

FUND MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES FOR EFFECTIVE ADMINISTRATION IN PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN BAYELSA STATE

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Abstract

This study investigated fund management strategies for effective administration in public secondary schools in Bayelsa state. The purpose of this study was to assess principals' budgetary practices; principals' maintenance of adequate record-keeping for effective fund management in public secondary schools in Bayelsa State. Two research questions and two hypotheses were used for the study. The research design was the descriptive survey design. The population of the study comprised the one hundred and sixty four (164) public secondary schools in Bayelsa State. The total number of respondents included one hundred and fifteen (115) principals representing 70% of the population, which were selected using the stratified random sampling technique. A self-designed questionnaire titled "Fund Management Strategies for Effective Administration in Public Secondary Schools Questionnaire (FMSEAPSSQ)" was used for data collection. A test re-test method was used to ascertain the reliability of the instrument. The Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (r) yielded a reliability coefficient of 0.76. The mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions while the z-test statistics was employed to test the research hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The result among others revealed that anticipated income records are kept by the principals for proper planning process, accurate records are provided on how money is spent, and records of every internally generated fund are kept and principals provide documented evidence of expenditure of internally generated revenues. It was recommended that Principals should be strictly monitored by the Ministry of Education so as to ensure that they continue to maintain accurate record-keeping because of its role in effective fund management in secondary schools.

Key Words: Funding, Fund management, Effective Administration, budgetary & record-keeping.

Introduction

The growth and development of any educational sector solely depends on the management of its finances. Education is an expensive social service which the government gives to its citizens, this is so because education is the major instrument for

sustainable development of nations. The establishment, administration and maintenance of set standards in any organization is greatly dependent on the financing available to it. The principal of secondary school is therefore the fundamental element on which the resource of school organization depends. Effective financial management is necessary in this institution to avoid financial mismanagement. Meanwhile, where the principal is weak and ineffective in managing the resources of the school, success would be very difficult to achieve. Therefore, fund management by school administrator requires managerial functions which deals with planning, acquisition and distribution of financial resources in order to achieve set objectives in public secondary schools.

On the other hand, lack of prudence and mismanagement of school funds by the principals could give rise to poor students' performance since it might slow down the acquisition of essential materials for teaching and learning. Ukunu (2005) affirms that mismanagement of funds might not be for a matter of ignorance or mistakes but an intentional act of embezzlement due to high level of corruption in many nations of the world. It is therefore imperative that school principals be knowledgeable in decision making for effective school administration. Principals as the chief executive in secondary schools should possess skills for making right decisions that will be of benefit to the school needs and the staff generally. In essence, a principal is effective when he is able to harness all the resources available to him and utilize them optimally for the achievement of the already stated goals of the school and in most cases, surpasses the targets set. It is against this backdrop that the principal could be said to be effective.

The planning of school finances usually begins with the drafting of a budget which describes the statement of the school expressed in monetary terms. It is also a planning instrument, which contributes in a constructive way towards preventing the disruption of educational programmes as a result of insufficient or exhausted resources. Therefore, efficient planning and management of funds in schools call for correct record keeping. Each school has to keep records of all financial transactions that were effected, which are to be made available to particular undertaking on request.

Izeiuj (2011) defined budgeting as the technique used by school administrators to help determine how many financial resources will be needed and how they will be used. Educational budget according to Nnabuo (2001) and Edem (2003) is a document which describes how various educational programmes outlined for the year or another stated period of time are to be financed. That is budgeting is a plan for allocating resources, a plan for specifying how resources, especially time or money will be allocated or spent during a particular period. Budgeting is a necessary tool in the financial management of all organizations, educational institutions inclusive. Ebong (2004) underscoring the importance of budgeting in schools posited that a management strategy such as school budget helps to highlight many problems long before they occur to prevent wastage of resources. Furthermore, it facilitates the process of delegation, control, evaluation and accountability by relating resource application to planned

programmes. That is the major concern of administering the budget is to make sure that the result achieved by the school carefully justifies the financial outlay.

According to Moses (2014) budgeting guarantees effectiveness of school administration by ensuring that only planned programmes are pursued, unnecessary spending is avoided and that all proposed expenditures are matched towards the expected revenue, leaving no room for deficit but rather creating a greater room for budget surplus. A successful school budget must be the product of a process that is based on sound and quality information. Ogbonnaya (2012, p. 14) while stressing the purpose of budget stated that:

1. School budget forecasts the activities, services and programmes, which an appropriate governing council (e.g. board of governor) has approved for a given period usually a one year in relation to income and expenditure.
2. School budget shows what revenue is to be anticipated and from what source this is to be derived.
3. School budget shows details, statement and estimates the expenditure of the various items of the school system as a whole.
4. School budget shows what other contributions and pressures on the budget that are anticipated during the financial year e.g. the pressure of inflation and how the school intends to raise more money over and above its original budget or how it intends to adjust itself to the situation.
5. School budget must be prepared in such a way that it can be executed by anyone, even from outside the school system. In this way the school budget aids the administration of the school programme in accordance with the accepted financial plan.

According to Ubong, Oguzor and Aburuga (2003) the school budget has three principal elements. These are the educational plan, the revenue plan and the expenditure plan. The three make up a functional school budget. The educational plan presents the objectives of the school as derived from the national community objectives. It also states the target as for instance, the number of students expected to pass the junior and senior secondary examination. It also documents the resources available in the school such as instructional materials, classrooms and other spaces, school plant generally, special services rendered and personnel (teaching and non-teaching staff) among other things. The revenue plan details the likely sources of funds such as government (Federal, State and Local) education tax fund, funds from philanthropic or charitable organizations, funds from the community associations, Parents Teachers Association Levies. The revenue plan also details capital receipts (money realized from sale of school equipment or grant from government for construction) and miscellaneous receipts (donations, development funds). The expenditure plan contains details of the different item of projected expenditure with the amount to be expended on each item.

The administration of a school budget simply means the operation, execution and implementation of the school budget. The very first thing the administrator should

do in administering the school budget is to provide himself with the necessary school account books for the purposes of entering both the detailed amount budget for, receipts and expenditures. The second is to provide a double check on the expenditures. In fact, there should be a simple ledger in which expenditures can be entered showing either weekly or monthly balance. The third important aspect of budget preparation include the proper handling of reserve fund set up to handle special needs as they arise. In some budget systems the switching of funds exists. This means that as long as the appropriation in any given fund is not exceeded, the administrator may switch charges from one account to another within the coverage of the fund itself. (Ezeocha as cited in Ogbonnaya, 2012).

Record-keeping is one of the important tools that can also be used to quid financial issues. Mngoma (2009) stipulated that efficient planning and management of funds in schools call for the correct record keeping. Each school has to keep records of all financial transactions that were effected must be kept safely in a record book. Accounting is an important aspect of managing the school funds. The school's bookkeeping may be delegated to a capable member of the staff who has the knowledge of accountancy. The principal must be responsible and accountable for financial management of all the money that is collected and paid out by the school (Kruger, 2003). The principal must facilitate the execution of its statutory functions relating to the assets, liabilities, property and other financial management issues (Mestry 2004, p. 130).

In as much as the budget is being drawn and approved, there is still need to provide accurate information on how the money is being spent. Proper financial records have a lot of bearing on the effective administration of school. It provides at glance:

1. Whatever money withdrawn has been used for.
2. It provides the link between the budget specification and the allocation of funds towards the actualization of those specifications.
3. The areas of recorded successes are mapped out in the budget.
4. Areas where more attention is needed.
5. The level of schools impress account.
6. The prudential nature of the administrator. Nnabuo as cited in Olawolu and Madumere-Obike (2011) defined school records, as documented information (data) about human resources and facilities that exist in a school. School records could be referred to as document or an account of activities or events about persons and facilities in the school that serves as references for the future. Record keeping is a fundamental activity in the school system and without it there would be no accountability.

The school head who handles a lot of money in the course of the year should keep a strict record of cash book if he is to give proper account Farrant and Onye (2006, p. 29). Akpan (2006) emphasized the importance of financial record keeping and

charged school heads that are in charge of account to keep and maintain proper records. This is because accurate record and periodic checks are essential for discovery of mistakes, losses and misuse of funds. Babayemi (2009) identified three basic phases of record keeping which applies to every organization and they are record creation, record use and machine and record disposition. These are the phase that creates records. Most records are internally generated from within the organization. Increase in records leads to problem of administration, management and appraisal of such records. On the other hand, in record use and maintenance, already generated records are put into use and are well maintained. Proper maintenance and storage record are necessary for easy access to such records and effectiveness. There should be adequate security to safe guard the records from hazards like flood, fire, dust, insects, and so on. Then in record disposition, record management involves discarding records that are not in use again. Retention or destruction of records in an organization depends on the storage facilities available.

Statement of the Problem

The importance of finance in the education sector cannot be over emphasized. The poor state of secondary school environment could be attributed to financial problems such as mismanagement and the economic crunch in the country. It is clear that poor financial management is one of the greatest obstacles of effective management of secondary schools in Bayelsa State. The problem usually emanates from the inability of many school managers or principals to plan and execute school budgets in line with the objectives of the school. It is a notable fact that many school administrators fail in their statutory functions in the identification of sources of school finances, methods employed in its collection and how the collected revenue are effectively applied to the school system. It has been observed that the condition of secondary schools have worsened so much that teaching and learning have received poor attention despite all the financial contributions of the federal government and other sources of funds available to schools.

Government on its own part argues that it is doing its best to provide fund sufficiently for the school to function well, but there is failure on the part of the administrators to manage these funds effectively in terms of budgeting, ineffective record-keeping and accountability. Principals on their part, argue that the government does not release the actual funds needed for the effective administration of the secondary schools. The mismanagement of fees and money meant for the education of our children is one thing that has led to the fear of the deteriorating standard of education in Bayelsa State. It is regrettable that impress paid by government to principals for the welfare of their pupils and the upkeep of the school in one way or the other are embezzled by some principals and financial clerks. The researcher is bothered whether principals of public secondary schools in Bayelsa State do really manage and utilize judiciously funds available at their disposal to run the school affairs without misappropriation or mismanagement and the extent principal's budgetary role, record keeping could help in realization of effective administration of public secondary schools in Bayelsa state.

Aim and Objectives of the Study

This study investigated fund management strategies for the effective administration of public secondary schools in Bayelsa State. Specifically, it seeks to:

1. examine the principal's budgetary practices for effective fund management in public secondary schools in Bayelsa State.
2. examine the extent principals maintain adequate record-keeping for effective fund management in public secondary schools in Bayelsa State.

Research Questions

The following research question guided this study:

1. What are the principal's budgetary practices for effective fund management in public secondary schools in Bayelsa State?
2. To what extent do principals maintain adequate record-keeping for effective fund management in public secondary schools in Bayelsa State?

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were tested to guide the study:

1. There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of male and female principals on the principal's budgetary practices for effective fund management in public secondary schools in Bayelsa State.
2. There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of male and female principals on the extent principal's maintain adequate record-keeping for effective fund management in public secondary schools in Bayelsa State.

Methodology

Descriptive survey design was used for this study. The population of the study consisted of all the one hundred and sixty four (164) public secondary schools and 164 principals in Bayelsa State. The sample size of this study comprised of one hundred and fifteen (115) principals representing 70% of the population was used as study participants. The stratified sampling technique was used for the study. In each of the L.G.A, 70% of the schools was selected and in each of the schools, 70% of the principals selected served as stratum from which the population of the respondent was drawn. The instrument that was used for data collection in this study was 11-item questionnaire titled: Fund Management Strategies for Effective Administration in Public Secondary Schools Questionnaire (FMSEAPSSQ). The questionnaire was divided into two sections: section A was for collection of demographic data. Section B was based on the 4- point modified Likert rating scale of (Strongly Agreed (SA) = 4 points; Agreed (A) = 3 points; Disagree (D) = 2 points; and Strongly Disagree (SA) = 1 point) and great extent, high extent, moderate extent and low extent respectively.

A draft of the document analysis was given to the researcher's supervisors and three other lecturers from the Department of Measurement and Evaluation, Faculty of Education, University of Port Harcourt to validate the authenticity of the document analysis with regards to the study under review. A test –retest method was used to obtain the reliability of the instrument. The researcher administered twenty copies of the instrument to twenty principals outside the study sample. Two weeks later, the same instrument was re- administered to the same respondents. It was also retrieved after three days. The scores obtained from the exercises were correlated using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient to determine the reliability index and a reliability of 0.76 was obtained. The one hundred and fifteen (115) copies of the questionnaire was administered to the respondents by the researcher and three trained research assistant. The respondents were given one day to respond to the questions after which the researcher retrieved only 111 completed copies of the questionnaire. All the copies of questionnaire retrieved were used for data analysis. The information gathered from the field was collated and analyzed using the mean scores and rank order to answer the research questions while using the z-test statistics to test the research hypotheses at 0.05 alpha level of significance.

Results and Discussion

Data Analysis and Empirical Results

The data presented in table 4.1 were analyzed and the empirical results were presented as follows.

Research Question 1: What are the principal's budgetary practices for effective fund management in public secondary schools in Bayelsa State?

Table 1: Mean Responses of Male and Female Principals on budgetary practices for effective fund management in public secondary schools in Bayelsa State.

S/N	Principal's budgetary practices	Male Principals 78		Female Principals 33		\bar{X}	\bar{X}	Remark
		\bar{X}	SD	\bar{X}	SD			
1.	I specify how resources are allocated within a particular period	3.40	1.43	3.27	1.36	3.34		Agree
2.	I forecast the activities and programmes in relation to income and expenditure	3.02	1.233	3.20	1.32	3.11		Agree
3.	I give detailed estimates of	2.90	1.19	2.80	1.16	2.85		Agree

	expenditure of various items purchased in the school						
4.	I Plan and procure necessary revenue to implement educational programmes	3.01	1.23	3.19	1.314	3.10	Agree
5.	I provide school account books for the purpose of entering detailed amount budgeted for.	3.19	1.314	3.10	1.27	3.15	Agree
6.	I provide school account books and receipt for the purpose of entering detailed amount utilized	2.80	1.14	2.89	1.18	2.85	Agree
Grand mean and standard deviation		3.05	1.26	3.08	1.27	3.07	

Table 1 indicated that item number 1 had the highest mean scores of 3.34 followed by item 5 with 3.15, item 2 with 3.11, item 4 with 3.10 and items 3 and 6 with 2.85 respectively. The various scores were above 2.50 which is the criterion mean, this simply implies that every issue investigated has strong implication on principal's budgetary practices for effective fund management in public secondary schools in Bayelsa State. That is to say principals specify how resources are allocated within a particular period, they forecast the activities and programmes in relation to income and expenditure, give detailed estimates of expenditure of various items purchased in the school, plan and procure necessary revenue to implement educational programmes, they provide school account books for the purpose of entering detailed amount budgeted for and also provide school account books and receipt for the purpose of entering detailed amount utilized.

Research question 2: To what extent do principals maintain adequate record- keeping for effective fund management in public secondary schools in Bayelsa State?

Table 2: Mean Responses of Male and Female Principals on the extent principals maintain adequate record-keeping for effective fund management in public secondary schools in Bayelsa State.

S/N	The extent principals maintain adequate record-keeping	Male Principals 78		Female Principals 33		\bar{X}	\bar{X}	Remark
		\bar{X}	SD	\bar{X}	SD			
1	To what extent are anticipated income records kept by me for proper planning process	3.00	1.23	2.98	1.22	2.99		Agree
2	To what extent do I provide accurate record on how money	3.01	1.23	3.19	1.314	3.10		Agree

is spent							
3	To what extent do I keep record of every internally generated fund?	2.89	1.21	2.99	1.25	2.94	Agree
4	To what extent do I document areas of success mapped out in the budget	3.23	1.34	3.29	1.37	3.26	Agree
5	To what extent do I document evidence of expenditure of IGR	3.21	1.32	3.14	1.29	3.18	Agree
Grand mean and standard deviation		3.07	1.51	3.12	1.29	3.09	

Table 2 indicated that item number 4 had the highest mean scores of 3.26 followed by item 5 with 3.18, item 2 with 3.10, item 1 with 2.99 and item 3 with 2.94 respectively. The various scores were above 2.50 which is the criterion mean. It simply implies that, there is a great extent to which anticipated income records are kept by the principals for proper planning process, there is a great extent to which accurate records are provided on how money is spent, there also a great extent to which they ensure accountability of fund spent, areas of success in the budget are documented and mapped out they keep record of every internally generated fund and provide documented evidence of expenditure of internally generated revenues.

Test of Hypotheses

Ho₁: There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of male and female principals on principal’s budgetary practices for effective fund management in public secondary schools in Bayelsa State.

Table 3: z-test Analysis of the Difference between the Opinions of Male and Female principals on the principal’s budgetary practices for effective fund management in public secondary schools in Bayelsa State.

Subject	N	\bar{X}	SD	df	z-cal	z-crit	Level of sig.	Remark
Male Principals	78	3.05	1.26	109	-0.11	±1.96	0.05	Ho₁ Accepted
Female Principals	33	3.08	1.27					

The result of table 3 showed that the z-calculated value of -0.11 is less than the z-critical value of 1.96 at degree of freedom of 109 at 0.05 level of significance. Therefore the null hypothesis is accepted and upheld that: there is no significant

difference between the opinions of male and female principals on the principal’s budgetary practices for effective fund management in public secondary schools in Bayelsa State.

Ho₂: There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of male and female principals on the extent principal’s maintain adequate record-keeping for effective fund management in public secondary schools in Bayelsa State.

Table 4: z-test Analysis of the Difference between the Opinions of Male and Female Principals on the extent principal’s maintain adequate record-keeping for effective fund management in public secondary schools in Bayelsa State.

Subject	N	\bar{X}	SD	df	z-cal	z-crit	Level of sig.	Remark
Male Principals	78	3.07	1.51	109	-0.18	±1.96	0.05	Ho₁ Accepted
Female Principals	33	3.12	1.29					

The result of table 4 showed that the z-calculated value of -0.18 is less than the z-critical value of 1.96 at degree of freedom of 109 at 0.05 level of significance. Therefore the null hypothesis is accepted and upheld that: there is no significant difference between the opinions of male and female principals on the extent principal’s maintain adequate record-keeping for effective fund management in public secondary schools in Bayelsa State.

Summary of Findings

From the data analysis, the following major findings were observed. It was found that Principals specify how resources are allocated within a particular period, forecast the activities and programmes in relation to income and expenditure, give detailed estimates of expenditure of various items purchased in the school, plan and procure necessary revenue to implement educational programmes, they also provide school account books for the purpose of entering detailed amount budgeted for and also provide school account books and receipt for the purpose of entering detailed amount utilized. It was also discovered that anticipated income records are kept by the principals for proper planning process, accurate records are provided on how money is spent, principals ensure accountability of fund spent, areas of success in the budget are documented and mapped out and keep record of every internally generated fund and provide document evidence of expenditure of internally generated revenues.

Discussion of Findings and Implications

From table 1, the study revealed that both male and female principals specify how resources are allocated within a particular period, they forecast the activities and

programmes in relation to income and expenditure; give detailed estimates of expenditure of various items purchased in the school; plan and procure necessary revenue to implement educational programmes; they provide school account books for the purpose of entering detailed amount budgeted for and also provide school account books and receipt for the purpose of entering detailed amount utilized. This study is in consonance with Onye (2012) who found out that budgetary practice of principals helps to highlight many problems long before they occur to prevent wastage of resources. Budget are administered to make sure that the result achieved by the school carefully justifies the financial outlay. He also discovered that revenues are carefully planned and procured for effective implementation of educational programmes and funding education is hinged on financial accountability of scarce resources available to the school principals.

In the same vein, Anyaogu (2010) found that budgeting guarantees effectiveness of school administration by ensuring that only planned programmes are pursued, unnecessary spending is avoided by school administrators and that all proposed expenditures are matched towards the expected revenue, leaving no room for deficit but rather creating a greater room for budget surplus. Therefore, the findings of Onye and Anyaogu correspond with the present work in the sense that activities and programmes in relation to income and expenditures are carefully highlighted by school principals before embarking on any programme.

From table 2, It was revealed that anticipated income and expenditure records are kept by the principals for proper planning process, accurate information are provided on how money is spent, they ensure accountability of fund spent, areas of success in the budget are highlighted and mapped out and also principals provided documented guide for expenditure. This findings is in line with Nnaemego (2011) who studied financial management practices of secondary school principals in Anambra State of Nigeria. He found that efficient planning and management of funds in schools call for the correct record keeping, principals keep records of all financial transactions in specific record book to define true accountability; principals delegate responsibility to a capable member of staff who has the knowledge of accountancy, they facilitate the execution of its statutory functions relating to the assets, liabilities, property and other financial management issues.

Conclusion

Funding is very indispensable in education for qualitative output and effective administration. Therefore it is a clear fact that principals are the ones responsible for the adequate budgetary practices of the school. Accountability is one of the major responsibilities of the principal if effective administration of secondary schools in Bayelsa State must be met. On this note, Principals must deal with funds in a responsible manner and are accountable to the parents, learners, the community and the government as well. The role accountability plays in managing funding for effective administration of public secondary schools includes; protecting public fund from the possibility of loss from careless expenditure for the wrong purpose, theft or

embezzlement; provides for a systematic way to relate expenditure to the attainment of educational objectives.

Recommendations

Based on the conclusion, the following recommendations were made:

1. Principals should take budgeting more serious because of its role in effective fund management
2. Principals should be strictly monitored by the Ministry of Education so as to ensure there is accurate record-keeping because of its role in effective fund management in secondary schools.

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