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Strategies for Enhancing Private Sector Participation in the Funding of Secondary Schools in Delta State, Nigeria

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Introduction:

Secondary education occupies a strategic position in Delta state because of the important role it plays in preparing the students for useful living in the society and for higher education. The state government manages and funds secondary education .(Onwusoanya, 2005). To ensure that secondary schools achieved what they are set to achieve , they must in environment that encourage students' encumbrance. Standard should be the strong point of the schools (Olanrewewa, 2005)

The private sector has much to offer to education as education is best weapon for development. The organized private sector is playing a role in developing various programmes in the key focus area of education as well as to compliment government efforts by participating in the funding of secondary education in Delta State, Nigeria. This is because the greatest potential for development lies in education which spawns human resources, social and economic development (Oyagbola, 2006). The funds provided to secondary education by the government are used to pay teachers salaries and allowances, procures instructional materials and equipments and other physical facilities. Funding secondary education in Delta state involves the provision of money and physical facilities to the schools. For the achievement of the achievement of secondary education goals and objectives. Morris (1990) observed that funds are one of the improved factors for realization of educational objectives.

According to Tella (2002), it is clear that government can no longer single handedly fund educational institutions in the country. The researcher is of the opinion that there is over reliance on government to provide solutions to problems facing secondary education in Nigeria. The consequences are that the schools are grossly neglected because they are not in position they ought to be. Ogbuaji (2006) opined that government is finding it difficult to effectively fund education because other section of the economy is competing with education for attention.

Adebite (2002), noted that the private sector should act as catalyst in complementing the efforts of government in terms of funding to ensure a qualitative and quantitative education for all and to achieve the objective of equal opportunities to all citizens. The private sector should participate in education beyond their contribution to the education tax fund as education for all is the business of all sectors of the economy. The organized private sector would have to play major role in helping to formulate strategies and monitoring of the implementation of programmes to ensure the overall education of the populace irrespective of age and cultural background (Charles, 2002).

In Delta state, parents, local communities and individuals assist in the funding of secondary education (Ogbonnaya) 2001). Parents deny themselves a lot of things to keep their children in schools. Local communities also often levied themselves to raise enough funds to provide facilities in schools like classroom blocks and dormitories. Anazonwu (2002) reported that most parents and local communities Assists schools that have resource problem

Regrettably, most serious problems facing secondary schools in Delta state as stated by Ogbonnaya (2000) Okafor (1998) and Azunna (1997) is that of inadequate funds. The funds provided by the state government are never enough. Fagbeni (1986) concluded that the obvious consequence of inadequate funding of secondary school education in most state include difficulty to provide instructional materials, pay teachers' salaries and provided equipment for teaching science in the schools . The problem of funding has been the most persistent and thorny issues militating against school ability to maintain existing services in Delta state. Since the state government finds it difficult in recent times to provide the resources and materials to schools, it is obvious that if funds are inadequate, the broad aim of secondary education will not be realized. This perhaps is one of the reasons why the state government encourages private sector participation in its funding of secondary schools

Private sectors are organizations owned by individual or group of individual. According to Patrick (1983), private sector is the part of country's economy owned, operated and managed by private individuals. In Delta state, private sector includes business organizations, industries and firms owned and managed by individuals or groups. They include banks, insurance companies, engineering companies, agro and chemical industries. In funding secondary schools, they give donations, provide infrastructures and other physical materials to schools. They also employ the service of secondary schools graduates as typists, clerks and sales agents. In this study, only the private sectors located in urban rural area of the state are used with the management staff and their subordinates from the basis of the population.

Government, the major source of fund for financing education has over the years failed to live up to its responsibility of sufficiently funding education. The need has risen for the private sectors and philanthropic organization that may be interested in education to assist in equipment, books and capital projects for the educational institutions (Archbong 2002). Kamanu (1007) believed that one of the best ways the private sector can contribute to nation building is by giving the children so that they too can play great roles in national development. The private sector should take it as a special responsibility to provide the type of physical and social environment that are ideal and supportive of learning.

The private sector could give the nation's educational sector a face lift, by providing the right infrastructure and environment conducive enough for learning as governments cannot alone solve the seemingly intractable problem facing the education sector. (Ezekwesili 2007) Pitan (2006) opined that there is need for governments to create avenue for the private sector to render meaningful financial support to secondary education. The private sector cam make giant strides in providing necessary facilities for academics and extra-curriculum activities required to develop the intellectual capabilities of students in urban and rural secondary schools. Han (2006) observed that the private sector should play a crucial role in improving the quality of education and producing competent human resources for the benefit of the nation and its economy. In addition, Oduleye (2000) opined that the private sector roles in the secondary schools would help to improve the standard of performance of students in external examinations.

Statement of Problem

Secondary schools in Delta state of Nigeria have suffered neglect over the years due to inadequate funding. It is the responsibility of the government to adequately fund education by paying salaries of

teachers and accord educated people due recognitions in the affairs of the state, and rehabilitate dilapidated infrastructure in all educational institutions. The United Nations Scientific and Cultural Organization (2002) on funding of education has said that 26% of the budget of developing countries should be devoted to education. Our educational sector apparently has suffered the greatest neglected over the years. The infrastructures are in total decay and in some areas, non-existent, thus creating a very unhealthy environment for effective teaching and learning (Ekwelem 2004). Tahir (2003) opined that a lot of problems are now confronting education sector. Among them are inadequate funding, resources mobilization, inadequate educational tools and materials and learning resources.

The infrastructures are in total decay and in some areas not in existent, thus creating a very unhealthy environment for effective learning. There is nothing to suggest that the secondary schools have received any serious or meaningful attention from the government . Classrooms are without desks and seats for students, very many school buildings are uncompleted. The school libraries, laboratories and workshops are not adequate and are poorly equipped in the schools where they are available as well as general lack of teaching text and instructional materials. Well built science laboratories with modern technology, libraries, classrooms, workshops comparable to those of the Western secondary schools abroad that help the students to study with the right equipment that will offer them every opportunity and exposure needed to advance academically are not provided for urban and rural areas secondary school. It is common to find as many as 100 students in a classroom/laboratories designed for 30 to 40 students.

In such circumstance, it could be hard to deny that good teaching and learning are not compromised. This kind of situation is unhealthy for teaching and learning situation, which is student's activity based and inquiry oriented because it can only be applied in an environment with organized resources and rewards. The standard of education is falling because government cannot effectively fund the resources needed by the schools. Ezekwesili (2007), observed that the state of public school system is growing to a state of security alert. Education in Nigeria is a nationwide problem that requires urgent national mobilization with over seventy percent of the schools in a dilapidated condition. With the persistent deterioration of urban and rural public secondary schools, shows that the government lacks the capacity to cope with the demands and challenges of maintaining a viable and qualitative secondary educational system. There is need to initiate policies to engender the private sector participation in funding and provision of resources for the secondary schools to ensure achievement of laid down standard.

Since the stakeholders have continued to decry this state of affairs, the study is a response to the challenge to the challenge by striving to identify strategies for increasing private sector participation in the funding of secondary education in Anambra state.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of the study is to curb the lacks and deficiencies of the secondary sub-sector participation in the funding of secondary education in Delta state.

Research Questions

(1) What specific projects in secondary schools should be funded by the private sector?

- (2) What are the constraints to private sector participation in funding secondary education?
- (3) What policies should be initiated by the government to increase private sector participation in funding secondary education.

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were formulated in the study.

The mean of the management staff and subordinates will not differ significantly ($p < 0.5$) as regards the constraints to private sector participation in funding secondary education.

The following questions guided the conduct of this study.

- (1). There is no significant difference between the management of staff and subordinates as regards the constraints to private sector participation in the funding of secondary schools in Delta state.
- (2) There is no significant difference between the management of staff and subordinates as regards the policies initiated by government to increase private sector participation in funding secondary schools in Delta state.

Methodology

The survey design was adopted

All the management staff and subordinates of all the private registered firms in the state. The population includes the chief executives, chief Accountants and administrative manager. There are 191 registered organization (145 urban and 46 rural) in Delta state.

Proportional stratified sampling was used to select. 100 organization (70 urban and 30 rural) out of the 191 private registered firms in the state. The proportionate stratified was based on the fact that these organization are located in the urban than rural areas. In selecting the management staff and subordinates, only the chief executives and chief accountants were used from each organization.

The instrument used was a researcher-developed questionnaire containing items and oral interview. The questionnaire was titled "Private Sector Participation in Funding Secondary Education" (PSPFSE). It was made up of 2 sections. Sections one sought demographic information about the name of company, respondent and location of the company (whether urban or rural). Section two comprised items arranged in three clusters. A four point likert scale of strongly Agree (4 point), Agree (point 3), (disagree point 2), strongly disagree (point 1)

The questionnaire was subjected to face content validation by four experts from the department of Educational Administration and Policy Studies, Abraka Nigeria. It was pilot tested using 20 organizations (15 urban 5 rural) to establish its reliability using cronbach alpha $0 < .$ The alpha obtained yield a co-efficient of internal stability of 0.75. Oral interviews were conducted with 10 management staff from the sampled organizations (5 urban and 5 rural) not included in the sample of the study.

Method of Data Analysis

Using the Direct Delivery Technique (DDT), the researcher administers two hundred questionnaires to chief executives and chief accountants (100) each) from the sampled firms for on the spot collection. This technique reduces the chance of either misplacing or losing copies of questionnaires.

Then four research assistants were trained and used to help administer the questionnaire to respondents.

The researcher used mean score and standard deviation to answer the three-research questions, while t-test statistic was employed in testing the two null hypotheses formulated to guide the study. Items of the research question with mean score of 2.50 and above were regarded as positive and acceptable, while any with a mean score between 2.50 were regard as negative and thus rejected.

Findings

Table

Mean Rating and Standard of Management of Staff and Subordinates of Private Registered Organizations on Projects to be Funded by Private Sector in Secondary Schools in Delta State.

	Project to be funded	Management Staff No =100			Subordinate No. =100		
		X	SD	D	X	SD	D
1	Building classroom an administrative blocks	3.20	1.29	High	3.17	1.17	High
2	Donation of technological and medical equipments	2.10	0.83	Low	2.16	0.84	Low
3	Donation of books, office and sports equipments	3.0	1.18	High	3.36	1.28	High
4	Provision of fund for school services	3.00	1.181	High	3.08	1.21	High
5	Award of scholarship	3.35	1.31	High	3.28	1.29	High

6	Renovate school buildings	3.28	1.29	High	3.25	1.25	High
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Table 1 shows that out of six items on specific projects be funded by private sector, items 1,3,4,5 and 6 were rated high by the both categories of respondents. It is therefore the opinions of the respondents that private sector should build classrooms and administrative block, provide office and sport equipments, ward scholarship and renovate school buildings. However, both categories of respondents responded negatively to item 2, this shows that the private sector doesn't have to import technological and science equipments for the schools.

Table 2

Mean Rating and Standard Deviation of Management Staff and Subordinates on the Consistent to Private Sector Participation of the Funding Secondary Schools in Delta State.

Constraints to Funding		Management Staff No =100			Subordinate No. =100		
		X	SD	D	X	SD	D
7	Obnoxious policies of the state sector for participation	3.60	0.56	High	3.53	0.55	High
8	Lack of interest on the part of private sector.	3.36	0.54	High	3.44	0.54	High
9	No special provision to private sector for participating in funding school	3.04	0.48	High	2.98	0.47	Mode
10	The fact that firms use to pay education tax fund	3.32	0.52	High	3.36	0.52	High
11	Inability of private sector to generate fund	3.33	0.52	High	3.25	0.51	High

From table 2, it can be seen that both category of respondents responded positively to all the items, except 9 which was rated high by management staff and moderate by the subordinates. It has a score of 2.98 and a standard deviation of 0.047. Therefore the constraint to private sector participating

special provision given to the private sector from participating to fund school, inability of the private actor to generate fund 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 government to increase Private Sector Participation in Funding Schools.

Policies initiated by the Government		Management Staff No =100			Subordinate No. =100		
		X	SD	D	X	SD	D
12	Payment of a stipulated amount into education fund	3.64	0.57	High	3.60	0.57	High
13	Ensuring that private firms incorporation educational development in their programme of activities	3.44	0.54	High	3.23	0.51	High
14	Task force should be uses on defaulting firms.	2.99	0.51	Moderate	2.91	0.46	Mode rate
15	Evidence of registration should be presented to the government	3.81	0.60	High	3.37	0.59	High
16	Government should motivate firms and place under surveillance firms that are not buoyant to fund schools	3.00	0.47	High	2.99	0.47	Mode rate

From table 3, items 12, 13, 15, were rated high by both respondents' items 14 was rated moderate by both respondents and item 16 was rated high by the management staff and moderate by their

subordinates. This shows that to increase private sector participation in funding secondary education, the government should initiate the following policies, private sector to pay a stipulated amount into education fund, ensuring that private sector incorporate educational development in their programmes of activities, task force to be used on defaulting firms and government should motivate firms and place under surveillance firms that are unable to fund schools.

Hypotheses Testing

Table 4:

Summary of t-test Analysis of the Difference between the Mean Scores of Management Staff and Subordinates on the Constraint to Private Sector Participation in Funding Schools.

Groups	N	X	SD	DF	Level of sign	t calculate value
Management Staff	100	31.29	4.90	198	0.05	0.08
Subordinates	100	31.19	4.87			

On table 4, it can be seen that the null hypothesis was accepted because the calculated t-value of 0.08 is less than the t-critical table 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 funding of secondary schools.

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Table 5

Summary of the t-test Analysis of the differences between the Mean scores of the Management Staff and Subordinate on the Policies to be initiated by the Government to increase Private sector Participation in Funding Secondary Schools.

Groups	N	X	SD	DF	Level of sign	t calculate value
Management Staff	100	25.60	4.04	198	0.05	0.08
Subordinates	100	25.29	4.04			

Subordinates			3.95			
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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 policies to be initiated to increase funding to schools. This is so because the calculated t-value of 0.85 is less than t-critical (table) value of 1.96 at 0.05 levels of significance and 198 degrees of freedom.

Discussion of Findings

The result of research question one indicated that private sector should build classrooms and administrative blocks, provide fund for school service, donate books and stationeries. This is in line with Ezeocha (1990) who stated that some private sectors like Longmans and Heineman donated books to secondary schools in some states in Nigeria.

The result that private sector award scholars and renovate schools buildings, shows that private sector recognized the educational enterprise as a costly social service, which should involve the construction of not only the government but also of individuals and private organizations. Ajabade (1989) in her critical examination of problem, prospects and implication of the rebirth of private ownership of secondary schools in Nigeria, buttress the fact that private sector should fund projects in schools. The review conducted with management staff also reveals that private sector to renovate schools and give adequate support to secondary schools.

The findings that obnoxious policies of the government on the private sector prevent them from funding schools, as such amount to lack of interest, lack of motivation and the fact the private sector pays education tax prevents the private sector from funding schools. According to Ezekwesili (2007), most private firms are satisfied with the 2% of their net profit as education tax they pay, and the government should not demand anything more from private firms and should not force them either. The government should device means of encouraging its private firms so as to increase their funding. The funding that the state government do not make any special provision to private sector for participating in funding school constitutes to a great extent one of the factor that militate against private sector participation in funding secondary schools in Anamber state.

Another fining of this study is that policies should be initiated by state government can be explained with fact that both respondent s see human and material development of any nation as being predicated see education. The private sector in particular according to Okafor (1998) is universally known as competent educator and is always prepared to welcome government policies and regulation on education. The findings that Tasks Force should be used on defaulting firms was acknowledged by Coombs (1985) who noted that since education is not one mans' business, communities and private individuals should put hands together to alleviate its problems. Mubas (2002) also supported the fact that government should give incentives to private individual and firms who fund schools.

The result of the interview conducted also indicted that the strategies to increase private organization participation in funding school include initiating policies which demand that private sector should incorporate educational development in their programme of activities, pay education, pat education tax and register their company before operation

Findings

As a result of the findings data analyzed the following findings were made.

1. Policies be initiated by the state government to engender participation of private sector in funding schools, is of practical benefit to the state government because it will provide them with the relevant information about initiating policies.
2. The result of the study also create awareness in the minds administrators in the state ministries of education and secondary school; principles about various ways private sector could be made to contribute to the funding of secondary school in the state.
3. The state government should therefore explore ways and means of enlisting the assistance and cooperation of private sector in the funding of secondary schools.
4. The private sector should renovate school buildings, makes donations and provision of materials to schools proves to a great extent that besides the provision made to schools by the government, the private sector funds schools in various strategies. This suggests that besides fees and government subventions, the secondary school principals can work and attract additional funds for institutions from private sector. The implications is that the funds available to secondary school principals for managing their schools are not sufficient and so there is need to attract additional funds.
6. The obnoxious policies of the state government and negative attitude of the officials of the state education commission is not allowing the private sector free hand to participate in the funding which constitute s to a great extent one of the factors militating against effective support of secondary schools by the private sector. This suggests that effective funding of secondary schools by private sector is marred by strict and difficult rules and regulations. The government should therefore relax some of the policies to enable private sector to fund schools.

Conclusion

On the basis of the findings in the study, the following conclusions were made. From the study, the researcher established that private sector in the funding secondary education in Delta State Nigeria is low. It was discovered that there were major hindrances to this poor state of affair. This includes the attitude of the government towards the private sector and lack of interest on the part of private sector because of the fact that education is non -profit investment. Since the government cannot fund scho0ol single handedly and since private sector participation to fund schools is low, and the need of secondary education have not been met, government should initiate policies to increase private sector participation in funding school and cooperate with the private sector in various ways.

Recommendation

Based on the findings of the study, the researcher recommends the following:

- 1 The private sector should assist in the provision of well-equipped laboratories to enhance the quality of public secondary schools in the Delta State.
- 2 Education commission should relax some of their policies to enable private sector participate

effectively in funding secondary school in the state.

3 Secondary school principals in Delta State should communicate with the private sector on how the funding they provided is being utilized.

4 Private sector should always pay education tax and to assist in the provision of institutional materials to enhance quality education.

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