

PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP INITIATIVE AND THE MANAGEMENT OF SECURITY IN THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT UNITY COLLEGES IN NORTH-CENTRAL NIGERIA

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Abstract

The study examined the impact of public-private partnership initiative (PPPI) on the management of security in the Federal Government Unity Colleges in North-Central Nigeria. The purpose of the study was to find out the perceived impact of PPPI on management of security in the Federal Government Unity Colleges. One research question guided the study while one hypothesis was formulated for the study. The study adopted the survey research method. The population comprised 2,866 teachers and PTA officials in the Unity Colleges. A sample of 712 was purposively selected through stratified random sampling for the study. A structured questionnaire based on 4-point rating scale, was used for data collection. The instrument which was trial tested, yielded a reliability index of 0.76 using Cronbach Alpha Coefficient Test. Descriptive statistics of mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions, while the Chi-square goodness of fit was employed to test the null hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance. The mean rating of 2.50 and above was the cut-off mark for acceptance of the research question. The finding of the study indicated no impact of PPPI on management of security in the Unity Colleges. Based on the findings, it was recommended that management of school security should not be left to the school administrators alone: community members and other private organizations should be involved, particularly in the areas of information sharing, organized community watches, security threat alerts and donation of security equipment to the schools.

Key words: Public-private partnership, management, security, unity colleges.

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Introduction

Schools are usually established to promote learning and acquisition of knowledge. These can be achieved only in a secured environment. Management of security in schools in order to secure the learning environment therefore, is one of the most important functions of school administration. The process of securing a learning environment is a joint responsibility of the administrators of the schools and the other stakeholders in the knowledge acquisition project. This is because security issues affect all and as such should be a concern of all. Security challenges of recent, particularly in public schools, have threatened the conduct of learning activities towards knowledge acquisition (Winsor, 2016). The situation is worrisome to parents, government and other stakeholders of education. There is need therefore for all to combine resources to fight insecurity in our schools. These resources may be combined through the public-private partnership initiative.

Public-Private Partnership Initiative (PPPI) is an economic orientation which entails an alliance between the public and private sectors to combine resources and share risks for the delivery of a product. Patrinos (2006) submits that public-private partnerships (PPPs) in education are often proposed in order to correct the inefficiencies in the public delivery of education services. For the educational institutions to achieve their desired results, the public and private sectors must cooperate and work together in partnerships to support the educational institutions. According to Fennel (2007), some of the advantages that can be obtained by Public-Private Partnership include enhanced managerial capacity, access to new technology, specialized skills, and better funding. Security challenges in schools could prevent the schools in offering quality education. Since the challenges seem to overwhelm government effort at providing security to the schools, PPPI could be adopted to engender the desired cooperation between government and the private sector to enjoy the advantages of PPPI and enhance security in the Federal Government Colleges.

Provision of school security is a very important attribute of school management. Ensuring students' and staff safety in schools has been part of the ethical framework for school management for decades (RoSPA, 2012). School security is an issue that concerns many stakeholders in education including school managers, teachers, students, parents, the community, and government. Security and safety are broad responsibilities for all participants in the education process. In an effort to address security challenges in schools, partnerships could be established between schools and the other stakeholders through the PPPI in order to enhance security in the Federal Government Unity Colleges.

The Federal Government of Nigeria has recognized the importance of Public-Private Partnerships (PPP) in service delivery, by stating that the need for massive investments beyond the means available to government calls for private sector participation through public-private partnerships (FGN, 2009). The Federal Government of Nigeria therefore formulated a public-private partnership policy which outlined the key principles upon which PPP is based for the improvement of public services, including public education, in a sustainable way. Some of these principles include "value for money, public interest, risk allocation, output requirements, transparency, competition, and capacity to deliver" (FGN, 2009, p.16.) Caldwell's (2004) assertion that if a broader perspective of PPP is adopted, it will provide an additional opportunity to strengthen the social capital base for public education, supports this view. Providing adequate security by government alone in the Federal Government Unity Colleges in North-Central Nigeria seem a challenging task. Public-private partnerships are obviously required in order to assist and sustain government capacity to deliver security services.

Statement of the Problem

Many public schools in Nigeria have been threatened by security challenges in the recent past. School security has therefore, become a very important and sensitive issue in school management in Nigeria. Happenings in schools such as secret cult activities (Ajayi, Ekundayo & Osalusi, 2010); kidnappings (Winsor, 2016); rape (Abayomi, 2015); school violence such as bullying and intimidation, Boko Haram attacks; suicide bombings; and attacks by suspected Fulani herdsmen in the country, and in North-Central Nigeria in particular, have often been reported. Other incidents of concern include injuries to learners and death through accidents involving building collapses (Premium Times, 2015). School security is vital to effective teaching and learning. The safety of school personnel should be of primary concern to stakeholders in the education sector, particularly the unity schools that attract students and staff from all over the country. Proactive measures need to be taken towards public schools' security and safety. The importance of having a safe and secure learning environment for academic development in Nigeria schools cannot be overemphasized.

Provision of efficient security service in public schools is very essential for stability, sustainable growth and academic achievement. Public sector provision of this service however has proved to be inadequate as evidenced in recent abductions of students from public schools and other security challenges witnessed in the schools. This may be attributed to factors such as inadequate managerial skills, heavy and cumbersome bureaucracy, poor workers' morale, inadequate equipment, among others. Public-Private Partnership Initiative (PPPI) was introduced in the country to help improve performances in government establishments (FGN, 2009; FRN, 2013). In spite of this, management of security issues still seems to be a major problem in public schools. The poor management of security in schools appears to threaten the existence of the schools and academic achievement of the students in the schools. It is in the light of this that the study was undertaken to investigate the perceived impact of PPPI on the management of security in the Federal Government Unity Colleges in North-Central Nigeria. The objective of this study was therefore, to ascertain the perceived impact of PPPI on provision of security in the Federal Government Unity Colleges.

Research Question

The study was guided by one research question:
What is the impact of PPPI on provision of security in the Federal Government Unity Colleges?

Hypothesis

The following hypothesis was formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance. Public-Private Partnership Initiative has no significant impact on provision of security in the Federal Government Unity Colleges.

Theoretical Framework

The study was anchored on Resource Dependence Theory in order to assess the behaviour of the Federal Government Unity Colleges in the area of study in initiating public-private partnerships (PPPs) towards improved management of security in the schools. The Resource Dependence Theory (RDT) which was propounded in 1978 by Jeffrey Pfeffer and Gerald R. Salancik states that organizations are dependent upon resources which are in the external environment. RDT proposes that actors lacking in

essential resources will seek to establish relationships with (be dependent upon) others in order to obtain the needed resources. The theory holds that even though all organizations have internal resources, they are not self-sufficient and therefore, must depend on external resources to support their operations and aspirations. Resources are often controlled by organizations not in the control of the organization needing them, meaning that strategies must be carefully considered in order to maintain open access to the resources. The theory further postulates that organizations have varying degrees of dependency on resources from the external environment. Consequently, inadequate control of the external environment may interfere with the achievement of organizational goals and ultimately threaten the very existence of such organizations.

The importance of this theory in explaining the actions of organizations by forming interlocks, alliances, joint ventures and partnerships, in striving to improve organizational management cannot be overemphasized. Resource Dependence Theory confirms the search for additional resources as a motivation for partnership between public and private organizations as a result of decline in public resources. The theory is therefore relevant to public school organizations as they strive to mobilize resources from the environment towards enhancing management of school security for the achievement of school goals.

Conceptual Framework

Safety and security are terms mostly used together to convey the same meaning but it is possible to understand them separately. Xaba (2014) explains that safety can be understood as a situation or condition that is not dangerous and or that is devoid of threats. In the environmental context, safety can be understood as a feeling, experience or perceptions that emanate from the condition or environment that is not dangerous. The safety of the school campus and buildings according to Schiffbauer as cited by Xaba (2006, p. 567),

includes ensuring that buildings are safe for use and that attention is given to hallways, stairways and verandas where learners walk to and from classes and other areas at the school, unused classrooms and out buildings used for storage, electrical fittings and other service amenities like plumbing pipes, fencing, lighting at night and sports field.

This implies that for school safety to be assured, the whole environment must be clean and well-maintained physically – the repairs, replacements and general up-keep of school property and facilities. It also involves continuous surveillance which entails monitoring the whole school environment, removing obstacles from school grounds, ensuring clear visibility of main entrances locating parking areas so that they are visible, keeping unused building securely locked, demarcating “out of bounds” areas, eliminating blind spots provided by doorways, fences, building and landscaping, and access control.

Security, on the other hand can be understood as a situation that is effected, created or made to exist because certain actions have been taken or certain measures have been put in place. Thus, Xaba (2014, p.1583) quotes Independent Project Trust (1999) as defining security to be

the measures that are taken to make the school environment free of crime and violence (and) is done by making arrangements within the school, and coordinating people’s efforts in such a way as to lower the risk of violence and injury.

Such measures may involve installation or erection of equipment or devices and acting on deficient facilities that pose danger or provide a potential for threats to an environment and its inhabitants' well-being and other actions that serve to discourage or repel situations or happenings that threaten safety and instead, enhance feelings of safety and well-being.

A safe school is therefore a healthy school, in that it is physically and psychosocially safe. May (2003) avers that a safe school environment is one that is not dangerous and that poses no threats to the school occupants in terms of their physical, emotional and psychological well-being. It has to be source of safety to be felt or experienced. Certain measures and actions have to be put in place to secure it, or for security to prevail. Securing the school environment or creating safe conditions involves facilities maintenance and surveillance of the school environment. The basic elements of safety and security entail the schools physical environment, security measures and policies that include procedural behaviour aimed at responding to security and safety threats. Features of safe school include the quality of security measures and maintenance of school buildings and grounds. A safe and clean environment that is conducive for education is that which has security of property, well-cared for facilities, furniture and equipment, clean toilets, water and green environment and absence of harassment.

According to Ochai (2012), school security is concerned with the safety of staff. It concerns the provision an environment that is free from threat. Safety of workers could motivate them for higher productivity. School personnel require security in area of kidnapping, freedom from secret cult attack, freedom of students from verbal and physical attacks, safety from parents insult and assaults.

The involvement of the private sector in the management of (school) security and safety has been stressed by Hon. Tom Ridge, former Secretary, United States Department of Homeland Security who is quoted by Busch and Austen (2012, p. 1) as submitting that "I just want to say this about the private sector. In my mind, the government is incapable of responding to its maximum ability without private support....." According to Raisch, Statler and Burgi (2007), the private sector has resources that can be of benefit to school security management. Such resources include community volunteers, and competencies in logistics, information and communication technology and communications. Partnerships between the public and private sectors would help to address the issues of security better. The risk of security and safety in schools is increasing, often overwhelming school resources and the private sector can assist in filling the gap.

Qaiser (2015) contends that tackling terrorism in general is painstaking work performed by specialized organs of the state. However, the threat to schools in recent times means that parents themselves must push and support schools to improve their security systems rather than waiting for the management to do so. Government agencies cannot provide enough security personnel to protect all schools. Consequently, the management of each school has the responsibility to hire private security guards to look into the security needs of staff and students. Parents should take the lead to ensure improved security apparatus in schools by ensuring that the right quality of private security guards are engaged, threat and risk assessment of schools carried out, plans are in place for handling emergencies such as fire, bomb threats; and armed intruders, school officials and recognized security experts meet regularly to discuss security issues and safety procedures. Engaging parents who have children in the school as part of school security officers could help in providing a personal reason for being vigilant. School partnerships with parents could help the school administration make the case to other

community members that school security is serious business. By working together, school and community can lessen crime and school violence, help improve academic achievement, and give a feeling of safety and security to the students and staff.

School-community partnerships have also been advocated as a means of improving school security and safety. According to the Independent Project Trust, IPT, (1999), research has shown that crime rates drop considerably with increased community involvement. This includes both increased community usage of the school and community partnership on security issues. Community partnership means that the school cooperates with other people and organizations in the area who volunteer to provide services or supplies to the schools. Community partnership could be in the following areas (IPT, 1999, p. 17):

- Community: Organized school watches, where volunteers take turns to guard the school.
- Adult volunteers to monitor learners as they move about the school in the day time.
- Talented people, with experience in security, who share their knowledge with the school security committee.
- Business sponsorship of security infrastructure like fences and alarms
- Parents and teachers volunteering to conduct after-school programs for adults like adult literacy classes, or for school-age children like clubs, sports, dances and other activities.

Brady, Balmer and Phenix (2007, p. 458) report that:

an example of school-police partnership that has experienced notable success is the 'Safe School' partnership developed for Chicago's public schools. Based on the philosophy that student criminal activity and violence is community-based and not a school-based problem, the 'Safe School' program is an interdisciplinary partnership that involves parents, local community leaders, school administrators, school staff, and law enforcement officers from the Chicago Police Department.

School security and safety are issues that require the attention and support of all those who are interested in positive development, learning and knowledge acquisition, and achievement of educational goals. Clearly, the problem is widespread and linked with other problems that are significant barriers to development, learning, teaching, parenting and socialization. As a consequence, single factor approaches to solutions cannot work. This is why public-private partnership initiatives are required to embrace comprehensive, multifaceted school – wide and community –wide approaches to tackle the school security challenges.

Empirical Studies

Various studies have been conducted by different scholars on management of security in public schools. Some of these studies are reviewed here to help link the current study.

Orabueze (2010) conducted a study on management of security of human and material resources in tertiary institutions in Anambra State, Nigeria. The purpose of the study was to examine the level of security threats, its management and challenges to the management of security of human and material resources in tertiary institutions in Anambra State. Four research questions were raised and four hypotheses were postulated for the study. The population of the study was all the 162 management staff,

76 security staff, and 152 student union executives in all the five tertiary institutions in Anambra State, totaling 390. The instrument for data collection was a 31-item self-designed questionnaire which was administered on all the 162 management staff, 76 security staff and 152 student union executive members. The data gathered were analyzed using mean, rank-order and one-way analysis of variance. The results showed that threats to life and property of staff and students are high. Challenges to effective maintenance of security in tertiary institutions in Anambra State include poorly-trained security staff, poor remuneration of security staff and irregular maintenance of security gadgets. The study recommended the need to review existing security measures, build structures for the protection of life and property, train security personnel, and improve their earnings and general working conditions in order to make them more effective and committed.

Brady, Balmer and Phenix (2007) conducted a study titled "School-police partnership effectiveness in urban schools: An analysis of New York City's impact schools initiative". The study examined the initial effect of the New York City's Impact Schools Initiative developed in 2004 that increased police presence in some of the City's most dangerous public schools. The data for the study were collected based on the annual schools report cards collected for all New York City public high schools for the 2002/2003 academic year, one year before the New York City Impact Schools Initiative took place, and for 2004/2005 academic year, one and a half years after the program's implementation in January, 2004. Each school record contained demographic and students' academic performance data in addition to a small set of school environmental indicators such as school overcrowding, police incidents, and student suspensions. Schools were identified by name and coded based on their impact school status during the first year of the program, 2004. A comparison between this original set for impact schools and nonimpact schools based on an analysis of school level demographic, academic, and school environment indicators was presented. Percentages were used to analyze the data. The results indicated that, despite increased police presence, students enrolled at New York City's impact schools continue to experience higher than average problems linked directly to future criminality, including more student suspensions and lower attendance rates than other New York City schools. The analyzed results revealed that relative to other New York City public schools, impact schools were more crowded and receive less funding. Based on the initial review of the program, the study concluded that New York City's Impact Schools Initiative cannot be seen as panacea or "Magic bullet", for improving school safety levels of some of the New York City's most dangerous public schools. It recommended that instead, heightened and more focused attention needs to be paid toward developing stronger partnerships with parents, family members, and community members affected by the New York City Impact Schools Initiative.

Methodology

The study employed a survey research method to establish opinions of school personnel on the current situation regarding their perceived impact of public-private partnership initiative (PPPI) on the management of security in the Federal Government Unity Schools in North-Central Nigeria. Data were collected through a structured questionnaire from a sample of 712 respondents from a population of 2,866 school personnel comprising teachers and PTA officials from 18 out of the 24 Federal Government Unity Colleges in North-Central Nigeria through purposive and stratified proportionate sampling techniques. In analyzing the data generated by means of the questionnaire, descriptive statistics of mean and standard deviation (SD) were used to

answer the research question, while the Chi-square (X^2) goodness of fit was employed to test the null hypothesis of the study. The values of 1 and 2 from the questionnaire responses were regarded as negative opinions while 3 and 4 were considered as positive opinions. The basis of decision was acceptance of the mean rating of 2.50 and above, while below 2.50 was not accepted.

Results/Findings

Research Question: What is the perceived impact of PPPI on provision of security in the Federal Government Unity Colleges?

Table 1: Mean and Standard Deviation of Impact of PPPI on Provision of Security in the Federal Government Unity Colleges in North-Central Nigeria

Item No.	Item Description	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	Std. Dev.	Rank	Decision
1.	Through PPPI: Private sector organizations have constructed a perimeter fence round the school and this gives protection to school personnel and property.	161	304	210	37	2.83	.84	1 st	Accepted
2.	Private sector organizations employ security guards to watch over the school thereby helping in school management.	29	225	397	61	2.31	.68	5 th	Not Accepted
3.	Private sector organizations donate security gadgets such as security cameras and microphones for use by the school security personnel and this helps in handling security challenges in the school.	77	231	331	73	2.44	.82	4 th	Not Accepted
4.	Local vigilante groups/police are mobilized by private sector organizations to help in protecting school property and as such school property is not stolen or vandalized.	161	37	210	304	2.48	.84	3 rd	Not Accepted
5.	Burglary proofs on school doors and windows are not provided and this leads to poor security of school property.	134	337	204	37	2.57	.80	2 nd	Accepted
6.	Regular meetings with the community members on school security issues are sponsored and this helps in handling school security issues	140	49	298	225	2.06	.87	6 th	Not Accepted
Cluster Mean and Standard Deviation						2.45	0.81		Not Accepted

Note: Item No. 5 was negative and so scored in reverse order.

Table 1 revealed mean and standard deviation scores of 2.83 (.84), 2.31 (.68), 2.44 (.82), 2.48 (.84), 2.57 (.80), 2.06 (.87) with cluster means of 2.45 (0.81) showing that items 1 and 5 are above 2.50 accepted mean score while 2 – 4 and 6 are below 2.50 therefore not accepted. This result implies no impact of PPPI on provision of security in the Federal Government Unity Colleges.

Item by item analysis revealed that respondents were of opinion that through PPPI; private sector organizations have constructed a perimeter fence round the school

and this gives protection to school personnel and property. Respondents on item 2 disagreed that through PPPI; private sector organizations employ security guards to watch over the school thereby helping in school management. Item 3 respondents disagreed that through PPPI; private sector organizations donate security gadgets such as security cameras and microphones for use by school security personnel and this helps in handling security challenges in the school. Respondents also disagreed with opinion on item 4 that through PPPI, local vigilante groups/police are mobilized by the private sector organizations to help in protecting school property and as such school property is not stolen or vandalized. Item 5 accepted that through PPPI; burglary proofs on school doors and windows are not provided by private sector organizations to enhance security of school property and item 6 also disagreed that through PPPI, regular meetings with the community security members on school security issues are sponsored by private sector organizations and this helps in handling school security issues.

Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis: Public-Private Partnership Initiative has no significant impact on provision of security in the Federal Government Unity Colleges.

Table 2: Chi-Square Analysis of the perceived impact of PPPI on the Provision of Security in the Federal Government Unity Colleges in North-Central Nigeria

Items Response	Fo	Fe	X ² Cal	X ² Crit.	Df	Sign.	Remark
SA	9	178.0					
A	39	178.0	5.50	7.82	3	.00	Not Significant
D	288	178.0					
SD	376	178.0					
Total	712						

Table 2 shows a Chi-square (X²) calculated value of 5.50 which is less than the critical value of 7.82 at significance level of 0.05 and 3 degrees of freedom. With this result, the null hypothesis was not rejected. This result shows that there is no significant impact of public-private partnership initiative on provision of security as perceived by the respondents.

Discussion

The finding of the study revealed that Public-Private Partnership Initiative (PPPI) has no impact on the provision of security in the Federal Government Unity Colleges in North-Central Nigeria. This finding is in agreement with the study by Orabueze (2010), which found that provision and management of security is poor in tertiary institutions in Anambra State, Nigeria, as a result of inadequate structures, including partnerships and collaborations to protect lives and property. The finding is also in agreement with those of the study by Brady, Balmer and Phenix (2007) who found that school-police partnerships were weak. It is the view of the researchers that security in the community helps security within the school, and vice versa. Since members of the community are freer and more capable of interacting far and near, partnership with the community

members through information gathering and dissemination on security issues could assist in promoting school security. A safe school environment promotes learning towards the achievement of school set goals.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, it has been established that Public-Private Partnership Initiative (PPPI) has no impact on the management of security in the Federal Government Unity Colleges in North-Central Nigeria.

Recommendation

It was recommended that since Security is an issue that concerns every member of the society, management of school security should not be left to the school administrators alone; community members and other private organizations should be involved. The involvement could be in the area of information sharing and security-threat alerts. Private sector organizations and individuals should note that the schools are society assets meant for the development of the whole society, and whatever affects the school adversely affects the whole society. Apart from donating security apparatus to the schools by private sector organizations, community watches could be organized collaboratively by the school and the community members in order to assist in providing school security.

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