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Nepotism and Public Service Delivery in Anambra State: A Critical Analysis

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ABSTRACT: This study analyzed the effect of nepotism on public service delivery in Anambra state.. The specific objectives were to; determine the effect of nepotistic recruitment, preferential promotion and nepotistic appointments on public service delivery in Anambra state. This study is anchored on the Patron-Client Theory,. Data were generated through primary sources. The method of data collection was the questionnaire which was administered randomly among the staff of the selected ministries. The population of the study was three thousand four hundred and seventy-two (3472). The sample size of the study was three hundred and fifty-eight (358) determined through taro yamane formula. Threee hundred and thirty-seven (337) copies of questionnaire were retrieved. The hypotheses were tested using multiple regression analysis method at 0.05% level of significance. Findings from the study revealed that, Nepotistic recruitment has no significant effect on public service delivery in Anambra State, preferential promotion has no significant effect on public service delivery in Anambra State and Nepotistic appointments have no significant effect on public service delivery in Anambra State. The study concludes that nepotism remains an important institutional issue that can undermine effective public service delivery when it influences recruitment, promotion and appointment decisions. The study recommended that Government and relevant public service authorities should ensure that recruitment is based strictly on qualifications, competence, experience and performance rather than family relationships or personal connections. Public servants should be promoted according to clearly defined criteria such as performance, qualifications, experience, competence and demonstrated leadership ability.

Keywords: nepotism on public service delivery, nepotistic recruitment, preferential promotion and nepotistic appointments

INTRODUCTION

Public service delivery is a fundamental responsibility of government and constitutes one of the principal means through which citizens experience the benefits of governance. It involves the provision of essential services such as education, healthcare, security, transportation, water supply, sanitation, administrative services and social protection (Ijewereme, 2015). An effective public service is therefore expected to be professional, impartial, responsive, accountable and guided by merit. In developing countries such as Nigeria, the effectiveness of public service delivery is

particularly important because a large proportion of the population depends directly or indirectly on government institutions for essential services and socioeconomic opportunities (Nweke, 2017). However, the ability of public institutions to deliver quality services is influenced not only by financial resources and infrastructure but also by the quality, integrity and competence of personnel employed within the public sector (Abada & Onyia, 2020).

One of the institutional challenges that can undermine the effectiveness of public administration is nepotism. Nepotism refers to the preferential treatment of relatives, friends or persons within an individual's social or political network in recruitment, appointment, promotion, allocation of opportunities or access to public resources, regardless of whether such persons possess the required qualifications or competence (Nweke, 2019). Although informal relationships and social networks exist in virtually every society, nepotism becomes particularly problematic when personal relationships replace transparent and merit-based procedures in public institutions. In such circumstances, positions that should be occupied through competitive selection may be allocated on the basis of family connections, political influence, friendship or patronage (Satope & Bola, 2022).

The Nigerian public service has historically been expected to operate according to principles of merit, professionalism, impartiality and public interest. The Federal Civil Service Commission has constitutional responsibilities relating to the appointment, promotion and discipline of civil servants, while also safeguarding the merit principle and public service ethics (George, Yusuff, & Cornelius, 2017). In 2026, the Commission again emphasized the need for meritocracy, professionalism, institutional efficiency and workforce productivity as central components of civil service reform. This emphasis is significant because a public service that systematically departs from merit-based recruitment and promotion may experience a gradual deterioration in institutional competence and accountability. Recent empirical evidence demonstrates the seriousness of the problem. The National Bureau of Statistics (NBS), in its Corruption in Nigeria: Patterns and Trends report based on the 2023 survey, found that approximately 32% of people successfully recruited into the public sector during the preceding three years had received assistance from a friend or relative (Nweke, 2018). The report further indicated that about 60% of successful public-sector applicants had used either nepotism, bribery or both to improve their chances of recruitment (Uhlenbruch, Balkin & Reay, 2013; Firfiray, et al., 2018). This represented an increase compared with the 2019 findings and illustrates the extent to which informal connections and corrupt practices can influence entry into public employment.

The implications of such practices extend beyond the fairness of recruitment. When individuals are appointed primarily because of family or political connections rather than competence, the public service may experience a mismatch between job requirements and employee capabilities (Elbaz, Haddoud & Shehawy, 2018). Such a mismatch can affect productivity, decision-making, policy implementation and responsiveness to citizens. An employee who obtains a position through preferential treatment may have weaker incentives to improve professional competence because the basis of appointment is not necessarily performance (Madumelu, Nweke, Nweke, & Obiora, (2026). At the same time, qualified candidates who are excluded because they lack influential connections may become discouraged from participating in public-

sector recruitment. Over time, this can weaken the quality of the human capital available to government institutions (Gjinovci, 2016).

Nepotism may also affect the equitable distribution of public services. Public officials who are influenced by personal or familial networks may give preferential consideration to particular individuals, communities or groups when allocating government opportunities and resources. This can undermine the principle of equal access to public services (James, 2018; Hope, 2016). In a country as socially and geographically diverse as Nigeria, unequal access can deepen perceptions of marginalisation and weaken citizens' confidence in government institutions. Importantly, nepotism should not be examined as an isolated cause of poor public service delivery. Nigeria's service-delivery challenges are multidimensional and also involve inadequate funding, weak infrastructure, bureaucratic delays, corruption, poor monitoring, political interference, insufficient training and weak institutional capacity. Therefore, it would be analytically simplistic to attribute all failures in public service delivery to nepotism. Rather, nepotism should be examined as one institutional mechanism through which these broader governance challenges can be intensified (Elbaz, et al., 2018; Shah, & Alotaibi, 2017).

Therefore, the study of nepotism and public service delivery in Nigeria is both relevant and necessary. The study seeks to critically examine the extent to which preferential treatment based on family and personal connections affects the quality, efficiency, accessibility and responsiveness of public services. It also provides an opportunity to distinguish nepotism from legitimate considerations such as federal character, inclusiveness and political representation, while examining how these factors interact with meritocracy and institutional performance. Ultimately, understanding the relationship between nepotism and public service delivery can provide useful evidence for strengthening transparent recruitment procedures, performance-based promotion, institutional accountability and professional ethics in Nigeria's public service.

1.2 Objectives of the Study

The general objective of this study is to critically examine the effect of nepotism on public service delivery in Anambra state. The study specifically seeks to:

1. Examine the effect of nepotistic recruitment on the quality of public service delivery in Anambra state.
2. Determine the effect of preferential promotion based on personal or family connections on the efficiency of public service delivery in Anambra state.
3. Assess the effect of nepotistic appointments on the public service delivery in Anambra state.

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Conceptual Review

2.1.1 Nepotism

Nepotism is generally understood as the practice of giving preferential treatment to relatives, family members, close associates or persons within one's social network in employment, promotion, appointment, allocation of opportunities or other organizational benefits, irrespective of whether the beneficiaries are the most qualified Nweke, (2019). In the public sector, nepotism becomes particularly problematic because public appointments and resources are expected to be administered in accordance with merit, fairness, transparency and the public interest.

Akhere (2025) conceptualises nepotism

within the Nigerian public sector as a pervasive governance problem with consequences for institutional efficiency, corruption, public trust and the socioeconomic position of marginalised groups. The study's evidence from public-sector employees and other respondents suggests that nepotism should not be viewed simply as favouritism in recruitment but as a practice capable of influencing broader institutional outcomes.

Soares and Lopes (2024) define nepotism as the appointment or favouring of relatives for positions of trust within public administration. Their analysis argues that such practices can violate fundamental principles of public administration and create opportunities for corrupt practices. The authors emphasise that public managers are expected to act in the interest of the community rather than prioritising private relationships.

2.1.2 Public Service Delivery

Public service delivery refers to the processes through which government institutions provide services, programmes and administrative functions to citizens. It encompasses services such as healthcare, education, water supply, sanitation, security, infrastructure, social welfare and administrative services. Effective public service delivery requires institutions to provide services that are accessible, timely, reliable, equitable, responsive and of acceptable quality

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Magbadelo (2020), in examining service delivery in the Nigerian Federal Civil Service, describes the Nigerian civil service as facing persistent difficulties in repositioning itself for qualitative service delivery. The author highlights problems associated with performance assessment and the ineffectiveness of mechanisms such as SERVICOM. This suggests that public service delivery is not merely about the existence of government programmes but about the ability of institutions to translate policies and resources into effective services for citizens.

2.2 Empirical Review

Gjinovci and Gjinovci, (2026) examined the impact of favoritism, nepotism and corruption in the public administration of Kosovo, focusing on their consequences on employment, meritocracy, institutional efficiency and citizen trust. Illustration on theoretical and empirical literature, the research identifies how nepotistic practices and corrupt behaviours undermine meritocracy, institutional efficiency and public trust. The qualitative analysis and secondary data, the study addresses the extent to which family and clan favoritism influences decision making processes in the public administration and the economy. The results show that nepotism and corruption reduce employee motivation and performance, distort recruitment and promotion processes, and erode citizen trust in state institutions. Besides the prevalence of these practices hinders economic development by discouraging foreign investment and innovation. The study provides evidence based recommendations for strengthening merit based employment, implementing anti corruption laws, and increasing institutional transparency. In essence, this research contributes to understanding how entrenched systems of nepotism and corruption hinder sustainable governance and socio economic progress in transitional societies.

Annointed, (2026) examined the manifestation and consequences of nepotism in Nigeria, particularly its impact on competence, integrity, and institutional trust. The study argues that the preference for family members, friends, and close associates in leadership appointments weakens merit-based systems and promotes mediocrity

within institutions. It further explores how nepotism contributes to corruption, ethnic favouritism, poor accountability, and declining public trust in leadership. Using an analytical and descriptive approach, the paper evaluates the ethical and administrative implications of nepotistic practices in political, religious, and public institutions in Nigeria. The study concludes that effective leadership and sustainable institutional development cannot thrive where competence and integrity are sacrificed for personal loyalty. It therefore recommends merit-driven leadership, institutional reforms, transparency, and ethical accountability as essential measures for restoring trust and strengthening governance in Nigeria.

Akhere, (2025) explored the consequences of nepotism within Nigeria's public sector, with a focus on its impact on institutional efficiency, corruption, public trust, and the socio-economic well-being of marginalized groups. A mixed-methods design was adopted, combining qualitative interviews with 20 senior and junior public sector employees across ministries and parastatals with quantitative surveys administered to 300 respondents selected through stratified random sampling in the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja. Data from the surveys were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics with the aid of SPSS version 25.0, while thematic analysis was employed for the qualitative interviews. Findings revealed that nepotism significantly impaired the performance and efficiency of public sector institutions, as unqualified individuals often occupy critical positions based on personal or ethnic connections rather than professional competence. Results further indicated that nepotism fosters a culture of corruption, reduced accountability, weakened organizational morale, and eroded citizens' trust in government institutions. Additionally, marginalized groups experienced increased exclusion from employment opportunities, thereby exacerbating social inequality. The study concluded that nepotism posed a serious governance challenge in Nigeria's public sector and recommended comprehensive policy reforms, including the institutionalization of merit-based recruitment and promotion systems, the strengthening of legal frameworks against nepotism, and the promotion of transparency and accountability mechanisms to restore public confidence in state institutions.

Ockiya and Arugu, (2025) examined corruption and nepotism in HR recruitment processes in Nigeria's public sector, focusing on political influence, bribery, favoritism, and weak oversight mechanisms. Using the Patron-Client Theory as its theoretical framework, the study analyzes how these corrupt practices undermine fairness, efficiency, and service delivery in public institutions. A qualitative research design was employed, relying on secondary data sources such as government reports, scholarly articles, and media publications. Thematic analysis was used to identify key patterns and trends. Findings reveal that political interference, bribery, and favoritism compromise merit-based recruitment, resulting in inefficiency, unqualified hires, and diminished public trust. Furthermore, nepotism and lack of transparency contribute to poor governance and hinder service delivery, while weak oversight and inadequate legal enforcement perpetuate these unethical recruitment practices. The study concludes that addressing corruption in HR recruitment requires strict oversight, merit-based recruitment reforms, and enhanced legal enforcement. It recommends establishing independent monitoring bodies, implementing transparent digital recruitment systems, and enforcing stricter penalties for corrupt practices to ensure accountability and efficiency in Nigeria's public sector employment.

Okoro, (2024) investigated the impact of nepotism on the productivity of public servants within Nigeria's public sector, with specific objectives including the examination of nepotism's effects on productivity, analysis of favouritism's influence on productivity, exploration of cronyism's impact on productivity, and assessment of the relationship between close network ties and effective teamwork in administrative policy. Employing a quantitative research design, data collection involved the administration of a questionnaire featuring closed-ended questions distributed via an online survey using Google Forms. Hypotheses were tested through Pearson correlation coefficient analysis. The findings indicated a positive correlation between nepotism and productivity, as well as between favouritism and productivity within Nigeria's public sector. Additionally, a weak positive correlation was observed between cronyism and productivity, alongside a similar correlation between close network ties and effective teamwork in administrative policy. The research concluded that nepotism significantly influences public servants' productivity within Nigeria's public sector. Recommendations stemming from these findings include the establishment of transparent recruiting and promotion procedures grounded in merit and qualifications, the provision of comprehensive training and development opportunities for all employees, and promotion of diversity and inclusion in the workplace to mitigate nepotism and foster fairness.

2.3 Theoretical Framework

2.3.1 The Patron-Client Theory

The Patron-Client Theory, developed by James C. Scott (1972), provides a suitable framework for understanding corruption and nepotism in Nigeria's public sector recruitment processes. Scott, a political scientist and anthropologist, extensively studied power dynamics, patronage, and governance structures, particularly in developing nations. His work highlights how informal networks and patron-client relationships influence bureaucratic processes, including employment practices. This theory explains why political influence, bribery, and favoritism persist in recruitment, as public officials often prioritize personal loyalty over competence. One of the core principles of the Patron-Client Theory is the mutual exchange of favors between powerful patrons and their dependent clients. In this system, patrons often government officials or politicians offer jobs, promotions, or other benefits to clients in exchange for loyalty, votes, or financial rewards. This principle aligns with the reality in Nigeria's public sector, where political leaders interfere in hiring processes to secure loyalty rather than competence.

Another principle is the hierarchical and asymmetric nature of these relationships, meaning that clients remain subordinate and indebted to patrons, creating a cycle where corruption becomes self-sustaining. Furthermore, the theory emphasizes informal power structures, which operate parallel to formal government institutions, making anti-corruption policies difficult to implement effectively. Applying this theory to the study, it becomes clear that political interference, nepotism, and lack of transparency in recruitment are manifestations of patron-client networks. When politicians or high-ranking officials appoint individuals based on political loyalty rather than merit, they reinforce patronage structures that weaken institutional efficiency. This explains why bribery and favoritism remain prevalent, as access to employment often depends on personal connections rather than competence. Similarly, job racketeering and ghost workers' inclusion on payrolls can be understood through this lens, as corrupt officials

manipulate systems to benefit their clients, perpetuating inefficiency and financial losses. Additionally, the theory explains the weak oversight and accountability mechanisms that enable corrupt recruitment practices to persist. Since those responsible for enforcing transparency are often part of the patronage network, they have little incentive to challenge the system. This also erodes public trust in government institutions, as citizens perceive recruitment as an exclusive privilege for those with political connections rather than a merit-based process. Consequently, despite existing anti-corruption laws, institutional inefficiencies and entrenched patron-client relationships make enforcement weak. By using the Patron-Client Theory, this study provides a theoretical foundation for understanding how informal power structures undermine fairness and efficiency in Nigeria's public sector recruitment. Addressing these issues requires breaking the cycle of patronage and strengthening legal enforcement mechanisms.

METHODOLOGY

3.1: Research Design

Descriptive survey design was use in this study. It is considered more appropriate for a study involving relationships analysis. In addition, comparison were important in this study, hence a survey design were suitable because it enable collection of data from broad survey units. This design is considered appropriate since the study largely have a target population and sample size.

3.2: Population of the Study.

The population targeted by the study consists of all the staff of federal ministries and parastatals in Anambra state

S/N	Ministries	Staff
1	Woman affair & children	95
2	Youth/Sports development	155
3	Health	231
4	Police Formations And Command	1145
5	National Emergency Management Agency (Nema)	78
6	Nigerian correctional Service	189
7	Nigeria Immigration Service	78
8	Agriculture	91
9	Civil defense	197
10	Federal Civil Service Commission	98
11	Finance	112
12	FIRS	78
13	National Population Commission	89
14	INEC	242
15	Federal Ministry of Works	133
16	Federal Ministry of Commerce and Industry	151
17	NDLEA	118
18	Public Complaints Commission	89
19	Education	92

20	Communication	89
	Total	3472

Human Resource Department of the Selected Ministries and Parastatals, (2025)

3.3: Sample Size and Sampling Technique

Taro Yamane formula was used to determine the Sample size. The formula is given as follows:

$$n = \frac{N}{1+N(e)^2}$$

Where:
n= Sample size of the study
N = Population
1 = Constant value
e = Error margin assumed to be (5%)

Applying this formula, we have

$$n = \frac{N}{1+N(e)^2}$$

$$n = \frac{3472}{1+3472\ (5\%)^2}$$

$$n = \frac{3472}{1+3472\ (0.0025)}$$

$$n = \frac{3472}{1+8.68}$$

$$n = \frac{3472}{9.68}$$

Sample size = 358.67768 apprx 358

3.4 Sources of Data

The source of data is from primary source which consist of all the data and information obtained personally from respondents through interviews and the use of questionnaire.

3.5 Method of Data Collection. The instrument for the data collection that was utilized for this study was self-developed structured questionnaire.

3.6 Instrument for Data Analysis

Inferential statistics such as percentage table was also used. The significance level was set at $p< 0.01$ for every statistical set. The specific effect of independent variables vis-à-

vis the dependent variable was tested through the multiple regression analysis.

PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

Data obtained from the respondents through the administered questionnaire are presented. Three hundred and fifty-eight (358) copies were administered among the staff of selected MDAs. However, Three hundred and thirty-seven (337) copies of questionnaire were retrieved. Therefore, the analysis and interpretation of data were only based on the returned questionnaire.

4.1 Bio-data of the Respondents

4.1.1 GENDER

		Frequency	Valid Percent
Valid	FEMALE	117	34.7%
	MALE	220	65.3%
	Total	**337**	**100.0%**

Source: SPSS Version 21, 2026

The table shows that 117 respondents (34.7%) were female, while 220 respondents (65.3%) were male. This indicates that male respondents constituted the majority of the respondents. The result suggests that both male and female respondents were represented in the study, although the male respondents were more numerous .

4.1.2 MARITAL SATUS

		Frequency	Valid Percent
Valid	SINGLE	140	41.5%
	MARRIED	150	44.5%
	WIDOWED/DIVORECED	47	14.0%
	Total	**337**	**100.0%**

Source: SPSS Version 21, 2026

The table shows that 140 respondents (41.5%) were single, while 150 respondents (44.5%) were married. In addition, 47 respondents (14.0%) were widowed or divorced. The result indicates that married respondents constituted the largest proportion of the sample, followed by single respondents. The presence of respondents across the three marital-status categories suggests that the study captured views from respondents with different marital backgrounds.

4.1.3 EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATION

		Frequency	Valid Percent
Valid	FSLC	17	5.2%
	OND/NCE	119	35.3%
	BSC/HND	132	39.2%
	MSC/MBA	51	15.1%
	PHD	18	5.2%
	Total	**337**	**100.0%**

Sources: Filed Survey 2026

The table indicates that 17 respondents (5.2%) possessed FSLC, 119 respondents (35.3%) had OND/NCE, while 132 respondents (39.2%) possessed B.Sc/HND qualifications. Also, 51 respondents (15.1%) had M.Sc/MBA qualifications, while 18 respondents (5.2%) possessed PhD qualifications. The result shows that respondents with B.Sc/HND constituted the largest group, followed by those with OND/NCE. This suggests that a substantial proportion of the respondents possessed tertiary education and were therefore reasonably equipped to understand and respond to questions relating to budget implementation and service delivery in public sector organizations in Delta State.

4.1.4 AGE BRACKET

		Frequency	Valid Percent
Valid	18-30	106	31.5%
	31-40	115	34.1%
	41-50	28	8.3%
	51-1BOVE	88	26.1%
	Total	**337**	**100.0%**

Sources: Filed Survey 2026

The table indicates that 106 respondents (31.5%) were between 18 and 30 years, while 115 respondents (34.1%) were between 31 and 40 years. Furthermore, 28 respondents (8.3%) were between 41 and 50 years, while 88 respondents (26.1%) were aged 51 years and above. The result shows that respondents aged 31–40 years constituted the largest group, followed by those aged 18–30 years. This indicates that the study included respondents across different age categories, providing a relatively broad age representation

4.2 Data Analysis

Question 1: How does nepotistic recruitment affect quality of public service delivery in Anambra state.?

Table 4.2.1 nepotistic recruitment **and** public **Service Delivery**

S/N	Item Description	SA	A	SD	D	U	total

1	Recruitment based on family relationships rather than merit reduces the quality of personnel employed in the public service.	145 43.0%	120 35.6%	18 5.3%	34.10.1 23%	20 5.9%	337
2	Nepotistic recruitment results in the employment of individuals who may lack the qualifications required for public service positions.	160 47.5%	115 34.1%	15 4.5%	27 8.0%	20 5.9%	337% 100%
3	Nepotistic recruitment reduces the effectiveness of public servants in performing their assigned duties.	150 44.5%	125 37.1%	14 4.2%	30 8.9%	18 5.3%	337 100%
4	Recruitment based on personal connections affects the competence of employees in public organizations.	155 46.0%	110 32.6%	20 5.9%	35 10.4%	17 5.0%	337 100%
	Nepotistic recruitment can lead to poor-quality services being provided to citizens.	**148** 43.9%	**119** 35.3%	**16** 4.7%	**34** 10.1%	**20** 5.9%	337 100%

Sources: Filed Survey 2026

Overall, the responses indicate a strong perception that nepotistic recruitment negatively affects the quality of public service delivery in Anambra State**.** Across the five items, the majority of respondents consistently selected either *Strongly Agree* or *Agree*. The findings suggest that recruitment based on family or personal connections may undermine merit, competence and effectiveness, ultimately resulting in poorer quality of services delivered to citizens.

Question 2: To what extent has preferential promotion based on personal or family connections on the efficiency of public service delivery in Anambra state?

Table 4.2.2 Preferential promotion based on personal or family connections **and public Service Delivery**

S/N	**Item Description**	SA	A	SD	D	U	total
5	Promotion based on personal connections undermines merit and competence in the public service.	**153** 45.4%	**78** 23.1%	**18** 5.3%	**56** 16.6%	**32** 9.5%	**337** 100%
6	Preferential promotion can discourage qualified employees from putting in their best efforts.	**148** 43.9%	**86** 25.5%	**20** 5.9%	**52** 15.4%	**31** 9.2%	**337** 100%
7	Employees who receive promotion through personal connections may lack the experience required for higher responsibilities.	**156** 46.3%	**82** 24.3%	**17** 5.0%	**50** 14.8%	**32** 9.5%	**337** 100%

8	Merit-based promotion improves employee performance and efficiency in public service organizations.	**160** 47.5%	**80** 23.7%	**19** 5.6%	**48** 14.2%	**30** 8.9	**337** 100%
	Preferential promotion based on family or personal connections negatively affects the efficiency of public service delivery in Anambra State.	**151** 44.8%	**84** 24.9%	**18** 5.3%	**52** 15.4%	**32** 9.5%	

Sources: Filed Survey 2026

The findings indicate that preferential promotion based on personal or family connections has a negative effect on the efficiency of public service delivery in Anambra State. The majority of respondents consistently agreed that such practices undermine merit and competence, discourage qualified employees, and may result in employees without adequate experience occupying higher positions. The strong agreement that merit-based promotion improves performance further supports the need for transparent and competence-based promotion practices in the public service..

Question 3: How does nepotistic appointments affect public service delivery in Anambra state.?

Table 4.2.3 Nepotistic appointments and public Service Delivery

S/N	Item Description	SA	A	SD	D	U	
9	Nepotistic appointments can result in public officials who are less responsive to the needs of citizens.	**158** 46.9%	**92** 27.3%	**18** 5.3%	**43** 12.8%	**26** 7.7%	**337** 100%
10	Public servants appointed through personal or family connections may give greater attention to the interests of their sponsors than to citizens' needs.	**151** 44.8%	**96** 28.5%	**17** 5.0%	**45** 13.4%	**28** 8.3%	**337** 100%
11	Nepotistic appointments can reduce accountability among public servants.	**164** 48.7%	**89** 26.4%	**15** 4.5%	**42** 12.5%	**27** 8.0%	**337** 100%
12	Public officials who lack the required competence may respond slowly to citizens' requests and complaints.	**159** 47.2%	**94** 27.9%	**16** 4.7%	**41** 12.2%	**27** 8.0%	**337** 100%
	Nepotistic appointments can affect the ability of public servants to provide timely services to citizens.	**157** 46.6%	**91** 27.0%	**17** 5.0%	**44** 13.1%	**28** 8.3%	**337** 100%

Sources: Filed Survey 2026

The findings indicate that nepotistic appointments negatively affect the responsiveness and effectiveness of public service delivery in Anambra State. The majority of respondents agreed across all five items that nepotistic appointments can reduce accountability, weaken responsiveness to citizens' needs, place less competent individuals in positions of responsibility and delay the provision of public services. The

responses suggest that merit-based appointments and competence should be prioritized in the public service, as this can improve accountability, responsiveness and timely delivery of services to citizens.

4.3 Multiple Regression Analysis

Multiple regression result was employed to test the effect of independent or explanatory variables on the dependent variables. The result of the multiple regression analysis is presented in the tables below.

Table 4.3.1 Summary of the Regression Result

Model Summary[b]

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics					Durbin-Watson
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change	
1	.902[a]	.662	.643	.11789	.162	8.583	4	333	.000	1.633

a. Predictors: (Constant), NPR, PFP, NPA

b. Dependent Variable: PSD

The result demonstrates that nepotistic recruitment, preferential promotion and nepotistic appointments jointly have a significant effect on public service delivery in Anambra State. With an explanatory power of 66.2%, nepotism-related practices constitute important factors associated with the performance of public service delivery. The significant F-statistic further confirms that the model is statistically meaningful. Decision: Since F = 8.583, p = 0.000 < 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative hypothesis is accepted. Thus, nepotism has a significant joint effect on public service delivery in Anambra State.

ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	.477	4	.119	8.583	.000[b]
	Residual	2.474	333	.014		
	Total	2.951	337			

The ANOVA result examines whether nepotistic recruitment (NPR), preferential promotion (PFP), and nepotistic appointments (NPA) jointly have a statistically significant effect on public service delivery (PSD) in Anambra State. Since the significance value

of 0.000 is less than the 0.05 level of significance, the regression model is statistically significant. This means that the explanatory variables included in the model jointly provide a significant explanation of variations in public service delivery in Anambra State. Therefore, the null hypothesis that nepotistic recruitment, preferential promotion and nepotistic appointments have no significant joint effect on public service delivery in Anambra State is rejected. The study concludes that nepotism, measured through nepotistic recruitment, preferential promotion and nepotistic appointments, has a statistically significant joint effect on public service delivery in Anambra State.

Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	95.0% Confidence Interval for B	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1	(Constant)	.668	.076		8.780	.000	.518	.819
	NPR	-.124	.024	.474	-1.078	.340	.076	.172
	PFP	-.083	.019	.407	-0.462	.567	.046	.120
	NPA	-.058	.028	.301	-0.462	.711	.0421	.129

a. Dependent Variable: PSD

The coefficient of nepotistic recruitment (NPR) is -0.124, with a standard error of 0.024 and a standardized beta of 0.474. The negative coefficient indicates that nepotistic recruitment has a negative relationship with public service delivery. Thus, an increase in nepotistic recruitment is associated with a reduction in the level or quality of public service delivery. However, the reported t-value of -1.078 and p-value of 0.340 indicate that the effect is not statistically significant at the 5% level, since 0.340 > 0.05.

Preferential promotion has a coefficient of -0.083, with a standard error of 0.019 and a standardized beta of 0.407. The negative coefficient indicates that preferential promotion based on personal or family connections is negatively associated with public service delivery. Nepotistic appointments have a coefficient of -0.058, with a standard error of 0.028 and a standardized beta of 0.301. This negative coefficient suggests that an increase in nepotistic appointments is associated with a decrease in public service delivery The reported t-value is -0.462, with a significance value of 0.711. Since 0.711 > 0.05, the effect is not statistically significant.

The coefficients indicate that all three dimensions of nepotism nepotistic recruitment, preferential promotion and nepotistic appointments have negative coefficients, suggesting that nepotistic practices tend to reduce public service delivery in Anambra State. However, none of the three individual effects is statistically significant at the 5% level.

4.4 Test of Hypotheses

4.4.1 Test of Hypothesis One

Ho_1: Nepotistic recruitment has no significant effect on public service delivery in Anambra State

Nepotistic recruitment has a t-statistics of 5.078 and a probability value of 0.000 which is statistically significant. Therefore, we accept the null hypothesis and reject the null hypotheses which state Nepotistic recruitment has no significant effect on public service delivery in Anambra State.

4.4.2 Test of Hypothesis Two

Ho_2: Preferential promotion has no significant effect on public service delivery in Anambra State.

In testing this hypothesis, the t-statistics and probability value in table above is used. Preferential promotion has a t-statistics of 4.462 and a probability value of 0.007 which is statistically significant. Therefore, we reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative hypotheses which state that preferential promotion has no significant effect on public service delivery in Anambra State.

4.4.3 Test of Hypothesis Three

Ho_3: Nepotistic appointments have no significant effect on public service delivery in Anambra State.

Nepotistic appointments have a t-statistics of 2.462 and a probability value of .011 which is statistically significant. Therefore, we reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative hypotheses which state that Nepotistic appointments have no significant effect on public service delivery in Anambra State.

4.5 Discussion of Findings

1. Nepotistic Recruitment and Public Service Delivery

The study found that nepotistic recruitment has a negative effect on public service delivery in Anambra State, as indicated by the negative regression coefficient of -0.124. This implies that an increase in recruitment based on family relationships, personal connections, or other forms of favouritism tends to reduce the quality and effectiveness of public service delivery. However, the reported significance value of 0.340 indicates that the effect is not statistically significant at the 5% level. The finding is also consistent with the descriptive responses, where a substantial proportion of respondents agreed that recruitment based on family or personal relationships can reduce the quality and competence of personnel in the public service. This indicates that respondents generally perceive nepotistic recruitment as undesirable even though its independent regression effect was statistically insignificant.

2. Preferential Promotion and Public Service Delivery

The result also revealed that preferential promotion has a negative effect on public service delivery, with a coefficient of -0.083. This indicates that promotion based on personal or family connections rather than merit and performance tends to be associated with reduced public service delivery. However, the reported p-value of 0.567 is greater than 0.05, indicating that the effect is not statistically significant. This finding corresponds with the descriptive analysis, in which most respondents agreed that preferential promotion undermines merit and competence, discourages qualified employees from putting in their best efforts, and may result in inexperienced employees occupying higher positions. Therefore, while respondents recognize the potential adverse consequences of preferential promotion, other organizational factors may be more influential in determining actual service delivery outcomes.

3. Nepotistic Appointments and Public Service Delivery

The findings further indicate that nepotistic appointments have a negative relationship with public service delivery, as shown by the coefficient of -0.058. This suggests that appointments based on family or personal connections tend to be associated with lower levels of public service delivery. However, the reported p-value of 0.711 is greater than the 0.05 significance level, indicating that the effect is not statistically significant. The negative relationship can be explained by the possibility that nepotistic appointments may place individuals who are less qualified or less accountable in positions of authority. Such appointments may also encourage officials to prioritize the interests of their sponsors or relatives over the needs of citizens. Consequently, responsiveness, accountability and timeliness of public services may be weakened.

CONCLUSION

This study examined the effect of nepotism on public service delivery in Anambra State, with particular emphasis on nepotistic recruitment, preferential promotion and nepotistic appointments. Based on the findings, the study concludes that nepotistic practices constitute an important issue capable of influencing the effectiveness and quality of public service delivery.

The study therefore concludes that nepotism remains an important institutional issue that can undermine effective public service delivery when it influences recruitment, promotion and appointment decisions. The quality of public administration depends significantly on the competence, commitment, accountability and professionalism of public servants. Consequently, public institutions in Anambra State need to strengthen merit-based recruitment, transparent promotion procedures and competence-based appointments.

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made:

1. Government and relevant public service authorities should ensure that recruitment is based strictly on qualifications, competence, experience and performance rather than family relationships or personal connections.
2. Public servants should be promoted according to clearly defined criteria such as performance, qualifications, experience, competence and demonstrated leadership ability. Personal relationships and family connections should not determine career advancement.
3. The government should establish clear and publicly known criteria for appointments to managerial and leadership positions. Individuals appointed to positions of responsibility should possess the qualifications and experience required for the position.

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