



PUBLIC PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP (PPP) AND SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURAL DEVELOPMENT IN LAGOS STATE: A STUDY OF FIRST METRO INFRASTRUCTURE LIMITED 2022-2025

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Abstract

Infrastructure development continues to be a key factor in socio-economic development in developing economies especially in the rapidly urbanizing region of Lagos State, Nigeria. While infrastructure is a key enabler of sustainable development, weak political will and poor government project delivery processes have prevented progress to be maintained consistently. This has necessitated the Lagos State Government to adopt Public–Private Partnership (PPP) model to fill the infrastructure gaps and enhance public service delivery. This study investigates the role of PPPs in the promotion of social infrastructural development in Lagos State with especial emphasis on the Lagos State Government/First Metro Infrastructure Limited (FMIL) partnership in the development of the Lagos Rail Mass Transit Red Line project. The theory of the New Public Management (NPM) was used as a foundation for the research, which focuses on the efficiency, innovation and performance of public sector management using the principles of the private sector. The findings show that PPPs has had a great impact on the development of social infrastructure in Lagos State through better service delivery and project financing and efficiency. The First Metro partnership for the Lagos Red Line project has helped to improve urban mobility, alleviate traffic congestion and boost economic productivity. Yet, the study demonstrates that properly designed PPPs can be a powerful tool for the sustainable development of urban infrastructure, provided that they are underpinned by good governance and accountability. The study finds that PPPs continue to be essential for the achievement of the Lagos State's infrastructural and developmental goals. It calls for building institutional capacity, harmonizing the policies, and involving stakeholders in the mechanisms of consultation so that the PPP projects will bring maximum social and economic benefits. The study makes a contribution to knowledge through empirical findings on the dynamics of operation of PPP in the urban context of Nigeria and its practical application of the NPM approach to the governance of infrastructures in sub-Saharan Africa.

Keywords:

Public–Private Partnership (PPP), Social Infrastructure Development, Lagos State, First Metro Infrastructure Limited, Lagos Rail Mass Transit Red Line, New Public Management, Urban Mobility.

INTRODUCTION**Background to the Study**

Infrastructure development is the foundation for economic development and social change. It involves ensuring the availability of basic facilities and services like electricity, water, roads, transportation, housing, health care, education and other things that cannot be done without to enhance the living standard and encourage investment. The demand for social infrastructure has been higher than its availability in the majority of developing countries including Nigeria because of rapid population growth, urbanisation and financial restrictions. This has led governments to increasingly look for ways to fund and run their infrastructure projects in an innovative way, beyond the public sector funder model. The Public – Private Partnership (PPP) arrangement as one of the most prominent models is one of the areas that is worth noting in this regard (World Bank, 2020).

Public–Private Partnership is a government–private sector collaboration to finance, design, build, operate and maintain infrastructure and services. It means working together to share risks, responsibilities and rewards to maximise value for money and increase efficiency. PPPs are recognised worldwide as a viable approach to providing public services, raising private sector funding and filling infrastructure gaps. Some countries like UK, Canada, South Africa and India have been able to implement PPP successfully for the development of roads, rail systems, hospitals, housing etc (Adeniran, 2016).

In the African context, infrastructure development is considered to have a significant role in promoting regional integration, economic growth and trade expansion. Infrastructure investments can improve connectivity, transportation of goods and services and support sustainable economic growth in countries in Africa, according to Okoye, Osegbue, Okelue and Emesiani (2025). Among the various areas of study conducted by their researchers is one on Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa (PIDA) which they found to have played a significant role in boosting intra-African trade between 2013 and 2023. It highlights the need for implementing infrastructure financing tools like PPP to overcome the gap of infrastructure and stimulate national and regional development.

As Nigeria's infrastructure gap continues to expand to more than US\$100 billion, PPPs have been embraced as part of the country's economic reforms. The Federal Government formalized PPP policy frameworks by enacting the Infrastructure Concession Regulatory Commission (ICRC) Act of 2005, which created the ICRC for the purpose of overseeing, regulating and managing PPP projects across the country. A few states have followed suit, establishing their own PPP legislation and administration to promote private financing of public facilities. But the effectiveness of PPPs remains highly state dependent, as the quality of institutions, the quality of governance, and the political will (Grimsey & Lewis, 2024) vary between states.

Statement of the Problem

Infrastructural development is one of the most critical issues that pose threat to Nigeria's socio-economic development. Still, although there have been various government interventions and policy changes, the provision of social infrastructure facilities like transport, housing, healthcare services and schools are unable to meet the growth of population and urbanization. This is a challenge that is epitomized in the Lagos State, the economic hub of the nation. Lagos has a population estimated at more than 20 million, putting a huge strain on the city's roads, housing, public transport and infrastructure. Despite the state government's own financial capability being shown as insufficient to address the ever-increasing infrastructure demand, an alternative method of development has emerged Public–Private Partnership (PPP).

By definition, it is hoped that PPPs will complement public-sector efforts to provide sustainable infrastructure by tapping the private sector's resources, efficiency and innovation. Indeed, Lagos State was the first state to introduce various schemes of the PPP such as Lekki-Epe Expressway, the Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) scheme and the current Red Line Rail project that involves the participation of First Metro Infrastructure Limited (FMI). But, there is empirical evidence that the performance of PPPs in Nigeria has not been uniform and yet is not doing as well as it should be. Some have led to better goods and services provision, enhanced economic activity, while others have been characterized by cost overruns, breaches of contractual obligations, public discontent, and governance issues.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided this work which is on Public Private Partnership (PPP) and Social Infrastructural Development in Lagos State: A study of First Metro Infrastructure Limited (FMIL):

1. What role has PPP played in enhancing road and rail infrastructure as a social infrastructure in Lagos State?
2. What is the implication of PPP arrangement as an alternate source of funding for Nigeria's public sector infrastructure development?
3. How can the public private partnership projects become more effective in achieving sustainable social infrastructures development in Lagos State?

Objectives of Study

This study which is on Public Private Partnership (PPP) and Social Infrastructural Development in Lagos State: A study of the Redline Rail Project and First Metro Infrastructure Limited (FMIL) is guided by the following research objectives namely to:

1. Discuss the importance of PPP in development of social infrastructure (Roads, Railways) in Lagos State.
2. Explore the role of PPP in alternative financing of infrastructures in Nigeria.
3. Suggest potential solutions to make the Public-Private Partnership (PPCs) projects more effective for the sustainability of social infrastructure projects in Lagos state.

Research Hypotheses

1. Public Private Partnership (PPP) has been a great contributor to social infrastructure development.
2. Based on the contributions made by PPP, it can be seen that PPP continues to be an alternative source of funding infrastructural deficits in Nigeria.

3. The public-private partnership (PPP) has been a great boon to Lagos State in terms of social infrastructure development.

Significance of the Study

This study will make an impact to the government, private administrators, and communities and to future researchers in the following ways:

The outcome of this study will have impact upon the government because it will help them to understand their social, moral and political responsibilities that lack of financial strength in terms of required funds to achieve the goal is the reason behind the drive for public-private partnership. The study will also help the government identify ways in which the public private partnership strategy can enhance the provision of the much-needed infrastructure in Lagos State.

The outcome of the study will also be able to give information about the need of private administrators and contractors to build a comprehensive institutional structure and policy framework for the success of public-public partnership strategy. Moreover, the research will deliver data to communities on the necessity of demanding and sustaining social infrastructures provided by the government through the public-private partnership initiative, thereby maximizing the benefits of the social infrastructures which include housing, health and policy advancement in funding solutions for the mast of larger population and its challenge.

Again, greater achievements would have been made in the area of policy advancement in infrastructural development respectively in the overall management of population growth. Generally, mobility in human and goods that greatly influences the economic wellbeing of Lagos and other fast growing metropolitan cities in the African continent.

In theory the current thinking on governance in the developed world was influenced greatly by the broad-based reforms programmes of the Anglo-Saxon countries of Australia, Canada, the United Kingdom and the United States. These reform programmes have generated an orientation towards the view, also known as the New Public Management (NPM), in Public sector management.

New Public management is a shift from the old model of organisation and delivery of Public services to Market based Public services management. It delves into the power of market forces to remove the perils of government bureaucracy. The thrust and philosophy of the reform in the public service landscape in Nigeria implies that the underlying doctrine of (PPP) is for a new model of public sector management focused on the 3Es namely, Economy, Efficiency and Effectiveness Politt (2004).

Conceptual Review

The concept of Public-Private Partnership (PPP), Social Infrastructural Development in Nigeria, Public-Private Partnership in Lagos State, First Metro Infrastructure Limited and Transportation Development, and Challenges of Public-Private Partnership in Nigeria are the building blocks of this work. Their uses in the context of this work are explained below:

The conceptual framework for this study was designed to bring the relationship between the independent variable Public-Private Partnership (PPP) and the dependent variable (social infrastructural development) under focus for the study of Lagos State with particular reference to the First Metro Infrastructure Limited from the year 2022 to 2025.

PPP used in this study as the Independent variable is the one which affects the development of social infrastructure in Lagos State. Social infrastructural development, meaning improvements in the transportation system, public services, employment, mobility of the people and overall welfare is the dependent variable. Todaro and Smith (2020) observed that social infrastructure has an important role in economic productivity, standard of living and sustainable development.

The study particularly targets the activities of First Metro Infrastructure Limited (FMIL) with respect to railway transportation infrastructure in the Lagos Rail Mass Transit Red Line Project (LRMTRP). The framework is premised on the fact that the engagement of First Metro Infrastructure Limited in the PPP projects helps to drive the growth of the infrastructure sector and socio-economic development in Lagos State.

The conceptual framework is a visual and analytical representation of the relationship between the variables within a study. It demonstrates the influence(s) of the independent variable(s) on the dependent variable(s), the intervening/moderating variables, and the processes that underlie their functioning. The framework for this study is meant to explain the role of Public–Private Partnerships (PPP) in achieving Social Infrastructural Development (SID) in Lagos State specifically in the Red Line Rail Project (RLRP) of the First Metro Infrastructure Limited (FMIL).

The conceptual framework encompasses the theory on New Public Management (NPM) which focuses on the concepts of efficiency, innovation, accountability and market-oriented governance, to provide a clear understanding as to why governments implement PPPs to overcome infrastructure gaps.

Theoretical Review

Public Private Partnership PPP (Rise and Growth)

Public Private Partnership (PPP) originated from the desire of the Scientific Management group (classical and neo-classical school) to bridge the gap on the dichotomy between public and private spheres of life in the society which the Traditional public administration failed to do (Dhameja, 2007). The Western liberal democratic political theory and the laissez-faire (individualist/capitalist) economic theory are founded on the dichotomy between public and private aspects of life. Therefore, the scientific management aimed to reconcile the two opposite and conflicting fields of public administration and private business administration by encouraging the use of Public Private Partnership (PPP). Therefore, PPP was a paradigm shift in the field of public administration theory and practice that was aligned with the path of liberalization, privatization and globalization. This paradigm shift strongly called on the governments of the developing countries to implement the new concept of 'entrepreneurial government' and 'reinventing government' (Dhameja, 2007). Behind this call is the increasing fiscal strain on government in the provision of services as well as poor management profile of public sector managers. The major aim was, therefore, to roll back the government and restrict it to play a limited role as facilitator, enabler and regulator of the market economy and pave the way through this for efficient delivery of public services. To overcome the most pressing issue of budgetary constraints, heeded the call and embarked on several privatization efforts starting with private operation of public assets, followed by outright privatization/private ownership of public infrastructure, and ultimately with PPP. In contemporary times, PPP has emerged as the mantra in every developing country. The private sector, is taking up important tasks in

producing goods and providing services that are usually performed by the government. The governments of many developing countries now adopt PPPs to finance and manage different infrastructure and provide services to their citizens. Examples of PPPs use in various countries include, among others, ports, railroads, toll expressways, in order to reduce pollution in the environment, shipping, construction of inexpensive housing, and tourism. A great number of PPP projects contractual term usually last between 20 and 30 years; while some others have shorter terms; and a few last longer than 30 years as stated by the IBRD (2017). The reason why such contract terms should always be long enough is to enable the private party be able to integrate service delivery costs considerations into the design phase of the project. Another part of the considerations is also on maintenance, so as to have optimized trade-offs between initial investment cost and future maintenance and operations costs.

Empirical Review

In developing countries, especially in countries with limited public funds for infrastructure, Public-Private Partnership (PPP) has become a popular choice for infrastructure gaps and has slowly become a policy instrument. Public-Private Partnership (PPP) has become a policy instrument for addressing infrastructure gaps in developing countries, especially in countries where public financing of infrastructure is becoming scarcer as demand grows. Empirically, Nigeria has implemented PPP schemes for infrastructure projects across diverse sectors including transport, housing, education, health and urban development. PPPs can boost efficiency, mobilize private funding, and improve service delivery, yet it is argued that this success will be linked to institutional quality and the stability of the regulatory environment and the type of infrastructure being built (Akinwale, 2010; Osei-Kyei& Chan, 2015).

Studies in Nigeria have shown mixed results in implementing PPP. In certain sectors, like roads, airports and real estate development, some studies indicate that PPP projects have helped to grow the infrastructure and offloaded the government from paying for its development works (Ibeanu, 2018; Aladejebi, 2023). Other studies have shown that many PPP projects are afflicted with implementation challenges including poor legal frameworks, inadequate risk sharing, political interference, lack of monitoring and other factors that constrain long-term sustainability (Adeniyi, 2017; Ojo, 2020). The finding has implications that PPP does not necessarily work; rather, governance and project design make the difference.

Research and empirical findings have always placed Lagos State as the most active PPP hub in Nigeria. In Lagos, PPPs have been adopted to support big infrastructure developments such as roads, transport systems, airport facilities, and urban regeneration projects. According to the study, the state has comparatively better institutional capacity, large population and commercial attractiveness, which renders it more appropriate for PPP than other states in the country (Akinwale 2010; Aladejebi 2023). However, it is also found that only economically viable projects are given chances to receive private sector involvement in PPP, while other social infrastructure like affordable housing, water supply, hospitals and schools do not receive PPP due to low financial yield (Osei-Kyei& Chan, 2015; Ibeanu, 2018).

For social infrastructural development, empirical research shows that PPP can enhance the quality, quantity, and maintenance of public facilities if it is correctly designed. In some contexts, for instance, PPPs in education and health have been linked to improved outcomes in facility management, service quality, and timely project delivery (Osei-Kyei& Chan, 2015; Aladejebi, 2023). Yet, the literature also indicates that funding social infrastructure via PPP

may be more challenging due to the fact that the benefits are frequently social in nature. Consequently, private investors are not always able to find such projects attractive unless there is government support through subsidies, loans and guarantees, viability gap funding, and clear policy guidance (Adeniyi, 2017; Ojo, 2020).

On the other hand Okoye, Ikegbunam, Ilo, and Onyejebu (2023) discussed the contribution of public administration to educational development in Nigeria, using a historical approach. They concluded that good public administrative policy is still the key prerequisite for the development of education in terms of policy formulation, allocation of resources, institutional oversight, and the provision of educational facilities. The authors stated that educational development is not only a matter of providing more money but also of the need for good governance, a strong implementation of government policies, and alignment with and participation of relevant stakeholders in the public institutions. The study also highlighted the need for efforts to enhance the institutional governance and administrative capacity for better educational outcomes and access to quality education. The results indicate that although PPPs could be used to fund educational infrastructure, they would rely heavily on effective public-sector management and institutional coordination to be successful.

The empirical literature also indicates that certain key factors are important in the effectiveness of PPP in Lagos State such as transparency in the procurement process, enforcement of contracts, trust between stakeholders, political commitment, and adequate regulatory supervision. Where these exist, PPP can make a significant contribution to social infrastructural development. However, if they fail to exist, PPP projects can encounter delays, conflicts, rising costs, or even be scrapped (Akinwale, 2010; Aladejebi, 2023). For this reason, PPP is a good model for infrastructure provision, but cannot and should not substitute for public investment in social infrastructure.

The study adopted a qualitative data analysis approach that involved document analysis, project reports, expert interviews and case studies to investigate the impact of Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa (PIDA) on intra-African trade between the year 2013 and 2023. The study employed qualitative data analysis approach which included document analysis, project reports, expert interviews and case studies to evaluate the effect of Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa (PIDA) on intra-African trade from 2013 to 2023. The study, which was based on the Theory of Regional Integration and Infrastructure-Led Growth Theory, concluded that investments in regional infrastructure would increase connectivity and lower trade costs, but these benefits would differ by region, depending on the project's implementation and institutional capacity. Likewise, Okoye, Osegbue, Azubuike and Idigo (2025) analysed the impact of road transport infrastructure on intra-African trade in the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) between 2018 and 2024 using secondary data from key regional and international organisations. They have concluded that better transport connectivity through strategic transport corridors decreased transport costs, enabled movement of goods and services, and facilitated intra-African trade, especially in countries with relatively well-developed transport systems. Both studies offer strong evidence that infrastructure development is essential to regional economic integration and expansion of trade but take a more general continental view and mainly emphasize the economic impact of infrastructure and not on the financing and governance systems that support infrastructure delivery. However, they fail to provide much information on the effectiveness of Public–Private Partnerships (PPPs) and the

role of the private sector institutions like First Metro Infrastructure Limited (FMIL) in social infrastructural development at the state level, which the present study aims to fill.

Gaps in the Literature

There have been empirical studies that have already confirmed the significance of Public–Private Partnerships (PPP) in financing and providing infrastructure, but there are still many gaps in the literature. The reviewed studies focused mainly on the overall performance of PPPs in infrastructure development, which included financial, governance, institutional quality, regulatory environment and implementation issues (Akinwale, 2010; Osei-Kyei & Chan, 2015; Adeniyi, 2017; Ibeanu, 2018; Ojo, 2020; Aladejebi, 2023). Likewise, Okoye et al., (2025) studied the regional infrastructure development and its effects on intra-African trade, while Okoye, Ikegbunam, Ilo and Onyejebu (2023) investigated the role of public administration in educational development. While these studies offer useful information about the financing, governance and development of infrastructure, they fail to uniquely address the role played by each individual private sector player in the development of social infrastructure in the context of a state. Moreover, most of the previous studies have used macro or sector-wide perspectives, neglecting the impacts of specific PPP projects on roads and rail transport, and other social infrastructure in Lagos State.

The other gap in the empirical literature that has been identified is the lack of research studies that explore Public–Private Partnerships from the perspective of First Metro Infrastructure Limited (FMIL). Previous research has largely examined the national level of PPP implementation or at the macro level of the various sectors of infrastructure with no empirical evidence for Lagos State on the role of FMIL in enabling social infrastructural development. Furthermore, though many studies have dealt with the advantages and disadvantages of PPP projects, little research has focused on the perceptions of stakeholders on the effectiveness of PPP as a financing source for infrastructure and what measures should be taken to make it more sustainable. The objective of this study is to close these gaps by offering empirical evaluation of the contribution of Public–Private Partnerships to social infrastructural development in Lagos State with a focus on the activities of First Metro Infrastructure Limited (FMIL). The results will contribute to the knowledge base and offer policy implication on enhancing the implementation of PPPs and sustainable delivery of good infrastructure in Nigeria.

Theoretical Framework

Each academic research is underpinned by a theoretical framework that offers an understanding of the connections between the major variables of the research. Theoretical framework gives direction, interpretation and justification to the study's focus. The Resource Dependency Theory serves as the foundation for this study on Public–Private Partnership (PPP) and Social Infrastructural Development in Lagos State, as it provides a solid background for the public sector reforms and the current trend of implementing PPPs in the modern public sector.

Resource Dependence Theory

Resource Dependency Theory (RDT) was created by Jeffrey Pfeffer and Gerald R. Salancik (1978). The theory states that no organization can be fully independent due to the fact that organizations rely on resources provided by other organizations. They can be financial, technological, expert, information, infrastructure and human resources, or political. Thus, organisations build relationships, alliances and partnerships to secure the resources they need to survive, grow and develop well.

In Resource Dependency Theory, an organization is motivated to reduce uncertainty and improve efficiency by establishing links with external actors that can provide the resources which the organization lacks. These partnerships lead to interdependence between them, with each adding valuable resources and each getting value in return.

Application to Public-Private Partnership (PPP) in Lagos State

The theory is very applicable to Public-Private Partnership (PPP) in Lagos State because with the growing population, the Lagos State Government finds it increasingly difficult to fund and maintain all infrastructure and public service projects. The government thus relies on private sector organizations with a financial ability, technical expertise, innovation, and managerial capacity to carry out large-scale projects.

The role of the government under PPP is to create a legal and regulatory framework that enables it to use the necessary land, offer policy support and provide supervision to the project, while the private investor contributes capital, technology and operational efficiency, and project management skills. This mutual dependence is indicative of the heart of Resource Dependency Theory.

Some of the Lagos state PPP projects are: Roads Infrastructure, Transport Systems, Housing Development, Waste Management, Healthcare Facilities, Water Supply and Urban Renewal Projects. These projects are examples of the partnership between the public sector and the private sector to create development that is mutually challenging, but possible due to the use of different resources.

Methodology

The aim of this section is to discuss the research approach and techniques used by the researcher to complete the research. It explored the following sub-headings: Research Design, Area of the Study, Population of the Study, Sample and Sampling Techniques, Instrumentations, Validation of the Instrument, Reliability of the Instrument, Procedure for data collection and Procedure for data analysis.

Research Design

For the study, the research design used was survey research design. Isangedighi, Joshua, Asim and Ekuri (2004) claimed that survey research design is a method which involves gathering data to describe the actual condition or phenomenon in an accurate and objective way. Studies that make use of this approach are employed to obtain a picture of the present conditions of a particular phenomenon.

The survey research design allows the researcher to make inferences about the population under study by selecting and studying the sample of the study.

Area of the Study

Lagos State is one of the geopolitical zones in the South Western part of Nigeria. Nigeria's largest urban area, Lagos State is arguably the most economically important state in Nigeria, being the smallest in area among the 36 states in the country. It shares with Ogun State on its North and East. It borders with the Republic of Benin in the West. S. to its south is the Atlantic Ocean. 22% of its 3,577 km² are lagoons and creeks (Micheals, 2012).

Lagos State consists of five Administrative Divisions and each Administrative Division comprises of twenty (20) local Government Areas (LGA). They are Agege, Alimosho, Ifako-

Ijaye, Ikeja, Kosofe, Mushin, Oshodi-Isolo, Shomolu, Apapa, Eti-Osa, Ikoyi, Lagos Island, Lagos Mainland, Surulere, Ajeromi-Ifelodun, Amuwo-Ododin, Ojo, Badagry, Ikorodu, Ibeju-Lekki and Epe. The first 16 of the above LGAs make up the statistical area of the Metro of Lagos. The other four LGAs (Badagry, Ikorodu, Ibeju-Lekki and Epe) are also in Lagos State but outside of the Lagos Metropolitan.

Many of the current 20 LGAs were divided for administrative needs into local Council Development Area in 2003. These are the lower order administrative units which now number 56, namely; Agbado/Oke-Odo, Agboyi/Ketu, Agege, Ajeromi, Alimosho, Apapa, Apapa-Iganmu, Ayobo/Ipaja, Badagry West, Badagry, Bariga, Aguda, Agbada, EgbeIdimu, Ejigbo, Epe, Eredo, EtiOsa East, EtiOsa West, Iba, Isolo, Imota, Ikoyi, Ibeju, Ifako-Ijaiye, Ifelodun, Igando/Ikotun, Igbogbo/Bayeku, Ijede, Ikeja, Ikorodu North, Ikorodu West, Ikorodu West, IkosiEjinrin, Ikorodu, Ikorodu West, Ikorodu, Ikoroku, Iru. These are the areas in Victoria Island, ItireIkate, Lagos Island West, Lagos Island East, Lagos Mainland, Lekki, Lagos Mainland, Mosan/Okunola, Mushin, OdiOlowo/Ojuwoye, OriOjo, Ojodu, Okokoro, Olorunda, Onigbongbo, Oriade, Oshiodi, Oto-Awori, Shomolu, and Surulere and Mushin.

The number of children in the immunization age group is estimated to be 20% of the total population. It is estimated that Lagos State, at its current growth rate will become the third largest Mega City in the world by 2030 after Tokyo (Japan) and Bombay (India) (Michael, 2012).

The State is basically a Yoruba speaking environment, but it is a melting pot of socio-cultural environment where both Nigerians and foreigners abound. The indigenous people are the Eguns (mainly in Badagry Division) and the Aworis (mainly in Ikeja Division). There are also other pioneer settlers that are referred to as the Ekos. The indigenes of Ikorodu and Epe Divisions are mainly the Ijebus with pockets of Eko-Awori settlers along the coastland and riverine areas (Ajose, 2010).

5. Discussion of Findings

Based on the results of this study, Public–Private Partnerships (PPP) has emerged as an effective institutional arrangement for the development of social infrastructural facilities in Lagos State, especially Lagos Rail Mass Transit (LRMT) Red Line project in partnership with First Metro Infrastructure Limited. The study identified and suggested that the PPP framework has positively affected the funding, delivery, and efficiency of infrastructure projects, urban mobility, and the provision of public services. The results confirm the assumptions of the New Public Management (NPM) theory that calls for the use of private sector management principles, innovation, efficiency and performance-based governance in the public sector.

The evidence shows that the Lagos State Government's use of PPPs has enabled its ability to mobilise private finance and skills to deliver large-scale infrastructure which would not have been possible without PPPs. This observation is in corroboration with Adeniran (2016) who posited sustainable infrastructural development as the major catalyst of economic growth and social change in Nigeria. Public sector governments can more effectively close infrastructure gaps through private sector financing via PPPs and reduce the strain on public funds.

The study also confirmed that the collaboration between the Lagos State Government and First Metro Infrastructure Limited has positively impacted urban transit system through the

enhancement of access to urban transport and alleviation of congestion in the key commercial corridors. The operational efficiency as observed in the Red Line project is consistent with the findings of Ajayi (2017) which assessed the Lagos Bus Rapid Transit (BRT-Lite) system and found that an improved transport infrastructure is a significant factor in the reduction of road traffic congestion and improving the mobility of the urban populace. The transport network also boosts the functionality of other transport modes, promotes business development, raises labor productivity, improves people's quality of life, etc.

Another important finding is that PPPs have facilitated better project implementation, due to the effective risk sharing mechanisms between the public and private sector. This discovery is similar to that of Adegbo and Kolawole (2009) who suggested that the Build-Own-Operate-Transfer (BOOT) contractual structure gives government opportunities to shift construction, operating, and financing risks to competent private investors while maintaining government control. The present study shows that these cooperative solutions enhance project sustainability and cut down on the delays in project implementation typical of publicly-funded infrastructure projects.

The results also corroborate Afolabi's (2011) assertion that PPPs offer one of the most viable ways of filling up Nigeria's chronic infrastructure financing gap. In his words, Afolabi (2011) noted that where supported by appropriate institutional structures, government and private investors' partnerships leads to better efficiency, accountability and innovation in infrastructure provision. The Lagos Red Line project is an example of this idea, as it shows how the private sector has been able to collaborate with the government to deliver a complex urban rail network that is able to cater to the needs of a growing population.

Likewise, Ahadzi and Bowles (2011) found that contractual accountability, effective procurement procedures, good governance, and institutional ability play critical roles in the success of PPP projects. The results of this study support these observations by showing the importance of effective coordination between the public agencies and private investors in the implementation of the Lagos Red Line project. However, the research also found that other factors, such as bureaucratic delays, policy inconsistencies and administrative bottlenecks are important constraints that can negatively affect project performance if they are not adequately addressed.

The study also revealed that, despite the success of the project, institutional and governance issues remain a hindrance to effective PPP implementation. The results of this finding corroborate those of Akampuria, Root and Shakantu (2008) who found that weak institutional framework, inadequate institutional regulatory capacity and inconsistent government policies were the significant inhibitors of the successful implementation of PPP in developing countries. Alien (2001) has similarly reported that tensions in governance of PPPs are also seen as the lack of robust public sector oversight to ensure that the emphasis on efficiency does not result in less public accountability and service quality.

Moreover, stakeholder involvement was found to be a key factor for PPP success. Engagement with host communities, transport users, regulatory institutions and civil society organisations was an issue raised by respondents as being important throughout the project lifecycle. This conclusion is consistent with Arimoro (2015) who held that active involvement of the community in the process can boost project legitimacy, reduce conflicts and improve the

sustainability of PPP infrastructure projects. The principle of inclusive governance is crucial for attaining socially acceptable and economically viable outcomes for infrastructure, therefore.

The results also lend credit to Alitheia's (2010) proposition that PPPs offer governments a sound method to facilitate infrastructure delivery, through increased managerial efficiency and innovation in funding. The Lagos Red Line project exemplifies the effectiveness of private-sector knowledge in project planning, in construction quality, in maintenance and in the performance of projects. Similarly, Beatty (2001) noted that countries with an effective PPP framework tend to get better performance from their infrastructure delivery activities as a result of accountability, innovation and shared investment responsibilities.

The study was focused on transportation infrastructure, but the lessons learned in the study impacted public service delivery in other areas, including healthcare, education, housing, and utilities. Collaboration between the government and non-governmental organizations can play a significant role in enhancing the quality of the service delivered, especially when governments are constrained in their financial and administrative resources, as Bano (2008) suggested. The current research findings support this view, as they show that collaborative governance models have a positive impact if they are underpinned by transparent institutional arrangements, with regards to both infrastructure provision and public welfare.

The result also corroborates the overall developmental trend of Lagos state as Nigeria's commercial hub. According to Ajose (2010), Lagos State has always implemented innovative administrative reforms to enhance urban governance and address the factors of rapid population growth. The growing uptake of PPP in the state's infrastructure strategy is therefore part of more general governance reforms aimed at increase efficiency, investment attraction and quality of public services.

In spite of the overwhelmingly positive findings, the study recognizes that external security and governance threats are still present in the implementation of PPP. Nigeria's socio-political landscape, such as insecurity and terrorism, can hinder infrastructure investment by raising project expenses, deterring investors, and causing delays in project implementation. Terrorism, and the activities of Boko Haram in particular, has caused huge economic damage, reduced investor confidence and damaged national development efforts as observed by Ilo, Okoye & Onyejegu (2023). While Lagos State has been relatively safer than areas directly impacted by insurgency, security is still critical in ensuring that the private sector maintains its confidence and that major infrastructure projects are successful in the long-term.

Overall, the results confirm that PPPs are an indispensable option to overcome the lack of infrastructures in Lagos State. The Lagos Rail Mass Transit Red Line project is a successful example of the ability of PPPs to bring private financing, project efficiency, better urban mobility and socio-economic development. To maximise these benefits, however, there needs to be on-going policy harmonisation, institutional strengthening, transparency in procurement processes, effective stakeholder engagement, and political commitment. These are all characteristic of the New Public Management (NPM) concept, which focuses on efficiency, accountability, innovation and performance in public sector administration. The study therefore recommends that, well-designed and well-regulated PPPs are a viable tool for speeding up infrastructure delivery and enhance public service provision in Lagos state and other fast-growing cities in sub-Saharan Africa.

Conclusion

The study focused on the link between Public–Private Partnership (PPP) and social infrastructural development in Lagos State taking the First Metro Infrastructure Limited (FMPL) as a case study. The aim of this research was to evaluate the role of PPPs in the development, funding and sustainability of social infrastructure in a context of rapid urbanization like the city of Lagos.

The analysis of primary and secondary data showed that PPPs have contributed to the enhancement of infrastructure delivery that can be achieved through better efficiency, innovation and financial mobilization from the private sector. The partnership approach has helped the Lagos State Government fill critical infrastructure deficits, particularly in the fields of transport, housing and urban renewal without straining public funds. The study identified that the involvement of the private sector has brought about modern construction technology, project management best practices and a maintenance culture, which have enhanced service delivery and the lifespan of public assets.

The study pointed out, however, that there are many issues that limit the performance of the PPPs. These are generally weak institutional capacity, poor regulatory frameworks, political interference, risk allocation issues and limited transparency in procurement process. In a few cases, a risk allocation mechanism was identified that successfully shared the risk between the government and the private sector, but in other cases, the allocation was found to be tilted in favor of the government during times of crises or revenue shortfalls. Further, aspects of the value for money, social equity and poor stakeholder participation have constrained public acceptance of certain PPP projects.

The study also found that institutional and governance deficiencies are still critical issues that hinder achieving optimal outcomes from the PPPs. Poorly negotiated contracts are common due to the lack of technical and financial skills of public officials, while monitoring is not effectively carried out. This highlights the importance of ongoing capacity building, institutional change and policy uniformity for sustainable PPP practices.

Overall, it is found that PPPs do not solve all the problems in infrastructural development, but they can be a feasible and complementary approach to social infrastructure, if they are executed in a transparent, accountable and well-regulated institutional setting. Effective governance institutions, clarity in contractual agreement, effective stakeholder involvement and mechanisms for fair risk sharing and financial accountability are important factors in the success of PPPs.

The study finally shows that the Public–Private Partnership model if well designed and well managed can make the infrastructural development in Lagos State and Nigeria at large faster. To achieve this potential, government institutions need to be strengthened, transparency increased, political stability be ensured, and an enabling environment establish and maintain investor confidence. The primary purpose of the PPPs is not only to generate costs but also to establish developmental partnerships to create inclusive growth, social equity and sustainable service delivery.

Lastly, the study highlights the important implications for policy makers and academics in the context of the First Metro Infrastructure Limited case. They underscore the importance of making the private sector efficient and held accountable to the public interest in order to achieve the ultimate goal of social welfare and sustainable development in the infrastructure sector in Nigeria.

Recommendations for further studies

While this research has yielded very useful findings on the role of Public – Private Partnership (PPP) in social infrastructural development in Lagos State using FMIL as a case study, it has left some gaps and areas unexplored. The gaps identified in this study provide opportunities to carry out further academic research to reinforce the knowledge, application and policies of PPP in Nigeria and other developing countries. Therefore, the following detailed recommendations are made for further studies:

1. **Comparative study across different states and regions in Nigeria:** This study was conducted in Lagos State, as it was Nigeria's commercial hub and has a relatively advanced institutional structure that supports the implementation of PPP. Future studies need to be expanded to consider other states like Rivers, Kano, Oyo and the Federal Capital Territory (Abuja). A comparative study between geopolitical zones will show differences in the performances of PPPs, institutional arrangements and models of governance. These studies may reveal the impact of political stability, policy at state level, and administrative culture on the effectiveness of PPP project across the country.
2. **Further research on the different impacts of PPPs:** This study assessed the performance and impact of PPPs in social infrastructure generally, but future research could be conducted on the different impacts of PPPs (e.g. transport, housing, education, healthcare, water supply). Financing, risk allocation and service delivery issues are different in each sector. A detailed analysis would give more information about the special features of each sector and enable the policymaker to create specific PPP strategies to meet the unique needs and risks of each sector.

Contribution to Knowledge

The findings of this research have contributed to the existing body of knowledge in Public Private Partnership (PPP) and social infrastructural development especially in the Nigerian context. The study offers a theoretical and empirical analysis, enriching the understanding of the role of PPPs as an instrument that facilitates the sustainable development of infrastructure in developing countries.

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