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PUBLIC PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP (PPP) AND COLLABORATION IN EDUCATION: A PANACEA FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS IN NIGERIA

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Abstract
Every country's development is practically anchored on education and its basic conditions for socio-economic and technological transformation of the nation. This paper examined the extent to which public-private partnership and collaboration in education contributes in the sustainable development of tertiary institutions in the areas such as infrastructural and human development. The paper x-rays the concepts of public-private partnership and sustainable development of tertiary institutions, types of public-private partnership. The paper also examine the benefits public-private partnership and collaboration in education, such as cost saving, enhancement of revenue generation and others. It further examines the role of public-private partnership and collaboration in education; it also highlighted the risks associated with public–private partnership in development programmes. The paper further reveals that the attainment of meaningful and sustainable development requires the genuine participation of the public, the organized private sectors, donor

agencies, individuals and civil society. Such as loss of control by the public sector where private partners commit more funds to a project than the public sector, there is a likelihood that private partners would seek for more control over how services are provided and priced. It further examined the ten tips for successful public- private partnership in higher institution. The paper recommended among others that public-private partnership should be encouraged for sustainability of our university systems.

Keywords: Public Private Partnership (PPP), Sustainable Development, Tertiary Institutions

Introduction

Education is an indispensable tool for socio-economic and technological transformation of any society. However, provision of quality education at any level is not something that every society or country can easily afford because of the high cost involved. Recently both the developed and developing countries have taken into consideration the need to enter into public-private partnership. The amount of money assigned to the education sector in the country's budget justifies it relevance in national development. From the global perspective, economic and social developments are increasingly driven by advancement and application of knowledge Oni & Alade 2008. Therefore, stress that education in general and higher education in particular has a high public value in terms of its contribution to economic growth and societal development. Higher education relates to all forms of post-secondary education such as Universities, Polytechnics, Colleges of Education, monotechnics and professional/research institutes.

In the quest for development, developing countries have acknowledged that investment in and, adequate funding of higher education are viable conditions that facilitate national development. Roger (2006) opined that higher education in Africa has given ample proof of its viability over the centuries and its ability to introduce change and progress in society. However, higher education is confronted with formidable challenges ranging from new demographics and exploding technologies to myriad of demands to act accountably towards students, parents, communities and tax payers. This is evident in the deplorable state of infrastructures, facilities and equipment as well as inadequate funding which has besieged higher institutions (Salami, 2003). The provision of higher education in Nigeria has continued to be devoid of quality accessibility and funding expected by stakeholders. Since 1999 that Federal Government has put in place a number of measures to reform the Nigerian University System. The government has systematically increased the amount of funds allocated to the tertiary institutions. To this end, the total government allocation to education increased from N12.23 billion, in 1999 to over N53.68 billion in 2005 and in 2006, the N76 billion allocated further demonstrates the federal government's commitment to improve the quality of higher education in Nigeria. Also through the instrumentality of the National Universities Commission (NUC), the federal government has continued to make policy and implement intervention projects and programmes targeted at enhancing the quality of teaching, research and community services in Nigerian Universities. Moreso, the introduction of Strategic Planning Management Scheme (SPMS), National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS) cannot be overemphasized.

Regrettably, in spite of government's efforts to ensure that tertiary institutions are sufficiently empowered and nurtured to produce globally, competitive and entrepreneurial graduates that can act as key players in driving the nation's socio-economic and technological development, the target seems not to have yielded the expected result or it still remains unachievable because many graduates of Nigerian Universities are deficient in basic skills and general aptitude for world of work, which consequently has made them highly unemployable. There is no doubt that government alone cannot handle the helm or investment required in the higher education sector. It is in the light of the above that this paper seeks to examine the extent to which public-private partnership collaboration in education could be employed to assist in the development of tertiary institutions in Nigeria, hence the paper highlights the effort made by both the government and private sector to redress the dilapidating effects in higher institutions through public-private partnerships.

Definition of Concepts

Concept of Public-Private Partnership

The concept of public-private partnership refers to a long-term contact between a private partner and a government entity, for providing a public asset or service, in which the private party bears significant risk and management responsibility and remuneration is listed to performance.

It is partnership between the public sector and the private sector for the purpose of delivering a project or a service.

A Public Private Partnership (PPP, 3P or P3) is a long-term arrangement between government and private sector institutions. Typically, it involves private, capital financing government, projects and services up-front, and then drawing revenues from taxpayers and/or users over the course of the Public Private Partnership contract. Public-private partnership have been adopted in many countries for developmental projects that involve the provision of infrastructures to the citizenry. They have been employed for building, equipping, operating and maintaining schools, hospitals, transport systems, and water and sewage systems (Wikipedia, 2022).

Cooperation between private sectors and the government has existed since the inception of sovereign states, notably for the purpose of tax collection and colonization. However, contemporary "public-private partnerships" came into being during the end of the 20th Century. They were associated with neoliberal policies to increase the private sector's involvement in public administration. Originally, they were seen by governments around the world as a method of financing new or refurbished public sector assets outside their balance sheets. At the down of the millennium, this vision of PPPs came under heavy criticism as tax payers or users still had to pay for those PPP projects, along with disproportionately high interest cost.

Public Private Partnership continue to be highly controversial as funding tools, largely over concerns that public return on investment is lower than returns for the private funder. PPPs were closely related to concepts such as privatization and the contracting out of government services. The lack of a shared understanding of what is their financial details makes the process of evaluating whether PPPs have been successful, complex. PPP advocates highlight the sharing of risk and the

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development of innovation, while critics decry their higher casts and issues of accountability. Evidence of PPP performance in terms of value for money and efficiency, for example, is mixed and often unavailable (Wikipedia, 2022).

The concept Sustainable Development

The World Commission on environment and development (1987) defines, Sustainable Development as the development that meets the need of the present, without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

Tertiary Institution

Tertiary Institution also referred to as third-level, third stage or post-secondary education, is the educational level following the completion of secondary education. The World Bank, for example, defines tertiary education as including universities as well as trade schools and colleges.

The Concept Partnership

A partnership could be defined as an unincorporated business organization formed by an association of two to twenty persons having similar economic interests, who by an agreement, (usually legal), decide to run a business together and share the risks and profits of the business. In Nigeria, the Companies' Act limits the number of partners. The maximum number of partners is likely to differ from country to country.(Anyanwuocha 2011)

Partnership is formed when a number of people provide the capital and share in the ownership, profits and losses of a business. It is the simplest association of persons that come into existence due to the need to raise capital and provide special skills for increased production (in the education sector (tertiary institutions)).

Membership of partnership ranges from 2 to 20 persons for non-banking business and 2 to 10 for banking business. Partnership is common among solicitors, doctors, accountants, and engineers. The finance of partnership comes from contributions of members raised through any of the sources discussed under sole proprietorship.

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Types of partnership

There are two main types of partnership:

1. Ordinary partnership: this is the type of partnership in which all the partners are fully liable for the debts of the business. The partners have equal powers and responsibilities and bear all the risks of the businesses equally. They also take active part in the running of the business and profits are shared equally.
2. Limited partnership: this is the type of partnership in which the liability of the members is limited to the amount they contributed to the business. In this case, there must be one general partner with unlimited liability who is the overall risk bearer.

Kinds of Partners

1. Active partners
2. Sleeping or dormant partners
3. Nominal partners
4. Quasi partners
5. Secret partners

The Features of partnership are as follows:

1. The active partners usually take major decisions together.
2. The partners contribute capital or skill or both, according to the agreement reached. In return, each of them receives a proportion of the profits as agreed. In addition, money could be borrowed from banks.
3. The partners bear risks of the enterprise jointly. With the exception of the limited partner, the partners have unlimited liability.
4. The business is not a separate legal entity and cannot, therefore, sue or be sued in its own name.
5. The business has no board of directors. The control and management of the business is in the hands of the active partners.

Joint Enterprises

Joint enterprises are those business undertakings in which private investors and the government are in partnership. The government may set up an enterprise jointly with private firms. On the other hand, the government may acquire part of the ownership of an already existing firm.

Benefits of Public-Private Partnerships in the development of tertiary institutions

The following are some of the benefits accrue public-private partnership in the development of tertiary institutions in Nigeria:

Cost Saving: These can result through more efficient cost effective operators and service delivery. The private partners can contribute to cost reduction through the application of economies of scale in providing, operating and maintaining facilities, the use of innovation technologies, adopting more flexible procurement and compensation arrangements and by reducing overhead costs (Kolade and Babalola, 2006).

- **Risk sharing**: The associated risks can be shared with a private sector.
- **Improved levels of service**: More innovative approaches can be introduced in order to increase the level as well as quality.
- **Enhancement of revenue generation**: Apart from setting appropriate user fees, which fairly reflect the cost of service delivery, PPP can offer the opportunity for introducing more innovative ways of generating revenue.
- **Over efficient implementation**: Through more efficient decision making processes and collaboration, PPP can provide more and facilitate more efficient ways of project implementation.
- **Economic benefits**: Public-private partnerships can stimulate employment generation, transfer of expertise and economic growth.

The Role of Public-Private Partnerships (PPP) in sustainable development of tertiary institutions.

The role of public-private partnership in sustainable development in higher institutions cannot be overemphasized. Experience across the globe reveals that the attainment of meaningful and sustainable development require the genuine participation of the public, the organized private sector, donor agencies, individuals and civil society. Public-private partnerships therefore is one of the new trends in partnership strategies; it is popularized as an alternative approach to the delivery of goods and services. It refers to contractual arrangement between the public sector and the private sector to achieve well-defined and shared objectives in a cost effective, efficient and sustainable manner. This arrangement always specifies targets, responsibilities, priorities and feedback processes. It primarily involves sharing of resources, knowledge and risks between the two sectors so that the university at large can benefit from the arrangement (Oni & Akinbinu, 2005).

Since the 1980s, dwindling resources of government have put more straw on investment in higher education making the task of funding, thus, become increasingly difficult coupled with increased enrolment and demands, while this financial stress was glaring in the prederegulation regime, the deregulation regime – post-structural Adjustment Program (SAP) changed things around creating less dependence on government for funding as evident in increase in tuition and opening of private ventures within higher institutions. Higher education is now seen as a "private good" for which individual beneficiaries should pay and also an outcome of complex interactions of different stakeholders whose corporate organizations give support to education as a corporate social responsibility.

Public Private Partnership (PPP) has received great recognition across the globe. In the United Kingdom, government adopted the Private Finance Initiative (PFI) in the early 1990s with the sole aim of constructing and refurbishing of school through lease arrangements and establishing the Academy Sponsors Trust (AST) to secure private sponsorship. Coupled with the fact that government funds are not sufficient which to a new public and private partnership; project which directly contributes to university research'. Kumarasinghe (2011) affirm that public private partnership is essential to be part of the emerging world.

The notion of public-private partnership (PPP) has on several occasions been heralded as one of the pivotal mechanisms for a move forward and a more sustainable development in the university system. In Nigeria, such high level public-private partnership (PPP) as evident in other countries is limited. Public-private partnership has been identified

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as an important way of financing higher education from alternative sources as it relates to funding; opportunities have been very effective. Example John O. and Catherine T. Mac Author Foundations has developed partnership with some Nigerian Universities in 2001 the Foundation provided grants of US$100,000 and $3,000,000 for Higher Institutions in the advancement of research which include donation of teaching and research infrastructure such as lecture halls, laboratories, hostel accommodation, ICT Centres, promotion of scholarship, supply of textbooks and journals; and the development of infrastructure and work-related curriculum (Ogbodo and Nwaoku, 2007 & Oghenekohowo and Abu, 2011).

Furthermore, Zinox Technologies, a computer company, have collaborated with universities in developing Information Communication Technology (ICT) facilities and training of high level manpower on the ICT component. The Communication Industry such as MTN, GLOBACOM, the Banks and other financial institutions are also involved in private initiative and collaboration. For instance, in University of Lagos, MTN has lent support in the area of e-library; banks have also intervened in the areas of funding scientific research.

Public-Private Partnership (PPP) is important in managing higher institution because a greater deal of educational reforms revolve around the collective input of all parties concerned. Caldwell (2004) stressed that if a broader perspective of PPP is adopted it will provide an additional opportunity to strengthen the intellectual, social and economic base of the higher institutions.

Public partnership is an effective way to ensure quality education. The private partner can bring in management and technical expertise to increase efficiency and quality. Such a partnership also helps private players to bring in innovative solutions and be accountable for delivery of impact.

Bharti foundation strongly believes in the PPP mode of implementation.

Public-private partnership also has a key role to play in ensuring that higher institutions curriculum is matched to local labour market needs and that young people make a smooth transition from school to labour market.

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Risks Associated with (PPP) Public-Private Partnership

- Loss of control by the public sector: Where the private partner commits more funds to a project than the public sector, there is a likelihood that he private partner would seek for more control over how services unprovided and priced. In this type of situation, the onus of establishing services standards and ensuring the protection of public interest rests squarely with the government.
- Increased cost: Since the delivery of services through public-private partnership requires some degree of cost recovery or pricing policy to reflect all relevant costs, then one can expect some increase in user fees for the affected services.
- Questionable level of accountability: With public-private partnership) the lure of accountability for the provision of services are often not very clear to the public, to the extent that could results to criticisms of the partnership arrangement.
- Reduced quality or efficiency of service: where there is very little incentives for the private partner and the public-private partnership is poorly structured, this can affect the efficiency of the service delivery system or the quality of service.

  According to Belle Wheelan, President, Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission. (Wheelan 2012)

Ten Tips for Successful Public-Private Partnerships In Higher Education

1) Set realistic expectations- both in terms of timing and outcomes.
- Entering into a long term public private partnership takes time. Give yourself a reasonable window to conduct a strong search process and time to negotiate your contract. Based upon the experience of others, this can take some time.
2) Engage a broad base of stakeholders from your institution
- There are numerous examples of institutions going through the long process of signing a partnership agreement only to find there is no faculty and buy in to execute the project.
3) Have the right leaders who can be agents of change.
- Implementing a significant university partnership may require establishing new business processes across several functional

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areas. To effectively achieve this, appoint and empower initiative leadership with the credibility to engage the university community marshal resources, and generate the commitment to make necessary changes.

4) Reach out to multiple companies and run a competitive selection process
- Whether running a formal process or just an informal search, approach as many potential partners as possible. The landscape of companies changes rapidly and there are likely more options than you think.
5) Do deep due diligence on potential partners. Your university is entering into a long term relationship and you want to make sure that your partner company will be fiscally stable for the duration of the agreement. With an abundance of private capital funding new ventures serving higher education, it pays to do basic financial due diligence on your potential partner.
6) Network with your peers and learn from their experience.
- When considering a potential partner, there is no substitute for the recommendation of another college or university.
7) Get financial and contractual expertise. Understand all the potential risks.
8) Find a cultural fit with a partner, not just the best practice.
9) Clearly define your goals for the partnership
10) Hold your partner accountable.

Conclusion

Based on findings of the study, future directions of universities depend wholly on everybody’s commitments, the public-private partnerships, corporate bodies, voluntary organisations to collaborate to deliver high quality, effective and efficient education service to the people. There is no doubt that government alone cannot handle investments required in higher education sector. As such, there is need for deliberate effort by the government and private sector to redress the dilapidating effects in higher institutions. The public-private partnerships must be diligent, in order not to be a party to corruption, policy inconsistencies, financial mismanagement and many others, and do everything possible to avoid all the risks associated with public-private partnership to achieve globally competitive and entrepreneurial graduates that can act as key players in driving the nation's socio-economic and technological development.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are therefore made:

1. The public-private, non-governmental organizations, therefore, should do everything possible at their disposal to encourage sustainability tempo of our university system.
2. All hands must be on deck to ensure that public private partnership program is encouraged in both human and infrastructural development in tertiary institutions in Nigeria.
3. All stakeholders involve in the provision of higher education in Nigeria should explore all existing opportunities to fulfil UNESCO's 1998 mandate of public-private partnership.

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