

PRINCIPALS' FINANCE RESOURCING MANAGEMENT SKILLS FOR EFFECTIVE ADMINISTRATION OF PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN DELTA STATE, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

The study investigated principal's finance resourcing skills required for effective administration of public secondary schools in Delta State. The descriptive research design was adopted for the study. The population of the study consisted of all the 438 principals in public secondary schools in Delta State, Nigeria. A sample size of 164 principals was drawn using proportionate random sampling technique. A validated questionnaire instrument titled "Principals' Finance Resourcing Skills for Effective Administration of Public Secondary Schools Questionnaire' (PFRSEAPSSQ)" was used to generate data. The instrument has reliability index of 0.83 using Cronbach alpha statistical test. The research question was analyzed and answered using mean and average mean, whereas the research hypotheses were tested using z-test statistics at 0.05 alpha level. The findings of the study revealed that principals in the public secondary schools in Delta State applied finance-resourcing skill to high extent in the performance of their administrative functions. Recommendations made among others include, the principals should encourage teachers, mobilize students to engage in handicrafts production, and sell produce to augment month subventions. The study further recommended that school principals should assess the prospects of establishing shops for selling of food items, soft drinks and stationeries among others. This will increase their internally generated revenues.

Keywords: Finance-Resourcing, Management, Skills, Effective, Administration

INTRODUCTION

Education is globally recognized as a tool for accelerating economic growth and social development. That is the reason why the Nigerian government recognized it as instrument par excellence for accelerating national development [Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN), 2014]. Apart from human capital development, education is also used in promoting social values for sustainable peace and national cohesion. It was against those gains and the need to achieve them that it became imperative on the part of researchers, to explore ways of fostering effective administration of educational Institutions. Secondary education in Nigeria is the second level of education with broad goals of preparing primary school leavers for useful adult life within the society and for higher education (FRN, 2014). Specifically, the main objectives of secondary education have been geared towards providing the young students an opportunity for mental, physical aesthetic and emotional development. As lofty and brilliant as these goals and objectives are, their realization has remained elusive, especially when one considers the large number of secondary school leavers that neither have vocational skills nor technical skills after graduation. It is therefore no wonder why Abraham (2013) remarked that effective administration of secondary schools is very essential for actualization of inherent objectives.

Administration in this context is an on-going process involving decision-making and mobilization of organisational human and material resources towards the realization of set goals. Adebayo (2004) observed that administration involves all processes through which appropriate material and human resources made available are optimally utilised to ensure operational effectiveness and institutional goals attainment. Effective administration has been very vital in actualizing the goals of secondary education. The realisation of organisational goals, which is one of the parameters for assessing school effectiveness, is contingent on the interaction between certain variables within the school (Kazmi, 2008). These variables include the administrator's leadership and financial management skills; the ability to generate money and utilize it prudently (Cole, 2004; Koontz, Cannice & Wehrich, 2010).

Financial management is concerned with managing the school's assets, liabilities, revenue, profitability and cash flow. Financial management is crucial to the health of a school in order to provide adequate funding for day-to-day needs and in planning for the future. Principals are responsible for coordinating and monitoring finance resourcing schemes and controls school's expenditure through budgeting. Budgeting is the process of allocating scarce resources to priorities and needs of the school. Obasi & Asodike (2014:175) posited that budget is "basically a financial document that encompasses planning the future savings and expenses". The above definition shows that budget is a product of planning and analysis that provides an important tool for forecasting and evaluating ways of generating revenue and control. Forecasting is important for several reasons; forecasting facilitates planning efforts by quantifying the future costs/benefits of strategic alternatives upon which decisions are based. Forecasting clarifies trends, needs, and issues that must be evaluated and addressed during budget preparation. For example, enrolment forecasting may reveal growing student population, this will constrain the school authorities to pay attention to it and make necessary provision to increase staff strength and facilities such as classrooms, desks, chairs and tables among others. Forecasting enhances decision-making at all levels of administration because it looks into the future and provides valuable insights and perspectives that allow administrators to be proactive and responsive. Evaluation enables administrators to detect flaws in the plans and programmes so that modifications will be made in the present operations or future programmes. Thus, budget prioritizes needs of the school, which is evaluated based on their short and long-term strategic advantages. The principal requires pertinent skills to perform these tasks effectively.

Skill is the ability to perform a particular task satisfactorily. One of the key skills required of a worker is finance resourcing skill. Financial Resourcing Skill is, therefore, the ability of the principal to scout for and identify opportunities and avenues that the school can explore to earn money apart from regular subvention from the Ministry of Education. Ukaigwe and Igbozurike (2018) observed that principals have a vital role to play in ensuring that the school generates significant financial resources and efficiently managed to eliminate wastages.

The school cannot carry out its responsibilities without financial resources. Finance in this context means monetary inputs to the school management. Finance is one of the critical resources that is very essential for survival and operational efficiency of an organisation. Ebong (2006:85) asserted that "finance is the oil that lubricates programmes". Obasi and Asodike (2014) further shade-light on this when they stated that no organisation could efficiently run its affairs without the availability of adequate finance. In Nigeria, private schools are mostly funded through tuition fees the parents pay on behalf of their wards. In some cases, the private schools receive donations from organisations, philanthropists and relatives. Whereas in public schools, where a sizeable number of students attend, is entirely financed by the government. Considering the emerging evidences that government alone

cannot adequately fund the secondary education, it has become unavoidably the responsibility of the school principals to devise ways of generating additional financial resources to augment the subventions that they receive from the Ministry of Education in order to meet the financial needs of the schools (FRN, 2004; Ebong, 2006). Ukaigwe and Igbozuruike (2018) postulated that principals should endeavour to collaborate with School Management Committees (SMCs) towards galvanizing the supports of their host communities and leveraging on such social capital to raise necessary funds for effective administration of the schools.

Nwakudu (2014) highlighted certain techniques a skillful and resourceful administrator can adopt to improve internally generated revenue of the school. These include;

Recognition of Opportunities

A school principal should be able to identify an opportunity when he or she sees one. Recognizing opportunity and exploring such might be a great boost for increased internally generated revenue for a school. When an opportunity is identified the principal is expected to work with other line staffs to collaboratively examine the business opportunity to ascertain its viability, profitability and sustainability before investing.

Feasibility Study

A school principal with research skill should regularly engage in a feasibility study to assess and test the viability, profitability and risks associated with a particular business venture before committing investible resources. The business opportunity should not come in-between the goals of the school. Otherwise, it should be jettisoned

Accountability and Record Keeping

Adequate record keeping of all financial transactions promotes responsibility in the management of the school funding. The idea of resourcing for funds encompasses the need for financial discipline and prudence in management. This is because; it will be irrational to engage in revenue drives just to have the generated monies misappropriated or mismanaged. Clear accounting records give the subordinate's confidence in the leadership of the school, which will in turn help to enlist their support for any finance resourcing exercise.

Creating Enabling Business Environment for Investors

The school principal should make sure that the environment for both academic and business activities is conducive. The school environment should be safe, healthy and business friendly so that investors will come and invest in the school. When private individuals site their firms in the school, the school authorities earns revenue in terms of rents and levies charged on the business outfit. Studies have shown that the application of the above techniques of finance resourcing combined with other investment management skills such as budgeting, auditing and reporting of financial accounts, will significantly improve the capacity of the schools to generate revenue internally. Agabi (2012) suggested some sources of internally generated revenue as: i) School fees, ii) Proceeds from school activities -sales from student's' handicraft, stationery, books, etc., iii) Community Assistance -Erecting school buildings for the school, iv) Payment of taxes -income tax and property tax, v) Donations from individuals and charity organisations, vi) Endowment funds - grants for specific purposes, vii) Alumni associations - donations and financing of projects, viii) Parents Teachers Association (PTA) levies, ix) Participation in business ventures - restaurants, bookshops, etc, x) Leasing of schools facilities or properties -auditorium, halls, etc., xi) Running of short-time or part-time academic programme– extramural and weekend lessens.

The theory that guided this study is Reddin's Three Dimensional (3D) theory, which was propounded by William Reddin in 1970. The theory built on earlier studies at Ohio State University in USA, where two dimensions of leadership behaviours named *task oriented* and *people oriented* were identified. Reddin built on this theory by introducing *effectiveness* as the third dimension of leadership. Reddin's theory centres on the assumption that there is no best leadership style given the continuously varying situations in work places. Effective was brought to underline the fact that neither people oriented nor task oriented leadership styles can effectively address all situations in work environment, thus, effective was viewed as viable alternative in which situation are matched with appropriate leadership style or skills to achieve expected results. To this end, successful principals are therefore, those that can adjust and adopt appropriate behaviour and skills to suit the demand of a job in a given situation. For instance, an emergency will require benevolent autocratic leadership style, tense atmosphere may require developer leadership style (high concern for a relationship and low concern for the task) while finance resourcing skills such as forecasting, budgeting and entrepreneurial initiatives are essential for financial management.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

One of the problems that often impede effective administration of secondary schools in Delta State is financial inadequacies on the part of government who largely funds the public schools. In view of this, principals are expected to come up with ways of generating funds internally to augment government subventions. However, observations suggest that many school principals rely heavily on subvention, to the extent that if the petty cash fails to come, there will be no money to procure critical stationeries and consumables. Does this mean that such principals in secondary schools in Delta State lack finance resourcing skills? Alternatively, is it that they are empowered to explore revenue generating opportunities? The task of answering those questions formed the thrust of the study.

AIM AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The aim of the study was to ascertain the extent to which principals apply finance resourcing skill in performing managerial functions in Public Secondary Schools in Delta State.

RESEARCH QUESTION

The research question below guided the study:

1. To what level do the principals apply finance resourcing skill in performing managerial functions in Public Secondary Schools in Delta State?

HYPOTHESIS

The hypothesis below was tested at 0.05 level of significance:

H₀₅: There is no significant difference between the mean scores of experienced and less experienced principals on the extent principals apply finance resourcing skill in performing managerial functions, in Public Secondary Schools in Delta State.

METHODOLOGY

The study adopted descriptive survey design. The population of the study consisted of all the 438 principals in public secondary schools in Delta State, Nigeria. A sample size of 164 principals (comprising 107 experienced and 57 less experienced principals) were drawn using proportionate random sampling technique. A validated questionnaire instrument titled "Principals' Finance Resourcing Skill for Effective Administration of Public Secondary Schools Questionnaire' (PFRSEAPSSQ)" was used to generate data. The instrument had a reliability index of 0.83 using Cronbach alpha statistical test. The instrument was a modified

four point Likert scale of Very Great Extent, Great Extent, Very Low Extent and Very Low Extent. It was face-validated by an expert from Department of Educational Administration and Planning, University of Port Harcourt. The instrument consisted of two sections; Section A was design to elicit demographic data of the respondents, while section B included 11 items questionnaire items structured to obtain responses from the respondents. Data generated were analysed with the aid of SPSS version 21. Research questions were answered using, mean and aggregate mean. The criterion for acceptance was $x \geq 2.50$ whereas z-test statistics was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 alpha level.

RESULTS

Research Question: To what level do the principals apply finance-resourcing skill in performing managerial functions in Public Secondary Schools in Delta State?

Table 1. Mean and average mean scores of experienced and less experienced principals on extent principals apply finance resourcing skill in performing managerial functions in Public Secondary Schools in Delta State.

S/N	Description of items	Means of Principals		Average Mean	Remarks
		Experience	Less Experience		
1	Principals occasionally carry out feasibility studies to identify viable business ventures on behalf of the school.	2.63	2.73	2.68	High extent
2	Principals work in synergy with the host community and receive donations from the people at times.	2.88	2.41	2.65	High extent
3	Principals collect P.T.A. levies from parents/guardians.	2.65	2.82	2.74	High extent
4	Handicrafts produced by students are sold to get income.	1.72	2.22	1.97	Low extent
5	Principals encourage old boys and old girls associations in the school and this promote development.	2.79	2.92	2.86	High extent
6	Our school organizes extra-lessons for students from which revenue is generated.	2.47	2.71	2.59	High extent
7	Our school has shop where stationeries, soft drinks and snacks are sold.	2.00	2.91	2.48	Low Extent
8	Principals prepare school budget before the beginning of the term.	2.61	2.95	2.78	High extent
9	Principals ensure that all school monies are prudently spent and accounted for.	2.80	3.00	2.90	High extent
10	Principals often recognize viable means of generating revenue.	2.41	2.92	2.67	High extent
11	Principals attract aids from non-governmental organizations.	2.39	2.54	2.47	Low extent
Aggregate		2.49	2.74	2.61	

Table 1 shows the mean and average mean of principals and teachers on the items assessing the degree at which principals apply finance-resourcing skill in performance of their duties in Delta. In items 1, 2, and 3 the respondents indicated that principals performed their functions to high extent as indicated by the items' respective averages means of 2.68, 2.65 and 2.74.

These imply that principals occasionally carry out feasibility studies to identify viable business ventures on behalf of the school, synergize with host community to bring development to the school and also collect P.T.A. levies as part of revenue generation (2.74). In item 4, handicrafts were produced at low extent (1.97). More so, item 5 indicates that principals to high extent encouraged old boys and old girls association to promote school development (2.86). The respondents also to high extent agreed that the principals organize extra-lessons for students from which revenues is generated (2.59) as shown in item 6. In item 7, the respondents however to a low extent indicated that their schools have shops where stationeries and other food items are sold (2.48). In items 8, 9 and 10, the respondents agreed to high extent that principals prepared budget before the beginning of the term (2.78), ensured that school monies are prudently spent and accounted for (2.90) and that principals recognized viable means for generating revenue (2.67). Furthermore, in item 11, the respondents revealed that principals attracted aids from non-governmental organizations (2.61). The aggregate mean score of 2.62 shows that principals in public secondary schools in Delta State applied finance resourcing skill to high extent in the administration of their respective schools.

TEST OF HYPOTHESES

Hypothesis One:

Hypothesis Five: There is no significant difference between the mean scores of experienced and less experienced principals on the extent of principals’ application of decision-making skill in the administration of Public Secondary Schools in Delta State.

Table 2. z-test analysis of the difference between the mean scores of experienced and less experienced principals on the extent of principals’ application of finance resourcing skill in administration of Public Secondary Schools in Delta State.

S/ No	Comparing Variables	N	Mean	SD	Df	z-cal.	z-crit.	Sig. Level	Remark
1.	Experienced	107	2.49	0.80	162	1.92	1.96	0.05	Not Significant (H ₀ accepted)
2.	Less Experienced	57	2.74	0.79					

Table 2 shows the comparison of the means and standard deviation scores of experienced and less experienced principals on the extent principals apply finance-resourcing skill in administration of secondary schools in Delta State. The comparison reveals that the z-calculated value of 1.92 and is less than the z-critical value of 1.96 at 162 degrees of freedom and 0.05 significance level. Hence the null hypothesis which states that, there is no significant difference between the mean scores of experienced and less experienced principals on the extent principals applied finance resourcing skill in performing managerial functions in public secondary schools in Delta State, is accepted.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS AND IMPLICATIONS

As already established, the principals of public secondary schools in Delta state apply finance resourcing skill. The result showed that experienced principals had aggregate mean score of 2.49, as shown in table 2 whereas less experienced principals had aggregate mean score of 2.74, resulting in aggregate average mean score of 2.61. This implies that principals occasionally carry out feasibility studies to identify viable business ventures on behalf of the school, organize paid extra-lessons, work in synergy with the host community and receives donations form community members, collect P.T.A. levies and encourage handicrafts

making, old boys and girls association among others. This finding is in-line with Nwakudu (2014), who stated that principals have vital role to play in ensuring availability of finance in the school. Ukaigwe and Igbozurike (2018) had also remarked that principals should synergize with host communities to raise the much-needed funds to finance school programmes.

The findings of the study also revealed no differences between the views of experienced and less experienced principals on the extent principals apply finance-resourcing skill. Notwithstanding, Agabi (2012) pointed out that the reality of shortages in subventions to schools have made it clearer for school managers to device ways to supporting their individual schools financially. The relevance of finance to any organization cannot be over-emphasised, given that it is like oil that lubricates the wheels of programme, without it, school activities will not go on smoothly and effectively (Ebong, 2006). Obviously, all the managerial skills of principals examined in this study, showed that the principals to a high extent are applying them. To this end, the observed shortcomings or perceived decline in the standard of secondary education in Delta State should not be attributed to the managerial competency of the principals, rather more studies are apparently imperative in areas of adequacy of physical facilities, teachers' quality and quantity among other factors.

CONCLUSION

The importance of principals' finance resourcing skills for effective administration of public secondary schools in Delta State has been enunciated and extent of its application established. Based on the findings, the study concludes that principals in the public secondary schools in Delta State applied finance-resourcing skills to a high extent. If this high rate of application of the said skill is improved upon, secondary schools administration in Delta State will improve further.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made:

- j. The principals should encourage teachers, mobilize students to engage in handicrafts production, and sell produce to augment monthly subventions.
- k. School principals should assess the prospects of establishing shops for selling of food items, soft drinks and stationeries among others. This will increase their internally generated revenues.
- l. Government should revive and revitalize the School Management Committee (SMC) system, as a way of involving communities in school governance.

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