

## **Public Private Partnership as a Tool for the Provision of Social Housing Inport Harcourt, Rivers State-Nigeria.**

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### **Abstract**

*There has been a growing concern about the alarming rate of housing deficit in the urban areas in Nigeria and other developing countries. Experts and policy makers have reached a consensus that the resources available are not enough for the government alone to address housing problems. Consequently, there is a paradigm shift by the government from being a provider of housing to being an enabler. Public Private Partnership (PPP) approach in the housing sector will serve as tool to increase social housing supply. This study examines the prospects of PPP as a tool for social housing provision in Port Harcourt, Rivers State – Nigeria. Data were obtained from both primary and secondary sources. Findings have shown that Public Private Partnership (PPP) for social housing in the study area is directed at the high income earners and the problem of insufficient housing for the low/medium income earners has not been addressed. The study recommends that the state and central government agencies should spread the awareness about social housing PPP and get the non – profit sector (NGOs) actively involved in social housing PPP. The study also recommends that the government should formulate a sustainable housing PPP frame work that will direct the focus of the private sector to perceive an investment in housing PPP as a corporate social responsibility and not for economic gain.*

**Keywords:** *Public Private Partnership, social housing, tool, provision*

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### **I. Introduction**

Housing occupies a very unique position in the life of every human being and stands out as one of the basic necessities after food. The importance of housing cannot be overemphasized as the United Nations Center for Human Settlement UNCHS (2010) estimate that 2.1million new houses are needed every year in developing countries. The availability of decent housing for each household/family defines the level of development which a country has attained. Certain factors such as fewer jobs, lower income for the population and difficult access to credits amongst others have sharpened the line of demarcation between those able to access homeownership in the free market and those unable to do so.

In Nigeria and other developing countries, a greater segment of the population considered to fall within this social class that are not able to access homeownership include; the low income earners, unemployed, homeless, ex-convicts and other segment of the population consisting of family nuclei that cannot meet their housing needs in the free market. (Cecodhas, 2011)

Social housing policies include all the initiatives aimed at providing housing supports for all the weak segments of the population listed above. Social housing initiatives are also considered as an opportunity for seeking remedy to housing inequality.

Housing deficit has been very alarming in Nigeria especially Port Harcourt in Rivers state due to the ever-increasing population as a result of it peculiarity as one of the major oil producing states in Nigeria. According to Eyenge& Urwin (2018), the contribution of new housing units to the existing housing stock in Port Harcourt is quite insignificant due to certain factors like rural-urban migration and rapid industrialization. There is dire need to achieve a productive delivery of social housing for the poor urban dwellers which constitute a larger segment of the population in Nigeria. (Ocholi et al., 2018).

In Port Harcourt, the government of Rivers State has made effort towards Public Private Partnership for housing provision which culminated in the delivery of Golf estate, Rainbow estate among others. However, the effort of government has not yielded the required result as the private sector participation is targeted at economic gain thereby making the housing units unaffordable for the low and medium income earners. Public Private Partnership has helped in allocating financial resources to social housing in several countries such as UK and US.

This study will focus on exploring the adoption of Public Private Partnership strategy for social housing delivery in Port Harcourt.

## II. Review Of Literature

### PUBLIC PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP CONCEPTUALIZED

Anvuur and Kumaraswamy (2006) conceptualized PPP as the whole spectrum of collaborative arrangements between the public and private sector entities other than public sector ownership, outsourcing and privatization.

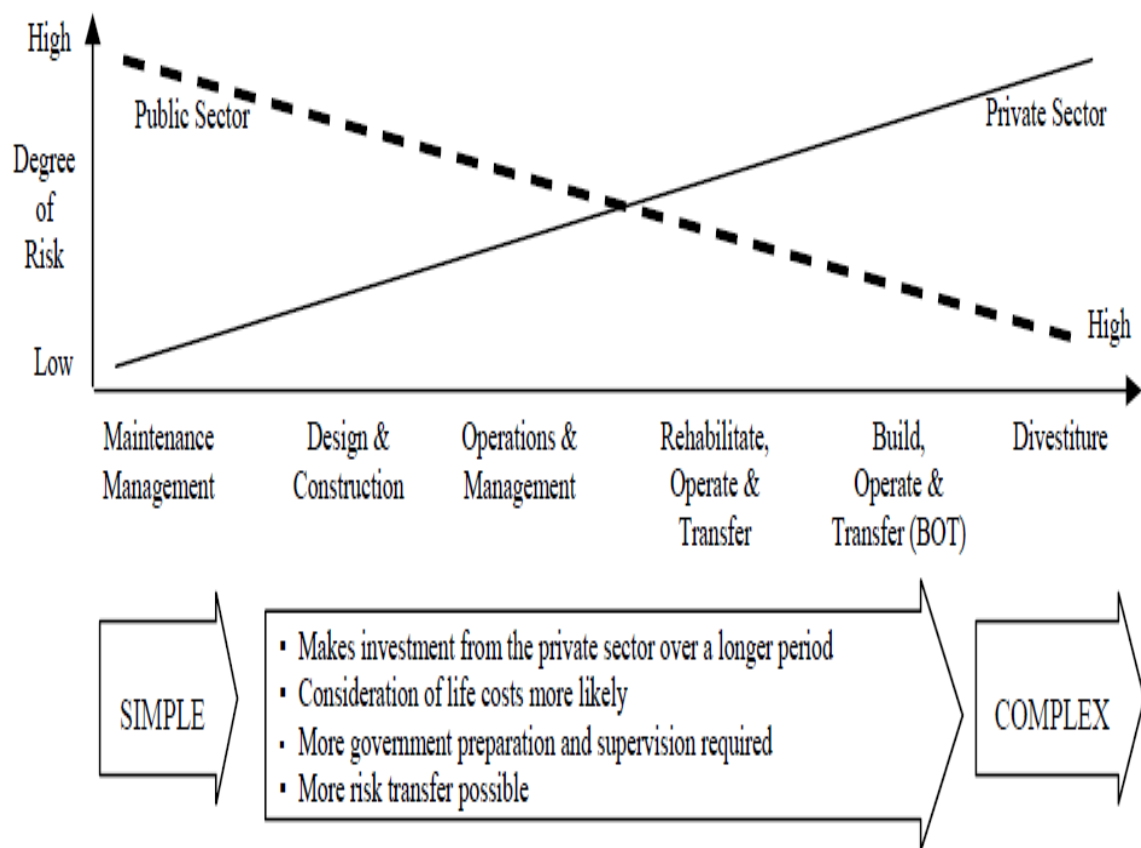
This conceptualization is seen as a genuine transfer of risk to the private sector and creates a shared responsibility for service outcomes but without a complete loss of control by the public sector entity.

The National Council for Public Private Partnership NCCPP (2013) define PPP as a contractual arrangement between the public and private sector which involves the private sector in the development, financing, ownership and/or operations of a public facilities or services.

PPP in its broadest sense can cover all types of collaboration between the public and private sector to deliver policies, services and infrastructures.

Various models are in use to refer to the wide variety of PPP arrangements based on the extent to which the responsibilities and risk are transferred from the public to the private sector.

Fig 1 below shows the risk transfer and features of various PPP models.



Source: Adapted from (Oyigbo et al.,2017)

Essentially PPP's in housing provision imply a change in the role of government from the provider of housing to an enabler. (Ergudeen, 2001).

Public Private Partnership is important in enhancing the performance of the housing market by encouraging public institutions, private developers and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOS) to be involved in joint decision making and management of housing provision.

### SOCIAL HOUSING DEVELOPMENT AND THE EMERGENCE OF PPP

The European committee for social housing has defined social housing as the set of housing solutions for family nuclei whose housing needs cannot be met under market conditions. (Cecodhas, 2012)

Social housing initiatives must therefore be aimed at meeting housing needs in terms of accessing and living in affordable decent homes, increasing the supply of dwellings for affordable rent through the

construction and management of social housing, defining criteria for assignment and for the identification of target groups on the basis of social economic criteria as well as with reference to other types of vulnerability (Guarini & Battish, 2014)

Indicators through which social housing needs are identified relate to overcrowding, housing quality and cost sustainability in relation to income.

This is exactly the situation in the developing countries where households must actively perform the task to gain access to land and construct a building within a very long period of time; ranging from 10-15 years without the support of government. (Ferguson, 2005)

The need for social housing investment continues to grow in the developing countries. Successive governments are recognizing the value in establishing partnership with the private sector to increase the provision of social housing (Austin, 2008)

Partnerships are not recent phenomenon but have gained prominence since the 1970s in the US and UK. The PPP approach under the auspices of the Private Finance Initiative (PFI) has become a recognized and effective way of delivery of value for money public infrastructure and services across the world. (Sobuza, 2010).

PPP concept has emerged as the most prominent urban housing policy model as it forms a broad framework for both government and private institution to work in an integrated approach (Grimsey & Lewis, 2004)

## **COMPARATIVE REVIEW OF PPP IN DEVELOPED COUNTRIES AND THE DEVELOPING COUNTRIES**

### **PUBLIC PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES**

The word “developing economy” is a pointer to a need awaiting development. Pessoa (2006) affirmed that developing economy is one that is searching for means of enhancing public infrastructures and services due to measurable under development within such territories.

World Economic Forum (2016) identify developing economy as one that is weak in infrastructure strength.

Kateja (2012) estimated that the cost of maintaining infrastructures and building new ones in the developing countries is about 7% of their GDP and also their spending capacity is about 3%, this shows a clear gap in the supply of infrastructures. Obviously, the poor state of infrastructural development in the developing countries is far beyond the capacity of government, as such there is need for partnership.

PPP has become a popular method of public procurement that is central to government policy in the developed world. In the industrialized countries especially the UK and Australia, various PPP oriented developments have demonstrated the benefit and viability of such schemes and how the concept has revolutionized public service delivery.

### **PUBLIC PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP (PPP) IN DEVELOPED COUNTRIES**

The experiences of two trailblazers in PPP (The United Kingdom and United States of America) will be considered in order to identify key attributes and success factors of PPP in social housing provision.

#### **The United Kingdom experience**

According to a study by Deloitte (2006), the United Kingdom is a leader in the use of PPP.

In the UK, housing in the social sector has depended on the private sector to supplement public funding by introducing the Private Finance Initiative (PFI) to encourage partnership between the private and public sector (Moskalyk, 2008)

Given an acute lack of public finance for the repairs, maintenance and new provision of social housing stock. The UK government decided to develop pathfinder projects to promote PFI (PPP) in social housing.

In 1998, eight local authorities were selected as pathfinders for PFI/ PPP housing projects. These authorities were selected to explore the potential of PFI in social housing.

The pathfinder PFI schemes covered a range of different types of housing projects which include traditionally built estate, modern high rise towers and incorporated refurbishment projects.

Under the PFI, local housing authorities award a long term contract to a private consortium which is usually made up of banks, housing contractors and a housing association.

Among the main goals of the housing PFI are to provide significant improvement to housing condition and to maximize the value of public money by ensuring a transfer of risk from the public to the private sector which may be better in managing both short term and long term risk (moskalyk, 2008)

#### **Funding framework**

Resources to support the capital element of the project were provided by the central government in the form of PFI credits that deliver additional subsidy to housing revenue accounts held by the local authorities. The revenue element of the project was supported by the local authority via the management and maintenance

allowance.

**Lessons**

Through the pathfinder project, the UK authorities have attempted to learn when and where to apply PFI and how best to set out and manage PFI for social housing.

The UK experience as drawn from the pathfinder projects indicate that: PFI should be considered the preferred option when the alternative methods of securing investment are either unviable economically or unacceptable to tenants. PFI projects were considered to deliver added value over longer contract period because it is seen to be an investment mechanism that locks in investment to maintain a specified output standard for housing stock. The commitment of central government in terms of policy and regulation was necessary to provide confidence to investors.

**The USA experience**

In the USA, PPPs are the country’s main source of social housing (mosalyk,2008). A wide array of supportive financing mechanismhas been put in place in the USA and these have helped to stimulate the production of social housing Public Private Partnership.

According to a study by the Canadian Mortgage Housing Company (CMCH), (1999), there is diversity in the nature of PPP arrangement used in the USA. PPP in the USA have their root in the non-profit sector. PPP approach in the USA involve the widespread participation of corporations, philanthropies, foundations, financial investors etc. The non-profits sector has evolved to such an extent that this new paradigm has become almost the sole approach for social housing provision.

The USA has historically incorporated a wide variety of programmes and subsidy techniques to encourage partnership for housing provision (Lee & Wallace 1996)

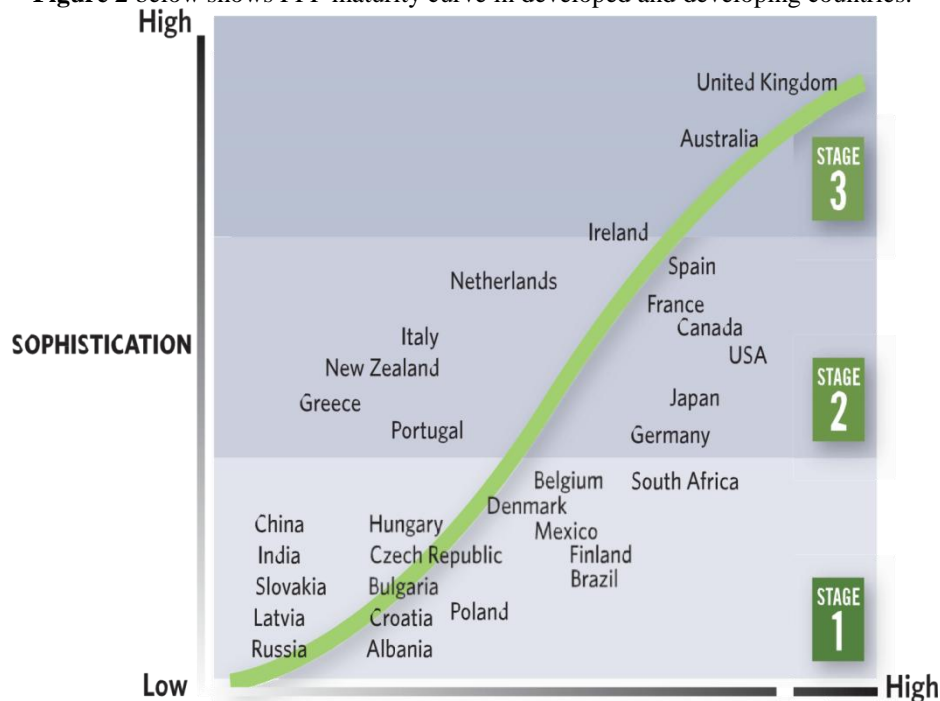
The most notable source of government funding for social housing in the USA come from the low income housing tax credit to local non- profit authorities that can then sell the credit to private investors for cash (P3 Advisor Inc, 2008)

Affordability is pursued by maximizing debt service cost so that the breakeven rent is relatively affordable and the project is viable without the need for ongoing government subsidy assistance to reduce rent to affordability level (CMCH,1999).

The path to a successive PPP Schemes is complex, as such no example can truly satisfy every success criterion.

However, there are key strategies that can be learnt from the experiences of advance economies that have contributed to the growth and viability of social housing through PPP.

**Figure 2** below shows PPP maturity curve in developed and developing countries.



Source: (Deloitte, 2007)

The figure above shows the three stages of PPP which include low, sophistication and high. The three stages is interpreted as developing PPP market, active PPP market and mature PPP market. Thus the figure revealed that the UK and Australia are at the mature stage of PPP. Few countries in Europe, United States, Canada, New Zealand and Japan are in stage two which is the active stage while developing countries are found in stage three that is considered Low PPP market. This goes further to confirm the need for PPP adoption and implementation in developing countries.

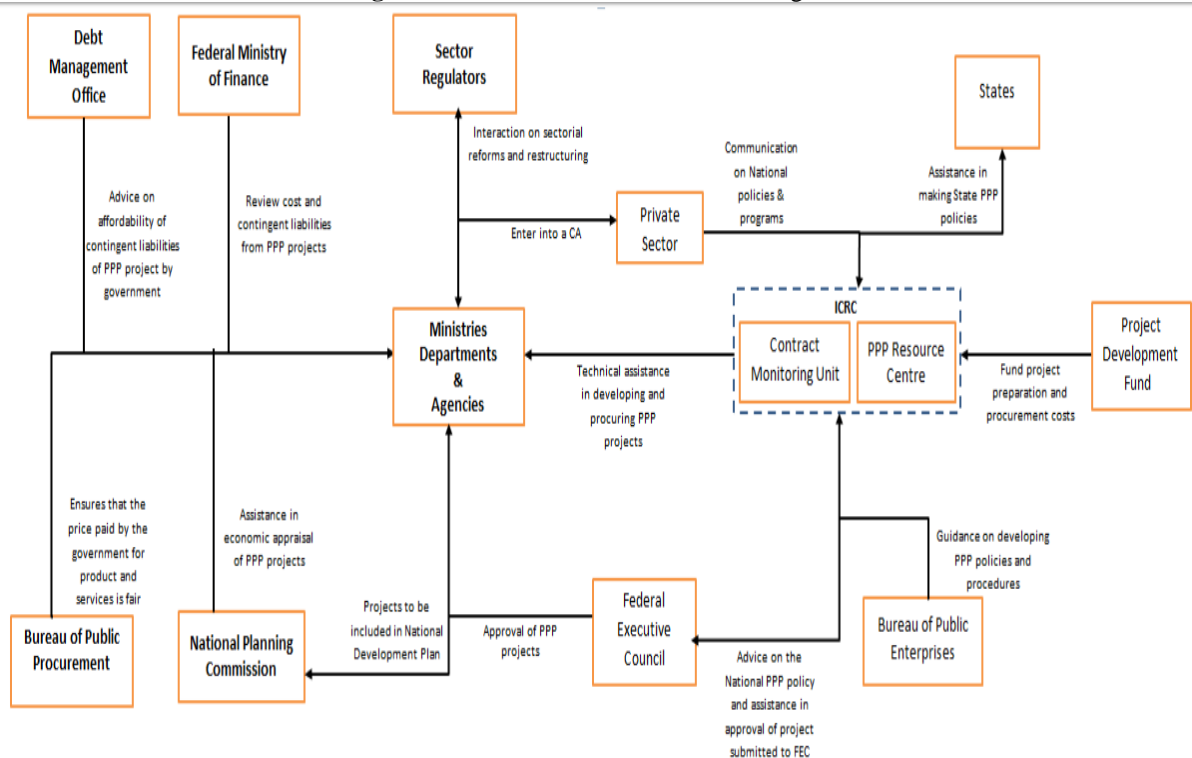
**PUBLIC PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP FOR SOCIAL HOUSING IN NIGERIA**

In Nigeria, the infrastructure concession regulatory commission (Establishment) Act, 2005 was enacted for the participation of the private sector in financing the construction, development, operation or maintenance of infrastructure or development project of the government through concession or contractual arrangements. (Onuobia & Okoro, 2018).

A wide range of PPP models are possible under this legal framework in Nigeria. The number of PPP housing project in some part of Nigeria has improved. According to Vetiva (2011), from 2000-2009, more than 51 housing projects were implemented through the use of PPP. In The 2013-2014, approximately 66 PPP housing projects were under construction. (ICRC, 2012). However, the experience of PPP for the housing sector in Nigeria is more directed at the high income earners than the low income earners. (Ahmed et.al, 2020).

PPP has not made any significant contribution to addressing the housing problems in the urban areas in the country due to the nature of PPP institutional framework and systems of operation in Nigeria.

**Fig. 3: PPP Institutional Framework in Nigeria**



Source: Infrastructure Concession Regulatory Commission (2012)

From figure 3 above, it can be deduced that the institutional framework for PPP’s in Nigeria is cumbersome as it considers mostly the organizations of government and the federal executive council ie (Political class). The PPP plan itself involves so many contributors and as such may result in conflict of interest between parties, delays in reaching agreement, administrative bottlenecks etc. Babatunde et al., (2014) confirmed that the implementation of PPP development project in Nigeria is surrounded by disagreement, delays, and revoked concessional agreement.

**PPP CRITICISMS AND DRAWBACKS**

A central justification for the adoption of PPP arrangement is that it is said to deliver efficiency over services provided directly by the government. However, there is argument that PPP delivers increased efficiency in some policy areas; for example, building and managing prisons, constructing roads, tunnels, bridges and other

economic PPP. (Dungan & Pollock, 2003).

From the available evidence, it appears that PPP for social housing has more complexities and challenges than the economic PPP (Sulsilawati & Armitage, 2008).

According to Culpit (1999), financing social housing is comparatively unprofitable and as such shuns potential financial players to the housing sectors. Culpit went further to state that it is a dilemma of social need for housing against the economic need for profiteering.

The conflicting issue is the commercial and social focus of the parties. The private sector focuses on economic gain while the government strives to protect the public interest through regulation and minimization of risk. If left unmanaged, these disparate goals of the two sectors can cause friction and mistrust between the parties.

Another issue that has been raised is about the credit risk profile for social housing as it is seen to vary considerably from PPP for other economic infrastructures. Social housing projects are generally small in scale than economic infrastructures such as bridges, tunnels, motorways etc and by their nature also tend to be complex in terms of ongoing involvement with tenants (Sulsilawati & Armitage, 2008)

Thus the private sector bidders for social housing PPP are often presented with a situation where the financial reward are less and the operational demands are more complex.

Babatunde et al., (2014), also identified the barriers/drawbacks and categorized them by using the SLEEPT approach which include Social, Legal, Economic, Environmental, Political and Technological factor.

They went further to assert that the recognition of these barriers and its elimination by stakeholders in PPP will help the partnership to function effectively and ensure successful implementation of present and future PPPs in the developing world.

In summary, PPP present both opportunities and challenges. However, the experiences in developed countries demonstrate that these challenges can be surmounted.

#### **DRIVERS FOR THE SUCCESSFUL IMPLEMENTATION OF PPPs**

Countries across the globe are increasingly aware of the need to adopt PPPs for infrastructure development. Thus drivers for the successful implementation of PPPs have been studied in both mature and emerging economies.

Grimsey & Lewis (2002) are of the view that better risk allocation is one of the primary objectives of PPP and as such risk are allocated to the parties that can manage it efficiently.

Better value for money as expressed by (HM Treasury 2006; Spackman 2002). According to them, it is usually the principal justification for PPP route.

Walker, et al., (1995) consider enhancement of public management as a main driver for the successful implementation of PPP projects. In this context, delivering of public facilities and services through PPPs enable government to focus on service planning and performance monitoring.

#### **SUSTAINABLE PPP FRAMEWORK AS A TOOL FOR SOCIAL HOUSING DEVELOPMENT**

Given the changing economic, social and political environment coupled with globalization and budgetary constraints, PPP has become unavoidable and indeed desirable in many countries.

PPP has been widely recognized as a natural response to meet the colossal demand for housing in the context of government dwindling budgetary capacity. The need for it is also accelerated by the massive market demand for better quality of social housing delivery (Erguden, 2001)

The importance of PPP approach for social housing delivery cannot be overemphasized thus government must be committed to providing leadership to create conducive economic environment in order to encourage the active involvement of the private sector in housing delivery. It is believed that PPP approach in the housing sector will serve as a tool for competitive housing delivery, improve the quality of social housing supply, increase the availability of investment capital as well as creating jobs for the unemployed and further enhance economic development (Fatile, 2015)

### **III. Methodology**

The primary data was sourced from structured questionnaires. Participants were selected following a purposive sample frame of senior officials of two state government housing agencies, officials of private real estate development companies/ financial institutions as well as the owners and occupants of two PPP Housing projects (Golf and Rainbow estate) in the study area.

One hundred questionnaires were distributed to the different categories of respondents in the study area and a total of ninety were retrieved. For analysis, this represents 90% response rate which is considered good enough for reliability and valid conclusion.

Among the issues covered in the questionnaires were rationale behind the adoption of PPP for social housing development, types of PPP housing schemes, prices of the housing units and the beneficiaries. Other

issues were partners and their specific roles in PPP for housing within the area of study.

The secondary data were sourced from journal articles, published report on PPP and public housing in Nigeria, text books and other related materials. Data obtained were analyzed using descriptive statistics. The results were properly arranged and tabulated to allow for meaningful analysis and interpretation.

**Data Analysis and Discussion**

The analysis of data for this study is presented in two sections. Section A contains the demographic information of respondents while section B contains the analysis of data from the different categories of respondents on the adoption of PPP as a tool for social housing development.

**Section A**

**Table 1: Total Number of Questionnaires Distributed and Retrieved**

S/N	Categories of respondents	Number of questionnaires distributed	Number retrieved	%
1.	Rivers State Housing Development Authority RSHDA	15	14	
2.	Rivers State Ministry of Housing and Urban Development	10	9	
3.	Officials of Private indigenous Real Estate Development Companies and Banks	40	38	
4.	Owners and Occupants of PPP housing projects in Port Harcourt	25	20	
5.	Bureau of Public Private Partnership (BPPP)	10	9	
<b>Total</b>		100	90	90%

Source: Researcher’s field survey, 2020

From the analysis in table 1 above, one hundred questionnaires were distributed to the different categories of respondents in the study area and a total of ninety was retrieved, this representing 90% response rate.

**Table 2: Age of Respondents**

Age of respondents	Frequency	Percentage
15 – 20	Nil	Nil
20 – 35	10	11.1%
35 – 55	45	50%
55 and above	35	38.8%
Total	90	100%

Source: Researcher’s field survey, 2020

**Figure 4: Bar chart showing age of respondent**

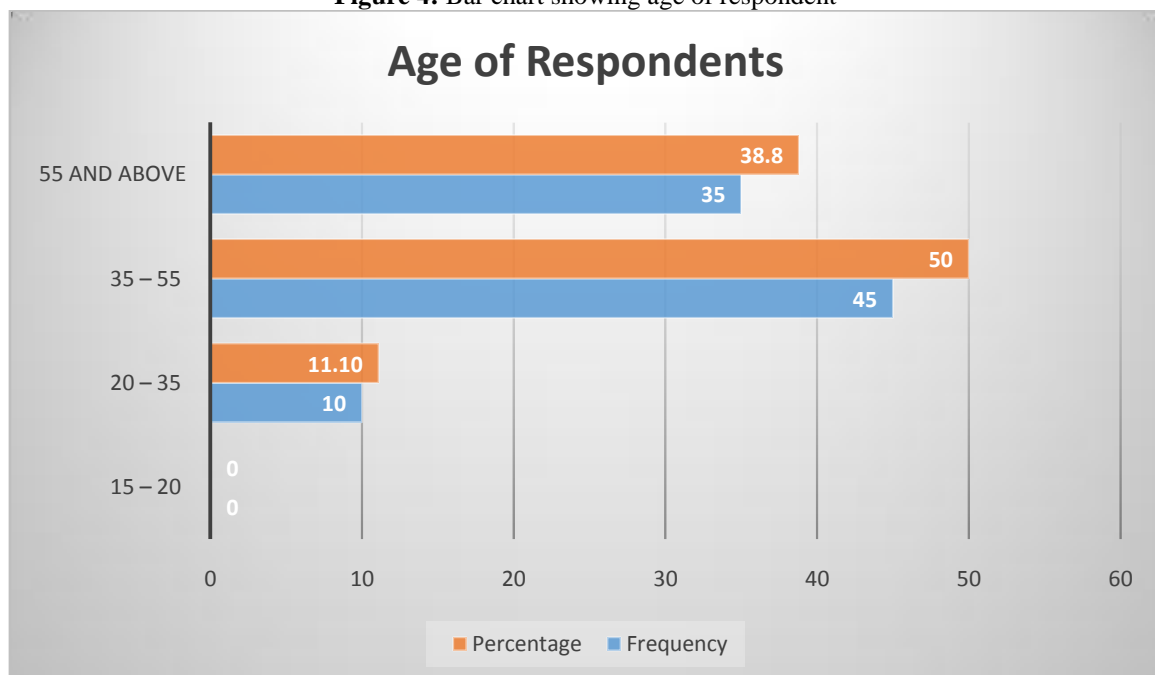


Table 2 and figure 4 above shows that 11.1% of the respondents fall within the age of 20-35 years, 50% fall within the age of 35-55 and 38.8% fall within the age of 55years and above.

**Table 3: Educational Qualification of Respondents**

Qualification	Frequency	Percentage
FSLC	Nil	Nil
O Level	4	4.4%
BSc/HND	55	61.1%
MSc	25	27.7%
PhD	6	6.6%
Total	90	100

Source: Researcher’s field survey, 2020

**Figure 5: Bar chart showing Educational Qualification of Respondents**

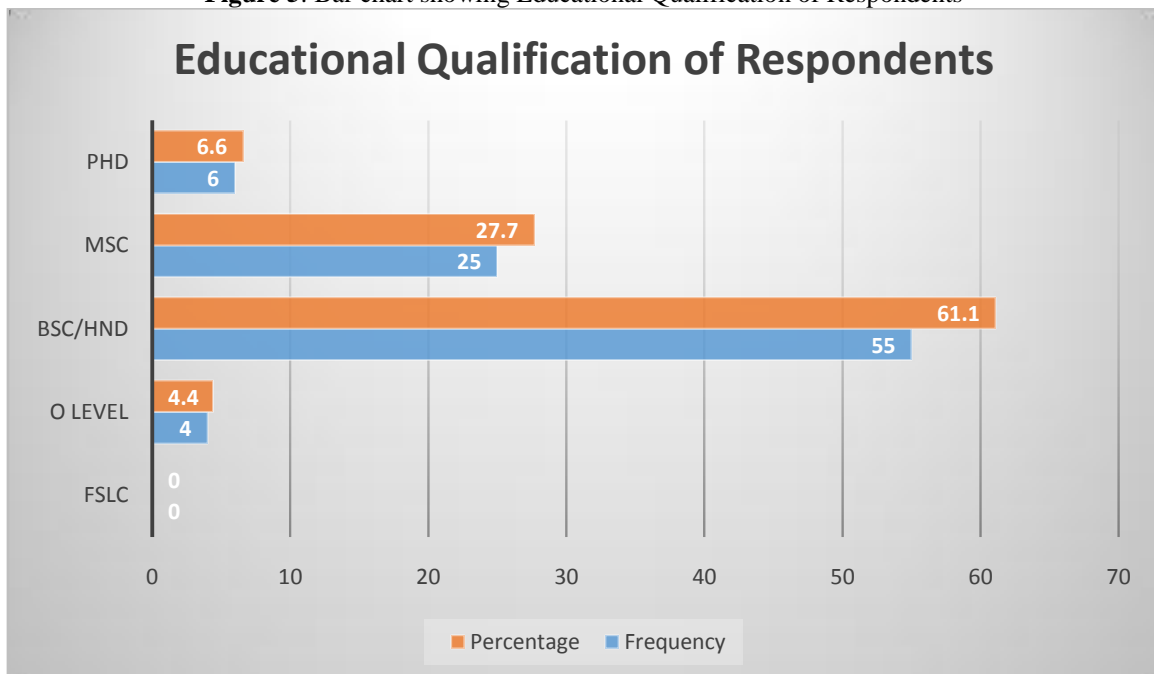


Table 3 and figure 5 above shows that 4.4% of the respondents have O level, 61.1% have BSc/HND, 27.7% have MSc while 6.6% are PhD holders.

**Table 4: Work Experience**

Work experience	Frequency	Percentage
1 – 5 years	10	11.1%
6 – 10 years	21	23.3%
11 – 20 years	40	44.4%
21 and above	19	21.1%
Total	90	100%

Source: Researcher’s Field survey, 2020

Figure 6: Pie chart showing work experience



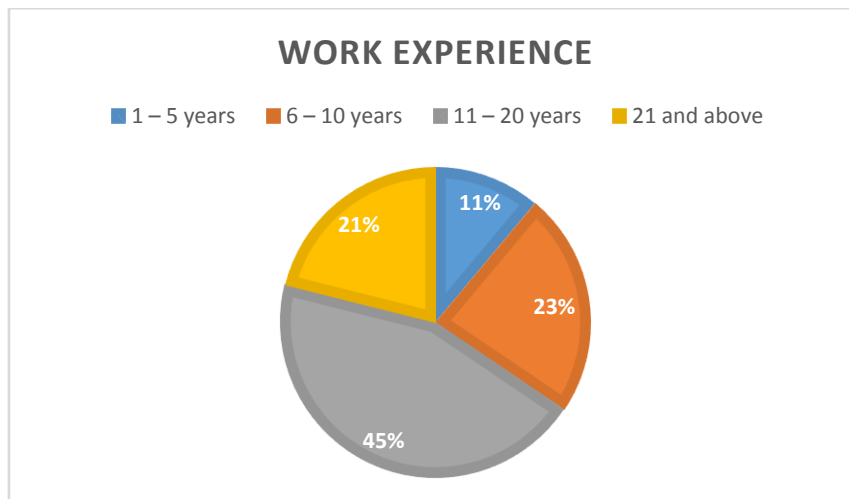


Table 4 and figure 6 above shows that 11.1% of the respondents have 1-5years work experience, 23.3% have 6-10years work experience, 44.4% have 11-20years work experience and 21.1% have work experience ranging from 21years and above.

**Section B**

The section shows the survey of varied opinions of the different categories of respondents on PPP as a tool for social housing development.

**Table 5:** Type of PPP Housing Scheme and prices in the study area.

Housing Scheme	House Type	Price
Golf Estate, Port Harcourt	1 bedroom bungalow	₦25,000,000
	2 bedroom bungalow	₦32,000,000
	3 bedroom bungalow	₦45,000,000
Rainbow Estate, Port Harcourt	1 bedroom bungalow	₦27,000,000
	2 bedroom bungalow	₦38,000,000
	3 bedroom bungalow	₦47,000,000

Source: Researcher’s field survey, 2020

Table 5 above clearly indicates some of the type of houses in (Golf and Rainbow estates) PPP housing schemes and their market prices.

**Table 6:** Beneficiaries of Housing PPP’s in the study area

Beneficiaries	Frequency	Percentage
Low income earners	Nil	Nil
Medium income earners	15	16.6
High Income earners	75	83.3
Total	90	100

Source: Researcher’s field survey, 2020

**Figure 7:** Bar chart showing Beneficiaries of Housing PPP's in the study area

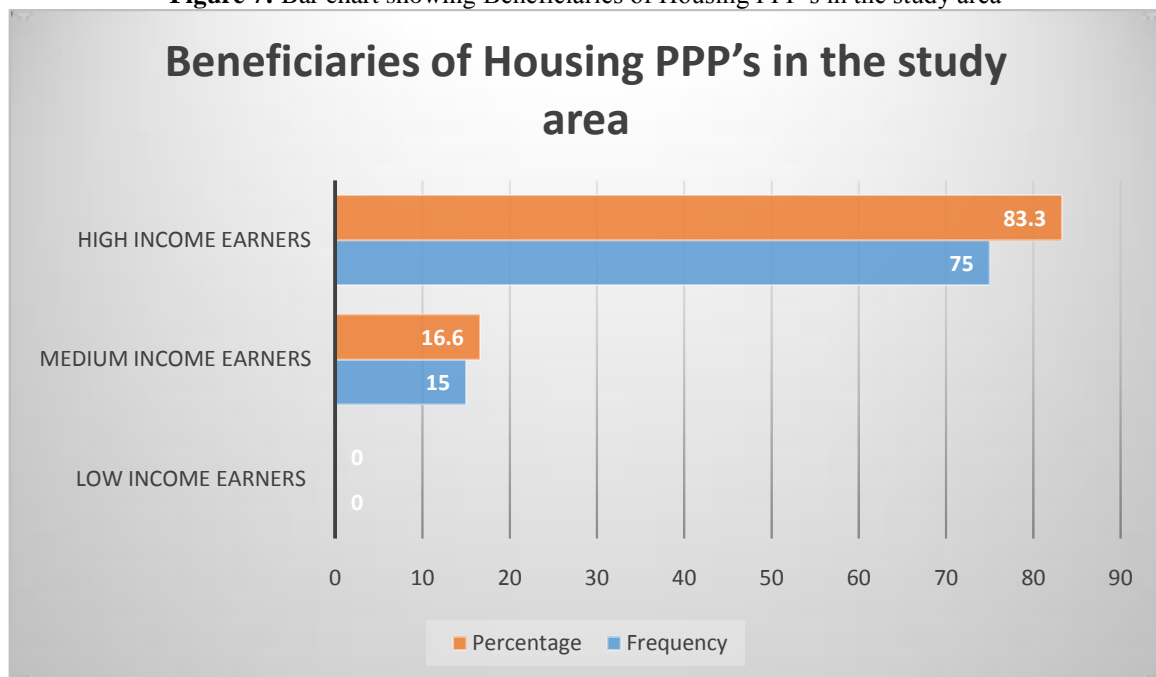


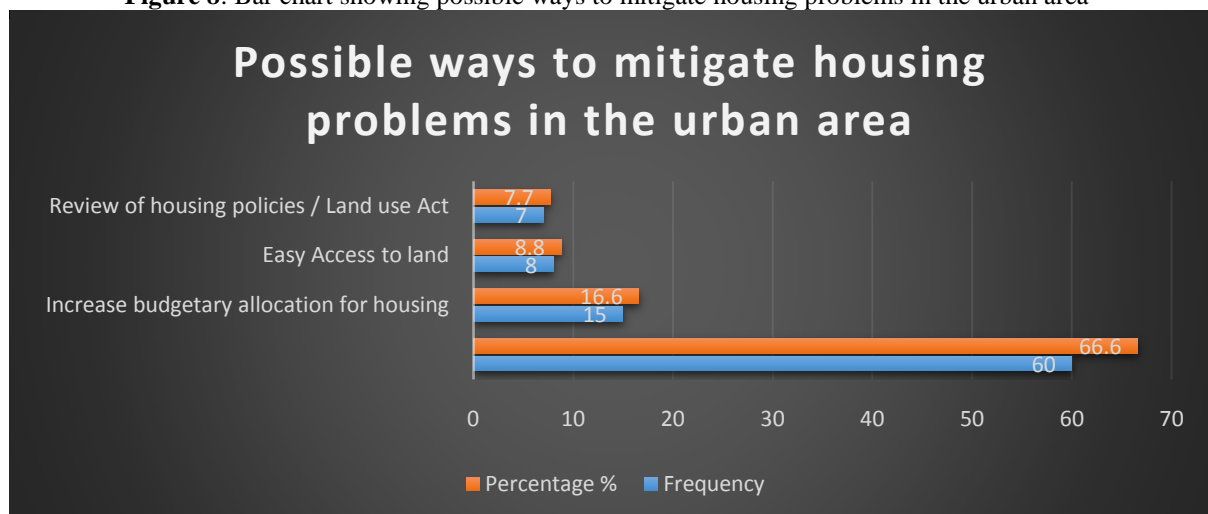
Table 6 and figure 8 above shows that 83.3% of the beneficiaries of the housing PPP in the study are high income earners while 16.6% of the beneficiaries are medium income earners. It is clear that the low income earners cannot benefit from the housing PPP's in the study area as it is unaffordable to them.

**Table 7:** Possible ways to mitigate housing problems in the urban area

Mitigation measures	Frequency	Percentage %
Sustainable policy framework for the implementation of PPP for social housing	60	66.6%
Increase budgetary allocation for housing	15	16.6%
Easy Access to land	8	8.8%
Review of housing policies / Land use Act	7	7.7%
Total	90	100

Source: Researcher's field survey, 2020

**Figure 8:** Bar chart showing possible ways to mitigate housing problems in the urban area



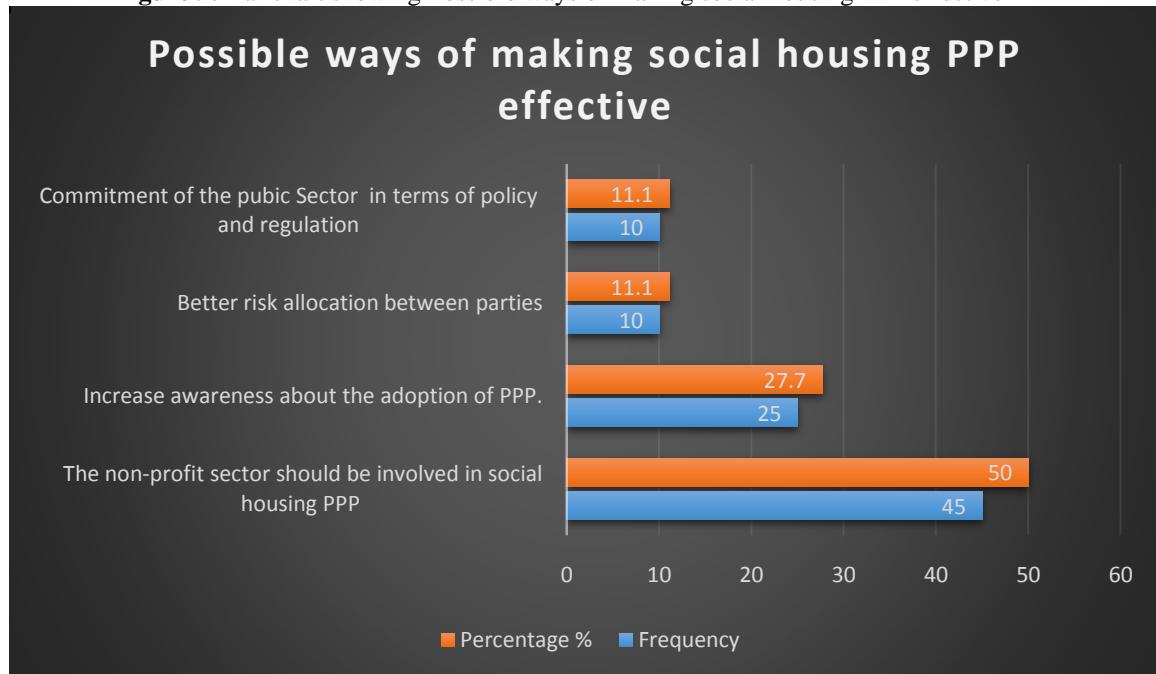
66.6% of the respondents are of the opinion that PPP for social housing should be encouraged so as to mitigate housing problems, 16.6% considered increased budgetary allocation for housing, 8.8% considered easy access to land while 7.7% considered review of the nation's housing policies.

**Table 8:** Possible ways of making social housing PPP effective

Factors	Frequency	Percentage %
The non-profit sector should be involved in social housing PPP	45	50%
Increase awareness about the adoption of PPP.	25	27.7%
Better risk allocation between parties	10	11.1%
Commitment of the Public Sector in terms of policy and regulation	10	11.1%
Total	90	100

Source: Researcher’s field survey, 2020

**Figure 9:** Bar chart showing Possible ways of making social housing PPP effective



From the analysis in table 8 and figure 9 above, 50% of the respondents are of the opinion that the non-profit sector should be actively involved in social housing PPP, 27.7% are of the opinion that there should be an increased awareness about PPP for social housing, 11.1% considered better risk allocation between parties as a way of making social housing PPP effective and again 11.1% considered more commitment by the public sector in-terms of policies and regulation.

#### IV. Summary Of Findings

The study has presented an extensive review of relevant literature and has identified that a formal partnership between the government agencies, commercial private real estate development companies as well as financial institutions directed at high income earners is the dominant type of housing PPP that is operational in Nigeria. The market prices of houses in Golf and Rainbow estate indicated in table 5 according to the field survey further gives credence to the views of Ahmed et.al, (2020) that the experience of PPP for the housing sector in Nigeria is directed at the high income earners. The private sector tends to lose interest in housing PPP because it is not profit oriented.

Nonetheless, the analysis in table 8 and figure 10 has revealed that, getting the non-profit sector (private organizations) e.g NGO’s actively involved in social housing PPP will help to make social housing PPP effective and further bridge the housing gap for the low and medium income earners which constitute a larger segment of the population. This is in line with a study by the Canadian Mortgage Housing Company (1999) that PPP approach in the USA has its root in the non-profit sector ie Philanthropies, Corporations, foundations etc. The field survey according to the analysis in table 7 has also revealed that a sustainable policy framework for the implementation of social housing PPP will help to encourage the private sector to invest in PPP for social housing.

#### V. Conclusion And Recommendation

In the light of the findings of this study it is clear that Public Private Partnership (PPP’s) have been widely used around the world for different purposes and in different sectors but its forms and modes vary considerably due to the peculiar nature of housing policies in different countries. However, the key reason for

adopting PPP for social housing is to provide a suitable and subsidized housing for all categories of income earners in Nigeria.

PPP for social housing in Port Harcourt is uncertain because the private sector perceives social housing PPP as unprofitable. The few PPP Housing projects in Port Harcourt is directed at the high income earners. To this end, the government agencies have to carryout a proper awareness campaign to get the non-profit (private organizations) eg NGO's actively involved in social housing PPP as it is operational in developed countries that are seeing as trailblazers of PPP.

The government of Rivers state and even the central governance of Nigeria should review it housing policies and adopt a sustainable PPP housing framework that will encourage the private sector to invest in social housing for all income earners.

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