

NEED FOR ADEQUATE FUNDING IN THE ADMINISTRATION OF SECONDARY EDUCATION IN NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

Funding is considered all over the world as the life wire that propels the educational sector towards achieving her objectives. The paper focuses on the need for adequate funding of secondary education in Nigeria. Emphases were laid on the alternative sources of funding for secondary schools as well as the consequences of inadequate funding on secondary school such as infrastructural decay, high cost of education, low level of staff commitment. Influence of adequate funding on secondary education such as infrastructural development, employment of quality teachers was also highlighted. The study also discussed the reasons for inadequate financing of secondary education among which is population explosion and lack of adequate planning. The techniques for proper financial management were also identified. It was concluded that proper funding plays a significant role in the achievement of the objectives of secondary education in the country. It was therefore recommended that the government should be committed to the funding of secondary education through adequate budgetary allocation while the private sector should also contribute to schools development as part of their corporate social responsibility.

KEYWORDS: Funding, Secondary, Education, Budget, Administration

INTRODUCTION

The level of success recorded by the educational sector has been closely linked with the availability of resources. Among the resources needed for the effective administration of the educational sector, funding has been identified as an indispensable instrument. This is because funding serves as the life-wire for the management and administration of most sectors of the economy including the educational sector. It is based on this fact that UNESCO recommended that 26% of the annual budget of any nation should be set aside for the administration and management of the educational sector (Odia & Omofonmwan, 2007). This is because such funding strategy will assist in providing the basic resources needed for teaching and learning both in terms of quality and quantity.

Over time, effort has been made by government of various countries to ensure improvement in the level of funding made available for the administration of the secondary level of education. This is also the case in Nigeria where the

government has relatively improved in the level of fund set aside for the development of the educational sector in the last few years (Voice of Nigeria, 2013). The improvement in funding is geared towards improving on the standard of education provided for the citizens especially in secondary schools. The government has taken this step to improve on the quality of education at this level for national growth and development. This is based on the aspiration of the government that education will serve as a tool for individual and national growth (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2004). Effort has therefore been made to improve on the budgetary allocation to the educational sector which also covers for the secondary level of education.

Various educational stakeholders have similarly highlighted that the quality of educational output is positively related to the quality of funding. As a form of social service, education is a commodity that must be provided by the government for as many people in the society that are willing and qualified to acquire it. It is based on this premise that the government is expected to contribute significantly to

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the provision of this essential public service.

Meaning of Funding

When funding is mentioned, the first thing that comes to mind is the availability of money for meeting the need for a given project or programme. It is a system of apportioning available capital belonging to an organization for meeting a need. Funding refers to a form of financial support that is given for the achievement of a project. According to the Online Business Dictionary (2013) funding is the provision of financial resources in order to meet a need, project or program. Money needed to run a project or programme in the school may be raised from within or outside the school. When funds are generated, they are usually disbursed based on the needs of the school. The process of making the acquired funds available to the units that require them either in the short or long run is referred to as funding.

Alternative Sources of Funding for Secondary Schools

In every formal organization, funds serve as an important resource that is needed to manage the affairs of the organization. However, it remains one of the scarce resources that are in short supply among most organizations including schools. Based on this situation, schools like all other organizations usually develop alternative means of securing adequate funds to manage their various activities. These funds can be generated either within or outside the school from both educational and non-educational services. Generating funds both within and outside the school in this case applies to the secondary school setting. Some of the sources through which secondary schools can generate more funds for the management of their various activities include the following:

School Fees: School fees have been identified as one of the major sources of finance that is needed to off-set administrative cost (Singleton, 2013). There have been various requests from different education stakeholder in Nigeria for the removal of school fees among the cost of education. This is geared towards making education free just like in other countries of the world. However, the total removal of school fees will likely affect the quality of education in the country. This is because the payment of school fees at a minimal level will provide part of the needed funds to manage the activities of the school system for increased efficiency. This will help to increase the quality of education provided for the various beneficiaries.

Government Funding: The government is one of the major sponsors of education in most countries of the world. Funding of public schools is one of the major functions of the government (Hall, 2013). This is done through the preparation of annual budget for meeting the needs of the various sectors of the economy

including education. Similarly, supplementary budget is usually prepared by government to take care of financial inadequacies in the education sector. The various levels of government; local, state and federal are partakers in the funding of the education sector (Hall, 2013). The government therefore plays a significant role of funding education through annual budgetary allocation. Consideration should therefore be given to the educational sector through continuous increase in the allocation to education sector. This will help to increase the quantity of available funds for managing the school system.

Private Sector Contributions: The role of the private sector in providing financial support for the administration of secondary education in the country cannot be over emphasized. According to Jakarta (2010) the contribution of the private sector to national education is a resource that remains largely untapped. Private sectors in the country usually have social corporate responsibilities of contributing to the development of their host communities. This implies that the provision of financial support to secondary education is one of the areas through which private sectors can fulfill their corporate social responsibilities. Private business owners are expected to contribute financially to the growth of the educational sector from their wealth of financial resources. This also will serve as additional revenue outlet for secondary schools in the country.

Sales of Student's Handcraft and Art: One of the forms of assessment used for students in the school system is the development of handcraft and arts. This includes products such as pots, baskets, mats, tie, dye, drama, painting etc. The production of this hand crafts and arts in large quantity can help raise enough funds which can be used to off-set some of the expenditures incurred in the school system. Revenue from handcrafts is used in some schools for the provision of learning facilities. The school can also partner with some manufacturing and marketing organizations that can help in developing and marketing handcraft products produced by teachers and students.

Alumni: Alumni are associations formed by individuals who are products from a particular educational institution. It is similar to the old students association formed in some educational institutions. Financial support from alumni is another way of generating funds for the administration of secondary education in the country. Frequent meetings are usually organized by these individuals where funds can be raised for the administration of their various schools. The alumni of various schools give an opportunity for highly placed individuals in the society to contribute to the affairs of the school where they graduated from. Such association serves as a means for generating funds for the administration of the school.

Sales of School Farm Products: Another method of generating funds among secondary schools is through the establishment and maintenance of school farm projects. Through the farm project, various cash and food products can be raised which when sold to the public can help to generate additional funds for meeting the other needs of the school. Farming activities on the school farm is sometimes performed by students and supervised by teachers as part of student's continuous assessment. However, when the products are harvested, it helps to generate revenue for the school. The farm products raised can be either plant or animal production. When such agricultural products are cultivated either in commercial or subsistent quantities, they can be sold out to the public for additional revenue.

Parents Teachers Association (P.T.A.): The Parents Teachers Association (PTA) is another source of generating revenue for the administration of secondary school education. This association has been used to finance major projects in schools such as transportation, building classrooms, laboratories, libraries etc. Parents Teachers Association usually meets to address the need of the school of their children or wards. In some cases, funds are usually raised to manage the activities of the school system as part of parental support to the administration of their children's school.

Consequences of Inadequate Funding on Secondary Education

Funding of education remains one of the important resources that are needed to manage the school system. All levels of education; primary, secondary and tertiary require sufficient level of funding in order to improve on the standard of education provided in the country. When funding is not provided in the right quantity and at the right time, it affects the education sector in so many ways. Some of the consequences of insufficient funding on the administration of secondary education in Nigeria include:

Infrastructural decay: According to Sullivan and Sheffrin (2003) infrastructure is a term used to refer to products, services and facilities that are needed for an institution to function. It therefore means that the ability of the school system to achieve her objectives depends on the availability of these products. Infrastructures are very important for learning to take place in any educational institution. Eseyin, Okafor and Uchendu (2014:196) stated that "Infrastructures play a significant role in the provision of quality education in any nation". They aid in the dissemination, assimilation and transmission of knowledge. However, when funds are not available for the provision and maintenance of these facilities, it could result into a dilapidation of existing structures as a result of wear and tear and lack of maintenance. Funding is also required to upgrade facilities in the

school environment and make them useful based on modern trends.

Low Level of Commitment among Staff: One of the benefits of funding is that it serves as a means of motivating staff in the work environment. According to Herzberg (1966) salary is one of the hygiene factors that motivate staff to work. When this is not forthcoming, it reduces the level of commitment of workers in the organization. The timely and adequate payment of staff salaries and other welfare package is a factor that stimulates workers willingness to work. Funding is therefore necessary in order to arouse the commitment of workers in the work place. The absence of this benefit will result to a poor level of commitment to work.

Low level of Academic Performance: Availability of facilities such as libraries, laboratories, workshops, comfortable hostels etc are necessary for a productive learning. These facilities make it easier for teachers and students to carry out their basic responsibilities in the school. Students need learning materials to learn well while the teachers also require teaching aids to be effective. However, in a situation where these facilities are not available for self development, the performance level of both teachers and students will be very low. This is because teachers and students will have more idle time than productive time. The implication is that study periods will reduce and learning outcome will be low.

Low Patronage of Nigerian Schools: The quality of staff and facilities in Nigerian schools is a factor considered by parents and students when making institutional choices. The availability of these resources in quality and quantity usually determines the standard of education provided. These resources cannot be provided as at when due when there is financial inadequacy. This situation can lead to the patronage of foreign educational institutions rather than local institutions. For example, over 75,000 Nigerian students are said to be studying in Ghana alone aside other countries (Punch, 2014). This is as a result of low expectations from educational institutions in Nigeria which is attributed to the poor funding policies in the educational sector.

Higher Cost of Education: The cost of acquiring formal education in Nigeria is gradually increasing when compared to other countries of the world. The cost of education is usually divided between the individuals and government. Cost sharing in this case makes the cost of education to be cheaper for individuals who wish to acquire formal education. However, when the needed funding from the other educational stakeholders is not forthcoming, this will increase the cost of acquiring education by interested individuals. The implication of this is that the level of enrolment will drop since interested students may not be empowered to pay for the high cost of getting

quality education.

Importance of Funding on Secondary Education

The availability of funds plays a significant role in determining the provision of quality education at all levels. The quantity of funds made available during budgeting will go a long way in improving on the quality of education provided. Adequate funding will be of importance in the provision of quality secondary education in one or more of the following ways:

It Leads to Infrastructural Development: The availability of fund is very important in the provision of school infrastructures. More funding will help the school management in providing more facilities such as classrooms, laboratories, libraries and instructional materials. Available facilities will also be provided based on modern development while obsolete facilities will be discarded. This means that the higher the level of funding, the more the infrastructures that will be provided for teaching and learning.

Employment of Quality Teachers: The availability of funds is very crucial in the employment of quality teachers. Various studies have shown that the income level is a factor that is used to attract quality teachers. It is therefore necessary that funds should be provided to acquire this crucial human resource. This is because the presence of quality teachers will help in transmitting quality knowledge to the students. Most organizations in developed countries now pay workers based on performance (Podgursky & Springer, 2007). The payment of high wages and salaries is now used to attract quality teachers and this is based on the availability of funds.

Reduction in Education Cost: Adequate funding of education by various educational stakeholders is a very important step in reducing the burden of the cost of education on parents and students. Rich (2012) stated that until alternative funding sources are provided, students will continue to pay high education cost even if the cost is unreasonable. Exploring funding sources will therefore help to reduce the burden of funding secondary education among the various educational stakeholders. Additional funding from alternative sources will provide avenue for generating funds for the purchase of learning resources which will reduce the burden of the cost of education on the government, parents and students.

Increases the Level of Patronage: When schools in Nigeria are properly funded to the minimum level specified by UNESCO at 26% of the annual budget, there will be an improvement in the standard of education provided and this will increase the level of patronage of Nigerian schools by both citizens and foreigners. This in a long run can help to improve on the image of Nigerian schools and increase the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Proper

funding of education will restore the confidence of parents and the international community on the standard of secondary education provided in Nigeria.

Reasons for Inadequate Financing of Secondary Education in Nigeria

There are various factors that are responsible for the underfunding or inadequate funding of secondary education in Nigeria. These factors can be human or administrative; it can also be as a result of errors from the government, parents and/or students. Some of the reasons for financial inadequacies for the administration of secondary education in Nigeria are:

Poor Forecasting and Planning: Forecasting is important in determining the number of students in the school and the amount of resources that will be enough to cater for their educational needs. The ability to keep records and trend analysis is a factor that has made it difficult to carry out adequate forecasting of needed resources and programmes for the improvement of secondary education in Nigeria. Adeleye, Adu and Olatunde (2012) pointed out that the problem of record keeping has been a challenge in the computerization of schools data. This has limited the ability to make appropriate plan for schools in the country.

Population Growth: Edem (1987) in Bua, Olatunde and Amough (2013:50-51) stated that "*Evidence shows an increasing rise in the total population of the African continent and in particular, school age increasing at the rate of 2.5 to 3% per annum and enrolment into schools is on the increase annually*". Increase in population has therefore been a limitation to adequate planning for the delivery of quality education among secondary school students. Secondary schools enrollment rate in the last four decades has increased above the level of resources provided for this level of education. Population explosion as a result of various religious, social and cultural beliefs has therefore made it difficult for proper funding of secondary education.

Corruption and Embezzlement: Corruption as a social problem that is affecting most of the sectors in Nigeria. The educational sector has also not been left out of the misappropriation and underutilization of funds set aside for the improvement of the education system. Ayobami (2011) pointed out that corruption can be systematic in nature but in a long run will affect the whole life of an institution or society. Corruption can therefore limit the goals of an institution thereby resulting to wastages. Some of the funds made available for the provision of quality education are sometimes diverted for selfish use while in other cases, the budget for the educational sector are misappropriated. This has given rise to the inadequacy of funds for managing the secondary level of education.

Financial Management Techniques Needed in Secondary Schools

Due to the level of inadequacy of funds for the management of education in the country, there is need to develop appropriate financial management techniques which will help to control the inflow and outflow of funds in the school. Some of the financial management techniques that can be used in the school system to control the inflow and outflow of funds are:

Publication of Accounting Records: One of the systems of ensuring a prudent utilization of school funds is through the publication of the school accounting records for public analysis. Inputs from financial experts and other educational stakeholders based on the financial records will assist the school to make judicious utilization of available funds. Mgbekem (2007) opined that adequate accounting system that will ensure accountability, honesty and transparency should be adopted. Such system must be able to earn public approval before they can be appreciated. A public report of the schools income and expenditure account will not only provide opportunity to be aware of the financial needs of the school, it will also provide opportunity for the public to monitor the expenditure level of the schools.

Budget Preparation: A budget is a financial record which shows the income to be generated and expenditure to be incurred for one financial year. The preparation of budget is a technique for controlling unplanned expenditure. It is therefore necessary that the school should ensure to plan and enforce a budget for the administration of the school. The budget will help to keep the school in check by enabling her spend based on available income

Expenditure Control Method: Another technique for financial management is expenditure control. This is a situation in which the capital and recurrent expenditures of the school must be properly controlled in order to avoid waste. Repeated expenditures which are not justified should be avoided and available funds should be used as prudently as possible. The school should also ensure that expenditure incurred have been planned for and implemented at the lowest cost possible.

Adequate Planning: Planning is very important in the utilization of funds for meeting school objectives. Adequate planning will assist the school to structure her needs and pursue the most important goals with the available resources. This will also help to preserve funds that would have been wasted in the course of implementation of school objectives.

CONCLUSION

The level of funds available to a large extent determines the quantity and quality of school

objectives that will be achieved. This is because funding is important in the acquisition of basic human, financial and material resources needed to transform the objectives of the school into reality. It therefore means that the unavailability of funds can limit if not totally jeopardize the objectives of the secondary level of education from being achieved. Such funds must also be properly utilized for the achievement and sustenance of the long term objectives of secondary education. Funding is tied to the provision of quality education delivery and the standard of education provided for the citizens to a large extent depends on the availability of funds. This implies that funding is the engine room of the education sector and its availability or unavailability will determine the outcomes of the education sector at this level.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the literatures that were reviewed, the following recommendations are worthy of note for the achievement of quality secondary education:

1. The government should be committed to the adequate funding of secondary education through appropriate budgetary allocation for the sustenance of secondary education in the country. The government should consider an upward review of the educational budget to meet up with the 26% allocation recommended by UNESCO and above.
2. The private sector should cooperate with the government and other educational stakeholders in supporting the education system through financial and material assistance. This should serve as part of its cooperate social responsibility since the education sector also contribute to the provision of quality manpower for this economic sector of the economy.
3. Managers and administrators of secondary education should explore other revenue outlets that will help to balance the financial needs of the school. This can be achieved through the provision of handcrafts, alumni contribution and other investments.
4. The school managers should also endeavour to apply appropriate financial management techniques in the management of available funds. Strategies which will assist in the effective utilization of available funds should be considered and implemented.
5. The government and Ministry of education should set up a supervision team to inspect how school managers disburse the funds assigned for different activities in the school. This will help to reduce the issue of misappropriation of school funds by school managers.

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