

SCHOOL FUNDING STRATEGY, INFRASTRUCTURAL MAINTENANCE, ATTRACTING AND RETAINING TEACHERS IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN FEDERAL CAPITAL TERRITORY, NIGERIA

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Abstract

This study examined school funding strategy, infrastructural maintenance, attracting and retaining teachers in some selected public secondary schools in the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja. Questionnaires was used to gather the information. Mean rating and Pearson Product-Moment Correlation were used for data analysis. The finding of the study revealed that education funding could be through direct allocation from consolidated funds, education tax on all operating companies, feasible fees to be borne by parents, and donations from organizations. It was also found that maintenance of schools building could be sustained through public private partnership, a well functional PTA body and that teachers could be attracted and retained through provision of attractive salaries and good working incentives, appropriate motivation, provision of good infrastructures, regular promotion of teachers and public change in perception about teaching profession. Based on the findings and conclusion of this study, the recommendations proposed are that: Government need to show adequate sincerity of purpose towards funding of education from the consolidated account. Parents should be given reasonable fees to pay for their children/wards, public private partnership should be taken as a priority in order to turn around the fortune of education. Teachers should not only be well motivated through attractive salary, but also the public should be enlightened to have a change in perception about teachers.

Key Words: School funding strategy, infrastructural maintenance, attracting and retaining teachers.

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Introduction

Secondary education in Nigeria is experiencing various challenges that threaten the standard of education at that level. Omoregie (2005) laments that the products of today's secondary school system can hardly meet the goals of useful living in the society or progressing into higher institutions of learning without their parents' aid or getting involved in one form of malpractice or the other. This is being done with impunity and sophistication. In time past, government modern and grammar schools lived up to expectation of producing very useful members of the society, but the case is now the reverse. As a matter of fact, it is now a national issue calling for urgent attention at different quarters. For instance, between 1999 to 2014, there were states in Nigeria whose secondary schools were shut down for a full academic session because of non payment of teachers' salaries. First it was Anambra State and then Benue State, because the barrage of problems bedevilling the system from realizing the expected goals are inadequate funding (Bankole, 2006).

School funding strategy, infrastructural maintenance, attracting and retaining teachers in secondary schools entails school managers and schools' management committee having useful information on how to address funding needs of the school, as well as developing strategy for effective administration of secondary schools in Federal Capital Territory. The essence also is to create awareness for the government on how to address basic issues hindering the development of secondary education in Nigeria by ensuring that the best teachers are attracted and retained in the system.

Funding of Secondary Education

Funding is very crucial in the sense that erecting and renovating of school buildings, purchase of equipment, payment of teachers' salaries and allowances and running expenses depends on available financial resources. Jaiyeoba and Atanda (2003) also explain that expansion of students' enrolment has necessitated the need for more funding. There is therefore no doubt whatsoever, that funding issue hinders the accomplishment of some of the aims and objectives of this level of education as contained in the National Policy on Education (Omoregie, 2005).

Moreover, low teacher morale is another issue of concern that tends to make good teachers to exit the profession in search of better paying jobs. Fadipe (2003) maintains that teachers' irregular promotion, low salary structure, and societal perception of teachers have dampened teachers' morale over time. This simply means that when teachers are not well motivated, their level of commitment falls as well. It is worthwhile to mention Longe Commission's Report (1991), which states that, "Education should be given top most priority in the allocation of national resources because it is the key not only to socio-economic and political stability but also the instrument to translate the nation from the 'league of low technology countries to that of high technology nation."

The commission recommends funds allocation to education from consolidated funds (otherwise known as the federation account), an Education Tax (2%) on all profits declared by companies operating in Nigeria, recovery of academic costs through fees, contributions and donations from voluntary agencies and philanthropic individuals (Longe Commission, 1991: 117). Additionally, Bankole (2006) gives three options through which funding arrangement could work better. These are free education, where government is solely responsible for education, fees payment, where parents are made to solely pay for education, and balanced cost sharing, which involves both government and parents supporting education development. This last option seems more feasible in the long run.

Maintenance Practices of School Infrastructures

Infrastructural decay in many secondary schools in Nigeria is a manifestation of poor funding, which consistently falls short of the UNESCO recommendation of 26% of annual budget to be channelled into the education sector. Ahmed (2003) explains that in many secondary schools in Nigeria, teaching and learning takes place under the most uncondusive environment, lacking in basic infrastructures and coupled with very low maintenance culture. This, therefore, hinders the fulfilment of educational objectives. Basically, school infrastructures such as classroom buildings, laboratory equipment, basic school facilities, electricity and Information and Communication Technology (ICT) equipment are necessary to achieve a considerable level of instructional effectiveness in the school (Jaiyeoba & Atanda, 2005). These are to be maintained periodically to expand their lifespan.

Maintaining and sustaining infrastructures is crucial not just to the economy, but also provides overall direction to secondary education and Arieu (2007) states emphatically that there is strategic consistency when the actions of an organization are consistent with the expected outcomes. This is to say, when education is seen from the business point of view, expectations would tend to be higher and maintenance culture will thrive strategically. Nag, Hambrick, and Chen (2007) are of the opinion that strategic management involves formulation and implementation of the major goals and initiatives taken by an organization's top management on behalf of owners, based on consideration of resources and an assessment of the internal and external environments in which the organization competes.

As a matter of fact, strategic management provides not just overall direction involving specifying objectives, developing policies and plans designed to achieve stated objectives, and then allocating resources to implement the plans, but also involves infrastructural development and maintenance (Jaiyeoba & Atanda, 2005). Going by this outlook on strategic management, the onus now falls on academics and practicing managers to develop numerous models and frameworks that could aid strategic decision making in the context of maintaining the few infrastructures available in the light of Nigeria's contemporary reality and harsh economic environment.

However, in the contemporary reality, many schools are now being maintained through public private partnership, having a well functional PTA body and school management committee, government commitment and funding from development levy and appeal funds (PTA Policy Issue, 2009). P.T.A. therefore plays several roles in schools (Onderi & Makori, 2013). For instance, in the USA, Lin (2010) reported that P.T.A involves parents in classroom decisions, promoting communication, social events and fundraising, and lobbying the state and national legislation on behalf of the students. This also involves infrastructural development and maintenance as the case may be.

Attracting and Retaining Teachers in Education Industry

Teachers are demotivated and poorly paid in Nigeria. This makes the profession less attractive and making life sometimes difficult for the practitioners (teachers). This according to Amaele (2006), is because teaching in Nigeria is yet to be fully professionalised. Dada and Fadokun (2010) therefore believe that when teaching is fully professionalised, only competent individuals who passed through specialized intellectual study and training for the acquisition of teaching skills will be rendering service for attractive fee or salary, and this will definitely attract and retain people in the profession.

Akinduyo (2014) states that the situation of inability to retain teachers is worsened by the lingering social, economic and political crisis in Nigeria, which makes many individuals to exit the profession in search of better paying jobs. The few teachers who are actually interested in the job have been compelled to demand for: Better condition of service; full professionalization of teaching; prompt payment of gratuities and pensions on retirement; adequate public recognition for teachers who nurture all the productive citizens of the society; and special teacher's salary structure (TSS) (Akinduyo, 2014). The aim of this is to ensure that teaching becomes attractive to people who would come into the profession.

Ezeugbor (2015) believes that the Federal Ministry of Education could correct the negative trend associated with teaching through appropriate control of entry into the profession; responsibility for maintaining and improving professional competence of members; control over work condition and participation in decision making on matters affecting the profession so as to retain the best hands in the profession.

Statement of the Problem

Secondary education in Nigeria has not been able to realize its objectives of preparing the graduate at this level of education for useful living and progression to higher education. This failure could be attributed to several factors. Among these factors are funding, infrastructure and teacher factor, which make secondary education in Nigeria to be in crises situation (Omoregie, 2005). This paper therefore investigates school funding strategy, infrastructural maintenance, attracting and retaining teachers in some selected public secondary schools in the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to investigate funding strategy, infrastructural maintenance, attracting and retaining teachers in some selected public secondary schools in the Federal Capital Territory. Specifically, the objectives were to:

- i. assess means through which secondary education could better be funded in the Federal Capital Territory;
- ii. determine the ways through which maintenance practices of school infrastructures could be sustained in the Federal Capital Territory;
- iii. assess means of attracting and retaining best teachers in the education industry in the Federal Capital Territory.

Research Questions

1. What are the ways through which secondary education can be funded with little or no government intervention in Federal Capital Territory?
2. What are the ways through which maintenance practices of school infrastructures could be sustained in Federal Capital Territory?
3. How can the best teachers be attracted and retained in education industry in the Federal Capital Territory?

Hypothesis

- Ho₁: There is no significant relationship between secondary education funding and maintenance practices of school infrastructures in Federal Capital Territory.
- Ho₂: There is no significant relationship between secondary education funding and attracting and retaining of best teachers in Federal Capital Territory.

Methodology

The research design in this study was a descriptive survey design. The sample was drawn from some selected teachers in the Federal Capital Territory. According to Federal Ministry of Education (2017), as at 2015/2016 academic session there were 122 public junior secondary schools and 57 senior secondary schools in the Federal Capital Territory. The population of the teachers in junior secondary schools was 2663 (1222 male and 1441 females), while the population of teachers in senior secondary schools was 3463 (1149 males and 1314 females). The schools were stratified on the basis of senior and junior secondary schools. Ten senior and fifteen junior secondary schools were drawn by ballot, totalling 25 secondary schools. Ten teachers were randomly selected in each school totalling 250 teachers in secondary schools from four area councils in the Federal Capital Territory. This represents the population the researchers could readily use in terms of time and available resources. The researcher developed a questionnaire called, ‘Funding Strategy, Infrastructural Maintenance, Attracting and Retaining Teachers in Some Selected Public Secondary Schools in the Federal Capital Territory, Nigeria (FSIMART) questionnaire,’ as instrument for data collection. FSIMART consisted of two sections. Section A solicited information on the personal data of teachers while section B is a 12 item questionnaire developed by the researcher in a four-point Likert rating scale. The questionnaire items were arranged in three sub-headings to seek information on the variables studied.

The instrument was given to two specialists in Educational Management for validation. Their corrections formed the basis of the final instrument used for the main study. To ensure content validity, a pilot test was carried out by administering the instrument to 40 respondents who did not participate in the main study. The test was calculated using the Lawshe Content Validity Index. CRV of 0.82 was obtained, which proves the validity of the instrument. Mean score, and Pearson Product-Moment Correlation were used for data analysis. The mean rating of each questionnaire item was determined by scoring each response as follows: Strongly Agree (SA) = 4, Agree (A) = 3, Disagree (D) = 2, and Strongly Disagree (SD) = 1. Mean score of 2.5 and above implies agreement while a mean value less than 2.5 signifies disagreement. The Pearson Product-Moment Correlation result was interpreted in such a way that a null hypothesis was rejected when the p-value was less than 0.05 level of significance, and not rejected if the p-value was greater than 0.05 level of significance.

Results

Research Question 1: What are the ways through which secondary education can be funded with little or no government intervention in Federal Capital Territory?

Table 1: Ways of funding Secondary Education

S/No	Item description	4	3	2	1	\bar{x}	S.d
1.	Direct allocation from consolidated funds.	78	85	39	48	2.71	1.01
2.	Education Tax on all operating companies in Nigeria	83	93	29	45	2.91	1.00
3.	Feasible school fees to be borne by parents	80	92	38	40	2.80	1.00
4.	Donations from organizations, endowments and philanthropic individuals,	90	76	39	45	2.80	1.01
						2.81	1.01

Table 1 above shows that variables 1, 2, 3 and 4, with mean score of 2.71, 2.91, 2.80 and 2.80 respectively shows an agreement. In conclusion, the overall mean scores of 2.81, as well as standard deviation of 1.00 therefore means that the way through which secondary education could be funded are through direct allocation from consolidated funds, education tax on all operating companies in Nigeria, feasible school fees to be borne by parents, donations from organizations, endowments and philanthropic individuals.

Research Question 2: What are the ways through which maintenance practices of school infrastructures could be sustained in Federal Capital Territory?

Table 2: Ways of Sustaining Maintenance Practices

S/No	Item description	4	3	2	1	\bar{X}	S.d
5.	Public private partnership	88	96	32	34	3.01	1.00
6.	A well functional PTA body and school management committee	93	89	31	37	3.01	1.00
7.	Government commitment and funding	90	76	39	45	2.82	1.00
8.	Development levy and appeal funds.	87	93	38	32	2.90	1.00
						2.94	1.00

Table 2 above shows that variables 5, 6, 7 and 8, with mean score of 3.01, 3.01, 2.82 and 2.90 respectively shows an agreement. In conclusion, the overall mean scores of 2.94, as well as standard deviation of 1.00 therefore means that the way through which maintenance practices of school building could be sustained are through public private partnership, a well functional PTA body and school management committee, government commitment towards funding, as well as development levy and appeal funds.

Research Question 3: How can the best teachers be attracted and retained in the education industry in the Federal Capital Territory?

Table 3: Showing how human resources can be attracted and retained

S/No	Item description	4	3	2	1	\bar{X}	S.d
9.	Provision of attractive salaries and good working incentives.	91	98	31	30	3.00	1.01
10.	Appropriate motivation and building of high morale.	94	88	32	36	3.02	1.00
11.	Provision of good infrastructures and working tools.	80	92	36	42	2.81	1.00
12.	Regular promotion of teachers and change in perception about teaching profession.	90	98	40	22	3.01	1.01
Cluster Mean and Standard Deviation						2.96	1.01

Table 3 above shows that variables 9, 10, 11 and 12, with mean score of 3.00, 3.02, 2.81 and 3.01 respectively shows an agreement. The overall mean scores of 2.96, as well as standard deviation of 1.01 mean that the way through which human resources could be attracted and retained are through provision of attractive salaries and good working incentives, appropriate motivation and building of high morale, provision of good infrastructures and working tools, as well as regular promotion of teachers and change in perception about teaching profession by the public.

Ho₁: There is no significant relationship between secondary education funding and maintenance practices of school infrastructures in Federal Capital Territory.

Table 4: Relationship between School Business Development Strategy and Effective Administration of Secondary Education

r	Sig. (2-tailed)	df	Decision
.399	.000	9	Significant

**(P < 0.05 level of significance)*

Table 4 shows that the coefficient obtained was 0.399, with a p-value = 0, which is less than the critical value at 0.05 level of significance. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected. This means that a significant relationship exists between secondary education funding and maintenance practices of school infrastructures in Federal Capital Territory.

Ho₂: There is no significant relationship between secondary education funding and attracting and retaining of best teachers in Federal Capital Territory.

Table 5: Relationship between School Business Development Strategy and Effective Administration of Secondary Education

r	Sig. (2-tailed)	df	Decision
.391	.000	9	Significant

**(P < 0.05 level of significance)*

Table 5 shows that the coefficient obtained was 0.391, with a p-value = 0, which is less than the critical value at 0.05 level of significance. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected. This means that a significant relationship exists between secondary education funding and attracting and retaining of best teachers in Federal Capital Territory.

Discussion

The first finding indicated that the ways through which secondary education could be funded are direct allocation from consolidated funds, education tax on all operating companies in Nigeria, feasible school fees to be borne by parents, donations from organizations, endowments and philanthropic individuals. The findings of this study agree with Longe Commission (1991) which recommended that funds should be allocated to education from consolidated funds (otherwise known as the federation account), an Education Tax (2%) should be on all profits declared by companies operating in Nigeria, recovery of academic costs through fees, contributions and donations from voluntary agencies and philanthropic individuals. This is also in line

with Bankole (2006) who gave three options through which funding arrangement could work better. These are free education, where government is solely responsible, fees payment, where parents are made to solely pay for education, and balanced cost sharing between parents and government.

It was also found that the ways of sustaining maintenance practices include through public private partnership, a well functional PTA body and school management committee, government commitment towards funding, as well as development levy and appeal funds. This finding agrees with Nag, Hambrick, and Chen (2007), as well as Onderi and Makori (2013) who posited that the success of any secondary school depends upon the resources available to through the help of the PTA body. Funding is very crucial in the sense that erecting and renovation of school building, purchase of equipment, payment of teachers' salaries and allowances and running expenses depends on available financial resources.

The result further revealed that the ways through which the best could be attracted and retained as teachers are through provision of attractive salaries and good working incentives, appropriate motivation and building of high morale, provision of good infrastructures and working tools, as well as regular promotion of teachers and change in perception about teaching profession by the public. This finding agrees with Fadipe (2003) who reported that teachers' irregular promotion, low salary structure, and societal perception of teachers have dampened their morale over time. This simply means that when teachers are not well motivated, their level of commitment to the job would certainly be low as well.

Conclusion

The finding of this study revealed that significant relationships exist between variables studied, and such it was concluded that secondary education could be funded from consolidated funds, education tax on all operating companies, fees to be borne by parents, and donations from organizations, which could lead to proper funding of secondary education. Also, with regards to maintenance of buildings, public private partnership, as well as a well functional PTA body and school management committee, and government commitment towards funding could always bail out this situation. More also, since teachers are human resources that would want a job that could give them a minimum required standard of life, another finding of study simply attest that attractive salaries and good working incentives, appropriate motivation, provision of good infrastructures, regular promotion of teachers and public change in perception about teaching profession could attract and retain them in the long run.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusion of this study, the recommendations proposed are that: -

1. Government need to show adequate sincerity of purpose towards funding of education from the consolidated account and also parents should be given reasonable fees to pay for their children/wards.
2. Public private partnership should be taken as a priority in order to turn around the fortune of education, especially with regards to infrastructure development and maintenance.
3. Teachers should not only be well motivated through attractive salary but also the public should be enlightened to have a change in perception about teachers.

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