

## **Sustainable Basic Education Transformation Through Public-Private Partnership in Nigeria**

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### **ABSTRACT**

*Private organizations are now becoming the most important actors in provision of quality education in Nigeria. Government finance is complemented by inputs from external partners such as NGOs, development partners, communities, household, religious institutions and private companies. Though public sector remains an important player in providing education services to the masses but due to economic recession the budgetary allocation to education is fluctuating which is affecting quality education there by denying populace rights to basic education leading to problems such as prostitution, armed robbery, kidnapping, rise and activities of such groups such as Boko Haram and Niger Delta militancy. The paper examines roles of public-private partnership in providing alternative option as well as challenges of private sector partnership in education finance for the achievement of education for all in 2015 and attainment of aims and objectives of millennium development goals. The paper relied on content analysis such as text books, journals and reports on the activities of public-private partnership. The findings revealed that the relationship between private provision of education and educational quality is positive, which means that private sector can deliver high quality education at cheaper rate and minimize corruption. The paper suggests increase in public-private participation to enhance effective and quality education in Nigeria.*

**Keywords:** *sustainable public sector, public-private partnership, basic education*

## INTRODUCTION

The paper examine the problems of public-private partnership (PPP) and its effects on efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery in Nigeria because public-private partnership has been in practice in many areas such as health, education and community development (World Bank, 2003; Patrinos & Sosale, 2007) but the country is experiencing low participation in this areas. There are numerous problems facing basic education in Nigeria ranging from inadequate school facilities, dilapidated school buildings, fast growing in enrolment due to inadequate funding and corrupts practices of officials entrusted to managed the resources. In realization of this dangerous state of the basic education, many schools have turned to private organizations for assistance through public-private partnership (Hinchliffe, 2002; UNESCO, 2004).

Public-private partnerships promote efficiency of business and avoid the full privatization of public goods. It gives government power to possess ownership while (contracting) private to perform certain functions for the benefit of both sides (Farlam, 2006). The essence of public-private partnership is that it will improve school facilities, promote efficiency and reduce bureaucratic bottleneck. It also offers money for the government as well as private investors. To ensure success of public-private partnership government needs to do feasibility studies that address the issues of whether or not the public can afford the price, value of money as well as risk transfer (Farlam, 2006). Davies & Hentsehke (2006) observed that public-private partnership as an integral part of new public management came in to been as a result of inability of public administration to addressed public issues and governments all over the world are facing serious financial constraints ranging from budget shrinking due to economic recession, corruption and larger size of public bureaucracy. Public-private partnership is needed in order to promote better quality of public services as well as to allow diffusion of new ideas from the private sector.

Many African countries could not raise public revenue because of macroeconomic and growth instability, high debt ratio, weak tax administration and low internal revenue as a result of international donation or aid. These countries were also alleged for mismanagement

of funds, lack of accountability and high incidence of corruption. The donors were criticized for their self-interest and project-oriented agendas (UNESCO, 2011).

The public-private partnership will help schools regain their lost pride, improve their resource management and attract more funds to the school from the private sector (Ijaiya & Jekayinka, 2009). The importance of government in any society is to ensure social obligation were met through reforms and investment in public sector. Public-private partnership allocated roles, obligations and risk bearing to the public and private partners in an optimal way. Public are government entities which include departments, ministries, state, local government. The private sector included local and international businesses, NGOs, community-based organizations and faith-based organizations.

### **CHANGING ROLE OF GOVERNMENT IN PUBLIC FINANCE**

The functions of government all over the world include provision of public goods, provision of physical infrastructures, promote micro economic stability, enhancing institutional development, technology and improving market for labor and income redistribution (Wade, 1990). However, in Nigeria, government expenditure has not translated to meaningful growth and development and government expenditure in human capital and economic growth has continued to raise debate among scholars.

Since the last three decades there has been changing role of government in public finance due to:

- a. Poor quality of service delivery in public schools;
- b. Quest for accountability and equity of public education: Public schools lack accountability due to weak chain of accountability, while in private schools teachers are accountable to the school authority;
- c. Initiative by entrepreneurs that competition can lead to improvement in public service delivery; and
- d. Developing alternative sources of funding public education (Harry et al., 2009).

Nigeria is the 8<sup>th</sup> oil producing state in the world with abundant supply of other resources such as agriculture, labor force, and minerals. However, the institutional quality remain subject of debate due to the

fact that the country lacks quality governance to utilize resources in the most productive and efficient manner in order to promote welfare of the generality of its population that is constantly seeking productive opportunity in human capital development and rising standard of living and quality of life (Durosoro, 2011). The underlying reasons that are often cited include selfishness of leaders in allocating educational resources to meet present and future needs. The paralysis that has been unfolding is one characterized by education's rising claim on public sector resources against a backdrop of widespread economic growth and increase in enrolment whose demand for education cannot be met by traditional means. There has been budget cut in allocation of funds to education sector since education must compete against other claims for investment resources (OECD, 2007). Due to economic recession, public expenditure is not determined base on productivity and the budgetary allocation to the educational sector over the years has declined and this has equally affected the quality of education in Nigeria (Durosoro, 2011).

Also political instability constitute a problem to the development of education sector due to the failure of the political class to obey rule of law and tenets of democracy which constitute the major reason for political instability in Nigeria. It created problems such as corruption, abuse of power, lack of tolerance to opposition and weakening institutions (Kew, 2006 & Harriman, 2006; cited in Fagbadebo, 2007). Investment in human capital offers opportunity for equitable distribution of income because the problems of equal distribution of wealth in Nigeria is very crucial due to pervasive poverty in the country where 112 million have been reported as earning less than a dollar per day (National Office of Statistics, 2012). Current studies such as Ahmed (2012) showed that since macroeconomic constraints force government of poor countries to limit their expenditure, leakages of funds should be avoided because the importance of funds utilization for economic growth and human welfare cannot be over emphasize. The prudent management of the resource is very important to a country's growth and development. The little resources available to education sector in Nigeria is been subjected to mismanagement thereby denying children access to basic education and contributing to security problems to the nation such as the Boko Haram crisis, Niger Delta crisis and bombings (Agabi, 2010).

In another perspective, lack of zeal on the part of government is another issue of concern by various administrations. The slow reforms constitute another factor for the deterioration of institutional quality. Even with the introduction of Universal Basic Education Programme in Nigeria, governments gave less attention to educational development and as a result educational institutions has suffered from inadequate reforms which could be seen in the level of quality of education as well as the physical facilities available in the schools (Guseh & Emmanuel 2007).

Absence of institutional resistance is another reason for low budget allocation. The low investments in social service constitute hindrance to emergence of quality institution (Ibrahim, 2008). The consequent of it is that underfunding of the institution which affects output and quality of the institution (Clark, 2000).

Due to oil glut in the 70s, the federal government took over schools which led to increase in government spending; the coming of structural adjustment programme in the 80s led to devaluation of Naira and consequently affected the implementation of Structural adjustment programme and government policies.

Also, the universal basic education lack accountability, no reliable and update data on education finance as well as enrolment (Amakom & Ogujiuba, 2010). The organization lack of scientific information on the distributional impacts of educational efforts and spending in Nigeria which serve as constraint to the development of the sector (Alabi, 2009).

At the E9 education ministers' review meeting held in Indonesia in 2008 (a forum of nine most populous countries which was formed to achieve the goals of UNESCO's Education for All initiative), it was stated that Nigeria was one of the countries that is at risk of not meeting the target of education for all. For the country to achieve the goal of education for all, the use of resources must emphasize efficiency and equity.

Other sources of funds such as public-private partnership available to educational institutions remain untapped and even where it is harnessed; it has been subjected to fraudulent practices by school management for their private ends (Benedict, 2008). Government cannot fund education alone, there is need for government to join hands with other stakeholders such as parent-teacher association (PTA) and other philanthropist organizations to ensure viability of universal basic education programme in Nigeria (Nakpodia, 2011).

For the country to achieve the goals of educational for all by the year 2015 as well as vision 2020, the institution need to develop alternative sources of funding the programme so that the aims and objectives of universal basic education could be realized (Emunemu, 2011).

### **SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT OF BASIC EDUCATION IN NIGERIA**

Government organization serves a variety of development purposes. The setting objectives or goals to be achieved, the resolution of policies, the formulation of plans and their translation in to programmes and projects, the preparation and administration of budgets for programme implementation and the mobilization and utilization of nation's resources in the execution of programmes. It is axiomatic that public organizations in Nigeria should be designed specifically for the purpose to be served. Different purposes require different types of organization. One of the great obstacles to sustainable development and implementation is the failure of the government to revamp and transform for new purposes, the government and practices evolved over the years to perform traditional functions.

According to Esman (1991) the administration of development is a radically different function than the maintenance of law and the conduct of routine public task. Sustainable development and public education management in Nigeria must design to execute programme change. Management principles such as setting goals or objectives, strategic planning, cost benefit analysis; programme evaluation and accountability have become commonly accepted value in most societies. Just as rationality, neutrality, scientific management are to public administration, rational administration according to Rosenbloom, Shafritz, Naff & Riccupei (2007) involves running government in the image of business, using cost benefit analysis, rapid computerization information feed back loops, systems analysis and qualitative models. The central theme of good management is that certain management principles and practices exist in all governmental operations in order to obtain efficiency, accountability and economy. The management transformation of the public sector over the past several years has generated an immense number of alternative techniques designed to make government reform better. New public

management strategies in Nigeria should be closely associated with innovative economic planning capabilities. The public management strategies suggested in this study to help Nigeria move forward were based on the findings of this research. The strategies should be guided by lessons from previous efforts at induced administrative reform and from judgment of what might be effective, pragmatic and feasible in the nation's economic development program (Sparks, 2009). World Bank (2012) opined that low budgets, poor budget execution and the knowledge in procurement and financial management was also rated as risk to sustainability of universal basic education program.

Development administration should be viewed as government action which aims at promoting economic growth, improve human and organizational capabilities, promote equality in the distribution of opportunities, income and power and involves deliberate attempt at social and behavioral changes. The instrument required managing public education good in Nigeria. The literature on development administration made a distinction between changes and changes as a result of innovation, innovation in development administration is an adoption process that bring in new ideas on how to formulate and implement sustainable development policies in a developing nation, it represents a changes in administrative processes and the ways in which developing nations relate to their environment. A variety of public management issues result from this focus.

Governments often establish public organizations to deal with perceived market failures. However, the extent to which public organization continued existence contribute to aggregate social welfare depends greatly upon the diligence and motivations of the public administrator who determine the budget and oversee their operations. Dibia (2000) observed that threatening budget cuts and budgeting agency executives may not be very effective ways of influencing behavior of the employees and the separation between politics and administration limits the capabilities of public agencies to meet consumer wants effectively. Therefore, government like market; sometimes fails to promote the social goods. Consequently, a broad perception of managerial skills, training and management principles are required by public administrators in Nigeria in order to link market, government and stakeholder objectives with broader organizational goals. Public management reforms are also very important for service quality. For effective public management in Nigeria, government

organization should tailor the objectives towards the empowerment administration strategy that is in line with structures, systems human resources practices and employee skills. The nature in which top management communicate or practice these values by providing leadership in implementation service per excellence, application of technology adopting innovation management in public sector, which would enable organization to cope with the challenges of economic development in the new millennium. Also government should involve in institutional building activity. Institutional building has three main implications: major reform, provision of innovation through building of individual capabilities, investing in the organization through cost and benefit analysis (Balogun & Gelase, 1999).

In addition, Dibia (2000) observed that some of the problems associated with sustainable public management in Nigeria are due to reduction in government revenue as a result of fluctuation in the oil market, lack of adequate planning, proliferation of schools and ad-hoc expansion of enrolment, economic recession, balance of payment deficit, rising inflation rates, low technological base, maladministration of resources, growing foreign debt burden, lower agricultural growth rates and oil glut on the world market. Isaksson & Bigsten (2011) stresses that supreme audit institution could reduce the cost of running organization because many poor countries of the world don't have many resources for development of their institutions which led to poor performance of the institution, to ensure their sustainability there is need for alternative sources of funding. Supreme audit institution has a vital role to play in promotion, accountability and transparency; the constraints to effective, supreme audit institution include cost constraints, institutional interdependence, and operational factors.

Kasekende, Brixova & Ndikumana (2010) added that economic recession experienced in the global economy is making a very big impact in Africa especially the poor countries which resulted in widespread of poverty and underdevelopment. Some of the measures to address these problems include injecting money into the economy, revenue-raising through international bond issue and excessive sharing of reserve money. The way out for many countries include introduction of reform, enhancing competition in the financial sector and development of private sectors. Precious (2012) revealed that with just a few years to 2015 date set for achievement of Millennium Development Goals (MDG), there was controversy on whether the system should be sustained so as to look beyond 2015 because there



is likelihood of not achieving the MDGs goals. Nigeria was ranked as one of the richest fifty (50) countries in 1970s but dropped to 25 poorest countries in the world where poverty has raised from 54.4% in 2004 to 65.1% in 2010 and also 10 million of pupils in primary school are out of school (National Office of Statistics, 2012). Desert Herald (2012) observed that ₦150 million naira was given to the chairman house committee on education to cover up mismanagement and bribery scandal in universal basic education which is running up to billions of naira.

Government as a partner in education development needs to provide good atmosphere for the operation of schools as well as the following:-

- a. Provide basis or justification for establishment of private basic education;
- b. Allow both profit and non-profit schools to operate;
- c. Facilitate foreign direct investment in education;
- d. Formulate clear criteria for establishing private basic education;
- e. Establishing quality assurance;
- f. Use transparency initiative for selection of private partners;
- g. Formulate performance measure; and Develop effective communication channel (Oluwafemi, 2011).

### **ROLES OF PRIVATE SECTORS IN ENHANCING EDUCATION IN NIGERIA**

Government remains the main financier of education in Nigeria while the private sector only contributed a small percent to enhancement of education. Most of the private organizations such as the church, mosque, communities, philanthropist as well as NGOs, play a vital roles in areas like building and maintenance of school and provision of instructional materials. Community built schools where the school is lacking, Parent-teachers associations contribute money for renovation, while well-to-do philanthropists also buy textbooks and made substantial donations to the schools. However, there are private individuals that set up schools for profit maximization. In Africa, the participation of private sector in advancing education is very low due to poverty among the populace. Current studies by National Office of Statistics (2012) revealed that 112 million Nigerians earn less than a

dollar per day. Some schools also embark on launching to augment government efforts in order to raise funds for day to day running of schools. The multinational companies such as Shell, Chevron, Mobile Telephone Network and Jelius Berger do contribute toward educational development by building schools, donating computers and giving scholarships to the masses.

### ***Argument for Public-Private Partnership***

Competition: Some school of thought argued that by enhancing public-private partnership, it promotes competition between the public schools and their private counterpart which will lead to qualitative education. Davies and Hentschke (2006) posited that private sector can compete with public school which will in turn accelerate quality education.

Induce channel of additional resources into education: Public-private partnership will help a lot in covering the gap especially of meager resources provided by government. Due to the complexity of government expenditure, government alone can no longer shoulder the responsibility of providing everything, thus private sector can complement the efforts of government. Public private partnership will help in mobilizing capital from local and international private sectors and regional development partners to enhance development.

Promote transparency and accountability: Through public-private partnership, some of the mechanisms for promoting efficiency in private sector can be introduced into the public sector thereby promote efficiency in the education sector.

Greater efficiency is maintained through public-private partnership because managing scarce resource has been an issue affecting government institution. Better quality of service is maintained through PPP and the essence of public-private partnership is that neither side can achieve their goals alone. By collaborating together will provide avenue for the achievement of the aims and objectives of both organizations (Davies & Hentschke, 2006). It gives room for proper implementation through proper supervision, increase cheap and better service to the customer.

Risk-sharing between government and private sector which will lead to efficiency: Governments all over the world are facing problem of serious financial constraints due to increasing financial

burden due to the recent economic recession and strategizing public-private partnership it will help in enhancing sharing of risk from both sides.

The rationale behind public-private partnership is to ensure cost saving and to promote efficiency of public services (Lathan, 2005). Studies such as (KPMG, 2008) observed a positive correlation between private funding and improvement in academic performance of pupils and rate of academic improvement. Also, an analysis of public-private partnership in UK shows greater improvement in academic performance, infrastructural improvement, and increase in enrolment and attendance rate (Gibson & Davies, 2008). All the above evidences and suggestions led the government and international communities to debate whether public education can reach the poorest in the society.

**Table 1**

*Private Partnership in Education of Some Selected Countries: 1990-2005*

Country	Primary %			Secondary %		
	1990	2005	% Change	1990	2005	% Change
Benin	3	12	300	8	25	213
Brazil	14	10	-29	35	12	-66
Bulgaria	0	0	0	0	1	100
Chile	39	51	31	49	52	6
Colombia	15	19	27	39	24	-38
India	10	20	100	10	23	130
Indonesia	18	17	-6	49	44	-10
Jordan	23	30	30	6	16	167
Nether land	69	69	0	83	83	0
Pakistan	25	27	8	24	25	4
Peru	13	16	23	15	22	47
S/Africa	1	2	100	2	3	50
Thailand	10	16	60	16	13	-19
Togo	25	42	68	17	28	65
Tunisia	1	1	0	12	5	-58
Ukraine	0	0	0	0	0	0
USA	10	10	0	10	9	-10

*Sources:* Kingdom, 2007; www.uis.unesco.org; www.world bank.com cited in Patrinos, Osorio & Guaqueta (2009).

**Table 2**

*Dimension of Public Private Partnership in Education*

<b>Actors</b>	<b>Types of involvement</b>	<b>Motivation</b>	<b>Nature of intervention</b>
<b>Business</b>	Resource provider	Social responsibility	Funding
<b>Foundations</b>	Service provider	Philanthropy	Technical
<b>NGOs</b>	Expertise	Business interest	Management
<b>Communities</b>			Advocacy
<b>Parent Association</b>			

*Adapted from: UNESCO, 2011.*

**PROBLEMS OF PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP**

1. Public and private do not understand each other: Antagonism generate from both public and private due to lack of good rapport. The two sides are pursuing different motives, public is for promotion of public goods while private is for profit maximization. Lack of rapport between both sides constitutes issue of discourse to public private partnership.
2. Low participation by private organizations: Another problem bedeviling public-private partnership is low level of participation by the private organizations due to low education and lack of understanding of public-private partnership.
3. Rivalry between government and private organizations: Philanthropic organizations play vital role in enhancement of basic education, but sometime government do misjudge their mission and term them like rival organization that are trying to create tension. Agada (2002) noted that the cooperation between the NGOS and national government have clandestine activities which are inimical to the interest of the developing world.
4. Corruption: Corruption is a factor identified as deterrent to the achievement of millennium development goals. Government expenditure in provision of social services such as education, health, water and sanitation has increased in recent time, however the rate of development is still very low due to lack of good management of funds. It create diversion of valuable

resources, consequently the poor and less privilege suffer from the corrupt practices. Many international donors are willing to support basic education but due to corrupt practices of host government, many agencies after a while have stopped giving aids to less developed countries.

5. Limited involvement of the community, NGOs and private sector in the provision of management of education due to inadequate public enlightenment and social mobilization, inadequate planning data, high dropout rate as a result of uncondusive learning environment, inadequate number of qualified teachers, inadequate infrastructural facilities, low management capacity and lack of facilities for monitoring. Santiross, Hinchliffe, William, Adediran & Oniboh (2009) observed that external aid is a very marginal source of finance for public expenditures on primary education in Nigeria. Substantial multiples of current aids would have little impact on the gap between the current level of funding and amount required to provide all children with quality education because external aid to Nigeria has declined (less than 2% of government expenditure). Annual commitment to education is very low, funding remain an issue and the education for all global monitoring report (GMR, 2008) identifies Nigeria as being at risk of not achieving education for all by 2015.

## **CONCLUSION**

The paper discussed how to enhance public-private partnership in Nigeria education using basic education as a unit of analysis. However, it was realized that despite the efforts of government to promote public-private partnership in Nigeria, the participation is still low due to many problems ranging from rivalry between government and private sectors, lack of transparency and accountability, corruption and lack of understanding between public and private sectors.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The following are some of the recommendations with the hope that if put in place it will help in addressing problems of education in Nigeria:

1. Outsourcing model (contracting): In this model, state schools have some or all of its educational duties contracted out to the private sector to promote accountability of their services. A good example of this is education management firm such as Edison schools in the US, in which all schools functions such as school management, improvement, pedagogy are control by company (Harry et al., 2009).
2. State-funded private schools model: New schools are created but funded by state as with Charter schools in US, Canada and UK.
3. Increase in budgetary allocation to the education: Government should increase the budgetary allocation to education to enable the sector to achieve the aims and objectives of education for all by the 2015.
4. Provision of equipments and learning materials to the schools: Government should as a matter of urgency commit to provision of instruction materials that will promote culture of learning in order to achieve basic education.
5. Increase in collaboration: Government should spread her tentacles and increase collaboration with non-governmental organizations, international non-governmental
6. Public management system: Improve financial system, strengthening financial management through the use of Medium Term Expenditure Framework (MTEFs), budget's transparency, and improve in electronic system and auditing.
7. Increase in transparency and accountability: Through anti-corruption education, advocacy and awareness-raising are some of the way to education reform process.
8. Capacity development: Training, organizational reform and capacity building as part of large or specific technical assistance projects complementing donor sector support and education for all fast track initiative funds. Training of Parliamentarians on education budgeting and among parents and school management committee on basic budgeting and school management procedures are deemed useful.

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