

STRATEGIES FOR ENHANCING PRIVATE SECTOR PARTICIPATION IN THE MANAGEMENT AND FUNDING OF CROSS RIVER UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY FOR IMPROVED PERFORMANCE

DR. Victor Obule Ebuara

Department of Educational Administration and Planning.
University of Calabar, Calabar
ebuaravictor@yahoo.com

Dr Maurice Ayodele Coker

Department of Political Science
University of Calabar, Calabar, Nigeria
coker_maurice@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT

The paper examined strategies necessary for involvement of private sector in the management and funding of Cross River State University towards better academic performance. The paper observed that government alone cannot shoulder the responsibility of providing fund and management of the state university because of incessant increase in enrolment, culminating problems of inadequacy of school facilities, sacrificing of quality for quantity, shortage of qualified human resources among others. There is need for involvement of private sector in the provision and management of University education in the State to compliment government efforts. To attain the objective of this study, survey design approach was adopted using proportional stratified sampling technique to select 100 private organization in the state. Analysis was done through mean rating and independent t-test. The result indicated that private sector contribution to University education in the state is low due to poor government attitudes and their feeling that is non – profit investment.

Introduction

Education is a public good that calls for greater support of all and sundry. Its importance leads to increase in demand for it. As a matter of fact, the financial burden and other resources required for the growth of education cannot be borne by government alone. Hence expenditure in education is viewed as both private and social investment that have to be shared by individuals, students, their families, employees, government, other groups and organization.

In Cross River State, the state government manages and funds the state university through its state ministry of education allocation. The ministry does this through the state education commission in exercising of their administrative function (Ubong, 2002;3) The fund provided to the university by the government is used to pay teachers salaries, allowances, procedure instructional materials, equipments and other physical facilities. Management and funding of the state university involved provision of money and facilities for the achievement of the university goals and objectives (Morris 1990). In line with this, Ogbonnaya (1997) observed that funds are one of the important factor resources for realization of educational objectives. Parents deny themselves a lot of things to keep their children in the university to study but they and their children have never reap the benefit of their effort due to poor management and funding that has resulted in frequent strikes and closure of the institution for several months within one academic year. The problem of funding has been the most persistent and thorny issues militating against the university authority's ability to maintain existing service in the institution. Since the state government funds it difficult in recent times to provide the resources, materials. Lecturer salaries and allowances, it is obvious that if funds are inadequate the broad aim of the institution cannot be realized. This, perhaps, is one of the reasons why the state government encourages the participation of private sector in managing the school system in Nigeria.

Private sector, are organizations that are owned and managed by individual and group of individuals. According to Patrick (1993) private sector is the part of the country's economy that is owned, operated and managed by private individuals.

In Cross River State, private sector includes business organization, industries, NGOs, firms owned and managed by individuals or groups. They also include banks, insurance companies, engineering companies, agro and chemical industries. In funding education, they give donations, provision of infrastructural and other physical facilities. They also employ the services of typist, clerks and sales agents.

Statement of the problem

Inadequate funding of Cross River University of Technology has been an issue of great concern both to the state government, parent's, private individuals and organizations. The state government alone has been making frantic efforts to increase funding of the institution. For instance in 2006 academic year, government grants/allocation to the state University was N110m and ETF was N20,22m. in 2007 school year N165m was allocated, ETF was N38,500m. inspite of this, the funding situation seems not to have improved. Government gives grants and provide infrastructural equipments and physical facilities to the institution. While these efforts are commendable, the problem of inadequate funding is persisting. For example in the 2009 school year total government grants was reduced to N150m and ETF was N7,05.50m only. Many staff of the university complained of poor management inadequate subvention to the school and lack of physical facilities needed for research teaching and learning. The contribution of the private sector in the funding is very low.

Their participation is low. Since the stakeholders have continued to decry this state of affairs, the study is therefore a response to this challenge by striving to identify strategies for increase private sector participation in the funding of the state university.

Purpose of the study

The purpose of the study was to investigate the persistent lack of interest of private sector in funding of Cross River University and identify the strategies for increased private sector contributions in the funding and management of the state university education system. Especially the study sought to find out:

1. To identify the extent of private sector participation in funding education.
2. To identify the problems militating against their interest in education management.
3. To identify possible solutions to the problems.

Research questions

1. What specific projects in the University should the private sector assist in providing fund.
2. What are the constraints to private sector participation in funding state university education
3. What policies should be initiated by the government and stakeholders to encourage private sector contribution to the management of the university system.

Hypothesis

The mean scores of management staff and subordinates will not differ significantly ($p>0/05$) as regards the constraints to private sector participation in the management and funding of university system.

The mean scores of management staff and subordinates will not differ significantly ($p.0.05$) as regards the policies to be initiated by the government to increase private sector participation in financing the university education.

Methodology

Survey design was adopted in this study. The population was made up of all the management staff and subordinates of all the private registered companies in the state. Proportional stratified sampling technique was used in selecting a sample of 100 companies in the state.

Proportionate stratified random sampling technique was used because these companies are more located in the urban than the rural areas. In selection of management staff and subordinates only the top management staff were sampled and used from each company. The instrument used was a researcher developed questionnaire containing items and oral interview was conducted. The questionnaire was titled "private sector participation in funding University Education" (PSPIFUE). It was made up of two sections; section A sought demographic information about the name of company, respondent and location of the Company. Section B Comprised 16 items arranged in three clusters. A four point likert-scale of strongly agree (4 point), agree (3 point), disagree (2 point), strongly disagree (1 point) was used. The questionnaire was subjected to face content validation by two experts from the faculty of education University of Cross River State. It was pilot tested using 20 companies to establish its reliability using cronbach alpha. The alpha obtained yielded a coefficient of internal stability of 0.65 oral interview was also conducted with six management staff from the sampled companies.

Method of data Collection and Analysis using the Direct Delivery Technique (DDT), the researcher administer two hundred (200) questionnaires to the respondents. This Technique reduces the chance of either misplacing or loosing copies of the questionnaires. Then, four research questions were posed and used. The researcher used standard deviation to answer the three – research questions, while t-test statistics was employed in testing the hypothesis formulated for the study. Items of the research questions with mean score of 2.50 and above were regarded as positive and acceptable while any with a mean score below 2.50 were regarded as negative and thus rejected.

Findings

Table 1

Mean rating and standard deviation of management staff and subordinates of privately registered companies on University project to be funded by private sector in the University.

S/NO	ITEMS	MANAGEMENT STAFF N=100			SUBORDINATES N=100		
		X	SD	D	X	SD	D
	Projects to be funded						
1.	Building classroom and Admin blocks	3.20	1.29	High	3.17	1.20	High
2.	Donation of Tech and Medical Equipment	2.10	0.83	Low	2.16	0.84	Low
3.	Donation of books, office and sports	3.13	1.18	High	3.16	1.28	High
4.	Provision of funding for school Services	3.00	1.18	High	3.08	1.21	High
5.	Award of Scholarship	3.35	1.32	High	3.28	1.29	High
6	Renovate school building	3.28	1.29	High	3.25	1.29	High

For table 1 above, out of six items on specific projects to be funded by private sector, items 1,3,4,5 and 6 were rated by both categories of respondents. It is therefore the opinion of the respondents that out of six items on specific projects to be funded by private sector, items 1,3,4,5 and 6 were rated by both categories of respondents. It is therefore the opinion of the respondents that private sector should build classrooms and administrative block, provide office and sort equipments, award scholarship and renovate school buildings. However, both categories of respondents responded negatively to item 2 thus shows that the private sector company doesn't have to import technological and science equipments for the state university education.

Table 2

Mean rating standard deviation of management staff and subordinates on the constraint to private sector participation on the funding of the university.

S/NO	ITEMS	MANAGEMENT STAFF N=100			SUBORDINATES N=100		
		X	SD	D	X	SD	D
	Projects to be funded						
7.	Obnoxious policies of the state government.	3.60	0.56	High	3.35	0.55	High
8.	Lack of interest on the part of private sector	3.46	0.54	High	3.44	0.54	High
9.	No special provision to private sector	3.04	0.48	High	2.98	0.47	Moderate
10.	The fact that sector company pay Education Tax	3.32	0.52	High	3.36	0.52	High

From Table 2 above, it can be seen that both category of respondents, responded positively to 11 of the items, except 9 which was rated high by management staff and moderate by the subordinates IT has a mean score of 2.98 and standard deviation of 0.47.

Therefore the constraint to private sector participation include obnoxious policies of the state government, lack of interest on the private sector, no special provision given to the private sector for contributing to funding of the University, mobility of private sector to generate funds and the fact that private sector use to pay education tax.

Table 3

Mean rating and standard deviation of the management staff and subordinates on the policies to be initiated by the state government to increase private sector participation in the management /funding of the state university.

S/NO	ITEMS	MANAGEMENT STAFF N=100			SUBORDINATES N=100		
		X	SD	D	X	SD	D
	Projects to be funded						
12.	Payment of stipulate amount to Uni	3.64	0.57	High	3.35	0.55	High
13.	Ensuring that private company incorp	3.44	0.54	High	3.44	0.54	High
14.	Tax force should be used on defaults	2.99	0.51	High	2.98	0.47	Moderate
15.	Evidence of registration should be presented	3.81	0.60	High	3.36	0.52	High
16.	Government should motivate companies to contribute to education system.	3.00	0.47	High	2.99	0.47	High

From Table 3 above, items 12,13,15 were rated high by both respondents, item 14 was rated moderate by both respondents and item 16 was rated by their subordinates. This shows that to increase private sector participation in funding the state university, the government should initiate the following policies, private sector should pay stipulated amount into education fund, ensuring that private sector incorporate educational development in their programmes of activities, tax force should be used on defaulting companies, and government should motivate companies and place companies that are unable to contribute to funding schools under surveillance.

Ho 1: Table 4

Summary of t-test analysis of the difference between the mean scores of management staff and subordinates on the constraints to private sector participation in funding the state university.

Groups	N	X	SD	DF	Level sign	t-Cal value	t-crit value	decision
Management staff	100	31.29	4.90	198	0.05	0.85	1.96	Ho 1
Subordinates	100	31.19	4.87					Accepted

On Table 4, it can be seen that the null hypothesis was accepted because the calculated t-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 finding of state university.

Ho 2: Table 5

Summary of t-test analysis of the differences between the mean scores of the management staff and subordinates on the policies to be initiated by the government to increase private sector participation in funding state university.

Groups	N	X	SD	DF	Level sign	t-Cal value	t-crit value	decision
Management staff	100	25.60	4.04	198	0.05	0.85	1.96	Ho 2
Subordinates	100	25.29	3.95					Accepted

On Table 5, the result of the t-test revealed that there is no significant difference between the opinions of the two categories of respondents on the policies to be initiated to increase funding to the university. This is so because the calculate t-value 0.85 is less than the critical table value of 1.96 at 0.05 level of significant and 198 degrees of freedom.

Discussions

The result of research question one (table one) indicated that private sector should build classroom lectures and administrative blocks. Provide fund for school service, donate books and stationeries. This is in line with Ezeocha (1990) who stated that some private sector like the NGOs, Heinemas and Longmans donated books to education institution in the state. The result 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.

Smith (1995) observed that the problem, prospect and implications of the rebirth of private organizations establishing schools indicate that private sector should fund projects in schools. The interview conducted with management staff also reveals that private sector suppose to contribute to education sector. The findings that obnoxious policies of the government on private sector prevent them from funding university education, as such amount to lack of interest, motivation and the fact that these companies pay education tax amount to lack of interest, motivation and the fact that these companies pay education tax prevent them from assisting in funding education. According to Udo (1995), most private companies are satisfied with 20% of their net profits as education tax they pay and that the government should not demand anything more from and should not force them either the government should device means of encouraging these companies so as to increase their funding the findings that the state government do not make any special provision to increase funding of university education constitute to great extent one of the interest in funding and management of the state university.

Another finding of this study is that policies should be put in place by the state government to motivate them, thus can be explained with the fact that both respondents see human and material development of any nation as being predicated on education. On this note, Okafor (1997) observed that private policies and regulations on education. The findings Task Force should be used on defaulting companies was acknowledge by Combs (1985) who noted that since education is not one means business, communities and private individuals should contribute to alleviate educational problems. Mubua (2002) also supported the fact that government should give incentives to private individuals and companies who contribute to the growth of university education. For instance in Cross River, the state government should encourage those banks and organizations that donated science and ICT blocks to the University for Improved Academic Performance.

The result of the interview conducted, indicated the strategies for companies to increase their participation in funding university education which include, initiating policies which demand that companies, firms and individuals should incorporate educational development in their programme of activities, pay education tax and register their company before operation. Current research findings on privatization of education management, young (2000) concluded that private assistance in running education enhances the overall development of the host community, not only intellectually, structurally, but also morally, socially and economically.

Implication of research findings

The findings the policies should be initiated by the state government to engender participation of private sector in management and funding of university education Is of practical benefit to the state government, because it has provide it has provided them with relevant with information about initiating policies. The results of the study also create awareness in the minds of administrators in the state ministries of education and university authority about the various ways private companies could be made to contribute meaningfully to the management of the state university education. The state government therefore should explore ways and means of enlisting the assistance and cooperation of private companies in funding state university education.

The findings that private organizations should innovate structures in education, make donations and provision of materials to the university proves to a great extent that besides the provision to the university by the state government, private companies fund university education in various ways. These findings suggest that besides fees and government subventions, the university management can work and attract additional funds for the institution from private companies. The implication is that the funds available to university administrators for managing their institution are not sufficient and so there is need to attract additional funds.

The findings that the obnoxious policies of the state government and negative attitudes of the officials of the state education commission in not encourage private companies to contribute to university education constitute to a great extent one of the factors militating against effective support of the university system by the private companies and firms. This suggests that effective funding of the university by private sector is married by strict and difficult rules and regulations. The government should therefore, relax some of the policies to enable private sector assist in the management and funding of the state university education.

Conclusion

From the study, researcher established that private companies participation in management and funding Cross River State University of Technology is low. It was discovered or observed that there were major hindrances to this poor state of affair. This include: the attitude of the government towards private sector and lack of interest on the part of private companies because of the fact that education is non-profit investment.

Since the state government alone cannot manage and fund education single handed and private sector effort to fund education is very low and the objectives of university education in the state have not been attained, government should initiate favourable policies to increase and encourage private sector participation in the management of the university and also cooperate with private sector to motivate them.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made.

1. Cross River State government through state education commission should relax some of their obnoxious policies to enable private sector contribute meaningfully to university education management.
2. University administrators should inform private organization on how the funds they have contributed are being utilized.
3. Private sector should be encouraged to pay education tax.

Reference

1. Ajibade, E.S. (1986). Ownership of schools revisited, problems, prospects and implications of rebirth of private ownership of secondary school in Nigeria. International Journal of Educational research.
2. Anazonwu, O. (2002) Educational Management. Enugu: Fourth Dimension Publish Company Limited. Anambra State Education Commission (2002). ANSC Mirror: Magazine of secondary education in Anambra State Vol. 1 No. 2 May/June. Anambra State.
3. Azunna, N.(1997) Sourcing for funds in Anambra State secondary schools. Unpublished Ph.D Thesis. Department of Education, University of Nigeria Nsukka.
4. Bosa, H. O. N. and Eneasator, G. O. (1996) Dimension of Educational Planning and Economics of Education, Lagos: E. O. Solid Foundation Publishers.
5. Coombs, P.H. (1985). The world in education: the view from the eighties. New York: Oxford University Press.
6. Eze, L. C. (1995) Constraints to financial Management in secondary school in Onitsha education zone. Unpublished Thesis, UNN
7. Ezeocha, P.A. (1990). Educational Administration and Planning. Nsukka: optional computer solution ltd.
8. Fagbemi, J. A. (1986) Practical Strategies for Schools Administration under University, Ibadan: Ibadan University Press.
9. Morris, A. O. (1990). Educational Administration: theory and practice in Nigeria. Ibadan: Bisi Books Limited.
10. Mubua, F. N. (2002). Educational Financing: Issues and Perspectives. Cameroun: Press Print Ltd.
11. Ogbonnaya, N. I. (1997). Sources of funds for the implementation of Educational programmes in Nigeria, Ogbonnaya N. I. and Ajagbonwu. C. I. 1987. Major concept and issues in Educational Administration. Onitsha. Calabar International Publishers.
12. Ogbonnaya, N. I. (ed) (2001). Practical Administrative Measures for Voluntary Agency participation in funding of secondary schools. Onitsha: Horribil Publishers Limited.
13. Okafor, F. C. (1991). Return of Voluntary Agency Schools: implication for the Nation. Enugu: Cecta (Nig)
14. Okafor, F. C. (1998). Nigeria Teacher Education: A search for new Direction. Enugu: fourth Dimension Publishing Company Limited.
15. Patrick, M. A. (1983) Chambers Dictionary. Edinburg: Spectrum books Ltd.