VALUE FOR MONEY AUDIT AND PUBLIC ENTITIES PERFORMANCE

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Abstract

The study examined value for money audit and public entities' performance. Prior studies have revealed that the problem of public entities' performance has been a complex and systemic issue that has deepened over the years in Nigeria and had defiled diverse policies due to noncommittal and incompetence attitudinal dispositions of the public servants. In addressing the problem of public entities' performance, this study employed systematic exploratory research of a desktop approach, using available research materials from the auditing and public accounting documentation, journals, periodicals, and other materials found to be relevant to the study. The study concluded that efficient adoption of value for money audit consistently is capable of enhancing the desired economy, efficiency, and effectiveness in the use of public funds. Effective institutionalization of value for money audit in public entities will enhance the safeguarding of public funds' vulnerability to fraud activities and misappropriation of funds, but will strengthen the performance of the civil servants. The study recommended that regulatory agencies should ensure strict compliance to regular value for money audits in all public entities and appropriately sanction erring officers and inefficient public entities.

Keywords: Accountability, Budgeted and actuals, Financial reporting, Misappropriation of funds, Public accounting, Value for audit, Public entities performance.

Introduction

Performance perceptions of the public about the performance of public entities have been a deepening concern as the lackadaisical attitudinal disposition of the civil servants has become unprecedentedly overbearing, high level of incompetence. Incidentally, this laisser-faire defiance character of the civil servants has noticeably reduced the quality of services and performance of public entities, and this has received disparagements and criticisms from the citizens. Sadly, this has not received adequate studies in Nigeria. Prudent resource management of national assets is essential imperative as key drivers of economic development of nations; this has eluded the developing economies due to bad square pegs in round holes in the public entities.

The performance of the public entities over the years has been an open display failure and underperformance below the expectations of the public (Asadullah, Muhammad, Ishak, Mirza, Mehfooz & Faisal, 2019: Askim, Johnsen & Christophersen, 2018). The primary objective of public entities has been to provide essential and public welfare services, notwithstanding, the entities are still expected to make a profit to cushion and reduce the extent of government monthly subventions, and besides to ensure optimal use of the public productive and available resources to yield economic returns or at worst ensure that public projects executed are of good standards. Andersen, Samset and Welde (2016) posited that public entities are expected to be managed by an appointed board of directors who is experts in their various fields, unfortunately, this has never been the case, over the years the level of inefficiency and unproductive stagnation of employees of the public entities is worrisome as the public entities have been inundated with triviality work attitude, unserious and below-average performance, chronicles of fraudulent activities and unbridled appetite for corrupt practices (Ball & Plugrath, 2014; Bert & Sebastian, 2018). Effective public entities performance has been a perennially complex concern in the public entities, according to Egbunike, Onoja, Adeaga, and Utojuba (2017), there is a fundamental and systemic error inhibiting the system, the problem of reckless spending, and inefficient management of the personnel and assets have been the hallmark of the public service in Nigeria. Consistent with this understanding, Bloom, Brenzel, Cadarette and Sullivan (2017), posited that globally; publicly owned entities are operated for the profit motives, leading to optimal utilization of the available resources in creating value for the owners. However the same is not the case in public entities, rather managerial diseconomy mindset prevails possibly due to lack of proper management and noncommittal attitude of the workforce.Studies have documented that value for money audit comes to mind as a panacea to effective public entities' performance (Demirag, Khadaroo, Stapleton & Stevenson, 2012; Chen, Chindarkar & Xiao, 2018). Some previous studies have shown that value for money audits significantly influenced public entities' performance. Ciraci and Polat (2019) posited that the agency problem and agency conflict of interest necessitated the separation of ownership and control since the owners (principal) are different from the managers (agents) who are in control of the business. In this regard, the social contract agreement comes to play a predominant role in checkmating and controlling the quality and economic value of services rendered by the public sector to the public considering the amount of fund voted in this respect. While the owners (the masses) who elected and entrusted the running of the state in the hands of the elected leaders, it becomes practically expedient that the masses require stewardship and accountability from the elected leaders, hence value for money audit becomes inevitably obligatory to ascertain the economic value derivable from the public executed projects (Culyer & Chalkido, 2019).

Dakin and Wordsworth (2013) submitted that value for money audit entails an assessment, measurement, and evaluation of the efficiency, effectiveness, and economy of public entities in its ability to optimally utilize public resources prevalent in the non-profit sector where the objective is not essentially for profit-making. According to Buvik, Bergmo, Bugge, Smaabkrekke, Wilsgaard and Olsen (2019), the three pivotal areas of consideration of value for money audit are the efficient and effective use of public funds by the public entities entrusted with these responsibilities. Hence the focus of value for money audit is to assess whether the public entities' performance scale through the achievement of three perspectives: economy, efficiency, and effectiveness of public funds.

However, from time to time, demand for periodic monitoring and bonding mechanisms that flattens divergences curves and social contract demands that external auditing of the public entities performance. Breese, Jenner, Serra and Thorp (2015) posited that information propositions and postulations external audit and value for money audit can be required because they improve the quality of public series and enhance accounting information disclosure of the entities. While private investors demand the credibility of financial statements, the public expects no less, except that value for money is expected from the executed projects (Volden, 2019). In addition, Volden and Samset (2017) submitted that the value for money audit had a positive significant effect on public expectations, Opawole, Jagboro, Babatunde and Opawole (2013) revealed that audit for money audit positively affected the performance of public owned enterprises. On the contrary, other studies have found inconsistent results. Thomas & Chindarkar (2019) studied-the picture from a cost-benefit analysis of public projects and documented that value for money audit had a negative and insignificant effect on public entities performance, the study posited that value for money audit is a reactive exercise and efforts in futility, as stolen money hardly get recovered in the public service as the case in Nigeria irrespective value for money audit exercise.

Problem of the Study

Fundament and dysfunctional systemic problems are inherent in the structural design of the Nigerian public system. Since the Nigerian independence, the public sector had structural defects and means of settling ethnic patronage, and political contract through which pipe-holes were entrenched to typhoon public funds (Olotuah, 2019). Some prior studies have asserted that public servants believe that the public entities are non-profit oriented from the onset, and this increases unseriousness and no one has been questioned for incompetence and inefficiency (Okpala, 2013; Omoniyi & Jiboye, 2011).

Besides, there is a lack of strategic planning and innovation, where competence is put to active service, rather an ethnic coloration and quota system underscore placement of the best qualified for effective public performances (Ubani & Ononuju, 2013). Political interference and political campaign have gradually taken the center of inefficiency and meritocracy in the public entities. Fraudsters and corrupt public officers evade investigations and prosecution for their crimes, as every action of the court in this direction are often visited with stiff public ethnic and religious emotional sympathies of being witch-hunted because of ethnic and religious the offender belong (Too & Weaver, 2014; Neumann & Sander, 2017).

In the public entities, value is absent for audit exercise, as the accounting system was designed to make audit exercise very difficult and records are falsified with all impunity (Ness, Volden, Odeck and Richardson (2017), there is clearly and unfortunately lack of freedom and flexibility of work pattern and system, systemic averse to innovations and technological skills in the public entities the most qualified are denied appointment and positions to preferred mediocrity, incompetence, least qualified nonentities in the name of the quota system and 'god-fatherisms' in Nigerian public system, leading to unprecedented inefficiencies and poor quality services and decisions and performances (Olotuah, 2017, Ogunlana, 2010; Daniel & Eze, 2016). There have been records of zero accountability, selective punishment of offenders based on tribe and political parties affiliations, non- concomitance to set goals and objectives, a system where rewards and promotions are not based on merits and efficiency, rather based on religious inclination, the ethnic group associations (Obara, 2007).

According to Olotuah (2017), the public entities performance in Nigeria is inconsequential as the public entities were structured to steal and spend government money for a political settlement of some set of individuals, a place to cut own national cake for a few privileged persons who got there by who they know.

The objective of this study is to examine value for money audit and public entities' performance. In addressing the problem of public entities' performance, the study considered the systemic issues and inherent challenges impeding the performance of the public entities in Nigeria. There has been a dearth of studies that have considered the problem of public entities' performance. Only few prior studies have made attempts to study the problem of public entities performance in Nigeria, creating wide gaps in the literature, in addressing these gaps, this study makes a bold attempt, contributing to knowledge and expanding the frontiers, using the value for money audit to investigate the complexity and problem of public entities performance in Nigeria. The rest of the study is planned in this manner: Section 2, the study presented a review of extant literature, section 3, the methodology, and the study considered conclusions and recommendations in section 4.

Review of Extant Literature

Conceptual Review

Public Entities Performance

In Nigeria, it is becoming a norm that public enterprises are becoming a means of fulfilling the political objective of political parties. The appointed government officials are there to serve the political interest of any particular ruling party, as a result, political factors greatly influence location projects and appointments and even day-to-day operational activities (Jiboye, 2009). Also, from Norway, Askim, Johnsen, and Christophersen (2018) documented the following problems associated with the execution of public sector projects; that in most cases, evaluation of past projects are not carried out, since they ought to have been built into future planning, guidance and regulations; lack of effective audit and reporting process to facilitate transparency and encourage feedback to improve the quality of the decision-making and management process in the public sector.

In the same manner, Pulmanis (2017) asserted that there is the nonexistence of project planning and management skills in some public sector systems, but on contrast, these are needed to enhance quality decisions within the civil service because strong planning and management system is essential to ensure productive infrastructure investments (Pulmanis, 2017). Public sector projects execution globally require painstaking and quality rational thinking as key and sensitive projects that will affect millions of people necessitates key decision possibly through legislative and public opinions from those outside the government cycle. Therefore, according to Ciraci and Polat (2019), rational planning practice can inject information into public projects decision-making process by offering, for instance, focus on strategic goals, insights into the public environment, and insight into quality service performance (Pulmanis, 2017; Shah, Barron, Klinger & Wright, 2014).

In the public sector, there must be projects that need to be executed and often some things that are critical to the success of the national social-economic benefit. Because of the high stakes, good public office holders do not just make decisions based on gut instinct, rather should be based on quality rational decisions and as a product of a thorough technical appraisal method. It requires pragmatic, rational, and quality decision-making aimed at minimizing risks and maximizing benefits to the best least ability of the decision-makers, and acting when there is more certainty than uncertainty (Ciraci & Polat, 2019).

The quality and durability of projects provide a veritable basis for the evaluation of the effect of various projects and policy changes, particularly the completed infrastructure investments in a wide variety of appraisal work. Several economists have instead proposed the use of quality and durable projects as a criterion of the positive effect of cost-benefit analysis on public sector Projects execution in a study of moving beyond the traditional valuation of vaccination by (Bloom, Brenzel, Cadarette, and Sullivan (2017). The concept of quality and durable projects as a proper measure of cost-benefit analysis is often and informally used to refer to any analysis used in decision-making that compares the expected costs and benefits from both in monetary terms of an investment. In principles, to be regarded as complete, a cost-benefit analysis should capture all benefits due to an intervention, valuing them either at their market value, quality, and durability or at the level of consumption that individuals are willing to forego to obtain them. Hence it has its conceptual roots in welfare economics, which quantifies social welfare in terms of the society's willingness to attest to the quality and durability after a long period of use (Le, Sanci, Chatterton, Kauer, Buhagiar, & Mihalopoulos, 2019).

Value for Money Audit

The concept of value for money audit is the processes where auditors investigate whether or not public entities have effectively performed its assigned duties and responsibilities in achieving economy, efficiency, and effectiveness in optimal utilization of public productive assets or budgeted funds at the disposal of the concerned entity. Studies have posited some inherent problems in value for money audit, the problem of insufficient funding, inadequate financial records, incomplete records, and lack of emphasis on stewardship, accountability (Newnes, Mileham, Cheung, Marsh, Lnham, Saravi & Bradbery, 2018). There is evidence of inconsequence in financial recording, inconsistencies in pattern of financial recording and preparation of financial records, and the problem of placing incompetent personnel in positions they are not qualified, political and economic instability also slow down public entities performance

Economy

Value for money audit aims to ascertain whether or not public entities have optimized output and cost-effectiveness towards achieving a specific set target. It considers the extent of output level in monetary terms. Consequently, a value for money audit investigates the acquisition and utilization of public resources appropriately in terms of quality and quantity.

Efficiency

Value for money audit in respect of efficiency considers the extent of productivity as achieved by the public entity performance. It reviews the percentage between the set targets and achieved targets, the planned and the actual of the concerned public entity. It considered the cost benefits of the quality of resources used and the output obtained.

Effectiveness

In carrying out a value for money audit, the expectation is to assess the quantitative and effective measures of public entity performance. It evaluates the variability of outcomes reflecting whether or not the entity has achieved its set goals and objectives. In this regard, the auditors examine any possible financial information to ascertain the effectiveness of the executed projects Flyybjerg, Holm & Buhl (2015) stated that value for money audit is significantly related to effective public sector performance. While Fan, Nancy, and Luo (2019) argued that value for money audit is positively correlated with the public entities' effective performance. It situates that auditor's measurement and assessments are anchored on the granular level of cost-effectiveness and quality of service delivery, budget and actual results analysis, and timely product or project delivery. The ability of the projects executed to meet the public expectations could be achieved from a similar project and at comparable costs.

Theoretical Consideration

Social Contract Theory

The social contract theory was postulated by a renowned political scientist Thomas Hobbes of 1562, who posited that social contract theory is all about morality and the issue of states. The social contract theory has been a contemporary discussion after the theory was earlier postulated. The contract theory is concerned with morality and the responsibility of the state to the people about the theory of the state. The social contract according to Thomas Hobbes suggested that the states are in existence basically to provide social welfare and provision of essential amenities based on the citizens' tax payment and also has the social contract to provide the citizens with quality and effective services as the justification for the political obligation to the citizens According to Musawir, Serra, Zwikael & Ali (2017), the social contract theory reflects on the government managing the affairs of the state on behalf of the society who elected the leaders, as the acceptance of the leadership position implies acceptance of the social contract to do the bidding of the masses, in protecting the citizens' rights and obligations using the state resources.

Rauscher (2012) elucidating the ideology and philosophy of social contract, went on to say that there are five basic and significant variables involved in the relationship between the states and the people (the masses). First, it considers the nature of the contract act, second, the parties involved in the social contract, three, the rights and obligation of each party to the social contract, including the extent of limitation of the parties each member of the party is consenting to and lastly, what are the agreement and tenets of the constitution of the state supposed to reflect. According to Rousseau (2004), argued that the world would have been in on confusion and lawlessness with the tenets of the social contract, hence the social contract plays a significant role in moral actions and protection of the rights of the citizens. On the contrary, Hume (2000) questioned the sincerity of the elected leader in protecting the rights and obligations as contained in the social contract.

Hume (2000) further posited that there is no need for the social contract if the leaders continue in selfish and unconcerned attitudes towards the masses. Society is in need of sincere and selfless leaders who are willing to make sacrifices on behalf of the masses which the leaders are not willing to do. This implies that the social contract is contextually prescriptive and not practical in realities.

Benefit Theory

Benefit theory was developed by Adams Smith as fallout of the famous book "the wealth of nations" in the year 1776. The benefit theory suggests that taxes should be imposed based on proportion to the benefit the taxpayer received for the period in question. According to Adams Smith, the theory's ideology is fairness and equity for taxpayers to pay in line with the measure of value being received from the government.

One of the strong supporters and proponents of benefits theory, Musgrave and Musgrave, (1982) had advocated that taxes should be paid by those who benefit the most from the tax revenue expenditure, suggesting that taxes should be earmarked for specific goods and services being provided. For example, that government tax expenditure on roads should be financed from taxes imposed on vehicle owners, such as the vehicle license and tax on toll gates, tax on fuel and diesel drivers' license, and fines/penalties on motor roadworthiness.

However, some scholars faulted the philosophy behind the benefit theory saying that it is rather impossible to measure benefit and utility derivable from the uses of tax revenue. Davis, Schoolman and Donaldson (1997) argues that in practice, the benefit is difficult to measure, for instance, that childless couple may be reluctant in making contribution to the provision of state education and/or tertiary education fund, however, they could derive benefit from living in the educated community developed by educated children in future. The theory of benefits theory was considered suitable and relevant because taxpayers ought to receive value for the payment of tax. At the least, actions and reactions have to do with perception and conviction, besides; it becomes difficult to see a reason to pay tax especially within the peculiarity context of the Nigerian society where people do not see any reason to pay tax.

The Theory of Planned Behavior

The theory of planned behavior was developed by Ajzen in 1985 as an extension of the theory of reasoned action. The theory postulates that people are more likely to do a behavior if they evaluate the suggested behavior as having positive results (Attitude). Furthermore, the main proposition of the theory of planned behavior is that there is one immediate determinant of behavior, normally the person's intention to perform or not to perform it. According to the theory, the intention is itself in turn viewed as determined by three factors of attitude, subjective norms, and subjective control towards the specific behavior.

More specifically, the theory of planned behavior attempts to provide an account of the way in which attitude. Subjective norms subjective control and intentions combine to predict taxpayers' conduct.

Other proponents of the theory of planned behavior include Demirag, Khadaroo, Stapleton and Stevenson (2012) who opined that a high correlation of attitude and subjective norms to behavior has been confirmed in many studies. That to improve on the predictive power of the theory of reasoned action, there is a preposition of perceived behavioral control to help account for behaviors that arise where an individual control over the behavior is incomplete. By this, Memirag *et al.,* (2012) argued that the theory of planned behavior reflects the role of non-volition in predicting behavior.

On the contrary, Niway and Wondwassen (2015) criticized the theory of planned behavior and stated a counterargument, that against the high relationship between attitude, subjective norms, and behavior, that it is not at all cases the postulation of Ajzen' theory of planned theory of can work. Niway and Wondwassen (2015) criticisms were based on the premise that because of circumstantial limitations, attitude and subjective norms do not always lead to behavior, rather the willingness of the individual.

This theory was seen to be appropriate and relevant to this study because tax compliance is situated with the behavioral conduct and determined attitude of the taxpayer. The taxpayer's willingness to comply with tax laws is based on the perceived mind that it is worth a civic responsibility and worth doing.

Empirical Review

Wolff, Pauling, Keck and Baumbach, (2020) studied the systematical review of value for money and summarized the cost-effectiveness dedicated to artificial intelligence in health care and also to access whether they meet the established quality criteria The study aimed at investigating the economic effect of artificial intelligence and the application of cost-effectiveness analysis. The study employed a systematic literature review based on qualitative and qualitative inclusion and exclusion criteria to identify relevant publications for an in-depth analysis of the economic effect of assessment. The study found that systematic value for money audit had a positive effect in artificial intelligence and that had thoroughly addressed economic effect assessment and quality of the reviewed publication on artificial intelligence were methodologically deficits.

Wolff, Pauling, Keck and Baumbach, (2020) and Park, Jit and Wu had similar findings were similar, however, while Wolff *et al*., (2020) found that very few publications have thoroughly addressed economic effect assessment and quality of public projects, Park *et al.,* (2018) using different cost-benefit analyses in the UK, cost-benefit analysis in vaccination enhanced mortality and morbidity risks in the Up Park, Jit and Wu (2018) examined a cost-benefit analysis of vaccination, a comparative analysis of eight approaches for valuing changes to mortality and morbidity risks.

The study employed a qualitative literature review to understand the implications of different cost-benefit analyses for capturing and monetizing benefits and their potential effect on public health decision-making. The study conducted that cost-benefit analysis of humans had a positive effect on papillomavirus vaccination in the United Kingdom using eight methods of monetizing health and economic benefits, valuing productivity loss using either the human capital or the friction cost method including the value of unpaid work in human capital or friction cost approaches, adjusting for hard-to-fill vacancies in the labor market, using the value of the statistical life, monetizing quality-adjusted life years and including both productivity losses and monetary quality-adjusted life years. The study also found that the total benefits of vaccination varied by more than 20-fold across the approaches. The threshold vaccine cost had a benefit to cost ratio above one.

The study recommended that applying different approaches to monetize benefits in cost-benefit analysis can lead to widely varying outcomes on public health interventions such as vaccination. That use of cost-benefit analysis to inform priority setting in public health will require greater convergence around appropriate methodology to achieve consistency and comparability across different studies.

Florio, Morretta and Willak (2018) investigated the role of cost-benefit analysis in the context of European Union cohesion policy. The study performed analysis on data sourced from 1000 major projects application, submitted during the period of 7 years (2007-20130 by 22 European countries and representing almost one hundred and eighty Euros after taking into consideration the European Union policy framework and the cost-benefit analysis guidelines designed by the European Commission. A distinctive feature of the current cost-benefit analysis approach adopted by the European Commission was the application for funding provided a forecast of both the project's financial rate of return and the economic rate of return. The study revealed that on average, the financial rate of return was slightly negative and the economic rate of return had a positive association on average with the difference across sectors. The findings of Hockley (2014) who examined cost-benefit analysis as a decision support tool for contesting ecosystem knowledge is consistent with that of Florio, Morretta and Willak (2018), affirming that cost-benefit analysis had a positive effect on expected economic contribution.

Ye, Shi, Yih, Fu, Lius and He (2018) examined the empirical analysis of firms' willingness to participate in infrastructure PPP projects. The study aimed at examining the factors of private participation in private participation projects (PPP) with the consideration of the willingness to participate as a function of internal (firm's nature) and external factors (institutions, the government's behavior, and project characteristics).

The study adopted a logistics regression model and the data from a questionnaire survey, the study found that nine variables of profitability, political connections, government intervention, government support, project complexity, and project experience, in particular, had a negative significant coefficient effect. The companies with more projects experience, more political connections, and higher profitability are more likely to be willing to participate in PPP projects. The study did not find any support for a firm's willingness to participate in PPPs. The study recommended that the study can serve reference in shaping the private sector' motivation to participate in Private participation projects.

Whitten, Mair, Haycox, May, Williams and Hellmich (2015) investigated the systematic review of cost-benefit analysis of telemedicine interventions in the context of telemedicine *interventions*. The study adopted a qualitative literature review of cost-benefit analysis and its effectiveness. The study revealed that a systematic review of cost-benefit analysis had a positive significant effect on telemedicine intervention and that only 55 out of 612 identified articles presented actual employed cost-benefit analysis data, which were required to be included in a detailed review.

In addition, after analyzing these articles, the study concluded that the provided evidence was not sufficient to assess whether telemedicine represented a cost-effective means of delivering health care. While adopting a qualitative approach, Whitten, Mair, Haycox, May, Williams and Hellmich (2015) investigated the systematic review of cost-benefit analysis of telemedicine interventions in the context of telemedicine interventions, the findings though considered cost-benefit analysis as beneficial to the expected economic value of projects, the study of Ye, Shi, Fu, Lius and He (2018) found that nine variables of profitability, political connections, government intervention, government support, project complexity, and project experience, in particular, had a significant coefficient on economic contribution to the institutions and government project characteristics.

Hockley (2014) found that lack decision guiding factors are limiting the influence of cost-benefit analysis on decision-making capacity in the public sector setups, Florio *et al.,* (2018) found that the rate of return was slightly negative and the economic rate of return had a positive association on average with the difference across sectors, using cost-benefit analysis. Furthermore, consistent with the findings as aforementioned above, Hockley (2014) examined cost-benefit analysis as a decision support tool for contesting ecosystem knowledge. The study considered the fact that all ecosystem knowledge is contestable, which restricts the effect of technocratic tools like cost-benefit analysis. The study investigates the effect of cost-benefit analysis on the democratic mechanisms shaping the decision-makers in the public sector. The study revealed that scarcity of decision guiding factors had a negative effect on decisions support for ecosystem knowledge. There are limiting the influence of cost-benefit analysis on decision-making capacity in the public sector setups. The study suggested that the demand-side factor that is resistant to change be taken care of and that supply-side reforms accommodate the benefit of cost-benefit analysis as an aid in decision-making mechanisms in the public sector.

Methodology

This study examined value for money audit and public entities' performance. In addressing the problem of public entities' performance, the study employed systematic exploratory research of a desktop approach, using available research materials from the auditing and public accounting documentation, journals, periodicals, and other materials found to be relevant to the study.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Conclusions

In this study, value for money audit and public entities' performance were reviewed. The study considered the systematic failure and high incompetence prevalent in the Nigerian public entities and evidential dismay performances. The study considered the basic areas in value for money audit, the angle of economy, efficiency, and effectiveness of attainment of purpose in the use and management of public resources by the public entities in the utilization of. The study reviewed the possible understanding of the concept of value for money audit and its implementation as significant and a solution to enhance public entities' performance. The study concluded that effectual adoption of value for money audit periodically is capable of enhancing the economy, efficiency, and effective use of the public funds. Effective institutionalization of value for money audits in public entities will enhance the safeguarding of public projects' vulnerability to fraud activities. However, a value for money audit is required primarily to ensure that three basic requirements is achieved in the public service - efficiency, and economy and effectiveness use of public funds, application, and implementation of budgeted public funds.

Managers of Public entities have the duties and responsibilities to effective use of public assets and protection of public assets, prevention, and detection of fraud and errors in their respective entities. It is the responsibility of the managers and board of directors that effective value for money audit is institutionalized to enhance the achievement of efficiency, economy, and effectiveness in the performance of their duties.

This study contributes to knowledge in many ways. First, the study contributes to the literature on public entities performance by adding documented evidence of the influence of value for audit to the effective performance of the civil servants as most positions in public entities in Nigeria are occupied by inappropriate personnel leveraging on a quota system

Recommendations

The study recommended that systemic defaults in the public sector structure should be revisited. In addition, the study recommended that the auditing process is intensified in the public sector to ensure effective value for money audit that will guarantee accountability, transparency, and credibility of public assets utilization that will achieve economy, efficiency and effectiveness in Nigeria. The study recommended that regulatory agencies should ensure strict compliance to regular value for money audits in all public entities to enhance effective performance.

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