

**PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP AND ACADEMIC STAFF PRODUCTIVITY  
IN NIGERIAN UNIVERSITIES.**

**Akinwumi, Femi Sunday**

*Department of Educational Management,  
University of Ibadan, Ibadan, Nigeria*

**Okeke Emeka Paul**

*Nigerian Institute of Social and Economic Research  
(NISER) Ibadan Nigeria*

**Abstract**

*University Education plays a significant role in the socio-economic growth and development of any nation. Inversely, the inability of the government to provide basic academic infrastructures, will lead to the breeding of uneducated men and women who may be destructive both to themselves and the society. The collaboration between the public and private organization in higher education provisioning have stimulated the productivity of university's academic staff to the realization of the development goals of the nation. Universities however, cannot be viable, virile and productive without the support of its entire workforce. In other words, human resources are crucial to higher productivity and quality products of any university. Hence, the need for public private partnership in bridging the gap where the government has failed. This paper therefore examines public private partnership in academic staff productivity in Nigerian Universities. The population for the study was 6 Deans and 69 Head of Departments (HOD) making a total of 75 was purposively selected mainly from the departments that have benefited from private partnership. The data for the study were collected through primary and secondary sources. The data collected were analyzed by the use of simple descriptive statistics with the aid of tables, graphs, charts and regression analysis. The findings revealed that the government budget for the institution (university of Ibadan) is far more less than the budget required to enhance academic staff productivity. The summary of the regression analysis shows that provision of academic infrastructural facilities through public-private partnership has significant contribution to academic staff productivity. It concluded*

*by stating that academic staff productivity are crucial to higher productivity and quality products of any university, hence, there must be increased funding, provision of academic infrastructure, increase in research grant and increased public-private partnership. Recommendations were made based on the findings of the study.*

### **Introduction**

Education is the most important institutional organization of a nation; it plays a significant role in the development of any country, such that all nations carefully design and structure their educational systems with a view of inculcating the right skills and knowledge to her citizens (Adegbite, 2007). In Nigeria, higher education was structured to train high level manpower and technical capacities to underpin economic growth and development (Odekunle, 2001). But due to the constrained funding of higher education, the sector was unable to cope with growing market demand and global competition. Hence, increased private participation in higher education provisioning is needed to expand infrastructure and provide greater access to quality higher education in Nigeria. The National Policy on Education (NPE, 2008) emphasizes that Public Private Partnership (PPP) could be an effective mechanism for attracting private sector investment in the Nigerian higher education system in Nigeria without diluting the regulatory oversight of the Government and other regulators.

In Nigeria, University education is seen as the focal point of higher education and as such much attention is attached to the system as the highest education training body. Presently, there are 125 accredited Universities in Nigeria (NUC, 2013). Out of this number, 37 are Federal Universities, 36 are State Universities and 50 are Private Universities. The supervision and regulation of all programmes in the University system are subject to the approval of the National Universities Commission (NUC).

All universities in Nigeria require academic infrastructure, equipment, resources and personnel which are deficient particularly in Federal and State universities (Ayeni, 2008). They also face a lot of problems that may not allow the system to make the expected contribution to the economic development of the country. These problems are internal and external in nature. The internal factors that are responsible for poor academic staff productivity include strikes, lack

of employees' motivation, weak accountability for educational performance and poor work environment. While the external causes comprised academic staff shortage, corruption, inadequate funding of the university system and admission based on quota system rather than merit. Afe (2005) pointed out that teaching task is done through conscious and deliberate effort and for an academic staff to carry out this conscious task, he needs an environment devoid of strike, inadequate motivation, weak accountability of educational programmes, inconsistent funding among others.

Ajayi (2011) therefore, opined that a functional university system, where staff can perform creditably will be subject to the provision of enabling environment. Opatolu (2005) found that experience, interest in the job, dedication and commitment among others, to be crucial in academic staff productivity. In this regards he referred to academic staff productivity as the strategies put in place by the university administrators to boost the morale and enhance the performance level of academic staff, with a view to repositioning, re-engineering and re-orientating the system for higher productivity and better services. Central to the realization of high level performance by the academic staff, whose roles are imperative and their number, quality and effectiveness makes the difference in university education production function (Nwadiani, 2002). Thus, the achievement of any academic system, to a large extent, depends on the academic staff because of the critical role they play in the education process. On the other hand, how effective an academic staff performs the stated roles in the contribution to academic growth is often the core basis for promotion. To ascend from a lower rank to a higher one is an indication that the staff has shown evidence of scholarship and effective performance in all the criteria for promotion as stipulated by the university policy.

According to Owuamanam, (2008), assessment of productivity in Nigerian universities is based mainly on research and publication rather than teaching competence alone, and consequently, advancement in depends mainly on the individual's research output. Similarly, the response in a study by Akuegwu (2005) indicated that while universities stated policies are to assess a candidate for promotion on the basis of his or her ability in three main criteria-teaching, administration and research, it was the latter which appeared

to be attributed the greatest weighting. This brings to the foreground the need for educational public - private partnership in enhancing academic staff productivity in university education in Nigeria, which will entail mobilizing and managing resources by the public, business and civil society partners for improved staff productivity and quality educational output (Lewin, 2009). The study area is the University of Ibadan.

### **Research Question**

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What are the contributions of the private sector in the university's endowment projects?
2. What is the income requirement and the estimated budget for the development of University of Ibadan?
3. What is the degree of partnership between University of Ibadan and other Agencies/Individuals?

### **Objectives of the study**

The broad objective of this study is to evaluate the relationship between public-private partnership and academic staff productivity.

The specific objectives of the study are:

1. to ascertain the extent of Educational Public-Private provision of academic infrastructure (internet, office space, teaching and learning facilities, etc.) availability, utilization and its effect on academic staff productivity.
2. to determine the correlation between private sector augmentation of fund and their effect on academic staff productivity.
3. to assess the impact of academic staff productivity on learning outcomes of students.

### **Hypotheses**

The following hypotheses were formulated for the study.

- H<sub>1</sub> There is no significant contribution of the private sector in the provision of academic infrastructure (internet, office space, teaching and learning materials etc.) to academic staff productivity.

- H<sub>2</sub> Contributions of the public-private partnership to fund augmentation and learning outcome have no joint relationship with academic staff productivity.

#### **Justification of the study**

The study will stir up government (Federal and State) in proper funding and adequate provision of academic infrastructures to University education to restore its dignity and provide enabling environment for active participation of the private sector in education provisioning and increased productivity of the academic staff. Again the study has implications for university management in the area of promoting academic staff productivity in research/publications and community service effectiveness.

#### **Literature Review**

To meet the needs of the study, this review examines the issues on educational public-private partnership on academic staff productivity.

#### **Academic Staff Productivity in Nigerian Universities**

'Productivity' as provided by Verspoor, (2010) emphasized on efficient production process that minimizes waste. He further expressed that productivity can have connotations of minimizing output- reflecting the use of resources in the production of goods and services that add the most value. Productivity is 'supply-side' measure, capturing technical production relationships between inputs and outputs. But by implication, it is also the production of goods and services that are desired, valued and are in demand. Evidence of productivity growth usually means that better ways have been found to create more output from given inputs.

According to Verspoor, (2010)) to observe this in the university activities, the first step is to classify their inputs, outputs and the relationship between them. Universities are uniquely equipped to contribute to policy formation by researching societal problems. Economic goals compromise the provision of a stream of highly skilled and employable graduates, generation of commercially valuable intellectual property and a significant economic contribution to their local communities.

Finance is the fundamental input underpinning all other academic infrastructures. The relative importance of government and alternative sources of funds varies significantly with a social or economic focus (Dees, 2008). In contrast, much of the social capital entrusted to the universities by society has little application to the outputs. In the economic sense, productivity is simply put as a ratio of the volume of goods and services (outputs) produced relative to the volume of inputs- including lands, labour and capital – employed in producing those goods and services (Verspoor, 2010). The fundamental purpose and process of universities appear to be totally different which makes the applicability of the concept of academic staff productivity in universities to be debatable.

The traditional role of the universities has been to create, preserve and transmit knowledge (Udo, 2003). Nevertheless, they have discharged fundamental functions for the society at large. These include preservation and expansion of cultural heritage and cultivation of citizenship through the formation of the character and skills of graduates who have discharged community leadership roles in all areas of the society. For the universities, this has entailed an emphasis on producing graduates who are well prepared to play specific roles in the economy. Thus, Productivity of academic staff is very pertinent and appropriate in the assessment of university performance but must be applied in a consistent manner with the complexity and unique characteristics of universities (Ajayi, 2007).

On the other hand, university education is perceived to have direct influence on a nation's productivity which determines the living standard and a nation's ability to compete favourably in the global world of work (Adegbite, 2007). For universities to support knowledge driven economy, there must be a strategic partnership in training of qualified academic staff, highly skilled technicians and scientists, entrepreneurial professionals and knowledge investors who through research and experiments are tested to pioneer the process of sustainable development (Ogunsheye, 2003). He suggested that this would lead to generation of new knowledge through ground breaking research and build the required capacity (graduates) to assess existing stores of global knowledge and adapt same to local use in terms of developing local technologies.

According to the University of Ibadan bulletin (2009), most of the partnerships the institution have had with other universities, donor agencies and development organizations around the world have been directed towards this purpose. The bulletin further revealed that, some of the partnerships have been in the areas of exchange of academic staff and students, collaborative research, development of internationalized curricular, joint internship etc. In line with the vision of the university, the partnership with John D, Catherine T and MacArthur Foundation, have been developed to provide access to digital learning, electronic journals and database in the university (Bamiro, 2010).

Unarguably, these partnerships have yielded positive results such as, university enhancement, staff capacity building, ICT training, leadership development training, attraction of institutional strengthening grants among others. (Abu, 2011).

### **Infrastructural Facilities and Academic Staff Productivity**

Inadequate infrastructure is still noticeable in Nigerian Universities. As Nwadiani and Igbineweka (2009) put it, many of our universities libraries are full of empty shelves and the laboratories are health hazards to our students. Aina (2012) in one of his studies observed that lecturers would not be productive under such working condition as electronic journals are not available and the physical facilities are not conducive for learning.

In a similar concern about the infrastructural decay in the Nigerian universities and their effect on academic staff productivity, Babalola (2008), reported that the crisis in the university system is that there is less money to spend on teaching, research and community services. Libraries are ill equipped, laboratories lack essential apparatus, classrooms are dilapidated and office accommodations are a mirage. Many universities even lack lecturers in the right quantity and of proper quality. He also noted that internet facility would contribute significantly to ease research of academic staff through download of relevant materials thereby enhancing their productivity. In like manner, Alli (2011) affirmed that conducive offices for lecturers and classrooms for students and other motivational factors would stimulate productivity and the input by the university academic staff. These conditions of service and welfare packages help to motivate staff to

work harder by increasing their productive level. Hence, the overall effect of these provisions is to maximize the academic staff productivity.

### **Methodology**

#### **Nature and Sources of Data**

The data for this study were collected from primary and secondary sources. The use of questionnaire was designed to elicit information on the primary sources. The instrument was designed and structured on a four-likert rating scale of Strongly Agree, 4points (SA), Agree, 3points (A), Disagree, 2points (D), Strongly Disagree, 1point (SD). On secondary sources, data on income and required estimated budget, expenditure and endowment fund of university of Ibadan for ten years was obtained from the Bursary department.

#### **Sampling Procedure**

The University of Ibadan has 13 faculties, 87 departments and 6 institutes. Out of this number, 6 Deans and 69 Head of Departments (HOD) making a total of 75 were purposively selected mainly from the departments that have benefited from private partnership.

#### **Method of Data Analysis**

The data collected from the Institution were analyzed by the use of simple descriptive statistics. The method involves the use of tables, graphs, charts and regression analysis.

#### **Discussion of Findings**

The discussion is based on the research questions raised and the hypothesis tested.

**Research question one:** What are the contributions of the private sector in the university's endowment projects?



**Table 1.1** Expenditure and Endowment fund of University of Ibadan

Year	Land and Building	Equipment/Laboratories	Equipment/Fittings	Research Grants	Endowments
1999/2000	33,272,740	129,882,469	12,610,755	96,145,666	4,085,023
2000/2001	451,982,763	167,865,161	20,819,685	232,715,071	4,293,023
2001/2002	503,038,954	235,774,278	41,902,954	242,410,196	4,533,823
2002/2003	729,027,500	288,469,380	47,948,380	293,869,925	12,683,623
2003/2004	809,890,958	363,363,516	61,201,090	311,011,928	12,909,423
2004/2005	1,073,119,374	482,499,467	82,545,880	402,852,430	17,390,370
2005/2006	1,106,051,509	592,467,713	120,564,082	733,358,050	17,390,370
2006/2007	1,136,070,015	749,961,197	172,955,170	733,052,036	19,584,097
2007/2008	2,512,267,362	1,043,324,012	239,021,020	109,851,679	22,507,483
2008/2009	2,322,238,7	1,275,640,680	158,427,830	222,168,711	14,680,632

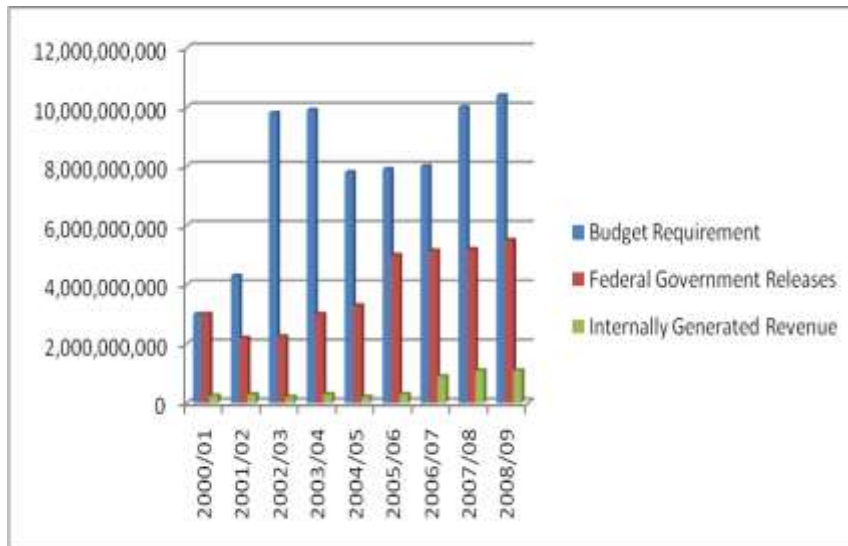
Source: Bursary Department, University of Ibadan

The table indicates the trends in expenditure and endowment fund from 1999/2000 to 2008/2009 session. Within this period the university generated 130,059,067 million naira from endowments which include professional chairs, student scholarships and donations towards programmes of interest to the donors. However, the campaign to raise endowment funds in Nigerian universities, date as far back as 1950 when the University College of Ibadan started an endowment drive (Bamiro, 2010). He further stated that the major donors in this direction are the Alumni and corporate organizations. As notice in the table the fund increased significantly from 2002/2003 to 2007/2008 session and declined in 2009.

The table also revealed that the expenditure on land and building, equipment and laboratories increased as a result of increase in students' enrolment. In the area of furniture and fittings and research grants, the story is the same as the expenditure expanded, considering also increase in enrolment of students in the university and consequent to the demand and need for adequate physical facilities.

**Research Question Two:** What is the income requirement and the estimated budget for the development of University of Ibadan?

**Figure 1.1** Income Requirement, Estimated Budget and Internally Generated Revenue (IGR) for university of Ibadan.

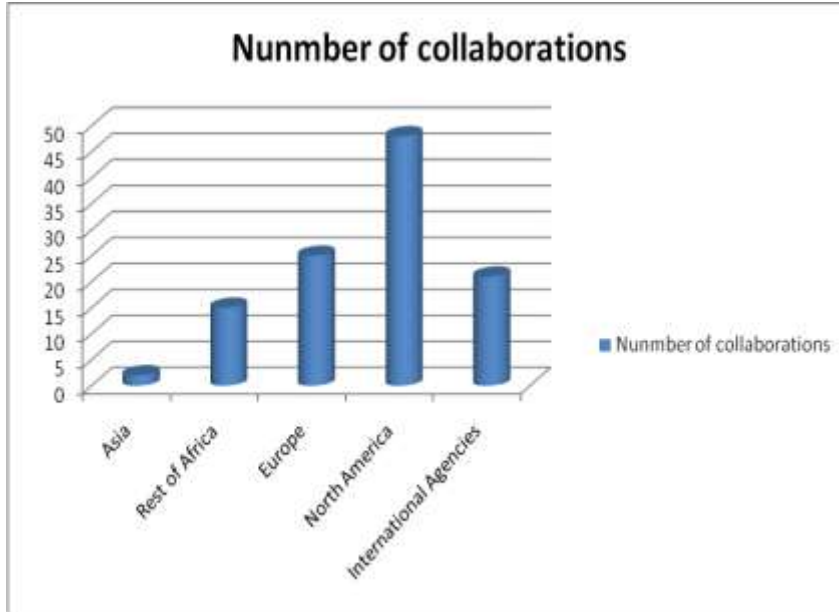


Source: University of Ibadan, 2009

**Figure 1.1** shows that it was only in 2000/2001 academic session that the federal government released fund that is commensurate with the budget required for the development of the institution. As observed further, there was a huge gap between the amount required and the amount released by the government. This explains the dilemma of academic staff productivity and academic output in our institutions in general, hence, the need for public private partnership. A cursory, look on the chart shows that even the combination of the funds from the government and the internally generated revenue of the university cannot meet the budget requirement of the institutions' need for development. Babalola (2008) and Samuel (2003) affirmed that the federal universities in Nigeria were lacking the financial resources to maintain educational quality in the face of enrolment explosion. The inadequate funding of the universities has had calamitous effect on teaching and research activities of institutions leading to brain drain of academics.

Research Question three: What is the degree of partnership between University of Ibadan and other Agencies/Individuals?

**Figure 1.2** Collaboration between University of Ibadan and other part of the world/Agencies



Source: University of Ibadan 2009

As indicated in figure 1.2 which shows the number of collaboration and Partnership University of Ibadan had with agencies around the world. The institution maintained partnership with several universities, donor agencies and development organizations around the world between year 2000 and 2009. The partnerships were in terms of exchange of academic staff and students, collaborative research, development of internationalized curricular, exchange of programmes and other policies (University of Ibadan, 2009). In a similar manner, the figure reveals that the University if Ibadan had the highest collaborations in North America with 48 institutions, followed by Europe with 25 institutions, 21 institutional collaborations with international agencies, 15 institutions and agencies in the rest African countries and the least collaboration in the Asian institutions with 2 agencies.

### Testing of the Research Hypotheses

H<sub>1</sub>: There is no significant contribution of the private sector in the provision of academic infrastructure (internet, office space, teaching and learning materials etc.) to academic staff productivity.

**Table 1.2** Summary of linear regression on analysis public-private partnership to the provisions of academic infrastructure towards academic staff productivity.

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	R	R <sup>2</sup>	Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	Sig. Level	Remarks
Regression	10.067	1							
Residual	689.973	74							
			10.067	1.080	0.120	0.014	0.001	0.302	Not Sig.
Total	700.039	75							

The result on the table above shows that public-private partnership in the provision of academic infrastructural facilities such as internet facility and office space, have no significant contribution to academic staff productivity. The linear combination of the predictor variable was found to have no significant contribution to academic staff productivity as indicated by ( $F_{(1, 74)} = 1.080$ );  $P > 0.05$ . This therefore, implies that the contribution of Educational Public-Private Partnership (EPPP) to provisions of infrastructural facilities (internet, office space etc.) is not significant to academic staff productivity. Hence, the significant level  $0.302 > 0.05$  of the null hypothesis is redetected and the alternative hypothesis accepted. This however indicates that there is a significant contribution of the private sector in the provision of academic infrastructure (internet, office space, teaching and learning materials etc.) to academic staff productivity.

H<sub>2</sub>: Contributions of the public-private partnership to fund augmentation and learning outcome have no joint relationship with academic staff productivity.

**Table 1.3** Relative contribution of Educational Public-Private Partnership to Infrastructural facilities, Fund Augmentation and Learning Outcome to academic staff productivity.

Model	Unstandardized coefficient		B	T	Sig.	Remark
	B	Std. Error				
Constant	23.229	1.527		15.209	0.000	
Contribution of EPPP to Infrastructure Facilities	-0.263	0.218	-0.146	-1.206	0.232	Not Sig.
Contribution of EPPP to Fund Augmentation	-0.181	0.395	-0.062	-0.458	0.648	Not Sig.
Contribution of EPPP to Learning outcome	0.814	0.367	0.294	2.218	0.030	Sig.

The table revealed that except contribution of Educational Public-Private Partnership (EPPP) to learning outcome that has significant correlation with academic staff productivity ( $B = 0.284$ ;  $P < 0.05$ ), fund augmentation and infrastructural facilities have no significant relationship with academic staff productivity. This is further, indicated by the critical values of ( $B = -0.146$ ;  $P > 0.05$ ) showing that there is no significant relationship between EPPP to the provisions of infrastructures and academic staff productivity and ( $B = -0.062$ ;  $P > 0.05$ ) which shows that there is no significant relationship between EPPP to fund augmentation and academic staff productivity. The null hypothesis is therefore rejected. This implies that there is a relative contribution of Educational Public-Private Partnership to infrastructural facilities and fund augmentation and to academic staff productivity.

### Conclusion

Research outputs, teaching process and community services have remained the determinant consideration for academic staff productivity. Okafor (2007) revealed that there was a decline in academic staff productivity before the advent of public-private

partnership. This was as a result of inadequate modern research methodology skills, poor academic equipments, combination of academic and administration works, work overload, inaccessibility of research fund and low level of mentorship among others. Based on the findings of the study, public private partnership have assisted in increasing academic staff productivity through, exchange of academic staff, students and programmes among the partners, exchange in curriculum, increase in endowment funds, availability of research grant and expansion of expenditure on academic infrastructural facilities. Although the budget release from the federal government does not meet the institutions funding requirements but through partnership support, some assistance has been rendered in that direction, otherwise the system would have been worse for it. It was also evident in the findings that due public-private partnership the institutions collaboration with agencies and institutions all over the world. The implication is that the academic staff will gain more in terms of modern research methodology skills and improved methods of knowledge transfer as well as increase mentorship.

The findings also revealed that public private partnership contribution in the provision of infrastructure (internet facility, office space) and fund augmentation have significant relationship with academic staff productivity. Except the learning outcome which shows no relationship with PPP to academic staff productivity. It was observed in the study that there is an imbalance in the partnership in the institution, where some departments and academic units have more partnership, links and research projects (which mean more resources), while others have virtually none. This will eventually create rich and poor departments and academic units as well as rich and poor professors within the same academic system.

Generally, the universities are important to the socio-economic growth and development of any nation. To this effect, a thorough breed of educated men is more productive both to himself and the society. Therefore the productivity of universities academic staff is of utmost importance to the realization of the development goals of the nation. Universities cannot be viable, virile and productive without the support of its entire workforce. In other words, human resources are crucial to higher productivity and quality products of any university. Hence, there must be increased funding, provision of academic

infrastructure, increase in research grant and increased partnership among all department and academic units. This will engender harmonious and team relationship in building a strong academic workforce and by extension the realization of academic objectives in university education provisioning.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the findings of the study the following recommendations were made.

- The universities in Nigeria need to be open to innovations in the area sourcing funds from agencies to meet up with some of her requirements.
- There is the need to review the activities of income generating centres in the universities to ensure the best practices and modern approaches are effectively utilized.
- It is important to enlighten the stakeholders such as parents, guardians, government, industrialists and other agencies on the need and various modes of financing higher education in other to improve the quality output.
- The government should legislate on better and improved pattern of funding higher education and encourage private partnership in providing infrastructures as obtained in some of the recent emerging economies in the world.
- For high academic staff productivity to be enhanced in the nations' universities there is the need to improve on the academic infrastructure base, more international engagement of our lecturers. As suggested by Ochuba, (2011) the present situation of our universities calls for urgent intervention most importantly by the government to make available enough funds for the rehabilitation of existing facilities in the universities. Besides, corporate bodies, multinational, industrialists, philanthropists and alumni associations should also assist in the provision of these facilities to aid effective teaching-learning activities in order to achieve the academic goals of university education for national development.

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