

Public-Private Sector Partnership and Administration of Secondary Schools in Rivers State, Nigeria

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Abstract: This paper examined public-private sector partnership and administration of secondary schools in rivers state, Nigeria. A correlational research design was adopted for the study. The population for this study consisted of all the academic staff in 289 public senior secondary and some elite residents working in some private sectors in Rivers State. Specifically, 289 principals, 7,142 teachers, and 2,000 elite residents, totaling 9,431. These critical public-private sector stakeholders in school served as the population for the study. The sample size of 400 respondents were drawn for the study using Taro Yemane formula. A stratified sampling technique was adopted to select the sample size in the 3 Senatorial District in Rivers State. The research instruments for this study were questionnaire titled: Public-Private Sector Partnership Scale (PPSPS) and Administration of Secondary Schools Scale (ASSS). The instruments items were designed and validated by the researcher. Cronbach Alpha reliability statistics was used to calculate the reliability coefficients of the two instruments. The reliability coefficients of Public-Private Sector Partnership Scale and Administration of Secondary Schools Scale are 0.87 and 0.84 respectively. The findings revealed that there is a significant relationship between public-private sector partnership in the provision of library facilities, laboratory equipment, financial assistance and administration of secondary schools in Rivers State, Nigeria. Based on the findings, it was recommended among others that government should create an enabling environment for the smooth running of businesses for private sectors to produce optimally so as to facilitate the provision of library facilities to schools.

Keywords: Public-Private Sector, Partnership, Administration.

INTRODUCTION

The speedy expansion of students' enrolment in public schools in Nigeria since the attainment of independence followed by economic depression orchestrated by Corona Virus in recent years has made education a thorny responsibility for government alone to shoulder. This rise in the student population coupled with inadequate funding of the sector has resulted in poor teaching, lack of instructional materials and dilapidated buildings in the whole system. There is no doubt however, that the inadequate funding of the education sector in the country has stalled the effective administration of schools and the accomplishment of some of the aims and objectives of education as enshrined in the National Policy on Education. It must, however, be stressed that education cannot be an instrument par excellence for achieving economic growth and national development where the sector is not effectively funded and managed to accomplish its aims and objectives. The success of any organization to a large extent depends upon the resources available to it. Fund is very important in this respect because by it,

all other vital elements in the school can be obtained, such as school building, purchase of equipment, teachers' remuneration and other operational expenses.

Undoubtedly in Nigeria today, most of the schools in the state may be said to be in crisis due to the inadequacy of necessary facilities for effective teaching and learning. The learning environment of the schools have relative poor physical infrastructure coupled with attendant students explosion in recent years. These of course have made education in the state a thorny responsibility for the government to shoulder alone. According to the Federal Republic of Nigeria (2014), the basic framework for educational management in the country, as provided in the 1999 constitution, spelt out basic national objectives for education. It stipulates that the government should seek to ensure equal and adequate educational opportunity at all levels, to promote science and technology and to eradicate illiteracy. To achieve these objectives, the framework posited that all hands must be on deck. A holistic approach involving the government, the private sectors

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and the general society needs to be embraced in order to give education its rightful place in the society, most especially in the administration of the secondary educational system.

In view of the fact that education is a key contributor to economic growth and national development of any nation, the critical role of the private sector in this regard cannot therefore be overaccentuated. Private sector is defined as that sector of the economy that are not owned and run by the government. They include the non-governmental organizations (NGOs), such as UNESCO, age grade, private schools, religious societies, market women, World Bank, International Monetary Fund (IMF), Parent Teachers' Association (PTA), Alumnus of schools, Community Based Organizations (CBOs), oil companies, wealthy private individuals and many more. Some of these private organized sectors play active and very significant parts in the development of education sector thereby supplementing the efforts of the government by participating in the administration and funding of the school system. This has become necessary as funds provided to secondary education by government are not enough to address such needs of the sector such as payment of teachers' remuneration, procurement of instructional materials and other facilities. The evolving reality no doubt reveals that government cannot single handedly continue to shoulder the cost of education alone. Thus, for effective administration and funding of the sector, it calls for public-private partnership.

Administration entails proper implementation and utilization of scarce resources; human, financial and material to achieve the goals and objectives set by the organization. Education is the fundamental human right that every child must acquire without any barrier. Administration of public secondary education especially in Nigeria bedeviled with many challenges such as poor funding, inadequate infrastructural facilities, inadequate qualified teaching force, poor community participation and a host of other related problems. In this situation, secondary educational administration, characterized by the aforementioned problems coupled with the economic depression necessitated by Covid-19 would worsen the situation if left unaddressed. The problem is assumed to cut across all levels of education. Perhaps, that was why the FRN (2014:47), as if it perceived the scenario of economic downturn which was brought about by Covid-19, stated in section 13 item 120 and 121 that: Education is an expensive social services and requires adequate financial provision from all tiers of government for successful implementation of the educational programmes. Government's ultimate goal is to make education free at all levels. The financing of education is a joint responsibility of the federal, state and local government and the private sector. In this connection, government welcomes and encourages the participation

of local communities, individuals and other organizations. It is on this premise that this study sought to examine the relationship between public-private sector partnership and administration of secondary schools in Rivers State, Nigeria.

Statement of the Problem

The need for public-private sector partnership in administration of secondary school cannot be overstressed, considering the observation and outcry of some well meaning individuals on the poor funding of the educational sector. Secondary schools in Nigeria are confronted with the problem of gross underfunding, insufficient skilled manpower, shortage of facilities and equipment due to financial constraints facing the system as a result of reduction of government budgetary allocation. This has led to the poor performance of students in both internal and external examinations as clamored by parents, decay and dearth in the system. Although several efforts have been made by legitimate authority to revamp and increase funding for the schools, but such effort have refused to yield positive fruit. School heads grumble of insufficient funds to perform daily operation and administration of schools particularly public secondary schools. However, just few public secondary schools can boast of both human and material resources, but many cannot pride themselves of such. The cost of access to these resources is a source of concern to public secondary school administrators and the school owners (government), as the schools cannot afford them. It is against this premise that this study sought to examine the relationship between public-private sector partnership and administration of secondary schools in Rivers State, Nigeria.

Aim and Objectives of the Study

The aim of the study was to examine relationship between public-private sector partnership and administration of secondary school in Rivers State, Nigeria. Specifically, the objectives were to:

1. Determine the relationship between public-private sector partnership in the provision of library facilities and administration of secondary schools in Rivers State, Nigeria.
2. Ascertain the relationship between public-private sector partnership in provision of laboratory equipment and administration of secondary schools in Rivers State, Nigeria.
3. Find out the relationship between public-private sector partnership in the provision of financial assistance and administration of secondary schools in Rivers State, Nigeria.

Research Questions

1. What is the relationship between public-private sector partnership in the provision of library facilities and administration of secondary schools in Rivers State, Nigeria?

2. What is the relationship between public-private sector partnership in the provision of laboratory equipment and administration of secondary schools in Rivers State, Nigeria?
3. What is the relationship between public-private sector partnership in the provision of financial assistance and administration of secondary schools in Rivers State, Nigeria?

Research Hypotheses

1. There is no significant relationship between public-private sector partnership in the provision of library facilities and administration of secondary schools in Rivers State, Nigeria.
2. There is no significant relationship between public-private sector partnership in the provision of laboratory equipment and administration of secondary schools in Rivers State, Nigeria.
3. There is no significant relationship between public-private sector partnership in the provision of financial assistance and administration of secondary schools in Rivers State, Nigeria.

METHODOLOGY

This study adopted a correlational research design to ascertain the relationship between public-private sector partnership and administration of secondary school in Rivers State, Nigeria. The population for this study consisted of all the academic staff in 289 public senior secondary and some elite residents working in some private sectors in Rivers State. Specifically, 289 principals, 7,142 teachers, and 2,000 elite residents, totaling 9,431. These critical public-private sector stakeholders in school served as the population for the study. The sample size of 400 respondents were drawn for the study using Taro Yemane formula. A stratified sampling technique was adopted to select the sample size in the 3 Senatorial District in Rivers State (i.e. Rivers South-East, Rivers

West and Rivers East). The instruments for data collection were questionnaires titled: Public-Private Sector Partnership Scale (PPSPS) and Administration of Secondary Schools Scale (ASSS). The instruments have two sections (A and B). Section A elicited demographic information from the respondents, while section B elicited information on public-private sector partnership and administration of secondary school respectively. The items of the instrument are responded on a 4-point Likert scale of Strongly Agreed (SA), Agreed (A), Disagreed (D), and Strongly Disagreed (SD). Data used for this study were sourced primarily by the researcher and with the help of two research assistants. 400 questionnaires were administered to the respondents, after which 387 copies were retrieved and found suitable for analysis resulting in 96% response rate. Cronbach Alpha reliability statistics was used to calculate the reliability coefficients of the two instruments. The reliability coefficients of Public-Private Sector Partnership Scale and Administration of Secondary Schools Scale are 0.87 and 0.84 respectively. Research questions were answered based on the value and direction of the correlation coefficient. Same correlation statistics was used to test the corresponding hypotheses at 0.05 significance level.

RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

The results of the analysed data for each research questions and its corresponding hypothesis are presented in tables.

Research Question 1: What is the relationship between public-private sector partnership in the provision of library facilities and administration of secondary schools in Rivers State, Nigeria?

Hypothesis (Ho₁): There is no significant relationship between public-private sector partnership in the provision of library facilities and administration of secondary schools in Rivers State, Nigeria.

Table 1: Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) showing the relationship between public-private sector partnership in the provision of library facilities and administration of secondary school in Rivers State, Nigeria

Variables	N	df	R	p (Sig.)	Decision
Provision of Library Facilities	387	385	0.552	0.031	Failed to Accept Ho ₁ (Significant) P < 0.05
Administration of Secondary School	387				

Decision Rule: 0.00 – 0.19 = Very Weak, 0.20 – 0.39 = Weak, 0.40 – 0.59 = Moderate, 0.60 – 0.79 = Strong, 0.80 – 1.00 Very Strong

To answer the research question, results from Table 1 produced a correlation coefficient, ‘r’ of 0.552; which by percentage is 55%. This result shows there is a moderate and positive relationship between public-private sector partnership in the provision of library facilities and administration of secondary schools in Rivers State, Nigeria.

For hypothesis tested, it is revealed from Table 1 that r of 0.552 is significant with P < 0.05 because the calculated probability value of 0.031 is lesser than the critical probability value of 0.05. Therefore, the null

hypothesis was rejected (r=0.552, p=0.031). By implication, there is a significant relationship between public-private sector partnership in the provision of library facilities and administration of secondary schools in Rivers State, Nigeria.

Research Question 2: What is the relationship between public-private sector partnership in the provision of laboratory equipment and administration of secondary school in Rivers State, Nigeria?

Hypothesis (Ho₂): There is no significant relationship between public-private sector partnership in provision

of laboratory equipment and administration of secondary school in Rivers State, Nigeria.

Table 2: Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) showing the relationship between public-private sector partnership in the provision of laboratory equipment and administration of secondary school in Rivers State, Nigeria

Variables	N	df	r	p (Sig.)	Decision
Provision of Laboratory Equipment	387	385	0.672	0.000	Failed to Accept Ho ₂ (Significant) P < 0.05
Administration of Secondary School	387				

Decision Rule: 0.00 – 0.19 = Very Weak, 0.20 – 0.39 = Weak, 0.40 – 0.59 = Moderate, 0.60 – 0.79 = Strong, 0.80 – 1.00 Very Strong

To answer the research question, results from Table 2 produced a correlation coefficient, ‘r’ of 0.672; which by percentage is 67%. This result shows there is a strong and positive relationship between public-private sector partnership in the provision of laboratory equipment and administration of secondary schools in Rivers State, Nigeria.

For hypothesis tested, it is revealed from Table 2 that r of 0.672 is significant with P < 0.05 because the calculated probability value of 0.000 is lesser than the critical probability value of 0.05. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected (r=0.672, p=0.000). By

implication, there is a significant relationship between public-private sector partnership in the provision of laboratory equipment and administration of secondary schools in Rivers State, Nigeria.

Research Question 3: What is the relationship between public-private sector partnership in the provision of financial assistance and administration of secondary schools in Rivers State, Nigeria?

Hypothesis (Ho₃): There is no significant relationship between public-private sector partnership in the provision of financial assistance and administration of secondary schools in Rivers State, Nigeria.

Table 3: Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) showing the relationship between public-private sector partnership in the provision of financial assistance and administration of secondary schools in Rivers State, Nigeria

Variables	N	df	R	p (Sig.)	Decision
Provision of Financial Assistance	387	385	0.461	0.011	Failed to Accept Ho ₃ (Significant) P < 0.05
Administration of Secondary School	387				

Decision Rule: 0.00 – 0.19 = Very Weak, 0.20 – 0.39 = Weak, 0.40 – 0.59 = Moderate, 0.60 – 0.79 = Strong, 0.80 – 1.00 Very Strong

To answer the research question, results from Table 3 produced a correlation coefficient, ‘r’ of 0.461; which by percentage is 46%. This result shows there is a moderate and positive relationship between public-private sector partnership in the provision of financial assistance and administration of secondary schools in Rivers State, Nigeria.

For hypothesis tested, it is revealed from Table 3 that r of 0.461 is significant with P < 0.05 because the calculated probability value of 0.011 is lesser than the critical probability value of 0.05. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected (r=0.461, p=0.011). By implication, there is a significant relationship between public-private sector partnership in the provision of financial assistance and administration of secondary schools in Rivers State, Nigeria.

Discussion of Finding

The first finding of this study revealed that there is a moderate and positive relationship between public-private sector partnership in the provision of library facilities and administration of secondary school in Rivers State, Nigeria. This finding is in line with Wrathall (2017) who stated that several school projects have obtained funding from public-private sector collaboration. According to him, Global Internets

are examples of private sector partnership with the government being the public sector in funding of information services in public libraries, although according to the scholar it was yet to reflect on administration of schools of most developing countries such as Nigeria, as they are yet to tap from such wave due to lack of necessary facilities. In a similar view, the Tide (October 21, 2019) noted that the emergence of first and second position of two community secondary schools (i.e. Community Secondary, Aletto Eleme and Community Secondary Rumuekini respectively) in Shell SPDC quiz in Rivers State, the Shell SPDC General Manager, External Relations, Mr. IgoWeli with the permission of the governemnt announced the award of SPDC Secondary School scholarship to the eight students and laptops, desktop computers and books for their school libraries. According to him, more libraries need to be provided to schools in Rivers State as the existing ones are either dilapidated or lack the necessary facilities to contribute to effective administration of schools, owing to the fact that provision of library facilities in schools goes a long way to promote instructional activities. Hence, there is a significant relationship between public-private sector partnership in the provision of library facilities and administration of secondary school in Rivers State, Nigeria.

The second finding showed that there is a strong and positive relationship between public-private sector partnership in the provision of laboratory equipment and administration of secondary school in Rivers State, Nigeria. This finding is in consonance with Okoro (2018) who noted that Shell companies in Nigeria have a long history of supporting most public schools through provision of laboratory equipment, scholarships and other incentives. Since inception of the company as a private sector in the 1950s, Shell companies in Nigeria with the collaboration of the government support initiatives to provide a positive learning environment for students and teachers, as well enhance curriculums. Although in the area of maintaining such facilities, it has been identified that schools and host communities have not done enough in maintaining them; thus, this contributed in ruining the effort of the company thereby limiting effective administration of the schools (Okoro, 2018). However, Rabe, (2017) asserted that since Nigerian economy began shrinking, government at all tiers have entered into partnership with private organizations such as Banks, Telecommunication companies like MTN, Dstv/Gotv, TOTAL, Shevron, Building construction companies, and other independent marketers who owned oil companies. From the community based organizations as part of private organizations, government at all tiers have also started partnering with Community Based Organizations (CBOs), School Based Management Committees (SBMCs), Parent Teachers Associations (PTAs), Old Students Associations/Alumni (OSAs), national and international Nongovernmental Organizations (NGOs), Charity Organizations like ACE Charity, Private individual Philanthropists like Dangote and other wealthy individuals not mentioned here, in supporting education system and its administration in Nigeria. Therefore, there is a significant relationship between public-private sector partnership in the provision of laboratory equipment and administration of secondary school in Rivers State, Nigeria.

Lastly, the third finding of the study revealed that there is a moderate and positive relationship between public-private sector partnership in the provision of financial assistance and administration of secondary schools in Rivers State, Nigeria. The result is in agreement with Ogbonnaya (2012) who observed that Communities, Philanthropic individuals, PTA, Alumni and charitable organizations in partnership with the government do support schools with funds in Rivers State and other parts of the country for daily administration. This, according to him, is done directly or indirectly, in the sense that they set up school buildings with well-equipped facilities, which are handed over to the government to administer. They also provide funds for desks, chairs and other equipment necessary for effective running of the schools. Thus, resulting in good academic performance of students and

proper administration of schools. Therefore, there is a significant relationship between public-private sector partnership in the provision of financial assistance and administration of secondary school in Rivers State, Nigeria.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of this study, it is concluded that there is a significant relationship between public-private sector partnership in the provision of library facilities, laboratory equipment, financial assistance and administration of secondary schools in Rivers State, Nigeria.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings and conclusion of the study, the following were recommended:

1. Government should create an enabling environment for the smooth running of business for private sectors to produce optimally so as to facilitate the provision of library facilities to schools.
2. Government at various levels should encourage Public-Private Partnership in the provision of laboratory equipment for effective teaching and learning of science subjects and for the attainment of quality administration in public schools.
3. Government and school principals of secondary schools should adopt good school-private sector relationship strategies to attract the support of private sectors and many other wealthy personalities in the provision of funds for effective administration of schools.

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