



FINANCING FEDERAL UNIVERSITIES IN SOUTH EAST ZONE, NIGERIA: IMPLICATION FOR GLOBAL COMPETITIVENESS

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Abstract

This study is titled Financing Federal Universities in South East Zone Nigeria: Implication for Global Competitiveness. The study has two objectives among which are; to find out the provision of finance to Federal Universities in South East Zone, Nigeria and its implication for global competitiveness and to determine the level of utilization of finance in federal universities in South East Zone, Nigeria and its implication for global competitiveness. In line with these objectives, two research questions, two null hypotheses will be asked and formulated respectively. Related literature was reviewed; concepts such as financing, provision of funds, utilization of funds, global competitiveness will be discussed. In addition, the review will be on the provision of finance to Federal Universities in South East Zone, Nigeria and its implication for global competitiveness and the level of utilization of finance in Federal Universities in South East Zone, Nigeria and its implication for global competitiveness. Descriptive research design will adopted for the study. A total of 365 respondents will be sampled from the total population of 7500, through the use of research advisor (2006). A structured questionnaire will be used to collect data from the respondents. Descriptive statistics will be used to analyze the bio- data of the respondents. The data collected will be presented in tables and analyzed using weighted means to give the responses of respondents to the research questions. The two null hypotheses will be tested using One Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) at 0.05 alpha level of significance. The findings of the study are: there is inadequate funding of federal universities in south east zone which affects there ability to compete favourably with other universities globally and that the finding shows that the fund made available to federal universities were not judiciously utilized, this also affect their ability to compete globally. It was recommended that Federal government of Nigeria should as a matter of importance deploy the needed fund for the management of federal universities in south east zone and that the fund made available to federal universities should be utilized judiciously in order enhance healthy competition globally

Introduction

The universities in Nigeria are charged with the creation of knowledge and it is one of their primary mandates. In creating knowledge, a lot of research has to be undertaken by both the universities and research centers. Nigeria's educational system is categorized into three levels-primary, secondary and tertiary, with the university occupying the top in the echelon of higher education. University education is the pinnacle of higher education where human capital that is capable of competing globally are trained and developed for societal transformation. Globally, university education is the most prestigious, much sought after and perceived to be the breeding ground in filling the gap of critical manpower needs of nations.

As a developing nation, Nigeria's education ab initio has witnessed inadequate funding and non compliance to UNESCO's recommendation for developing nations to allocate 26 percent of their annual budgetary provision to the sector. This situation has left universities in a state of advanced decay with most teaching staff leaving the country in droves in search of greener pasture abroad Oraka, Ogbodo & Ezejiofor (2017). Additionally, enrolment by students of low parents' socioeconomic status has been



on the decline owing to increased cost and demand for university education as well as government's debilitating funding pattern leading to poor quality output

A comparative analysis of education funding among developing nations indicate that in 2012, Nigeria allocated 8.4 percent compared to Ghana 31.0 percent, Cote d'Ivoire 30.0 percent, Uganda 27.0 percent, Morocco 26.4 percent etc Matthew (2016). In Nigeria, anxieties in education are stirred by the combined effects of population explosion in the classrooms at all levels, deteriorating facilities, continued inadequacy of funding, recurrent strike actions leading to truncated academic calendar particularly in higher institutions Ojedele, Oyekan, & Jeremiah, (2016). It is therefore, more apt to address the issue of quality university education as outcome of adequate funding. According to Igbeneweka and Enowoghomenma (2017), quality education refers to the suitability of the education system in relation to its goals and objectives. It has to do with issues of relevance, validity, functionalism and efficiency in the attainment of prescribed goals and objectives of the educational system. University education can only attain the above status when adequately funded

Due to dwindling oil revenue coupled with increased demand for education, government is no longer able to fund university education alone. This necessitated the need for cost of funding to be shared among stakeholders who include: parents, students, philanthropist, government, corporate organizations among others. This development does not go well with students/parents as the cost-sharing has no clear-cut metrics resulting in disproportionate sharing. Families of low socio-economic status are constrained sending their children to university for choice academic discipline owing to high cost of tuition and other charges. This unfortunate situation is unacceptable taking into account the importance of university education in a developing nation like Nigeria, hence the need for this study

Provision of fund to Federal Universities in South East Nigeria and its implication for Global Competitiveness

While emphasizing the importance of university education, Ekundayo and Ajayi (2009) averred that the funds allocated to higher education should not merely be considered as an expense but a long-term investment that could yield benefit to society as a whole. These benefits are reflected in the socio-economic outlook of citizens in terms of better healthcare, lower unemployment rate, lower crime rate, increased political awareness and participation, higher tax returns, among other indirect benefits. It is on this premise that funding university education by stakeholders is a necessary condition for the enhancement of the aforementioned benefits. In view of this, Hartnett cited in Ogunyinka (2013) suggested that more creative and adaptative strategies are needed in order for Nigerian universities to offset the declining educational quality, resource use efficiency and learning effectiveness that now confronts them.

However, it is common knowledge that universities in Nigeria have not enjoyed the financial resources necessary to maintain educational quality in the midst of significant enrolment explosion. Thus, cost-sharing is necessary due to the fact that the gross under-funding of the education sector has the capability of rendering the university system incapacitated. Low morale among lecturers, poor and inadequate instructional materials, poor research and development grants to lecturers, inadequate office space for university staff, incessant strike actions, among others, are some of the indicators of inadequate funding of universities in Nigeria.

For the fact that all the items that measured lecturers' perception of funding patterns and cost-sharing in universities recorded "improvement needed" and "improvement highly needed" implies that adequate funding and cost-sharing are factors to be considered by university management if universities in Nigeria will be qualitative for global competitiveness. Policy makers should therefore integrate adequacy of funding and cost-sharing factors in university management policy framework. To do this, the Federal Ministry of Education through the National Universities Commission (NUC) should streamline the stakeholders that will be involved in the cost-sharing with clear-cut metrics and ratio of sharing among them.



Utilization of fund to Federal Universities in South East Nigeria and its implication for Global Competitiveness

The government at all levels at the global level had been putting concerted effort for providing necessary education right from the grass level of the society; so that their society will be ranked high among other nations of the world. Among the efforts of the government, according to Ezeofor (2019) free education and school feeding for all the disadvantaged groups and out-of-school children, Girl child, Nomads, Fishermen, Adult and Learners with disabilities. For effectiveness and efficiency of higher education toward enhancing global competitiveness and for education to be compatible with other higher education at global level, the following programmes are put in place at the higher institutions in Nigeria.

The Nigerian higher institutions are faced with the problem of financial management ranging from the fraudulent, budgetary allocation of UNESCO 26% which the Federal government failed to release the amount to education, embezzlement if the internally generated revenue (IGR) Misappropriation inflationary trends, high cost of the instructional facilities. And the student population explosion which made the utilization of both the financial and physical resources to be difficult for quality delivery (Dunosaro, 2012).

According to Oke (2016) low research publications sponsorship and utilization of the research findings. It should be noted that a lot of research activities had been initiated through series of conference, seminars, workshops, retreats, lectures and educational trips. Need for cost analysis for effective financial resources management in Nigerian Higher Education. The Nigerian institution managers should always encourage educational cost analysis by determining the cost of the educational materials, the available funds sources of reviews, adequacy for both recurrent and capital expenses and the effectiveness of the opportunity and total cost. The cost analysis will enable effective spending for the provisions and procurement of facilities that will be used for the instructional activities that will quality delivery and productivity for the global competitiveness of the institutions.

The government provide the groups with different learning opportunities like part time, Distance learning system, online education and Blended learning system with aim of providing equity, access and Quality to different levels of education in the interest of meeting up with global competitiveness on the eradication of mass literacy at world level by the year 2030. Therefore, no nation wants to be victim at the global wants to be a victim at the global level.

Objectives of the study

1. Find out the provision of finance to Federal Universities in South East Zone, Nigeria and its implication for global competitiveness
2. Determine the level of utilization of finance in federal universities in South East Zone, Nigeria and its implication for global competitiveness

Research Questions

1. What is the level of provision of fund to federal universities in south east Nigeria and its implication for global competitiveness?
2. What is the level of utilization of fund in federal universities in south –east Nigeria and its implication for global competitiveness?

Research Hypotheses

1. There is no significant difference in the opinion of respondents on the level of provision of fund to federal universities in south east Nigeria and its implication for global competitiveness
2. There is no significant difference in the opinion of respondents on the level of utilization of fund to federal universities in south east Nigeria and its implication for global competitiveness



Methodology

This research work adopted descriptive survey design. According to Ali, (2006) descriptive survey is a type of study which aims at collecting data and describing in a systematic manner, the characteristic features and facts about a given population.

The population of the study was 7500 which comprised 5, 708 lecturers, 1014 deans and 770 HODs. The study was carried out in federal universities in south east zone, Nigeria. There are six federal universities in south east zone. The sample size of the study was determined by adopting the procedure suggested by research advisor (2006). To this effect, 270 lecturers, 18 deans, and 74 HODs was drawn from the six federal universities in south east zone; making a total of 365 participants.

Results

This section presents the analysis and discussion of the data collected from the respondents using frequency and mean based on the four Likert scale rating. The analysis is presented as follows:

H01: There is no significant difference in the opinion of respondents on the level of provision of fund to federal universities in south east Nigeria and its implication for global competitiveness

Table 3: summary of Analysis Of Variance (ANOVA) on opinion of respondents on the level of provision of fund to federal universities in south east Nigeria and its implication for global competitiveness

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F computed	Sig.
Between Groups	2.014	2	1.007	0.138	0.871
Within Groups	2535.650	355	7.286		
Total	2537.664	357			

Results of the Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) statistics above showed that there is no significant difference in the opinion of respondents on the level of provision of fund to federal universities in south east Nigeria and its implication for global competitiveness. This is because the calculated p value of 0.871 is above the 0.05 alpha level of significance and the computed F value of 0.138 is lower than the F critical value of 2.60 at df 2, 348. Therefore the null hypothesis which state that there is no significant difference in the opinion of respondents on the level of provision of fund to federal universities in south east Nigeria and its implication for global competitiveness is hereby accepted and retained.

H02: There is no significant difference in the opinion of respondents on the level of utilization of fund to federal universities in south east Nigeria and its implication for global competitiveness

Table 4: summary of Analysis Of Variance (ANOVA) on opinion of respondents on the level of utilization of fund to federal universities in south east Nigeria and its implication for global competitiveness

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F computed	Sig.
Between Groups	23.248	2	11.624	.690	0.502
Within Groups	5866.467	355	16.858		
Total	5889.715	357			

Results of the Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) statistics above showed that there is no significant difference in the opinion of deans, lecturers and HODs the effects of on the level of utilization



of fund to federal universities in south east Nigeria and its implication for global competitiveness.. This is because the calculated p value of 0.502 is above the 0.05 alpha level of significance and the computed F value of 0.690 is lower than the F critical value of 2.60 at df 2, 348.. Therefore the null hypothesis which state that there is no significant difference in the opinion of respondents on the level of utilization of fund to federal universities in south east Nigeria and its implication for global competitiveness is hereby retained.

Findings

1. There is inadequate funding of federal universities in south east zone which affects there ability to compete favourably with other universities globally
2. The finding shows that the fund made available to federal universities were not judiciously utilized, this also affect their ability to compete globally

Discussions

Based on the computed results of the study, the major findings revealed that;

The first finding showed that There is inadequate funding of federal universities in south east zone which affects there ability to compete favourably with other universities globally. This implies that most of the federal universities are struggling to cope with enormous challenges of procuring both human and material resources that are needed in the face of inadequate funding be the federal government

The second findings revealed that the fund made available to federal universities were not judiciously utilized, this also affect their ability to compete globally. By implication, it shows that the little fund made available to the federal universities were in most cases not channeled appropriately to the required place in the right quantity and quality

Conclusion

The study concludes as follows

Based on the need for the Nigerian higher institutions to embrace global competitiveness through proper funding quality delivery, control and effective supervisory strategies. It can therefore be concluded that funds were adequately made available to the institutions as expected. All the relevant stakeholders should synergize including the three tiers of government to ensure effective management to encourage the Nigerian higher institution.

Recommendations

In the light of the findings, the researcher makes the following recommendations thus

1. Federal government of Nigeria should as a matter of importance deploy the needed fund for the management of federal universities in south east zone
2. The fund made available to federal universities should be utilized judiciously in order enhance healthy competition globally

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