



PRIVATE SECTOR PARTICIPATION AS PREDICTOR OF QUALITY EDUCATION DELIVERY IN PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN RIVERS STATE, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

This paper examined private sector participation as predictor of quality education delivery in public secondary schools in Rivers State, Nigeria. The study was guided by three objectives, with corresponding research questions and null hypotheses. The study adopted a correlational survey research design. The population of this study comprised of all the 6,893 teachers of 291 public senior secondary schools in Rivers State. A proportionate stratified random sampling technique was adopted to select a sample of six hundred and eighty-nine (689) teachers representing 10% of the entire population. Two instruments titled: Private Sectors Participation Scale (PSPS) and Quality Education Delivery Scale (QEDS) were used for this study. Cronbach alpha reliability test was conducted to ascertain the reliability of the instruments, of which the reliability coefficients of Private Sector Participation Scale and Quality Education Delivery Scale were 0.84 and 0.88 respectively. The research question 1 to 3 were answered using simple regression, while hypotheses 1 to 3 were tested with t-test associated with simple regression at 0.05 level of significance. The result of the study showed that private sector participation in the provision of health/nutritional services, sports/recreational facilities and laboratories in public senior secondary schools predict quality education delivery to a low extent in Rivers State. Thus, it was concluded that though private sectors participate in the area of provision of health/nutritional services, sports/recreational facilities and laboratories in public senior secondary schools to a low extent but can be significantly improved for the actualization of quality education delivery in Rivers State. Based on the result and conclusion of this paper, it was recommended among others that public secondary schools leadership should fall back to their host community leaders and food industries within the school communities with a good conscience of education purpose to seek funds and support regarding the provision of health/nutritional services. Also, 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 sports/recreational facilities in schools.

KEYWORDS: *Private Sector, Participation, Quality Education*

INTRODUCTION

Education has turned a major venture over the globe and it is conceded as the important and greatest investment any economy could adopt for speedy development. Education is a need whose budgetary weight has for years rested on the shoulders of the legitimate authority. The rapid expansion of students' enrolment in Nigeria since the attainment of independence followed by the enrolment explosion in recent years has made education a thorny responsibility for the 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 hindered the accomplishment of some of the aims and objectives of this level of education as contained in the National Policy on Education.



However, it must be stressed that education cannot be an instrument par excellence for achieving 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, payment of teachers' salaries and allowances and running expenses.

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 has been observed by the researcher that relative poor physical infrastructure coupled with students' attendant explosion in recent years have made education in the state a thorny responsibility for the government to shoulder alone. According to the Federal Ministry of Education (2004), 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 and the general society needs to be adopted in order to give education its rightful position in the society, most especially in the secondary educational system.

Education being a key contributor to the national development of any nation, the crucial role of the private sector in this regard cannot therefore be over emphasized. Private sector refers to that sector of the economy that are not owned and controlled by the government. They include the wealthy private individuals, 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 etc. Some of these private organized sectors play active and very significant roles in the development of the education sector thereby complementing the efforts of the government by participating in the administration and funding of the sector. This has become necessary as funds provided to secondary education by the government are not enough to address such needs of the sector such as payment of teachers' salaries and allowances, procurement of instructional materials, equipment and other facilities. The emerging reality no doubt reveals that government cannot single handedly continue to bear the cost of education alone. Thus, for effective management and funding of the sector, it calls for both public and private partnership. Section 1 of the 6th edition of the National Policy on Education 2013 as amended states in specific terms, the specific goals of Education in Nigeria. The Policy Projects that Education offered in Nigeria should be qualitative, comprehensive, functional, relevant and Information Technology driven. The Policy further states that, in doing this the Nigeria Government will ensure, sustain and offer unfettered access and equality education to all individuals in partnership with the private sector, Non-Governmental Organizations and Local Communities to support and fund education at all levels such as the secondary education.

Secondary education is the education which is received in the regular formal school setting where well trained and equipped teachers interact, on a regular basis, with the learner(s) on planned educative process. It is that education level which follows immediately after primary education and is also referred to as post primary education. It is the education children receive after primary education and before proceeding to higher institutions of learning. Institutions that provide secondary education in Nigeria are variously addressed as: Secondary School, College, Grammar school, and High School. Education at this level exists to prepare the individual learners for useful living within the society and for higher education. In order to achieve these broad goals efforts must be made by all stakeholders in the education sector to provide all primary school leavers with the opportunity for education of a higher level, irrespective of sex, social status, religious or ethnic background. Diversified curriculum to cater for the difference in talents, opportunities, and future roles, trained manpower in the applied science, technology and commerce at sub professional grades shall also be provided.

Besides these, the stakeholders in the education industry shall develop and promote Nigerian languages, art and culture in the context of world's cultural heritage. Students with the desire for self-improvement shall be inspired to achieve excellence and foster national unity with an emphasis on the common ties that unite the nation in our diversity. This level of education among other things aims at raising a generation of people who can think for themselves, respect the views and feelings of others, have respect for the dignity of labour, and to provide technical knowledge and vocational skills necessary for agricultural, industrial, commercial and economic development of the



nation. This level of education builds on the basic literacy, numeracy, and functional knowledge acquired at the primary level. It, in addition, offers students through its diversified curriculum the opportunity to acquire more advanced and specialized knowledge and skills which are for further education, for the labour market and for living. During the colonial era and up till 1976, secondary education was in just one phase of six years, though some schools did the course in just five years.

However, with the 1976 introduction of the 6-3-3-4 system, the six-year secondary education was split into two, constituting the junior and secondary levels. Thus, most students at the junior secondary level are aged between 12 and 15 years. Apart from serving as the link between primary and tertiary education, Nigerian Secondary education provides opportunity for a child to acquire additional knowledge, skills, and traits beyond the primary level. A major factor that necessitates the acquisition of secondary education in Nigeria is that the education being provided at the primary level is proving to be insufficient for a child to acquire permanent literacy, communicative, and numeracy skills expected from him/her at the end of the training (Matthew, 2013). The early missionary teachers taught mostly Latin, Greek, and three “Rs” - Reading, Writing Arithmetic. All that this level of education could provide was low man power to facilitate the spread of the gospel, there was no need rushing into secondary education which could make the people develop critical thinking. Besides, secondary education requires higher manpower and huge financial spending which the missions could not conveniently afford more especially as their interest was on political and economic control, with little interest in spending on education.

Consequently, several years passed before the establishment of secondary school in Nigeria. According to Adesina in Ige (2011), the first secondary school (CMS Grammar School, Bariga, Lagos) was established by the Church Missionary Society in 1859. The colonial government, for a very long time, did not complement the efforts of the Christian Missions in providing secondary education until 1909, fifty (50) years after the establishment of the first secondary school, when King’s College, Lagos was established as the first government owned secondary school. Thereafter, many education ordinances, policies, reports, edicts and bye laws aimed at improving the state of secondary education in Nigeria were promulgated. Throughout the period of stewardship of the Colonial Governments in Nigeria, there were few secondary schools to provide secondary education for those that were then willing to acquire it. Nevertheless, with the realization of the government that the strength of the nation depends largely on the quality of the education of its citizens, many secondary schools were established especially in the former Eastern and Mid-West Regions of the federation following the introduction of the Universal Primary Education (UPE) in the nation.

In Rivers State, there are 291 public senior secondary schools with an enrolment of 184,631 students (Planning, Research & Statistics Department, Rivers State, 2021). It is obvious that this number will continue to grow as the years progress, thereby creating more managerial problems in human and material resources in the sector. Today, most of these senior secondary 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 relatively poor physical infrastructure coupled with attendant students explosion in recent years. These of course have made secondary education in the state a thorny responsibility for the government to shoulder alone. According to the FME (2004), 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.

In view of this fact, the government invites and encourages the participation of local communities, individuals and other organizations in the provision and development of education. This is so because there is growing evidence that private sector participation in education can improve effectiveness in developing countries. The participation of the private sector could partially have the greatest impact on expansion opportunities, improving the cost effectiveness of educational delivery as well as improving the quality of secondary education. However, the state of secondary schools in the state seems not to suggest that the private sector has heeded the clarion call for participation by the government. This study therefore examine the participation of the private sector as predictor of quality education delivery in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.



STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The need for private sector participation in quality education delivery of secondary schools cannot be over stressed. In Rivers State, in spite of the Government's effort to employ thirteen thousand (13,000) teachers and the building of new schools in 2013, most public secondary schools since then have been observed to have suffered total neglect from the government and are at present generally in a state of disrepair and decay thereby giving a very serious concern to stakeholders in the education sector as to the quality of the output from such schools. The researcher as a school teacher has observed that some schools in Rivers State today portray deficiency in the availability and utilization of facilities. These facilities appear to be inaccessible and underutilized. In some cases, many of these facilities are still locked up in principals' offices and housed in conditions that leave much to be desired. In some public secondary schools, it was observed that many of these school buildings and facilities are in a state of dilapidation and dismay. Some of the schools lack books, relevant materials, teachers, libraries, well equipped laboratories, other manpower and proper administration. It was also observed that some of the schools lack power supply, adequate reading space, physical facilities like reading desks and chairs, fans, computers, ICT gadgets, toilets, etc. All of these hinder effective quality education delivery in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

Hence, all of the above and many more in public secondary schools in the state leave no doubt for the private sector to participate in quality education delivery. Therefore, it is on this premise that this study sought to investigate private sector participation as predictor of quality education delivery in public secondary schools in Rivers State, Nigeria.

AIM AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The aim of the study was to investigate the extent private sector participation predict quality education delivery in public secondary schools in Rivers State, Nigeria. Specifically, the objectives sought to:

1. Determine the extent to which private sector participation in the provision of health/nutritional services to public senior secondary schools predict quality education delivery in Rivers State.
2. Ascertain the extent to which private sector provision of sport/recreational facilities for public senior secondary school predict quality education delivery in Rivers State.
3. Examine the extent to which private sector participation in the provision of laboratories for public senior secondary schools predict quality education delivery in Rivers State.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following research questions were posed to guide the study:

1. To what extent does private sector participation in the provision of health/nutritional services to public senior secondary schools predict quality education delivery in Rivers State?
2. To what extent does private sector provision of sports/recreational facilities for public senior secondary school predict quality education delivery in Rivers State?
3. To what extent does private sector participation in the provision of laboratories for public senior secondary schools predict quality education delivery in Rivers State?

HYPOTHESES

Ho₁: Private sector participation in the provision of health/nutritional services in public senior secondary schools does not significantly predict quality education delivery in Rivers State.

Ho₂: Private sector participation in the provision of sports/recreational facilities for public senior secondary school does not significantly predict quality education delivery in Rivers State.

Ho₃: Private sector participation in the provision of laboratories for public senior secondary schools does not significantly predict quality education delivery in Rivers State.

METHODOLOGY

This study adopted a correlation survey design to ascertain if there is a relationship or co-variations among the variables using a quantitative method of research. The population of this study was made up of all the 6,893 teachers (i.e. 3,490 male and 3,403 female) of 291 public senior secondary schools in Rivers State. The sample size for this study was six hundred and eighty-nine (689) teachers representing 10% of the entire population. Kpee (2015)



considered such percentage appropriate to serve as an acceptable sample for a population running into thousands. The sample size was drawn from the entire population using the proportionate stratified random sampling technique. This ensured that all members of the population are given equal opportunity of being selected. The research instrument titled: Private Sector Participation Scale (PSPS) and Quality Education Delivery (QEDS) were used for this study. The instruments have two sections (A and B). Section A elicited demographic information from the respondents, while section B elicited information on Private Sector Participation Scale and Quality Education Delivery. The instruments were structured on four-point Likert-scale of Very High Extent (4), High Extent (3), Low Extent (2) and Very Low Extent (VLE) respectively. Cronbach Alpha reliability statistics was used to test the reliability of the two instruments. The reliability coefficients of Private Sector Participation Scale and Quality Education Delivery are 0.89 and 0.83. For the data that were analyzed, research questions one to three to ascertain the extent of prediction by multiplying the regression squared coefficient by 100%. Consequently, t-test associated with simple regression was used to test hypotheses one to three at 0.05 level of significance.

RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

As part of data collection efforts, the researcher designed and distributed 689 copies of the questionnaire to respondents. Six hundred and forty three (643) copies were retrieved and found suitable for analysis resulting in 93% response rate.

Table 1: Distribution of Respondents by their Gender

S/No	Status	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	Male	354	55.1
2	Female	289	44.9
	TOTAL	643	100

Research Question One: To what extent does private sector participation in the provision of health/nutritional services to public senior secondary schools predict quality education delivery in Rivers State?

Table 2: Simple regression on the extent private sector participation in the provision of health/nutritional services to public senior secondary schools predict quality education delivery in Rivers State.

Model	r	r Square	Adjusted r Square	Extent of Prediction	Decision
1	.614a	.403	.402	40%	Low Extent

Decision rule: 100% - 75% = Very High Extent, 74% - 50% = High Extent, 49% - 25% = Low Extent and 0% - 24% = Very Low Extent

Table 2 revealed that the regression (r) and regression square (r²) coefficients are .614 and .403 respectively. The extent of prediction (coefficient of determinism) is 40.3% (.403 × 100). The result indicated that private sector participation in the provision of health/nutritional services to public senior secondary schools to a low extent predict quality education delivery in Rivers State by 40%.

Research Question 2: To what extent does private sector provision of sports/recreational facilities for public senior secondary school predict quality education delivery in Rivers State?

Table 3: Simple regression on the extent private sector provision of sports/recreational facilities for public senior secondary school predict quality education delivery in Rivers State.

Model	r	r Square	Adjusted r Square	Extent of Prediction	Decision
1	.611 ^a	.454	.445	45%	Low Extent

Decision rule: 100% - 75% = Very High Extent, 74% - 50% = High Extent, 49% - 25% = Low Extent and 0% - 24% = Very Low Extent.



Table 3 revealed that the regression (r) and regression square (r²) coefficients are .611 and .454 respectively. The extent of prediction (coefficient of determinism) is 45% (.454 × 100). The result showed that private sector provision of sports/recreational facilities for public senior secondary school to a low extent predict quality education delivery in Rivers State by 45%.

Research Question Three: To what extent does private sector participation in the provision of laboratories for public senior secondary schools predict quality education delivery in Rivers State?

Table 4: Simple regression on the extent private sector participation in the provision of laboratories for public senior secondary schools predict quality education delivery in Rivers State.

Model	r	r Square	Adjusted r Square	Extent of Prediction	Decision
1	.623a	.464	.463	46%	Low Extent

Decision rule: 100%- 75% =Very High Extent, 74% - 50% = High Extent, 49%-25% = Low Extent and 0% - 24% = Very Low Extent

Table 4 revealed that the regression (r) and regression square (r²) coefficients are .623 and .464 respectively. The extent of prediction (coefficient of determinism) is 46.4% (.464 × 100). The result showed that private sector participation in the provision of laboratories for public senior secondary schools to a low extent predict quality education delivery in Rivers State by 46%.

Hypothesis 1: Private sector participation in the provision of health/nutritional services in public senior secondary schools does not significantly predict quality education delivery in Rivers State.

Table 5: T-test associated with simple regression on the extent private sector participation in the provision of health services predict quality education delivery in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	p-value	Alpha level	Decision
	B	Std. Error	Beta				
(Constant)	2.642	.197		16.176	.000	0.05	Hypothesis is accepted
1 Health/Nutritional Service	-.109	.072	-.092	-1.851	.087		

a. Dependent Variable: Quality Education Delivery

Table 5 revealed that standard beta value and t-test are -.092 and -1.851. The p-value of 0.087 is greater than the level of significance of 0.05. Therefore, the null hypothesis is accepted. By implication, private sector participation in the provision of health/nutritional services in public senior secondary schools does not significantly predict quality education delivery in Rivers State.

Hypothesis 2: Private sector participation in the provision of sports/recreational facilities for public senior secondary school does not predict quality education delivery in Rivers State.



Table 6: T-test associated with simple regression on the extent private sector participation in the provision of sports/recreational facilities for public senior secondary schools predict quality education delivery in Rivers State.

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	p-value	Alpha level	Decision
	B	Std. Error	Beta				
(Constant)	1.676	.172		9.672	.000		
1 Sports/ Recreational	.298	.063	.351	4.582	.001	0.05	Hypothesis is rejected

a. Dependent Variable: Quality Education Delivery

Table 6 revealed that standard beta value and t-test are .351 and 4.582. The p-value of 0.001 is less than the level of significance of 0.05. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected. By implication, private sector participation in the provision of Sport/Recreational facilities significantly predicted quality education delivery in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

Hypothesis 3: Private sector participation in the provision of laboratories for public senior secondary schools does not significantly predict quality education delivery in Rivers State.

Table 7: T-test associated with simple regression on the extent private sector participation in the provision of laboratories for public senior secondary schools predict quality education delivery in Rivers State.

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	p-value	Alpha level	Decision
	B	Std. Error	Beta				
(Constant)	1.663	.188		8.765	.000		
1 Laboratories	.319	.077	.315	4.489	.000	0.05	Hypothesis is rejected

a. Dependent Variable: Quality Education Delivery

Table 7 revealed that standard beta value and t-test are .315 and 4.489. The p-value of 0.000 is less than the level of significance of 0.05. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected. By implication, private sector participation in the provision of laboratories for public senior secondary schools significantly predicted quality education delivery in Rivers State.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The first finding of the study shows that private sector participation in the provision of health/nutritional services to public senior secondary schools to a low extent predict quality education delivery in Rivers State by 40%. The finding is in agreement with SABER (2015) which opine that NGOs provide health/nutritional service to public schools by encouraging good hygiene in school; holding schools accountable for any negligence in managing health issues within the school; empowering parents, schools and communities with basic ideas/knowledge on the improvisation of health service facilities; and promoting the need for healthy diet for student. But to an extent the services provided by these NGOs seem so insignificant to many schools in African. Reason being that when such services are rendered which are accompanied by materials and resources, they are being made away by some hoodlums or even school personnel, thereby hindering the end beneficiaries from profiting from it.

Concurring to the above, Adele (2005) noted that private costs of financing education for the year 2004/2005 session in Port Harcourt Local Government Area showed that the private sector provide health/nutritional services to public secondary schools in devise ways, such as: provision of first aid boxes, building of sickbays and equipping it with basic health facilities, awareness/campaign on personal hygiene, healthy lifestyle and balance diet, institutionalizing health clubs in schools such as Red Cross Society, provision of drugs and other medical materials and training of teachers and other staff personnel to serve as school first aiders. But he lamented that despite the various efforts made by these private individuals and institutions, there are still bottlenecks and challenges that have hindered the



effectiveness of the health services in the long run especially when they are made available. These challenges according to Enaohwo (2012) are mismanagement of facilities and materials provided, non-utilization/misappropriation of funds provided or made available for these services, and non-availability or continuous funding to maintain health facilities provided. Hence, private sector participation in the provision of health/nutritional services in public senior secondary schools do not significantly predict quality education delivery in Rivers State.

The second finding of the study indicates that private sector provision of sports/recreational facilities for public senior secondary school to a low extent predict quality education delivery in Rivers State by 45%. The finding is in consonance with Kabiru (2015) who in his study on the assessment of P.T.A contribution to educational development in Kano State showed that to a low extent P.T.A supports the secondary schools within the State in the provision of sporting and recreational facilities especially during the schools intra and inter sports competitions. But the little contribution made are in form of donation of sports materials, cash prizes to purchase sport and recreational facilities. According to Kabiru (2015), these little and low contributions could be linked to parents' poor socio-economic status.

Also, the finding is in agreement with Anozie (2016) who in his study noted that philanthropic individual like the former Super Eagle player Kanu Nwankwo in the bid to support sports in schools donated several sports/recreational facilities and as well with the establishment of Kanu Football Camp across some public secondary schools in Imo State, to enable students learn basic football skills from top coaches around the world. But to an extent not every school within the state benefited from this scheme due to the remote location of some schools, inability of some schools to meet the requirements for accessing these facilities and many more. Thus, private sector participation in the provision of sport/recreational facilities significantly predicted quality education delivery in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State

Finally, the third finding of the study disclosed that private sector participation in the provision of laboratories for public senior secondary schools to a low extent predict quality education delivery in Rivers State by 46%. The finding is in contrast with Ogbonnaya (2012) who observed that Communities, Philanthropic individuals, PTA, Alumni and charitable organizations do provide funds for the building of laboratories in schools in Rivers State and other parts of the country. This, according to him, is done indirectly, in the sense that they set up school buildings with well-equipped laboratories, which are handed over to the government to administer. They also provide desks, chairs and other equipment necessary for effective running of the schools. But despite these efforts to promote quality education in this line, the government fails to consolidate them by maintaining them to stand the taste of time. Thus, resulting in students not offering science subjects and as well poor performance in external and internal examinations in the area of sciences.

However, Okoro (2018) noted that Shell companies in Nigeria have a long history of supporting education through scholarships and other incentives. Since inception in the 1950s, Shell companies in Nigeria support initiatives to provide a positive learning environment for students and teachers, as well enhance curriculums. Therefore, private sector participation in the provision of laboratories for public senior secondary schools significantly predicted quality education delivery in Rivers State.

CONCLUSION

Based on findings of the study, it was clear that private sector participation in the provision of health/nutritional services, sports/recreational facilities and laboratories in public senior secondary schools predict quality education delivery to a low extent in Rivers State. Thus, it was concluded that though private sectors participate in the area of provision of health/nutritional services, sports/recreational facilities and laboratories in public senior secondary schools to a low extent but can be significantly improved for the actualization of quality education delivery in Rivers State.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings and the conclusion of the study, the following are hereby recommended.



1. Public secondary schools leadership should fall back to their host community leaders and food industries within school communities with a good conscience of education purpose to seek funds and support regarding the provision of health/nutritional services.
2. 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 sports/recreational facilities in schools.
3. Government at various levels should encourage Public-Private Partnership in the provision of laboratories for efficient service delivery in schools for the attainment of quality education.

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