

Issues in Land Administration and Project Delivery in Nigeria: Challenges and Ways Forward ¹

Henry Chinedu Halimⁱ and Christian Osita Ifedioraⁱⁱ

ⁱ Department of Estate Management, Delta State Polytechnic, Ogwashiuku Nigeria

ⁱⁱ Department of Estate Management, Delta State University of Science and Technology, Ozoro, Nigeria

Abstract

Land administration and project delivery play crucial roles in the socioeconomic development of any nation. In Nigeria, the duo faces significant challenges, resulting in inefficiencies and hindered development. This calls for concern and possibly solution to the identified challenges. This works looks at the issues and challenges faced in land administration and project delivery in Nigeria. The study addressed various aspects of land administration and project delivery in Nigeria. The review highlights key challenges and proposes potential solutions and the way forward for effective land administration and project delivery in the country.

Keywords: *Land, Land Administration, Challenges, Project and Project delivery*

1.0 Introduction

In recent times there has been a revival of interest in the role and operation of land administration systems, Dale, (2000). This interest could said to be been made possibly because of the importance of same even in project delivery. Land administration can be described as the government's management and regulation of land resources in the country. It encompasses various processes, including allocation of land, registration of land and titling, surveying as well as mapping, land use planning, and land dispute resolution. It also pertinent to state that is also not only the government or municipality that is responsible for land administration: it is everyone's responsibility, Hull, Kingwill and Fokane, (2020). They further opined that even by occupying a plot, one is staking a claim to it which is a function of land administration.

The aim of land administration is to ensure efficient and sustainable use of land, promote equitable distribution of land rights, and provide a secure and transparent system for land transactions. Dale, (2000) stated in his work that, until recent times the primary aim of land administration was seen as the provision of secure title to land. Land administration involves establishing clear land ownership and tenure, maintaining accurate and up-to-date land records, and implementing policies and regulations to govern land use and development.

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Effective land administration is crucial for socioeconomic development, these can be seen in case of it provision of foundation for securing of property rights, facilitation of investment in land and infrastructure, supporting agricultural productivity, and promoting sustainable urban planning. In Nigeria, like in many other countries, challenges such as weakness in governance, the issue of corruption, inadequate documentation, and complex land tenure systems appears to hinder efficient and effective land administration. Addressing these issues is crucial for the proper management and utilization of land resources in the country.

Land administration and project delivery play crucial roles in the socioeconomic development of any nation. In Nigeria, land administration and project delivery faces significant challenges, these results in inefficiencies and had in most times hindered development. In order to address the identified challenges, it is important to appreciate the weight of the underlying problems and possibly explore potential solutions. This work identified existing related literatures and with the aim to providing a comprehensive overview of the challenges faced as well as proposes measures for improvement.

2.0 Literatures – concepts and definitions

Land

Land, a major factor of production has so many definitions and by different scholars, Ifediora, (2014). According to him, Professor J.A. Umeh postulated six concepts of land to include: physical, economic, legal, socio-political, spiritual and abstract. Umeh, (1973) is of the opinion that the meaning of land can be best explained through the conceptual framework expressed by the major players in land use decision namely: economists, lawyers, geographers, supernatural persons and governing institutions. For the Igbo the mother earth is (LAND) ala, the greatest deity after Chukwu, the heavenly creator, Parrinder, (1976).

The UNCCD defines land as “the terrestrial bio productive system that comprises soil, vegetation, other biota, and the ecological and hydrological processes that operate within the system.

Land Administration

Land administration according to Dawidowicz and Żróbek (2017) is not a new discipline. According to Williamson et al. (2010b), land administration it believed to have evolved out of the cadastre and land registration areas which focused on the security of land rights. Dawidowicz and Żróbek (2017) noted that the global idea of building state Land Administration Systems (LAS) was to determine the infrastructures for the implementation of land policies and land management strategies in support of sustainable development.

Land Administration is defined as the process of determining, recording and disseminating information about ownership, value and use of land and its associated resources, Abiodun,

Odumosu and Omodare, (2020). Land administration includes the systems for land registration, land use planning, land management and property taxation (Williamson et al, 2010).

Land administration system (LAS) is a term that is derived from the concept of land administration, which determines the processes of recording and disseminating information about the ownership, value and use of land and its associated resources when implementing land-management policies (UN, 1996; Molen, Mishra, 2006).

Land administration refers to the set of processes, policies, and institutions involved in the management, control, and governance of land and related resources. It operates as the instrument to ensure equitable access to land by stakeholders within the policy framework of a country (Ukaejiofo, 2008). It encompasses various activities and functions, including land registration, land use planning, land surveying and mapping, land valuation and taxation, land tenure systems, land information systems, and land dispute resolution.

The primary goal of land administration is to establish and maintain an effective framework for the sustainable and efficient use of land resources. The World Bank and the International Federation of Surveyors (FIG) 2014, noted that A fit-for-purpose approach includes the following elements:

- Flexible in the spatial data capture approaches to provide for varying use and occupation.
- Inclusive in scope to cover all tenure and all land.
- Participatory in approach to data capture and use to ensure community support.
- Affordable for the government to establish and operate and for society to use.
- Reliable in terms of information that is authoritative and up-to-date.
- Attainable in relation to establishing the system within a short timeframe and within available resources.
- Upgradeable with regard to incremental upgrading and improvement over time in response to social and legal needs and emerging economic opportunities.

Land administration involves establishing secure land rights, facilitating land transactions, enabling land-use planning and development, ensuring equitable access to land, and resolving conflicts and disputes related to land ownership and use.

Land administration plays a crucial role in supporting economic development, social stability, environmental sustainability, and effective governance. It helps provide confidence and security in land transactions, fosters investment and economic growth, enables infrastructure development, and promotes social justice and tenure security for individuals and communities.

Project

According to Project Management Institute (PMI), project refers to any temporary endeavour with a definite beginning and end. It is simply mean a series of activities with goal, a beginning and an end, Osuagwu, (1997). Nwachukwu (2016), defined it as any sequence of events or process which entails the putting together of different resources towards the attainment of a particular goal.

Project delivery

Project delivery refers to the process of successfully completing and delivering a project to stakeholders. It involves the planning, coordination, execution, and control of all activities and resources required to meet the project's objectives within the defined constraints of time, cost, and quality. Project delivery may include initiation, planning, execution, monitoring and control, and closure. Effective project delivery requires strong project management skills, effective communication, collaboration, and the ability to adapt to changing circumstances. It aims to meet the project's goals while meeting stakeholders' expectations and delivering value.

3.0 Issues and Challenges

In Nigeria, land administration encompasses various aspects, each of which plays a crucial role in the management and governance of land resources. Some key aspects of land administration in Nigeria include:

1. **Land Registration and Titling:** This aspect involves the formal registration and documentation of land rights and ownership. It aims to establish secure and legally recognized land titles to enhance land tenure security and facilitate land transactions.
2. **Land Use Planning:** Land use planning involves the systematic allocation and regulation of land for different purposes, such as residential, agricultural, commercial, and industrial. It helps optimize land utilization, minimize conflicts, and promote sustainable development.
3. **Land Surveying and Mapping:** Land surveying and mapping are important for creating accurate and up-to-date cadastral maps and spatial data. It involves the measurement, demarcation, and documentation of land boundaries, which are crucial for resolving land disputes and supporting efficient land administration.
4. **Land Valuation and Taxation:** The valuation of land and property is necessary for determining their market value, rental value, and tax assessments. It enables the fair assessment and collection of property taxes, which contribute to revenue generation for the government.

5. **Land Tenure Systems:** Nigeria has various land tenure systems, including customary, statutory, and dual systems. Land administration involves recognizing, harmonizing, and regulating these tenure systems to ensure equitable access to land and prevent disputes.
6. **Land Information Systems (LIS):** Land information systems facilitate the collection, storage, retrieval, and dissemination of land-related data and information. It supports effective decision-making, land governance, and public access to land information.
7. **Land Dispute Resolution:** Given the complexity of land tenure and competing land interests, land administration involves mechanisms for resolving land disputes. This may involve traditional, informal, or formal dispute resolution processes to ensure fair and timely resolution of conflicts.
8. **Land Management Policies and Institutions:** Land administration relies on the formulation and implementation of policies, laws, and regulations related to land management. It also involves the establishment and functioning of land administration institutions at different levels, from national to local, to facilitate effective land governance and administration.

These aspects collectively contribute to the efficient, transparent, and sustainable administration of land in Nigeria.

Land Administration Challenges

Land administration is believed to have been faced with lots of challenges; the identified challenges include, but are not limited to, hierarchical and outdated organizational structures, bureaucratic processes, and high costs and fees for service, Ghebru and Okumo, (2016).

Morenikeji, Ayorinde and Owoyele (2000) in their paper; *Land Administration Problems in Nigeria: A case study of Oyo and Niger States* stated thus; that land administration in both states is faced with challenges such as inability of the states to meet the land requirements of the public, rigorous process of getting the right-of-occupancy, changing of public officers which is frequent, record-keeping which is usually poor, inability of government to pay compensation in respect of acquired land, among others. They further stated that these problems in turn were found to have contributed to physical planning problems. Also illegal land transactions were still found going on in both states irrespective of effort put in place by the government to curb same and there is constant conflict between the local government authorities and the town planning department over the allocation of plots and use of land.

Some of the summarised challenges from literature review include;

- a. **Inadequate infrastructure:** Limited availability of infrastructure such as roads and utilities hinders efficient land administration.

- b. Inefficient land registration and titling: Lengthy procedures, corruption, and overlapping regulations contribute to delays and disputes in land registration and titling processes.
- c. Weak land governance: Poor coordination among government agencies, inadequate legislation, and weak enforcement mechanisms lead to inefficiencies in land administration.
- d. Inaccurate land data: The absence of accurate land data, including outdated or incomplete records, impedes effective land administration.

Project Delivery Challenges

- a. Inadequate project planning: Insufficient pre-project studies, ineffective project designs, and inadequate environmental impact assessments contribute to delays, cost overruns, and project failures.
- b. Corruption and inefficiency: Corruption at various stages of project delivery, including procurement processes, leads to inflated project costs, poor quality infrastructure, and delays.
- c. Inconsistent policies and regulations: Frequent changes in policies and regulations affect project continuity and create uncertainty among investors and contractors.
- d. Limited access to finance: Insufficient funding options and limited access to finance hinder project delivery, especially for small and medium-sized enterprises.

4.0 Recommendations/Solutions/Way forward

For effective or proper land administration in Nigeria and effective project delivery, the following recommendation needs to be adopted or looked into.

1. There should be a concerted effort aimed at strengthening institutional capacity: Investing in human resources, establishing specialized land agencies, and enhancing training and capacity-building programs will improve land administration efficiency.
2. Utilization of technology: Implementing digital solutions such as Geographic Information Systems (GIS), mobile applications, and online platforms for land administration can enhance transparency, accuracy, and efficiency.
3. There is need for more effort aimed at enhancing legal framework: Updating and harmonizing land-related legislation, establishing a clear regulatory framework, and strengthening enforcement mechanisms will improve land governance.
4. Promotion of collaboration: Encouraging collaboration among stakeholders, including government agencies, private sector actors, and community representatives, will lead to coordinated project planning and implementation.

5. Improving transparency and accountability: Strengthening anti-corruption measures, promoting transparency in project procurement processes, and instituting robust monitoring and evaluation systems will enhance project delivery.

5.0 Conclusion

Effective land administration and project delivery are crucial for Nigeria's sustainable development. This literature review identified several challenges, including inadequate infrastructure, inefficient land registration, inadequate planning, corruption, and limited access to finance. The proposed solutions, including institutional capacity building, technology adoption, regulatory improvements, collaboration, and transparency, provide a roadmap for addressing these challenges and ensuring efficient land administration and project delivery in Nigeria. Further research and implementation of these recommendations are essential for sustainable socioeconomic development in the country.

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About the Authors



Henry Chiedu Halim

Ogwashiuku, Delta State, Nigeria



Henry Chiedu Halim holds a Bachelor of Science (B.Sc) Estate Management from Enugu State University of Science and Technology (ESUT), and a Masters of Science (M.Sc) from University of Nigeria, Enugu Campus (UNEC).

Halim Henry Chiedu belongs to many national and international professional bodies. A seasoned academic researcher and professional, he currently lectures in the Department of Estate Management, Delta State Polytechnic, Ogwashi-uku.

He has headed the Department for several years. He is an associate member of the Nigerian Institution of Estate Surveyors and Valuers (ANIVS) and a registered Estate Surveyor and Valuer (RSV).



Dr. Osita Ifediora

Ozoro, Delta State, Nigeria



Dr. Ifediora holds a National Diploma in Estate Management from Federal Polytechnic Oko. B.Sc. in Estate Management at Nnamdi Azikiwe University Awka (UNIZIK). M.Sc. Estate Management (*Project Management*) and PhD in Estate Management with specialisation in project management. Worked at Paul University Awka as Technical Officer (Estate), Assistant Lecturer, Department of Estate Management, Caritas University Amorji Nike, Emene Enugu Nigeria, Department of Estate Management - Ajayi Crowther University Oyo and now Department of Estate Management, Delta State University of Science and Technology Ozoro.

He is an associate member of the Nigerian Institution of Estate Surveyors and Valuers (ANIVS), Registered Estate Surveyors and Valuers (RSV). He has published over 27 journal articles,

textbooks, conference papers and as well book chapter. Dr. Ifediora has reviewed articles for several international journals including Elsevier. He is a peer reviewer of International Journal of Research and Scientific Innovation (IJRSI), International Journal of Research Innovation in Social Science (IJRSS) and International Journal of Latest Technology in Engineering, Management & Applied Science-IJLTEMAS. Dr. Ifediora has attended many academic and professional conferences, delivered lectures/presented papers. He served as resource person in Osun State NIESV MCPD 2022. He served as a member of Oyo State NIESV 2022/2023 MCPD committee. He is a principal consultant, Osita Ifediora and Associate - A real estate firm. Dr. Ifediora can be contacted at ositaifediora@gmail.com and ifedioraco@dsust.edu.ng