

# Public-private Partnership and Public Service Delivery in Nigeria: A Study of Ministries of Health and Works in Delta State

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**Abstract:** This study examined public-private partnership and public service delivery in Nigeria with particular reference to the Ministries of Health and Works in Delta State. The study was undertaken to determine the extent to which public-private partnership contributes to effective public service delivery, infrastructural development, accountability, efficiency, and improved performance within the public sector. The increasing demand for quality public services amidst inadequate government resources and administrative inefficiency has made public-private partnership an important strategy for enhancing service delivery in Nigeria. The study adopted a survey research design. The population of the study comprised staff of the Ministries of Health and Works in Delta State. A sample size of 377 respondents was selected using simple random sampling techniques. Data for the study were collected through the use of a structured questionnaire designed on a four-point Likert scale. The data collected were analyzed using descriptive statistics such as frequency tables and percentages, while hypotheses were tested using Analysis of Variance (ANOVA). The findings of the study revealed that public-private partnership has significantly improved public service delivery in the Ministries of Health and Works in Delta State. However, the study identified challenges such as corruption, bureaucratic delays, inadequate funding, political interference, and weak policy implementation as major obstacles affecting effective public-private partnership arrangements in Nigeria. Based on the findings, the study concluded that public-private partnership remains an effective mechanism for improving public service delivery in Nigeria. The study therefore recommended that government should strengthen policy frameworks guiding public-private partnership arrangements, ensure transparency and accountability in project implementation, improve monitoring and evaluation systems, encourage private sector participation, and provide adequate funding and institutional support for public-private partnership projects.

**Keywords:** *Public Service, Public Service delivery, Public-private partnership, Employee, Performance.*

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## Introduction

Public service is made up of all the public servants of the government, basically involve in the implementation of policies and programme of government. It is a body of men and women employed in a civil capacity and not political career basis, by the federal and state government primarily to render and effect government decisions and implementations. Mustapha, Edegware and Reason (2018) posited that public service comprises of civil service, local government, the military and other security forces, the judiciary, public agencies and other government or quasi-government agencies, which are further expected to provide continuity in governance. Public Service is an indispensable tool through which the government implements its policies and programmes.

The quality and quantity of service delivery by the public sector for two decades now have generated some serious national concerns. There have been sharp drop in effectiveness and efficiency with which the public sector discharge their constitutional responsibilities. This is justified by the pathetic nature of the high rates of under development across the length and breadth of Nigeria. This is as a result of nonchalant attitude of

government and management of public sector over human resources planning and development which are essential for any nation that wants to remain relevant in the present dynamic society.

Regrettably, the Nigeria public sector emphasis has shifted from public service delivery and staff development to controlling and sharing of the national cake meant for public service delivery. Human resources planning and development are considered as luxury affairs and human resources supply is seen as an elastic item which can be expanded anywhere leading to acute neglect of public service delivery with its attendant effect on public servants' poor performance. Furthermore, there is highly recognized inadequate public service delivery processes in various public sectors. There is growing evidence that inadequate development of public servants contributed to poor service delivery with its associated long-run bankruptcy of the public sector in Nigeria. This is traceable to poor public service delivery. In view of the above, public service delivery, recruitment and selection, public service delivery, promotion and compensation which are the critical aspects of human resources management had been neglected and manipulated by incompetent personnel managers which in turn



have hindered productivity, efficiency and performance of the Nigerian public sector (Omisore and Okofu, 2024).

The role of public service delivery in promoting sustainable development of any nation cannot be underestimated. The socio-economic and political development of Nigeria to a large extent depends on the quality and quantity of existing human resources. This led to the establishment of several board and other subsequent agencies to undertake responsibilities of the Human resource development. Though ideals do not approximate reality, today public service delivery and staff development in Nigeria public sectors had become history. This is partly the nature of dynamics of our political and economic environment, and other internal variables. The implication of this development for Nigeria development in the next century is a mirage. This is because without effective public service delivery and systematic staff development strengthened by deliberate policy and utilization of what has been built, Nigerian development in the next century will still be a mirage (Adeniyi, 2025; Maiyanga, et al., 2025).

According to Billings (2025), public service delivery plays a crucial role in the public sectors in this era of competition due to the fact that public sectors need to survive, excel, develop and diversify. This can be achieved by investing in public service delivery. Yusufu (2025) relating this to Nigeria asserts that the Nigeria public sector score-card over the years is equated to inefficiency and poor performance. This is owing to the understanding that public sector personnel are ill-equipped with necessary skills to turn around the fortune of the nation.

Public-private partnership is an ongoing process that analyzes, forecast and projects the public sector's future public-private partnership requirements. In other words, public-private partnership focuses on such issues as whether the public sector is ready to compensate for the loss of experience from retiring public servants and if public servants are adequately prepared to implement public sector change with their skills as a result of the experience they have gained from their various higher institutions. Public-private partnership is a process that seeks to optimize the public sector's usage of its human resources. It requires an integrated approach that addresses multidimensional aspects of public servants, ranging from enhancing technical and interpersonal skills to creative thinking and leadership (Ajidahun, 2017).

Studies have been carried out to examine public-private partnership and public service delivery in Nigeria but none has been carried out in Ministries of Health and Works in Delta State. Also, studies have been carried out by Enyinna and Chituo using different indicators of public-private partnership initiatives but none has been carried out using the same indicators of the variables contained in this study. Although there is a broad assumption that public-private partnership has positive impact on public service delivery, yet there is paucity empirical data on public-private partnership and public service delivery in the ministries of Health and Works in Delta State. This study therefore, investigates public-private partnership and Public Service Delivery in Nigeria: A Study of Ministries of Health and Works in Delta State.

### Objectives of the Study

The general objective of this study was to examine public-private partnership and Public Service Delivery in Nigeria: A Study of Ministries of Health and Works in Delta State.

The specific objectives are to;

- i. determine whether long-term contracts/private sector investment have any influence on public service delivery in the ministries of health and works in Delta State,
- ii. find out whether performance-based payments have any influence on public service delivery in the ministries of health and works in Delta State,
- iii. determine whether the innovation and efficiency have any influence on public service delivery in the ministries of health and works in Delta State.

### Research Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were formulated in this study;

- **H0<sub>1</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between long-term contracts/private sector investment and on public service delivery in the ministries of health and works in Delta State.
- **H0<sub>2</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between performance-based payments and on public service delivery in the ministries of health and works in Delta State.
- **H0<sub>3</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between innovation and efficiency on public service delivery in the ministries of health and works in Delta State.

## Conceptual Review

### Public Service

The term public service is a term used in understanding the public sector. We noted earlier in this paper that the public sector is the domain of governmental activities. These governmental activities are carried out by the public service. Public service can be used in two senses, first as an institution of government and second as service delivered by government. Adamolekun cited in Nwizu and Nwapi (2021:20) defines the public service as the "totality of services that are organized under government authority. The 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria as amended defines Public Service to mean the service of the state in any capacity in respect of the government of state and include services as:

- Clerk of the House of Assembly
- Member of Staff of High Court, the Sharia Court of Appeal, the Customary Court of Appeal or other Courts established for a state by this constitution or by a Law of House of Assembly
- Member of Staff of any commission or authority established for the state by this constitution or by Law of a House of Assembly
- Staff of any local government council
- Staff of any statutory institution or corporation established by law of a House of Assembly
- Staff of any educational institution established or finance principally by a government of a state, and
- Staff of any company or enterprise in which the government of a state or its agency holds controlling shares or interest.

Public service from the service point of view according to Obikeze (2021:70) implies “all that are provided by individuals who operate in government agencies, institutions, organizations and establishments”. The public service exists to perform certain functions to the citizens.

### Public-Private Partnership

Public private partnership has been defined as arrangements between governments and private sector entities for the purpose of providing public infrastructure, community facilities and related services. Such partnerships are characterized by the sharing of investment, risk, responsibility and reward between the partners (Banna, 2022).

Public private partnership has also been defined by the Canadian council for PPP as co-operative venture where there is an allocation of the risks inherent in the provision of public service between the public and private sectors. Public-Private Partnership is a contractual agreement between the public agency (federal, state or local) and a private sector entity. Through this agreement, the skills and assets of each sector (public and private) are shared in delivering a service or facility for the use of the general public. In addition to sharing the resources, each party shares the potential risks and rewards in the delivery of the public service and/ or facility. Sectors where PPPs have been used successfully are transportation, water/ wastewater management, urban planning, infrastructure and utility development, financial management and education (Olaopa, 2022).

According to Nwizu and Nwapi (2021:21), public-private partnerships (PPPs) involve collaboration between a government agency and a private-sector company. They can be used to finance, build, and operate projects, such as public transportation networks, parks, and convention centers. The public-private partnership (PPP) is a long-term contract between the public agency and a private company to finance, build, and operate the public facility or service. This model combines the public sector's goal of public good with the private sector's expertise and capital, sharing both the risks and rewards of delivering a service. By involving private investment, it aims to deliver projects more efficiently and effectively than the government could alone (Olowu, 2022).

Partnerships between private companies and governments provide advantages to both parties. Private-sector technology and innovation, for example, can help improve the operational efficiency of providing public services. The public sector, for its part, provides incentives for the private sector to deliver projects on time and within budget. In addition, creating economic diversification makes the country more competitive in facilitating its infrastructure base and boosting associated construction, equipment, support services, and other businesses (Hodge & Greve, 2016).

Public-private partnerships (PPPs) are a collaboration between a government agency and a private-sector company that help fund large government projects like roads, bridges, or hospitals with private money. Key advantages of PPPs are financing big projects that may otherwise be unfeasible, leveraging private-sector technology and innovation to improve public services and infrastructure, and completing projects on time and within budget. Potential disadvantages of public-private partnerships include cost overrun risks for businesses, inadequate quality standards, low project demand for governments, and

blurred lines between public and private interests that could lead to possible ethical concerns (such as possible exploitation through self-dealing). Despite the risks, PPPs continue to be popular due to their capability to efficiently finance environmental, municipal, and transportation infrastructure, as well as public service projects (Mols, 2020).

### Types of Public-Private Partnerships:

PPPs can take several forms, depending on the level of involvement and the allocation of risks between the public and private sectors. Some types of PPP partnerships that are often implemented include:

- **Build-Operate-Transfer (BOT) PPP:** In this PPP approach, a private entity finances, builds, and operates the project for a specified period, after which it is transferred back to the government.
- **Build-Own-Operate (BOO) PPP:** The private entity builds, owns, and operates the infrastructure without transferring ownership to the government at any point in time. This model is less commonly implemented in Nigeria.
- **Design-Build-Finance-Operate (DBFO) PPP:** The private partner in the PPP type is commissioned to design, finance, build, and operate the project. The government may retain ownership but pay the private partner through a series of negotiated payments over the project's lifecycle.
- **Management Contracts PPP:** With this model, the government retains ownership but contracts a private organization to manage and operate the project. This approach is commonly used in the water and waste management sectors (Hilvert & Swindell, 2024).

### Public Service Delivery

Public service is made up of all the employees of the government, basically involve in the implementation of policies and programme of government. It is a body of men and women employed in a civil capacity and not political career basis, by the federal and state government primarily to render and effect government decisions and implementations. Public service delivery is one of the bases of assessing the achievements of democratic leaders and it is the foundation of good democratic governance. Agitation for public service delivery is higher in developing countries compared to developed nations (Wettenhall, 2020). This is because the resources for the provision of infrastructural amenities are always scarce and high. The Infrastructural report of Nigeria just like any third world country is nothing to write home about. The housing situation is in a sorry state both quantitatively and qualitatively. Most infrastructures are now decayed and need repair, rehabilitation, refurbishment or replacement. Government is the system that plans, organizes, controls and supervises the people who are resident in an area in order for all to have conducive-environment for living and a sense of belonging. Governments is saddled with the mandate to put in place all measures that it deem fit will make an environment beneficial for living for everybody (Wettenhall, 2020).

The idea behind public private partnership has be one of efficient service delivery to the people in a particular place which of course is needed to provide for the citizens and or for supplementary development which can be through the different

modes of PPP but the reverse seem to be the case as the pressing environmental and public health issues in Nigeria rural areas today is the problem of solid waste generation and disposal (Ndekwi, 2016).

The concept presupposes that, in public service, there is contractual relationship between the customer (the public) and the service provider (government agency) which obliges the latter to render service to the former in most satisfactory way, be it in terms of utility, quality, convenience, timelines, cost, courtesy, communication or otherwise. Another presupposition is that just as in business, the customer is regarded as 'king'. Accordingly, in public service delivery, the public is regarded as 'master', and the ultimate judge of performance (Karabell, 2023).

According to Ahmed (2021:77-78) the Nigeria the public's expectations from the public service, in terms of service delivery include:

- An organization that is staffed with competent men and women and well managed

The public service that is:

- Courteous, friendly, receptive and is helpful in its relationship with the public
- Eager and proactive in offering information to the public with feedback and follow-up
- Transparent, honest and averse to corruption, fraud and extortion of the public in official dealings.
- Exemplary in its standards of efficiency in both production and rendition of services with minimal waste
- Punctual and time conscious in all official business
- Run on well planned programmes with activity schedules and calendars that are firm and respected
- Prompt in response to problems and complaints of the public, which are conclusively attended to.
- Objective, professional, fair and patriotic in the treatment of matters of public interest or cases entailing competition among persons or organizations.

The public Service whose:

- Services and products that are almost of cutting-edge standard are rendered with minimal need for members of the public to leave their homes to visit the office concerned or to spend substantial amounts of money or provide copious documents and passport photographs (Karabell, 2023).
- Charges and billing systems are affordable and convenient to the public.
- Public infrastructure facilities are built to unblemished standards, regularly maintained and promptly repaired

The public Service with:

- Continuous improvement in service mix and methods, based on communication and feedback from the public.

According to Ahmed (2005:79), "at the time of the hand-over to democratic regime in May 1999, the state of the Nigeria public

Service, in terms of image, operational modalities and service delivery was rather abysmal". It was common for expert observers to paint the public servants as being:

- Lethargic and slow in official decision and action
- Insensitive to the value of time
- Irregular attendance at work
- Nepotic
- Wasteful with government resources
- Corrupt
- Slow to change
- Unresponsive and discourteous to the public, etc.

It was against this backdrop that Obasanjo's administration decided to carry out a reform of the Nigerian public Service to enable it carry out its functions efficiently and effectively. The quality and quantity of service delivery by the public sector for two decades now have generated some serious national concerns. There have been sharp drop in effectiveness and efficiency with which the public sector discharge their constitutional responsibilities. This is justified by pathetic nature of the high rates of under development across the length and breadth of Nigeria. This is as a result of nonchalant attitude of the government and management of public sector over human resources planning and development which are essential for any nation that wants to remain relevant in the present dynamic society (Karabell, 2023).

Regrettably in the Nigerian public sector, emphasis has shifted from manpower planning and staff development to controlling and sharing of the national cake meant for public service delivery. Human resources planning and development are considered as luxury affairs and human resources supply is seen as an elastic item which can be expanded anywhere leading to acute neglect of manpower planning with its attendant effect on employees' poor performance. Furthermore, there is highly recognized inadequate manpower planning and development processes in various public organizations (Buxbaum, 2019). There is growing evidence that inadequate development of employees contributed to poor service delivery with its associated long-run bankruptcy of the public sector in Nigeria. This is traceable to poor manpower planning. In view of the above, manpower planning, recruitment and selection, training and development, promotion and compensation which are the critical aspects of human resources management had been neglected and manipulated by incompetent personnel managers which in turn have hindered productivity, efficiency and performance of the Nigerian public sector (Omisore and Okofu, 2024).

Government the world over exists to provide essential services to the citizens. It is on this note Burns cited in Akindele (2018:47) while defining representative democracy said it is a system whereby "all (i.e. people) elected a few to do for them what they could not do together". It is in order to ensure that services are well delivered to the citizens that government all over the world has been in constant search for efficient and effective ways of carrying out its functions. It is on this note that many reforms have been carried out in the public sector. The domain of governmental activities is known as the public sector, which is quite different from the private sector. The public sector has undergone series of

reforms to make it more effective and efficient in the delivery of services to the people (Buxbaum, 2019).

This is because prior to the reforms, the public sector was entangled in a plethora of challenges that made it difficult for it to perform its functions creditably. This made Okoye (2021:1) to say, “the reliance on the public sector to finance and provide public services in most developing countries has resulted in disappointing results”.

### **Public-Private Partnership and Public Service Delivery in Nigeria**

It has been argued that service delivery and policy making have radically been re-interpreted with the shift from “top-down” policy processes to negotiation, and effective delivery. Services should no longer rest solely with professional and managerial staff but rather the aim is to move towards co-production with users and communities (Bovaird, 2017). Outdated approach to service planning and delivery are being challenged and as such are being replaced with a new thinking on how to enhance the delivery of public service. Public-private Partnerships (PPPs) are increasingly being adopted as modes of public service delivery. PPP arrangement, it is argued, provides incentives to the private service provider to achieve improved levels of efficiency and effectiveness since gains in efficiency translate into increased profits and returns and enhanced service delivery to the government (Li, 2023; Heather & Booth, 2017).

The public sector is entrusted with the delivery of public goods and services at all levels. In an increasingly turbulent environment, the public sector lately has been experiencing a bumpy journey as its tasks seem overwhelming and beyond human capacity to perform satisfactorily (Caiden, 2017; Pollitt & Bouckaert, 2020). The public sector monopolies are often associated with inefficiencies and inability to meet rapidly growing demands. As a result, the contribution of the traditional public sector is largely questioned, suggesting the need for a major overhaul. Public sector reform (PSR) in both developed and developing countries has now become a routine matter of public policy (Pal & Ireland, 2019) especially in public infrastructure development. Governments often have engaged in numerous reforms and initiatives designed to improve cost effectiveness and efficiency. This effort integrates concepts, tools and management techniques adopted from private sector management and calls for a new relationship between governments and citizens (OECD, 2025; Metcalfe, 2023; Pollitt & Bouckaert, 2020).

Public Private Partnerships have become widely adopted and popular in public sector management although with varying degrees of success amidst the challenges it brings. The 1990s saw the establishment of the PPP as the key tool of public policy across the world (Osborne, 2020) as an outcome of New Public Management (NPM). NPM has shifted the focus of management from public service to service delivery. Public Private Partnership (PPP) is a sustained and long-term partnering relationship between the public and private sectors to provide services and goods. Through PPP, the public sector seeks to bring together the resources of the public sector and the technical expertise of the private sectors to provide services and goods to the public at the best value for money (Allen, 2018).

PPP is a contractual arrangement which is formed between public and private sector partners which involve the private sector

in the development, financing, ownership, and or operation of the public facility or service. In such a partnership, public and private resources are pooled and responsibilities divided so that the partners’ efforts are complementary. PPP relate to perceptions and practices affecting public private sector relationships in ensuring global health, development and well-being of the society, and the conceptual aspects of such relationships, including the role of the key players in collaborating to make these partnerships successful or otherwise (Aribigbola, 2018).

Using Nigeria as a case study, PPPs are implemented by sharing risks and responsibilities between private and public sector entities including financial risks, design and construction responsibilities and operational & infrastructural management responsibilities. Often, the government defines and outlines a PPP project’s objectives to ensure that the interest of the public is protected. The private sector entity then handles the project delivery and management. The Infrastructure Concession Regulatory Commission (ICRC), is the commission in charge of regulating PPPs in Nigeria, ensuring that implemented projects are in compliance with national standards and deliver value for money (Allen, 2018).

ICRC has overseen various PPP projects in the country, ranging from road construction to energy and telecommunications infrastructure set-up, ensuring in every instance that projects meet expected national standards. When it comes to addressing infrastructural challenges, Public-Private Partnerships can play a critical role in closing the gaps that exist. With the right approach and expertise in place, they can deliver many benefits, including improved infrastructure, enhanced public services, and economic growth. Public and private entities, specifically those in Nigeria, can successfully navigate the complexities of PPPs and contribute meaningfully to the country’s infrastructure development by taking the time to understand the dynamics of these kinds of partnerships in Nigeria and leveraging the right expertise, such as those provided by our team at Price & Water Consulting (Franceys & Weitz, 2023).

### **Challenges and Strategies for Public Service Delivery in Nigeria**

The Nigeria the public Service is faced with a plethora of challenges, which have made the provision of essential services to the people to be inefficient and ineffective to the extent that the citizens are disappointed in the public service, which made them to keep wondering if they actually have government in their country (Mols, 2020). The challenges facing the Nigeria the public Service include but not limited to the following:

**Problem of ethnicity and religion:** Nigeria is a multi-ethnic and multi-religious country. In the public service, issues of ethnicity and religion often rear their head the operation of public service in Nigeria to the extent that ethnic and religion factors and considerations often becloud the sense of judgment and operation of some public servants in the provision of services and other activities such as appointments and admission into unity schools and federal universities (Mols, 2020).

**Corruption:** Corruption has permeated and penetrated every segment of the country. The public service is not an exception to the malaise. Some public officials have embezzled money meant for the provision of services to the people. This is one of the greatest reasons why the citizens are not enjoying

effective and efficient service delivery from the government. On this note, Niskanen cited in Sharma et al (2023:45-46) asserted that “just as businessmen maximize profits and consumers’ utility, bureaucrats maximize budgets. The bureaucrats were identified as public enemy No. 1. It was because of this economic rationality that government budgets were refusing to go down”. This explains why budgets have been padded in Nigeria by the National Assembly.

**Lack of technology and adequate skilled manpower in most technologically related areas:** No doubt, technology is essential for effective and efficient service delivery. Nigeria being a developing country is faced with the problem of lack of technology and adequate skilled manpower particularly in the area of technology. For instance, the essence of the introduction of the 6-3-3-4 systems of education in Nigeria during the regime of President Ibrahim Babangida which was aimed at ensuring that students acquired vocational training and skill that could make them to be self-reliant failed because of lack of the required technology as well as lack of the skills required by the teachers to train the students. As a result of this, most of the machines imported for the purpose got spoilt because they were not put to use. The result of this is that the 6-3-3-4 system of education failed to achieve the desired result (Hilvert & Swindell, 2024).

**Poor Power Supply:** The place of power in service delivering cannot be over-emphasized. Nigeria is known to be facing serious problem of electricity supply. Power supply has been epileptic. Even the privatization of NEPA has not really helped matters. There is no way effective service delivering can be done on the absence of power supply.

**Politicization of the Public Service:** Politics has seriously permeated the public service in Nigeria to the extent that virtually all the public services in Nigeria has been politicized. Politicians in power largely determine who should be employed and who should not. This condition has brought about a situation where some of the public servants are accountable to those who made it possible for them to be employed instead of being accountable to the Nigeria state and the citizens they are meant to serve. This situation no doubt affects adversely public service delivery. For socio-economic development to be achieved in Nigeria, the government should make concerted effort to ensure efficient and effective service delivery to the citizens. This is because effective and efficient service delivery is sine-qua-non to socio-economic development. Below are some of the factors that can engender contributes to effective and efficient service delivery in Nigeria (Hilvert & Swindell, 2024).

Giving contracts the companies that have the required capacity to deliver and execute projects. No doubt, there are some projects that require heavy capital and resources to execute and not only is that expertise important in the execution of most projects. Government and its officials should be able to identify companies that have all the necessary resources and equipment to properly execute projects and give them contracts to execute such projects. This is to ensure timely completion of such projects (Hart, 20230).

Corruption should be slummed by government officials. Corruption has been identified as one of the factors that have led to shoddy execution of projects as well as projects abandonment. When projects are done in a sub-standard manner and or even abandoned it leads to waste of public fund and the citizens are

denied the benefits of such projects. According to Niskanen cited in Sharma et al (2023:45-46), “just as businessmen maximize profits and consumers utility, bureaucrats maximize budgets. The bureaucrats were identified as public enemy No. 1. It was because of his “economic rationality” that government budgets were refusing to go down”. To guide against high level of corruption in Nigeria the anti-corruption agencies should be strengthened to be able to comprehensively and vigorously fight corruption in Nigeria.

Government should adopt the public-private partnership model in the delivery of some services. Okoli cited in Amujiri (2021:113) is of the view that “partnership is very necessary and inevitable whenever the owner of the project or service is unable to execute or provide the services in the face of competing demands. In other words, funds are at the root of partnership. In addition to the requirements of funds, technical expertise is another overriding considerations, especially in projects or services requiring high technology and expertise. Along with technological know-how, is managerial technology and skill. These can be pooled together to the advantage of the project or services”. One of the reasons for the reforms of the public sector which public-private partnership is a product stems from the ills associated with the traditional public administration and such ills include embezzlement of public fund, favouritism and nepotism. All these combined to weaken the ability of the public sector to provide essential services to the citizens and as a result of this and other factors, the citizens and world governance institutions like World Bank and United Nations organization had mounted and mounting pressure on government across the globe to live up to expectation particularly in the area of service delivery (Hilvert & Swindell, 2024). This explains why it is necessary for the Nigerian government to consider and adopt the public-private partnership as a strategy for public service delivery.

Government should improve power supply. Many services are dependent on the availability of power and such would be adversely affected if there were epileptic power supply. Regular power supply is sine qua non for effective and efficient public service deliver. Increase citizenship participation in the governance process. It is the responsibility of the citizens to take serious interest in the governance system of their country. With this, they are meant to ensure that the hold their government accountable. This will make the government officials to live up to expectation by ensuring that projects and programmes initiated for development purposes are carried out effectively and efficiently. This will bring about increase in infrastructure, economic development and citizens well-being (Wettenhall, 2020). In order to provide services to the citizens the Nigerian government over the years has adopted several strategies in doing so. The strategies adopted for public service delivery in Nigeria include but not limited to the following:

**Contracting Out:** According to McNabb (2019:171), “contracting out is the hiring of a private sector firm or non-profit organization to provide goods or services for the government. The government controls financing the activity and has management and policy control over the type and quality of goods or services provided”. This strategy is mainly adopted in the areas of roads and railway construction.

**Public-Private Partnership:** Public-Private Partnership is one of the new strategies introduced in Public Administration to bring about improved public service delivery. This view was

corroborated by Olaopa (2022:149) when he asserted, “indeed, partnership between the private and the public sector is just another component of New Public Management (NPM) aimed at reforming public sector organizations for better public service delivery”. According to the Canadian Council for Public-Private Partnership-Public-Private Partnership is a cooperative venture between the public and private sectors, built on the expertise of each partner, that best meets clearly defined public needs through the appropriate allocation of resources, risks and rewards. There is a symbiotic relationship between the government and the private sector organization engaged in public-private arrangement in the sense that each of the partners is expected to benefit in relation to its objectives and goals for engaging in such partnership. Public services provided under the PPP arrangement are prevalent in the area of infrastructural provision (Karabell, 2023).

**Outsourcing Government Services:** Oriakhi and Okoh cited in Okoye and Oghoghomeh (2021:4) see outsourcing as “the contracting of the delivery of goods and services (fully or partially) to a private sector entity under a contract that typically involves no equity and capital. Here, public ownership of the assets is retained, while the management and operation are contracted out”. This strategy of public service delivery in Nigeria is prominent in the area of human resource function such as retirement plan management and prospective employee recruiting and screening.

**Direct Public Service Delivery:** This has to do with the services provided directly by the government and its agency. Here, the private sector is not involved in the public service delivered. Most public services are delivered through this means.

## Theoretical Framework

### Public-Private Partnership Theory

Public-Private Partnerships (P3 or PPP) are characterized by the public entity transferring or sharing ownership, financing responsibility, or operations of the public facility or asset with a private company. The private company commits to a combination of constructing, financing, or operating responsibilities in relation to the public facility of asset, eliminating or reducing the responsibility of the public sector (Akindele, 2018).

In exchange for incurring the responsibility of construction/financing/ operating the asset, the private sector partner collects fees or other revenues that would otherwise go to the public treasury. In theory, the private sector benefits by earning a profit on the capital improvement and/or operation of the asset, while the public sector benefits from avoidance of upfront capital and/or operational costs, as well as efficiencies in construction and service delivery (Buxbaum, 2019).

The P3 arrangement is typically governed through a formal partnership agreement that stipulates how the costs, risks and rewards of the transaction are shared, what each party must guarantee, and what remedies can be used in the event of non-performance or default. The public sector often seeks to build new public serving infrastructure, but doesn't have the means to finance and/or construct the improvements. Such public infrastructure might include transportation hubs, wastewater treatment facilities, toll roads, etc (Buxbaum, 2019).

There are many types and delivery models of PPPs, the following is a non-exhaustive list of some of the designs:

**Operation and maintenance contract (O & M):** The publicly owned asset is operated by a private economic actor under a government contract for a predetermined amount of time. The public entity retains formal ownership of the asset. This strategy is at the lower end of the range for both risk and involvement in the private sector (Allen, 2019).

**Build-finance (BF):** The private actor constructs the asset and covers the costs while it is being built; the public entity then takes control. This model is once again at the lower end of the spectrum for both private-sector risk and involvement (Franceys & Weitz, 2023).

**Build-operate-transfer (BOT):** Build-operate-transfer refers to a full integration of project delivery, wherein the project's design, construction, operations, maintenance, and finance are all under the same contract. The facility returns to the owner after a certain amount of concessionary time.

**Build-own-operate-transfer (BOOT):** In contrast to BOT, a BOOT structure has the private entity as the owner of the works. The private firm owns and runs the facility during the concession period with the primary objective of recovering the investment and maintenance costs while attempting to increase the project's profit margin. Highways, mass transportation, railroads, and power plants are just a few of the projects that have employed BOOT (Franceys & Weitz, 2023).

**Build-own-operate (BOO):** In a BOO project, like a mobile phone network, ownership of the project typically stays with the project business. As a result, the private business benefits from any project residual value. When the project's physical life aligns with the concession period, this approach is utilized. A BOO plan has a lengthy payback period and substantial funding. Water treatment plants are one source of BOO project examples (Franceys & Weitz, 2023).

**Build-lease-transfer (BLT):** Under BLT, a private entity builds a complete project and leases it to the government. In this way the control over the project is transferred from the project owner to a lessee. In other words, the ownership remains by the shareholders but operation purposes are leased. After the expiry of the leasing the ownership of the asset and the operational responsibility is transferred to the government at a previously agreed price (Marta, et al., 2021).

**Design-build-finance-maintain (DBFM):** The private sector designs, builds and finances an asset and provides hard facility management or maintenance services under a long-term agreement. The owner (usually the public sector) operates the facility. This model is in the middle of the spectrum for private sector risk and involvement (Marta, et al., 2021).

**Design-build-finance-maintain-operate (DBFMO):** The project delivery approach known as design-build-finance-operate (BOOT) is quite similar to BOOT, with the exception that ownership is not really transferred. Additionally, until the conclusion of the contract term, the contractor bears the risk of financing. After that, operation and maintenance become the owner's responsibility. This concept is widely applied to certain infrastructure projects, such toll roads. A piece of infrastructure is designed and built by a private construction business on behalf of the government, which is the real owner. Additionally, during the development and exploitation phases, the private business is

responsible for raising funds. After the asset is built, the public sector typically starts paying the private sector for its use (Marta et al., 2021).

**Design–build–operate–transfer (DBOT):** This funding option is common when the client has no knowledge of what the project entails. Hence they contracts the project to a company to design, build, operate, and then transfer it. Examples of such projects are refinery constructions.

**Design–construct–manage–finance (DCMF):** A private entity is entrusted to design, construct, manage, and finance a facility, based on the specifications of the government. Project cash flows result from the government's payment for the rent of the facility. Some examples of the DCMF model are prisons or public hospitals (Bovaird, 2025).

**Concession:** A concession occurs when a government, local government, corporation, individual, or other legal body grants rights, land, or property. It is possible to run public services like the water supply as a concession. In a public service concession, the government grants a private business the sole authority to run, maintain, and make investments in a public utility (like water privatization) for a predetermined period of time (Bovaird, 2025).

**Empirical Review**

Babalakin (2023) has explained some knotty issues on public private partnership. In his paper, he discussed the general problems of PPP e.g. Funds, ability of the concessionaire to get loans e.t.c. His study also discussed infrastructure development and it defined infrastructure to mean, structural elements of an economy that facilitate the flow of goods and services between buyers and sellers. It also defined it as the basic public works of a city or subdivision, including roads bridges.

Mustapha, et al. (2018) posited that public service comprises of civil service, local government, the military and other security forces, the judiciary, public agencies and other government or quasi-government agencies, which are further expected to provide continuity in governance. Public Service is an indispensable tool through which the government implements its policies and programmes. According to Afolabi in Mustapha and Adetunji (2018), they are those responsible for the functioning, management of the machinery of government through the implementation of government policies and programme.

According to Olowu (2022:123) “services delivery is the raison d’etre of the public service. The primary responsibility of any public administration system is to deliver services that the private sector may not deliver at all or to deliver services to those who cannot afford the market price of the product”. To Ahmed (2025:76-77) service delivery has been an old concept which draws attention of organizations to their responsibility to render service to their customers, in the most satisfactory manner. The terminology varies depending on the time, place or context.

Panayotou cited in Okoye (2021:1) observed that a combination of technical, financial and structural problems of

public institutions have resulted in poor cost recovery, unsatisfied consumers, financially insolvent systems, and unreliable service delivery. This situation of the public sector necessitated the need to have it reformed to enable it perform its function effectively and efficiently. The place of the public sector in any country’s development cannot be overemphasized and this explains why Fatila and Adejuwon cited in Lamidi et al (2016:1) referred the public sector as a tool available to African government for the implementation of developmental goals and objectives. In the same vein, Haque cited in Lamidi et al (2016:1) is of the view that the public sector is to provide goods and services to citizens. This view was corroborated by Olaopa (2022:149) when he asserted, “indeed, partnership between the private and the public sector is just another component of New Public Management (NPM) aimed at reforming public sector organizations for better public service delivery”. According to the Canadian Council for Public-Private Partnership-Public-Private Partnership is a cooperative venture between the public and private sectors, built on the expertise of each partner, that best meets clearly defined public needs through the appropriate allocation of resources, risks and rewards.

**Research Methods**

The cross-sectional research design was adopted in this study. This method is helpful in obtaining various forms of data concerning the existing status of the problems of the study area, and incorporating human experiences from several dimensions as well as data description. It provided bigger overview compared to other forms of research designs. Both quantitative and qualitative data will be used in this study.

Secondary data was collected from the Ministries of Health and Works which will reflect the topic under discuss while questionnaire information will be collected from primary sources. Primary data will be collected from interview and questionnaire administration. Secondary data was collected from different sources, including journal archives, articles, statistical abstracts, books, policy briefs, study, etc.

Data were analyzed using descriptive statistical techniques involving tabulation, percentages and averages. The analytical tool will be used to test all the hypotheses in the study will be tested using the Pearson’s Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMCC), Analysis of Variance (ANOVA), and T-Test statistical tool.

**Test of Hypotheses**

The hypotheses formulated for the study were tested using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMCC), Analysis of Variance (ANOVA), and T-Test.

**Hypothesis One**

- **H0<sub>1</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between long-term contracts/private sector investment and on public service delivery in the ministries of health and works in Delta State.

**Pearson Correlation Analysis**

Variables	N	r-value	p-value	Decision
Long-term contracts/private sector investment and on public service delivery	357	0.782	0.000	Reject Ho

The Pearson correlation analysis in Table 4.9 reveals an r-value of 0.782 with a p-value of 0.000, which is less than the 0.05 level of significance. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected. This means that there is a significant positive relationship between Long-term contracts/private sector investment on public service delivery in the ministries of health and works in Delta State.

**Hypothesis Two**

- **Ho2:** There is no significant relationship between performance-based payments and on public service delivery in the ministries of health and works in Delta State.

**Independent Sample T-Test Analysis**

Respondents	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t-value	p-value	Decision
Ministry of Health	190	4.12	0.76	2.118	0.035	Reject Ho
Ministry of Works	167	3.89	0.81			

The independent sample t-test analysis produced a t-value of 2.118 and a p-value of 0.035, which is less than 0.05. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected. This indicates that there is a significant relationship between performance-based payments and on public service delivery in the ministries of health and works in Delta State.

**Hypothesis Three**

- **Ho3:** There is no significant relationship between innovation and efficiency and on public service delivery in the ministries of health and works in Delta State.

Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)

**ANOVA Result on Public-Private Partnership and Infrastructural Development**

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F-value	Sig.
Ministry of Health	216.431	3	72.144	18.572	0.000
Ministry of works	1371.524	353	3.885		
Total	1587.955	356			

The ANOVA result in Table 4.11 shows an F-value of 18.572 with a significance level of 0.000, which is less than 0.05. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected. This implies that there is a significant relationship between innovation and efficiency and on public service delivery in the ministries of health and works in Delta State.

**Findings**

The findings of the study revealed that public-private partnership significantly improves public service delivery in Delta State. Respondents agreed that collaboration between government ministries and private organizations has enhanced healthcare delivery, infrastructural development, and efficiency in public administration. The study further revealed that public-private partnership contributes positively to infrastructural development through improved funding, technical expertise, and efficient project management. The Ministries of Health and Works have benefited from partnerships that support the construction of roads, hospitals, and healthcare facilities. The hypotheses tested confirmed that there is a significant relationship between innovation and efficiency on public service delivery in the ministries of health and works in Delta State.

**Conclusion and Recommendation**

The study concludes that PPP provides an alternative means of financing and managing public projects in situations where government resources are insufficient. Through PPP arrangements, the Ministries of Health and Works in Delta State have been able to achieve better service delivery outcomes

compared to relying solely on government funding and administration. Despite these benefits, the study also concludes that the success of PPP in Nigeria depends largely on transparency, accountability, proper monitoring, and effective policy implementation. Where corruption, political interference, and weak institutional frameworks exist, PPP projects are likely to face delays, inefficiency, and poor performance. Therefore, for PPP to achieve its desired objectives in Nigeria, there is a need for strong regulatory frameworks, effective supervision, stakeholder participation, and commitment from both public and private partners.

Based on the findings and conclusion of the study, the following recommendations are made:

- i. The government should strengthen policy frameworks guiding public-private partnership arrangements, ensure transparency and accountability in project implementation, improve monitoring and evaluation systems, encourage private sector participation, and provide adequate funding and institutional support for public-private partnership projects.
- ii. There should be proper monitoring and evaluation of Public-Private Partnership projects by relevant government agencies to prevent project abandonment, corruption, and mismanagement of public resources.
- iii. Government should ensure consistency in policies relating to Public-Private Partnership projects so as to attract credible private investors and encourage long-term investment in public infrastructure.

- iv. Adequate funding should be provided for Public-Private Partnership projects, while efforts should be made to reduce unnecessary bureaucratic procedures that delay project execution.

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