

THE ROLE OF PUBLIC PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP (P P P) IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF QUALITY EDUCATION PROGRAMMES IN NIGERIA FOR SELF-RELIANCE AND ECONOMIC IMPROVEMENT

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Abstract

The National Policy of Education gave prominence to education for self-reliance in the educational structure. However good the structure maybe, it appears that it needs some improvement to accommodate some disadvantage youth in our society. The study review the condition of the institutions responsible for producing self-reliant with particular reference to Technical Colleges in Nigeria. Workshops, equipment and tools, learning environment and condition of service for teachers. Most of the problems identified initially as militating against the success of the educational system are still with us. These problems are traceable to economic, political and social situation in the country. The recent call for PPP intervention has become necessary because present educational system and its programme has failed to meet the expectations of the people in Nigeria. What students are learning in the present system are essentially theoretical due to lack of tools and equipment, workshops/laboratory buildings and motivated teachers. This paper recommended that, schools should set-up a work experience programme to ensure practicability entrepreneurship ventures by the youth should be made to attract credit facilities among others.

Key words: PPP, Quality-Education, Self-reliant, Economic, Improvement.

Introduction.

The 2001 UNESCO and ILO'S General Conference on Education for self-reliant i:e Technical and Vocational Education and Training referred to TVET as "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 related to occupations in various sectors of economic and social life. (UNESCO and ILO, 2002).

In recent years in Nigeria, education for self-reliant refers to theoretical vocational preparation of students for jobs involving applied science and modern technology. It emphasizes the understanding of basic principles of science and mathematics and their practical applications, rather than the actual attainment of proficiency in manual skills as is the case with vocational education.

The goal of self-reliant education is to prepare graduates occupations that are classified above the skilled crafts but below the scientific or engineering professions. Faruk (2013) in Nigeria, Vocational education and training prepares learners for jobs that are based in manual or practical activities, traditionally non-theoretical and totally related to a specific trade occupation or vocation, hence the term, which the learner participates. Self-reliant education/vocational education is usually considered part of the formal education system, and usually falls under the responsibility of the ministry of education.

According to Saba (2013) the world today is driven by vocational education, therefore, it has become very imperative for any country wishing to progress in both human and economic spheres, to ensure acquisition of entrepreneurial knowledge for her citizenry. The knowledge, when adequately acquired, shall enable every individual to be self-reliant. Therefore, education for self-reliant occupies a unique position in the socio-economic development of a nation. In other words, it is the most significant sector of any civilized economy. The current state of educational facilities especially in many of our technical and vocational institutions, are in utter dilapidation, yearning for refurbishing and expansion.

Vocational education as an aspect 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 sector of economic and social life (FRN 2004). As Nigeria move through the millennium, it is imperative that educational institutions produce citizen with vocational skills, especially in this period of high incidence of unemployment. According to smith (2008), an

educational system which makes no adequate provision for preparing its youths for their future life is like exposing them to great psychological economic and social tension. In a bid to prepare youths for their future life, vocational education is an integral part and has been entrenched in the National Policy of Education (2004) with the responsibility of providing its recipients with the required scientific knowledge, attitudes and practical skills promoting education with practical skills in the youth through various trades and careers which should be a paramount in every business curriculum.

The fact that the youth of any nation from the active undependable bulk of that nation is obvious. Okolocha (2007) the desire of any government is the achievement of self-reliance and resilient economy capable of resulting in economic development and national growth. Vocational education skills in the youth through different trades and careers for job creation are no doubt a task worth embarking on in order to be self-reliant.

The youth should be encouraged to acquired vocational skills, general reasoning problem solving and behavioural skills as well positive cognitive style are increasingly needed to supplement the narrow cognitive and occupational skills sought in more directed work environment. This paper therefore consider the acceptance of PPP intervention, reviews the concept and its merits and demerits for economic transformation through joining venture on educational programmes by public-private partnership through partnership of government. Concept of PPP, objectives of Nigeria's transformation agenda, centres for training self-reliant and its challenges in Nigeria, PPP best practices are all variables diagnosed.

The Concept Public-Private Partnership (PPP)

PPP describe a government service or private business venture which is founded and operated through partnership of government and one or more private sector companies. There is however, no hard and fast definition of PPP, savas(2000) described PPP as a partnership between the public sector and the private sector for the purposes of designing, planning, financing, constructing and/or operation projects.

Adirieje (2009), defined PPP as a cooperative venture between the public and private sectors, built on the expertise of each that best meets clearly defined public needs through the appropriate allocation of resources, risks and rewards.

Furthermore, Bukar (2012) view PPP as a process which involves a contractual agreement between a public sector authority and a private party in which the private party provide a public service or project and assumes substantial financial, technical, and operational risk in the project.

A public private partnership (PPP) is a government service or private business venture which is funded and operated through a partnership of government, and due or more private sector companies (Wikipedia, 2013). PPP involves a contract between a public sector or authority and a private party, in which the private party provides a public service or project and assumes substantial financial, technical and operational risk in the project.

Similarly, Ndagi (2010) stated that PPP referred to a contractual arrangement between a public sector agency and a for-profit private concern, whereby resources and risks are shared for the purpose of deliver of a public service or development of public infrastructures. PPP arrangements are graving in use and acceptance as an alternative and effective method to mobilize additional financial resources and benefits from private sector efficiencies. However, Ndagi (2010) maintained that PPP is not only method to deliver project financing and realization. It does not provide a miracle solution or a quick fix. Financing a project through a public-private partnership can allow a project to be completed sooner or make it a possibility in the first place (Ndagi, 2010).

Therefore, public private partnership often use private sector investment to finance a public project when sufficient public funding is not available for such projects such as public transportation networks, punks, convention centre, constructions, educational training and development in exchange for receiving the operating profits once the project is complete.

Objectives of PPP Transformation Agenda.

Invariably, considering numerous importance and relevance of PPP to develop the physical and human resources and all sectors including sub-sector of the educational sector, the objectives are stated as,

- Create decent jobs in sufficient quantity to resolve the protracted problems of unemployment and reduce poverty.
- Lay a foundation for robust inclusive growth within the Nigeria economy.

- Improve on a sustainable basis of the wellbeing of all classes of Nigerian regardless of their personal circumstances and location.
- Education is the key to human capital development, while TVET and training is the master key it needs refurbishing.
- However the provision of education in Nigeria cannot be carried out by the government alone hence the need for PPP. (Uwaisu 2006)

The Role of PPP in the Promotion of Education for Self-Reliant.

There is no doubt on the fact, that vocational education is a very current educational challenges among the developing countries. The content and learning experiences are yet to be fully integrated into the formal school curriculum in most cases and in most nations PPP. For some countries, the new initiatives are still grappling to gain both political and economic support.

However, the growing and popularity of public private partnership in recent years has led to the establishment of special centres in universities and other higher institutions for delivering specific curriculum instructions in vocational skill and education and other innovative subjects in new venture creation, enterprise development and capacity building.

The United-Nations (UN) clearly indicated that PPP and higher educational institutions should have a strategy of action plan for teaching and research in skill/vocational education, and for new ventures creation and spin-off. The real essence of Education for self-reliant is to ensure the improvement of educational quality by equipping the young ones with basic skills that will make them functional and productive in the society. This challenge is in line with UNESCO (2004) on the role of PPP in improving quality of education.

UNESCO made reference to Dakar framework for action which gave new impetus to the promotion of quality education by designing one of the six Education for All (EFA) goals; “improving all aspects of the quality of education and ensuring excellence of all, so that recognised and measurable learning outcomes are achieved by all, especially in literacy, numeracy and essential life skills” (Abdullahi, 2013). Bridges et-al (2007) stated that universities and societies across the world are consulted in the expansion of their central aims and purposes to be able to accept the challenges of development in the society in which they located.

This change of direction has much implication for the curriculum, instructional procedures and the students as a whole. They advanced further that universities are increasingly expected not mostly to respond to these changes but to drive economic and social development in the new environment, contributing to business competitiveness and innovation through knowledge transfer, research-based business start-ups, demand-led education and training, the development of the learning society and the contribution of higher level skills to knowledge economy. At the same time, the universities struggle to meet up with its traditional roles in the formation of an intellectual leadership, the education of a democratic citizenry or the cultivation of a wise and highly skilled community. In establishing the conceptual link between PPP and economic growth in Africa, Abubakar (2010) indicated that in a knowledge economy PPP can help economies keep up or catch up with more technologically advanced societies. Graduates are likely to be more aware of and better able to use new technologies. They are also more likely to develop new tools and skills themselves. Therefore, their knowledge can also improve the skills and understanding of non-graduate co-workers, while the greater confidence and know-how inculcated by advanced schooling may generate employment, with positive effect on job creation.

Benefits of Public Private Partnership in Educational Sector.

Public Private Partnership can also have direct benefits to the society. The most intriguing question is by producing well-trained teacher, this can enhance the quality of primary and secondary educational system and give secondary graduates greater opportunities for economic advancement. Below are points of consideration in-terms of benefits of PPP.

- Improves service delivery
- Improves cost effectiveness
- Increase Investment
- Reduces public sector risk by transferring to the private sector for more effective management
- Faster implementation of policies
- Makes better use of facilities and resources. (Bukar 2013)

Public Private Partnership Best Practices.

Voluntary and collaborative relationship between various participant in which all participants agree to work together to achieve a common purpose or undertake specific tasks and to share risks, responsibility, resources competencies and benefits and gain employable skills to its participants. A typical example of Public Private Partnership best practices is India's leap into the economic stage which is inextricably linked to its decade-long successful effort to provide high-quality and technologically oriented business to a significant number of its people. The following are examples of best practices of PPP in some countries of the world.

- Bangladesh Garments Manufacturing Association (BGMA) in partnership with UNICEF and ILO has established Garment Workers Education programme provide basic and vocational education to former labourers in the Garment industry.
- The German chamber of commerce and industry and some Nigerian Business Associations are partnering in Lagos in Abuja and Ogun to provide education to their workers.
- The German company WIHA-tools for Professionals in partnership with local Vietnam-German industrial college has implemented an internship programme in Song-Cong Nguyen province.
- Other best practice; Dangote Academy in Lagos; LG Electronics Nigeria and Yaba College of Technology partnership for the provision of job training to students; GBT Technical Training Centre; Hwajin Cosmetic College etc. (Uwaisu, 2006)

Challenges of the Public Private Partnership in Educational System of Nigeria.

Akinola (2006) asserts that vocational education should emphasize functionalism of skills rather than certificates. Practical work for a meaningful work according to Akinola is the solution to unemployment problem in Nigeria. In support of this, Wali-Uwais (2006) has classified the challenges of PPP into four parts, and these are;

A part of the challenge of PPP

- Dilapidated infrastructures.
- Low enrolment.

- Non-standardised informal technical and vocational training format.
- Dearth of skilled teachers.
- Poor perception.
- Low esteem.
- Poor remuneration for skilled workers.

B part of the challenge of PPP.

- poor funding
- Technical and vocational education and training provision is not based on manpower needs.
- Gender imbalance in participation and performance.
- Teaching-learning and Assessment practices are teacher-centred.
- Prior learning is not recognised.

C Part of the challenges of PPP.

- Lack of upward academic mobility for polytechnic graduates.
- Technical and vocational education curricular are not regularly revised.
- Weak quality Assurance system.
- Poor implementation of apprentice and SIWES

D part of the challenges of PPP.

- Government bureaucracy
- Low level of awareness of the stakeholders
- Low level of skills of stakeholders on PPP.
- Lack of data on skills demand and sectors
- Corruption practices
- Correct risk calculations and sharing.
- Problem of enforcing compliance by Government.
- Mistrust between the public and the private sector.

Constrain in educational system that lead to PPP intervention.

One of the complex and difficult task and the current issues facing the field of educational system today in the developing world like Nigeria is determining

exactly the effective strategies for implementation of educational system in order to achieve the national goals.

However, many of the people who addressed the issue enlisted a lot of strategies like effective and efficient funding, provision of teaching materials, use of effective evaluative method e.g continuous assessment, efficient management, and administration, and giving motivation to students and teachers. All these are necessary but not sufficient strategies. Rather the best way is to put the most implementers in the front line. This is because whatever you want education to achieve you put in the implementers.

In Nigeria, where the economy is characterised by low in-come, high in-come inequality, high rate of inflation and unemployment (stagflation) poor salary and wages to the workers, short average of life-span, low economic growth rate and survivalist economic situation, the teachers who are the greatest implementers of educational system complain bitterly of hash economic condition. These effect the way they teach (their teaching styles) which invariably affects our laudable system of education. (Saba, 2013)

Therefore, for our good educational system to achieve its aims of putting Nigeria to be self-sufficient, sustained, scientific and industrialised nation, Public Private Partnership intervention should be considered most. The success of vocational and technical education programme for skills development to generate self-reliant, educational is the key to human capital development while technical vocational education and training is the master key to achieve self-reliant mission. However, the provision of education in Nigeria cannot be carried out by the government alone hence the need for public private partnership (PPP) (FRN 2004)

Conclusion.

There is no doubt that public private partnership is a good alternatives to improving the financing of institute of skills development funds in Nigeria, however for institutions of learning to initiates develop and engage in it successfully a lot of sensitisations advocacies and capacity development among the stakeholders are required. A collective resolve can make a difference.

Recommendations.

Based on the findings of this paper, the following recommendation were made.

- To set-up partnership unit or department to develop the capacity of staff on how to initiate develop and engage in partnership.
- To create website to tell your own story, register with UNEVOC e-platform to access opportunities.
- To apply for grants from local and international donors by writing good proposal for institute skills development funds.
- To set up an independent commission for the implementation.
- To introduce award system for industries, companies, schools that participate successful public private partnership.
- To carry out intensive awareness campaign in the media for public awareness on PPP intervention.

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