

Alternative Sources of Funding Vocational and Technical Education in a Period Of Political and Economic Stress in Niger State

Hassan, A.M, Abdulkadir, M & Kareem, W.B
Department of Industrial and Technology Education,
Federal University of Technology, Minna

Abstract

In this paper attempt is made to related vocational and technical education funding to standard and how standard translates to national security or insecurity. In the process the polymorphous nature of the concept vocational and technical education in recognized. Proper funding of Vocational and Technical Education (VTE) will definitely help[to improve the standard expected. As a matter of fact, adequate funding requires the support or co-operation of all and sundry in the society so that our goal will be met accordingly. The study was set out primary to identify the alternative sources of finding vocational and technical education in a period of political and economic stress in Niger State. Research questions were formulated to guide the investigation. Data were collected and analyzed using frequency and percentages. It is thus recommended that community agencies philanthropist Alumni Association should continue to assist the school financially.

Introduction

Education is a very lucrative venture economically and socially to the individual and to the society in general. Vocational Technical Education has been described as a viable industry and a pre-requisite to the new world technological order and therefore requires adequate supply of human and material resources. The importance of vocational and technical education in National development and security can never be over emphasized. Aloma (2004) observed that “where all or majority are educated; governance, peaceful co-existence, work efficiency and general positive ‘attitude towards developments become easier’. This probably explains why adequate funding of vocational and technical education has always remained an essential expenditure on the part of its providers and beneficiaries.

In the past, financially Vocational and Technical Education was the responsibility of the missionaries and philanthropic organizations that built the schools where vocational and technical subjects were part of school curriculum. The missions administered, managed and financed these schools. However, the government became involved in vocational and technical education when in 1931 a survey school in Oyo and a similar one in Kaduna in 1938, were established.

Presently, financing vocational technical education is the sole responsibility of the government. The government has made tremendous efforts in this area of education. But still, there is need for adequate funding system. Oranu (1992) noted that there is not amount of assistance from government that will control the financial impediment of vocational and technical education. Abdullahi (2006) noted equally that finance was a constraining factor in educational development of this country. Olaitan (1992) in Oranu (1992) noted that the sole dependence of Technical Teacher Education on government for all her needs is a major reason for poor funding of vocational and technical education programmes in Nigeria. Considering the hug capital outlay usually involved in the establishment and operation of Vocational and Technical Education programme, there is need for alternative sources of funding for effectiveness in implementation of the programme.

Subvention

From the analysis before us, (table 1 and 2), it is clear as can be seen from the allocation column that, thee had been tremendous increment in the allocation of funds from the State Government for Technical Education. The period 1988 to 1999 was remarkable in the sense that special allocations were made to Science and Technical Schools Board then, having 21 schools and later become 10 (five Science and five Technical).

Funding of technical education in niger state of nigeria (a) government allocations for science and technical education to the defunct science and technical schools board (1988-1996)

S/No	Year	Allocation	Org	Remakrs
1	1988	-	STSB	Exact figures not available for 1988
2	1989	N4,500,000.00	"	"
3	1990	N700,000.00	"	"
4	1991	N6,926,297.0	"	"
5	1992	N7,408,032.00	"	"
6	1993	N7,408,032.0	"	"
7	1994	N10,371,245.00	"	"
8	1995	N10,889,807.00	"	"
9	1996	N4,500,000.00	"	"

(B) Government allocation for development of science and technical education to, the secondary schools education board (1997-1998)

S/no	Year	Allocation	Org	Remarks
1	1997	N7 Million	SEB	
2.	1998	N5.5 Million	SEB	

Source: government of Niger State of Nigeria Annual Estimates Booklet

The problem

The specific research problem is to identify the various sources of funding vocational and technical education with a view to determine their effectiveness in raising sufficient money for the schools to meet their critical needs. Also to investigate the extent to which Vocational and Technical Education (VTE) administrators in Niger State have been striving to achieve quality Vocational and Technical Education (VTE) with the limited or scarce resources at their disposal in the period of political and economic stress

Research Questions

Based on the problem under investigation the following questions were formulated to guide the study.

- a. What are the other sources of school revenue besides State Government Grants.
- b. What are the effects of free-secondary education programme on school management
- c. How adequate are the teaching and supporting staff in terms of quality and quantity?
- d. How adequate are the school physical facilities in terms of decency, space, ventilation and insulation from heat, furniture and materials?
- e. Are the following student welfare service adequately provided and effectively administered in the school
- f. Has the Parent Teachers Association (PTA) increased its financial contributions to supplement government efforts in the schools in this period of economic recession.
- g. How effective is the PTA in the provision of instructional materials, physical and transport facilities in the schools in the period of political and economic stress?

The research Instrument

A research instrument titled school finance questionnaire (S.F.Q) was constructed to provide relevant information on the sources of funding vocational and technical education their

effectness and the various management problems that arose from the school financial constraint. The content validity of the instrument was determined through the assistance of some experts in tests and measurements of Federal University of Technology, Minna. Its reliability was established through the Split-half method. The correlation coefficient of these half tests was calculated using the Pearson Product Moments formula. The coefficient obtained was further subjected to statistical analyzing using Spearman Brown's formula.

A coefficient of 0.83 was obtained and the instrument was considered reliable.

Data Analysis

A total of 300 copies of the questionnaire were administered to the principals, vice-principals, bursars and other teachers with a minimum of 10 years teaching experience. These are from the randomly, selected schools., The analysis was based on 220 that is 73.3% duly completed questionnaire.

Result

Table I

Responses on the sources of school revenue besides State Government Grants.

Responses	Yes	%	No	%
Source of School Revenue	220	100.0	0	0.0
School Fees	220	100.00	0	0.0
Parent Teachers' Association Contribution	156	70.9	64	29.1
School Harvest and Bazaar	220	100.0	0	0.0
Proceeds from School Farms	136	61.8	85	38.2
Sales of students handicrafts	140	63.6	80	36.4
Sporting Activities	62	28.2	158	71.8
Religious Organization	34	115.5	186	84.5
Philanthropic Organization	126	57.3	94	42.7
School Alumni Association	12	5.5	208	95.0
Staging of school plays	10	4.5	210	95.5
Influential community members				

Table II

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Effectiveness of the sources of schools funds
Sources of school fund level of effectiveness

	Very Effective	%	Just Effective	%	In Effective	%
Sporting activities	60	27.3	80	36.4	80	36.4
Religious organization	18	8.2	40	18.2	162	73.6
Philanthropic organization	4	1.8	30	13.6	186	84.5
School Alumni Association	26	11.8	45.5	94	42.7	
Staging of School plays	3	1.4	6	2.7	211	95.9
Influential Community Members	4	1.8	6	2.7	210	95.5

Table III

The effects of free secondary education programme on school management

N = 200

Effects	Responses			
	Yes	%	No	%
Tremendous increase in enrolment	220	100.0	0	0.0
Growing number of Day students	156	70.9	64	29.1
Problem of truancy and lateness of school	126	57.3	94	42.7
Increase Transport Problem	220	100.0	0	0.0
Local placement of pupils breeds Parachialism, tribalism and statism	220	100.0	0	0.0
Poor infrastructural facilities	186	84.5	34	15.5
Derogatory attitudes to studies	178	80.9	42	19.1
Inadequate teachers both in quality and Quantity	136	61.8	84	38.2
Poor funding of the school system	220	100.00	0	0.0
An increasing wave of indiscipline	126	57.3	94	42.7
Less government attention on other social services	210	95.5	10	4.5

Table IV

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Responses on the Adequacy of physical facilities in the school in period of political and economic stress

Facilities	Very Adequate	%	Fairly Adequate	%	Inde - quate	%	Not Available	%
Spacious and Well ventilated classroom	38	17.3	126	57.3	56	25.5	0	0.0
Properly equipped Library	0	0.0	84	38.2	236	61.7	0	0.0
Well equipped laboratory	12	5.5	196	57.5	145	65.9	7	3.2
Properly equipped Technical workshop	12	5.5	70	31.8	123	55.9	15	6.8
Schools halls	54	24.5	86	39.1	74	33.6	4	1.8
Student Common Room for playing In-door Games And Relaxation	0	0.0	12	5.5	62	28.2	24.6	66

Table V

Responses on the Provision of Student Welfare Services in Period of Political and Economic stress

RESPONSES

Welfare Services	Yes	%	No	%
Regular water supply	127	57.7	93	42.3
First Aid Box stocked with drugs	94	42.7	126	57.3
Periodic immunization and vaccination Services	82	37.3	138	62.7
Stand-by generating plant for regular Light supply	14	6.4	206	93.4
Kiosk services	106	48.2	114	51.8
Guidance and counseling services	135	61.4	85	38.6

Table vi

Effectiveness of the PTA in Executing Some Tasks in the schools in period of political and economic stress

Responses

Specific PTA Tasks	Yes	%	Just	%	Ineffective	%
Generating money for The school through fund raising activities	132	60.0	88	40.0	0	0.0
Provision of Physical facilities in the school	117	53.8	96	43.6	7	3.2
Provision of schools buses	156	70.0	49	22.3	15	6.8

Discussion of Findings:

As clearly indicated in Table II, the identified sources of school income besides the state Government grants include school fees PTA contributions, school harvest and bazaar, proceeds from school farms, sales of students handicraft sporting activities; religious organization, philanthropic organizations, school Alumni Association, staging of school plays, influential community members. Of all these sources over 61% of the respondents declared that school fees, PTA contributions from school farms and sporting activities have been effective as the school realize substantial amount from these sources. While sources such as school Alumni Association, staging of school plays, philanthropic organizations, religious organizations and influential community members have proved ineffective (Table II).

From the interview conducted with some principals and officials of the State Ministry of Education, Science and Technical School Board the revenues that accrued to the government from schools fees an other school earnings are insignificant when compared with expenditure on education. As the government envisages heavy financial burden vocational and technical education, it is emphasized in the new National Policy on Education (2004) Section 4, paragraph 2, "concerning the proprietorship of vocational and technical education, Government welcomes

the contribution of Voluntary Agencies Communities and private individuals in the establishment of vocational and technical education alongside those provided by the Federal and State Government.

A survey of the state strength in the schools indicates that all the schools have no adequate teachers and supporting staff. The crucial area in dire of staff need is technical teachers who have Diploma in specific areas of technology. Thus, the schools lack technical teachers both in quality and quantity. The available teachers in the schools are saddled with heavy teaching load of 18 periods in average per week per teacher. The school administrators attributed this poor situation to the State Government policy of 1/8th teacher per class, in order to minimize cost of vocational and technical education.

According to Aderategbe (2000) "The heart of Nigeria's educational system is the teachers,. Whether at the primary, secondary or university level; the teacher is and would continue to be both the major indicator as well as the major determinant of quality education. Buttressing further the importance of teachers in educational matter Babayi (1998) affirmed that "the teacher is the spark that fixed the whole development process, the key man in the drive to progress". In his own contribution to the indispensable role of teachers in the school system. Olaitan (1992) said inter alai: "The services of the teachers are to a nation, for they, more than any other professional group influence the live of the Nigerian youths an therefore the nation's future". IF schools are under staffed due to shortage of funds, the attainment of quality education becomes an up-hill task.

On the effects of free secondary education on school management over 57.0% of the total respondents (Table IV) declared that free secondary education programme introduced in Niger State between 2007 and 2010 by the present civilian administration in the state had far reaching effects on school management. Such effects include astronomical increase in school enrolment, increase in growing number of day students, poor funding, an increasing waves of indiscipline. Do we need free secondary education in period of political and economic stress?

According to UNESCO (2008), "To make education free is a question of money, to make it universal is a question of public support and law. But what we want today is education that is relevant to the needs of the economy and society".

On the adequacy of the political facilities, while 57.3% of the total respondents. (Table V) contend that spacious and well ventilated classrooms are fairly adequate in their schools,

25.5% held the contrary view. However, 55% of the respondents declared that properly equipped libraries, well equipped laboratories and properly equipped technical workshops were inadequate in their schools. Also most of the schools lack student common room for playing in-door games and relaxation. Inadequate physical facilities in the schools can be attributed to the financial problem facing the schools.

As vividly indicated in Table VI, while over 57.0% of the respondents affirmed that their school provide regular water supply and career guidance and counseling services for the students other essential student welfare services such as first-aid box stocked with drugs, periodic immunization and vaccination services, stand-by generating plant for regular supply electricity and kiosk services are not adequately provide in the schools due to financial constraint.

On the effectiveness of the PTA in executing some tasks in the schools in the period of political and economic stress, over 53.% of the respondents (Table VII) contended that the PTA had been very effective in generating money for the school and in providing physical an transports facilities in the school. Some of the items of substantial expenditures provides through the fund – raising activities of the association in some of the sample schools, include school bus with the name and crest of the school conspicuously inscribed on its both sides, trophies for inter-house sports competition, electric generating plants especially in rural schools, the supply of crude implements such as cutlasses and hoes for farming, expansion of classrooms, provision of physical facilities such as dormitories, mosques, assembly halls, and building fences against trespassers.

Conclusion

Of all the social services in Niger State, education has been attracting a lion share of the total money budgeted for social services. A greater proportion of the State expenditure on education goes to education. The present level of funding is increasing becoming inadequate to meet certain vital needs of vocational and technical education (VTE) such as personnel, infrastructures, materials, and equipment. To match the exhilarating quantitative growth of the school system with qualitative growth, it becomes necessary to find ways for the school system to be run more cost effectively. While other sources of generating funds should be sought so as to meet the critical needs of the vocational and technical education system.

Recommendations

Based on the findings from this study, the following recommendations are made:

Towards solving the financial problem of the vocational and technical education the need to embark on some fund-raising activities becomes inevitable. These include organizing school endowment funds, encouraging donations both in kind and in cash, offering consultancy services, engage in commercial farming, poultry, fishing and catering services. Organize sports and games and charge gate fees. Companies, politicians, big businessmen and the community at large must be enticed to assist in secondary school financing.

Moreover, school fund must be judiciously expended while areas of wastages must be curtailed.

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