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ALTERNATIVE FUNDING MODELS FOR EFFECTIVE ADMINISTRATION OF PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN ENUGU STATE

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Abstract

This study investigated the alternative funding models for effective administration of public secondary schools in Enugu State. Descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. The study was guided by two research questions and two hypotheses. The population for the study was 295respondents which comprised 201 male and 94 female principals. The population is manageable, hence there was no sampling. The instrument for data collection was a structured questionnaire titled "Alternative Funding Models for Effective Administration of Secondary Schools Questionnaire (AFMEASSQ)". The instrument was validated by three research experts who were from Department of Educational Management and Department of Mathematics and Computer Education all in the Faculty of Education, Enugu State University of Science and Technology (ESUT). Cronbach alpha statistic was used to determine the reliability of the instrument which yielded .80 for cluster 1 and .82 for cluster 2 with an overall reliability index of .81 which made the instrument reliable and was used for data collection. Mean scores and standard deviation were used for analyzing the data collated while t-test statistic was used to test the null hypotheses at .05 level of significance. The findings of the study showed that public-private partnerships and community-based funding initiatives are alternative funding models for effective administration of public secondary schools to a great extent. In view of the findings, the study recommended that Enugu State government should implement policies that provide tax breaks or other incentives to businesses and individuals who participate in public-private partnerships for education.

Keywords: Alternative Funding Models, Effective Administration, Public Secondary Schools, Enugu State.

Introduction

Education is a vital component of societal development, and the quality of education provided in public secondary schools plays a pivotal role in shaping the future of a nation. Education is the catalyst that propels both individual and national development. Education according to (Ileuma, 2017), is an investment and an instrument that can be used to achieve a more rapid economic, social, political, technological, scientific and cultural development in the country. Nsirim (2019) defined education as the vehicle that brings about a formative effect on the mind, character or physical ability of the individual concerned. Education is a broad term that refers to the process of acquiring knowledge, skills, and values through various formal and informal means. Secondary education is a specific stage within the overall education system that follows primary education and typically serves as a bridge between primary education and higher education. Secondary education is a crucial phase within the broader spectrum of education.

As stated in the National Policy on Education (FRN, 2013), it is the level of education children receive after completing primary education and before entering the tertiary stage. Unachukwu (2014), described secondary education as a transitional stage that acts as a bridge between primary and tertiary levels. In Nigeria, secondary education consists of a six-year program, comprising both junior and senior secondary schools, with each section lasting three years. Besides serving as a link between primary and tertiary education, secondary education offers children the opportunity to gain additional knowledge, skills, and qualities beyond the primary level (Ige, 2013).In the management of secondary schools, key figures are principals, and their responsibilities encompass various aspects of the school's functioning.

A principal, in the context of education, is the chief administrative officer and leader of a school. The principal is responsible for overseeing the day-to-day operations of the school, as well as setting the overall vision and direction for the institution. The principal bears the responsibility of overseeing significant administrative duties and providing supervision for both students and teachers. Within a school, the principal serves as both an administrative and professional leader, directly accountable for efficiently managing and controlling the school's operations (Wangui, 2017). Principals play a crucial role in the administration of an educational institution.

Administration refers to any organized and formal endeavour aimed at achieving predetermined objectives through the utilization of human, material, and financial resources. In the realm of education, the administration of public secondary schools plays a pivotal role in shaping the future of nations and empowering their citizens. In the work of Nwangwu, Otegbulu, and Eze (2017), Okorji and Unachukwu's definition of educational administration can be summarized as the skillful and responsible handling of limited and accessible resources, along with a strong emphasis on holding all members of the organization accountable. The administration and maintenance of public secondary schools play a crucial role in shaping the educational landscape and equipping future generations with the skills and knowledge necessary for personal and societal advancement. As demands for quality education continue to increase, so do the challenges faced by school administrators in ensuring adequate funding to support the diverse needs of their institutions. The traditional funding mechanisms, often reliant on government allocations and local taxes, have proven insufficient in meeting the evolving requirements of modern educational systems. Administrators and the quality of education they can provide to students are significantly affected by the funding model, which plays a crucial role in determining the resources, staff, and programmes available to secondary schools.

Funding refers to the process of supplying monetary resources to support various business activities, investments, and purchases, among other purposes. Funding is the provision of financial means in the form of money to back a specific program or project. Similarly, according to Enefu, Aminu, and Ameh (2020), funding can be defined as the provision of financial resources to fulfill the requirements of a particular project or programme. Funding models refer to the different ways in which organizations, businesses, or projects secure financial resources to support their operations, initiatives, or growth. Funding models are systematic approaches or strategies that organizations, businesses, or individuals use to acquire financial resources to support their activities, projects, or ventures.

The traditional funding model for public schools in Enugu State relies heavily on government allocations and budgetary provisions. Unfortunately, these funds are often insufficient to cover the growing needs and demands of the education sector. As a result, schools struggle to maintain essential facilities, purchase updated educational resources, and provide competitive teacher salaries, among other vital aspects of a well-functioning educational institution. To address these financial challenges and enhance administrative effectiveness in public secondary schools, alternative funding models have emerged as potential solutions. Alternative funding models, according to Onyeche (2018), are alternative channels, methods, and mechanisms that have arisen independently from the government funding system to cater to the financial requirements of secondary schools. In this context, these alternative funding models encompass a diverse range of strategies, such as public-private partnerships, community contributions, grants, and other innovative fundraising approaches. In this study, the researcher laid emphasis on public-private partnerships and community-based funding initiatives.

The notion of a public-private partnership (PPP) acknowledges the presence of other options for delivering education services, beyond relying solely on public funding and administration. PPPs are collaborative arrangements between government entities (public sector) and private sector organizations or companies. PPP refers to collaboration between the government and one or multiple private sector companies, where they jointly fund and operate a government service or private business venture (Onyekwelu, 2021). PPPs are extensively established extended agreements between governments and carefully chosen private partner(s) (Ferreira and Marques, 2020). These partnerships are established to jointly undertake a specific project, provide public services, or develop infrastructure that benefits both the public and private entities involved. Khalid, Javed, Nasir, and Afreen (2016), discovered that public-private partnership has a notable influence on the availability of physical amenities in secondary schools. In some cases, PPPs may be complemented by community-based funding initiatives by encouraging local residents and businesses to contribute financially to the project.

Community-based funding initiatives refer to fundraising efforts that involve individuals or groups within a specific community coming together to financially support a common cause, project, or venture. Ugwu in Ejeh, Okenjom, Chizzy-Woko, and Agbo (2016) defined a community as a group of individuals who are interconnected not by factors such as place of birth, race, sex, or religion, but rather by their mutual understanding, shared preferences, specific requirements, or common goals. The key advantage of community-based funding initiatives is that they empower individuals to take an active role in supporting causes they believe in, fostering a sense of ownership and responsibility within the community. These initiatives often leverage the power of collective contributions from community members, pooling their resources to achieve a shared goal. Community-based funding initiatives can have a significant impact on administrative effectiveness in secondary schools. These initiatives involve collaboration between the school and its local community to secure additional financial support or resources. In their study, Emenalo and Camillus (2013), uncovered that communities actively participate ineffective administration of secondary schools. Community-based funding initiatives can have a significant link with gender, as they can impact the economic empowerment and financial inclusion of women and gender-diverse individuals.

Gender plays a crucial role in this research, encompassing socially constructed roles, learned behaviours, and expectations linked to both males and females. According to the World Health Organization (WHO) (2016), gender pertains to the distinct characteristics, responsibilities, and roles that society assigns to women, men, boys, and girls, all of which are shaped by social influences. The principals in the secondary schools in Enugu State are either male or female.

The concerns of this research stem from the observation that secondary education is facing financial challenges due to a declining economy. As educational systems face evolving challenges and growing complexities, the need for effective funding models has become increasingly apparent. Adequate and sustainable funding is essential to ensure the smooth functioning of schools, the provision of quality education, and the overall development of students. Over the years, the traditional funding mechanisms for public secondary schools have encountered various limitations. Budget constraints, resource disparities, and bureaucratic hurdles have often hindered the seamless administration of these institutions.

Consequently, this has led to compromised educational standards, reduced access to essential facilities, and a decline in academic performance. Despite this situation, school principals are not sufficiently proactive in seeking alternative funding models for secondary education. Instead, they rely heavily on government subsidies, which have proven to be insufficient. By effectively tapping into various alternatives like public-private partnerships (PPPs) and community-based funding initiatives, there is a significant potential to enhance the delivery of education in a more effective manner. Based on the above background, the study ascertained the alternative funding models for effective administration of public secondary schools in Enugu State.

Statement of the Problem

The insufficient availability of educational facilities, particularly at the secondary school level in Enugu State, has been a major concern for individuals, states, and the nation as a whole. This decline in education quality is primarily attributed to the poor standard of teaching and learning, stemming from a lack of infrastructural facilities and qualified teaching personnel in secondary schools. The root cause of these problems is insufficient funding, which leads to a shortage of essential factors such as personnel, facilities, and teaching materials necessary for providing a quality education. The absence of modern and well-equipped facilities hampers meaningful learning, as many schools struggle with a lack of classrooms that are either too small, run-down, or poorly ventilated. In light of these challenges, it is crucial to explore alternative funding models to ensure effective administration of secondary education and complement the efforts of the government. Among the proposed solutions are public-private partnerships and community-based funding initiatives, which have the potential to significantly improve the funding situation for secondary education. With this context in mind, the researcher carried out an investigation into alternative funding models for the administration of public secondary schools in Enugu State.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to determine the alternative funding models for effective administration of public secondary schools in Enugu State. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. ascertain the extent to which public-private partnership (PPP) is an alternative funding model for the administration of public secondary schools in Enugu State;
2. determine the extent to which community-based funding initiative is an alternative funding model for the administration of public secondary schools in Enugu State.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. To what extent is public-private partnership an alternative funding model for the administration of public secondary schools in Enugu State?
2. To what extent is community-based funding initiative an alternative funding model for the administration of public secondary schools in Enugu State?

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were tested at .05 level of significance:

H_{O1}: There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of male and female principals on the extent to which public-private partnership (PPP) is an alternative funding model for the administration of public secondary schools in Enugu State.

H_{O2}: There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of male and female principals on the extent to which community-based funding initiative is an alternative funding model for the administration of public secondary schools in Enugu State.

Research Method

Descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. According to Nworgu (2015), this design involves collecting data and presenting them in a systematic manner. The study was guided by two research questions and two hypotheses. The population for the study was 295 respondents which comprised 201 male and 94 female principals. The population is manageable, hence there was no sampling. The instrument for data collection was a structured questionnaire titled "Alternative Funding Models for the Administration of Secondary Schools Questionnaire (AFMASSQ)". The instrument was validated by three research experts who were from Department of Educational Management and Department of Mathematics and Computer Education all in the Faculty of Education, Enugu State University of Science and Technology (ESUT).

Cronbach alpha statistic was used to determine the reliability of the instrument which yielded .80 for cluster 1 and .82 for cluster 2 with an overall reliability index of .81 which made the instrument reliable and was used for data collection. A 4 point rating scale of Very Great Extent (VGE), Great Extent (GE), Low Extent (LE) and Very Low Extent (VLE) was used. However, out of the 295 copies of the instrument administered on the respondents, the researcher with his assistants retrieved 284 copies (199 from male and 85 from female principals) which was a 96.27% retrieval rate. In rating the mean, each response option had a numerical value based on real limit of numbers: VGE = 3.50-4.00; GE= 2.50-3.49; LE = 1.50-2.49;

VLE = 0.00-1.49. The interpretation of the test of hypotheses was based on the significance (sig.) values from the SPSS output. The null hypotheses were not rejected when the probability values were greater than .05, but were rejected when the probability values were less than .05.

Data Analysis and Results

Research Question 1: To what extent is public-private partnership an alternative funding model for the administration of public secondary schools in Enugu State?

Table 1: Mean ratings of male and female principals on the extent to which PPP is an alternative funding model for the administration of pubic secondary schools

	ITEMS	Male Principals 199			Female Principals 85		
S/N	**PPP is an alternative funding model for secondary school administration when it:**	$\overline{x}$	**SD**	**Dec**	$\overline{x}$	**SD**	**Dec**
1.	contributes financial resources to improve the overall functioning of the school.	2.54	.98	GE	2.59	.95	GE
2.	sponsors school activities like sports festivals.	2.56	.91	GE	2.62	.91	GE
3.	invests in the construction of school buildings.	2.65	.90	GE	2.55	.89	GE
4.	brings in technological advancements to enhance the quality of education.	2.59	.95	GE	2.58	.94	GE
5.	involves in managing the day-to-day operations of schools, such as providing teaching staff.	2.61	.92	GE	2.55	.92	GE
6.	shares the risks associated with maintaining schools.	2.59	.94	GE	2.61	.95	GE
	Cluster Mean	**2.59**	**.93**	**GE**	**2.58**	**.93**	**GE**

Table 1 presents data indicating that male principals received mean ratings ranging from 2.54 to 2.65, and female principals received mean ratings ranging from 2.55 to 2.62. Additionally, their respective cluster means were 2.59 and 2.58, with standard deviations of .93 for both groups. These findings suggest that Public-private partnerships (PPPs) can serve as a viable funding model for administering public secondary schools in Enugu State to a significant extent.

Research Question 2: To what extent is community-based funding initiative an alternative funding model for the administration of public secondary schools in Enugu State?

Table 2: Mean ratings of male and female principals on the extent to which community-based funding model is an alternative funding model for the administration of pubic secondary schools

	ITEMS	Male Principals 199			Female Principals 85		
S/N	**Community-based funding initiative is an alternative funding model for secondary school administration when:**	$\overline{x}$	**SD**	**Dec**	$\overline{x}$	**SD**	**Dec**
7.	identifying specific needs that require additional funding.	2.58	.88	GE	2.55	.91	GE

8.	organizing fundraising events to raise funds.	2.60	.91	GE	2.54	.93	GE
9.	educating the local community members about the school's challenges.	2.55	. 97	GE	2.58	.87	GE
10.	reaching out to former students (alumni) to encourage them to contribute back to their alma mater and support current students' needs.	2.65	.85	GE	2.60	.99	GE
11.	collaborating with local businesses to secure donations or grants for specific projects.	2.61	.99	GE	2.59	.90	GE
12.	leveraging online platforms to create crowd funding campaigns.	2.64	.99	GE	2.61	.98	GE
	Cluster Mean	**2.61**	**.93**	**GE**	**2.59**	**.93**	**GE**

Table 2 presents the average ratings of male and female principals, with male principals receiving mean ratings between 2.55 and 2.65, and female principals receiving mean ratings between 2.54 and 2.61. The cluster means for male and female principals were 2.61 and 2.59, respectively, while their standard deviations were both .93.These results suggest that the community-based funding initiative could be a highly viable funding model for managing public secondary schools in Enugu State.

H_{O1}: There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of male and female principals on the extent to which public-private partnership (PPP) is an alternative funding model for the administration of public secondary schools in Enugu State.

Table 3: Summary of t-test analysis of the mean ratings of male and female principals on the extent to which public-private partnership (PPP) is an alternative funding model for the administration of public secondary schools

Group	N	$\bar{x}$	SD	df	p-value	Decision
Male Principals	199	2.59	.93	282	.093	H_{O1} not rejected
Female Principals	85	2.58	.93			

The data presented in Table 3 indicates that with 282 degrees of freedom, the calculated p-value was found to be .093. This p-value is higher than the significance level of 0.05 chosen for the study. As a result, the null hypothesis was not rejected, leading to the conclusion that there is no statistically significant difference between the mean ratings of male and female principals regarding the extent to which public-private partnership (PPP) serves as an alternative funding model for the administration of public secondary schools in Enugu State.

H_{O2}: There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of male and female principals on the extent to which community-based funding initiative is an alternative funding model for the administration of public secondary schools in Enugu State.

Table 4: Summary of t-test analysis of the mean ratings of male and female principals on the extent to which community-based funding initiative is an alternative funding model for the administration of public secondary schools

Group	N	$\bar{x}$	SD	df	p-value	Decision
Male Principals	199	2.61	.93	282	.086	Ho_2 not rejected
Female Principals	85	2.59	.93			

The information from Table 4 reveals that, with 282 degrees of freedom, the computed p-value was determined to be 0.086. Since this p-value exceeds the chosen significance level of 0.05 for the study, the null hypothesis could not be rejected. Consequently, the conclusion drawn is that there is no statistically significant difference between the mean ratings of male and female principals concerning the extent to which the community-based funding initiative serves as an alternative funding model for administering public secondary schools in Enugu State.

Discussion of Findings

The study's results indicated that Public-private partnerships (PPPs) are a feasible means of financing public secondary schools in Enugu State to a considerable extent. This outcome aligns with the views of Khalid, Javed, Nasir, and Afreen (2016), who suggested that PPPs present an alternative funding model for managing secondary schools. Additionally, the study found no statistically significant difference in the average ratings given by male and female principals regarding the efficacy of public-private partnerships (PPPs) as an alternative funding approach for administering public secondary schools in Enugu State.

Moreover, the research demonstrated that the utilization of a community-based funding initiative is a highly viable approach for overseeing public secondary schools in Enugu State. This finding corroborates the claims made by Emenalo and Camillus (2013), who argued that community-based funding initiatives serve as an alternative funding model for managing secondary schools. Furthermore, the study revealed no statistically significant difference between male and female principals concerning their assessments of the effectiveness of the community-based funding initiative as an alternative funding model for administering public secondary schools in Enugu State.

Conclusion

The conclusion drawn from the findings of the study is that public-private partnerships and community-based funding initiatives can be highly effective alternative funding models for the administration of public secondary schools in Enugu State. These models have proven to be successful in addressing the financial challenges faced by public secondary schools and have contributed significantly to their effective administration. By engaging with private entities and involving the community in funding and supporting these schools, there is a positive impact on the overall quality of education, infrastructure, and resources available to the students and staff. These alternative funding models have the potential to improve educational outcomes, enhance the learning environment, and create opportunities for additional programs and activities. However, it's important to note that while these funding models show great promise, their success may depend on various factors such as the level of collaboration, commitment from all parties involved, and effective governance and management of the resources.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the researchers recommended that:

1. Enugu State government should implement policies that provide tax breaks or other incentives to businesses and individuals who participate in public-private partnerships for education. By offering benefits, the government can attract more private entities to support the education sector.
2. The state government should foster active participation from local communities in supporting their public secondary schools. This involvement can include fundraising events, volunteer programmes, and community-driven initiatives to enhance the school's facilities and educational resources.

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