Public-Private-Partnership in Libraries for Efficient Service Delivery, for the Attainment of Vision 20:20:20 in Nigeria

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Abstract

Purpose: *The aim of this study is to examine how the operation of public-private partnership in libraries will provide efficient service delivery for the attainment of vision 20:20:20 in Nigeria. In addition, this paper examines the operations, constraints and strategies for enhancing public-private partnership in libraries.*

Design/Methodology/Approach: *The research design adopted for this study was survey. The area of study was the University of Nigeria Library system. The population used was the 70 professional librarians Nsukka, UNEC library and the medical library at UNTH, Enugu. The mean was used as the main descriptive statistics for data analysis.*

Findings: *The study identified the main features of public-private partnership in libraries. The paper also found out that public-private partnership enhances library services. It also identified some constraints and strategies that will enhance public-private partnership in libraries.*

Practical Implications: *Inadequate funding of libraries leads to low standard of education inefficient services by libraries and apathy to the use of libraries by library clienteles.*

Originality/Value: *The value of this work is based on the fact that in this era of unemployment in Nigeria, graduates of library schools have opportunity to partner with institutional libraries. Also the benefit derivable from efficient service delivery through public-private partnership such as, provision of abstracting services, internet services, Current awareness services and Selection dissemination of information.*

Keywords: *Public-Private-Partnership, Vision 20:20:20, Library Service, Libraries, Business Librarian.*

Paper Type: *Empirical.*

Introduction

Most libraries all over the world are usually owned and run by public institutions such as schools, hospitals, law establishments, universities, research institutes, ministries etc. The major roles of such libraries are that of acquiring, processing organizing, storing and disseminating library information for teaching, learning, research and public service.

Libraries in many instances are over-strenched by fund and the demand of users for library services. The funding of these library services and the high cost of new technology are issues which must be addressed. Wrathhall (1997) stated that several projects have obtained funding from outside the public sector. He further stated that Global internets are examples of private sector funding of information services

in public libraries. It is a profit making venture by the company with no involvement of the public library service other than free provision of space. While this may mean that the library gains kudos because it houses a high-tech development, it has little control over the information provided. This explains the importance of private sectors in the provision of library services through the establishment of public-private partnership. Public-Private Partnership involves the joint contributory efforts of both the public institutional efforts and the private sector business librarians in providing library services and resources to clients. Clients in this case are the end users who may be students, lecturers, researchers and the entire, public. Uhegbu and Unagha (2007) stated that Public-Private Partnership is a situation

where the public sector represented by the government collaborates with the private sector represented by private individuals organized groups, associations or corporate bodies in the management, provision and delivery of services to the people. It involves pooling resources, ideas, personnel and finance to improve the services of public libraries. The services provided according to Igbeka (2008) may be photocopy, literature search, CD ROM literature search, desktop publishing, web tutorial classes, virtual library intelligence centre internet resources etc. Fees are paid to the collaborator partners by the users and shared on a prorata basis. For instance, a business librarian who is interested in partnering with any library to render library services understudies the law, rules and regulations establishing the institutional library. He meets the administrators of the establishment to find out how he can fit in to offer enriched private input to library development, i.e. input of financial resources and services for enhancing library services for client.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to ascertain the following information from the Librarians in the University of Nigeria library system.

i. To identify the main objectives of Public-Private Partnership (PPP) in libraries

ii. To find out the features of public-private partnership in libraries

iii. To ascertain how public-private partnership enhance library development in the attainment of the goals of vision 20:20:20

iv. To determine the constraints involved in operating Public-Private Partnership in libraries

v. To find out the strategies that will enhance Public-Private Partnership for library growth and development.

Research Questions

1. What are the objectives of Public – Private Partnership (PPP) in libraries?

2. What are the features of PPP in libraries?

3. How can PPP enhance library development in the attainment of the goals of vision 20:20:20.

4. What are the constraints involved in operating PPP in libraries?

5. What are the strategies for the enhancement of PPP for library growth and development?

Methodology

The descriptive survey design was adopted for this study. The population constituted librarians in University of Nigeria library system which comprises the Nnamdi Azikiwe library U.N.N, the Enugu campus library, medical library of UNTH, Enugu. A structured questionnaire was the major instrument used for data collection. The questionnaires were administered to 80 librarians in the University of Nigeria Library system. Out of the 80 structured questionnaires distributed to the respondents, 70 copies were correctly filled and returned giving a response rate of 80.3%. The mean ($\bar{x}$) was used as the main descriptive statistics for data analysis.

Literature Review

The Nigeria's economy is not growing as it should. This is affecting so many developmental matters including libraries, roads, infrastructures, schools etc. The depressed economy notwithstanding, the federal government of Nigeria, has decided, determined and committed to placing Nigeria among top 20 economics of the world by 2020. That means, Nigeria would have to be a leading global economy competing with nations like the United States of America, Japan, Germany etc. Dudu (2002) stated that the power and status of a nation is partly determined by the information at disposal and which it uses for production of goods and services.

Effective information system through which information in all areas of human endeavour is collected, collated, processed, stored, retrieved and disseminated is very important and this in effect is the job of the Librarian. Igbeka (2008) noted Librarians to be professional library workers, custodians, suppliers, finders, organizers and retrieval of information and knowledge resources. As gate-keeper and information professionals, librarians have never been found wanting in their practice and service either in the past, present and later in the future

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(Bello, 2007). This is borne out of the fact that a librarian has specialized training in a particular type of library function: cataloguing, special collections, reference systems, public library administration, law library, and marketing information industry. Opeke (2009) stated that librarians as information professionals can be self employed like their counterparts in other professions, like medicine, accounting, law etc. Igbeka (2008) confirmed that this is already happening in developed countries and with information technology it would be even more viable in the developing countries.

Operating Public-Private partnership in library services is one of the roots to national economic advancement. Wrathall (1997) rightly argued that a democratic society should provide facilities for citizens to become informed so that they can fully participate in economic, social, political and cultural life. A main way of doing this is for citizens to have access to resources and information regardless of the ability to pay.

Operating Public–Private Partnership in Library can be described as a government service or private business venture which is funded and operated through a partnership of government and one or more business librarian. Wikipedia, (2010) define Public-Private partnership as a service that involves a contract between a public-sector authority and a private party in which the private party provides a public services or project and assumes substantial, financial, technical and operational risk in the project. Wikipedia, further stated that projects typically built and operated through PPP's include public entities, such as libraries, hospitals, prisons etc. Operating Public-Private Partnership in library sector is a form of cooperation in its simplest meaning. It involves working together to achieve a particular purpose. Gretton (1971) explains what Partnership is by referring to common axioms used in Partnership such as increased strength from joint effort; two good heads are better than one, or many hands make light the work. For instance, when business librarians join hands with either academic, school, special or public libraries establishment to render library services or build a modern public library or even install ICT facilities in the library for a fee, they are in partnership.

Wikipedia stated that in some types of PPP, the cost of using the service is borne exclusively by the users of the services. In other types, capital investment is made by the private sector or business librarians on the strength of a contract with government to provide agreed services and the cost of providing the service is borne wholly or in part by the government. Also, in a project that is aimed at creating library services, like the construction and running of a school library, the government may provide a capital *subsidy* in the form of a one-time *grant,* so as to make it attractive to the private sector, who may be business librarians. Igbeka (2008), enumerated a number of lucrative businesses that librarians can imbibe to contribute towards the realization of the laudable vision 20-20-20. Among them are, photocopy, scanned documents, literature searches, document transfer, inter library loan/document delivery, book binding, fee-based library services and independent information Brokerage.

Uhegbu and Unagha (2007) are of the view that public-private partnership in library services will ensure proper formulation of library policies, improve the services and working environment, facilitate the development of infrastructure, encourage quality and reliable information services, design, packaging, delivery and injection of needed funds for expansion.

Every library in the view of Ogbonna (2002), has passed through various functional and teething development stages which are often determined by changes in the society. The changes invariably ascribe to the library its aims, objectives, roles and services in the society at the particular point in time as well as the extent it is able to carry out such services.

Some librarians operate their own information businesses. Igbeka (2008) and Madu (2010) referred to such librarians as business librarians. Both authors noted that there are many terminologies used to refer to business librarians. They include; Research specialist, Information brokers, Information consultants, Independent Information professional, freelance librarian and Information specialist.

He stated that these terms can be used interchangeably depending on a given author. Madu (2010) describe business librarians as a generic term for persons, organizations, libraries, and institutions providing information services for a fee. The bottom line of their activities in information provision is the fact that they are in business to make profit, hence they charge fees.

Some librarians have found it challenging and profitable to set up their own information services offering to gather, evaluate and package information for their client for a fee. The services provided by business librarians as stated by Madu (2010) includes: Computer training/Internet services, Research service, Abstract, Bibliography, Current awareness, Directory compilation, Publishing, Translation, Writing and editing.

Public-Private Partnership is intended to enhance library resources, functions, duties and services. This is to better prepare clients to meet the challenges of vision 20-20-20, which Nigeria is a signatory to. Vision 20-20-20, according to Onyekakeyahi (2008) is a grand concept which the Yar'Adua administration acclaims and adopted on May 29, 2007, the day President Yar'Adua made his inaugural speech in Abuja. Its goal is to make Nigeria one of the 20 most developed economies in the world by 2020.

- Sada (2009) also viewed vision 20-20-20, as a comprehensive framework aimed at stimulating economic growth in Nigeria. Anuforo (2009), positioned vision 20-20-20 as "Nigeria's quest to join the league of 20 industrialized nation by the year 2020". Sada, further explained that Nigeria would have to be a leading global economy competing with nations like the United States of America, Japan, and Germany. Meaning, certain benchmarks used by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) like Gross Domestic Product (GDP), Gross National Product (GNP), rise in personal income have to match that of Brazil or South Korea.

Commenting on the visions goal, Sada (2009) stated that a number of initiative have to be explored in an effort to achieve the vision objectives, such as those that will improve the country's portfolio performance or those on capacity building for project implementation, monitoring and evaluation etc.

In his contributions, Olunlade (2000) advice that dissemination of relevant information services by libraries is a catalyst to achieving vision 20-20-20. These services will also propel and make realistic lasting growth and development possible.

Results

Table 1: Objectives of Public Private Partnership (PPP) in Libraries

Items	The main objectives of practicing PPP by the business librarians are:	Mean
1.	To render better and more efficient library services to users and society at large	3.7
2.	To argument the financial problems and increases the sustainability of government providing services	3.6
3.	To enhance library development	3.8
4.	To reduce the cost of funding library by the government	3.1
5.	To help in quick and efficient library decision making	3.0
6.	To maximize profit by the business librarians	2.9

Based on a criterion level of 2.50 as bottom line of acceptability, data on table 1: shows that all the items provided as objectives of Public Private Partnership (PPP) in libraries were acceptable by respondents. Enhancement of library development, rendering better and more efficient services to users, and augmenting financial resources attracted 3.8; 3.7 and 3.6 respectively on the mean table. PPP reduces cost of funding governments, help in quick and efficient decision making and maximizing profit. These were rated: 3.1; 3.0 and 2.9 respectively on the mean table. All these were therefore accepted by respondents as appropriate objectives of PPP in libraries.

Table 2: Features of PPP

Items	The features of PPP in libraries include:	Mean
1.	Joint contributory effort	3.2
2.	Concrete agreement of partnering between the public and private sectors security partnership agreements with other sectors	3.2
3.	Fee is charged for every services rendered to the users	2.5
4.	Preparing an inventory of library needs (books, seats, equipment) etc	2.7
5.	Assisting to provide these needs	3.3
6.	Periodic monitoring and evaluating of library services	3.0
7.	Ensuring accountability	3.1

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Table 2 in libraries PPP features in different ways including: Assisting to provide needed resources; sourcing for additional funds; securing partnership agreements with other sectors (public or private); ensuring accountability and periodic monitoring and evaluation of library services. These items were rated 3.3, 3.2, 3.1 and 3.0 respectively. Other features of PPP in libraries include: preparing inventory of resources and equipment and charging fees for services rendered. These were rated: 2.7 and 2.5 respectively.

Table 3: Enhancement of Library Services for the Achievement of Vision 20:20:20

Items	PPP enhance the achievement of vision 20:20:20 through	Mean
1.	Assisting researchers to access information	3.7
2.	Providing abstracting services	3.5
3.	Current awareness services to users	3.7
4.	Assisting researcher to publish services	3.4
5.	Translating services of vital publications	3.3
6.	SDI services to library clientele	3.5
7.	Bibliographic services to researchers	3.4
8.	Directory services to users	3.5
9.	Photocopy services to library clientele	3.4
10.	Computer training/Internet services	3.3

Data on Table 3 shows that application PPP in libraries of brings about enhancement that could lead to the achievement of vision 20:20:20. By the rating of respondents: assisting researchers to access information, providing current awareness to users; providing abstracting serviced, bibliographic services and directories to users are some of the ways PPP can bring enhancement. These item polled 3.7; 3.7; 3.5; 3.5 and 3.5 respectively on the mean table. Other factors through which PPP can enhance the achievement of vision 20:20:20 include: assisting researchers to publish, rendering bibliographic services and photocopy are all contributions of PPP. Respondents rated these items, 3.4 respectively on the mean table. Also acceptable to respondents were: translating services, and provision of computer coaching/internet services. These were rated 3.3 respectively

. **Table 4: Constraints Involved in Operation PPP**

Items	What are the constraints involved in operating PPP in libraries?	Mean
1.	Financial problems	3.4
2.	Insecurity of library collections	3.3
3.	Irregular power supply	3.4
4.	Inadequate infrastructures	3.4
5.	Natural disaster (leakages, book worms, wind, storm) etc.	3.2
6.	Inactiveness and truancy on the part of conventional library staff	2.8
7.	Dishonesty on the part of business librarians	3.0

Table 4 shows the constraints in operating PPP in libraries. Going by the rating of respondents the major constraints in operating PPP in libraries are: Financial problems (which are common experiences of libraries); poor electricity and ICT provision; unavailability of infrastructure to employ PPP. These measures were rated 3.4 respectively on the mean table.

Other constraints are: insecurity of library collections, natural disaster and insincerity on the part of business librarians. These were rated: 3.3; 3.2 and 3.0 in the mean Table. Inactiveness and truancy on the part of the conventional staff also poses as constraint to effective operation of PPP.

Table 5: Strategies for the Enhancement of PPP and Library Development

Items	Strategies for the enhancement of PPP for library growth and development include	Mean
1.	Adequate utilization and management of user fees realized	3.8
2.	Business librarians self-reliant training	3.5
3.	Attending workshop, conferences and seminars by business librarians	3.7
4.	PPP training collaborations with libraries abroad	3.5
5.	Adequate monitoring by library managements	3.3
6.	Provision of adequate security and risk management measures	3.8
7.	Exploring and developing modern library techniques and protocols	3.8

Table 5 shows the strategies that could be adopted for the enhancement of PPP in library development. They are as follows: adequate utilization and management of user's fees realized; provision of adequate security and risk management measures and developing modern library techniques and protocols. These items were highly rated by respondents at 3.8 mean respectively. Other strategies include: allowing business librarians to attend conferences and workshops; self reliant trainings; collaboration with libraries abroad for focus. These were rated: 3.7; 3.5; 3.5 respectively. Consistent monitoring by library management was also considered appropriate by respondents for efficiency of the programme. This item was rated 3.3 on the mean table.

Discussion of Findings

The findings in respect of the first research question which set out to know the objectives of Public-Private-Partnership (PPP) in libraries revealed that the respondents identified rendering of efficient library services, library development, reduction of cost of funding by government and profit motive by business librarians. This buttressed the views of Wikipedia (2010) which stated that Public-Private Partnership is a service that involves a contract between a public-sector authority and a private party in which the private party provides a public services or project and assumes substantial financial, technical and operational risk in the project.

With regards to second research questions on the features of the Public-Private-Partnership in libraries study revealed that that fees is charged for every services rendered, periodic monitoring and evaluation of library services; accountability, partnership between government and private sector. The fee based services will be put in such a way as not to dissuade users but to motivate them to use the library maximally. In support of this, Madu (2010) stressed that some

librarians have found it challenging and profitable to gather, evaluate and package information for their clients for a fee.

The study also found out that Public-Private-Partnership enhanced library growth and development in the attainment of the goals of vision 20:20:20 through the current awareness services, SDI services assisting of researchers in accessing information, provision of abstracting services and publishing services. Olunlade (2000) agrees with these findings and stated that the above services by libraries will propel and make realistic growth and development which will in turn aid the achievement of vision 20:20:20.

On the constraints of operating public-private partnership in libraries, the study identified financial problems, irregular power supply, poor attitude of the conventional staff, insecurity of the library collections inadequate infrastructures, dishonesty by the business librarians.

Finally the study found out some strategies that will enhance the public private partnership in libraries in providing efficient service delivery for the attainment of vision 20:20:20. They include adequate utilization of user fees, provision of adequate security and risk management measures exploring and developing modern library technique, adequate training of business librarian and attending of conference/workshops by the business librarians.

Conclusion

Public-Private Partnership in libraries is an innovative practice in library profession that enhances the growth and development of libraries worldwide. Though the operations of Public-Private Partnership in libraries enhance efficiency and accountability, there are some constraints to the operation of Public-Private Partnership in libraries. Business librarians need appropriate trainings so that they will not be

found wanting in the discharge of their professional duties.

Finally, various levels of government should encourage Public-Private Partnership in libraries for efficient service delivery for the attainment of Vision 20:20:20 in Nigeria.

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