

**ALTERNATIVE SOURCES OF FUNDING ADOPTED BY
PRINCIPALS IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN ONUEKE
EDUCATION ZONE OF EBONYI STATE.**

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Abstract

This study investigates the alternative sources of funding adopted by principals in secondary schools in Onueke education zone, Ebonyi State. The researcher adopted a descriptive survey research design for the study. The study was guided by two research questions and two hypotheses respectively. The hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance. The study was conducted among public secondary schools in Onueke education zone. The population for the study consisted of 2181 principals and teachers in all the 65 public secondary schools in the zone. The researcher used all the 65 principals since the number is few and manageable while the sample size of teachers was 423 giving the total sample size of 488 respondents. 20% percent of the population of teachers and principals was used. The instrument for data collection was researcher's made questionnaire entitled: "Alternative sources of funding secondary schools in Onueke education zone questionnaire (ASFSSQ) which was face-validated by three experts from faculty of education, Enugu State University of science and technology (ESUT), two from education management and one from mathematics and computer. Descriptive statistics of mean of 2.50 and above was accepted while below 2.50 was not accepted. Standard deviation was used to answer the research questions while inferential statistics of t-test was used to test the null hypotheses at 0.05 alpha level of significance. It was found out that community involvement, PTA fund, Alumni Association fund and development of school farm are alternative sources of funding secondary schools in Onueke education zone adopted by principals, Ebonyi State. Based on the findings, recommendations were made thus: communities should intensify efforts in funding secondary schools, government through good polices should allow school heads to use funds within the school to run it freely, among other things.

Keywords: Alternative, Secondary Education, Funding, sources.

Introduction

Education is a process through which human beings become useful to themselves and the larger society, through the systematic acquisition of relevant skills, knowledge, values and attitudes (Aguba, 2016). Education has been a very big enterprise all over the world and it has been recognized as the greatest investment that any country can make for the quick development if it's economic, political, sociological and human resources can grow. Education is a process through which man realizes his potentials and uses them for self fulfillment in the services of himself and others Ocho in (Okigbo, 2020). Education in every society is obviously known to be an indispensable tool for nation's economic growth and development. It has been empirically proven and universally acknowledged that unless the citizens of a given

country are well educated and appropriately trained, the achievements of rapid economic and social development cannot be guaranteed Ahmed in (Amaechina, Obioha and Obioha, 2020). They further observed that secondary education is critical to the development of the nation being the bridge between primary and tertiary education. Apart from serving as the link between primary and tertiary educations it provides opportunity for a child to acquire additional knowledge, skills and traits beyond the primary level. It is worthy of note that secondary schools are headed by principals while teachers teach students. This means that the principal owns the decision rights of day to day running of the administration of the school. Urban and rural principals and teachers were used as the respondents of this study because of the vastness of the zone under study.

However, the explosion on the enrolment ratio of both primary and secondary schools is a thing of great concern. Okigbo (2020) noted that such increase in enrolment affects government expenditure as more schools and teachers are required, not only more teachers and schools, other resources needs attention in terms of funding, with this also there is pressure on the tiny government resources allocated to education thereby, affecting public schools management that called for private investment in education in terms of funding.

Central Bank of Nigeria in Okigbo (2020) asserted that funding formal education in Nigeria has become an issue of public concern as a result of the present economic down turn and worldwide inflation. Poor funding has been the bane of Nigeria education system to the extent that the budgetary allocation has been very low. Funding secondary education has remained a critical factor in the provision of functional education that can lead to a national transformation. Ayeni and Babalola in Okigbo (2020) argued that funding of secondary education was central and germane to the success at all levels of education. Unfortunately, there has been a wide outcry against poor funding of education in the country mostly at the secondary level. Obe in Okigbo (2020) maintained that without adequate funding, standards of education at any level shall be tantamount to mirage that is, building castles in the air. Money is important in a school because it is used to construct buildings, purchase needed equipments, pay staff salaries and allowances, maintain the plants and keep the services going. It is when these things are put in place that a conducive teaching and learning environment could be created for the attainment of quality education. Funding of secondary education depends on who owns and manages the schools. For example, public secondary schools are funded by the state; private secondary schools are funded by the missionaries, proprietors or proprietress. Public secondary schools can be funded also by the government as earlier stated, private co-operate individuals, non-governmental organizations and even the local community Oseni in (Amaechina, Obioha and Obioha, 2020). Fafunwa in Amaechina, Obioha and Obioha (2020) noted that, without a solid foundation and adequate funding, the objectives of secondary school education cannot be achieved and this could lead to the collapse of the educational system at the secondary school level. He went further

to emphasize that secondary education is fundamental to academic training because it provides the basis and foundation for other training which the child receives. The level of educational attainment of any person is strongly influenced by quality and standard of knowledge he acquires. The achievement of educational goals depends so much on financial support. The federal government of Nigeria is aware of this known fact. This is why it provides funds to federal institutions throughout the country.

Funding of secondary school education in Ebonyi State in general and down to education zones involves the provision of money, infrastructures and other resources to schools. Oduleye in Okigbo (2020) observed that it is very clear that government can no longer single handedly fund educational institutions in the country. It is upon this background that Okigbo (2020) opined that there is over reliance on government to provide solutions to problems facing secondary education in Nigeria. The consequences he identified that schools are grossly neglected because they are not in position they ought to be. In fact, government is finding it very difficult to effectively fund education because other sectors of the economy are competing with education for attention.

Adewunmu and Ehiamentalor in Okigbo (2020) observed that the inadequacy of funding (financial resources) will certainly have the effect on both the state and its local governments. The fact that the state government cannot adequately fund the secondary education implies that the school administrators must sought for alternative sources of funding available to their schools. Ogbonnaya in Amaechina, Obioha and Obioha (2020) believed that the following are the alternative sources of funds adopted by principals available to secondary schools: school fees, government grants, Parents Teachers Association (PTA), proceeds from school activities, community efforts, Donations from individuals and charitable organizations, Old student's Association. Ikediugwu (2016), Nwosu and Akinsanya in Okigbo (2020) believed that the following are the alternative sources adopted by principals in funding secondary schools: Tuition and fees, gifts, grants and endowment investment income, Auxiliaries i.e enterprise, parents, Alumni consultancies and research activities, community involvement and international aids.

Since schools are established in communities, it is

therefore necessary that school administrators fall back on the community hosting it for certain needs of the school. Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN) in Okigbo (2020) asserted that the school administrator cannot successfully own the school in isolation without the involvement of the host community. The community will help the school in carrying out its policies especially in the area of funding. Incidentally, the Federal Republic of Nigeria has recognized the importance of community involvement in school administration when it stated in the National Policy on Education that “close involvement of communities at the local level in the administration and management of schools will be encouraged” The school and the community are two inseparable entities which are mutually dependent on one another (Okigbo, 2020). Another reliable alternative source of funding secondary school education is the parents Teachers' Association (PTA) Funds. Ogbonnaya in Amaechina, Obioha and Obioha (2020) noted that every secondary school for example in Enugu State just like in Ebonyi State under study. Parents Teachers' Association helps the state government in one form or the other in managing the affairs of the school. Normally, every student pays the PTA levy every term which is managed by the school authority in alliance with the PTA officials. In many cases, PTA levy is used in funding PTA teachers and some school facilities and repairs. Apart from provision of both human and material resources, PTA motivates both students and teachers by giving awards and scholarships to exceptional students and teachers. This goes a long way to encourage hard work and commitment in the school. Also, Nwafor, Uchendu and Akani (2015) believed that Alumni as associations formed by individuals who are products from a particular educational institution render financial support to the administration of secondary school education in the country. Frequent meeting are usually organized by these individuals where funds can be raised for the administration of various schools.

Nwafor, Uchendu and Akani (2015) identified that another method of generating funds among secondary schools is through the establishment and maintenance of school farm projects. Through the school farm project, various cash and food products can be raised which when sold to the public can help to provide additional funds for meeting the other funds of the school. When the products of the farming are

harvested, it helps to generate revenue for the school. The funding of secondary school education in Nigeria is indispensable to the development of the Nation's economy. Oduleye in Okigbo (2020) stated that it is clear that government can no longer single handedly finance educational institutions in the country. This is the same to the secondary schools in Onueke educational zone of Ebonyi State. It is against this backdrop that the researcher investigated on the alternative sources of funding adopted by principals in secondary schools in Onueke education zone, Ebonyi State.

Statement of the Problem

It is indubitably clear that education is an indispensable tool for nation's economic growth and development. It has been empirically proven and universally acknowledged that unless the citizens of a given country are well educated and appropriately trained, the achievements of rapid economic and social development cannot be guaranteed. The anticipated goal cannot be achieved without fund. Funding of education in Nigeria has been identified as the responsibilities of the three tiers of government. Many scholars observed that there is pressure on the tiny government resources allocated to education because of the rapid increase in the enrolment of students and other challenges of education nationwide. Unfortunately, there has been a wide outcry against poor funding of education in the country mostly at the secondary level. Money is important in a school because it is used to construct buildings, purchase needed equipments, pay staff salaries and allowances, maintain the plants and keep the services going. It is when these things are put in place that a conducive teaching and learning environment could be created for the attainment of quality education.

In Onueke education zone, Ebonyi State, there have been various challenges faced by secondary schools due to underfunding of schools in the state. These challenges if not well handled will amount to keeping the zone and the state in the back educationally. There is a call for government and private sector to allocate adequate fund into the education sector to smoothen the achievement of the set goals of Nigeria educational system. The study investigated the alternative sources of funding adopted by principals in secondary schools in Onueke education zone of Ebonyi State with reference to community

involvement, PTA's fund, Alumni Association Fund and establishment of school farm.

Research Questions

1. What are the alternative sources of funding secondary schools in Onueke Education Zone, Ebonyi State?
2. What are the challenges in accessing fund in secondary schools in Onueke Education Zone, Ebonyi State?

Research Hypothesis

Ho₁: There is no significant difference in the mean ratings between the rural and urban principals and teachers on the alternative sources of funding secondary school in Onueke Education Zone, Ebonyi State.

Ho₂: There is no significant difference between the rural and urban principals and teachers on the challenges in accessing fund for secondary schools in Onueke education zone, Ebonyi State.

Method

The design that was used for the study is descriptive survey. Descriptive survey according to Nworgu in Okigbo (2020) is a study in which a group of people or items is studied by collecting and analyzing data from few people or items considered to be a representative of the entire group the way it is without manipulation.

The study was conducted in public secondary schools in Onueke education zone. The population for the study consisted of two thousand one hundred and eighty one (2181) principals and teachers from all the sixty-five (65) public secondary schools in Onueke education zone, Ebonyi State (Ebonyi State Ministry

of Education Planning, Research and Statistics, 2010). The sample size for the teachers is 423 while the size of principals is 65 giving the total sample size of 488 respondents. The subjects were selected using multi-stage sampling Techniques which according to Kothasi and Gaurav (2014) is a further development of clusters which involves two or more stages of sampling Technique in which the researcher studied 20% of the population was used. Ball and Gall in Uzoagulu (2011) suggested that for a population up to 1000, use 20%, for 5000 use 10%, for 10,000 use 5%. The 65 principals were used as sample size since the number is few and manageable.

The instrument for data collection was a researcher's structured questionnaire designed by the researcher entitled: "Alternative sources of funding secondary schools in Onueke Education Zone Questionnaire" (ASFSSQ). The instrument consisted of 20 items which are clustered in line with the research questions that guided the study. The instrument was face-validated by three experts from faculty of Education, Enugu State University of science and Technology (ESUT) two from educational management and one from mathematics and computers. Crombach Alpha estimate using statistical package for the social sciences (SPSS Version 20) was used to ascertain the reliability of the instrument and a coefficient of 0.83 was ascertained. Descriptive statistics of mean of 2.50 and above were accepted while below 2.50 were not accepted, and standard deviation was used to answer the research questions while inferential statistics of t-test was used to test the null hypotheses at 0.05 alpha level of significance. The response scale of very high extent (VHE), High extent (HE), low extent (LE) and very low extent (VLE) was used for the study.

Research Question One: What are the alternative sources of funding secondary schools in Onueke Education Zone, Ebonyi State?

Table 1: Mean ratings of Principals and Teachers of both rural and urban areas on alternative sources of funding secondary schools.

S/N	Stem: Alternative sources of funding secondary schools.	Principals = 65		Teachers =423	
		Rural Mean; SD	Urban Mean; SD	Rural Mean; SD	Urban Mean; SD
1	Communities help in funding of secondary schools	3.54,0.57	3.41,0.59	3.23,0.68	3.18,0.76
2	Parent teachers' association fund is not enough in funding secondary schools	3.05,0.75	2.54,0.86	3.56, 0.54	3.54, 0.57
3	Alumni association fund goes a long way in funding secondary schools	2.66, 1.05	3.67,0.55	2.51,0.81	2.50,0.83
4	Establishment of school farm to raise fund is also an alternative source of funding secondary schools.	3.66,0.54	3.01,0.71	3.79,0.43	3.72,0.50
5	Alternative sources of funds do not in any way provide a enough fund for funding secondary schools	2.87,0.81	2.58,0.81	3.05,0.75	3.06,0.75
6	Communities donate fund for building of schools by erecting structures	3.21,0.61	2.32,0.89	2.91,0.79	2.71,0.84
7	Communities provide fund for building school libraries	2.41,0.88	2.56,0.61	2.31,1.12	2.34,1.13
8	PTA fund assist the school to raise fund through donations	3.77,0.45	3.33,0.63	3.43,0.60	3.32,0.68
9	PTA fund help the school in putting up facilities necessary in the schools	3.46,0.58	2.45,0.89	3.71,0.54	3.65,0.55
10	Alumni fund is used in the renovation of school building	2.40,0.88	2.01,1.22	2.31,1.12	2.28,1.13
11	Technological and medical equipment are provided in schools using alumni funds	2.00, 1.21	2.22,1.18	2.11,1.14	2.13,1.11
12	Fund from school farm is used in awarding scholarships to intelligent students.	1.86, 1.24	1.94,1.22	1.81,1.23	1.85,1.20
	Grand mean	2.95,0.78	2.77,0.76	2.89,0.81	2.83,0.84
	Mean of mean		2.86,0.77	2.85,0.83	

Table 1 presents the result of the analysis using t- test showing that there is no significant difference between mean response of the urban and rural Principals and teachers on the alternative sources of funding secondary school education in Onueke Education zone. This was so because the calculated t-test of 0.1 was less than the critical value of 1.96 at 0.5 level of significance and degree of freedom 486. Therefore, the null hypothesis is accepted.

H₀₁: There is no significance difference in mean rating of principals and teachers on the alternative sources of funding secondary education.

Respondents	No	Mean	SD	DF	t-cal	t-critical	Decision
Principals both rural and urban	65	2.86	0.77	486	0.1	1.96	Not significant at 0.05 level
Teachers both rural and urban	423	2.85	0.83				

Research Question Two: What are the challenges in accessing fund in secondary schools in Onueke Education Zone, Ebonyi State?

Table 2: Mean ratings of Principals and Teachers on both rural and urban on the challenges in accessing alternative sources of funding secondary schools.

S/N	Stem: challenges in accessing alternative source of fund for secondary school education	Principals = 65		Teachers =423	
		Rural Mean; SD	Urban Mean; SD	Rural Mean; SD	Urban Mean; SD
13	Sole dependence on government in funding secondary education	3.18,0.92	3.15,0.94	3.31,0.89	3.12,0.98
14	Unstable policies/programmes in Nigeria do not allow easy access to fund secondary schools.	3.65,0.84	3.12,0.98	3.41, 0.86	3.33, 0.88
15	Politicization of membership of secondary education board (SEB)	3.45,0.85	3.33,0.88	3.22,0.89	3.10,0.91
16	Misappropriate of funds meant for secondary education	3.38,0.86	3.21,0.92	3.10,0.91	3.07,0.92
17	Inadequate funding of education sector in Nigeria	2.58,1.03	2.61,1.01	2.41,1.03	2.40,1.03
18	Poor statistical data in secondary education in the State	2.01,1.17	2.00,1.18	2.01,1.17	2.25,1.16
19	Poor method of disbursing fund	2.81,0.95	2.50,1.08	2.58,1.02	2.61,1.01
20	Undue influence of secondary education board official	2.56,1.04	2.51,1.07	2.61,1.01	2.01,1.17
	Grand mean	2.93,0.82	2.82,0.84	2.76,0.82	2.71,0.85
	Mean of mean	2.87,0.83		2.7,30.83	

Table 2 presents the result of the analysis using t-test showing that there is no significant difference between the urban and rural principals and teachers on the challenges in accessing fund in secondary schools in Onueke Education Zone, Ebonyi State. This was so because the calculated t-test of I was less than the critical value of 1.96 at 0.05 level of significance and degree of freedom 486. Therefore, the null hypothesis is accepted.

Ho₂: There is no significance difference in mean rating of principals and teachers on the challenges in accessing alternative fund for secondary education.

Respondents	No	Mean	SD	DF	t-cal	t-critical	Decision
Principals both rural and urban	65	2.87	0.83	486	1	1.96	Not significant at 0.05 level
Teachers both rural and urban	423	2.73	0.83				

Summary of Findings

The following are the major findings of this study:

1. Community involvement is an alternative source of funding secondary schools in Onueke Education Zone, Ebonyi State.
2. Parents Teachers Association fund is also another alternative source of funding secondary schools in Onueke Education Zone, Ebonyi State.
3. There is no significant difference between the mean response of principals and Teachers on the alternative sources of funding adopted by principals in secondary schools in Onueke Education Zone, Ebonyi State in terms of Alumni Association fund.
4. There is no significant difference between the mean response of principals and teachers on the alternative sources of funding adopted by principals in secondary schools in Onueke Education Zone, Ebonyi State in terms of establishment of school farm to raise fund for funding secondary schools
5. There are challenges in accessing alternative sources of fund in secondary schools in Onueke Education Zone in terms of sole dependence on government in funding secondary education, poor method of disbursing fund, misappropriating of fund meant for secondary schools.

Discussion of Findings

The findings of the study have shown that community involvement is an alternative source of funding secondary schools in Ebonyi State. This implies that community involvement as alternative source for funding adopted by principals in secondary schools will likely bring about qualitative education in the sense that funds raised by the communities will be used for execution of some projects like building of school libraries, provision of school water tanks, building of hostel among others. The findings agree with Duma (2013) who opined that the involvements by the communities are very important for the development of the school activities with the expansion of schools and population explosion; it is increasingly becoming difficult for the government alone to fund secondary schools. Therefore, the wealthy ones in the communities should look critically into the problems that secondary school in their localities are facing and promptly come to their rescue by raising funds among themselves. The hypothesis tested revealed that there is no significant difference between the mean response of principals and teachers on the alternative sources of funding secondary schools in Onueke Education zone, Ebonyi State in terms of community involvement.

The findings of this study have shown that PTA fund is also another alternative source of funding secondary schools in Onueke education zone, Ebonyi State. The finding implies that PTA funds as

alternative source of funding secondary schools in Onueke education zone will likely bring about quality education in the sense that funds raised through PTA is used in execution of some projects like renovation of school building, construction of toilets, urinaries and others. This finding corresponds with the view of Okigbo (2020) who investigated on the alternative source of funding secondary school education in Enugu State and found out that PTA fund assist in the provision of resources required for classroom accommodation, science and introductory technology amongst others.

The finding of the study reveals that Alurnni fund is an alternative source of funding secondary schools in Onueke education zone, Ebonyi State. This implies that fund from the Alurnni Association help in the administration of secondary school in Onueke education zone. The Nigeria educational policy, even with its lofty visions would remain mere documentations unless the education sector in Nigeria is well funded and professionally managed.

The findings also find out that the development of school farm is also another important source of funding secondary schools in Onueke education zone. It agrees that fund from school farm can be used in awarding scholarships to intelligent students.

Recommendations

Based on the findings made from the study, the following recommendations are made.

1. Communities should intensify efforts the more in funding secondary schools to solve the problem of under funding or total dependence on government for funding secondary schools in Ebonyi State.
2. School heads should be allowed free access to the PTA fund to enable them to utilize the execution of some projects which will help in teaching and learning in schools
3. Since government cannot fund secondary schools completely, government should allow school heads to use it in maintenance of secondary schools in the zone.
4. Development of school farm as an alternative source of funding secondary schools in Onueke education zone as the schools IGR,

the school head should be mandated to use it prudently in building the secondary schools in the area.

5. Government should stop undue influence and politicization of Secondary Education Board (SEB) and its officials through good policies and programmes that will favour secondary schools in the state.

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