

UNIVERSITY BASIC EDUCATION: ITS FUNDING

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Abstract

The universal basic education is free and compulsory for all children of school age. As an innovation, it has to pass through the initiation, adoption and implementation stages. A lot of money will be required for any meaningful implementation to be recorded. The paper takes a look at the educational funding in Nigeria and proposes alternative sources of financing the (JBE).

Introduction

For any organization to function effectively, it requires finance. This is necessary most especially when such organization is at its innovation stage. Barnett (1953) cited in Bassey (2000) sees an innovation as any thought behaviour or thing that is new because it is qualitatively different from existing forms. Barnett argues that all innovations start as an idea, and that some of them reach the level of overt and tangible expression through the implementation process. Noting the different types of innovations, Zaitman (1970) cited in Bassey (2000) defines an innovation as any idea, practice, or material perceived to be new by the relevant unit of adoption.

The Universal Basic Education is a new educational programme proposed by the Federal Government of Nigeria for the primary school system and the junior secondary level. The programme is to create access for basic education, more access for children to various components of basic education so that they can avail themselves of learning certain modern skills and attitudes. It is an innovation and has to pass through the initiation, adoption and implementation stages, according to the education standards aired establishment of institutions decree (1985).

The areas to implement UBE successfully are: a teacher training programme for the curriculum defined, a building programme designed for the new curriculum, a curriculum which the heat is science and technology, and equipment programme, a management and administration programme in schools, states and federal ministries of education, and a deployment programme for distributing the graduates of the junior secondary to senior secondary schools trade centers, and apprenticeship and employment (Bassey, 2000).

Education Funding in Nigeria

Funding of education in Nigeria has been accomplished through schools fees, grants in aid from various governments, and levies by cultural union and various forms of voluntary contributions by parents and graduates (Adesua, 1981). Igwe (1990) cited in Bassey (2000) reports three traditional sources of income for education services to include the public authorities, users of education, and self generated income. In 1969 educational expenditure in Nigeria absorbed 5% of the gross nation budget (Adesina 1980). Ndagi (2000) cited in (Bassey, 2000) observes that federal government expenditure on education rose from N19-20 million in 1967/68 session to N867.36 million in 1977/78 session. In the second national development plan, allocation to education ranked second only to transportation accounting for N77.8 million out of N2.0 billion gross public sector investment. During the third plan (1975-80) education accounted for N32 billion or (12%) of the total public sector budget. During the fourth plan period (1981-85) was N7.7 billion representing about 10% of the annual budget of the federation. Mbipom (2000) observes that despite the largest share of the annual budget it still remains inadequately funded because of large numbers and high cost of equipments.

Revenue Allocation to Universal Basic Education

The failure or success of education to attract a substantial preparation of the national revenue for its services is determined by many factors. Some of them are the growth rate of the condition of the world market; the competition of other sectors of the economy; and the nature of sources of financing education (Eden, 1987).

The revenue devoted to education represent a cost to the economy because they could be used for other purposes. If economic growth lags behind the demand for education, then the annual

increments to the budget on education are likely to decrease as a guide to a sound budget therefore, often expressed in relation to economic growth, since in the final analysis it is the increase in the national income that determines the extent of increases to be made in educational founding. Since most African countries

depend on primary products as major sources of income, there is often an uncertainty of how much resources should be spent on education since education is the only one of the economic sectors competing for a share in the national cake, the more money allocated to education, the less the share of funding for other sectors.

In Nigeria presently, high priority is placed on UBE, definitely a corresponding reduction in the shares of funding going to services like health information, and industry. Finally, there is need for a steady flow of income into government treasury if a substantial proportion of it is to go to education Edem (1987) cited in Bassey (2000). Relying only on a single source of revenue for the country can inhibit educational growth and development.

Alternative Sources of Funding the UBE

The traditional sources of funding education in Nigeria have been school fees and levies paid by parents and guardians and grants-in-aids from the various governments. These sources of funding of education existed from the colonial era up to about independence in 1960 and beyond. Adesua (1981) reports of Christian missionaries, rich merchants and emigrant businessmen living in Lagos being the first financiers of education in Nigeria. Donations and church offerings by members formed a sizeable percentage of the money used in financing the schools founded by the missionaries bodies. The education ordinance of 1882 provided for the total maintenance and finance of schools established by the colonial governments while missionary and private schools were to be assisted through a system of grants in aid. From 1970 to date, education has been mainly financed by the public sector, i.e. governments (Adesua, 1984).

The current funding pattern of public primary and secondary schools is that the federal government contributes the lion share with state and local governments as contributors. Secondary schools are funded by owner states, while unity secondary schools are financed by the federal government. Parents and teachers' bodies e.g. PTA, contributes to education through various levies and fees on students.

- 1) In the light of the high cost of education and the limited sources of financing there is need to go out searching for viable alternative sources for funding the Universal Basic Education. The following alternative sources for financing UBE have been identified: revenue from business venture, individual primary and secondary should strive to generate income by engaging in various types of business venture, depending where the particular schools is located. Schools located in booming commercial centers like Lagos, Onitsha, Aba, Port Harcourt, Ibadan, Kano, or Calabar can invest some money on fast selling products like food stuff, enterprising stall, shop or canteen. Profits are to be ploughed by head teacher and should be rewarding and encouraged by those directly connected with the venture.
- 2) Funds from Alumni Association: Every institution has alumni students. Efforts should be made by head teachers to trace all alumni students who passed through the school. Advertisements in national and state newspapers accompanied with radio and television announcements could be useful in locating successful alumni students for formation of alumni.
- 3) Private Sector Contacts: Those primary and junior secondary schools that have successful private and public companies within their catchments areas could make contacts with these firms for assistance as the needs for these arise. Since these companies have a policy of assisting communities and institutions within their areas of operations on a regular basic, the school should maintain a good public relations with the community and institutions for a free flow of assistantships to them.
- 4) Voluntary Agency Contributions and Donations: These are contributions and donations from voluntary agencies.
- 5) Revenue from Culture Festivals: Some school might be able to organize from time to time successful cultural festivals as a source of revenue. The school head will have to ensure that he has staff and students who are talented in cultural performances and are willing to do it for the school.
- 6) Founders day celebration. Though some schools may find it unconditional to celebrate founders day. It is very possible to agree on a day of significance in the life of every school. This day will be used to assemble all important people in that particular community. It could even be called a prize-giving day. The head teacher should exploit his public relations competencies to the fullest to ensure that donations and gifts are made to his school.
- 7) Acrobatic displays and artistic shows. Another possible source of revenue to individuals school is artistic shows and acrobatic displays. Schools that have staff and students gifted in these areas could on monthly basis organize such shows. Fees charged from such shows should be minimal to

attract larger number of people and increase profit at the end.

- 8) Rents from kiosk operations. Small retailers who rent and sell their wares, usually snacks on school premises pay a reasonable amount of money yearly for permission to do their business.
- 9) Rent for use of school facilities. Schools in urban and commercial center have the privilege of charging some fees for permission to use facilities like assembly halls, and the dormitories during holiday.

Conclusion

In conclusion, since the funding of UBE is very costly, its funding cannot be left to the governments (federal, state, local alone. Planners and policy makers should avoid a recourse to foreign aids as much as possible, they should tactically encourage healthy partnership funding, amongst the public sector, private individuals, communities and religious organizations. The alternative funding sources recommended could prove effective if they are vigorously pursued.

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