Received Date: 15/06/2020 Acceptance Date: 30/06/2020 Publication Date: 30/06/2020

The Effects of Institutional Challenges in Failed Public Private Partnership Project: Evidence from Nigeria

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Abstract: *Unsuccessful public private partnership projects often attract investigators to find the root cause(s) of the failure. Often, the research is focused on the engineering, technical and project finance reasons of failure. Yet, in many cases, the failure is not caused by engineering, technical or project financing reasons but institutional deficiency of the jurisdiction the project is sited. The objective of this paper is to enrich our understanding of project failure due to institutional challenges by utilizing institutional theory and its three pillars — regulative, normative and cultural-cognitive — as propounded by William Richard Scott, to take a retrospective look at two unsuccessful projects in Nigeria, Lekki epe motorway and Murtala Mohammed International Airport; and perhaps more important, establish potential failure avoidance approach for future projects. Although each pillar provides a unique and different outlook, collectively, they demonstrate that the constraints the weak institutions imposed on the concessionaire prompted the failure of both projects. This study reveals that institutional theory can deepen understanding of project failure and provide new insights for future research. The result provides useful information for future investors, and amplifies the understanding of the researched country's regulatory environment, norms and culture.*

Key Words: *Public Private Partnership, Institutional Theory, Transport Infrastructure, Case Study.*

1. PREFACE:

In the last two decades, Public-Private Partnership (PPP) has remained a key alternative infrastructure financing model widely recommended to the developed economies by the International Financial Institutions (IFIs) as a model for the provision of public assets and services without resorting to scarce public funds (Boardman and Vining, 2010; Siemiatycki, 2013, 2015). As a result, numerous developing economies, seeking finance and technical know-how from the World Bank, International Monetary Fund (IMF) and most recently China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) to develop public infrastructures and exploit the economic potential of their region, had PPP model foisted on them as a win-win solution (Panayides, Parola and Lam, 2015; Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development [OECD], 2012). By the last count, PPP spread is in Latin America (Mendoza, 2016; Queiroz, Astesiano, and Serebrisky, 2014), North America (Iseki and Houtman, 2012), Asia (Yuan, Skibniewski, Li, and Shan, 2010; Chang and Phang, 2017), OECD countries (OECD, 2012; Burger and Haskeworth, 2011) and Africa (African Legal Support Facility [ALSF], 2018). In fact, the spread is phenomenal in Africa as only ten out of fifty-four of its countries are without PPP model project in various phases.

However, literature is mixed as to if PPP has been successful in achieving the expected positive outcome or not across the developing economies. Of interest are countries that adopted PPP due to the IFI's recommendation because of the model's proclivity in assisting countries to counterbalance economy-related problems that budgetary deficit and efficiency-related problems activated (Chou, Tserng, Lin, and Huang, 2015: p. 204). Thus far, results are poor as Akintoye and Beck (2009) and Soomro and Zhang (2013) established that most countries still struggle to post positive economic growth after PPP adoption, with limited success in most sectors, countries and regions recognised. More poignant are projects in risk-prone complex transport infrastructure (as airports, railways, roads, ports), which have shown thin success in developing countries and even in most developed economies like Canada, Australia, UK and USA (Checherita and Gifford, 2007; Merrow, 2011: p. 12; Soomro and Zhang, 2013) with advanced implementation abilities. These failures have continued unabated as the World Bank's Private Participation in Infrastructure (PPI) database that covers private sector involved projects awarded in low-and-middle-income countries reflects that $32.1 billion worth of transport infrastructure projects are either cancelled or under distress since 1990.

2. INTRODUCTION:

Prior works identified several factors that trigger the failure of PPP outside not meeting time and budget goals; notably, engineering or technical factors and various risks and financial reasons (Jooste, Levitt, and Scott, 2011; Matos-Castano, Mahalingam, and Dewulf, 2014; Sauser, Reilly and Shenher, 2009). However, less attention has been paid to a more threatening factor, prevailing in developing countries where PPP model are significantly relied upon for public assets provisioning. In these regions, deficiencies that hamper an enabling institutional environment, institutionalised or pre-existing political and policy legitimacy, organisational capacity and partnership building are all existing causing PPP inconsistencies and failures (Bisenthal, Clegg, Mahalimgam, and Sankaran, 2018; Delhi, Palukuri and Mahalingam, 2010; Guasch, Laffont, and Straub, 2007, 2008; Jooste *et al*., 2011; Matos-Castano *et al*., 2012, 2014; Mu, de Jon, and Heuvelhof, 2010; Opara, Elloumi, Okafor, and Warsame, 2017 and Scot, Pierce, Pasqualetti, Jones, and Burrell, 2011). Despite its huge impact on project failures, limited attention has been paid to deepen understanding and provide insight about the influence that institutional context characteristics exert on the use of PPP in developing countries (Peroco 2014).

In attempt to cover this gap, this paper utilizes a unique research approach – the adoption of Scott (2008) three institutional theory pillars; regulative, normative and cultural-cognitive views — to look at the formal and informal institutions framing underpinning projects in a developing country. This institutional approach utilizes formal and informal institutions — political patterns, political instability, norms, customs, values and beliefs, government effectiveness, regulatory quality, rule of law and control of corruption — to conduct a retrospective investigation at the two unsuccessful projects in Nigeria. The goal is to expand PPP failure beyond traditional failure studies that focused on technical, engineering, risk and financial related issues to offer avenues for further institutional research, especially in developing countries marred with deficient institutional environment.

The rest of the paper is structured as follows: the theoretical background comes next (Section 3), followed by the methodology and the case studies' findings respectively (Sections 4 and 5). Section 6 discusses the findings, while Section 7 concludes the study.

3. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND:

Institutional theory is of two variants—the old and the new. This study is aligned with the frameworks of the new variant because it helps to critically examine the direct impact of complex institutional environment on infrastructure construction along three different dimensions, regulative, normative and cultural-cognitive (Scott, 2014). This approach is different from the single regulative framework of the old approach and brings more diversity towards the understanding of institutions. Scott (2014, p. 56), argued that these different frameworks (regulative, normative and cultural-cognitive) combined with other associated activities and resources are the three pillars an institution must comprise to provide stability and meaning to social life.

Broadly, Javernick-Will and Scott (2011) stated that the regulative elements are formal and include governance mercenaries that are easily observed and manipulated: legal and regulatory framework applicable to PPP that enhance efficiency and stability throughout the contract duration are within this precinct. While surveillance, incentives and sanctions are various enforcement tools in support of laws and rules, their roles are predominantly to mitigate manipulation as a result of weak legal and regulatory framework or where strong framework exists, weak regulator and judicial system incapable of legally enforcing and upholding contractual agreements. North (1990) argued that designing laws are not enough but enforcing such laws can constrain opportunistic behaviour to reduce transaction costs and return normalcy to countries with endless PPP failures experiences. This remains the greatest turnoff for investors and lenders because their contracts and rights could easily suffer extensive manipulation in the country with relative non-independence of the judiciary, where issues such as contract enforceability, recognition and enforcement of dispute resolution clauses and waivers of sovereign immunity remain unenforceable.

In contrast to the regulative pillar, both normative and cultural elements are informal and align in some circumstances. The primary focus of the normative element is on the prescriptive, evaluative and obligatory dimensions of social life. According to Scott (2001, p. 55), the 'normative systems define the goals or objectives but also designate appropriate ways to pursue them.' Particularly, this category holds the shared values and norms, interpersonal expectations and valued identities sacrosanct and endorses professional standards for both participating concessionaires and stakeholders within the local communities. This pillar 'creates stability by setting socially determined expectations for behaviour driven morals and obligations,' (Alexander, 2012, p. 796). Cultural-cognitive elements, on the other hand, connote two beliefs: the cultural element because of the observed socially constructed symbolic representations, and cognitive because of the vital template that is helpful in framing perception and decisions of individuals involved.

Furthermore, the cognitive viewpoint has social construction features, which create acceptable categories that would amplify world view. Instances abound where cognitive schema focuses mainly on knowledge creation and sharing with each country patterns distinct to another. Above all, both pillars relate to how an individual in a society understands and manages change, uncertainty, risk and innovation emanating from collaboration or partnership or alliances that loosely or tightly affect orientation (Ambos and Schlegelmilch, 2008; Franke, Hofstede, and Bond, 1991; Shane, 1993). *Table 1* revealed the indicators and examples of each institutional pillar, showing the ripple-effect of institutional inadequacies. In the real world, the ripple effect is more and not limited to the categorisation shown as they are purely for theoretical purposes since the pillars influence each other and provide complex combinations that are extremely challenging to document and understand (Javernick-Will and Scott, 2011). Overall, *Table 1* below reinforced the suitability and appropriateness of the adopted elements in unravelling the dynamics of institutional forces' influence on projects' success or failure by looking at the laws and regulations, social values and norms in the jurisdiction of a PPP project's location.

Uniquely, this study adopted all the elements as a comprehensive approach to understanding the phenomenon contrary to the previous ones that focused mainly on regulative principles [elements] of the theory, because of its easiness to discern (Javenick-Will, 2009). While cultural-cognitive and normative rudiments are most challenging to recognise and often categorised as secondary in some studies (Javernick-Will and Scott, 2011). This paper, however, adopted all three because there are cases where participants' perception (normative and cultural-cognitive elements), crucial to the project's success have often conflicted with project's goals and polycentric governance structure, which have shown the ability to obfuscate decision-making on projects, and exert significant influence on the project's outcome. Likewise, non-evaluation of the environmental and social impact of the construction and operation of PPP (normative approach), including not addressing local communities' concerns on a regular basis (cultural cognitive approach) could result to endless delays, increased transaction cost and in extreme cases render projects unsuccessful.

The three approaches as empirically observed and seen in *Table 1*, overlap and influence each other. For instance, in *Table 1*, regulative elements, which are about constructing laws and regulations to enforce compliance, are often triggered by normative and cultural-cognitive elements' 'expectations that are morally binding' and 'beliefs that are embedded in the culture' respectively. These elements interact to promote standardisation, how things should work and motivate obligations (Javernick-Will and Scott, 2011). This study adopting the three approaches for analyses in the case studies makes not just a comprehensive study but as well

Table 1. Institutional pillars breakdown.

Institution types and indicators		Examples
Regulative (rules & regulations)	Governance arrangements	Service delivery and revenue collection by government agencies, private companies, communities
	Resource mobilisation	Tax payer funding, public grants, PPP, private investment
	Regulatory mechanisms (coercive/legally sanctioned) Judiciary independence	Laws, bans, limits, targets, restrictions, performance indicators, contractual clauses, audits, sanctions, licenses Enforceability of contracts, dispute resolution clauses, buyout clauses.
Normative (values & expectations)	Public/social expectations that is morally binding	Values, concerns, perceptions, visions
	Communities of practice	Formal works, informal networks, loose affiliations, coalitions, alliances, project teams, organisational departments, partnership
	Roles and responsibilities	Allocation of stakeholder responsibilities, an advisory network for decision-makers, formal obligations, informal obligations
	Goals and commitments	Formal policy, strategic documents, strategic programmes, official announcements, media statements, organisational commitments
	Standards	Accreditation, benchmarking, product labelling, best practice guidelines, design standards, case studies, codes of practice
Cultural-cognitive (categories & cultural schemes)	Taken for granted cultural knowledge and common shared understanding	Awareness, beliefs, meanings, language, narratives, symbols, individualism
	Technical knowledge	Scientific knowledge, theories, empirical data, technology development, technology testing, technical designs
	Experiential knowledge	Tacit knowledge, practical experience, skills in operating and maintaining technologies
	Implementation tools	Procedures, templates, guidelines, routines, manuals, models, frameworks

Source: Adapted from Rogers, Brown, Haan, and Deletic, (2015) and modified by the author provides a comparative overview. Thus, it will enable a critical crafting of solutions for the Nigerian government and investors and as well for countries with similar institutional challenges.

4. METHODOLOGY:

Investigating institutional challenges requires an approach that captures the context and complexity of the occurred event in the sample population through retrospective longitudinal approach, which assists in making observed events more accurate and applicable in various other fields (Carlson, Heth, Miller, Donahoe, and Martin, 2009; Yin, 2003). As such, the study adopted a qualitative method with mixture of philosophical paradigm — desk research, Delphi survey and case studies. Qualitative method because it helps in discovering what happens in 'real life' – the complex configuration of action and belief (Cale, Chell, Chittenden, Mason, 1992; Hammersley, 1993, p. 20), understanding individuals' perception of a phenomenon and the world they live in (Bell, 1993); which are exactly what the author is interested in finding out concerning the implementation of PPP in transport infrastructure projects, and why it failed. Both desk research and Delphi survey method (see Okoli and Pawlowski, 2004; Listone and Turoff, 1975), were chosen as data collection methods to develop rich data, explore a range of perspectives and develop a holistic viewpoint (Kvale, 1996). The desk research involved the synthesis of relevant studies and pulled potential factors linked to institutional challenges in PPP projects, mega projects and construction projects abroad. A total of 32 factors were identified and formed the foundation upon which the Delphi survey questions were designed and applied in understanding institutional challenges in Nigeria's perspective.

The selection of experts (respondents) for the survey and interview followed the Key Informant Approach (KIA) of Li and Atuahene-Gima, (2002), which allows the selection of expert(s) who is/are organisation(s) representative(s) and can provide opinions that validly reflect those of the other key decision-makers. The higher the roles the recognised experts had played previously and still playing, the higher the chances of selection. This aligned with the rigorous but flexible selection process this study is committed to since the author is keen in obtaining results with validity. Upon completion of the selection process, thirty-five experts initially consented to participate received survey questionnaires via email, only twenty responded by returning the survey questionnaire and were subsequently scheduled for face to face interview. Since the survey questionnaire was structured, the interviews questions were semi-structured to accommodate new knowledge from the respondents' local experiences. This is particularly important because each country has its unique institutional challenges, which may not be a reflection of the factors extracted during desk research that was used to frame survey questions. Afterwards, the pilot-testing of the questionnaire followed a roundtable approach with five members of the centre for West African Strategic Research and International Development (CWASRID) to test the appropriateness of the question as well as comprehension clarity. All the interviews were tape-recorded and lasted within 45 minutes to 1 hour. Anonymity wasn't a concern for some, while few insisted their recorded interview must be anonymous. The author in his wisdom sensed it would be more appropriate to keep all views anonymous.

Although the face-to-face interview was a key tool for in-depth information gathering for this study, a two-case studies within a familiar socio-political and sectoral context — Nigeria and transport sector was used to examine further the circumstances that triggered the failure and every other occurrence post failure. Data from documents review labelled "field notes," which includes: the preliminary reports and court proceedings, legislative hearings, media reports, newspapers and various official government data; formed part of the data obtained during the cause of this investigation. They complemented the results obtained from the interview, extremely vital in corroborating and substantiating some of the statements credited to the experts (Glaser and Strauss, 1967). Adopting these multiple data sources helped in enhancing the reliability of the information obtained. They also served as data triangulation for the optimal validity of the study (Yin, 1994). Afterwards, literal replication was achieved in the two cases: MMA2 and Lekki-Epe. Then exciting findings were produced by the application of adopted institutional theoretical views.

Overall, the study narrowed down the institutional factors influencing PPP projects in Nigeria to a total of 9 critical factors which spanned across the regulative, normative and cultural-cognitive pillars: metagovernance, absence of regulator, non independence of the judiciary, weak dispute resolution framework, burdensome legal limitations, red tapism, zero transparency law, stakeholder (citizen) opposition, unmet public expectation, weak knowledge of the jurisdiction PPP market, corruption, individualism and unavailability of local skill. At this point, it is essential to understand the story surrounding the projects and then critically interpret each from the three pillars views for a proper understanding of the phenomenon. In the end, *Table 2* displayed a summary of all the institutional challenges identified in the project by the experts, its impact and the category of each challenge.

5. FINDINGS:

Case 1: Murtala Muhammed Airport (MMA2)

Murtala Muhammed Airport 2 (MMA2) is in Lagos State, the current economic capital of Nigeria. The airport is the busiest domestic airport in Nigeria, accounting for 698,165 domestic passengers, or 41.4 per cent of the total air passenger in Nigeria as was revealed in the Air Transportation Data (ATD) Q1 2017, released by the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) in 2017. The contract to finance, develop, manage and operate the Lagos MMA2 (and ancillary assets) was awarded in 2003 under a Build-Operate-Transfer (BOT) arrangement to BiCourtney Concession Limited (BCL) through direct negotiation between Federal Airport Authority of Nigeria (FAAN), representative of Nigerian Government and BCL, the concessionaire. The project was the first BOT project in Nigeria's transport infrastructure. The government's understanding of the standard concession awarding process was limited, which reflected on the direct negotiation option adopted instead of tendering and open transparent bidding approach. Giving a historical background on the project, one of the respondents asserts that:

"The project was first PPP procurement in the country and the government couldn't separate the difference between PPP tendering process that requires tendering and transparent bidding process, different from direct procurement pattern synonymous in most public-sector constructions. The contract signing was in three phases: the first 12 years concession duration in 2003. The second, an amended version in 2004, which saw the project construction duration increased from 18 months to 33 months because multi-storey car park and apron were among the additional projects included to the original concession contract. Thirdly, the Addendum agreement in 2006—extended the concession period from the 12 to 36 years after it was confirmed by BCL experts that 12 years is not enough to recoup the investment," (Interviewee III, 2017).

Series of challenges occurred afterwards, but the key part that stalled the project's commencement post contract signing was the unavailability of project funding. However, the project took off in 2007, following a syndicated loan of ₦20 billion ($170 million approximated at $118/$1 exchange rate) arranged by seven commercial banks to part finance MMA2 project. While this was recognised as ground-breaking project financing from local domestic banks, conflicts triggered between the concessionaire and the syndicated investors:

"The initial project deadline was not met, and the banks requested repayment of the borrowed sum after the concessionaire rollover request was declined. The pressure to repay was huge on BCL long before the project became operational. It became a huge challenge for BCL, which escalated to litigation," (Interviewee I, 2017).

As BCL was putting efforts to resolve the conflicts with the banks, the concessionaire got enmeshed in multiple conflicts with the government as lucidly captured below:

"the non-remittance of revenue accrued to the government as stipulated in the concession agreement was set at 5% of total concession turnover to be paid monthly or annually. BCL failed to remit government's proceeds, precipitating the government to ask the court to grant AMCOM (the government agency responsible for collecting government debt) the authority to take over the management of MMA2 Airport," (Interviewee III, 2017).

Also, in the same lawsuit, field notes gathered that the government asked the court to nullify the 2006 "addendum agreement" and revert to the original 2003 because the Federal Executive Council (FEC)—the apex body that approves construction contracts in line with the mandatory provision as propagated in ICRC Act (see ICRC Act, 2005)—did not approve the renegotiated concession period. BCL refuted the government's claims on contract duration and reinforced that the concession duration was duly signed and approved for 36 years. As this case was still in court, the government approved the commencement of operation at General Aviation Terminal (GAT) adjacent to MMA2, conflicting with the 'non-compete clause" agreement that both parties signed. This action was part of the concessionaire's plea in the court, buttressing the fact that the concession agreement conferred the exclusive right to them over GAT and all future airports in Lagos until the expiration of the contract. Consequently, the government is barred from renovating or operating GAT or other terminals within Lagos State and failure to adhere to the agreement would mean the government breaching the concession agreement restrictive covenants, the non-compete clause.

Moreover, BCL opined that the estimated demand forecast for the MMA2 had reduced after the government commenced operation at GAT, against the concession agreement. According to them, this necessitated the delays in remitting 5 per cent obligation due to the government and meeting other financial obligations with the syndicated investors. As at the time the interview was conducted, the case is still pending in the court and BCL prayed the court to ask the government to refund proceeds from the operation of the GAT terminal, put at the sum of $73 million (Filed Note, 2017).

Case 2: Lekki-Epe Motorway

The Lekki-Epe toll road project is the first motorway project with toll under the PPP model in Nigeria. it is a BOT contract type with 30 years concession duration, which reverts to the Lagos State Government (LSG) afterwards. The project was critical to decongesting vehicular traffic within the major cities of Ikoyi in Lagos Island district and Lekki to Epe, a suburban area of Lagos through the Lagos peninsular; 49 kilometres (km) brownfield project comprised of rehabilitation and upgrade of the existing two-lane dual carriageway to a three-lane highway, construction of toll booths (not exceeding 22) and the construction of a greenfield 20 km highway along the south coast of the Epe peninsula. Again, just as in case one, the project bidding and awarding process were not transparent. It was a near unanimous understanding among the interviewees that conflict of interest abounds in the contract award with company ownership disclosure request by the stakeholders disregarded after Lekki Construction Company (LCC), rumoured to belong to a government official won the contract (Field Note, 2017);

"Lekki-Epe motorway tendering negotiation was on ad hoc basis of which LCC was the only concessionaire permitted to submit a bid, and emerged as the concessionaire. Other bidders were disqualified for various flimsy reasons," (Interviewee II, 2017).

The execution of the project concession agreement was on April 24, 2006; but the construction commencement was interrupted due to challenges linked to funding and red-tapism. How was the project able to scale through the funding and red-tapism challenges was the question put forward?

"The project's value was ₦46 billion ($390 million at ₦118/$1 exchange rate), legally backed under the Lagos State Public-Private Partnership Law 2011 formerly Lagos State Roads, Bridges and Highway infrastructure (Private Sector Participation) development Act 2004. So, when a *change of government happened in 2007 ushering in a new president and governor at the federal and state level respectively. Babatunde Fashola (the state governor as of 2007) was eager to complete the project started by his predecessor. He waved all state taxes for the investors, signed four supplementary agreements with LCC that would enable easy access of long-term funding for the construction of the project after lobbying the FGN to issue the long-awaited sovereign bond guarantee and Federal Support Agreement," (Interviewee X1, 2017).*

As funding and various red-tapism issues were resolved, the project took off. Despite the expectations placed on LCC, only 4 km stretch of the road was initially completed before a toll-booth was set up at the end of the admiralty way for tolling. However, the residents declined compliance with toll payment until the entire project is completed, which is in line with basic mechanisms of a PPP project:

"As you know, the standard requirements in concessions is that no payments of toll until the asset is delivered and working, so the residents are well informed. More so, Lekki-Epe is an area with high net-worth citizens who know their rights, they can't be influenced easily to comply with tolls," (Interview XIV, 2017).

Agitations from the residents forced the state government to suspend toll collection indefinitely on the completed road. Nine months after, the collection of tolls re-commenced necessitating a massive violent protest that forced the government to suspend the tolling the second time. The LSG reversed the suspended toll collection due to the inability to sustain the payment of ₦4 billion ($34 million, approximately) shadow tolls to LCC in the absence of toll collection. One of the interviewees offered his insight as follows:

"It is a pure deception for the LSG to upgrade an existing road and commence toll charge without proper stakeholder engagements. Besides, poor communication of the project design and implementation strategy and weak stakeholder engagement escalated the conflict. If our state government wants to introduce toll, not on this road that has been in existence since 1982 and reconstructed by previous governments with no usage charges. Suddenly, Fashola (former Governor of Lagos) reconstructed the road and included toll charge without engaging the local people or providing a subsidy for those who can't afford the toll. Nothing of such was done. So, I am certain the rejection of toll is connected to the people not having a full understanding of the project dynamics as well as those who genuinely are unable to afford this fee," (Interviewee XIX 2017).

Furthermore, an interviewee argued why would the state introduce a toll on the road which is contrary to the position of the government at the centre that banned toll collection on federal roads. The roads in Nigeria are divided into Trunk A (Federal) Trunk B (State) and Trunk C (Local Government).

"Renovating the road is a welcome development, but why include toll payments even when the federal government already banned tolls in all federal roads, why do we have to pay a toll in state roads, this is unfair and lacking a human face," (Interview XVIII, 2017).

Most of the interviewees and the field notes reinforced that the LSG neglects to engage the stakeholders—unions, civil servants, workers, business, civil society and community leaders—about the project. The real benefits and costs of the project played a more significant part in the rejection of toll and subsequent protests. Other issues found in the course of the investigation were complaints on the increased cost of transportation on the Lekki-Epe axis due to toll, the increment of traffic congestion with exacerbating vehicular flow with no route marked for special vehicles like ambulances or police cars, which conflicts with the government's publicised project benefits.

Also, the interviewees upheld the stakeholders' rejection of the LCC's decisions to start toll collection on the 4 km section of the completed road instead of when the entire proposed project is completed as stipulated in the contract document and commonly practised worldwide. More so, the alternative route provided for those unwilling to pay toll fell short of output specification standard.

Conflicting opinions were found on the lack of transparency in the financial arrangement of the concession, making the position debatable. Specifically, the stakeholders asked for clarifications on the accurate cost of the project and what proportion was the debt to equity ratio as well as what was the relationship between the concessionaire and some individuals within the government. Further, they argued why that vital information was not open to the public for scrutiny while the public would pay for its usage. Lastly, uncertainties attributed to the road construction such as flooding of homes were not given prompt attention when raised by the communities (Field Notes, 2017; Interviewees V, VI, X, XIV 2017).

Addressing issues raised, LSG representative countered most of the stakeholders' claims. However, the information obtained from the email sent to an official of the government reiterated the claim on the construction of an alternative road for users unwilling to pay toll charges. Indeed, this position was accurate as the author (of this work) physically visited the location and established that LSG constructed an alternative road. The shortcomings observed were the deplorable state of the road, lack of security and the distance, which is thrice longer than the toll road.

In responding to toll collection on the 4 km completed section of the road, LSG representative argued that the contract documents empowered LCC to toll any section of the road completed. Some of the interviewees corroborated this line of thought and confirmed that the contract document authorised LCC to set up toll plazas and commence toll collection at the stage of the construction, which was not communicated to the public, a key weakness of this project (Field Notes, 2017; Interviewees VI, X, XI, 2017).

While the LCC and the stakeholders conflict escalated, LSG intervened, with an approach that contravened with the agreed risk sharing method. The demand risk was allocated to LCC, which transferred the right to fix toll tariffs to the concessionaire. With minimal compliance with the toll, there was an increase in toll charge. The plans to raise funds to offset rising interest rates and cost of constructing the remaining section of road was cited as the reasons. LCC argued that the depreciation in naira left the concessionaire with more financial risk to endure. Upon the project take off, naira stood at ₦118/$1; and ₦155/$1 as at the time of the concessionaire's increment. The sustenance of the contract at the old cost was unrealisable, and the only option left was to increase tolls paid from the original price of ₦120 to ₦350 ($0.80

Table 2. Summary of the institutional challenges on transport infrastructure in Nigeria

Key Institutional Challenges	Impact on Transport Infrastructure	Institutional Pillars
Metagovernance	Internal instruments constraining PPP progress—soft law, incentives, guidelines, brokering activities and other key legal mechanisms, notably law and contracting 'around' and 'in' PPP arrangements.	Regulative: rules, laws, regulations (Scott, 2008)
Absence of a regulator	Uncertainty over the agency with the constitutional right to issue punitive measures on parties to the contract when a dispute arises.	
Non-independence of judiciary	Enforceability of contractual terms, non-adherence to the contractual agreement and dispute resolution clauses. Judicial inability to enforce decisions against the government.	
Weak dispute resolution framework	Projects end in endless litigation which is time-consuming.	
Burdensome legal limitations	Legislation seeking to micromanage PPP processes dense thereby deterring prospective investors and limiting the	

INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL FOR INNOVATIVE RESEARCH IN MULTIDISCIPLINARY FIELD ISSN: 2455-0620 Volume - 6, Issue - 6, June – 2020
Monthly, Peer-Reviewed, Refereed, Indexed Journal with IC Value: 86.87 Impact Factor: 6.497
Received Date: 15/06/2020 Acceptance Date: 30/06/2020 Publication Date: 30/06/2020

	expansion of a current project due to the paucity of funding necessitated by the absence of willing investors.	
Red-tapism (Government)	Needless interferences and delay from the government in obtaining approvals for project commencements. Executing the task on merit becomes difficult unless contractors pay kickbacks and inducements. Those with the responsibilities prioritise their gains over national gains.	
Zero transparency law	Mechanism aimed at preventing corruption and upholding transparent bidding process non-existing.	
Stakeholders' opposition	Dissatisfaction with government and concessionaire consultation, poor engagement and communication process resulting in unwillingness to pay the toll, which influenced the project's outcome.	Normative: Norms, values, expectations (Scott, 2008)
Unmet public expectations	The public expectation was a toll-free road due to the abolishment of toll in Nigeria	
Weak market knowledge	Knowledge of existing infrastructures and an understanding of the end user's payment history on privately financed projects.	
Corruption	Project cost inflated, contractual terms unfulfilled but submitted as fulfilled, unsuitable concessionaire selected, opportunism, public perception—project lacks transparency.	Cultural - Cognitive: understanding local jurisdiction and the existing market (Javenick-Will and Scott, 2010)
Red-tapism (Private owners)	Delays in obtaining permits from private owners to relocate items beneath the surface and on the surface for smooth transport infrastructure constructions.	
Individualism	Participants in influential positions expected to employ state resources to further private and communal interest because everyone is expected to look after him/herself.	
Labour unavailability	Quality of locals that can interpret project designs, and materials manufactured abroad are limited.	

Source: Developed by the author

to $2.30 approximately) on the class "A" vehicle (cars), with the highest tollbooths usage rate and plans concluded to set up toll booths in other completed section (Field Notes, 2017).

The initial intervention of LSG was suspending the new rate increase. Realising that fixing rate was under demand risk transferred to LCC, the suspension was relaxed. A proposal to buy back was presented. LCC accepted it. At the conclusion of the buyout deal, LSG's total expenditure for this project was ₦62.3 billion ($325 million) as against ₦46 billion ($300 million, approximately) original cost for full completion of 49 km. Clearly, in terms of value for money, the project failed to achieve the expected real efficiency benefits and deemed a failure.

6. DISCUSSION:

From the abridged review above, key findings emerged as summarised in table 2. This is an important finding in the understanding of the PPP implementation in Nigeria and it is worth discussing these interesting facts under the following subheads: regulative, normative and cultural-cognitive.

6.1: Regulative element

The regulative pillar's weight is on the mechanisms and processes of regulatory environments that enable or constrain the PPPs projects. As seen in table 2, it includes metagovernance, absence of a regulator, non-independence of the judicially, absence of dispute resolution mechanism, zero transparency among others. There are two issues raised in the cases reviewed: non-independence of judicially (nonadherence to contractual agreement) and absence of regulator. In *Case 1*, the government's inability to adhere to contractual terms and resolve contracting problems with the concessionaire emerged as critical towards the failure and ongoing litigation. Such a problem has been identified as recurring in PPP due to the absence of clear laws guiding the implementation of PPP practice. Even previous study by Gil and Lundrigan (2012) raised similar concern about this challenge in PPP admitting that failure to develop a credible legal and regulatory framework remove expected reassurances investors are looking for before investing in a given jurisdiction's PPP project. Although the respondents' and field notes results confirmed the existence of credible frameworks and rules in Nigeria; the extant study observed that the challenge in Nigeria remains the lack of implementation and enforcement of the rules. Various arguments about non-implementation of PPP rules and framework exist, but a very popular one remains—the second issue— the absence of a known and recognised regulatory body, supported by the constitution with the responsibility for regulating PPP projects hence existing agencies continue to foot drag on the issues of implementation due to lack of mandate. For example, some agencies of government that act as quasi regulatory bodies but lack the constitutional mandate to carry out serious regulatory activities are ICRC, NCP and BPE. ICRC established under the provision of ICRC Act 2005 is only empowered to provide guidelines, policies and procurement processes for the Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDA) to enter PPPs agreement with the regulatory power missing from the mandate even when the word 'regulatory' is used in the commission's name (Yar'dua 2008). Given the complexity of PPP, ICRC is more of a PPP unit than a regulator as its functions align with functions of a PPP unit. Others include National Council for Privatisation (NCP) inaugurated in 2017 by the Vice President of Nigeria, Professor Osinbajo with the authority to approve public enterprise to be privatised or commercialised, as well as manage the legal and regulatory framework for the public enterprise to be privatised among other critical endeavours (Osinbajo, 2017). Again, the NCP bill lacks a clear regulatory mandate to regulate PPP, enforce contracts specifications and laws and penalise defaulters. The BPE is another sister government agency under NCP with the commercialisation and privatisation of government assets responsibilities but not regulatory of PPP projects (Ojeifo and Alegbeleye 2015). It is in this light that the analysis proceeds to look in to the absence of a regulator and its impact on the PPP failures. The focus here is to establish a link that the non-existence of PPP regulator also contributed towards the failures. Table 2 under absence of a regulator argues that lack of clarity over the agency with the constitutional right to issue punitive measures on parties to the contract when a dispute arises creates an environment of uncertainty. Klein (1980), Monteiro (2015) and Hart (2002) uphold that uncertainty triggers incomplete contract. Lessard and Miller (2001) listed factors that create incomplete contract to include but not limited to natural (geology or weather), market (interest rates, risk premium, exchange rates, etc.), country/fiscal (regulatory environment, contract enforcement, legal and political stability, terrorism), industry and competitive (demand, competition etc.), and technical/project (construction, project management). Against this backdrop, absence of a PPP regulator could trigger failure in PPP project because it denies the PPP market a recognisable body that can take decisions on issues patterning PPP disputes and resolve same in a quick and assured manner that the public, private and other stakeholders could embrace without resorting to lengthy litigation processes. Bringing it to the Nigerian context, the MMA2 case is still pending in court ten years after; with each court decision follows another appeal from the party the judgement did not favour. These evidences show that achieving progress with PPP requires the establishment of a proper regulative mechanism capable of assisting the public sector in the selection of right regulatory policies, procedures and establish strong institutional structures that advance accountability and contractual agreement compliance, to enhance PPP performances. This is pertinent because the regulative pillar strength is on 'prescribe or proscribe' guiding principles, Eggertson (1996), which ensures the enforcement of compliance or sanctioning of individuals or parties that violate the contractual agreement. Thus, it is obligatory that in ensuring a functional PPP processes, regulative pillars components must be strengthened

6.2: Normative element

From table 2, the normative pillar focuses mainly on public expectations and preferences for projects (Javenick-Will and Scott, 2011; Rogers *et al*., 2015), and managing expectations of the locals are cardinal components of this pillar (Javernick-Will and Scott, 2011). Mindfulness of such expectations can have a tremendous impact on the perception of the locals towards the concessionaire and the project. In a situation the perception is negative, it can have damaging effect on the project's success and financial returns since its success is ultimately dependent on the local's interest and acceptance of the project. The study findings confirmed there was disparity between the local's preference for toll free project with concessionaire's adoption of toll thereby creating a mismatch of users' expectations. This conflict supported this study conclusion that the project failed because the concessionaire was unable to understand the preference of the locals as regards tolling. Although, it is unclear if the stakeholders would embrace the project if engaged prior to design implementation and made to understand that the projects are equally public investments that enhances citizens' lifestyle, and requires collective collaboration and willingness to pay toll for successful operation and management. What is clear, however, is that the 'preference conflict' wasn't addressed due to non-existing conflict management mechanism. Opara *et al* (2017:87) admitted that conflicts, due to preference or goal mismatch derail PPP project, necessitating Alberta (Canada) to create 'conflict prevention and resolution mechanism to form a structural part of all PPP projects after Swan Hills project experience where several disagreements occurred in the project with no clear conflict prevention and management mechanism was in place to address the issues.'

PPP projects requires intensive information communication, partially due to large number of stakeholders involved. Several processes must be completed within a defined deadline. One of such process is effective information integration (Cui, Liu, Hope, and Wang, 2018). This paper suggests that future projects desirous to achieve high-efficiency PPP project management must conduct communication and engagement of stakeholders. This gives the project teams' opportunity to communicate to the stakeholders the project purpose, innovations it would attract and implementations process. It is also a chance to discuss how project would affect residences, environment among other issues. Specifically, it helps project managers identify both locals' support and opposition groups. For example, information on toll plans upon project completion may not allow reaching a universal consensus due to citizens preference, but regular information flow and awareness from the project team to the stakeholders from the proposal stage may reduce any potential protests and enhances the likelihood of project acceptability.

6.2: Normative element

From table 2, weak knowledge of project jurisdiction, corruption among others were the findings of the study under this pillar. The study further unravelled a deeply embedded culture of corruption, a leviathan of Nigeria culture, which shapes the procurement and contract system in Nigerian public sector (Heilbrunn 2004). From the respondents view and field notes observations, corruption is a behaviour enshrined in the social value system, painting a picture of the citizens accepting corrupt people and lionizing big time grafters (Balgos, 1998, p. 267-268). Osisioma (2001) attributed this to damage in the value system, as a result of disconnect between the government and the masses, where neither productivity nor excellence motivates the workers due to lack of reward system as well as exploitation by both government and entrepreneur, prompting workers creed to remain, "I, me and my" (p.4). While the study acknowledges the efforts of government to curtail this act by strengthening the Public Procurement Act, which has been able to close off a number of loopholes, it failed to address the wider causes or prevalence of corruption: high degree of state control of the economy, weak democratic norms and institutions, and a low degree of integration (Sandholtz and Koetzle, 2000). A further novel finding under corruption is the flip side of political support: political interference by projects being pushed directly to the president for support or resolution, resulting in some cases, political push to deliver un-bankable projects or state government using outrageous laws to outwit potential bidders using political input as cover up. In *Case 1*, a concessionaire emerged a bid winner through presidential directive" while in the *Case 2* bid process, other concessionaires were restricted from participating using restrictive laws, and LCC emerged as the sole concessionaire and bid winner. Advanced countries, like the UK, Canada and Australia, introduced the mandatory disclosure of grounds for concessionaire selection to checkmate political interference or individualism (see table 2). But in Nigeria procurement process, it's not mandatory to include grounds for concessionaire selection (World Bank, 2017). Because of this potential limitation, such gap is being exploited to achieve parochial interest, thereby limiting number of willing bidders, reduces competitiveness and enhances inefficiencies (Achua, 2011).

In summary, the result of this investigation is an indication that weak institutional settings affect the implementation of PPP in transport infrastructure. Although the extant study found that the failure of the two projects investigated were not limited to the deficiency in institutional set up as anticipated, it provided clear cut evidence of managerial ineptitude causing failure. Managerial failings like stakeholder's neglect, unmet expectations, goals conflict – which efficient project managers would have corrected — undermined the project *ex post*. As valuable as such engagement is towards providing vital information that would help the project manager understand the preferences and acceptability of the projects, and present an opportunity to explain to stakeholders their role in helping to fund public assets and sensitization on willingness to pay, it wasn't attended to, which resulted to citizens rejection. Likewise, the result on institutional factors like metagovernance, excessive corruption, red-tapism, weak legal and regulatory structuring including absent of a regulator to more brazen corruption and political interference presented a solid understanding of the jurisdiction's institutional challenges, risky to successful implementation of PPP projects. Therefore, the analysis concluded that although the institutional challenges was pronounced as key factor to the failure, the project managers inefficiency towards managing stakeholders and the entire project contributed significantly to the failure. It is expected that future project managers should understand the locals' view and body languages on tolled infrastructure projects and inculcate their preference in the project design and if necessary, re-adjustments made, such that adoption of availability payment option (full or partial shadow toll) as repayment plan encouraged, rather than the contentious user pay that conflicts with users' preferences. Lastly, government should fully understand that strengthening of institutions heralds contract award. The presumption that a contract can be awarded while the regulatory agency develop afterwards remains counterproductive. Institutions and regulatory agencies must be in place before PPP contracts are awarded as these measures reduce the likelihood of failure in developing countries.

7. CONCLUSION:

This paper delved into the thin family of studies spotlighting different understanding why projects fails and what can be done to remedy the situation. It buttresses that institutional theory can provide concrete insight and intuitional analysis of PPP failures within the Nigerian context. Secondly, this study demonstrated that PPP is not "one size fits all" model and not particularly the right procurement option for countries with deficient institutional environment. Stakeholders of a country with deficient institutional environment should interrogate the decision of the government to adopt PPP model for infrastructure construction; while a future study to compare the performances of PPP project against those constructed via the traditional procurement approach to establish if the PPP model delivers value for money would deepen this discussion.

As with most papers, there are always limitations. That of this paper are generalisation and narrowness of the theory. First, it is debateable if the results can be generalised to countries with similar weak institutions since the cases investigated in this paper is in Nigeria. Be that as it may, Nigeria is the biggest economy in Africa and among the first few that adopted PPP for public assets procurement in sub-Saharan Africa. Therefore, other smaller countries in sub-Saharan Africa can learn lessons from the Nigerian experience, especially that PPP may not be the right procurement model for the public assets provisioning if deficient institutional environment exist; and where it has been decided to be the right model, developing outstanding framework and rules for PPP is not enough to deliver successful PPP. The need to have a regulatory agency and strengthen institutions before embarking on PPP project is the optimal approach for success delivery — instead of the Nigerian pattern of adopting PPP model while the agency to regulate the project not in place. Learning the Nigerian lessons would avert failure in those jurisdictions. Second, institutional theory and its views ability in unearthing the toll increment action of the concessionaire in *Case 2* in order to determine if it was done 'opportunistically' to exert more money from the users, harm the public's interests and government's expectations to force the government to exercise the buy-back clause is limited. Future studies can adopt the relational choice theory (rationality, preference and individualism assumption variant) to consider the preferences individuals make in society and what triggers such, if it is 'selfish egoist' or 'social preferences' and if their choice is based on 'methodological individualism' or 'structural individualism'. Thinking this out properly under relational choice theory would amplify productive dialogues across approaches and advance even further the understanding of institutional influence on project failure and decision of the project managers.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS :

The author wishes to thank the editor and members of CWASRID for their useful comments and suggestions. Any subsequent errors are on the authors own account.

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