managers and those involved in change processes.

Limitations of the Study

Limitations are influences over which a researcher has no control. They are the conditions, shortcomings, and impacts that researchers cannot constrain that place restrictions on their conclusions and methodology (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). The first limitation of the study was that I am a Nigerian and from a marginalized area with less effective NPM, which may unconsciously add cultural bias to the study. Influences and motivations grounded on an individual cultural focus can generate ethnocentrism, which is adjudicating research participants and their responses exclusively by the standards and values of one's own culture (Mintrom & Luetjens, 2017).

Another limitation of the study was criticism the case study method receives for not proposing statistical generalizations, which limits transferability of data results on the entire population from which the study samples originated (see Yin, 2017). However, the multiple case study is not used for this determination. It is used instead to strengthen trustworthiness of data and safeguard against participant bias, advancing theory generation and cross-case comparison (Patton, 2014). While I made use of the multiple

case study to enhance a profound understanding of specific knowledge gaps among public agency managers in Nigeria on sustainable, effective NPM practice, the data collection method was limited to ten participants and based on the data saturation (Maxwell, 2013).

Recommendations

NPM is defined in the extant management literature as the transfer of private sector principles, grounded primarily in market place theories, to the public sector (Hope, 2012). According to Pollitt and Dan (2011), although there are many definitions of NPM, there are significant overlaps among them. NPM is hypothesized and intellectualized as a double-level procedure. In the upper level, it was observed as a universal concept or guideline that determines that the competence and efficiency of the public sector can be improved through the application of public sector business doctrines and models (Pollitt & Dan, 2011). The findings may provide information that can help improve service delivery to low income populations in Nigeria by agency managers who are responsible to deliver efficient and effective service to the people. The potential benefits of this study are that NPM symbolizes a bundle of performances and components, but presentation and prominence differ with the dissimilarities in countries and time (Goldfinch et al., 2012). In this regard, NPM is characterized by a shift in the focus of management systems; a shift of focus to inputs and processes, more measurement on service quality and consumer orientation, and leaning into a flat and autonomous organizational model. Such a shift represents efficiency and individualism in the management of public sector

organizations, and a wider deployment of services across markets and contracts (Hope, 2012; Pollitt & Dan, 2011).

On the basis of this study's strength and limitations, future researchers should be encouraged to reproduce this study by making use of a research approach that addresses this topic to validate research findings by conducting a quantitative study. Additionally, an inherent limitation of qualitative research is finding a way to improve temporal precedence when establishing cause and effect (Yin, 2017). This study provides a maximum discernment of how one factor indeed led to another in the study; the triangulation of interview responses, historical literature, and field notes was incorporated to provide accurate insight into changing processes and minimize retrospection bias, as well as to strengthen temporal discernment (Affleck, Zautra, Tennen, & Armeli, 1999).

Methodological Recommendation 1: Quantitative Validation

In this study, making use of a quantitative method of research such as a survey could expose important views into transferability of the study investigation into effective service delivery to low income populations most needed by agency managers in Nigeria. Inasmuch as my study participants' views were similar, many agency managers in Nigeria may see it differently based on their understanding and culture. A considerably larger quantitative study could focus on high point cultural similarities and inconsistencies while revealing more important parts of my study with respect to culture, year of service, and service delivery within the agency.

Methodological Recommendation 2: Qualitative Replication

The use of qualitative research method in future studies is encouraged, which would be useful to determine how research findings vary in the Nigerian context of service delivery to low income population branded by different cultural understanding and economic differences. Furthermore, future researchers could conduct similar studies with samples that are greatly represented by managers across the nation. Such studies could develop more in-depth and valuable understanding on effective service delivery to low income populations in Nigeria.

Recommendations for Future Research

The NPM model, with the view of changing the traditional bureaucracy, has to be adopted due to rising challenges (Larbi, 2003). According to Larbi (2003), adopting the NPM model is necessary mainly because of existing pressures that entailed the need to change the traditional bureaucracy. The current agenda of public service reform is a blend of the second and third generations focusing on three dimensions: effectiveness, transparency, and accountability (Bukonya & Yanguas, 2013). There is need for good governance which is the current banner of the public-sector reforms as business environment and governance indicators of the World Bank and Transparency International confirmed governance and corruption problems as topical in many countries (Abteu, 2017). New public service reform is needed. It has six major policy targets: administrative reform, civil service, anticorruption and transparency and financial management; participation and co-production; tax administration; and public expenditure and decentralization (Bukonya & Yanguas, 2013). Another recommendation is that

instead of looking at a public services reform agenda as an isolated reform process, its processes should be evaluated collectively to reform the way the state does business with its constituency through the lens of public management (Yanguas, 2017).

Path Dependence in the Public Sector

Based on this study, I recommend a new approach to path dependence in public administration that strives to look beyond identifying constraints, as advocated by most researchers on path dependence, because it takes a retrospective approach. In this regard, a recommendation is another theoretical view as a stand towards public administration research to contribute to path dependence literature (Stuteville & Jumara, 2011). Hence, Stuteville and Jumara (2011) proposed a prospective approach that addresses prescriptive research questions, concluding that although the thoughtful ground rules in many path dependence literatures are reasoned on limitations towards current action, irrespective of history, the eventual ground rules have been the opposite. Despite stressing possibilities and choices, the idea, which is in line with path dependence ideas, clarifies that many paths can be attainable (Roy, 2008). I recommend a clear and visible agenda on public management reform in the area of service delivery to low income populations in Nigeria. Groups advocating reform should be encouraged to engage more actors to allow institutional change machineries with analytical notions to expand in-depth analysis. Government establishments have to follow their reform proposals with a strategy to accomplish change, which could contribute to path dependency in public reform. Moreover, there should be further research grounded in the strengths and limitations of the current study.

In this regard, Kuipers et al. (2014) specified areas of further research in managing change, like NPM. It is imperative to conduct in-depth empirical studies on implementing change management processes in public sectors in different contexts. Specifically, the study should focus on providing comprehensive accounts on change interventions and the roles and behaviors of those involved in change processes. An important approach in such studies is to work in cooperation with practitioners to explore the realities of change implementation in a variety of contexts. This approach is appropriate because disagreement does occur between those practicing change and outsiders seeking more knowledge about change. Consultants in both consulting and managerial roles are engaged in implementing change and the choices therein, which has been a welcome source of comprehensive data on the process (Higgs & Rowland, 2005).

Implications of the Study

Positive Social Change

The present study is transferable towards making a positive social change for the low-income population and their communities and other communities because participants face similar economic, goods and service delivery, and security challenges as do those in many other cities in Nigeria. Formerly, researchers have primarily focused on trainers, non-government agency workers, and government officials' roles in exploring the livelihood challenges of low-income population with service delivery in Nigeria. However, Goldfinch et al. (2012), Tsang (2013), and Giauque (2015) specified the necessity for using a qualitative methodology that gives in-depth access to low-income

population service delivery through NPM ideas, with knowledge gaps in public management practices in Nigeria.

From a social change perspective, policy makers and managers in the public agency community sectors are charged jointly to create public value (Bryson et al., 2017). It is germane to state that the Nigerian civil/public service, which came into existence in 1954, had witnessed a litany of reforms as corroborated, yet the reforms have not been as much a positive review of the civil service's original objectives as a form of damage control (Ikeanyibe, 2016). From inception, the attempt to graft a foreign structure on local realities presented the bureaucracy with problems that successive reformers sought to attenuate, and the consequences have been largely reverberating. It was also consistent with good reasoning to state that the Nigerian public service is still an evolving institution on a journey towards maturity (Ibietan & Joshua, 2015). Still, social change implications for the low-income population in Nigeria can only be realized when the agents of public reform, the local NPM managers themselves, can have a voice in Nigeria's national conversation on implementing path-breaking interventions on how best to improve services and change social outcomes for the low-income population (Gualini, 2018; Ibietan & Joshua, 2015).

Individual level. My study confirms the findings of other studies that agency managers need NPM reform for effective service delivery to low income populations (Ikeanyibe, 2016). In understanding this reform on the part of agency managers, organizations will help to better prepare new agency managers for their expected roles and demonstrate to make an impact their agency towards effective service delivery to low

income populations (Higgs & Rowland, 2005). Adherence to NPM reform and managerial training will complement agency managers service delivery skills learned through studies and trainings. These skills will also enhance their ability to make the shift from inefficiency to effective service delivery management (Roy, 2008). Such adherence could also help them to control and overcome the service delivery challenges that arise in their managerial positions (Yanguas, 2017).

Family level. In this study, I did not precisely consider research on family issues with respect to service delivery to low income populations in Nigeria and related service delivery requirements. However, there is sufficient literature with respect to poor and inefficient service delivery to low income populations in Nigeria (Ikeanyibe, 2017), which improved NPM reform knowledge of service delivery that could help to alleviate the problems of poor and ineffective service delivery through better preparation of new agency managers as well as enhanced potential for professional development at the individual level (Bukenya & Yanguas, 2013). The need for agency managers to have more confidence and motivation in their professional life and opportunities for enhanced service delivery will contribute to overall family well-being of the people (Larbi, 2003).

Organizational level. The findings of this study provide expressive confirmation for service delivery and ways for organizations to provide and implement NPM reforms training to agency managers with respect to service delivery to low income populations (Hope, 2012; Pollitt & Dan, 2011). This will be of great support to agency managers and value to organizational development while improving NPM reforms (Goldfinch et al., 2012). It will also strengthen organizational practices that ensure the successful

completion of service delivery to low income populations, supporting organizations, agency managers and sustainable development within the organization, which will also strengthen organizational practices that ensure efficient service delivery to low income populations (Hope, 2012). Advancing quality service delivery and competencies in decision making and teamwork, will empower agency manager's confidence and motivation to think outside the box on positive ideas of effective service delivery (Menzies & Paradi, 2002; Souitaris et al., 2007).

Societal Level. Creating and maintaining effective management and leadership skills throughout the agency is a crucial factor of its overall future success. Not only is it necessary for the managers and administrators of the agency to understand effective leadership skills in service delivery, but it is also important for entry level managers be trained on these skills in order to maintain effective service delivery in their respective agencies (Maxwell, 2013). This study findings in the area of individual and administrative levels benefits will have the ability to make positive social change to the society in terms of service delivery to low income populations. This study presents expressive evidence for agency managers to give support to marginalized groups in service delivery with desire to make life better for themselves. Nepotism and corruption has continued to exist in service delivery irrespective of the government law against discrimination. The inequality in service delivery within the agency managers has been an unfair treatment against the disfranchised groups and it is based on ethnicity, religion, or politics (Tsang, 2013). Many social groups are marginalized, but it does not mean that

they stay at the edge of society. These groups and individuals are constantly fighting for their right, for the power to make positive social change for their people.

Conclusions

Ongoing and detailed research targeting the effectiveness of NPM performance in Nigeria has indicated many failures in specific public agencies caused by the conflict between macro- and micro-level views and poor presentation of professional management values. These circumstances have led to such organizational pathologies as poor organization, over-staffing, over-centralization, apathy, corruption, a sluggish bureaucracy, resistance to structural adjustment by local agency managers, and managerial incompetence (Aoki, 2016; Joshua, 2015; Ikeanyibe, 2016). According to Stuteville and Jumara (2011), there are various sources in literature on the significance of path dependence to explain how administrative reforms are ratified or stalled.

Since 2004, every fundamental government administration in Nigeria has introduced a personal development and NPM reform plan through a path dependence process while holding back agency managers from initiating new solutions for NPM delivery of services to the communities within their public agencies (Adewole, 2015; Rasul & Rogger, 2018). Leaders must consider the need for management reforms in public organizations and understand how public management impacts the behaviors and attitudes of some employees at the frontlines, specifically public agency managers delivering service to the low-income population (Porter & Watts, 2017).

Given the prevalence of path-dependent processes in NPM in developing economies such as Nigeria, it was unsurprising that public managers encounter notable

difficulties when attempting to engage with path-creation processes, including issues of trust (Boateng & Cox, 2016), motivation (Bright, 2013), sensitive group dynamics (Hossan et al., 2013), resistance to change (Kuipers et al., 2014), and structural factors (Van der Voet et al., 2016), to name a few. For Nigerian policy makers, to attain value through NPM, they must carefully consider input and feedback from stakeholders, and actively include them in relevant discourse as well as give weight to their experiences for the development of effective policies, whose goal is to minimize the path dependence process controlling service delivery (Porter & Watts, 2017).

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Appendix: Interview Protocol

Path-Breaking Interventions to Support Effective New Public Management in Nigeria: A Multiple Case Study

Date: _____

Introduction

To Interviewee:

“The interview is recorded on tape for the best possible data. Is this okay? I can turn off the tape recorder along the way if you wish.”

“Have you read the information I sent in the e-mail? Have you signed the Informed Consent Form to participate in this study?”

“The title of this research project is: Path-Breaking Interventions to Support Effective New Public Management in Nigeria: A Multiple Case Study.

“Do you wish to ask any question regarding the study or this procedure before we proceed?”

Exploring Interviewee Perceptions on the Study Topic^[1] To

Interviewee:

“New Public Management (NPM) has attracted the attention of researchers in both developed and developing countries. There are mixed findings on the performance of NPM in the public sector. Although there are some findings for poor performance of NPM in developing countries, there is research gap in effectively implementing NPM in public organization in developing countries. This interview intends to address the problem of effective adoption of NPM programs in Nigeria.

Part A (Participant Information)

- A1. First name of the Interviewee
- A2. Last name of the Interviewee
- A3. Age (in years)
- A4. Nationality
- A5. Gender
- A6. Education (highest degree)
- A7. Public agency management experience (in years)
- A8. Title / function

Interview Questions:

1. What is planned or claimed on NPM reform in policy announcements, statements of intent, and government documents?
2. What rhetoric on NPM reform is transmitted directly to the people and how is this done?
3. To what extent have NPM reforms been put into practice in the field from rhetoric to actual design?
4. To what extent have NPM reforms moved from design and actual action?
5. To what extent have NPM reforms resulted in improved services for the population?

6. To what extent have the reforms resulted in better outcomes in particular for the low-income population?
7. As a final question, would you like to add any further reflections on adoption of NPM reforms in Nigeria?

Prompts to facilitate conversations around the facts:

“Can you give me an example of that?”

“Please tell me more about that.”