



FUNDING STRUCTURE IN NIGERIAN SECONDARY SCHOOLS: IMPLICATIONS FOR SCHOOL MANAGERS.

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Abstract

This study aims to analyse the implications of the funding structure in Nigerian secondary schools for school managers. The study has two main objectives. Firstly, to explore the challenges posed by the lack of a viable funding structure in Nigerian secondary schools and, secondly, to identify strategies school managers can employ to ensure they operate in an economically sustainable manner. To meet these objectives, a qualitative study was conducted using semi-structured interviews as the main data collection tool. Participants included school managers, senior staff, teachers, and learners in two Nigerian Secondary schools in two locations. Results of the study revealed that the lack of a viable funding structure for Nigerian secondary schools poses many challenges for school managers. These challenges generally relate to the overall quality of the educational service, which is impacted by the lack of adequate resources. The study also identified key strategies that can be employed by school managers to manage the difficult economic situation of their schools. These included the need to use available resources efficiently and effectively, create alternative sources of revenue, and build partnerships with other stakeholders. The results of this study provide useful insights into the implications of the lack of a viable funding structure for Nigerian secondary schools, as well as strategies that school managers can employ to ensure their schools are financially sustainable. These findings could inform future interventions and policymaking designed to improve the funding structure of Nigerian secondary schools.

Keywords: Funding, school managers, interpretive paradigm, secondary school.

Introduction

Viable funding structure in schools around the world over has been the main driver of successful education outcomes (Guo Et al., 2019). The lack of funding structure or means of financing education is the main cog in the wheel of educational development in both developed and developing nations of the world (Mehendale & Mukhopadhyay, (2020). In Africa, Ghana and South Africa studies have showed that funding structure of secondary schools in plays a crucial role in determining the quality of education provided to learners (Yeng, Woode-Eshun, & Badu, 2022; Du Plessis & Mestry, 2019). Secondary education is an essential phase of the Nigerian educational system. Federal Republic of Nigeria, (FRN, 2014) in her National Policy of Education opined that secondary education in Nigeria caters for learners between the ages of 11 and 17 or 18. Secondary education builds on the foundation laid in primary schools and prepares learners for higher education or vocational training. In Nigeria, secondary schools can be categorized into different types; government-owned public schools, privately-owned schools, and mission schools established by religious



organizations (Taura & Ibrahim, 2023). Each of these categories has distinct funding structures that shape their operations, infrastructure development, and educational resources. Understanding the funding structure of secondary schools in Nigeria is crucial for policymakers, educators, parents, and other stakeholders in the education sector. It sheds light on the financial mechanisms and sources that support secondary schools, as well as the challenges and disparities that exist in funding allocation.

The funding structure of Nigeria's secondary schools comprises various components that contribute to the financial resources necessary for the functioning and development of these educational institutions (Lawan, Jacob, Gregory & Lawan, 2020). In the same vein, Ogunode and Aiyedun, (2020) asserted that adequate funding is essential for providing quality education, maintaining infrastructure, ensuring a conducive learning environment, and supporting the overall growth of learners. In this study, we explored the key components of the funding structure of Nigeria's secondary schools. The researchers examined the sources of funding, including government allocations, private investments, parent's contributions, and community involvement. Understanding these components provided insights into the financial mechanisms that sustain secondary schools and the challenges they face in meeting their funding needs.

The Nigerian government, at the federal and state levels, provides funding for secondary schools. The allocation is typically based on budgetary provisions for the education sector (Suleiman, Et. al., 2022). The government determines the amount of funding allocated to each school, considering factors such as student enrolment, infrastructure needs, and academic programs (Eze, Ugwuanyi, & Okeke, 2020). Funds allocated by the government are used for the construction, maintenance, and renovation of school buildings, classrooms, laboratories, libraries, and other facilities (Ojeka & Onyedibe, 2021). These resources are crucial for creating a conducive learning environment. Olujuwon, Omiyale, and Olujuwon, (2022) submitted that the lack of support received from the private sector, and communities in supporting secondary education and promoting equitable access to quality learning opportunities for all Nigerian learners has been the problem.

Exploring the various components of the funding structure contributed to informed discussions and efforts aimed at improving the financial sustainability of Nigeria's secondary schools and enhancing the educational experience for learners across the country. However, one of the critical challenges facing Nigeria's secondary schools is inadequate funding from the government (Olamoyegun, Olatunde-Aiyedun, & Ogunode, 2022). Similarly, Jegede, (2019) submitted that insufficient financial support from the government has far-reaching implications for the quality of education provided in these institutions, hindering their ability to deliver effective teaching, maintain infrastructure, and provide necessary educational resources. In this study, we explored the problem of government inadequate funding and its implications on Nigeria's secondary schools. The researcher examined the causes of inadequate funding, the consequences it has on various aspects of education, and the resulting impact on learners, teachers, and the overall education system. Jacob, Jegede, and Musa, (2021) asserted that insufficient government funding often leads to a range of issues, including overcrowded classrooms, a lack of qualified teachers, limited access to teaching materials and technology, inadequate infrastructure maintenance, and a compromised learning environment. These challenges disproportionately affect learners from economically disadvantaged backgrounds, perpetuating educational inequalities and hindering social mobility.

Furthermore, Jacob and Ndubuisi, (2020) submitted that inadequate funding can impede the implementation of educational reforms, teacher training programs, and curriculum development initiatives. It can also limit the provision of extracurricular activities, special education services, and support systems for learners with diverse learning needs. Understanding the implications of government inadequate funding is crucial for policymakers, educators, parents, and other stakeholders. Highlighting the consequences of insufficient financial support, we can advocate for increased investment in education, promote equitable distribution of resources, and explore alternative funding mechanisms to bridge the funding gap. In due course, Jacob and Lawan, (2020) agreed that addressing the problem of government inadequate funding in Nigeria's secondary schools is dynamic for improving the quality of education, promoting equal opportunities for all learners, and nurturing a skilled and educated workforce for the country's future development.

The roles of school managers cannot be overemphasized in navigating the challenges posed by insufficient funding in schools. In many educational systems, limited financial resources can significantly impact the quality of education, infrastructure development, and overall functioning of schools. School managers are tasked with finding innovative solutions, making strategic decisions, and implementing effective measures to mitigate the effects of insufficient funding (Osuji & Etuketu, 2019). In this study, the researchers explored



how school managers deal with the issue of insufficient funding in schools. We also examined various strategies and approaches they employ to optimize resources, prioritize budget allocations, and seek alternative funding sources. One of the roles of school managers is to effectively manage limited resources and aim to ensure a conducive learning environment, provide necessary educational materials, and meet the diverse needs of learners and staff (Chandolia & Anastasiou, 2020). Managing insufficient funding requires a comprehensive understanding of the financial landscape of the school, as well as strong leadership and decision-making skills. School managers need to assess the specific challenges they face, identify priority areas, and implement practical measures to make the most of the available resources (Cheng, 2022).

Furthermore, school managers must actively engage with stakeholders, including teachers, parents, community members, and policymakers, to advocate for increased funding and garner support for the school's financial needs (Olaseni, 2022). Collaboration, transparency, and effective communication are essential in navigating the complexities of insufficient funding and finding sustainable solutions. Addressing the issue of insufficient funding, school managers contribute to the overall development and success of their schools (Sasere & Makhasane, 2023). Through their resourceful management, they strive to provide quality education, support the professional growth of teachers, and create an environment that fosters student achievement and well-being. The problem of funding in the Nigerian secondary education system could be linked to a lack of effective leadership in schools. However, the goal of this research is to find school managers perspectives to managing security and safety of the school community with a view to reduce some challenges encountered by the school managers. The researchers investigated the funding structure in Nigerian secondary schools, as well as the challenges it poses to secondary school effectiveness and probable solutions. The study is lensed through transformational leadership theory ensuring a good funding structure to help school managers manage the school.

Theoretical Framework

Transformative leadership theory is a leadership framework that focuses on the ability of leaders to bring about significant positive changes in individuals, organizations, and society as a whole (Shields, 2011; Shields, 2019). It emphasizes the leader's capacity to inspire and motivate followers, challenge existing systems and norms, and empower others to reach their full potential. First proposed by James Downton in the 1970s and later expanded upon by James MacGregor Burns and Bernard Bass, transformative leadership theory goes beyond transactional leadership, which focuses on exchanges of rewards and punishments, and charismatic leadership, which emphasizes the personal magnetism of leaders. Instead, transformative leadership theory emphasizes the leader's ability to transform followers and the organization through a process of mutual inspiration and collective action (Shields, 2020).

Transformative leadership theory is founded on a set of principles that guide leaders in their efforts to bring about significant positive changes in individuals, organizations, and society (Tebyani, 2023). These principles provide a framework for leaders to inspire, empower, and transform their followers, fostering personal growth, organizational effectiveness, and social impact (Bakti & Hartono, 2022). The researchers explored the key principles of transformative leadership theory. These principles highlight the core beliefs and practices that distinguish transformative leaders from other leadership styles. By understanding and applying these principles, leaders can effectively lead and catalyze meaningful change within their respective domains. The principles of transformative leadership encompass various aspects, including vision, inspiration, empowerment, collaboration, and social transformation (Bruce & McKee, 2020). They emphasized the leader's role in envisioning a better future, inspiring and engaging followers, empowering individuals, fostering collaboration, and driving social change. School managers adhere to these principles, transformative leaders create environments that foster personal growth, encourage innovation and critical thinking, and promote equity and justice (Strasser, de Kraker, & Kemp, 2019). They aim to develop individuals into empowered and self-actualized contributors, create high-performing and adaptive organizations, and contribute to the betterment of society.

Transformative leaders establish a compelling vision that includes financial sustainability and the provision of quality education. Inspiring stakeholders with this vision, create a shared sense of purpose and commitment towards overcoming financial challenges. The leader's ability to communicate the importance of adequate funding and its impact on learners' academic success and prospects ignites passion and motivation within the school community. Transformative leaders encourage resource optimization within the school



(Webb, Et al., 2022). Hence, they are inclined towards implementing effective management practices, promotes the efficient use of existing resources such as textbooks, equipment, and infrastructure. Regular maintenance, energy-saving measures, and maximizing resource utilization ensure that the available funds are used judiciously, thereby minimizing wastage and increasing the longevity of resources. Transformative leaders foster collaborations and partnerships with external organizations, businesses, and community members. By leveraging these relationships, they tap into additional resources and expertise. Partnerships can be sought for funding, grants, sponsorships, or donations of materials and services. Such collaborative efforts create a collective responsibility for addressing funding challenges and broadening the pool of available resources.

Nigeria's secondary schools often face the daunting challenge of insufficient funds, which hinders their ability to provide quality education and create an optimal learning environment for learners. However, transformative leadership offers a promising approach to address this issue. Transformative leaders possess the vision, inspiration, and collaborative mindset necessary to mobilize stakeholders, explore innovative solutions, and secure additional resources (Sørensen, Bryson, & Crosby, 2021). This study explores how transformative leadership can effectively tackle the lack of funds in Nigeria's secondary schools, enabling them to thrive and fulfill their educational mission.

Research Questions

Based on the above-examined problems of lack of viable funding structure and means in Nigerian secondary schools, the following question was formulated to guide the study.

- How can lack of funding structure be addressed using transformative theory in Nigerian secondary schools?
- To answer the research questions, the following objectives were raised to further guide the study
- To examine the funding challenges in Nigeria secondary schools,
- To explore suggestible solutions to the challenges of lack of funds in Nigerian secondary schools.

Methodology

The study was premised on the qualitative research approach. Qualitative research provides rich and detailed insights into complex social, cultural, and human phenomena, allowing researchers to uncover deep understandings and generate new theories or hypotheses (Mohajan, (2018); Bleiker, Et. al., (2019). The study is located within the interpretive paradigm (Guba & Lincoln, 1989; Alvermann & Mallozzi, 2010). In the context of this study, addressing the lack of funds in Nigeria's secondary schools using transformative leadership, qualitative research can be instrumental in gaining a comprehensive understanding of the experiences, challenges, and perspectives of various stakeholders. A case study approach was employed targeting two schools with 12 participants; two school managers, two teachers, and 2 learners taking into consideration the gender biases (Yin, 2009). The participants were selected using a purposive sampling procedure (Campbell, 2020). Focus group discussions were used as data collecting instrument comprising six participants per selected school (Escalada & Heong, 2014). Pseudonyms were used for the selected rural schools, that is, green and purple according to their uniforms. Thomas and Hardy's three procedure of thematic analysis is employed to interpret the data collected (Thomas & Harden, 2008). The process was chosen because it gave room for coding, categorization, and thematization. The Ministry of Education gave the go-ahead for this research and the rights of the participants were protected using the ethics rules of general and human ethics rules of the University of the Free State.

Results

The findings of this study were organized into meaningful themes and discussed below. The three steps of thematic analysis proposed by Thomas and Hardy were used to identify these themes. Three themes were discovered and explored below; lack of funding structure for schools, inadequate resources, effective and efficient use of resources.

Lack of Funding structure and Funds for schools



The lack of a robust funding structure is a critical issue that many schools around the world, including those in Nigeria, grapple with. Adequate funding is essential for schools to provide quality education, maintain infrastructure, acquire necessary resources, and support the overall development of learners. However, the absence of a well-defined and sufficient funding structure poses numerous challenges for schools, hindering their ability to meet the needs and aspirations of learners and educators. The findings from the participants revealed that lack of viable funding structure leads inadequate provision of quality education in Nigeria secondary schools. schools sampled were rurally located schools termed school green and purple. Schools 1 represented green school while school 2 represented purple school. School manager which is termed participant one has this to say;

“The absence of a comprehensive funding structure often results in limited financial resources for schools. This means we often lack adequate teaching materials, textbooks, laboratory equipment, and other resources necessary for effective teaching and learning”.

In the same vein, the school manager from the same school green has this to say for Participant 2;

“Without a proper funding structure, schools may struggle to maintain existing infrastructure or invest in necessary upgrades. Aging buildings, inadequate facilities, and a lack of essential amenities such as clean water, electricity, and sanitation facilities can significantly affect the learning environment and learners' well-being”.

Similarly in the focus group discussions from purple school, the school manager termed participant 7 has this to say;

“Insufficient funding [structure] can lead to a shortage of qualified teachers and support staff. Schools may struggle to attract and retain talented educators due to limited resources for competitive salaries and professional development opportunities. The lack of adequate staffing levels can impede the delivery of quality education and individualized support to learners”.

In the same vein, the school manager from purple school termed Participant 8 showed some passion while answering the questions posed by the researchers. She said;

“Insufficient funding [structure] often leads to a reduction or elimination of extracurricular activities such as sports, arts, and clubs. These activities play a vital role in fostering creativity, teamwork, leadership skills, and personal growth among learners. The lack of funding for extracurricular programs deprives learners of valuable opportunities for holistic development”.

Participant 3 a teacher from green school has this to say when asked the same question;

“A lack of funding structure exacerbates existing educational inequalities, disproportionately affecting schools in low-income areas. Learners from disadvantaged backgrounds may face greater barriers to quality education, perpetuating socioeconomic disparities and limiting their future opportunities”.

Teacher (participant 4) answered that inadequate funding increases teacher's workload.

“Inadequate funding may result in increased workload and limited support for teachers. They may have to work with limited resources, manage large class sizes, and face challenging teaching environments. These factors can contribute to low morale, increased burnout, and a higher attrition rate among educators”.

Learners (Participant 5 and 9) in green and purple school has this to say;

“Insufficient funding often leads to overcrowded classrooms, limited instructional resources, and a lack of professional development for teachers. These factors can hinder student engagement and academic achievement, ultimately impacting overall educational outcomes”.



“A lack of funding structure restricts schools' ability to innovate and adapt to changing educational needs. Schools may struggle to invest in new teaching methods, curriculum enhancements, and educational technologies that can enhance student learning and engagement”.

Teachers (Participant 10) from purple school has this to say;

“Insufficient funding can lead to a lack of community involvement and support for schools. Without adequate resources and programs, parents and community members may feel disconnected and less invested in the school's success, diminishing the overall sense of community and collaboration”.

The findings revealed in both selected schools (Green and Purple) that insufficient funding causes a lot of havoc to educational development. The absence of a robust funding structure for schools poses significant challenges and implications for educational institutions, learners, and educators. Adequate funding is crucial to ensure access to quality education, maintain infrastructure, and provide essential resources for effective teaching and learning. Addressing the lack of funding structure requires concerted efforts from educational stakeholders. This is in line with the findings of Ogunode and Musa (2020) that inadequate funding has contributed to problems educational administrators face in schools. The next section discusses the next problem consequences of viable funding structure in the selected schools.

Inadequate resources.

Inadequate resources in schools are a pervasive issue that affects educational institutions globally. Adequate resources are essential for creating an enriching and conducive learning environment, supporting effective teaching practices, and promoting student success. However, insufficient resources pose significant challenges and the implications for schools, educators, and learners, hinder schools' ability to achieve educational excellence. Participant 2 from green school, A school manager said;

“Insufficient resources can result in deteriorating infrastructure, including classrooms, libraries, laboratories, and recreational facilities. Outdated or poorly maintained infrastructure can create discomfort and safety hazards for learners and educators, adversely impacting the overall learning environment”.

Similarly, in the purple school, A learner termed participant 11 said;

“A lack of resources often means that schools struggle to provide an adequate supply of textbooks, workbooks, and teaching aids. This limits the availability of learning materials, making it difficult for teachers to deliver comprehensive and engaging lessons. Learners may have limited access to essential resources, hindering their ability to grasp concepts effectively”.

In the same school, learner (Participant 12) has this to say;

“In the digital age, access to technology is crucial for modern education. However, a lack of resources can impede schools' ability to provide computers, internet connectivity, and educational software. This digital divide restricts learners' opportunities to develop digital literacy skills and hinders their access to online educational resources and tools”.

In the same school, A teacher (Participant 10) has this to say;

“Insufficient resources may lead to understaffing, with schools unable to hire an adequate number of teachers and support staff. Large class sizes and a shortage of specialized educators limit individualized attention and support for learners, impacting the quality of education provided”.

In Green school manager (Participant 2) said in verbatim quotes that;



“Insufficient resources may hinder opportunities for professional development and training for educators. Lack of funding for workshops, conferences, and ongoing training programs restricts teachers' ability to enhance their skills, stay updated with pedagogical advancements, and implement innovative teaching strategies”.

The school manager (Participant 1) from the same school said;

“Schools with limited resources often struggle to meet the diverse needs of their student population. Disadvantaged learners, who may already face socioeconomic challenges, are particularly affected by the lack of resources. This exacerbates educational inequalities, creating a disparity in educational opportunities and outcomes”.

Sharing the same sentiments, a teacher (Participant 9) in the same school said;

“Educators working in resource-constrained environments may experience high levels of stress and burnout. The lack of necessary resources, increased workload, and limited support can impact their morale, job satisfaction, and overall well-being. This can lead to higher teacher turnover rates and a negative impact on the continuity and quality of instruction”.

The teacher (Participant 4) in green school has this to say;

“Insufficient resources directly affect learners' learning outcomes. The lack of teaching materials, outdated infrastructure, and limited access to technology can hinder learners' engagement, comprehension, and academic achievement. This can perpetuate educational disparities and hinder learners' long-term success”.

The findings from both schools (Green and Purple) revealed that inadequate resources in schools significantly impacts the quality of education and student outcomes. Insufficient teaching materials, infrastructure, technological access, staffing, and professional development opportunities hinder effective teaching and student engagement. This results in reduced learning outcomes perpetuates educational inequalities, and diminishes. This is in line with the submissions of Olujuwon, Omiyale & Olujuwon, (2022) that an inadequate resource can be linked with a lack of funds which can influence school plants and resources. The next section discussed the effective and efficient use of resources as one of the challenges of education.

Effective and efficient use of resources

Efficient and effective utilization of available resources is crucial for schools to maximize the impact of their limited resources and provide quality education to learners. By employing strategic approaches and practices, schools can optimize resource allocation and ensure that resources are utilized most efficiently and effectively as possible. The participant discussions followed and the school manager (Participant 1) from green school, said that even if the school has enough materials and funds, mismanagement can cause problems for schools;

“Inadequate resource management can lead to the misallocation of funds, materials, and personnel. This can result in a mismatch between the needs of the school and the resources allocated to address those needs. For example, funds may be spent on non-essential items while critical teaching materials or infrastructure improvements are neglected”.

The school manager (Participant 2) has this to say;

“Without proper planning and prioritization, schools may struggle to allocate resources effectively. In the absence of a strategic plan, decision-making regarding resource allocation becomes ad hoc and reactive, leading to inefficiencies and missed opportunities. Without clear priorities, critical areas such as teacher training,



curriculum development, or infrastructure improvement may not receive adequate attention”.

In the same school a teacher (Participant 3) said;

“Insufficient resources may result in a lack of maintenance for infrastructure, equipment, and resources. This can lead to accelerated deterioration and increased repair costs in the long run. Neglected maintenance can impact the functionality and safety of facilities, hindering effective teaching and learning”.

Sharing the same sentiments, in purple school, the school manager (Participant 8) said;

“To address the inadequate use of available resources, schools need to prioritize strategic planning, needs assessment, and efficient resource allocation. Clear prioritization, maintenance schedules, professional development opportunities, and investment in technology and support staff are essential to optimize resource utilization. By addressing these issues, schools can enhance educational quality and improve student outcomes, fostering a more equitable and conducive learning environment”.

The findings from the selected schools revealed that there is inadequate use resources; schools must prioritize strategic planning, needs assessment, and efficient resource allocation. Clear prioritization, maintenance schedules, professional development opportunities, and investment in technology and support staff are essential to optimize resource utilization. By addressing these issues, schools can enhance educational quality and improve student outcomes, fostering a more equitable and conducive learning environment. This is in line with the submissions of (Jegade, 2019) that provision of instructional materials for schools enhances student outcomes. The next section revealed the solutions to viable funding structures in Nigerian secondary schools.

Suggestible Solutions to Lack of funding structure in Nigerian secondary schools

The findings of this study were organized into meaningful themes and discussed below. Creating alternative sources of revenue, and building partnerships with other stakeholders.

Create alternative sources of revenue

In the face of limited funding, schools can explore alternative sources of revenue to supplement their financial resources. Diversifying funding streams can provide schools with additional funds to support various educational initiatives, improve infrastructure, and enhance the overall learning experience for learners. By seeking alternative sources of revenue, schools can become less reliant on government funding or traditional revenue streams and gain greater financial stability. The participants revealed that some alternative sources of revenue be given to boost the funding in school. Suggestions made were revealed in the following conversations; School manager (Participant 1) in green school revealed;

“Schools can actively pursue grants and sponsorships from private foundations, corporations, and community organizations. These entities often provide funding opportunities for educational initiatives, infrastructure projects, and programs aligned with their missions. Developing strong grant-writing skills and building relationships with potential sponsors can significantly increase the chances of securing additional funding”.

In the same school, the school manager (Participant 2) revealed that;

“Collaborating with local businesses and institutions can open avenues for generating revenue. Schools can explore partnerships for sponsorship of school events, advertising opportunities on campus, or donations in exchange for recognition. For example, local businesses may sponsor sports teams or contribute to the development of specific educational programs”.



In purple school, the teacher (Participant 9) said;

“Organizing fundraising campaigns within the school community can mobilize resources and generate additional funds. Schools can hold events such as galas, auctions, bake sales, or fun runs to engage parents, learners, and the wider community. These events not only raise funds but also foster a sense of community involvement in supporting the school's financial needs”.

In the same school, a teacher (Participant 10) said;

“Schools can maximize the use of their facilities by renting out spaces during non-school hours. This could include leasing out auditoriums, sports facilities, or classrooms for community events, workshops, or summer programs. Generating revenue through facility rentals can help offset operational costs and generate additional funds for school activities”.

In green school, the teacher (Participant 4) said;

“Schools can actively engage alumni by establishing alumni associations and networks. These networks can facilitate fundraising efforts and alumni donations to support the school's initiatives. Alumni can be approached for financial contributions, mentorship programs, or guest speaker engagements, fostering a sense of pride and connection with their alma mater”.

The findings from both schools revealed that creating alternative sources of revenue can significantly alleviate the lack of funding in schools. By diversifying funding streams, schools can become more financially resilient, provide enhanced educational experiences for learners, and invest in infrastructure improvements. Exploring grants, sponsorships, partnerships, fundraising campaigns, alumni engagement, fee-based programs, and online platforms can help schools access additional resources and strengthen their financial foundation. With proactive efforts and strategic planning, schools can reduce their reliance on limited funding sources and ensure a sustainable and enriching learning environment for learners. This is in line with the submissions of Mutunga, (2013) that diversified means of funding assist stakeholders and the school management in ensuring the objectives of education is accomplished.

Building partnerships with other stakeholders

Building partnerships with various stakeholders is a valuable strategy for schools to address the lack of funding and access additional resources. Collaborating with external organizations, community members, businesses, and parents can create mutually beneficial relationships that support the school's financial needs and enhance educational opportunities for learners. By forming partnerships, schools can tap into diverse expertise, funding sources, and resources that can supplement their existing resources. A learner from green school (Participant 5) said;

“Schools can engage local businesses and corporations in partnerships to secure financial support, sponsorships, and donations. Businesses may provide funding for specific projects, scholarships, or infrastructure improvements. Additionally, businesses can offer internships, job shadowing opportunities, and career guidance to learners, preparing them for the workforce”.

In the same school, a learner (Participant 6) suggested that;

“Partnering with non-profit organizations and foundations can open doors to grant funding, resources, and expertise. Many organizations focus on education and offer grants or funding opportunities for initiatives aligned with their mission. Non-profits can also provide access to educational programs, mentoring, or enrichment activities for learners”.

Sharing the same idea, in purple school learner (Participant 11) said;



“Collaborating with government agencies and local authorities can help schools access funding programs, grants, and support initiatives. Schools can work with local government entities to identify available resources, participate in community development projects, and leverage government programs aimed at improving education”.

While in the same school, learner (Participant 12) said;

“Building relationships with philanthropic individuals who are passionate about education can lead to significant financial support. Schools can actively engage with philanthropists, sharing their vision, goals, and impact to attract their support. Philanthropic individuals may provide grants, scholarships, or endowments to support the school's initiatives”.

The findings from both schools (Green and Purple) revealed that building partnerships with stakeholders is an effective strategy for schools to overcome the lack of funding and access to additional resources. Engaging with local businesses, non-profit organizations, universities, parents, government agencies, alumni, professional associations, and philanthropists can provide financial support, expertise, and valuable resources. These partnerships contribute to the overall development and success of schools, enhancing educational opportunities and creating a sustainable learning environment for learners. By cultivating these collaborative relationships, schools can tap into a wide range of resources and create a strong network of support that benefits both the school and its stakeholders. This is in line with the findings of Okpa (2019) that the collaborative and building partnerships supports educational excellence and success in Nigerian secondary schools.

Discussions

According to the findings, inadequate resources is a problem and this has a negative influence on school outcomes. This finding is in line with the submissions of Ogunode and Musa (2020) that a lack of resources affects the realization of school goals and objectives. The lack of viable funding structure has also been found as a gap where school managers struggled with managing meager school funds given by the government which are inadequate. The finding is in line with the submissions of Okpa, (2019) that the lack of viable funding structure also affects the efficiency and effectiveness of schools. More findings revealed that effective and efficient use of resources was found to be a problem in Nigerian secondary schools. The study also found that creating alternative sources of revenue and building partnerships with other education stakeholders are suggestible solutions to the funding problems in secondary schools in Nigeria.

Conclusions

The funding structure in Nigerian secondary schools plays a crucial role in determining the overall operations and effectiveness of these institutions. School managers, including principals and administrators, need to understand the implications of the funding structure to effectively manage their schools. The findings revealed inadequate use resources, a lack of viable funding structure for schools, effective and efficient use of available resources. The suggestible solutions found in empirical data are creating alternative sources of revenue and building partnerships with stakeholders. As a result of the foregoing facts and findings, it is suggested that;

- The funding structure directly impacts the availability and allocation of resources within secondary schools. Adequate funding allows school managers to provide the necessary infrastructure, educational materials, and technology to support teaching and learning. Limited funding may result in resource deficiencies, affecting the quality of education and student outcomes. School managers must carefully plan and prioritize resource allocation based on the available funding.
- Funding influences the recruitment and retention of qualified teachers. Sufficient funding enables school managers to attract and retain competent teachers by offering competitive salaries and benefits. Insufficient funding may lead to challenges in hiring and retaining quality educators, resulting in compromised educational standards. School managers must navigate budget constraints while ensuring competitive remuneration to maintain a skilled teaching workforce.



- Adequate funding allows schools to offer a diverse range of curricular and extracurricular programs, fostering holistic development among learners. It enables the implementation of innovative teaching methods, educational technologies, and professional development opportunities for teachers. Insufficient funding may limit the school's ability to provide a comprehensive curriculum and hinder the overall learning experience. School managers must assess the funding available and make informed decisions regarding curriculum offerings and program implementation.
- Funding is crucial for maintaining and upgrading school infrastructure, including classrooms, laboratories, libraries, and sports facilities. Insufficient funding can result in inadequate infrastructure, which negatively impacts the learning environment. School managers must prioritize infrastructure needs, allocate funds for repairs and maintenance, and explore alternative sources of funding, such as partnerships or grants, to ensure a conducive learning environment for learners.
- In many Nigerian secondary schools, fees paid by learners contribute significantly to the overall funding. School managers need to carefully consider the fee structure to strike a balance between generating adequate revenue and ensuring affordability for learners and their families. Excessive fees may lead to decreased enrolment and limited access to education. Effective communication with stakeholders, transparent financial management, and equitable fee structures are vital for school managers to navigate this challenge.
- School managers should develop robust financial planning strategies to optimize the utilization of available funds. This includes creating budgets, tracking expenditures, and ensuring accountability in financial management. Effective financial planning helps school managers make informed decisions, identify areas for cost optimization, and seek additional funding sources. They should also ensure transparency and accountability in financial matters to build trust among stakeholders.

Finally, the funding structure in Nigerian secondary schools has significant implications for school managers. They must navigate funding constraints, allocate resources wisely, attract and retain quality teachers, offer a comprehensive curriculum, maintain infrastructure, balance fee affordability, and practice effective financial planning and accountability. With these implications, school managers can make informed decisions to enhance the overall educational experience for learners.

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