

Implementation of Public Private Partnerships in Technical and Vocational Education in Nigeria

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Abstract

This study focused on the implementation of public private partnership (PPP) strategies in technical and vocational education in Nigeria. Three research questions guided the study. A descriptive survey design was employed and sample for the study comprised of 270 staff of technical colleges and higher institutions where technical education program are offered in Niger and Kaduna states. The instrument for data collection was face validated by 3 experts in technical education from federal university of technology, Minna. A reliability coefficient of 0.71 of the instrument was determined using Cronbach alpha. Data were analyzed using mean and standard deviation. The results showed that the implementation of PPP has numerous challenges. It was recommended that PPP strategies should be utilized in the provision of infrastructure and services in technical and vocational education in Nigeria.

Keywords: *Partnership, technical colleges, technical education, vocational education, services*

Introduction

Public private partnership (PPP) is a sustainable effort between the public and private sectors in which each contributes to planning and resources needed to accomplish a mutually shared objective (Asian Development Bank, 2012). The term PPP describes a range of possible relationships among public and private entities in the context of infrastructure and other services. Public private partnership according to Dolapo (2009) is a contractual arrangement between a government agency and a private sector/non-governmental/civil society that allows for greater private sector participation in the delivery of infrastructure or

services. It is about how government services is funded and operated through a partnership of government and private sector companies. The aims of PPP include mobilization of private investment for infrastructure development, socio-economic growth, poverty reduction and provision of needed services. Dolapo further stated that PPP is carried out in order to provide infrastructure and services in various areas such as agriculture, sport, housing, micro-finance (economy), health, education etc.

The objective of PPP in education sector is for the provision of educational facilities, educational services, operational services, management services and professional services. When these facilities and services are provided through PPP, experts are of the view that it may lead to effective and efficient governance. Other advantages of the PPP in the education sector include: (a) private sector (non-governmental organizations or civil society organizations) brings resources and expertise that government lacks. (b) it enhances acceptance by private sector to venture into societal development where they are stake holders. (c) risks are allocated to those best able to handle them. (d) future funds are not tied up in servicing debts. (e) it increases government's capacity to invest. (f) it leads to greater budget transparency. (g) infrastructure/services are delivered when they are needed. (h) it ensures accountability and (i) it encourages customer service orientation with respect to public services.

In the light of these laudable merits of PPP in the education sector, it becomes very necessary for it to be adapted and effectively implemented in technical and vocational education and training in Nigeria given the glaring challenges of poor funding and inadequate facilities in the sector that has arise partly due to the expensive nature of technical and vocational education. Technical and vocational education (TVE) according to United Nations Educational Scientific and cultural organization (UNESCO) (1999) refers to those aspects of the educational process involving in addition to general education, the study of technologies and related sciences and the acquisition of practical skills, attitudes, understanding and knowledge relating to occupations in various sectors of economic and social life. Specifically, FGN (2004) define technical education as that aspect of education that leads to the acquisition of practical and applied skills as well as basic scientific knowledge. It is a planned programme of courses and learning experiences that begins with exploration of career options, support basic academic and life skills, and enables achievement of high academic standards, leadership and preparatory for industry-related work. This type technical education is commonly found in tertiary institutions in Nigeria. On the other hand, vocational education and training prepares learners for careers that are based in manual or practical activities related to a specific trade, occupation or vocation. This kind of training is com-

monly found in technical colleges. Okoro (1999) viewed technical college as vocational institutions where skills are imparted to trainees in various trade areas. Hence, in this study, those responsible for the training of students in technical colleges are referred to as vocational educators

TVE is known to increase productivity of individuals, profitability of employers and expansion of national development. A knowledgeable workforce, one that is both highly skilled in a particular occupation and also exhibits flexibility is seen as the most important human capital required for the development of a country (Berlia, 2012). This can be achieved with a well implemented TVE because it is basically occupational in nature which makes individuals self-reliant. This implies that the acquisition of occupational skills in TVE will improve the standard of living of its recipients and by extension improve national development. Based on the importance of TVE to national development, Okpor & Hassan (2012), opined that sustainable access to technology development in Nigeria can best be achieved through PPP with technical and vocational education. However, the authors were quick to add that PPPs are still at infancy stage in Nigeria. In the same vein, UNESCO (1999) stressed that due to the challenges of poor funding and inadequate facilities in TVE, government and non-governmental organizations, private firms and private individuals should make a collective effort in improving education in this sector through the formulation and effective implementation of PPP goals and strategies.

The PPP strategies that are implementable in TVE include but not limited to the following: provision of facilities and machineries for improving skill training in TVE institutions, provision of training in various trades of TVE, and provision of other services. If these strategies are being adequately implemented in TVE since the inception of PPP in Nigeria, the nation should have started feeling the impact of PPP in the sector as well as experiencing a more speedy technological development by now. However, it appears that the positive impact of the PPP in TVE has not been adequately felt in Nigeria given the teaming unemployed youths rooming the streets due to lack of employable skills. Could it be that the PPP arrangements are not adequately implemented in Nigeria?. This study therefore, sought to investigate the implementation of PPP in TVE in Nigeria.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to determine the extent to which PPP strategies are implemented in TVE by stakeholders for improving skill training in Nigeria.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

To what extent are PPP strategies implemented in TVE in Nigeria?

What are the challenges to the effective implementation of PPP in TVE?

What are the strategies that could be employed to enhance effective implementation of PPP in TVE?

Research Methods

The study adopted the descriptive survey design. Survey researches according to Best (1997) involves assessing behaviours, preferences, perceptions and opinions of a sample. The population of the study consists of 541 staff of technical colleges and higher institutions where technical education programme is offered in Niger and Kaduna states. The population distribution is as follows; 235 staff of six technical colleges in Niger state, 26 technical education lecturers in Federal University of Technology, Minna in Niger state, 250 staff of five technical colleges in Kaduna state and 30 technical education lecturers of Kaduna polytechnic in Kaduna state. 50% of the staff in each institution was sampled using the simple random sampling technique. This gave a total of 270 staff. Data was collected using a 48-items questionnaire designed by the researcher and known as public private partnerships implementation instrument (PPPII). The PPPII was made up of three sections: A, B & C based on research questions 1, 2 and 3 respectively. In section A, the PPPII was structured using the four point rating scale of Very High Extent (VHE), Moderate Extent (ME), Low Extent (LE) and Very Low Extent (VLE). While in sections B & C, the PPPII was structured using the four point rating scale of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD). These ratings have weights of 4, 3, 2 and 1 beginning from the highest to the lowest respectively. The instrument was face validated by three experts in technical education in Federal University of Technology, Minna and their comments and suggestions were considered in preparing the final draft of the instrument. The instrument was trial tested in Government Technical College, Bunza and data collected were used to determine internal consistency of the items of the instrument using the Cronbach alpha method which resulted to a reliability coefficient of 0.71. Data collected for the study were analyzed using mean and standard deviation for the research questions. The four point scale was statistically interpreted as follows: VHE&SA=3.00-4.00, ME&A=2.00-2.99, LE & D=1.00-1.99 and VLE&SD=0.01-0.99.

Results

Research Question 1

To what extent are PPP strategies implemented in TVE in Nigeria?

The result that emerged from table 1 shows that all the PPP strategies are being implemented to a low extent with means ranging from 1.00 - 1.99 except for items 3, 5 & 12 which are being implemented at moderate extent with a mean rating of between 2.00-2.90. Item 5 On the organization and sponsoring quiz and debate programmes as well as speech and prize given days in schools was agreed by respondents as most implemented while items 2, 9, & 10 on Provision of opportunities for TVET Teachers to regularly update their workplace experience, Provision of operational services such as cleaners and school wardens and Provision of scholarships to deserving and hardworking students were regarded as not implemented respectively.

Table 1: Mean Responses of Staff on the Extent of Implementation of PPP Strategies in TVE in Nigeria.

S/No	ITEMS	Technical Educators			Vocational Educators		
		X	SD	DEC	X	SD	DEC
1	Provision of training in various vocational trades for local artisans and the teaming unemployed youths	1.66	0.40	LE	1.36	0.31	LE
2	Provision of opportunities for TVET Teachers to regularly update their workplace experience	1.33	0.35	LE	1.04	0.28	LE
3	Provision of opportunities for Industrial attachment for students	2.11	0.53	ME	2.90	0.38	ME
4	Provision of facilities such as water, electricity, classrooms and hostels in various institutions for effective training of students	1.61	0.23	LE	1.90	0.36	LE

5	Organization and sponsoring quiz and debate programmes as well as speech and prize given days in schools	2.82	0.21	ME	2.90	0.46	ME
6	Provision of tools, equipment and instructional materials for effective teaching and learning	1.91	0.52	LE	1.99	0.49	LE
7	Provision of security outfit to help in effective school management	1.66	0.68	LE	1.82	0.53	LE
8	Facilitation and provision of professionals in various trades to deliver talks on speech in prize given days of schools	1.51	0.46	LE	1.76	0.58	LE
9	Provision of operational services such as cleaners and school wardens	1.44	0.35	LE	1.32	0.30	LE
10	Provision of scholarships to deserving and hardworking students	1.64	0.30	LE	1.23	0.41	LE
11	Provision of experts or professional in management to educate/train managers of TVE in order to improve poor management	1.94	0.70	2.00	1.88	0.69	LE
12	Attachment of Technical and Vocational Education students to enterprises for practical work experience	2.32	1.00	ME	2.00	1.89	ME
13	Interaction between teachers and relevant company officers to draw up result oriented attachment programmes for students	1.99	0.74	LE	1.76	0.67	LE

14	Provision of maintenance services for existing facilities in Tech. & Voc. Institutions for effective training purpose	2.11	0.88	ME	1.93	0.77	LE
GRAND MEAN		1.65	0.87	LE	1.45	0.88	LE

Research Question 2

What are the challenges to the effective implementation of PPP in TVE in Nigeria?

Results emerging from table 2 indicated that respondents disagreed with items 4 and 11 on Inability to find the right partners and Lack of local talent in the area of technical and structuring competence respectively as least challenges but they agreed with all other items posed to them as challenges to the implementation of PPP in technical and vocational education in Nigeria. Items 13 & 7 on Implementation of PPP projects in Nigeria is affected by the fact that PPPs are relatively new phenomena in the country and Sidelineing of TVET teachers when articulating the framework of PPP respectively were identified as major challenges to effective implementation of PPP in TVE in Nigeria. See table 2 for details.

Table 2: Mean responses of staff on the challenges to the effective implementation of PPP in Nigeria

S/No	ITEMS	Technical Educators			Vocational Educators		
		X	SD	DEC	X	SD	DEC
1	Lack of political will for proper implementation of PPP.	3.23	0.86	SA	3.22	0.80	SA
2	Misconception of the terms of PPP	3.17	0.85	SA	3.31	0.67	SA
3	Fear of Risk of Failure by parties involved.	3.41	0.72	SA	3.11	0.76	SA
4	Inability to find the right partners	1.09	0.43	D	1.23	0.54	D
5	Stringent legal process involved in partnership arrangements.	2.04	0.54	A	2.44	0.43	A
6	Lack of clear understanding of government objectives in TVET	3.56	0.86	SA	3.61	0.71	SA

7	Sidelining of TVET teachers when articulating the framework of PPP	3.66	0.85	SA	3.81	0.77	SA
8	Perceived lack of transparency in PPP	3.00	0.69	SA	3.05	0.80	SA
9	Inattentiveness on the part of government to partnering opportunities	2.03	0.47	A	2.99	0.78	A
10	Misconceived notion that PPP weakens the government's ability to implement its policies	0.91	0.67	SD	0.86	0.75	SD
11	Lack of local talent in the area of technical and structuring competence	1.03	0.62	D	1.22	0.68	D
12	Lack of adequate comprehension of the fundamentals of PPP by participants (government & private sector)	3.44	0.76	SA	3.56	0.72	SA
13	Implementation of PPP projects in Nigeria is affected by the fact that PPPs are relatively new phenomena in the country.	4.00	0.81	SA	4.11	0.61	SA
14	Leadership and management in PPP not fulfilling contractual agreement	2.91	0.56	A	3.11	0.64	A
15	Insufficient participation of the private sector in the PPP relationships	3.02	0.59	SA	3.21	0.54	SA
16	Inadequate follow-up/ motivation by government agencies to encourage/ forge cooperation	3.33	0.66	SA	3.51	0.77	SA

17	Lack of knowledge/ appreciation of the immense longer term benefit of PPP.	3.41	0.87	SA	3.22	0.74	SA
18	Many people exploit the PPP arrangement as a means of cheap labour or a means of making money.	3.55	0.53	SA	3.24	0.63	SA
GRAND MEAN		3.45	0.71	SA	3.53	0.82	SA

Research Question 3

What are the Strategies to enhance PPP implementation in TVE in Nigeria?

The data on table 3 showed that respondents agreed that the strategies presented could be adopted as means of enhancing the implementation of PPP in TVE in Nigeria. The most accepted strategies by the respondents are items 3, 16 & 8, which emphasized that TVET teacher and other stakeholders, should be involved in articulating the framework of PPP, Holding workshops/seminars to sell benefits of PPP and Creating an enabling institutional environment in which partnering relationships can flourish respectively. See table 3 for details. This implies that these strategies if adapted, they could lead to improve implementation of PPP in TVE in Nigeria.

Table 3: Mean responses of staff on the strategies to enhance PPP implementation in TVE in Nigeria

S/No	ITEMS	Technical Educators						Vocational Educators		
		X	SD	DEC	X	SD	DEC	X	SD	DEC
1	Allocate risks and responsibilities to parties best able to handle them.	3.00	0.76	SA	3.02	0.69	SA			
2	Mutual objectives and goals of the partnerships should be properly articulated to all stakeholders.	2.79	0.42	A	3.22	0.45	SA			
3	TVET teachers and other stakeholders should be involved in articulating the framework of PPP.	3.99	0.77	SA	3.98	0.67	SA			
4	Government to create enabling environment for partnership	2.80	0.48	A	2.98	0.54	A			
5	Provision of the right political will	3.00	0.24	SA	3.30	0.68	SA			
6	Establishing enabling legal institutional and regulatory framework	2.43	0.39	A	3.76	0.33	SA			
7	There should be quality control and standard setting in the PPP project	2.91	0.34	A	2.34	0.24	A			
8	Create an enabling institutional environment in which partnering relationships can flourish.	3.78	0.33	SA	3.67	0.34	SA			
9	Identify areas in government where impediments to partnerships may exist.	3.20	0.61	SA	2.64	0.43	A			

10	Recognize and acknowledge publicly the valuable contributions that current private sector partner's organizations make to the government.	2.80	0.39	A	3.42	0.56	SA
11	Government to develop and support clear policies that encourage partnership building	3.10	0.29	SA	3.00	0.65	SA
12	Identify existing non-partnered government programmes that could benefit from partnerships.	3.57	0.38	SA	2.96	0.41	A
13	Promote continued dialogue among all stakeholders to define the common goals and remove potential obstacles to partnerships.	2.93	0.41	A	2.39	0.70	A
14	Set the tone for transparency by creating solid financial and technical regulatory frameworks.	3.30	0.66	SA	2.98	0.55	A
15	A fair amount of Education & communication in both Public & Private sector should be encouraged.	2.30	0.36	A	2.63	0.65	A
16	Hold workshops/seminars to sell benefits of PPP.	3.67	0.29	SA	3.68	0.62	SA
	GRAND MEAN	3.07	0.46	SA	3.05	0.22	SA

Discussions

The findings of this study revealed on table 1 that most of the PPP strategies are implemented at a low and moderate extend. Furthermore, the grand mean of the responses of respondents shows that the PPP is not adequately implemented in technical and vocational education in Nigeria. This finding is not surprising, given the challenges faced by technical and vocational educators in imparting this type of education in the country. Okpor and Hassan (2012) stated that for effective implementation of technical and vocational education in Nigeria, it is necessary to involve the PPP to aid in the provision of facilities and services. In the same vein, Alitheia Capital Real Estate (ACRE) (2010) maintained that the PPP is the answer to Nigeria's infrastructure and services delivery problems. Ogwo and Oranu (2006) also noted that the implementation of the objectives of technical and vocational education in Nigeria is not being adequately achieved because of lack of necessary facilities and services. Hence, the need for the effective implementation of PPP strategies in the provision of infrastructure and services in technical and vocational education in Nigeria.

Findings emanating from table 2 show a whole lot of challenges to the implementation of PPP in technical and vocational education in Nigeria. Out of these challenges, respondents rated the newness of PPP in Nigeria as the biggest challenge with a mean rating of 4.00 and 4.11 for technical and vocational educators respectively. While it is true that PPP transactions are relatively new in Nigeria when compared to some other countries, it has been noted by Alitheia Capital Real Estate (ACRE) (2010) that in the last decade, over twenty-five (25) major infrastructure projects have been rolled out through PPPs. It was added that the federal government of Nigeria, state and local government areas (LGAs) have contributed over N10 trillion to this. This is quite encouraging given the scenario of the situation on ground. However, a whole lot more need to be done in other to enhance the transactions of PPP in Nigeria especially in technical and vocational education.

Findings in table 3 showed that respondents agreed with all the items presented as a means of reducing the challenges militating against effective implementation of PPP in technical and vocational education. However, respondents strongly believe that if TVET teachers are adequately involved in articulating the framework of PPP it will go a long way in reducing the challenges to effective implementation of PPP in technical and vocational education.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, it can therefore be concluded that even though PPP is not adequately implemented in TVE, the PPP remains the best approach to delivering infrastructure and services in technical and vocational education in Nigeria. This can be explained by the fact that TVE is capital intensive as such government alone cannot adequately fund this type of education. Therefore, if the much-needed technological and economic development must be achieved and sustained, the PPP arrangement seems to be the most viable option in TVE and other sectors in Nigeria. Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made:

1. PPP strategies should be highly utilized in providing infrastructure and services in technical and vocational education and the needs of other sectors of the economy in Nigeria.
2. All stakeholders in PPPs including TVE teachers should be involved in articulating PPP objectives especially in TVE and work towards implementing it.
3. Government should create enabling environment for PPP to flourish in technical and vocational education

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