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Effective Funding of Educational System for Sustainable Development: A Psychological Inquiry

By

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Abstract

This study investigated effective funding of educational system for sustainable development in Idemili North Local Government Area. Four research questions and a hypothesis were formulated to guide the study. Descriptive survey research design was used. 180 primary school teachers (60 primary I, 60 primary II and 60 primary III) made up the sample for the study. Stratified random sampling was used in selecting the sample, with a researcher-made instrument to collect the data. Data was analyzed using mean, standard deviation and ANOVA. The findings revealed that though proper funding of education can be achieved through PTA, monetary assistance, renovation of schools from time to time, and provision of educational resource centers, and teaching materials like chalk, blackboard, chisel etc., the federal government and ministry of education are responsible for funding educational system. There was no significant difference on the teachers' perception of effective funding of educational system for sustainable development. Recommendations were made based on observations.

Education is the greatest tool through which an individual can acquire skills, knowledge and values that would help him to contribute to the development of his

society in near future. A thorough assessment of the educational system in Nigeria proves that education is not adequately funded when comparing primary, secondary and tertiary institutions. This is supported by Aina (2002:236) that the inadequate funding of the universities by the federal government is having profound effects on teaching and research while universities in Nigeria have been forced to embark on internal income generation projects in order to source alternative funds. Such atmosphere has promoted an arena where a school child is forced to learn in an open air without any roof, no desk to sit down on, no fan to provide proper ventilation, while the school children are at times forced to stay under a tree for their learning process (Ojimah, 2004).

According to Azegbe (2005), the primary education system is the foundation of knowledge, which cannot be neglected by any government in power because it lays the foundation for future doctors, lawyers, technologists, pharmacists, industrialists, politicians and any other profession in the society. Hence, any error in proper management of primary school system will affect the society in near future.

Presently, the federal government relies on the Parents' Teachers Association (PTA) for effective funding of the educational system as parents are forced to pay certain amount of money for the welfare of their children. Though nobody is against parents paying a particular amount of money as levy for children in school, there is need for government to fund education since it has proved to be a way to acquire knowledge or learning (Okotie, 2005).

However, Indabawa (2004) opined that, one possible solution to the problem of education is to provide proper fund. Whatever the case maybe, the federal government through the ministry of education can adequately fund the educational system by allocating certain amount of money to every school within the country. Such capital allocation can be used to purchase school bus for the children, renovation of schools that are old, and providing of teaching materials like chalk, blackboard and chisel, wash hand basin or any other teaching materials needed by the school teachers (Omolade, 2005).

However, the federal ministry of education is now working with the United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) to fund most of the schools within the environment. UNESCO as the case may be is providing about 40% of the school allocation, while the federal government is providing 60% of the fund. Under such ideology, UNESCO will assist government in providing desk and materials for learning, renovation of school system, while the federal government will only pay for the salaries of teachers (Okeoma, 2005).

Therefore, the effective funding of educational system in Nigeria will act as a first step toward the eradication of illiteracy and ignorance in a manner that will force parents to send their children and wards to government school under the Universal Free Education Scheme (Oshiomole, 2005). Such avenue of free education will stop the roaming of children in motor parks and market places where they are hawking one item or the other when they are supposed to be in their respective classes (Eneh, 2006).

Statement of the Problem

For the past 30 years, the federal government and other stakeholders in the educational system of Nigeria have not really come up with proper funding of the education. Such attitude has made most parents to send their children to private schools where education is well designed to promote skills and knowledge on part of the growing child.

Today what we have in Nigeria is a poor decayed structure that act as school building for schools, while most of them lack classroom accommodation, reading and writing materials like good textbooks, video machine for practical teaching, proper desk for sitting and writing, no blackboard for writing and sometimes no chalk to write on the blackboard, lack of teaching aids and other instructional materials. Unfortunately, one of the greatest problems facing the developing nations of the world today is the ever increasing demand for education in the face of decreasing resources and rising cost (Ukeje, Akabogu and Ndu, 1992). Such attitude has made most of the schools especially the ones in rural areas to lose the shape of school system as most of their roofs are dilapidated, with little or no desk for children to sit down, while the building lack proper ventilation that would promote proper learning from taking place (Ozor, 2003). In fact, there is acute shortage of fund in the educational system. This could probably be due to the fact that education budgets throughout the states are not keeping pace with the vast increase in the students' population and the ever-escalating cost.

School children learn in poor environment where most of them stand up to learn while others receive their studies in a classroom with no roof and in the process, find it difficult to understand what he or she is being taught (Makinde, 2005).

With the problems mentioned above, it is hoped that the federal government which is in charge of the educational system would come up with reasonable ideas on how to fund the education in a manner that a school child will be attracted to class every day.

In this regard, the research addresses the issue of how to effectively fund educational system in Nigeria with Idemili North Local Government Area as the main study.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of the study is to find out how to effectively fund educational system in Idemili North Local Government Area.

Specifically, the study was designed to:

1. Find out if there is proper funding of schools as perceived by primary school teachers.
2. Find out the best strategy through which educational system would be effectively funded.

Research Questions

The following research questions were designed to guide the study:

1. Is there proper funding of schools as perceived by primary school teachers?
2. What is the best strategy through which the educational system would be properly funded?

Research Hypothesis

The null hypothesis was formulated to guide the study at 0.05 level of confidence.

Ho: There is no significant difference in the mean scores of primary one, two and three teachers on the effective funding of educational system.

Area of the Study

The study was carried out in Idemili North Local Government Area of Anambra State. Idemili North has many towns and various primary schools, some of which were used to find out how educational systems are effectively funded.

Design of the Study

Survey research design was used for the study. According to Osuala (2005) survey research design studies both large and small populations by selecting and studying samples chosen from the population to discover the relative incidence, distribution and interrelations of sociological and psychological variables. Survey research design assesses the characteristics of the whole population and it usually studies samples drawn from the population of study.

Population and Sample Selection

The population for the study consisted of all primary school teachers in Idemili North Local Government Area. Based on the data collected from Idemili North Local Government Authority (February, 2012) in Idemili North Local Government Area of Anambra State, there are 1089 primary school teachers. The sample was made up of 180 teachers selected from 10 primary schools. This comprised 60 primary I teachers,

60 primary II teachers and 60 primary III teachers. 6 teachers were selected from each class, giving a total of 18 teachers per school. Stratified random sampling was used in selecting the sample size.

Instrument for Data Collection

A structured questionnaire titled “Effective Funding of Educational System Questionnaire” was used for data collection. The questionnaire was designed to elicit responses from the participants based on literature reviewed on effective funding of educational system. The questionnaire was measured on a 4-point Likert-type format of Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree and Strongly Disagree, which were assigned numerical values, 4, 3, 2, and 1.

Validation of the Instrument

Experts in psychology and measurement and evaluation validated the instrument by scrutinizing the contents of the questionnaire. They offered useful corrections and suggestions which led to some modifications. Based on their recommendations, some items were dropped and the final draft was produced. The instrument was considered valid for use in the study.

Reliability of the Instrument

A pilot study was conducted to determine the internal consistency of the instrument. The reliability of the instrument was established when it was administered to 50 primary school teachers selected from three schools in Idemili North LGA. The teachers were excluded from the main study in order not to contradict the result. The instrument has reliability of 0.75 Cronbach Alpha. The reliability coefficient was considered high enough and suitable for use in the study.

Method of Data Collection and Analysis

A total of 180 questionnaires were distributed and collected personally by the researchers. Mean and standard Deviation were used to analyze the data for the research questions while ANOVA was used to test the null hypothesis at 0.05 level of confidence. The acceptable level of mean score was 2.50 and above.

Presentation of Results and Analysis of Data

Major findings of the study were presented in tables based on the research questions.

Table 1: Mean and Standard Deviation Scores on the Funding of Schools as Perceived by Primary School Teachers

Item No	Item Description	Item Mean Score	SD	Decision
1	Monetary Assistance	2.18	1.05	Not Accepted (NA)
2	Building grants	2.32	0.95	(NA)
3	Provision of sufficient classroom furniture	2.45	0.96	(NA)
4	Government call for principals to submit budget estimates	2.46	1.17	(NA)
5	Provision of science lab furniture, equipment and fixtures	2.32	1.09	(NA)

Analysis of data in table 1 shows that all the items rated below the acceptable mean of 2.50. The conclusion is that educational systems are not effectively funded.

Table 2: Mean and Standard Deviation Scores on the Best Strategy through which Educational System would be Effectively Funded

Item No	Item Description	Item Mean Score	SD	Decision
6	Assistance from Parents' Teachers Association	3.77	0.59	Accepted (A)
7	Providing monetary assistance	3.84	0.52	A
8	Provision of building grants by government to renovate schools from time to time	3.81	0.58	A
9	Government should call for principals to submit budget estimates for classroom, and science lab fixtures.	3.78	0.60	A

Analysis in table 2 shows that all the items rated above the mean score of 2.50. The conclusion is that the best strategy through which educational systems would be

effectively funded are through Parents' Teachers Association (PTA), providing monetary assistance, provision of building grants by government to renovate schools, provision of sufficient classroom furniture, government call for principals to submit budget estimates, and provision of science lab furniture, equipment and fixtures.

Table 3: Analysis of Variance on the Mean Scores of Primary One, Two and Three Teachers on the Effective Funding of Educational System

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F	Sign	Decision
Between Groups	11.35	27	0.42	0.74	0.82	
Within Groups	86.43	152	0.57			Accepted
Total	97.78	299				Ho

The result of the test of hypothesis reveals that the F-value is less than the table-value at 0.05 level of confidence. The null hypothesis of no difference is therefore not rejected. This implies that there is no significant difference in the teachers' perception of effective funding of educational systems.

Discussion

This study proves that effective funding of the educational system in Nigeria should be the responsibility of federal government and ministry of education. The opinion of the respondents support Indabawa (2004) who believed that one possible solution to the problem of education is to provide proper funding.

Findings obtained in research question one prove that there is no serious type of funding of educational system in Idemili. This finding supports Okotie (2005) who indicated that despite the fact that primary school education is the foundation of knowledge; no adequate effort is being made by federal government to fund it effectively but only rely on Parents Teachers Association (PTA) for such ideology.

Also in support of this finding is Aina (2002:236) who believed that the inadequate funding of the universities by the federal government is having profound effects on teaching and research while universities in Nigeria have been forced to embark on internal income generation projects in order to source alternative funds. Similarly Ukeje, Akabogu and Ndu, (1992) indicated that one of the greatest problems facing the developing nations of the world today is the ever increasing demand for education in the face of decreasing resources and rising cost.

Findings in research question two indicate that the best strategy through which the educational system can be effectively funded is through Parents Teachers Association (PTA), monetary assistance, provision of building grants by government to renovate schools, provision of sufficient classroom furniture, government call for principals to submit budget estimates, and provision of science lab furniture, equipment and fixtures.

The idea of these respondents support Omolade (2005) who believed that the best strategy through which educational system can be effectively funded is through allocating certain amount of money to the ministry of education, which can be used for school renovation and providing teaching materials, sufficient classroom and science lab furniture, equipment and fixtures. He further pointed out that the federal government through the ministry of education is responsible for funding educational system and should do anything possible to prevent the collapse of the foundation of knowledge.

There was no significant difference in the teachers' perception of effective funding of educational system for sustainable development.

From the psychological point of view, effective funding of educational system would create an avenue to assess the extent to which the psychological and material needs of both the teachers and learners are met. Staff salaries and fringe benefits would be paid as and when do, so as to reduce corruption within the educational system. This will strengthen employee motivation, and accountability for educational performance. However, the success of any educational system hinges on adequate funding, proper planning, reinforcement, efficient administration, and motivation.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are made for improvement:

1. Government should allocate more budgets to federal ministry of education who in turn should fund the educational system. This will provide an enabling environment for teaching and learning for Nigerian education to have its pride of place through targeting funds to those things that will really make a difference, prudent application of funds and prompt release of funds.
2. Parents Teachers Association (PTA) should also assist government in funding the educational system.
3. Non-governmental organizations like Shell Petroleum, Agip Petroleum and other oil companies, and communication giants like MTN, GLO, and Celtel should assist in the funding of education.
4. Community leaders should also donate materials like desks and chairs to educational systems from time to time.

5. Co-operative organizations like banks and insurance firms should provide good textbooks for education.

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