Ethics, Corruption and Performance in Developing Economies in Public Service

Peter Adoko Obicci, Esq.
Ethics, Corruption and Performance in Developing Economies’ Public Service

Peter Adoko Obicci

POA-Kittim Consultants

C/O Box 7003, Kampala, Uganda

'adokoadoko@gmail.com

Abstract— Poor performance of public service in developing economies has been a major concern to donors, world leaders, and their citizens alike. The concern is backed-up with the reality of service delivery failure despite having in place measures to tackle the challenge of inefficiency and capacity collapse. This paper, therefore, looks at how unethical practices and corruption have played pivotal role in championing poor public service performance in developing economies. It demonstrates that these vices have delayed the development of developing economies by linking the laxity of strict adherence to unethical practices and corruption to poor performances. By adopting content analysis as a method of data gathering and analysis, the paper suggests viable options for effective and efficient service-oriented public service. Its originality is embedded in taking the twin combination of unethical practices and corruption as causal factors for poor public service performance. Its contributory role is the provision of a more complex view of ethics vis a vis corruption to public service performance. Its recommends future studies should empirically investigate unethical practices and corruption as key factors of poor public service performance in developing economies with varied outcomes thereof.

Keywords— Corruption, Developing economies, Ethics, Public Servants, Public Service performance

1. INTRODUCTION

Public service performance is determined by the nature and context of the environment in which it operates. As such, performance of public service can be evaluated within the socio-political context of its operating environment. Simply put; the goodness or the badness of public service performance is the function of its environment. For example, if the environment is corruption-free, public service performance can tend to be good. According to Arowolo (2012), public service can neither be separated from, nor superior to, the environment in which it finds itself and so its environment continually impact either positively or negatively on its operations. To perform its functions effectively, public service needs to be divested from all sorts of vices including unethical practices and corruption. In an effort to achieve this, public service ought to be guided by rules and regulations and other strategies at its disposal to fight such vices.

In developing economies, code of ethics for public servants is one tool for curbing vices in public services. It is the one ethical principle that guides the conduct of public servants within which they must operate. According to Denhardt (1997), a code of ethics is a set of rules outlining the norms and rules and responsibilities of, or proper practices for, an individual, party or organization. Simply put, it is the principle, value, standard, or rule of behaviour that guides the decisions, procedures and systems of an organization in a way that contributes to the welfare of its key stakeholders and respects the rights of all constituents affected by its operations. Code of ethics is often adopted by government, not to promote a particular moral theory, but rather because it is seen as pragmatic necessities for running an organization in a complex society in which moral concepts play an important part. Code of ethics is majorly designed to not only ensure good performance, but also to neutralize environmental influence, partisanship, favouritism and other primordial factors that could vitiate the performance of public servants. With this, the code of ethics saliently demonstrates that there is a correlation between ethics-corruption and performance. Thus for easy attainment of good performance in any organization, it necessarily follows that strict adherence to ethics and a move out of the closet of corruption is a matter of priority and urgency. This aids in avoidance of unethical practices and corruption which negatively affect public service performance. It’s honest therefore, that merely having in place a code of ethics is inadequate to promote good performance of public service as exemplified in many countries of the developing economies. The crux of the matter is that having a code of ethics is insufficient to rock public servants from engaging in unethical practices. For instance, one serious example of unethical practices very common in developing economies is corruption (Osawe, 2015). As an unethical practice, corruption is the act by which selfish behaviour is mobilized and sustained in the interest of satisfying an individual needs and achieving personal aggrandizement at the expense of public interest. Corruption thus, has the potential of championing the cause of poor performance of public service. Literally, corruption is a tool to short cut in self-enrichment and wealth accumulation. It is a deviation between what a public servant ought to do justifiably and what he/she selfishly does actually. Overtime, though, it has been rarely observed that unethical practices, such like corruption do have
negative impact on the performance of public service. This can be largely attributed lack of knowledge as to the target of such practices which is none other than self fulfilment of the individual public servant.

There appears to be a serious fundamental link between unethical practice, for example, corruption and poor performance. Given that the degree of commitment and loyalty to corruption by public servants in developing economies, it is safe to say, poor public service performance as demonstrated isn’t mythical. Much still, these public servants do conduct their workplace businesses in unethical manner such that consideration for the promotion of their self enrichment and wealth accumulation underpin their relationship with public service. Its unsurprising, therefore, that ethical behaviours and good performance have attracted only limited attention in developing economies as well as management literature (Lindorff, 2007). In light of such a lacuna in knowledge gaps, this study aims to show that there is a relationship between unethical practices-corruption and public service performance of developing economies.

In the following second section, the paper reviews the literature by outlining theoretical underpinnings of the relation between ethics, corruption and performance in the context of public service dilemma in developing economies. In the preceding paragraphs, the section further explores factors that can either enhance or vitiate performance at work. In the third section, an empirical glimpse into the workings of ethics and corruption in public service in developing economies shall be examined. This shall subsequently be followed by highlighting the interface between ethics and corruption on the one hand and public service on the other. This shall act as a discussion part of this paper which is section three. In the fourth and last section, the paper is concluded with practical recommendations to have a public service free of unethical practices and most importantly corrupt-free well and all tuned to good performance.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

This section aims to provide clarity to the intent of the concepts used in this discourse, that is, ethics, corruption, performance and public service. Its purpose is to conceptualize and contextualize these concepts to illustrate their vitiating elements on public service performance. They shall be handled in turn with more emphasis on developing economies.

A. Ethics

Etymologically, the word “ethics” has its root in a Greek word “ethos” which is traditionally referred to as rules of conduct. Freaky and Burgh (2000) defines ethics as what we ought to do. This implies, ethics requires judgment and reasoning in decision making in what ought to be done. It then raises question regarding what is right and wrong, what is good or bad, what is fair or just. To Chandler and Plano (1982), ethics is the science of morality which examines the nature or moral values and judgment of human conduct. They further submit that ethics is a normative science that studies the norms of human behaviour. It can therefore, be deduced generally, that ethics is a system of moral principles or rules of behaviours that controls, influences or regulates a person’s behaviour. However, in essence, ethics does not concern itself with the description of the ways things are but the way things ought to be. Consequently, ethics deals with norms or standards of human behaviour. More specifically, it has to do with the concept of right and wrong.

Generally, ethics recommends how someone should act; resolve the issues of right and wrong, good and evil, virtue and vice (Bartels, et. al. 2015). For instance, in the eyes of ethics, it is unethical for people not to pay their taxes; obey relevant laws and regulations. In the public service, personal ethics of the public servants determine the performance of public service. This is because public servants ought to apply ethical principles when executing their functions, that is, what they do and how they do it is influenced by their personal ethics. So the personal value system of a public servant has an influence on performance of public service. Nonetheless, it ought to be remembered that personal ethics can only be of value if it is intertwined with the purpose of public service. It is therefore, incumbent upon public servants to steer their personal value systems toward an ethical public service direction so that rendering of those services is of the greatest benefit to the public.

B. Corruption

The term corruption is derived from the Latin verb rumpère, meaning “to break”. Transposed to ethics, corruption in the sense of its roots means the breaking of a certain code of conduct for the personal benefit of the perpetuator. Rose-Ackerman (1999) gives a contemporary meaning of corruption by defining it as the misuse of public power for personal gains. The implication of this meaning is that corruption is relational as it occurs at the interface of the public and private individuals. In the same vein, Nye (2002) conceives corruption as a behaviour which deviates from the formal duties of a public role because of private interest regarding pecuniary (personal, close family, private clique) or status gains; or violates rules against the exercise of certain types of private-regarding influence. Barker and Carter (1994) define corruption in a more detailed way as acts containing three elements: violations of law, rules, regulations, or ethical standards; misuse of an officer’s position; and acceptance of some actual or expected material reward or gain. In this paper, corruption is understood as the willingness to exert high level of effort to reach selfish goals. This is conditioned by the availability of resources and time as a consequence of public service...
to satisfy personal need. Corruption is an unethical practice within the context of public service in the sense that it goes against the very essence of ethics. It is much concerned with self-enrichment and wealth accumulation that elicits personal satisfaction at the expense of the wider public. It further elates an act of being stimulated or influenced to derive ‘benefits’ in a crooked manner to derail achievements of goals laid down by the public service.

C. Performance

Performance is a consequence of an action. In the context of public service, according to Prasetya and Kato (2011), performance is the attained result of skilled workers in some specific situations. This means it is an act, process or art of performing an official duty. It can also be described as how well or badly a person does a particular job or activity. In this paper, performance is simply an action that involves a lot of efforts aimed at achieving a purpose. That is the activities of a public servant most especially in terms of his/her efficiency in producing certain quantity of goods or services which his/her department produces in a day, week, month or year. This means, it could be good or poor.

D. Public service

Public service is loosely defined by Caiden (1971) to mean the collectivity of specialized government institutions or agencies established by law, financed by public money and staffed by professionals and career bureaucrats for the purpose of executing public policies. For Ezeani (2006), public service is much broader than the term civil service as the former (public service) refers to the totality of services that are organized under public (that is, government) authority. Simply put, public service is a body or department in the executive arm of government with the responsibility to assisting in the planning and implementation of government policies. It comprises of ministries, agencies, parastatal, corporation and such like. Since it is an institution established to deliver essential services to the people, it is non profit-oriented. According Lewis and Catron (1996), public service is a trust. Therefore, the citizens expect public servants to serve public interest with fairness and to manage public resources properly on a daily basis. Fair and reliable public service inspires public trust. Public service ethics are a prerequisite to, and underpin, public trust, and are a cornerstone of good performance. The public service of any country is regarded as a transformational institutional because of its timeless responsibility of implementing public policies and programmes and the rendering of essential services to the masses. These goals are usually accomplished through the application of ethical codes of conduct which are provided to guide the conduct of public servants in the course of discharging their duties.

E. Performance factors at work

Suffice to note that in so far as the attitude of the public servants towards their employment is fundamentally linked to the way in which they conduct themselves at the workplace, public service considerations and implications are clear. Public servants who conduct themselves ethically requires less directives to supply effort to perform as dictated by the goals of the public service, thereby lowering service delivery costs and enhancing performance. Unfortunately, people cannot always agree on what is ethical and what is not (Zekos, 2004). There is not a standard level of ethics in different parts of social life, but the author considers that at least the standard of ethics of human life should be unchangeable. However, since the antithesis of ethics versus corruption is obvious and while ethics can lead to value maximization in the long run, corruption leads to value minimization in the long run regardless of short-term value maximization. Consequently, this makes it possible for numerous factors to either enhance or inhibit performance at work.

Existential context upon which public service is delivered is shrouded with lots of challenging factors whose resultant effects can either lead to good or poor performance result. Enhancing factors are good making it possible to provide quality public services (Curristine, Lonti & Joumard, 2007). These factors include:- i) provision of work facilities to public servants that they need to work with at work; ii) building a cordial relationship since working as a team, as friends, as brothers/sisters increases performance; iii) initiating and maintaining informal group/team building as a result of creating informality out of formality enables public servants, management team, subordinates and boss to relate, discuss out of work environment and to share their grievances and what they think should be done to enhance their performance at work; iv) creating a friendly environment to elicit performance as there will be cooperation rather than conflict, harmonious relationship in place of rancour; v) creating awareness about performance appraisal as it makes public servants to increase his/her performance with knowledge that there is time to evaluate his/her efforts and to reward or punish depending on the efforts he/she puts into production process; vi) ensuring capacity building of public servants as a mechanism to increase the way in which they could work; vii) instituting an equitable promotion policy to encourage public servants to perform to their best ability; and vii) making clear the disciplinary/punishment procedures to make public servants make an informed decision whether to behave well and be law abiding or not.
In the absence of enhancing factors, public service performance can be inhibited by vitiating factors (Abdullah, 2008) such as: a) official hostility among public servants or from the boss to the subordinates that naturally kills employee’s morale and consequently reduce his/her performance; b) the practice of individualism which creates a situation where public servants work separately without cooperation; c) lack of initiative or routinization that discourages initiatives as public servants keep doing the same pattern of work over and over; d) low wages that makes public servants demotivated which may force them to engage in menial job in some cases; e) lack of work challenges which does not encourage engagement in opportunities; e) presence of psychological factors such as trauma, depression that may disturb public servants’ mind will most likely lead to poor performance; f) infectious attitude especially by superiors over subordinates taking the later as incapable of performing despite abundant skills and academic qualifications the subordinate has; and g) absence of job fulfillment/self-actualization which may reduce performance as a public servant may have low morale at work.

Essentially, public service performance can either result into a good or a bad one depending on the factor at play. Ethics and corruption seem to make daunting contribution to make these factors either cause active or inactive impacts of public service in developing economies. A glimpse to the situation at hand in developing economies forms the basis of the proceeding section.

F. Ethics in the Developing Economies’ public service

The importance of ethics in service delivery can well be appreciated if an organization is run without it. The latter is a very evident and visible situation in developing economies’ public service of today. Cautiously, it’s sufficient to assert that if ever, there is lack of ethics or failure to adhere strictly to it, the organization is a potential candidate of being ruined. Such a scenario makes the organization to be an unethical one. This is because the organization will be run like an extension of private or personal property and so corruption, nepotism, kick-backs, favouritism, mismanagement, mediocrity, etc., all manifestations of unethical conducts, abound. While corroborating this standpoint, eminent scholars like Barrows (2003) insist that the personal character of a public servant should be the focus of study and practice in management ethics. Further studies (Seteolu, 2001) demonstrate that the most critical problem in public service is the scarcity of men and women of good character in positions of leadership- whether public, private, religious, educational, political, social, etc. Berkeley (1986) intimates that for too long, the management orthodoxy has taken as axiomatic the propositions that good systems will produce good people. This is far from true as every sector of the human society is infested with good and bad people alike.

In developing countries, therefore, ethics which ought to be the backbone on which performance in the public service leans is at threat. Yet ethics is the pivot that can ensure the stability, continuity, orderliness and development of the state of developing economies. Let it be known that it is through ethics that bad habits such as tyranny, self seeking, favouritism, arbitrariness, corruption, partiality, partisanship, unwarranted rebuke etc., - habits that breed poor public service, can be prevented. It is therefore, inconceivable to separate ethics from public service performance as a matter of fact since performance is in a way tied to ethics. If there is ethical depravity, in any situation, there will be poor performance and poor public delivery consequently low level of development. For example, Oluka and Sesnnoha’s view (2008) is in line with this argument when they observe that the lack of or total disregard for ethical standards throughout agencies and departments of government in Uganda is a serious drawback in service delivery provision. Precisely, this is because public service is the agency of government saddled with the responsibility of implementing the public will. In any case, if delivery of services is the chief reason why there is public service and good performance is a measurement standard of services that the state can provide for its citizens; then public service is the tool by which good performance of government is attained. It then follows that good performance is tied to public service and achieving it is a function of adherence to ethical practices. After all, the public ordinarily accepts only the highest standards of behaviours from those on the public payroll and nothing less.

From the premises, it seems true that upholding the principles and standards of right conduct in the management and administrative spheres is an important aspect of public service ethics. According to Olufem (2013), the essential requirement in this is that public servants ought to respect the rule of law and the dignity of the individual in carrying out official responsibilities. To this end, there is Leadership Code of Conduct and a number of institutions created to provide overall guidance and set standards in public service ethics and integrity. For example, in Uganda, the Code is enforced by the Inspectorate of Government while the established Directorate of Ethics and Integrity in the Office of the President formulates and monitors policies, strategies and frameworks and establishes ethical standards that apply to government and public officials and professional bodies to fight unethical behaviour. However, there are serious constraints in the enforcement of ethics and values in the public service in developing economies (Ezigbo, 2012) due to insufficient resources; absence of proper remuneration package to public servants; inadequacy of punishment for corrupt practices and unavailability of records of...
classified expenditure in certain ministries, for example, ministry of defence; lack of strong civil society to play its oversight role; lack of integrity and the complex nature of corruption coupled with some cultural problems, failure to supplement the Code by training in the public service; absence of administration programmes with components on ethics; failure to induct new staff on ethical standards; and failure to adopt as well as popularize Public Service Charter, Charter for Public Service in Africa and Customer Service Charters. To compound the ugly herds of these challenges the more, Dunner (1964) points out that public servant are under pressure to meet special expectations concerning proper patterns of behaviour. This has an incurable influence of luring them to behave unethically. More so that their actions are subject to greater scrutiny than are those of persons not on a public pay roll. It’s not a secret that they have become object of folktales, rumours, suspicions, and criticism to a much greater degree. In spite of the fact that there is in general, higher standards of honesty and morality expected of public servants than others.

As probably elsewhere, for instance in developed and transitional economies, public servants in developing econommies (Ezigbo, 2012) are obliged to observe impartial judgment in the service of all constituents; avoid conflict of interest that could undermine objective judgment; not abhor favouritism towards family and friends in appointment; prohibit bribes in the discharge of official duties; and forbid investment in a company in which one has vested interest. Apart from these obligations, in ensuring efficient and performance-oriented public service, public servants are supposed to observe ethical principles. These principles include: anonymity, i.e., they are supposed to remain anonymous; their names should not be heard in public in connection with any government decision or policy. Although senior public servants play vital roles in helping the Minister or Permanent Secretaries/Accounting officers of their Ministries to reach important decisions, it is the latter that should be praised or blamed for such decisions. Political neutrality, i.e., public servants is to be apolitical in nature; they are to be non-partisan. They are not allowed to take active part in politics. They cannot campaign in political rallies or stand as candidates for election. Any public servant who wants to contest an election must first resign his/her appointment as a matter of ethical consideration. Impartiality, i.e., public servants are supposed to be impartial in carrying out their duties. They are to relate to people in the course of their official duty equally without any unnecessary attachment or undue preference. Official secrecy, i.e., official secrets must not be leaked by any public servant; their official duty must not be discussed outside their office at leisure. Although this is controversial as citizens are, under normal circumstances, supposed to be well informed about the activities of the government, including the so-called official secrets. For example, government ought not to have anything to hide if it is transparent. Permanence, i.e., there is security of job and this gives public servants psychological balance and fulfilment which may, in turn, increase their performance. Merit, i.e., appointment in the public service is presumed to be based on merit rather than social or cultural affiliation. Appointment is a function of technical competence, experience and acquired qualification. This is aimed at enhancing efficiency tailored for good performance. Other ethical principles which the public servants must observe are: - fairness, courage, respect for individual autonomy, patriotism, respect for the constitution, avoidance of conflicts of interests, integrity, eschew bribery, good conduct, etc.

In the dungeon of controversies, however, the situation of public service in developing economies reveals that public servants have not been observing these ethical principles. They seem not to act in conformity to the principles though public service rules and regulations even the constitution provide clear stipulations for punishment of offenders. Unfortunately, the instruments to implement ethical principles are infrequently used (Gilman, 2005). For instance, the basic problem of ethics in public service of developing economies is the issue of punishment and reward. These twin opposing concepts are always misplaced since punishment is selective so also rewards, and there is usually no reward for excellence. It isn’t strange that reward is given to the person who does not merit it which only helps to kill the enthusiasm and morale of other public servants and consequently reduce performance. Further still, the numerous problems and unethical practices are manifested through corruption, lack of political will, undue political influence, lack of planning, etc.

Regrettably, the bane of public service mismanagement in developing economies, especially since the disappearance of the evil of colonialism onwards under which persons tainted with corrupt genes ascended into the realm of leadership, public service has not been any better (Dahida & Akangbe, 2013). The continual existence of structurally weak unethical control mechanism has only helped to create a variety of loopholes that have tended to facilitate and sustain corrupt practices. In this contextual dimension, unethical practices in the form of corruption in developing economies’ public service manifests itself as any of the following: bribery involving the promise, offering or giving of a benefit that improperly affects the actions and decisions of public servants whose benefit accrue to the public servant, another person or an entity, for example a traffic officer accepts a cash payment in order not to issue a speed fine. Embezzlement involving theft of resources by persons entrusted with the authority and control of such resources, for example, hospital staff that steals medicines and in turn sells these to private pharmacists. Abuse of power involving a public
servant using his/her vested authority to improperly benefit another public servant, person or entity (or the vested authority to improperly discriminate against another public servant, person or entity), for example, during a tender process but before actual selection of a successful contractor, the head of department expresses his/her wish to see the contract awarded to a specific person. **Fraud** involving actions or behaviours by a public servant, other person or entity that fool others into providing a benefit that would not normally accrue to the public servant, other persons or entity, for example, a public servant that registers a fictitious employee in order to collect the salary of that fictitious employee.

Furthermore, unethical practices that derail public services in developing economies can be seen in, for instance, **extortion** involving coercing a person or entity to provide a benefit to a public servant, another person or entity in exchange for acting (or failing to act) in a particular manner, for example, a public health official threatens to close a restaurant on the basis of fabricated health transgression unless the owner provides the public health official with regular meals. **Insider trading/abuse of privileged information** involving the use of privileged information and knowledge that a public servant possesses as a result of his/her office to provide unfair advantage to another person or entity to obtain a benefit, or to accrue a benefit himself/herself, for example, a local government officials has, as a result of his/her particular office, knowledge of residential areas that are to be rezoned as business areas informs friends or family to acquire the residential properties with a view of selling these as business properties at a premium. **Nepotism** involving a public servant ensuring that family members are appointed to public service positions or that family members receive contract from State resources, for example, a head of department appoints his/her sister’s child to a position even when more suitable candidates have applied for the position. **Conflict of interest** involving a public servant acting or failing to act on a matter where the public servant has an interest or another person or entity that stands in a relationship with the public servant has an interest, for example, a public servant considers tenders for a contract and awards the tender to a company of which his/her partner is a director. And **favouritism** involving the provision of services or resources according to personal affiliations like ethnic, religious, party of a public servant, for example, a regional manager in a particular region ensures that only persons from the same tribe are successful in tenders for the supply of foods in to the manager’s geographic area of responsibility.

Far from achieving intended purpose, public service in developing economies cannot realize the purpose for which they are intended due to numerous manifestations of unethical practices. These practices erode the purpose for which governments in developing economies are meant to function. There is need to overcome these terrible mayhem, whose glitches can be gleaned from the discussions in the proceeding section.

### III. DISCUSSION

In this section the interface between ethics and corruption on the one hand and public service on the other is exposed. It’s intended to form the benchmark upon which recommendations for an ethical and corrupt-free public service can be realized in developing economies. In the given rampant unethical behaviors especially of corrupt nature, more than ever, citizens of the developing economies are calling for state institution that is corrupt-free, efficient in the use of public funds, effective in delivering services while in the mean time remain strong in the increasingly complex ethical environment. Scholars (Larmour & Wolanin (2001) have shown that the significance of an efficient, effective and transparent public service is underlined as vital to the realization of the end of service delivery provision. They reiterate that while striving to strengthening human resources in the public service, the focus should be on developing a comprehensive policy to promote ethics and values amongst public servants. Hence, the increasing demand by the citizens for quality service provision heralds the importance of ethics to performance in the public service that is able to foster public-oriented employees and ensure broader public interests. Although there are diverse facets of ethics in performance of the public service in terms of content and process, the devastating effects of corruption on service delivery are very immense.

Against these backdrops, the discourse on ethics-corruption and poor performance is like the egg and chicken because of their complementary nature. The enhancement of performance in the public service largely depends on well-grounded ethical practices by the public servants. Strict observance of ethical practices therefore, is indispensable for good performance. It has been proved that unethical practices like corruption can crumble service delivery (Šatienė & Toleikienė, 2007). Consequently, observance of ethical practices in a way is a mechanism through which corruption is managed and minimized. Ethical practices become ethical practices when they compel public servants to perform to the best of their ability. When public servants do behave unethically, that is, when ethical practices do not touch the inner most of their hearts, their ability to perform to their best is threatened. As a consequence, good performance and efficiency become elusive while poor performance and low productivity is encouraged. From the foregoing, it is evident that the concept of ethics-corruption and poor performance are inseparable (Jain, 2001). They both operate side by side and they are complementary. Unethical practices-corruption is not an end in itself; it is a means to an
end. That is, it aims at poor performance. It is often adored by unethical public servants as deprivation tool, a sharp-edge sword to promote poor performance in the public service. Conversely, the need to build confidence in government in the light of increased concern on corruption due to unethical behaviour of public servants cannot but only prompt the urge to review approaches to ethical conduct. Basically governments can use two approaches to improve public service ethos (Aldridge & Stoker, 2002). First, the use of compliance-based ethics management approach especially in this era of rampant unethical behaviour and difficulty in changing widespread corruption through enactment of rules and enforcement. Secondly, the integrity-based ethics management approach that centers on inducements and support which is more appropriate to situations in which there is strong shared sense of values and a higher degree of homogeneity. In reality, it is appropriate to take these approaches together. However, it is worthy to note that the ethics infrastructure in which citizens in developing economies is experiencing requires a comprehensive framework to review the institutions, systems, and mechanism that promote unethical practices in the public service. Thus the review must be based on key principles that can identify the function of guidance, management or control against which a given public ethics management system can be tested. It is incumbent upon a government to apply a mix of packages to encourage and support ethical public service environment. This can be achieved by reflecting on the behavioural approaches and specifically in promoting public service ethics and values. According to Obicci (2015), packages that can promote ethics in public service include but are not limited to: practicing transformative leadership, i.e., ethical leadership and political commitment at the higher level remain vital to the success of public service. Public service rules and regulations by themselves will not lead to good performance if they are not backed by political will and the preparedness of government to impose total adherence to these rules and regulations to promote good public service performance. Transformative leadership should aim at addressing such dimensions as vision, effectiveness, and integrity, all of which are critical to realizing good public service performance. Bass (1998) contends that ethical leadership is vital to creating an ethical workforce. Also other researchers (Pastin, 1986) indicate that most employees look themselves to significant others for guidance in ethical dilemma situations, which should be provided by the leader of the organization. Promoting education and training, i.e., in improving the quality of service and performance, the training of public servants must be at the centre of the effort. Effective public service training system requires institutional structure that encompass overall strategic guidance at the political level and a national body responsible for defining training needs, guiding the training curricula, contracting out training delivery, monitoring quality and evaluating impact. Mentoring, i.e., guiding public servants so as to enable them undertake the tasks to be assigned to them in an appropriate manner. This will help to attract, retain and develop ethical public servants. Aside from these packages, however, other specific efforts that the government can undertake to promote the culture of ethics in the public service are immense. Since the human nature being what it is and the difficulty to prevent all lapses of judgment, some strategies can be pursued to minimize them. It has to be appreciated that the responsibility for maintaining standards and minimizing unethical behaviour within the public service falls on the public service itself. This would call for proper conception of the regulations governing the public service to be directed towards erecting and maintaining an administrative and management system to protect public interest. Rather than detecting and punishing the wrongdoer after the fact, such a system should reduce the risk of unethical behaviour occurring in the first place. In a well managed administration system, the incidence of unethical behaviour would be minimized and, where they did occur, swift disciplinary action would be the norm.

IV CONCLUSION

This paper correlated ethics, corruption in public service within the context of developing economies. It focused on the effects of well-designed ethics on public service and concluded that where standard ethics is practiced, better performance is assured and where unethical behaviour prevails, performance is negatively affected. It is, therefore, desirable to adhere strictly to standard ethics to increase performance in the public service. Unethical practices, more especially corruption needs to be curbed in order to have good performance in public service. Mechanism should be put in place to punish public servants that are found to have been corrupt or have aided unethical/corrupt tendencies. Focus should, therefore, be placed on instituting and implementing public service procedures and systems tailored to public interest. In other words, in an environment of unethical behaviour, significant public service will prove elusive if unethical practices are ignored. This should be undertaken against the backdrop of undermined public trust and confidence in governments due to the public’s perception of widespread wrongdoing in both developed and developing countries (Ayee, 1998). For sure, high ethical standards for the provision of public services and the exercise of restraints to indulge in unethical behaviours (Oluya, 1998)-corruption-free environment is a prerequisite if public service is to
have meaning to the citizenry in the developing economies.

REFERENCES


