

## **ALTERNATIVE FUNDING PRACTICES FOR EFFECTIVE ADMINISTRATION OF PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN ENUGU STATE, NIGERIA**

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### **Abstract**

The purpose of this study was to investigate the alternative funding practices adopted by principals for effective administration of public secondary schools in Enugu State, Nigeria. Descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. One research question and one hypothesis guided the study. 116 respondents made up of 21 principals in urban secondary schools and 95 principals in rural secondary schools were sampled from a population of 291 principals, using proportionate random sampling technique. The questionnaire developed by the researchers titled Alternative Funding Practices of Secondary Schools Questionnaire (AFPSSQ) was used for data collection. The instrument has sixteen (16) items and four (4) rating scales of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D), and Strongly Disagree (SD). The instrument was validated by one research expert in Measurement and Evaluation; and two research experts in Educational Management from Enugu State University of Science and Technology (ESUT). A test of the internal consistency of the instrument yielded overall coefficient of 'r' - .72 using Chrombach's alpha method. Mean with standard deviation and z-test were used for data analysis. Findings of the study revealed that the principals use only extra lessons for students and operation of school canteen as alternative funding practices in the administration of public secondary schools in Enugu State. Based on the findings of the study, it was recommended among others that the principals should diversify the funding sources for public secondary schools through school business management.

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**Keywords:** Funding, principal, secondary school, administration.

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### **Introduction**

The education industry is a sector that feeds and sustains every aspect of a society. The education sector is so indispensable that every other sector depends on it for production of skilled manpower required for meaningful developments to occur. This was why Cheru (2021) argued that education is the corner stone of human development in every society. This implies that the quality of manpower required for societal development is a function of the state of the nation's education system. It is in support of this that FRN (2013) in the National Policy on Education stated that the Nigerian philosophy of education is of the belief that 'Education is an instrument for national development and social change'. To achieve this, the education sector in Nigeria is categorized into 3 broad levels: primary, secondary, and tertiary levels. This study shall focus on the secondary education level, with specific interest on public secondary schools.

Secondary education is an intermediary level between primary and tertiary education levels. FRN (2013) described secondary education as the education children receive after primary education and before tertiary education. This education policy states that the broad goal of secondary education shall be to prepare the individual for useful living within the society and ensure higher education. Specifically, secondary education shall provide all primary school leavers with the opportunity for education of a higher

level, irrespective of sex, social status, religious or ethnic background; offer diversified curriculum to cater for different talents, opportunities and future roles; provide trained manpower in the applied science, technology and commerce at subprofessional grades; and develop and promote Nigerian Languages, art and culture in the context of world's cultural heritage, and so on. To achieve these objectives of secondary education would require effective administration. Administration in view of Nwachukwu (2021) involves the process of achieving set goal using available recourses. Peretomode (2014), defined educational administration as the systematic arrangement of resources and programmes needed for education and judiciously use them in a systematic manner, adhering to defined guidelines and policies to achieve the goals of education. In the case of secondary schools, the task of administration is the responsibility of the school principals. The principals are saddled with the responsibility of using the available human, material, and financial resources to achieve set educational goals. However, when a country suffers economic crisis, every of her sectors including education faces some elements of declining. Under such situation, administration of schools may become very difficult in the sense that there would be insufficient funds to run schools because of poor government subventions (Okere, Nwagwu & Branch 2021).

Public secondary schools are funded from the budgetary allocations for the educational sector for a particular fiscal year. Looking at the current economic developments in Nigeria, the government appears not to be funding education adequately. According to Amaechina, Obioha and Obioha (2020), the problem of education financing in Nigeria has to do with lack of commitment on the part of the government to provide quality education to her citizens, this is evident in the continued decline in budgetary allocations for education. Analaba and Jack (2023) reported that governments often lack the resources to provide adequate funding for schools. However, Ozigi (2017) argued that no organization could carry out its functions effectively without adequate financial resources at its disposal. Money is needed to pay staff, maintain the plant and keep the services going. Since a wide array of other sectors of the system competes for the scarce resources available to government, education have often been very poorly funded in Nigeria (Ahmed & Adepoju, 2013).

The funding pattern has also shown a dichotomy between the urban and rural schools. Many scholars believe that urban secondary schools are better funded than their rural counterparts. Weiping and Hashim (2024) observed that there is unbalanced distribution of educational resources which could be attributed to the funding system. In the urban areas, public secondary schools enjoy comprehensive educational facilities, while in rural communities the schools are unable to provide similar educational opportunities (Wood, 2023). To cope with the poor funding of education, principals could resort to several income generation activities to supplement the government budgetary allocations. According to in Abdrahman, Ngkim and Ngeoh (2015) income generation activities mean a set of small-scale projects which create income to the individual beneficiaries or groups, on the other hand, promote rights to self-determination and integration. Also, Hezron (2016), defined income-generating activities as those activities which can be undertaken by organizations to raise revenues to enhance project or enhance school finance other than the statutory allocation. School-based income generating activities play important role in education financing by enabling schools to absorb macro-economic shocks without necessarily passing more financial obligation to parents, most of whom struggle to keep their children in school (Odundo & Rambo, 2013). Odundo and Rambo (2013) further stated that the returns from income generating activities enable

schools to expand their asset base and manage their liabilities. The funds realized are used to equip school libraries, renovate dilapidated classroom blocks and other projects the school want to undertake (Ahmed & Adepoju, 2013). The main types of income generating activities include: school buses, farms, hire of classroom for use by churches and social activities like ceremonies or crusades, horticulture; where some schools raise vegetables and fruits for use, within and outside the school clubs and societies among others (Hezron, 2016). Other sources could include water vending services to members of the community, operating canteen, and computer business centre within the school, making detergents and soaps for sale, making snacks for sale within and outside the school among others (Ugwu & Nnebedum, 2018). The researchers are worried because principals of secondary schools in Enugu State appear to rely solely on funds provided by the government for the administration of secondary schools in the state. Little or no efforts are made to explore other avenues to generate fund which could complement government subventions. This practice could be very dangerous, as the schools may not be able to achieve the set objectives. It is against this background that this study investigated the alternative funding practices for effective administration of secondary schools in Enugu State.

### **Statement of the Problem**

In Enugu State, the public secondary school system is completely dependent on government sponsorship. There is very little, or no support received from other stakeholders in education. As such when the economy is in crisis, the secondary education sector is badly affected. This is normally witnessed in the dilapidation of educational facilities and decline in provision learning materials as well as other public expenditure in the schools. Hence, there has been noticeable drop in students' academic performance in internal and external examination like WAEC, GCE, NECO and JAMB in Enugu State. Students who graduate from secondary schools do not exhibit the expected level of knowledge and skills, just as they do not make good results. In the light of this situation, one wonders what the actual causes of this poor academic performance of students could be. Could it be that the principals' inability to supplement the government budgetary allocations for education have resulted to inefficiency of teachers as well as ineffectiveness of school administration? It was in line with this problem that this study investigated the alternative funding practices adopted by secondary school principals for effective administration in Enugu State.

### **Research Question**

One research question guided the study.

1. What are the alternative funding practices adopted by principals for effective administration of public secondary schools in Enugu State?

### **Research Hypothesis**

One null hypothesis tested at 0.05 level of significance guided the study.

**H<sub>01</sub>:** There is no significant difference between the mean scores of urban and rural principals on alternative funding practices adopted for effective administration of public secondary schools in Enugu State.

### **Methods**

The design for this study was a descriptive survey. The study was carried out in Enugu State, Nigeria. The population for the study comprised all the 291 Principals (238 Rural and 53 Urban) in public secondary school in Enugu State (Post Primary School

Management Board (PPSMB), 2022). The sample size for the study is 116 which are made up of 21 urban principals and 95 rural principals in the public secondary schools which is about 40% of the total population. Proportionate stratified random sampling technique was used to select the respondents. Proportionate stratified random sampling is a method of sampling in which the researcher divides a finite population into subpopulations and then applies random sampling techniques to each subpopulation (Salkind & Frey, 2019). Nworgu (2015), holds that, if the population is a few hundreds; a 40% or more sample will do, if many hundreds; a 20% sample will do, if a few thousand; a 10% sample will do, and if several thousands; a 5% or fewer samples will do. This was considered necessary to ensure that principals from the various zones in the state were represented in the same proportion they existed in the population. The instrument used in this study was a structured questionnaire titled Alternative Funding Practices of Secondary Schools Questionnaire (AFPSSQ). The questionnaire consists of two sections. Section A deals with biodata of the respondents. Section B consists of sixteen (16) items focused on alternative funding practices in secondary schools for effective administration. The instrument had response mode of 'Strongly agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D), and Strongly disagree (SD)'. The scale was weighed 4, 3, 2, and 1 respectively. In other words, the higher the aggregate scores in the rating scale, the more positive the response of the subjects and the lower the score the more negative the response of the subjects. Two research experts in the field of Educational Management and one research expert in Measurement and Evaluation in the Department of Computer and Science Education, Enugu State University of Science and Technology validated the instrument. To ensure the reliability of the instrument, the validated instrument was administered to 20 principals (10 rural and 10 urban principals) in Ebonyi State, which is outside the area of the study but, share the same characteristics with those in Enugu State. To ascertain the internal consistency of the instrument, Crombach alpha method was used to compute the reliability estimate of the items. The computation yielded a reliability coefficient of 'r' - .72, which indicates that it is reliable and considered appropriate to the study. The researchers personally administered the instrument to the respondents. This is possible because the sample size is manageable. This method was employed to reduce the loss of instrument. The data collected for the study was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistical procedures. Mean and Standard Deviation were used in answering the research questions. The decision rule was that any item with mean rating of 2.50 and above was interpreted as "Agreed" which means that the principals are using that strategy, while mean rating below 2.50 was interpreted as "Disagree", which implies that Principals do not apply that strategy. This is in line with the position of Uzoagulu (2011) who stated that with four-point scale, a mean rating with 2.50 or above should be positive, while those less than 2.50 should be regarded as negative. The z-test statistics at an alpha level of 0.05 was used to test the hypothesis. Consequently, when the calculated z-value is less than the critical z-value, the null hypothesis was rejected, but when the calculated z-value is equal to or greater than the critical z-value, the null hypothesis is not rejected. This is to determine if significant difference exists between the respondents on the variable under study.

## **Results**

**Research Question One:** What are the alternative funding practices adopted by principals for effective administration of secondary schools in Enugu State?

**Table 1: mean responses and standard deviation of principals on alternative funding practices for effective administration of public secondary schools in Enugu State.**

S/N	Item Statement	Urban Principals 21		Rural Principals 95		Overall 116		
		X	SD	X	SD	X	SD	Dec
1.	Operate fishpond	2.11	1.05	1.00	.00	1.71	.99	D
2	Rear livestock	1.56	.73	1.40	.89	1.50	.76	D
3	Sell livestock feeds	1.56	.73	1.40	.89	1.50	.76	D
4	Lease land for farming	1.67	1.00	2.40	1.52	1.93	1.21	D
5	Engage in dairy farming	1.89	.78	1.40	.55	1.71	.73	D
6	Operate Agro-chemical venture	1.67	.50	1.20	.45	1.50	.52	D
7	Cultivate cereal crops	1.78	.83	2.60	1.14	2.07	.99	D
8	Grow fruits in commercial quantities	1.44	.53	1.40	.89	1.43	.65	D
9	Provide water vending services to community	1.56	.53	1.20	.45	1.43	.51	D
10	Rent school hall for events	2.56	1.13	1.40	.89	2.14	1.17	D
11	Organize extra lessons for students	3.11	.78	2.60	1.52	2.93	1.07	A
12	Operate computer business centre	2.11	.93	2.00	1.00	2.07	.92	D
13	Operate stationary shop	2.33	1.00	2.60	1.52	2.43	1.16	D
14	Rent school fields for events	2.11	1.05	1.40	.89	1.86	1.03	D
15	Make detergents and soap for sale	1.78	.97	1.60	.89	1.71	.91	D
16	Operate canteen within the school	2.89	.93	3.00	1.41	2.93	1.07	A
<b>Cluster mean</b>		<b>2.01</b>	<b>.84</b>	<b>1.79</b>	<b>.93</b>	<b>1.93</b>	<b>.90</b>	<b>D</b>

Table 1 above shows the mean scores of Urban and Rural principals on alternative funding practices adopted for effective administration of public secondary schools in Enugu State. The respondents' means ranged from 1.44 to 3.11 with a cluster mean of 2.01 and a standard deviation of .84 for urban principals, while those of rural principals ranged from 1.00 to 3.00 with a cluster mean of 1.79 and standard deviation of .93. The respondents had an overall cluster mean of 1.93 and standard deviation of .90. Both groups recorded similar responses in all the items except on item 7 and 13 where only the rural principals cultivate cereals and operate stationary shops; and in item 10 where the urban principals rent school halls for events. The overall cluster mean of 1.93 and standard deviation of .90 indicates that the alternative funding practices adopted by principals of public secondary schools in Enugu State are organizing extra lessons for students and operating canteen within the school.

### Hypothesis

Ho<sub>1</sub>: there is no significant difference between the mean scores of urban and rural principals on alternative funding practices adopted for effective administration of public secondary schools in Enugu State.

**Table 2: z-test of significant difference between urban and rural principals on alternative funding practices adopted for effective administration of public secondary schools in Enugu State.**

Groups	Mean	SD	Df	z-calculated	z-critical	Decision
Urban	2.01	.84	114	1.07	1.96	Do not reject Ho <sub>1</sub>
Rural	1.79	.93				

Table 2 shows the z-value for the difference in urban and rural principals on the alternative funding practices adopted for effective administration of public secondary schools in Enugu State. The result showed that the calculated z-value (1.07) was less than the critical value (1.96). Hence, the null hypothesis was not rejected. Therefore, there is no significant difference between the mean scores of urban and rural principals on alternative funding practices adopted for effective administration of public secondary schools in Enugu State.

### **Discussion**

The findings revealed that Principals apply only extra lessons for students and operation of school canteen as alternative funding practices in the administration of public secondary schools in Enugu State. Only these two funding practices may not be enough to make up for the financial needs of public secondary schools in Enugu State. This finding agrees with the finding of Ahmed and Adepoju (2023) who reported that education have often been very poorly funded in Nigeria. This finding explains why public secondary schools in Enugu State are poorly managed and maintained. The principals do not explore other legitimate avenues to generate funds which could be used to augment government grants and subventions. The principals rely solely on government allocations which is usually not enough. The finding further showed that there is no significant difference in the alternative funding practices between principals in urban and rural secondary schools in Enugu State. This finding opposed the report of Weiping and Hashim (2024), who observed that there is an imbalance in the distribution of educational resources attributes to the funding pattern. However, it agrees with Odundo and Rambo (2013) who reported that the returns from income generating activities enable schools to expand their asset base and manage their liabilities. Similarly, Ahmed and Adepoju (2013) reported that funds realized from school business activities are used to equip school libraries, renovate dilapidated classroom blocks and other projects the school want to undertake. The implication of this finding is that if principals of public secondary schools in Enugu State fail to diversify the funding sources, the schools may not be able to overcome the financial and administrative challenges hindering the delivery of effective teaching and learning.

### **Conclusion**

Based on the findings, it can be concluded that public secondary schools in Enugu State are completely dependent on government sponsorship, which can be problematic. This means that the principals have no strategy to mitigate the funding gaps created by inability of the government to adequately fund the schools. This funding challenge may continue to hinder effective teaching and learning in public secondary schools in Enugu State, if adequate measures are not taken to address it.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the finding of the study, the following recommendations were made:

1. The principals should diversify the funding sources for public secondary schools through school business management.
2. The Post Primary School Management Board (PPSMB) should organize in-service training for principals on school business management to enhance the principals' capacity in generating funds for the schools.
3. The government should encourage public private partnerships in establishing and running workshops and laboratories in public secondary schools which could enhance the school finances.

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