Perception of Academic Staff on Public-Private Partnership and Finance of Public University Education in Rivers State

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Abstract
The study is on perception of academic staff on public-private partnership and finance of public university education in Rivers State. Three (3) research questions and three (3) null hypotheses guided the study. The design of the study was descriptive survey design. The population of the study was 2619 lecturers and a sample of 347 which is 13% of the entire population of the study. The instrument for data collection was a self-designed questionnaire captioned "Academic Staff on Public-Private Partnership Questionnaire (ASPPPQ) which was content and face validated with a reliability coefficient of 0.82. Mean score and standard deviation was used to answer the research questions and z-test was used to analyze the null hypotheses. It was discovered that the private sector can finance university education when they design, build, and operate universities and concluded that public private partnership is critical in financing university education and hence, recommended that Government and institutional leaders should find out ways of ensuring public private partnership financing in public universities in Rivers State. For instance, government can cooperates with educational institutions to deliver unique services, the government can connect with private enterprises in order to protect current infrastructures, in various fields, higher institutions are expected to build, develop and maintain good ties with private businesses.

Keywords: Perception,Academic Staff., Public-Private Partnership, Finance

Introduction

Collaboration between a government body and private-sector institutions can be used to fund, develop, and run a school projects and other non-school projects such as public transit networks, parks, and conference centers. This collaboration is known as a public-private partnership (Choi, 2018). Financing a project through public-private collaboration will help it get done faster. Tax or other operating income concessions, liability insurance, or partial ownership interests to nominal public services and land are all common elements of public-private partnerships (Badalov, et al, 2017). Finance in this study entails any form of funding given to the government owned universities by the private sector through collaboration.

Large-scale government social investment like schools, hospitals, may be financed by public-private partnerships. When private sector innovation and

creativity are combined with public sector incentives to complete work on schedule and on budget, these collaborations work well (Delmon, 2017). Cost overruns, technological flaws, and a failure to reach quality requirements are risks for private enterprises. But nevertheless, the combined synergies of the public and public sector in the provision of education can never be overemphasized. According to Hoeppner & Gerstlberger (2003), government runs the overheads, several issues of maintenance and running of private school has been an addendum towards the effort to provide quality secondary education.

Internationalization and the globalization of education by public private partnerships (PPPs) have sparked much discussion over the past decade about their nature, intent, status, and outcomes. This argument is particularly heated in the education sector because many people believed that education is a dynamic social investment that should be kept primarily, if not entirely, in the public sector to serve the public good (Lukmanova & Mishlanova, 2015). The exponential growth of education public-private partnerships (ePPPs), which rapidly include private investors in a variety of public-sector education activities, including more and more conventional arenas of public education systems.

Tertiary education finance has been a major problem for many underdeveloped countries and in Nigeria particularly. The reason for this is the that money for educational system, capacity building and infrastructure growth needs a significant amount of government intervention. As a result, most policy makers have searched for other ways to fill the revenue-generation deficit that is harmful to growth (Adedeji, 2008). As a result, in various parts of the world, public-private partnerships have emerged as an alternative means of delivering quality services (Cui, 2018). The government operates on a massive scale and will take advantage of economies of scale. The public sector has a lot of scientific and specialized experience that is considered fairer than the competition. The participation of the private sector at all levels of society is one of its advantages. Today, many well-known schools are owned by private entities. It is undeniable that such schools have made significant contributions to the preparation of students for higher education in order to acquire skills to function effectively for improved national economy (Deryabina, 2008). Against this backdrop, education has long been regarded as the cornerstone of any country's science and technological growth. Similarly, without town-gown relationship, a country's economy would be deprived of the knowledge base needed for growth and development.

As a result, in the light of decreasing government support for tertiary education, there is increasing demand and justifiable leverage for direct beneficiaries to pay a reasonable portion of the expense. For example, the Longe commission(1992), which was established about 29 years ago, proposed that higher education funding be spread among different interest groups within the economy, including various levels of government, student parents/sponsors, the private sector, and higher education institutions themselves (Faniran and Akintayo, 2012).

It is also note worthy over the last three decades, significant progress has been made in increasing access to schooling at all levels and enhancing basic literacy. However, there are also significant shortcomings in the standard of

education at all levels, as well as access to early childhood education, gender equity, and higher education access (Akudo, 2008). The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals for Education include, among other things, full access to high-quality education from early childhood through secondary school, equal access to accessible basic, vocational, and tertiary education, and increased spending in educational infrastructure to enhance learning conditions by 2030. Meeting these challenges would necessitate sustained and increased public resources and leadership, initiatives to promote creativity and technology, and recognition of the private sector's position in achieving public education objectives.

Statement of Problem

A strong education system is built on a regulatory structure that ensures a level playing field and encourages the private sector to expand in ways that lead to expanded access for learners at all levels while also ensuring quality delivery. Regulations should be objective and observable to curb discretion and corruption; publicly distributed so that they can be obtained quickly; output-focused to allow for versatile and varied implementation approaches; and implemented uniformly across different levels of government where registration systems are devolved. There are several reasons for this, as well as ways in which public-private collaborations might strengthen educational initiatives. The enormity of the task of improving educational quality underlines the necessity for collaboration. Furthermore, rather of working in tandem toward a single objective, the two sectors complement one another. Evidence suggests that public-private partnerships (PPPs) in education can enhance program efficiency and transparency of public spending, enhance service delivery, particularly to underrepresented communities, allow for faster responses, and overcome public sector constraints. The post-secondary education system in Nigeria is experiencing more significant issues than ever before. The lack of detailed data for sectoral analysis is a problem. According to a World Bank (2002) analysis, there is a strong link between the loss in educational quality and other factors such as infrastructure depreciation, a lack of books and journals, and insufficient research funding. Gender disparity, access, and equal opportunity are all concerns that Nigerian higher institutions have yet to address—problems that demand a holistic approach. A more serious issue is that cash raised from internal and other non-budgetary sources are not accounted for in the budget. This may affect the perception of lecturers and hence the need to investigate perception of academic staff on public-private partnership and finance of public university education in Rivers State.

Purpose of the Study

1. Find out the critical areas in public private partnership in public universities that will ensure proper financing in Rivers State.
2. Find out the factors inhibiting public private partnership financing in public universities in Rivers State.
3. Find out the ways of ensuring public private partnership financing in public universities in Rivers State.

Research Questions

1. What are the critical areas in public private partnership in public universities that will ensure proper financing in Rivers State?
2. What are the factors inhibiting public private partnership financing in public universities in Rivers State?
3. What are the ways of ensuring public private partnership financing in public universities in Rivers State.

Hypotheses

1. There is no significant difference in the mean ratings in perception of male and female lecturers on the critical areas in public private partnership in public universities that will ensure proper financing in Rivers State.
2. There is no significant difference in the mean ratings in perception of male and female lecturers on the factors inhibiting public private partnership financing in public universities in Rivers State.
3. There is no significant difference in the mean ratings in perception of male and female lecturers on the ways of ensuring public private partnership financing in public universities in Rivers State.

Literature Review

Public Private Partnership

Public Private Partnerships (PPP) do not have a widely agreed definition, and the World Bank Group has not adopted one. PPPs may refer to informal and short-term collaborations between nongovernmental organizations, the private sector, and/or government agencies to achieve a common goal; more formal, but still short-term private sector engagements for the provision of specific services, such as annual outsourcing arrangements for janitorial services for a school or cafeteria operations; or more formal, but still short-term private sector engagements for the provision of specific services, such as annual outsourcing arrangements for janitorial services for a school or cafeteria (World bank, 2002). In education, public-private partnerships (PPPs) are long-term negotiated arrangements between the government and a private provider for all or part of the supply of technology and facilities to students. They've been used to provide a framework for bringing the public and private sectors together to balance each other's capabilities in funding and delivering education services (Dubauskas & Balius, 2015). PPPs will help expand the scope and usefulness of government grants, promote educational creativity, improve the protection, quality, and capability of physical educational facilities, and, in the right public policy sense, enhance access to educational resources and equity of opportunity (Adeyemo, 2000 & Caldwell, 2004). They help the government to retain strategic, economical, and regulatory power over public education while encouraging them to step back from day-to-day facilities and/or service delivery and management in circumstances where their resources are restricted Martyn ova et al., 2019). In the last 15 years, public-private partnerships have become increasingly

common in the distribution of educational services. For instance, United Kingdom and Europe, the first generation of PPPs based on supply-side initiatives including upgrading the building and maintenance of school facilities at the primary and secondary levels (David, 2002). The same ideas were then added to demand-side constraints to adapt to the standard of education management and pedagogy by compromises for the implementation of education facilities (school management and teaching), to improve equity in access through demand-side financing schemes such as school vouchers, and hybrid models to address both facilities and programs through demand-side financing schemes such as school vouchers.

Types of Public Private Partnership

There are various forms of PPPs that fall along a continuum in terms of possible risk allocation between the private and public sectors. Private sector engagement is involved in a variety of ways, including ownership, operations and maintenance, funding, risk allocation, and length. According to the World Bank (1997) in Farlam (2011), the types of PPP options accessible in the world include Service Contract, Management Contract, Lease, Concession, Build Operate Transfer, and Divestiture. The Build-operate-transfer (BOT) method is a well-known PPP alternative. Public-private partnership is an agreement between the public and private sectors with explicit agreed objectives for the private sector to supply public infrastructure and/or public services that would otherwise be delivered through regular public sector procurement (Kumaransinghe, 2011). In Nigeria, the use of public-private partnerships (PPPs) in housing is aimed to enhance urban housing supply while also addressing housing affordability and accessibility (Kasenene, 2009).

According to Lukmanova and Mishlanova (2015) in both developed and developing nations, the build, operate, transfer (BOT) model has played an increasingly important role in the execution of industries and infrastructure projects such as toll highways, water supply, and treatment facilities in recent years. The word "BOT" refers to a concept or organization that employs private capital to fund infrastructure development that has traditionally been done by the government. There are different types of known BOT

1. Build-own-operate(BOO).
2. Build-own-operate-transfer (BOOT).
3. Design-building-finance-operate (DBFO).

BOO (build, own, operate) is a public-private partnership (PPP) project type in which a private organization builds university, owns, and runs a facility or structure with the government's assistance (Adeogun, et al., 2010). Although the government does not give direct support under this approach, other financial incentives such as tax-exempt status may be available. The developer is the only owner and operator of the facility.

BOOT (build–own–operate–transfer) is a type of public–private partnership (PPP) in which a private university gets a concession from the government (or, on rare occasions, the private sector) to fund, design, construct, own, and manage a facility specified in the concession contract (Anand, 2012). This allows private

investors to recoup their investment, as well as the project's running ar maintenance costs.

Design-building-finance-operate (DBFO) involves contract for the desig construction, financing, and operation of a university is granted to a private sect entity (Kayongo, 2007). The private sector partner may be compensated by th government agency (for example, availability payments) or by fees collected fro university end users in exchange for fulfilling its commitments under the agreemen The project is owned by the government or a government-owned enterprise.

For efficient and increased development programs, partnership necessitate collaboration between the public and private sectors. When it comes to the notion o development and how it may be achieved and sustained, neither the government no the private sector can do it alone. Government must offer the direction that agencie and organizations needed in order for them to coordinate their efforts to remove development bottlenecks (World Bank, 2002). Similarly, without government involvement in the free functioning of the economy, significant gaps in material property will emerge under capitalism (Akihiko, 2002 in Delmon, 2017). As a result, it is the state's job to establish an enabling climate for the private sector to engage in development projects through public-private partnerships. As a result, the Public-Private Partnership is a welcome development, because even in a free business economy, the problem of national development and growth sustenance is frequently shared by the public and private sectors (Adebari, 2000).

The success or failure of a PPP project, according to the authors (Nelson & Zadek, 2000), is determined by a variety of elements that may be divided into four categories: government competence, concessionaire selection, risk distribution between the public and private sectors, and a good financial package. A PPP project's development and administration are heavily influenced by the government. The government's improper engagement in the management of PPP projects may result in project failure.

Government's participation in PPP projects into five subfactors: Create a climate that is conducive to investment. Create a legal/regulatory structure that is suitable, In order to find an appropriate concessionaire, Create a coordinating and supporting authority and participate actively in all phases of the project life cycle (Roger, 2006). A concessionaire is a key player in a public-private partnership project, and its roles include finance, design, building, operation, and maintenance of infrastructure assets, as well as handing them to the client in working order at the end of the concession period (Salami, 2003). The procurement procedure, tender assessment procedure, and assessment criteria were all used to divide concessionaire selection.

Akudo (2008) stated thatPPP projects are characterized by a significant level of risk owing to the long concession time and the diversity of actors participating in the partnership. Political risks, financial risks, construction risks, operation and maintenance risks, market and revenue risks, and legal risks are all linked with PPP projects. Building an institution is a capital-intensive activity that needs a well-thought-out finance strategy to ensure its success. According to Cui et al (2018), a sound financial plan for a PPP should include an appropriate mix ofiequity and debt,

a financing strategy based on project risks, project conditions, and financing sources, and certain government supports such as minimum guaranteed revenue, tariff structure flexibility, financial support, and force majeure protection.

Theoretical Framework

This study is based on System Theory by Ludwig von Bertalanffy proposed in 1940s, which was furthered by Ross Ashby (1964). Von Bertalanffy was reacting to both reductionism and attempts to restore science's unity. He is widely regarded as the creator and primary author of general systems theory. A system, according to Von Bertalanffy (1968), is a complex of interacting elements that are open to and interact with their surrounding environment. Furthermore, they can emerge with qualitatively new properties, implying that they are constantly evolving. When we talk about systems, we usually mean that they are self-regulating (they self-correct through feedback). It is any collection of distinct parts that interact to form a complex whole is referred to as a system. According to the theory, the system's sub-unit must perform their work for the sustenance of the entire whole. As applied to this study, the public and private sector must interplay and complement each other to ensure that that they the entire educational institution survives and achieve its institutional or education objectives. But in this case, it must be able to work hand in hand to achieve the objectives of university education. By doing this, the private sector and the public sector as a unit must complement each other. Such complementary actions are demonstrated in form of partnership between the public and private sector. This is because the government depends on the private sector which is a subsystem to bring on board different resources to ensure that the system is sustained. Where the government cannot not always provide the needed resources, it simply entails that the government as another sub-system must depend on the private sector to provide supports in terms of finances, technical support etc.

Methodology

The design of the study was descriptive survey. According to Nwankwo (2013), descriptive survey study is that in which the researcher collects data from large sample drawn from a given population and describes certain feature of the sample as they are at the time of the study and which are of interest to the study. The population of this study was comprise the three public universities in Rivers State with 2619 lecturers as the respondents. The composition are as fellows; University of Port Harcourt (1,467) which is 56% of the entire respondents, Rivers State university (599) which is 23% of the entire respondents and Ignatius Ajuru University of Education (553) which makes up the 21.% of the respondents. The sample size of the study is 347 representing 13% of the total population of 2619 which was determined by Taro Yamene's formulae (1967). Based on the sample, 194 which is 56% of the sample are of University of Port Harcourt, while 79 which is 23% of the sample are of Rivers State University and finally, 72 which is 21% of the sample are of Ignatius Ajuru University of Education. Among the sample size, 192 (55%) were male lecturers while 155 (45%) were female lecturers. Stratified random sampling technique was adopted because it intends to have a complete coverage of the whole

strata of the entire population from the three universities being studied. Th instrument for data collection was a self-designed questionnaire captione "Academic Staff on Public-Private Partnership Questionnaire (ASPPPQ) which wa content and face validated with a reliability coefficient of 0.82. The ASPPPQ wa based on the modified Likert four-point rating scale. The response option for Sectio A with 3 items was Strongly Agreed (SA), Agreed (A), Disagree (D) and Strongl Disagree (SD). Mean score and rank order will be used to analyze the researcl questions while z-test will be used to analyze the hypotheses.

Answer to Research Questions

Research question 1: What are the critical areas in public private partnership in public universities that will ensure proper financing in Rivers State?

Table 1: ***Mean score and standard deviation of the critical areas in public private partnership in public universities.***

S/N	Item	$\bar{x}_1$	Sd_1	$\bar{x}_2$	Sd_2	Mean Set	Decision
1.	The private sector can build and own universities after obtaining necessary license.	2.93	1.71	2.44	1.56	2.68	Accepted
2.	The private sector can build, own operate and finally after a predetermined time, transfer the institution to the government	2.75	1.65	2.53	1.59	2.64	Accepted
3.	The private sector can finance university education when they design, build, and operate universities.	2.88	1.69	2.50	1.58	3.3	Accepted
4.	The private sector can provide facilities as support of university education owned by the public sector.	3.35	1.83	3.23	1.79	3.29	Accepted
5.	The private sector can finance training of students as way to enable them blend the learning with real life instances as done in SIWES.	3.62	1.90	3.02	1.73	3.32	Accepted
	Total	3.10	1.75	2.74	1.65	3.04	

Table 1 shows that perception of lecturers regarding critical areas in public private partnership in public universities that will ensure proper financing in Rivers State. Based on the table analyses, it was agreed that all the items are the critical areas in public private partnership in public universities. This is because; they are above the mean criterion of 2.5. Hence all the items were accepted.

Research question 2: What are the factors inhibiting public private partnership financing in public universities in Rivers State?

Table 2:*Mean score and standard deviation of the factors inhibiting public private partnership financing in public universities.*

S/N	Item	$\bar{x}_1$	Sd_1	$\bar{x}_2$	Sd_2	Mean Set	Decision
1.	Incompetence on the part of the government.	2.76	1.66	2.53	1.59	2.64	Accepted
2.	Issues related to the concessionaire selection	2.89	1.7	2.55	1.59	2.72	Accepted
3.	Risk distribution between the public and private sectors.	2.90	1.70	2.75	1.65	2.82	Accepted
4.	Absence of a good financial package among public and private sector	2.76	1.66	2.64	1.62	2.7	Accepted
5.	The problem of corruption in public private partnership.	2.57	1.60	2.54	1.59	2.55	Accepted
	Total	2.77	1.66	2.60	1.60	2.68	

Table 2: shows that perception of lecturers regarding are the factors inhibiting public private partnership financing in public universities in Rivers State. Furthermore, the respondents accepted all the items as factors inhibiting public private partnership financing in public universities in Rivers State. This was so because the all the items mean were above the mean criterion of 2.5.

Research question 3: What are the ways of ensuring public private partnership financing in public universities in Rivers State?

Table 3:*Mean score and standard deviation ways of ensuring public private partnership financing in public universities.*

S/N	Item	$\bar{x}_1$	Sd_1	$\bar{x}_2$	Sd_2	Mean Set	Decision
1.	Government cooperates with educational institutions to deliver unique services.	3.65	1.91	2.53	1.59	3.09	Accepted
2.	The government can connect with private enterprises in order to protect current infrastructures.	3.54	1.88	3.13	1.76	3.33	Accepted
3.	In various fields, higher institutions are expected to build, develop and maintain good ties with private businesses.	3.21	1.79	3.42	1.84	3.31	Accepted
4.	Government and higher institutions should disseminate sufficient information and ensure stakeholders may participate in the decision making process in public -private partnerships.	2.64	1.62	2.54	1.59	2.59	Accepted
5.	Universities should establish links with private organizations and procedures to collaborate with them.	3.58	1.89	3.42	1.85	3.5	Accepted
	Total	**3.32**	**1.81**	**3.00**	**1.72**	**3.16**	

Table 3: shows the perception of lecturers regarding ways of ensuring public private partnership financing in public universities in Rivers State. The items were above the mean criterion of 2.5 hence being accepted as the ways of ensuring public private partnership financing in public universities in Rivers State.

Test of Hypotheses

Table 4: mean score, standard deviation and z-test of the difference between the mean ratings of male and female lecturers on the critical areas in public private partnership in public universities that will ensure proper financing in Rivers State.

Ho1: There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female lecturers on the critical areas in public private partnership in public universities that will ensure proper financing in Rivers State.

Variables	*N*	*Df*	*Mean*	*Sd*	*Z-cal.*	*Z-crit.*	*Decision*
Male	192	345	3.10	1.75	1.80	1.96	Accept
Female	155		2.74	1.65			

Based on the details on table 4, the table shows the null hypotheses which stated that there is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female lecturers on the critical areas in public private partnership in public universities that will ensure proper financing in Rivers State. The z-calculated is 1.80 which is less than the z-critical of 1.96 at 0.05 alpha significant levels and with the degree of freedom standing at 345, hence the null hypotheses is accepted.

Table 5: mean score, standard deviation and z-test of the difference between the mean ratings of male and female lecturers on the factors inhibiting public private partnership financing in public universities in Rivers State.

Ho2: There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female lecturers on the factors inhibiting public private partnership financing in public universities in Rivers State.

Variables	*N*	*Df*	*Mean*	*Sd*	*Z-cal.*	*Z-crit.*	*Decision*
Male	192	345	2.77	1.66	1.21	1.96	Accept
Female	155		2.60	1.60			

The z-calculated is 1.21 which is less than the z-critical of 1.96 at 0.05 alpha significant levels and with the degree of freedom standing at 345, hence the null hypotheses is accepted.

Table 6: mean score, standard deviation and z-test of the difference between the mean ratings of male and female lecturers on the ways of ensuring public private partnership financing in public universities in Rivers State.

Ho3: There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female lecturers on the ways of ensuring public private partnership financing in public universities in Rivers State.

Variables	*N*	*Df*	*Mean*	*Sd*	*Z-cal.*	*Z-crit.*	*Decision*
Male	192	345	3.32	1.81	1.77	1.96	Accept
Female	155		3.00	1.72			

The z-calculated is 1.77 which is less than the z-critical of 1.96 at 0.05 alpha significant levels and with the degree of freedom standing at 345, hence the null hypotheses is accepted.

Discussion of Findings

The study find out that on the critical areas in public private partnership in public universities that will ensure proper financing in Rivers State, the lecturers perceived that the private sector can build and own universities after obtaining necessary license, the private sector can build, own operate and finally after a predetermined time, transfer the institution to the government, the private sector can finance university education when they design, build, and operate

universities, the private sector can provide facilities as support of university education owned by the public sector, and the private sector can finance training of students as way to enable them blend the learning with real life instances as done in SIWES. This is in line with the opinion of Adeogun, et al., (2010) and Anand (2012).

The study also discovered that the perception of lecturers on the factors inhibiting public private partnership financing in public universities in Rivers State includes; incompetence on the part of the government, issues related to the concessionaire selection, risk distribution between the public and private sectors, absence of a good financial package among public and private sector, the problem of corruption in public private partnership. The findings however, is in agreement with the opinion of Cui et al (2018) and this also is linked to the view of (Faniran & Akintayo, 2012).

The study also found out that the perception of lecturers on the ways of ensuring public private partnership financing in public universities in Rivers State is that government cooperates with educational institutions to deliver unique services, the government can connect with private enterprises in order to protect current infrastructures, in various fields, higher institutions are expected to build, develop and maintain good ties with private businesses, government and higher institutions should disseminate sufficient information and ensure stakeholders may participate in the decision making process in public-private partnerships and universities should establish links with private organizations and procedures to collaborate with them. The study is in consonance with the opinion of Adeyemo (2000) and Caldwell (2004) because in their related opinion Public Private Partnership can assist to extend public funding and its utility, stimulate educational inventiveness, strengthen protection, quality and capacity of educational institutions, and boost access to educational resources and fairness of opportunity in the proper sense of public policy.

Conclusion

Public private partnership is critical in financing university education. Changes in societies throughout the world have given a lot of importance not just to higher education administration but to sustainable development in public-private partnerships. This article discusses public-private partnership approaches to develop an extensive collaboration process. In measures which might mobilize to sustain higher education in the country, factors inhibiting public-private partnership efficacy in the management of higher institutions have been recognized and highlighted.

Recommendation

1. Government and institutional leaders should find out that on the critical areas in public private partnership in public universities that will ensure proper financing in Rivers State. This can be achieved by allowing that

the private sector to provide facilities as support of university education owned by the public sector, and the private sector can finance training of students as way to enable them blend the learning with real life instances as done in SIWES.

2. Government and institutional leaders should identify the factors inhibiting public private partnership financing in public universities in Rivers State. This includes; incompetence on the part of the government, issues related to the concessionaire selection, risk distribution between the public and private sectors.
3. Government and institutional leaders should find out ways of ensuring public private partnership financing in public universities in Rivers State. For instance, government can cooperates with educational institutions to deliver unique services, the government can connect with private enterprises in order to protect current infrastructures, in various fields, higher institutions are expected to build, develop and maintain good ties with private businesses.

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