

AN ANALYSIS OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE COSTS OF TITLE REGISTRATION AND PROPERTY INVESTMENT YIELDS WITHIN OWERRI, IMO STATE OF NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT: *Land is required for various forms of investment. However, to use land for/as investment, security of title is essential. Security of title is practically achieved through title registration. Primarily, without such title registration, security of investment in land is not guaranteed and therefore investment in land becomes very unattractive and sometimes even impossible. Every investment is fundamentally targeted at the investment yield, hence the need to reconcile the process of securing such an investment. This process is inescapably associated with costs. The effect of such costs on the investment yield becomes imperative. This paper investigated the impact of the total cost of land title registration (**direct cost** - officially approved fees paid in the cause of title registration + **indirect cost**- the impact of bureaucratic delays during title registration and the impact of changes in government policies) on property investment yield in Owerri, Imo State. The empirical research methodology was employed while survey research design was adopted for study. Research questions and hypotheses were also formulated to guide the study in consonance with the objectives. Primary data was obtained from a questionnaire administered to forty respondents. These 40 include investors in landed property that are registered with the Imo State Ministry of Lands, Survey and Physical Planning. The study utilized mean scores to answer the research questions and Analysis of variance to test the hypotheses formulated. The hypotheses tested revealed that direct cost of title registration and bureaucracy (indirect) have a significant relationship with property investment yield in Owerri, Imo State; while cost of title registration and changes in policy by government equally showed some significant relationship with property investment yield in Owerri, Imo State, Nigeria at 5% level of significance. The empirical findings from data analysis helps us to conclude that there exist a significant relationship between cost of title registration, property investment yields in Owerri, Imo State and changes in government policy. This relationship was observed to be inversely proportional to the yield on property investment in Owerri, Imo state. This paper criticized the registration process of land in Nigeria, which is both slow and expensive and proposes an efficient, simpler, easier and less expensive land registration process that will encourage investment in Nigeria.*

KEYWORDS: cost, investment yield, Owerri, Nigeria, property investment, title registration

INTRODUCTION

Landed property remains a very brawny investment media over the ages, in fact land and real estate account for about 45-75% of the wealth of developing countries. The schedules of rates, fees and charges associated with investment in landed property however, can be used to influence development. Therefore, management and administration of same can go a long way to sway the investor's choice and thereby have a strong effect on the economy.

The instruments of land administration are focused on the recording of existing land tenure arrangements. This recording process often referred to as Land (instrument) Registration, is a very important aspect of land administration. This is so because for effective administration, the determination of actual ownership is vital. Since the bench mark of any genuine transaction on land is security, which unregistered conveyance does not guarantee, registration provides a safe and easy means of recording, storing and retrieving vital information about transactions on land. By the way, developing countries are being encouraged to embark on nationwide programmes of systematic title registration to improve their land administration systems. This land registration process if properly implemented and well managed, can positively impact the economy.

According to UNECE, good land administration systems guarantee ownership, secure tenure, support the land and property tax system, constitute security for credit systems, develop and monitor land markets, protect State lands, reduce land disputes, facilitate land reform, improve urban planning and infrastructure development, support land management based on consideration for the environment and produce statistical data. The impact of the cost of this process of title registration on the return on investment in landed property is the rationale behind this study.

At the center of every investment is the cost associated therewith. This is because every investor invests with the singular intention to receiving some benefits. It is therefore pertinent to examine and determine the interplay of the various cost components with regards to the benefits accruing from the investment and therefore its desirability. This comes on the backdrop of the fact that if at any point the cost/benefit indicators are either unclear or seem unfavourable, prospective investors are more likely to be averse or completely divest. This situation naturally creates a dearth of investment in the property market with the capability of throwing the economy into recession. The foregoing makes imperative the very need to x-ray the various cost components that one may be directly or indirectly associated with property investment. The cost of securing a genuine formal title over the landed property, herein referred to as 'Cost of Title Registration' and how this cost affects property investment yield forms the crux of this paper. This paper is focused on determining whether there is any relationship between the cost of title registration and investment, and if the relationship is significant enough to influence investment yield, using Owerri, the Imo state capital as a focal point. Land acquisition and security of

title and interest in land (as guaranteed by registration of title), is fundamental to the harnessing of investments, expansion of businesses and the growth of economies.

DEFINITIONS

Land, Title, Registration/ Land Registration

Land is often defined as the material of the earth, whatever may be the ingredients of which it is composed, whether soil, rock or other substance, and includes free or occupied space for an indefinite distance upwards as well as downwards, subject to limitations upon the use of air space imposed and rights in the use of airspace granted by law. Section 18 of the interpretation Act (Cap 192), Laws of the federation of Nigeria, 1990) states that immovable property or land includes any building and any other thing attached to the earth or permanently fastened to anything so attached but does not include minerals. However, at common law the principle has been *Quicquid Plantatur Solo Solo Cedit*, which translates to “whatever is affixed to the soil belongs to the soil”. This is to say that buildings form part of the land on which they are attached and land includes everything up to the sky and down to the centre of the earth. Therefore, the presumption is that a transfer or the ownership of a particular parcel of land includes not only the physical soil but all buildings permanently attached to the soil or permanently fastened to anything which is attached to the soil (James 1973).

The Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary defined Title as the legal right to own something, especially land or property. It also defined it as the document that shows you have this right. Similarly ‘title deed’ is referred to as a legal document proving that somebody is the owner of a particular house or landed property. According to Smith (1999) Title connotes the degree of control or forms of control, use and enjoyment that are recognized and protected by law. Registration is defined by Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary as the act of making an official record of something. Registration is intended to provide a record of land transactions carried out by means of written documents as a means of informing intending purchasers (Tobi, 1997).

According to Smith (1999), Land Registration is the process of recording, enrolling and inserting land transactions in an official register recognized by law and kept for that purpose. Land instrument registration is the process of getting a document relating to landed property registered and aim of the process is the attainment of perfect title in land and it serves to put the world on notice as to the existing rights on any piece of land.

Under Land title Registration, a title register is maintained and the register of each parcel of land has under it a description of the land, nature of estate, its proprietor and other particulars of interest existing on the land such as mortgages, charges and other restrictive covenants.

The essence of registration is to keep records. To inform and put other individuals on notice as to the existing titles on a piece of land in order to curtail arising disputes and settle existing ones. Once any Registerable Instrument bearing proper and sufficient description of an affected land is lodged at the land registry for registration, it must be accepted and registered. Deed registration is an important tool for land administration. However, any instrument bearing a plan, sufficient and proper description of the affected land may be lodged at the registry for registration even if it is defective. Therefore, registration does not by itself cure the instrument of any defect nor does it confer upon it any effect or validity which the instrument apart from the registration, would not otherwise have had. Whereas, Land Instrument Registration has proved quite effective in proving title, it is not able to cure defects or act as a remedy for defective title.

Land Instrument

According to Afonya (2005), a land instrument means “a document affecting land whereby one party confers, transfers, limits, charges or extinguishes in favour of another party any interest or title or right in land.”

Akujuru and Durojaiye (2006) defined an instrument as “a document affecting land whereby one party (hereinafter called the grantor) confers, transfers, limits, charges or extinguishes in favour of another person (hereinafter called the grantee) any rights or title to or interest in land.”

The Land Registration Act of 1924 defines an instrument as “a document affecting land whereby one party called the Grantor, confers, transfers, limits, charges or extinguishes in favour of another party called the Grantee, any right or title to or interest in land and includes the Certificate of Purchase, The Power of Attorney, under which any instrument maybe excluded, but does not include a will”.

Based on all the above definitions on what constitutes the land (Registerable) instrument, it is agreeable that a land instrument is any document which upon registering can be produced as evidence in the court of law that is prove of any transactions made on land between two separate parties where one party transfers all or part of their existing titles, rights or interests to the other party. In Nigeria, every or any document which transfers conveys or which limits, charges or extinguishes an interest in land or title to land is registerable with the exception of a will.

For the purpose of this work, Registerable Instruments will include a Certificate of Occupancy (Statutory and Customary), Lease Agreements, Deeds, Indentures, Mortgages, Power of Attorney, Tenancy Agreement, Certificate of Purchase, Sub-lease and Licenses. For an instrument to be registered, it should contain a survey plan of the subject land and property as a definition of that property for the avoidance of doubt. In cases of grants, the duration of the grant and other terms and conditions should be clearly stipulated. “No instrument shall be registered in the registry unless it is contained in the parcel clause adequate or sufficient and comprehensive description of the property and a survey plan” (Umezulike, 1992).

Investment, Yield, and Return On Investment

Investment has been defined as the parting with immediate scarce capital in anticipation for the return in the form of regular income or capital appreciation. According to Kalu(2001), investment is the parting with capital with a view to receiving future regular income or capital appreciation. Ogunba (2013) also defined investment is the giving up of a capital sum now in exchange for income flow (called rent in the landed property context) or capital gains/benefits from sale to be received in the future. IVSC (2003) defines investment as using a capital sum to acquire an asset, which is expected to produce an acceptable flow of income and/ or appreciation, in capital value. Kalu (ibid) defines yield as the return on investment over a period of time, insisting that it is the numerical representation of the relationship between net income and capital outlay or initial cost over a period of time expressed as a percentage. Investopedia.com defines return on investment (ROI) as a performance measure used to evaluate the efficiency an investment or to compare the efficiency of a number of investments. It went further to state that to calculate ROI, the benefit (return) of an investment is divided by the cost of the investment; the result is expressed as a percentage or a ratio with the formula:

$$\text{ROI} = \frac{(\text{Revenue from investment} - \text{Cost of investment})}{\text{Cost of investment (COI)}} = \frac{\text{Net Income}}{\text{(COI)}}$$

Business Dictionary.com sees ROI (also called rate of return, or yield) as the earning power of assets measured as the ratio of the net income (profit less depreciation) to the average capital employed (or equity capital) in a company or project. Expressed usually as a percentage, ROI is a measure of profitability that indicates whether or not a company is using its resources in an efficient manner.

The Problem

The need to secure genuine ownership title over an interest in assets is at the front burner of property ownership and property investment. Title registration helps to ensure security of title to a property concerned, even though registration does not cure a faulty title. Security of title entails that a person's rights over the property will be recognized by others and protected in cases of specific challenges. Investments in such properties are considered safe. Security of title generates confidence on the part of the investors. People with insecure title face the risk that their rights being threatened by competing claims or even lost as a result of eviction. Given the importance of title registration, costs associated with the process cannot be ignored.

The World Bank publication "Ease of Doing Business" report for 2013 to 2016, rated Nigeria as one of the most difficult in business investment amongst other African nations. The world bank report also rated Imo State as one of the most difficult state for Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) and Starter businesses to invest and thrive. One of the indices for this position was the registration of title documents over land for Business Starters and SMEs. The foregoing therefore throws up the need to critically examine the impact of the cost of title registration as a factor of significant influence on

investment yields. It has equally been observed that less and less investors in land seem to register their title document. It paper reveals that the cost of registration of Land title documents in Owerri, Imo state is higher than every other capital city in the South-East and South-South regions of the Country.

Therefore in recognition of the importance of security of interest and title to land to foreign direct investments, the World Bank included “**registering property**” as one of the new indices used in its annual *Doing Business* report. Nigeria was ranked 185th out of 189 countries with respect to the “**Ease of Registering Properties**” in the 2016 *Doing Business* Report, published by the World Bank and tagged “Measuring Regulatory Quality and Efficiency”. This is clearly a disincentive, to prospective investors interested in land acquisition deals (and/or investors who are willing to provide debt capital) when faced with the seemingly daunting regulatory issues as well as the high cost of registration said to be connected with registering title to property or creating security over landed property; more so in the light of the World Bank ranking.

An efficient Land title registration process should be simple, reliable, prompt, affordable/cost effective and well suited to the society it serves while not losing its aim of providing security and genuineness. In more developed jurisdictions their property title registration process follows well established simple procedure. Registration of title in Owerri, Imo State is still expensive and adversely affects the yield thereby influencing the investor’s choice.

Below in Table 1 and 2 are a detailed summary of the steps, time and cost involved in registering property as collated and presented by the World Bank Group, *Doing Business* in Nigeria as at June 2013 (published 2014).

Table 1 : Procedure for Land Registration in Nigeria (according to the World Bank Group, Easy of Doing-Business)

S/ N	PROCEDURE	Durati on	Associated Cost
1	Pay search fee at Ministry of Finance The applicant or lawyer pays the search at the Ministry of Finance and picks up a receipt	1 day	N5,000 (search fee)
2	Conduct a search of property files at Lands registry A lawyer makes a formal application for search on behalf of the applicant, attaching receipt of payment of the search fee. Lawyers usually charge N10,000 as legal fee for performing this procedure.	3 days	N10,000 (legal fee for search)
3	Execute deed of assignment Lawyers are associated by law to prepare the deed of assignment to be executed by the parties. The parties are required to complete and sign 5 copies of the deed of assignment. Legal fees are charged based on the Scale of Fees for Conveyancing Matters (Legal Practitioners Remuneration for Legal Documentation and other Land Matters Order 1991). In practice, lawyers charge 10% of the value of consideration. This fee covers all steps required until the deed is registered under the new owner's name.	5 days	N1,112,453 (10% of the property value which is the legal fee)
4	Submit application for Governor's consent at Ministry of Lands By virtue of the Land Use Act, promulgated in 1978, all land in each state of the federation became vested in the Governor of that state, whose prior consent is mandatory for the legal validity of any transfer or alienation of interest in landed property. A formal application is made by the applicant to the Governor's office. The applicant must submit the following documents: Application letter Copy of the existing title and certificate of occupancy Four copies of the deed of assignment Current tax clearance of the seller and buyer Certificate of incorporation for both companies	1 day	No cost
5	Receive inspection and valuation of property After the application for consent is received, the valuation unit from the Ministry of Lands inspects the property and prepares a valuation report. The purpose of the valuation is to determine the capital value of the property based on which the consent fee will be assessed. The	7 days	No cost

	valuation can be completed in 7days.		
6	<p>Obtain property valuation and pay assessed fees at Ministry of Lands</p> <p>The applicant goes back to the Ministry of Lands, Survey and Urban Planning to be informed of the results of the valuation and pick up the payment order. The applicant can pay the assessed fees on the spot at a bank branch located on the premises of the Ministry.</p>	2 days	N625,876 (N6,000 site inspection fee + N5000 registration fee + N5000 preparation fee + N5000 approval fee + N5000 application fee + 7.5% of the property value which is the consent fee)
7	<p>Pay stamp duty and stamping of the deed of assessment at Stamp Duty Office</p> <p>The applicant takes the deed of assignment to the Stamp Duty Office for assessment, and then pays the stamp duty at the cash office. The deed is then stamped. This procedure can be completed in one day.</p>	1 day	N333,735.4 (3% of the property value)
8	<p>Submit receipts of payment of fees to Ministry of Lands and obtain Governor's consent</p> <p>The applicant submits the receipts for the payment of fees to the Ministry of Lands, Survey and Urban Planning. After reviewing the file, the Director makes a recommendation to the Commissioner of Lands. If the commissioner is satisfied, he endorses the document and sends it to the Governor for final consent.</p>	120 days	No cost
9	<p>Registration of deed at Lands Registry</p> <p>After the Governor's consent is granted, the deed is filed at the Lands Registry. The applicant is required to show evidence of payment of registration fee.</p>	7 days	No cost

Table 2: Procedure for Registering Property in Imo State (standard case)

S/N	PROCEDURE	Duration	Associated Cost
1	Pay search fee at Ministry of Lands The applicant or lawyer pays the search fee at the Ministry of Finance and picks up a receipt	1 day	N20,000 (search fee)
2	Conduct a search of property files at Lands registry A lawyer makes a formal application for search on behalf of the applicant, attaching receipt of payment of the search fee. Lawyers usually charge N10,000 as legal fee for performing this procedure.	3 days	N10,000 (legal fee for search)
3	Execute deed of assignment Lawyers are associated by law to prepare the deed of assignment to be executed by the parties. The parties are required to complete and sign 5 copies of the deed of assignment. Legal fees are charged based on the Scale of Fees for Conveyancing Matters (Legal Practitioners Remuneration for Legal Documentation and other Land Matters Order 1991). In practice, lawyers charge 10% of the value of consideration. This fee covers all steps required until the deed is registered under the new owner's name.	5days (depending on the schedule officer and possibility of locating the relevant search documents on time)	N1,112,453 (10% of the property value legal fees)
4	Submit application for Governor's consent at Ministry of Lands By virtue of the Land Use Act, promulgated in 1978, all land in each state of the federation became vested in the Governor of that state, whose prior consent is mandatory for the legal validity of any transfer or alienation of interest in landed property. A formal application is made by the applicant to the Governor's office. The applicant must submit the following documents: Application letter Copy of the existing title and certificate of occupancy Four copies of the deed of assignment Current tax clearance of the seller and buyer Certificate of incorporation for both companies	1 day	No cost

5	Receive inspection and valuation of property After the application for consent is received, the valuation unit from the Ministry of Lands inspects the property and prepares a valuation report. The purpose of the valuation is to determine the capital value of the property based on which the consent fee will be assessed. The valuation can be completed in 7days.	7 days	No cost
6	Obtain property valuation and pay assessed fees at Ministry of Lands The applicant goes back to the Ministry of Lands, Survey and Urban Planning to be informed of the results of the valuation and pick up the payment order. The applicant can pay the assessed fees on the spot at a bank branch located on the premises of the Ministry.	2 days	N625,876(N 6,000 site inspection fee + N5000 registration fee + N5000 preparation fee + N5000 approval fee + N5000 application fee + 7.5% of the property value which is the consent fee)
7	Pay stamp duty and stamping of the deed of assessment at Stamp Duty Office The applicant takes the deed of assignment to the Stamp Duty Office for assessment, and then pays the stamp duty at the cash office. The deed is then stamped. This procedure can be completed in one day.	1 day	N333,735.4 (3% of the property value)
8	Pay Capital Gains Tax at the Board of Internal Revenue Ministry of Finance	3 days	N1,112,453 (10% of the property value capital gains tax)
9	Submit receipts of payment of fees to Ministry of Lands and obtain Governor's consent The applicant submits the receipts for the payment of fees to the Ministry of Lands, Survey and Urban Planning. After reviewing the file, the Director makes a recommendation to the Commissioner of Lands. If the commissioner is satisfied, he endorses the document and sends it to the Governor for final consent.	30 days	No cost
10	Registration of deed at Lands Registry After the Governor's consent is granted, the deed is filed at the Lands Registry. The applicant is required to show evidence of payment of registration fee.	7 days	No cost
11	Capturing of perfected document	7-14 days	No cost

	After the deed is registered, it is moved to the Imo Geographic Information Agency for capturing of vital details		
Total	Using the minimum figures	74 days (2.5 months)	N3,214,517.4

Effect of Registration and Non-Registration

Ordinances relating to land registration in Nigeria dates back to 1883 when Compulsory Registration of Deeds was introduced in Lagos under the Registration of Ordinances of 1883. The laws relating to the registration of instruments were unified in the whole country under the Land Registration Ordinance No.12 of 1915. These ordinances were amended till the Land Registration Act of 1965 came into fruition and finally the Land Use Act of 1978.

Registration of Instruments according to Nwabueze (1974) is intended to provide a public record of land transactions carried out by means of informing intending purchasers of such transactions. Going by this, the need for the registration of instruments on land cannot be over-emphasised as it puts every other individual on notice as to the extent of titles existing on any piece of land. The Property and Conveyance Law and Land use Act (Cap L.5, Laws of the Federation of Nigeria 2004), holds that the registration of any instrument under the provisions of the Land Instrument Registration law shall be deemed to constitute actual notice of such instrument in so far as it creates or affects an estate contract, equitable easement, a general equitable charge or a restrictive covenant.

Imo State Ministry of Lands, survey and Housing Procedure Manual (2006) holds that only registered title documents at the Deeds/Land Registry can be tendered in court as proof of title. Also, that registration confers priority among persons who may have competing claims over the same land. This goes to support and encourage registration among title owners in land as a sort of insurance against adverse claims. Land is a natural resource which is most limited in supply, this gives rise to the need for there to lay claim on particular piece(s) of land. This claim is done by an evidencing of ownership giving rise to the introduction of title to land.

An instrument could be void or voidable if, it is not registered, depending on the type of instrument. In Johnson V. Onisiwo & Ors (1943), the court held that “Non registration of instrument makes it merely voidable, not void”. However, in Onashile V. Idowe and Ors (1961), the court held a non-registered mortgage is void and cannot convey legal estate. This is because a mortgage is an absolute conveyance for monetary considerations and should be registered within two months after the date and execution of the mortgage.

“A transfer of title without complying with the provisions of the Registration of Titles Act is invalid.” This was the decision of the court in Philips V. Ogundipe (1967) where the plaintiff bought a land from the defendant who executed an instrument of transfer in his favour but was held to be null and void and inoperative as the vendor was not a registered owner of the land.

A registrable instrument affecting state land which is not registered within six (6) months is void. An instrument affecting the subject of a grant by a native to a non-native is void unless registered within six (6) months of execution from the date of consent by the Governor. If such Instrument is executed outside Nigeria, non-registration within twelve (12) months makes it void from the date of execution.

Non-registration of instruments renders them inadmissible as evidence of document affecting land, but they are not for that reason alone void, Umezulike(2013). Where documents created over a land transaction are not registered it renders such documents inadmissible in a court of law as evidence of the transaction, and a party to a land dispute will not be allowed to rely on it in a dispute over title to land thus negatively impacting his/her case. The document registered after its execution takes effect as against other instrument affecting the same land from date of its registration. This essentially reflects the “first in time rule” which is to the effect that where there are competing claims over the title to land whoever registers his interest first takes priority over other claimants.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The paper used the survey research design to investigate the relationship between the cost of title registration and property investment yields within Owerri, Imo State of Nigeria with specific objectives targeted to determine the impact of direct cost and bureaucracy (indirect cost) of land title registration on property yield and changes in government policy on property yield in Owerri, Imo State of Nigeria. Research questions and hypotheses were also formulated to guide the study in consonance with the objectives. In order to test the hypotheses formulated, the Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) technique was used as the method of data analysis.

Primary data was obtained from a self made questionnaire administered to forty respondents. These 40 include, investors in landed property that are registered with the Imo state ministry of Lands, Survey and Physical Planning. The study utilized mean scores to answer the research questions and Analysis of variance to test the hypotheses formulated.

Analysis of Hypotheses

i). Hypothesis One

H₀: Cost of land title registration has no significant effect on property investment yield in Owerri, Imo State of Nigeria.

H₁: Cost of land title registration has a significant effect on property investment yield in Imo State.

Table 3: Test of Hypothesis One

S/NO	QUESTIONNAIRE REFERENCE ITEMS	RESPONSES				TOTAL
		SA	A	D	SD	
1.	The cost involvement of land title registration is not low in Owerri, Imo State.	60	15	30	5	110
2.	The cost involvement in land title registration has no effect on investment yield in Owerri, Imo State	40	24	18	13	95
3.	Only the wealthy can afford the cost of land title registration in Owerri, Imo State	72	36	6	7	121
4.	The cost involvement of land title registration is a disincentive for active involvement in property investment	56	36	6	11	109
5.	The cost involvement of land title registration is responsible for the slow pace of property investment in Owerri, Imo State	76	33	10	5	124
6.	There are hidden charges in land title registration that affects property investment in Owerri, Imo State.	72	36	6	7	121
	TOTAL	376	180	76	48	680

Table 3.1

Reliability Statistics		
Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.813	.990	5

Table 3.2

ANOVA						
		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig
Between People		220668.343	6	36778.057		
Within People	Between Items	156763.429	4	39190.857	5.692	.002
	Residual	165233.371	24	6884.724		
	Total	321996.800	28	11499.886		
Total		542665.143	34	15960.739		
Grand Mean = 77.7143						

Decision: Since $F_{sig} < 0.05$, the null hypothesis is rejected and it is concluded that cost of land title registration has a significant effect on property investment yields in Imo State at 5% level of significance.

Hypothesis Two

H₀: Bureaucracy (indirect cost) involved in land title registration has no significant effect on property investment yield in Imo State.

H₁: Bureaucracy (indirect cost) involved in land title registration has a significant effect on property investment yield in Imo State.

Table 4: Test of Hypothesis Two

S/NO	QUESTIONNAIRE REFERENCE ITEMS	RESPONSES				TOTAL
		SA	A	D	SD	
7.	The bureaucratic process involved in land title registration is cumbersome in Owerri, Imo State.	80	36	8	4	128
8.	The bureaucratic process involved in land title registration is due to sharp practices in registration offices in Owerri, Imo State	44	27	20	10	101
9.	The bureaucratic process involved in land title registration is a disincentive for property investment in Owerri, Imo State.	72	33	20	11	136
10.	The bureaucratic process involved in land title registration has slow paced the development of property investment in Owerri, Imo State.	72	36	6	7	121
11.	The bureaucratic process involved in land title registration causes delay that affects property investment and yield in Owerri, Imo State	24	18	18	19	79
12.	The bureaucratic process involved in land title registration does not affect property investment and yield in Owerri, Imo State	45	36	8	9	98
	TOTAL	337	186	80	60	680

Table 4.1

Reliability Statistics		
Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.816	.992	5

Table 4.2

ANOVA						
		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig
Between People		217653.086	6	36275.514		
Within People	Between Items	144513.829	4	36128.457	5.427	.003
	Residual	159785.771	24	6657.740		
	Total	304299.600	28	10867.843		
Total		521952.686	34	15351.550		
Grand Mean = 76.2571						

DECISION: Since Since $F_{sig} < 0.05$, the null hypothesis is rejected and it is concluded that bureaucracy involved in land title registration has a significant effect on property investment yields at 5% level of significance.

Hypothesis Three

H₀: Policy on landed property development has no significant effect on property investment yield in Imo State.

H₁: Policy on landed property development has a significant effect on property investment yield in Imo State.

Table 5: Test of Hypothesis 3

S/NO	QUESTIONNAIRE REFERENCE ITEMS	RESPONSES				TOTAL
		SA	A	D	SD	
13	Policy changes on landed property investment by government does not affect property investment and yield in Owerri, Imo State	36	24	20	13	93
14	People are aware of government policy on property investment in Owerri, Imo State.	44	57	6	7	114
15	The policy on property investment in Imo State favours the wealthy in the society.	52	30	14	8	104
16	The policy on land property investment and development should be reviewed to positively affect the pace of property development in Owerri, Imo State.	40	66	8	4	120
17	The policy on property investment and development in Imo State is more concerned with revenue generation	28	15	18	19	80
18	The policy on property investment and development in Imo State is not strictly adhered to in Owerri, Imo State.	40	45	14	8	107
	TOTAL	240	237	80	59	616

Table 5.1

Reliability Statistics			
Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	Alpha on	N of Items
.833	.991		5

Table 5.2

ANOVA		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig
Between People		181394.286	6	30232.381		
Within People	Between Items	114446.400	4	28611.600	5.655	.002
	Residual	121418.000	24	5059.083		
	Total	235864.400	28	8423.729		
Total		417258.686	34	12272.314		
Grand Mean = 70.4571						

DECISION: Since $F_{sig} < 0.05$, the null hypothesis is rejected and it is concluded that policy on landed property development has a significant effect on property investment yield in Owerri Imo State at 5% level of significance.

The hypotheses tested revealed that direct cost of title registration and bureaucracy (indirect) have a significant relationship with property investment yield in Owerri, Imo State; while cost of title registration and changes in policy by government equally showed some significant relationship with property investment yield in Owerri, Imo State at 5% level of significance.

FINDINGS

From the data analysis carried out, findings were made which revealed from the analysis of research questions that:

The **direct cost** of land title registration has greatly affected property investment yield in Imo State: **Bureaucracy (indirect cost)** involved in land title registration has greatly affected property investment yield in Imo State, and **Policy changes** by government has greatly affected property investment yield in Imo State.

The analysis of hypotheses also provided some major findings which were as follows:

- i. Direct cost of land title registration has a significant effect on property investment yield in Imo State;
- ii. Bureaucracy involved in land title registration has a significant effect on property investment yield in Imo State; and lastly
- iii. Policy changes by the government has a significant effect on property investment yield in Imo State.

The first two results of the hypotheses tested support our a priori expectations because cost bears a direct and significant impact which is financed out of income and income is mostly accounted for on a monthly basis after expenses have been deducted from business costs, have competing ends. Thus, cost

has an inverse relationship with the rate of property investment and yield as people would rather have to wait longer to be sure to secure such monies to register their lands as a result.

Also, with respect to the second hypothesis, bureaucracy (indirect cost) makes the land title registration process more expensive to property owners because they have to provide pecuniary incentives to persons handling their property registration and kick backs are often demanded to initiate the process more often than expected. This is because with every second counts and with delay the cost of borrowing increases.

Finally, from the analysis of the third hypothesis it was discovered that changes in the land title registration policy had a significant effect on property investment yield in Imo State. This result can be explained from the view point that government is transitory and has specific objectives it hopes to achieve, hence policies are bound to change and people have learnt to be adaptive in response to these changes as they accept these changes. The truth remains that no matter the changes made in terms of policies, they can never be a disincentive to deter people from developing their property already acquired when viewed in the light of anticipated long run gains.

Recommendations

In the light of the empirical findings made in this paper, it is recommended that Government should look into the direct cost of title registrations. This is necessary if the government wants to pursue rapid developmental objectives in the near future. This can be done by making certain adjustments in service fees and charges which would not serve as a disincentive to prospective property investors.

Also, the government should as a matter of urgency, establish an easy open and transparent means of payment and processing for property registration so as to put an end to illegal fees and charges and all other forms of extortion from property registration offices in the state. This can be achieved by defining all fees payable for various purposes and creating a number of one-stop-shops where payments can be effected to government with ease.

The government should mount enlightenment campaigns for the public in this regard for clarity and transparency in all its affairs in the registration of titles and other processes. The electronic and print media can equally help in this process. Persons who engage in administrative corruption should be brought before the law and if found guilty, be dismissed as a deterrent to others; and lastly.

Changes in government policies should be looked into seriously as this has a way of distorting the objectives of the state. Frequent changes in government policies should be reduced especially as it regards revenue should be avoided because it has an overall negative effect on investment. Government

is not profit oriented business and therefore should explore other areas of revenue generation without being overbearing on the citizenry and investors.

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