



## CHALLENGES OF IMPLEMENTING PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP FOR ROAD INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT IN FEDERAL CAPITAL TERRITORY, NIGERIA

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### ABSTRACT

*This study examines the challenges associated with the implementation of Public-Private Partnership (PPP) in road infrastructure development in the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Abuja. The FCT's population increased from approximately 2.59 million in 2006 to over 4 million in 2020 and is projected to exceed 4.2 million by 2025. Concurrently, rising motorization has significantly increased traffic volumes, with private vehicles accounting for more than 93% of traffic on major corridors. Studies further indicate that traffic delays affect up to 42% of vehicles at key intersections during peak periods. These developments have placed considerable pressure on existing road infrastructure, leading to increased congestion, longer travel times, and a growing demand for sustainable transportation solutions. The study adopted a mixed-method research design, utilizing questionnaires, interviews, and documentary sources for data collection. From a target population of 216,879 stakeholders, a sample size of 400 respondents was determined using Yamane's (1967) formula, of which 387 valid responses were analyzed. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, while qualitative data were subjected to content analysis. The study was anchored on Neoliberal Theory, which advocates private sector participation in the provision of public infrastructure. The findings reveal that the implementation of PPPs in road infrastructure development within the FCT is constrained by weak legal and institutional frameworks, inadequate access to long-term financing, ineffective risk allocation, political interference, project delays, land acquisition challenges, and limited transparency in concession arrangements. The study concludes that these challenges undermine the effectiveness and sustainability of PPP projects. It therefore recommends strengthening institutional and regulatory frameworks, improving financing and risk-sharing mechanisms, enhancing stakeholder engagement, and providing clear policy guidelines to facilitate more effective and sustainable PPP-driven road infrastructure development in the FCT.*

**Keywords:** -Private Partnerships, Road Infrastructure, Policy Implementation, Urban Development, Federal Capital Territory

**JEL Classification Code:**

### 1.0 Introduction

Infrastructure development has remained a central focus of development policy globally, given its critical role in stimulating economic growth, enhancing connectivity, and improving quality of life (Ajayi, 2021; James & Ojano, 2019). Among various forms of infrastructure, road infrastructure is particularly vital, as it facilitates mobility, trade, access to social services, and overall urban and regional development (Baba, 2022). In many developing countries, including Nigeria, governments have increasingly adopted Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) as an alternative strategy for financing and delivering road infrastructure, especially in the face of fiscal constraints and rising urbanization pressures. PPPs are designed to leverage private sector capital, technical expertise, and managerial efficiency while sharing risks with the public sector (Grimsey & Lewis, 2024). However, despite their perceived

advantages in mobilizing private capital, enhancing efficiency, and accelerating infrastructure delivery, the effective implementation of PPPs in road infrastructure development remains contentious in both academic and policy discourse due to concerns relating to financing constraints, risk allocation, regulatory weaknesses, project delays, and accountability issues.

In Nigeria, the challenge of inadequate road infrastructure is particularly acute in rapidly growing urban centers. The Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Abuja, as the nation's administrative and political hub, has experienced rapid population growth and spatial expansion since its creation, resulting in increased demand for efficient transportation networks (Lukman, 2017). This growth has placed immense pressure on existing road infrastructure, leading to congestion, accelerated road deterioration, and insufficient connectivity between the city center and surrounding satellite towns. Although successive administrations have prioritized road infrastructure development in the FCT, limited public funding, competing budgetary demands, and inefficiencies associated with traditional public procurement methods have constrained the government's ability to meet infrastructure needs solely through public financing (World Bank, 2020).

Against this backdrop, the adoption of Public-Private Partnerships for road infrastructure development in the FCT gained prominence from 2012 onwards. Through PPP arrangements, the FCT Administration has sought to attract private sector participation in the financing, construction, operation, and maintenance of road projects (Ibrahim & Bala, 2019). These arrangements are expected to accelerate project delivery, improve service quality, and reduce the fiscal burden on government while ensuring value for money (OECD, 2015). Notable PPP-driven initiatives in the FCT have included road projects and urban road development schemes implemented through concession agreements involving private investors and operators.

### 1.1 Statement of the Problem

Road infrastructure development is critical to economic efficiency, urban mobility, and sustainable development, particularly in rapidly urbanizing regions (Jamilu, 2021). In Nigeria, successive governments have increasingly relied on Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) as a strategic mechanism for addressing persistent infrastructure deficits, especially in the road transport sector (Osei-Kyei & Chan, 2022). This approach has been justified by the need to mobilize private capital, improve service delivery, and reduce pressure on public finances. Between 2012 and 2024, the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) Administration entered into several PPP arrangements aimed at financing, constructing, operating, and maintaining major road infrastructure projects. These initiatives were intended to address mounting challenges such as traffic congestion, road deterioration, and inadequate connectivity between the city center and satellite towns.

Given Abuja's status as Nigeria's political and administrative capital, efficient road infrastructure is essential for governance, economic activity, and social integration (Nwokoro & Amos, 2023). However, empirical evidence suggests that the performance of PPP road projects in Abuja has been undermined by a combination of institutional, financial, and governance-related constraints (Igwe, 2022). While the FCT has continued to expand in population and spatial coverage, the capacity of public institutions to design, negotiate, and manage complex PPP contracts has remained limited. According to Onukwube (2023), weak regulatory oversight, inadequate feasibility studies, and poor risk allocation between public and private partners have further complicated project implementation. In addition, challenges related to land acquisition, compensation disputes, and unclear legal frameworks have frequently disrupted project timelines and increased transaction costs.

In response to these challenges, the government has introduced several measures, including policy reforms such as the enactment of the Infrastructure Concession Regulatory Commission (ICRC) Act, 2005, the adoption of the National Policy on Public-Private Partnerships, the establishment of PPP units within relevant government agencies, and initiatives aimed at attracting private sector investment into road infrastructure development.

Nevertheless, the persistence of implementation challenges suggests that these interventions have not sufficiently addressed the structural and contextual factors constraining PPP effectiveness in the FCT (Olusegun, 2024). Despite their widespread adoption, PPP road infrastructure projects have not consistently achieved their intended objectives. Evidence from several countries indicates persistent challenges, including cost overruns, construction delays, traffic demand shortfalls, and frequent contract renegotiations, which have contributed to project underperformance and, in some cases, termination. These challenges highlight the influence of institutional, financial, and governance factors on PPP outcomes and underscore the need for a deeper examination of the barriers to effective PPP road project delivery. Consequently, this study is justified by the need to systematically examine the challenges of implementing Public-Private Partnerships for road infrastructure development in the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja, between 2012 and 2024, with the aim of generating empirical insights that can inform policy reforms and improve the sustainability and performance of PPP-driven road infrastructure projects.

## 1.2 Research Questions

- i) What are the challenges associated with implementation of Public-Private Partnerships for road infrastructure development in FCT, Abuja?
- ii) What measures have been put in place to address the challenges of implementation of Public-Private Partnerships for road infrastructure development?

## 1.3 Objectives of the Study

- i) To identify the challenges associated with implementation of Public-Private Partnerships for road infrastructure development in FCT, Abuja.
- ii) To analyse the measures put in place to address the challenges of implementation of Public-Private Partnerships for road infrastructure development.

## 2.0 Literature Review

This segment focuses on issues relating to subject of investigation starting with conceptual framework, empirical review related studies and theoretical framework

### 2.1 Conceptual Framework

#### Public-Private Partnership (PPP)

Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) have been widely conceptualized as collaborative arrangements between public authorities and private sector entities for the provision of public infrastructure and services. Itu and Kenigua (2021) emphasize PPPs as contractual collaborations characterized by clearly defined responsibilities, profit-sharing mechanisms, and mutual resource contributions, highlighting efficiency and shared benefits. Similarly, Amujiri (2021) describes PPPs as strategic alliances formalized through agreements such as memoranda of understanding to facilitate joint delivery of public services or infrastructure. While these perspectives underscore important operational and contractual elements, they offer a relatively narrow understanding of PPPs by underemphasizing the long-term, institutional, governance, and socio-economic dimensions that increasingly influence PPP performance, particularly in complex public sector environments.

In the context of road infrastructure development, especially within rapidly urbanizing jurisdictions such as the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Abuja, PPPs extend beyond contractual arrangements or strategic alliances. They are embedded within dynamic governance systems shaped by political interests, regulatory frameworks, fiscal constraints, stakeholder expectations, and sustainability imperatives (Ajayi, 2023). The existing definitions inadequately account for critical issues such as accountability, transparency, equitable risk allocation, institutional capacity, and the alignment of private sector incentives with long-term public value. These omissions are particularly significant in developing-country contexts, where weak regulatory enforcement, bureaucratic bottlenecks, funding uncertainties, and socio-political pressures often pose substantial challenges to effective PPP implementation.

### **Infrastructure Development**

Idaeho and Adeshina (2021) conceptualize infrastructure development as the provision of essential facilities and services required to support economic growth and societal well-being, encompassing both “hard” infrastructure such as transportation networks, energy systems, and water supply and “soft” infrastructure, including institutional frameworks, regulatory systems, and governance mechanisms that ensure effective service delivery. This perspective highlights the catalytic role of infrastructure in reducing transaction costs, enhancing productivity, improving connectivity, and stimulating investment, thereby fostering inclusive and sustainable economic development.

From an institutional standpoint, Omobhude and Chen (2020) emphasize that infrastructure development in Nigeria is profoundly shaped by governance structures, institutional arrangements, and legitimacy pressures, noting that weak coordination, fragmented decision-making, and limited stakeholder participation often lead to suboptimal outcomes. This perspective is particularly relevant to Public-Private Partnership (PPP) arrangements in road infrastructure development, where project success depends not only on financial and technical capacity but also on regulatory clarity, institutional competence, and effective alignment of public and private sector interests. However, existing frameworks tend to underrepresent the evolving socio-technical dimensions of infrastructure development, including technological innovation, adaptive planning, community engagement, and sustainability considerations, which are increasingly critical in ensuring the long-term performance and resilience of PPP-driven road infrastructure projects.

The foregoing conceptualizations of infrastructure development highlight that infrastructure is not merely a physical or technical output, but a multidimensional system comprising both tangible assets and intangible institutional arrangements that jointly determine development outcomes. A key lesson is that the effectiveness of infrastructure provision is strongly contingent upon the quality of governance structures, institutional coordination, and regulatory capacity, particularly in developing-country contexts such as Nigeria.

## **2.2 Empirical Review of Related Literature**

Several empirical studies have been conducted in view of Challenges of implementing Public-Private Partnerships for Road infrastructure development. For instance, Temulin and Mengzhong (2021), in their review of PPP implementation in China, identify key challenges including divergent organizational cultures and objectives between public and private partners, weak institutional support, inadequate political and legal frameworks, unreliable risk-sharing mechanisms, poor partner selection procedures, limited transparency, and weak monitoring and evaluation systems. Although the Chinese context differs from that of Nigeria in terms of economic maturity and institutional capacity, the findings are instructive in highlighting systemic issues that are also prevalent in many developing countries. These

challenges underscore the inherent complexity of PPP arrangements and provide a useful comparative framework for examining PPP-related difficulties in road infrastructure development within the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Abuja.

In the Nigerian context, empirical evidence suggests that PPP implementation is significantly hindered by funding constraints, bureaucratic inefficiencies, and weak institutional trust. Sani, Abdulkadir, and Ahmed (2023), in their study of PPP housing projects in Bauchi State, identify inadequate financing, bureaucratic delays, and mistrust between public and private sector actors as major impediments to effective PPP delivery. Similarly, Aja (2020) notes that PPPs have emerged in Nigeria largely due to government funding limitations and inefficiencies in public infrastructure provision, yet their effectiveness remains constrained by institutional weaknesses and poor implementation practices. Afolabi (2021) further highlights the lack of political will as a critical challenge undermining PPP performance in Nigeria, emphasizing that inadequate commitment from political leadership often results in policy inconsistencies and weak enforcement of PPP frameworks. Collectively, these studies reveal that despite the recognized potential of PPPs to address infrastructure deficits, systemic governance and institutional failures continue to limit their effectiveness.

Sector-specific studies on transport and road infrastructure further reinforce these findings. Edogbanya and Adekeye (2024), in their evaluation of PPP impacts on transport infrastructure in Nigeria, identify funding inadequacies, poor maintenance culture, lack of transparency, and procedural violations as recurring challenges affecting PPP project outcomes. Drawing on institutional accountability and governance principles, the study emphasizes the need for strict adherence to public procurement regulations to enhance transparency and accountability. These findings are particularly relevant to road infrastructure development in the FCT, Abuja, where large-scale PPP projects require strong institutional oversight and regulatory compliance to ensure sustainability and value for money.

Comparative evidence from other developing countries further highlights the centrality of regulatory and policy frameworks in PPP success. Osei-Kyei and Chan (2017), in their study of PPP implementation in Ghana, find that clear government policies, transparent procurement processes, and well-defined regulatory frameworks are critical success factors, while weak legal systems often lead to project delays and financial disputes. At a broader global level, Hodge and Greve (2018) demonstrate that regulatory uncertainty and weak government commitment increase risks for private investors and undermine PPP sustainability, whereas countries with robust regulatory frameworks, such as Australia and Canada, record more successful PPP outcomes. These international insights reinforce the argument that effective PPP implementation, particularly in road infrastructure development, is heavily dependent on strong institutional capacity, regulatory clarity, and transparent governance.

Despite the growing body of literature on Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) in infrastructure development, several gaps remain. Existing studies are focused on areas such as housing and energy, with limited attention to road-specific PPP projects in rapidly urbanizing and politically complex contexts such as the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Abuja. Furthermore, while implementation challenges including funding constraints, bureaucratic inefficiencies, weak institutional capacity, and regulatory weaknesses are well documented, there is limited empirical analysis of how these factors interact over time, particularly in relation to political will, institutional trust, and regulatory enforcement. Much of the literature also remains descriptive rather than explanatory, offering limited insight into the causal mechanisms through which governance quality, stakeholder coordination, and risk allocation influence PPP outcomes.

### 2.3 Theoretical Framework

The study adopted Neoliberal Theory. The Theory was propounded by Friedrich Hayek (1899–1992) and Milton Friedman (1912–2006). Neoliberal theory emphasizes the primacy of market-driven solutions in governance, advocating for minimal state intervention and the promotion of private sector participation in economic activities. This theoretical framework underpins the adoption of Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) in Nigeria's infrastructural development between 2012 and 2024. Neoliberalism argues that governments are often inefficient in managing large-scale infrastructure projects due to bureaucratic bottlenecks, corruption, and financial constraints. By shifting responsibilities to private actors, the state can leverage private sector expertise, efficiency, and financial resources to enhance infrastructure delivery. This ideology has influenced Nigeria's policy direction, leading to the establishment of legal and institutional frameworks, such as the Infrastructure Concession Regulatory Commission (ICRC), which facilitates PPP arrangements in critical sectors like transportation, energy, and urban development.

Between 2012 and 2024, Nigeria has witnessed an increasing reliance on PPPs in major infrastructure projects, driven by neoliberal principles. Abuja Light Rail Project, Lagos Light Rail Project, Lekki Expressway, and the Lagos Urban Transport Project exemplify how the government has engaged private investors to finance, build, and manage infrastructure projects. These partnerships reflect the neoliberal preference for cost-sharing and risk distribution, where private entities assume financial and operational risks while the government provides regulatory oversight and policy direction. Additionally, the power sector privatization, initiated under the Goodluck Jonathan administration and continued by subsequent governments, aligns with neoliberal prescriptions that promote competition and efficiency in service delivery. However, challenges such as regulatory inconsistencies, contract disputes, and the reluctance of investors due to economic volatility have sometimes hindered the success of these initiatives.

Neoliberal theory also explains the role of international financial institutions and donor agencies in shaping Nigeria's PPP-driven infrastructure agenda. The World Bank, International Monetary Fund (IMF), and African Development Bank (AfDB) have consistently advocated for market-oriented reforms, linking financial assistance to the implementation of PPPs. Through policy recommendations, these institutions have encouraged Nigeria to create an enabling environment for private investment by improving regulatory frameworks, ensuring contract enforcement, and reducing political risks. Consequently, the Buhari and Tinubu administrations have sought to attract foreign direct investment (FDI) in infrastructure development by offering tax incentives, guaranteeing returns on investment, and promoting ease of doing business reforms. These measures align with neoliberalism's emphasis on liberalization and deregulation as catalysts for economic growth.

Despite its benefits, the neoliberal approach to PPPs in Nigeria's infrastructure development has faced criticism. While private sector involvement has facilitated capital inflows and improved service delivery in some instances, neoliberalism's market-driven approach has also led to the prioritization of profit over public welfare. Infrastructure projects under PPP arrangements often result in high user fees, such as tolls on roads and electricity tariffs, which disproportionately affect lower-income populations. Moreover, the lack of transparency in contract negotiations and the dominance of politically connected firms raise concerns about governance and accountability. Therefore, while neoliberal theory provides a framework for understanding Nigeria's shift toward PPPs in infrastructure development, the state must balance market efficiency with social equity to ensure that infrastructural growth benefits all citizens.

### 3.0 Methodology

The study adopted a mixed research design to examine the challenges associated with the implementation of Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) in road infrastructure development in the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Abuja. The quantitative component involved the collection of primary data through the administration of structured questionnaires to relevant stakeholders, while the qualitative component relied on secondary data sourced from scholarly literature, official government publications, policy documents, time-series data, and other relevant written materials. The adoption of a mixed research design was considered appropriate as it enabled a comprehensive and in-depth understanding of the multifaceted challenges confronting PPP implementation in road infrastructure development, thereby enhancing the validity and robustness of the study findings.

The study population comprised a total of Two hundred and sixteen thousand, eight hundred and seventy-nine (216,879) respondents. The target population included staff from the Ministry of Works and Housing, private sector representatives from construction and engineering firms, project managers, consultants, and residents who are end-users of the roads developed under Public-Private Partnership (PPP) arrangements in the FCT. These respondents were drawn from Thirteen (13) selected organizations, namely: the Federal Ministry of Works (2,766), the Federal Capital Territory Administration (FCTA) (5,675), Federal Capital Development Authority (FCDA) (1,890), Infrastructure Concession Regulatory Commission (ICRC) (354), Bureau of Public Enterprises (BPE) (675), China Harbour Engineering Company (7,645), China Civil Engineering Construction Corporation (CCECC) Nigeria Ltd (12,654), Julius Berger Nigeria Plc. (9,419), Avia Infrastructure Services (411), Africa Plus Consortium (380), Deanshanger Project Limited (432), the National Union of Road Transport Workers (NURTW) (96,000) and Abuja Community Development Cooperative Society (78,578).

The sample size representative of the target population in this study is 400. It is determined using Taro Yamane formula as follows:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

Where N= population, e= level of significance. This is a constant figure of 0.05

In applying the formula to determine the sample size, this process is followed

$$n = \frac{216,879}{1 + 216,879 (0.05)^2}$$

$$n = \frac{216,879}{1 + 216,879 (0.0025)}$$

$$n = \frac{216,879}{1 + 0.5421975}$$

$$n = \frac{216,879}{0.5421976}$$

$$n = 400 \text{ (sample size)}$$

A total of 400 questionnaires were distributed, out of which 387 were duly completed and returned, while 13 questionnaires were not returned. For the interview component, a purposive sampling technique was utilized in selecting key informants based on their expertise, professional experience, and institutional relevance. This process involved

deliberately identifying and selecting respondents who possess in-depth knowledge and practical involvement in PPP initiatives and infrastructure delivery. The data analysis for the study involved the use of simple percentages and tabular presentation for quantitative data, while content analysis was employed to analyze qualitative data obtained from secondary sources. The adoption of these analytical tools facilitated an objective and systematic examination of the challenges confronting the implementation of PPPs in road infrastructure development within the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja.

#### 4.0 Data Presentation and analysis of Results

Below is the analysis of responses as well as the data supplied through the questionnaire distributed and interview questions administered to the respondents.

Table 1.1 Showing Number of Questionnaire Distributed

S/N	Selected Organization	Population	%Percentage	Questionnaire distributed	Questionnaire returned	Questionnaire not returned
1	Federal Ministry of Works	2,766	1.28%	5	5	0
2	Federal Capital Territory Administration (FCTA)	5,675	2.62%	10	9	1
3	Federal Capital Development Authority (FCDA)	1,890	0.87%	4	4	0
4	Infrastructure Concession Regulatory Commission (ICRC)	354	0.16%	1	1	0
5	Bureau of Public Enterprises (BPE)	675	0.31%	1	1	0
6	China Harbour Engineering Company	7,645	3.53%	14	14	0
7	China Civil Engineering Construction Corporation (CCECC) Nigeria Ltd	12,654	5.84%	23	22	1
8	Julius Berger Nigeria Plc.	9,419	4.34%	17	16	1
9	Avia Infrastructure Services	411	0.19%	1	1	0
10	Africa Plus Consortium	380	0.18%	1	1	0
11	Deanshanger Project Limited	432	0.20%	1	1	0
12	National Union of Road Transport Workers (NURTW)	96,000	44.26%	177	171	6
13	Abuja community Development cooperative society	78,578	36.23%	145	141	4
Total		<b>216,879</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>387</b>	<b>13</b>

Source: Field Survey, 2026

Table 1.1 presents the distribution and retrieval of questionnaires administered to selected public and private sector stakeholders involved in road infrastructure development under Public-Private Partnership (PPP) arrangements in the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Abuja. The total study population across the selected organizations amounted to 242,645 respondents, from which a sample size of 400 questionnaires was distributed. Out of these, 387 questionnaires were successfully returned, representing a high response rate of 96.75%, while only 13 questionnaires (3.25%) were not returned. National Union of Road Transport Workers (NURTW) accounted for (44.26%) and the Abuja Community Development Cooperative Society (36.23%). Together, these two stakeholder groups account for over 80% of the total population. Their dominance in the sample reflects the strong relevance of

community-based and transport-user stakeholders in PPP-driven road infrastructure projects within the FCT.

In contrast, federal regulatory and supervisory agencies such as the Infrastructure Concession Regulatory Commission (ICRC) (0.16%) and the Bureau of Public Enterprises (BPE) (0.31%) constitute smaller proportions of the population. Similarly, core public sector institutions directly responsible for infrastructure planning and execution namely the Federal Ministry of Works (1.28%), the Federal Capital Territory Administration (FCTA) (2.62%), and the Federal Capital Development Authority (FCDA) (0.87%) are proportionately represented. Their participation is essential, given their statutory responsibilities in road development, contract supervision, and policy implementation within the FCT. Private sector construction firms involved in PPP arrangements such as China Harbour Engineering Company (3.53%), China Civil Engineering Construction Corporation (5.84%), and Julius Berger Nigeria Plc (4.34%). The proportional allocation of 400 questionnaires reflects the relative size of each organization within the total population. The highest number of questionnaires was distributed to NURTW (177) and the Abuja Community Development Cooperative Society (145), consistent with their large population sizes. The high return rates from these groups (171 and 141 respectively) suggest strong engagement and interest in the subject matter, likely due to the direct impact of road infrastructure quality on their daily activities. Notably, all distributed questionnaires to federal institutions and most private firms were returned, indicating a 100% response rate in many cases. Slight non-response was recorded among China Civil Engineering Construction Corporation, Julius Berger Nigeria Plc, NURTW, and the Abuja Community Development Cooperative Society. However, the overall non-response rate remains minimal (3.25%), which reduces the risk of non-response bias.

Table 1.2 Challenges associated with implementation of Public-Private Partnerships for road infrastructure development

S/N	Statement	SA	A	SD	D	U
1	Political interference often disrupts the continuity and smooth execution of PPP road projects in Nigeria	201 51.0%	89 23.0%	32 8.3%	62 16.0%	3 0.8%
2	Inadequate funding from the government limits its ability to meet financial obligations in PPP agreements	156 40.3%	104 26.9%	77 19.9%	41 10.6%	9 2.3%
3	Delays in project approval processes slow down the initiation and completion of crucial road infrastructure projects under PPP arrangements	103 26.6%	124 32.0%	76 19.6%	69 17.8%	15 3.9%
4	Corruption and lack of transparency significantly hinder the effective implementation of Public-Private Partnerships in road infrastructure development	122 31.5%	89 23.0%	64 16.5%	83 21.4%	29 7.5%

Source: Field Survey, 2026

Table 1.2 presents respondents' perceptions of the key challenges associated with the implementation of Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) for road infrastructure development. The analysis is based on responses measured using a five-point Likert scale comprising Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Strongly Disagree (SD), Disagree (D), and Undecided (U).

The results for Statement 1 indicate that political interference constitutes a major challenge to the effective implementation of PPP road infrastructure projects. A combined 74.1% of

respondents either strongly agreed (51.9%) or agreed (23.0%) that political interference often disrupts the continuity and smooth execution of PPP road projects, while 24.3% disagreed or strongly disagreed and only 0.8% were undecided. This finding is reinforced by the interview data. Respondent 1, a senior official in a public infrastructure agency, noted that frequent changes in political leadership often result in shifts in project priorities, leading to delays or outright abandonment of ongoing PPP road projects. According to the respondent, such interference undermines contractual stability and discourages private sector confidence in long-term infrastructure investments. Statement 2 examined the extent to which inadequate government funding affects PPP implementation. The findings reveal that 67.2% of respondents either strongly agreed (40.3%) or agreed (26.9%) that insufficient government funding limits the government's ability to meet its financial obligations under PPP agreements. In contrast, 30.5% disagreed or strongly disagreed, while 2.3% were undecided. Supporting this result, in one of the interview conducted on 21st, January, 2026, with interviewee 1, a private sector project consultant involved in PPP road development, emphasized that:

Delays in government counterpart funding and failure to honor agreed financial commitments often strain PPP arrangements, leading to project restructuring or slow implementation. This suggests that funding inadequacies weaken the credibility of the public partner and increase financial risks for private investors.

However, this observation also indicates that persistent funding uncertainties undermine the principle of equitable risk-sharing that underpins PPP arrangements, thereby discouraging long-term private sector participation and reducing the overall efficiency and sustainability of road infrastructure projects. In contexts such as the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja, where large-scale road projects require substantial and sustained financial commitments, such funding challenges may result in increased project costs, extended completion timelines, and diminished value for money for the public sector.

Responses to Statement 3 show that delays in project approval processes are another critical challenge affecting PPP road projects. A total of 58.6% of respondents strongly agreed (26.6%) or agreed (32.0%) that bureaucratic delays slow down the initiation and completion of road infrastructure projects under PPP arrangements, while 37.4% disagreed or strongly disagreed and 3.9% were undecided. In line with this finding, Respondent 1 explained that lengthy approval procedures involving multiple ministries and regulatory bodies often prolong the pre-construction phase, increasing transaction costs and discouraging private sector participation. This highlights the role of administrative inefficiencies in constraining timely PPP project delivery. Statement 4 assessed the impact of corruption and transparency issues on PPP implementation. The results indicate that 54.5% of respondents strongly agreed (31.5%) or agreed (23.0%) that corruption and lack of transparency significantly hinder effective PPP implementation in road infrastructure development. Conversely, 37.9% disagreed or strongly disagreed, while 7.5% were undecided. The high level of agreement reflects concerns over procurement irregularities, non-transparent bidding processes, and weak accountability mechanisms. These concerns were echoed by interviewee 2, a staff with Federal Ministry of Works and Housing, who observed that;

Non-transparent procurement practices and political favoritism in contractor selection often distort risk allocation, inflate project costs, and reduce public trust in PPP road projects. Such practices undermine the efficiency and sustainability of PPP arrangements and weaken their developmental impact.

This situation further suggests that weak institutional oversight and ineffective enforcement of procurement regulations create an enabling environment for such practices, thereby compromising accountability and diminishing the capacity of PPP frameworks to deliver efficient, cost-effective, and socially responsive road infrastructure outcomes.

Table 1.3 Suggestions to address the challenges associated with Implementation of Public-Private Partnerships for road infrastructure development

S/N	Statement	SA	A	SD	D	U
1	Improving funding mechanisms will enhance the government's ability to meet financial obligations and attract more private sector investment	188 48.6 %	145 37.5 %	21 5.4 %	33 8.5 %	0 0.0 %
2	Strengthening regulatory frameworks is essential to provide clear guidelines and foster investor confidence in PPP road infrastructure projects	103 26.6 %	111 28.7 %	84 21.7 %	79 20.4 %	10 2.6 %
3	Enhancing stakeholder involvement throughout the project lifecycle helps build public trust and ensures that road projects meet the needs of local communities.	192 49.6 %	151 39.0 %	23 5.9 %	18 4.7 %	3 0.8 %
4	Increasing transparency and accountability can reduce corruption and ensure more effective implementation of PPP agreements.	209 54.0 %	128 33.1 %	13 3.4 %	25 6.5 %	12 3.1 %

Source: Field Survey, 2026

Table 1.3 presents respondents' views on possible strategies for addressing the challenges associated with the implementation of Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) for road infrastructure development. The results for Statement 1 reveal overwhelming support for improving funding mechanisms as a critical strategy for enhancing PPP implementation. A total of 86.1% of respondents either strongly agreed (48.6%) or agreed (37.5%) that improved funding mechanisms would enhance the government's ability to meet its financial obligations and attract more private sector investment. Only 13.9% of respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed, with no respondents remaining undecided. These findings are corroborated by evidence from the interview conducted with Interviewee 3 on 28 January 2026. The interviewee emphasized that:

The sustainability of PPP road projects largely depends on the government's capacity to provide timely counterpart funding and credible financial guarantees, without which private investors remain reluctant to commit long-term capital.

This perspective underscores the importance of sound financial structures in reducing investment risk and strengthening public sector credibility, as well-designed and reliable financing arrangements reassure private investors of the government's capacity to honour its contractual obligations, minimize uncertainties associated with delayed payments or cost overruns, and create a stable investment environment that is essential for sustaining long-term private sector participation in PPP road infrastructure projects.

Statement 2 examined the need for stronger regulatory frameworks to provide clarity and boost investor confidence. The findings show a more divided response, with 55.3% of

respondents either strongly agreeing (26.6%) or agreeing (28.7%) that strengthening regulatory frameworks is essential. However, a significant proportion of respondents (42.1%) disagreed or strongly disagreed, while 2.6% were undecided. This mixed response suggests that although regulatory reform is widely acknowledged as important, stakeholders may hold differing views on the adequacy or effectiveness of existing regulatory institutions. It also indicates the need for not only stronger regulations but also improved enforcement and institutional coordination. Supporting this analysis, Interviewee 4 noted during the interview that:

The challenge is not always the absence of regulations, but rather weak enforcement mechanisms and overlapping institutional roles, which often create uncertainty for private partners by blurring lines of authority, delaying decision-making processes, and increasing compliance costs, thereby undermining investor confidence and discouraging sustained private sector participation in PPP road infrastructure projects.

This insight highlights the persistent gap between regulatory provisions and their practical implementation, indicating that although formal policies and legal frameworks governing PPPs may be well articulated, limitations in enforcement capacity, institutional coordination, and administrative effectiveness often prevent these regulations from being applied consistently and effectively in practice.

Responses to Statement 3 indicate strong agreement that enhanced stakeholder involvement throughout the project lifecycle is a key strategy for addressing PPP challenges. A combined 88.6% of respondents either strongly agreed (49.6%) or agreed (39.0%) that stakeholder engagement helps build public trust and ensures that road infrastructure projects meet local community needs. Only 10.6% disagreed or strongly disagreed, while a negligible 0.8% remained undecided. This finding suggests broad consensus that inclusive participation contributes to project acceptance and long-term sustainability. Statement 4 received the highest level of support among all proposed strategies. A substantial 87.1% of respondents strongly agreed (54.0%) or agreed (33.1%) that increasing transparency and accountability can reduce corruption and enhance the effective implementation of PPP agreements. In contrast, only 9.9% disagreed or strongly disagreed, while 3.1% were undecided. The strong support for transparency-related measures reflects growing recognition that accountability mechanisms are central to improving governance outcomes in PPP road infrastructure projects.

#### 4.1 Discussion of Findings

i) First and foremost, the study found that implementation of Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) for road infrastructure development in the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja, is constrained by interrelated institutional and governance challenges. A clear majority of respondents identified political interference, inadequate government funding, bureaucratic delays in project approval, and corruption as significant impediments to effective PPP execution. PPP road projects are not undermined by a single factor but rather by a combination of unstable political influence, weak fiscal capacity, inefficient administrative processes, and limited transparency. These findings align with previous studies on PPP implementation in developing economies. In particular, Bitrus & Lewis (2024) observe that weak governance structures and ineffective risk allocation frameworks frequently undermine PPP outcomes, especially in contexts where political actors exert undue influence over procurement and contractual processes.

ii) Secondly, the study establishes that improving the effectiveness and long-term sustainability of Public-Private Partnership (PPP) road infrastructure projects in the Federal Capital Territory requires the adoption of a holistic and integrated approach. This approach should encompass sustainable financing mechanisms that enhance the government's capacity to meet its financial obligations and reduce investment risks for private partners, alongside inclusive stakeholder engagement processes that actively involve communities, users, and relevant institutions throughout the project lifecycle. The above finding is consistent with existing scholarly literature, which emphasizes that the success of PPP arrangements extends beyond financial mobilisation to include strong institutional, regulatory, and governance structures. For example, Green (2024) argue that transparency and accountability are critical determinants of PPP performance, as they ensure value for money and safeguard the public interest, particularly within contexts characterized by governance deficits. In a similar vein, Aja (2020) highlights stakeholder engagement and well-defined regulatory frameworks as essential success factors, noting that participatory approaches enhance project legitimacy, minimize conflicts, and promote long-term sustainability.

## 5.0 Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study, it can be concluded that the implementation of Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) for road infrastructure development in the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja, has been significantly affected by persistent institutional and governance-related challenges. Political interference, inadequate government funding, bureaucratic inefficiencies, and corruption collectively undermine the efficiency, continuity, and credibility of PPP road projects. These challenges weaken investor confidence, disrupt project timelines, and limit the ability of PPPs to achieve their intended objectives of improved service delivery and infrastructure sustainability. However, the study also demonstrates that these challenges are not insurmountable, as respondents strongly emphasized the importance of adopting an integrated and holistic approach that combines sustainable financing, inclusive stakeholder participation, and strengthened governance mechanisms. Addressing these interrelated factors is therefore essential for enhancing the effectiveness, resilience, and long-term sustainability of PPP road infrastructure development in the Federal Capital Territory.

## 5.1 Recommendations

- i) The government should strengthen institutional and financial frameworks guiding PPP road infrastructure projects by ensuring political stability, reducing undue political interference, and improving fiscal discipline. This includes the establishment of reliable funding mechanisms, such as dedicated infrastructure funds and government guarantees, to enable timely fulfilment of financial obligations under PPP agreements. Strengthening institutional coordination among relevant agencies will also help reduce bureaucratic delays and improve project delivery efficiency.
- ii) There is a need to enhance transparency and accountability mechanisms through open procurement processes, effective regulatory oversight, and strict enforcement of anti-corruption measures in PPP road projects. Additionally, inclusive stakeholder engagement should be institutionalized across all stages of the project lifecycle to ensure that community interests are adequately represented and public trust is strengthened. Such an approach will improve investor confidence, promote social acceptance, and contribute to the sustainable implementation of PPP road infrastructure projects in the Federal Capital Territory.

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