

Full Length Research Paper

Techniques for improving private sector participation in the funding of educational institutions in Delta State, Nigeria

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The paper has made a critical examination of the private sector participation in the funding of educational institutions in Delta state. Three research questions were raised and two null hypotheses were formulated to guide the study. An instrument was constructed and designated as “Private Sector Participation in Funding Secondary Schools” (PSPFSS). The instrument was validated in its face and content values and found reliable at 0.75 reliability coefficient. T-test method of statistical analysis was employed to analyze the data collected. The results of findings revealed that private sector recognized the country’s educational enterprise as a costly social service which should include both government and the private sector. From the findings, it was recommended that policies being initiated by the state government to engender participation of private sector in funding public educational institutions and that Delta state education commission should relax some of their policies to enable private sector participate effectively in funding schools.

Keywords: Methods, improving, private sector, funding, Nigeria Educational Institutions.

INTRODUCTION

Education has become a very big enterprise all over the world and it has been recognized as the greatest investment that any economy can make for the quick development of its economic, political, sociological and human resources. It is a social service whose financial burden has for a long time rested on the shoulder of the government.

The emerging reality have no doubt reviewed that government alone cannot single handedly bear the cost of education. This is because public school education is the largest public undertaken in the country. It is a public owned property which attracts public attention constantly and it is the heart of the nation’s life in democracy; and the pillar on back bone of society. Private sectors are organizations owned by individual or group of individual.

According to Charles (2002), private sector is the part

of country’s economy owned, operated and managed by private individuals. In Delta state, private sector includes business organizations, industries and firms owned and managed by individuals or groups. They include banks, insurance companies, engineering companies, agro and chemical industries. In funding secondary schools, they give donations; provide infrastructures and other physical materials to schools. They also employ the service of educational institutions graduates as typists, clerks and sales agents.

In this study, only the private sectors located in urban rural area of the state are used with the management staff and their subordinates from the basis of the population. The private sector has much to offer to education as education is best weapon for development. The organized private sector is playing a role in

developing various programmes in the key focus area of education as well as to compliment government efforts by participating in the funding of secondary education in Delta State, Nigeria. This is because the greatest potential for development lies in education which spawns human resources, social and economic development.

The funds provided to secondary education by the government are used to pay teachers salaries and allowances, procures instructional materials and equipments and other physical facilities. Funding secondary education in Delta state involves the provision of money and infrastructures to the schools.

According to Oduleye (2002), it is clear that government can no longer single handedly fund educational institutions in the country. The researcher is of the opinion that there is over reliance on government to provide solutions to problems facing secondary education in Nigeria. The consequences are that the schools are grossly neglected because they are not in position they ought to be. In fact, government is finding it difficult to effectively fund education because other section of the economy is competing with education for attention.

However, private sector should act as catalyst in complementing the efforts of government in terms of funding to ensure a qualitative and quantitative education for all and to achieve the objective of equal opportunities to all citizens. The private sector should participate in education beyond their contribution to the education tax fund as education for all is the business of all sectors of the economy. The organized private sector would have to play major role in helping to formulate strategies and monitoring of the implementation of programmes to ensure the overall education of the populace irrespective of age and cultural background (Charles, 2002).

In Delta state, parents, local communities and individuals assist in the funding of secondary education (Ogbonnaya, 2001). Parents deny themselves a lot of things to keep their children in schools. Local communities also often levied themselves to raise enough funds to provide facilities in schools like classroom blocks and dormitories. Anazonwu (2002) reported that most parents and local communities assist schools that have resource problem.

Regrettably, most serious problems facing educational institutions in Delta state as stated by Ogbonnaya (2000), Okafor (1998) and Azunna (1997) is that of inadequate funds. The funds provided by the state government are never enough. Fagbeni (1986) concluded that the obvious consequence of inadequate funding of secondary school education in most state include difficulty to provide instructional materials, pay teachers' salaries and provided equipment for teaching science in the schools.

The problem of funding has been the most persistent and thorny issues militating against school ability to maintain existing services in Delta state. Since the state government finds it difficult in recent times to provide the resources and materials to schools, it is obvious that if

funds are inadequate, the broad aim of secondary education will not be realized. This perhaps is one of the reasons why the state government encourages private sector participation in its funding of secondary schools.

Government as the major source of fund for financing education has over the years failed to live up to its responsibility of sufficiently funding education. The need has risen for the private sectors and philanthropic organization that may be interested in education to assist in equipment, books and capital projects for the educational institutions (Archbong, 2002). Kamanu (2007) believed that one of the best ways the private sector can contribute to nation building is by giving the children so that they too can play great roles in national development. The private sector should take it as a special responsibility to provide the type of physical and social environment that are ideal and supportive of learning.

There is no doubt, that the private sector could give the nation's educational sector a face lift, by providing the right infrastructure and environment conducive enough for learning as governments cannot alone solve the seemingly intractable problem facing the education sector (Ezekwesili, 2007). Oduleye (2002) opined that there is need for governments to create avenue for the private sector to render meaningful financial support to secondary education. The private sector can make giant strides in providing necessary facilities for academics and extra-curriculum activities required to develop the intellectual capabilities of students in urban and rural secondary schools.

Statement of problem

Education in Nigeria is faced with the problem of gross under funding, shortage of qualified manpower, inadequate facilities and equipment, and over bloated student's population. A visit to public educational institutions in the country will reveal the sorry state of the education sector. Now the government claims that it is no longer buoyant as it used to be, it has tactfully shown its sole-provident position leaving education institutions as orphans, urging them to look for alternative sources of financing their programmes.

Infact, inadequate funding of educational system at all levels in Delta state is an issue of great concern both to the state government, parents, private individuals and organizations. The state government has been making frantic effort to increase funding for school and the situation seems not to have improved.

Government gives grant to schools and provide infrastructural equipment and physical facilities to run schools in the state is persisting. Many school heads complain of inadequate funding to run their schools. Since the stakeholders have continued to decry this state of affairs, the study is a respond to the challenge by striving to identify the techniques for increasing private

sector participation in the funding of educational institutions in Delta state.

Purpose of the study

The purpose of the study is to find out the extent private sector can participate fully in financing education in Delta state in view of the adverse effect of government lack – luster attitude towards the education enterprise.

Research questions

The following questions guided the conduct of the study.

1. What specific projects in secondary schools should be funded by the private sector?
2. What are the constraints to private sector participation in funding secondary education?
3. What policies should be initiated by the government to increase private sector participation in funding secondary education?

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were formulated in the study.

H₁: There is no significant difference between the management of staff and subordinates as regards the constraints to private sector participation in the funding educational institutions in Delta state.

H₂: There is no significant difference between the management of staff and subordinates as regards the policies initiated by government to increase private sector participation in funding educational institutions in Delta state.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Private sector participation in the funding and management of education in Nigeria began with the missionary school established in 1843. Kamanu (2007) averred that individual communities played no major roles in private sector involvement in educational management at this period. However, private sector participation in funding education increased, incorporating individuals, other corporate organizations and different missionary societies.

By 1976, the public school edict, which originated in 1970, enabled the government to compulsorily acquire all the schools from the original owners. Private sector participation in funding education, however, resurfaced in the 1980s as government's financial muscle began to atrophy, and could no longer solely fund education.

Today, clarion calls are being made to individual, com-

munities, missionary as well as non-governmental organization (NGO's) to participate in funding education in Nigeria. At present, schools were now handed over to the missionaries; their formal owners.

In fact, education in Delta state of Nigeria has suffered neglect over the years due to inadequate funding. It is the responsibility of the government to adequately fund education by paying salaries of teachers and accord educated people due recognitions in the affairs of the state, and rehabilitate dilapidated infrastructure in all educational institutions.

The United Nations Scientific and Cultural Organization (2002) on funding of education have said that 26% of the budget of developing countries should be devoted to education. Our educational sector apparently has suffered the greatest neglected over the years. The infrastructures are in total decay and in some areas, non-existent, thus creating a very unhealthy environment for effective teaching and learning.

Nakpodia and Obielumane (2011) opined that a lot of problems are now confronting education sector. Among them are inadequate funding, resources mobilization, inadequate educational tools and materials and learning resources.

The infrastructures are in total decay and in some areas not in existent, thus creating a very unhealthy environment for effective learning. There is nothing to suggest that the secondary schools have received any serious or meaningful attention from the government.

Classrooms are without desks and seats for students, very many school buildings are uncompleted. The school libraries, laboratories and workshops are not adequate and are poorly equipped in the schools where they are available as well as general lack of teaching text and instructional materials.

Well built science laboratories with modern technology, libraries, classrooms, workshops comparable to those of the Western secondary schools abroad that help the students to study with the right equipment that will offer them every opportunity and exposure needed to advance academically are not provided for urban and rural areas secondary school. It is common to find as many as 100 students in a classroom/laboratories designed for 30 to 40 students.

In such circumstance, it could be hard to deny that good teaching and learning are not compromised. This kind of situation is unhealthy for teaching and learning situation, which is student's activity based and inquiry oriented because it can only be applied in an environment with organized resources and rewards. The standard of education is falling because government cannot effectively fund the resources needed by the schools.

Ezekwesili (2007) observed that the state of public school system is growing to a state of security alert. Education in Nigeria is a nationwide problem that requires urgent national mobilization with over seventy

Table 1. Mean rating and standard of management of staff and subordinates of private registered organizations on projects to be funded by private sector in educational institutions in Delta State.

S/N	Project to be funded	Management staff No =100			Subordinate No. =100		
		X	SD	D	X	SD	D
1	Building classroom an administrative blocks	3.20	1.29	High	3.17	1.17	High
2	Donation of technological and medical equipments	2.10	0.83	Low	2.16	0.84	Low
3	Donation of books, office and sports equipments	3.0	1.18	High	3.36	1.28	High
4	Provision of fund for school services	3.00	1.181	High	3.08	1.21	High
5	Award of scholarship	3.35	1.31	High	3.28	1.29	High
6	Renovate school buildings	3.28	1.29	High	3.25	1.25	High

percent of the schools in a dilapidated condition. With the persistent deterioration of urban and rural public secondary schools, show that the government lacks the capacity to cope with the demands and challenges of maintaining a viable and qualitative secondary educational system. There is need to initiate policies to engender the private sector participation in funding and provision of resources for the secondary schools to ensure achievement of laid down standard.

Since the stakeholders have continued to decry this state of affairs, the study is a response to the challenge by striving to identify techniques for increasing private sector participation in the funding of secondary education in Delta state.

METHODOLOGY

The study is an ex-post facto, employing a survey design. The population consists of all the management staff and subordinates of all the 191 private registered organizations in Delta State, Nigeria which include chief executive, accountants and administrative managers.

Proportional stratified sampling was used to select 100 organization (70 urban and 30 rural) out of the 191 private registered firms in the state. The proportionate stratified sample was based on the fact that these organizations are located in the urban than rural areas. In selecting the management staff and subordinates, only the chief executives and chief accountants were used from each organization.

The instrument used was a researcher-developed questionnaire and oral interview. The questionnaire was titled "Private Sector Participation in Funding Secondary Schools" (PSPFSS). It was made up of 2 sections. Section one sought demographic information about the name of company, respondent and location of the company (whether urban or rural). Section two comprised items arranged in three clusters. A four point Likert scale of strongly Agree (4 point), Agree (point 3), (disagree point 2), strongly disagree (point 1) was employed.

The questionnaire was subjected to face and content values by four experts from the department of Educational Administration and Policy Studies, Abraka Nigeria. It was pilot tested using 20 organizations (15 urban 5 rural) to establish its reliability using cronbach alpha 0<. The alpha obtained yielded a reliability coefficient of internal stability of 0.75. Oral interviews were conducted with 10 management staff from the sampled organizations (5 urban and 5 rural) not included in the sample of the study.

Using the direct delivery technique (DDT), the researcher

administers two hundred questionnaires to chief executives and chief accountants (100) each from the sampled firms for on the spot collection. This technique reduces the chance of either misplacing or losing copies of the questionnaire.

The researcher used mean score and standard deviation to answer the three-research questions, while t-test statistic was employed in testing the two null hypotheses formulated to guide the study. Items of the research question with mean score of 2.50 and above were regarded as positive and acceptable, while any with a mean score between 2.50 were regard as negative and thus rejected.

PRESENTATION OF RESULTS

Question 1

What specific projects in secondary schools should be funded by the private sector? Table 1 shows that out of six items on specific projects being funded by private sector, items 1, 3, 4, 5 and 6 were rated high by the both categories of respondents.

It is therefore the opinions of the respondents that private sector should build classrooms and administrative block, provide office and sport equipments, ward scholarship and renovate school buildings. However, both categories of respondents responded negatively to item 2. These show that the private sector does not have to import technological and science equipments for the schools.

Question 2

What are the constraints to private sector participation in funding secondary education? From Table 2, it can be seen that both category of respondents responded positively to all the items, except 9 which was rated high by management staff and moderate by the subordinates. It has a score of 2.98 and a standard deviation of 0.047.

Therefore, the constraints to private sector participation include obnoxious of the state government, lack of interest on the part of the private sector, no special provision given to the private sector from participating to fund schools, inability of the private sector to generate

Table 2. Mean rating and standard deviation of management staff and subordinates on the consistent to private sector participation of the funding educational institutions in Delta State.

Constraints to funding	Management staff No = 100			Subordinate No = 100		
	X	SD	D	X	SD	D
7 Obnoxious policies of the state sector for participation	3.60	0.56	High	3.53	0.55	High
8 Lack of interest on the part of private sector.	3.36	0.54	High	3.44	0.54	High
9 No special provision to private sector for participating in funding school	3.04	0.48	High	2.98	0.47	Mode
10 The fact that firms use to pay education tax fund	3.32	0.52	High	3.36	0.52	High
11 Inability of private sector to generate fund	3.33	0.52	High	3.25	0.51	High

fund and the fact that private sector use to pay education tax.

Question 3

What policies should be initiated by the government to increase private sector participation in funding secondary education? From Table 3, items 12, 13 and 15, were rated high by both respondents. Item 14 was rated moderate by both respondents and item 16 was rated high by the management staff and moderate by their subordinates.

This shows that to increase private sector participation in funding secondary education, the government should initiate the following policies, private sector to pay a stipulated amount into education fund, ensuring that private sector incorporate educational development in their programmes of activities, task force to be used on defaulting firms and government should motivate firms and place under surveillance firms that are unable to fund schools.

Hypotheses testing

On Table 4, it can be seen that the null hypothesis was accepted because the calculated t-value of 0.08 was less than the t-critical table value of 1.96 at 198 degree of freedom and 0.05 level of significance.

There is therefore no significant difference between the mean rating of management staff and their subordinates on the constraints to private sector participation in the funding of educational institutions. This implies that the hypothesis which states that there is no significant difference between the management of staff and subordinates as regards the constraints to private sector participation in the funding of educational institutions in Delta state was retained.

HO₂

There is no significant difference between the management of staff and subordinates as regards the policies

initiated by government to increase private sector participation in funding educational institutions in Delta state.

Table 5 shows the result of the t-test revealed that there is no significant difference between the opinions of the two categories of respondents on policies to be initiated to increase funding of schools. This is so because the calculated t-value of 0.85 is less than t-critical (Table 5) value of 1.96 at 0.05 levels of significance and 198 degrees of freedom.

This shows that the hypothesis which states that there is no significant difference between the management of staff and subordinates as regards the policies initiated by government to increase private sector participation in funding educational institutions in Delta state was retained.

DISCUSSION

The result of research question one indicated that private sector should build classrooms and administrative blocks, provide fund for school service, donate books and stationeries. This is in line with Ezeocha (1990) who stated that some private sectors like Longmans and Heineman donated books to educational institutions in some states in Nigeria.

The result that private sector award scholarship and renovate schools buildings, shows that private sector recognized the educational enterprise as a costly social service, which should involve the contribution of not only the government but also of individuals and private organizations.

Ajabade (1989) in her critical examination of problem, prospects and implication of the rebirth of private ownership of educational institutions in Nigeria, buttress the fact that private sector should fund projects in schools. The review conducted with management staff also reveals that private sector to renovate schools and give adequate support to educational institutions.

The findings that obnoxious policies of the government on the private sector prevent them from funding schools, as such amount to lack of interest, lack of motivation and the fact the private sector pays education tax prevents

Table 3. Mean rating and standard deviation of the management staff and subordinates on the policies to be initiated by the government to increase private sector participation in funding educational institutions.

Policies initiated by the Government		Management staff No = 100			Subordinate No. = 100		
		X	SD	D	X	SD	D
12	Payment of a stipulated amount into education fund	3.64	0.57	High	3.60	0.57	High
13	Ensuring that private firms incorporation educational development in their programme of activities	3.44	0.54	High	3.23	0.51	High
14	Task force should be uses on defaulting firms.	2.99	0.51	Moderate	2.91	0.46	Mode rate
15	Evidence of registration should be presented to the government	3.81	0.60	High	3.37	0.59	High
16	Government should motivate firms and place under surveillance firms that are not buoyant to fund schools	3.00	0.47	High	2.99	0.47	Mode rate

Table 4. Summary of t-test analysis of the difference between the mean scores of management staff and subordinates on the constraint to private sector participation in funding educational institutions.

Groups	N	X	SD	DF	Level of sign	t calculate value	t critical value	Decision
Management staff	100	31.29	4.90	198	0.05	0.08	1.96	Ho ₂ Accepted
Subordinates	100	31.19	4.87					

Table 5. Summary of the t-test analysis of the differences between the mean scores of the management staff and subordinate on the policies to be initiated by the government to increase private sector participation in funding educational institutions.

Groups	N	X	SD	DF	Level of sign	t calculate value	t critical value	Decision
Management staff	100	25.60	4. 04	198	0.05	0.08	1.96	Ho ₂ accepted
Subordinates	100	25.29	3.95					

the private sector from funding schools.

According to Ezekwesili (2007), most private firms are satisfied with the 2% of their net profit as education tax they pay, and the government should not demand anything more from private firms and should not force them either. The government should device means of encouraging its private firms so as to increase their funding. The funding that the state government do not make any special provision to private sector for participating in funding school constitutes to a

great extent one of the factor that militate against private sector participation in funding educational institutions in Delta State.

Another finding of this study is that policies should be initiated by state government which can be explained with fact that both respondents see human and material development of any nation as being predicated. The private sector in particular according to Nakpodia and Obielumane (2011) is universally known as competent educator and is always prepared to welcome government policies

and regulation on education.

The findings that Tasks Force should be used on defaulting firms was acknowledged by Coombs (1985) who noted that since education is not one mans' business, communities and private individuals should put hands together to alleviate its problems. Mubua (2002) also supported the fact that government should give incentives to private individual and firms who fund schools.

The result of the interview conducted also indicted that the techniques to increase private

organization participation in funding schools include initiating policies which demand that private sector should incorporate educational development in their programme of activities, pay education tax and register their company before operation.

FINDINGS

The following findings were made in the study:

1. Policies be initiated by the state government to engender participation of private sector in funding schools, is of practical benefit to the state government because it will provide them with the relevant information about initiating policies.
2. The result of the study also create awareness in the minds administrators in the state ministries of education and educational institutions; principals about various ways private sector could be made to contribute to the finding of secondary school in the state.
3. The state government should therefore explore ways and means of enlisting the assistance and cooperation of private sector in the funding of educational institutions.
4. The private sector should renovate school buildings, makes donations and provide materials to schools.
6. The obnoxious policies of the state government and negative attitude of the officials of the state education commission is not allowing the private sector free hand to participate in the funding which constitute s to a great extent one of the factors militating against effective support of educational institutions by the private sector. The government should therefore relax some of the policies to enable private sector to fund schools.

Conclusion

From the study, the researcher established that private sector in the funding educational institutions in Delta State Nigeria is low. It was discovered that there were major hindrances to this poor state of affair. This includes the attitude of the government towards the private sector and lack of interest on the part of private sector because of the fact that education is non-profit investment. Since the government cannot fund school single handedly and since private sector participation to fund schools is low, and the need of secondary education have not been met, government should initiate policies to increase private sector participation in funding school.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The researcher recommends the following:

1. Private sector should assist in the provision of well-equipped laboratories to enhance the quality of public educational institutions in the Delta State.
2. Education commission should relax some of their policies to enable private sector participate effectively in funding educational institutions in the state.
3. Heads of educational institutions in Delta State should communicate with the private sector on how the funds they provided are being utilized.
4. Private sector should always pay education tax and to assist in the provision of institutional materials to enhance quality education.

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