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The Impact of Agricultural and Social Programme Proceeds on Sustainable Funding of Public Universities in Rivers State

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ABSTRACT
The study examined impact agricultural and social programme proceeds on sustainable funding of Universities. The study's scope revolved around three major variables of the study. The correlational design was employed for the study with population 303 administrators in the three (3) public universities in Rivers State. A sample of 303 administrators and Purposive sampling technique was used to determine the sample size. Data was elicited with two questionnaires namely Alternative Revenue Sources Questionnaire (ARSQ) and Sustainable Funding of Public Universities (SFPUQ)". . The instruments were validated by the researcher's supervisor and other two experts in test and measurement, faculty of education. The reliability coefficients of each variable were 0.88, 0.91, 0.85, 0.87, 0.79 and 0.86 using Cronbach alpha method. Generally, the coefficient index of 0.86 was obtained. Simple regression was used to answer the research questions, while t-test associated with simple regression was used to test the hypotheses. From the analysis, findings revealed that, agricultural products proceeds, social programme proceeds, facilities rental proceeds contributes to sustainable funding of public universities in Rivers State. It was concluded that, agricultural products proceeds, social programme proceeds, amongst others contribute to the sustainable funding of public universities in Rivers State. Based on this result, it was recommended among others that universities should increase the cultivation of agricultural products. Also, social programmes should be intensified as it will generate more revenue for the universities.
Keywords: Agricultural Proceed, Social programme proceeds, sustainable funding, Public Universities, Rivers State.

INTRODUCTION

The challenge of underfunding of Nigerian tertiary institutions has a significant effect on the performance of staff and students who are at the receiving end. Ekundayo (2008) posited that most of the capital projects being undertaken to meet the increasing number of students have been abandoned due to lack of funds. He also affirmed that the pressure on the inadequate resources has led to a decline on the staff welfare package and remuneration coupled with depreciation of working conditions and environment. The resultant effects are high brain-drain of professional staff, persistent strike action, rioting, high crime rate, and cultism, extortion of students, admission runs, embezzlement and all sorts of vices (Imhabekhai & Tonwe, 2001). In the face of the declining financial resource allocation to the education sector, there is the need for alternative channels of funding which will ensure qualitative education and graduates from Nigerian education system.

Sustainable funding refers to the adequate provision and utilization of funds for use. It implies a situation whereby finance is made available and in good use in order to achieve goals and objectives. It is seen as a perpetual revenue stream that is sufficient in magnitude to accomplish a program's goal and reliable enough to confidently develop long term maintenance and monitoring programs (West, 2020). Achieving sustainable funding can be a challenging and complex process. It has to do with

issues that deal with the availability of finance and how they are disbursed, as well as judicious utilization of those funds. Funding is of great relevance in the attainment of prescribed goals and objectives of the educational system. Migliorelli (2021) defined sustainable funding as the finance to support sectors or activities that contribute to the achievement of, or the improvement in, at least one of the relevant sustainability dimensions.

Funding is very essential and integral to the running of universities all over the world. No university or public institution can function properly without adequate funds, and goals cannot be achieved effectively without finance. If funding is low or not available, it hampers on the success of universities achieving pre-determined goals and objectives. Finance is an essential part of the organization system and is referred to as a financial resource. It is very instrumental in the running of activities in any institution. The National Policy on education, the Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN, 2013:47) stated that "education is a capital-intensive social service, which requires adequate financial provisions from all tiers of government for successful implementation of educational programmes". This proclamation affirms that educational programmes and goals cannot be achieved if adequate funding is not provided. Finance is defined as the management of money and includes activities such as investing, borrowing, lending, budgeting, saving and forecasting. Ebong (2005) described financial resources as monetary inputs into a system which acts as lubricant in the management of that system. It goes to show that finance is the oil and lubricant that facilitates activities within any system. Thus, without finance, nothing will function properly and the system would become "stagnant" and nothing would work. There is no organization or institution that would excel without proper funding, because finance handles and solves many issues.

Alternative revenue sources are ways institutions and organizations can generate more money to finance their activities. There are several of them. One is through the sale of agricultural products from university farms. Edwards (2011) was of the opinion that proceeds from school farm can also be sold in canteens and restaurants for revenue making. Farm products are end products harvested from the farms where farming occurred and took place. The essence of cultivating crops is either to consume them or to sell them to generate profit. Most schools have boarding facilities and most of the food given to students are derived or gotten from the school farm. It is worthy to note that farm products harvested in schools are in most cases, harvested in large quantities and most schools sell these products to the public.

Social programmes proceed can also be a source of alternative revenue. Here, social programs are organized for other universities to partake and engage in, thus creating funds for the school. When other university students engage in pageantry competitions, cultural dance competitions and others, they bring in money for the universities. Ezeugbor and Obi (2015) opined that this is a way of generating revenue internally in educational institutions.

This study was motivated by the fact that the Federal Government of Nigeria worried about the incessant complaints of poor funding of public institutions of learning, advised University managers through the National Universities Commission (NUC) to explore various ways of generating ten percent (10%) of their expected revenue from within and outside their institutions towards solving their finance related problems rather than depend almost entirely on subsidizations by Government.

Finance is an important factor in the success of any organization as it lubricates the activities of the entire organization or institution. The establishment, administration and maintenance of set standards in any organization are greatly dependent on the finance available to it. It is concerned with how people allocate their assets over time under conditions of certainty and uncertainty. Education finance is therefore the process by which tax revenues and other resources are drawn from the establishment and operation of educational institutions as well as the process by which these resources are allocated to institutions in different geographical areas.

Nevertheless, financing education is therefore the responsibility of the government, communities, private organizations and individuals. Furthermore, funding education is the provision of money either by the government, private sector, organizations and individuals to run education programs in order to ensure quality of education is properly managed. In the same vein, since government alone is not mandated to fund education, the alternative source of funding public universities is therefore a very importance aspect for the university management. Revenue is very essential in funding universities in Rivers State, especially in public universities. For universities to fund their activities properly there is need for them to have enough revenue to do this. The normal and usual way of

making money, or getting assistance from the government is not adequate enough, hence the need to look for alternative sources to sustain funding of public universities sin Rivers State.

Statement of the Problem

The level of funding of education has thus declined over the years with attendant decay of infrastructure and low staff morale. The effects of inadequate funding of the education sector include, among others: inadequate and outdated library books and journals, inadequate scientific materials, non-existent fund for conferences and exchange programmes, inadequate resources for recurrent expenditures, inadequate capital resources which have led to suspension and/or non-completion of capital projects, leading to overcrowded and rundown facilities, lecture hall and hostels, inadequate staffing and training, poor motivation and low staff morale, instability in academic calendar caused by incessant strike actions by students and university workers, deficiencies in the curriculum and its delivery, cultism in student life, examination malpractices, mercenary attitude to teaching and research.

A very close look at most public universities shows either lack or inadequate basic facilities needed for the delivery of quality education. These include classrooms, instructional materials, equipment, libraries, laboratories equipment and availability of ICT in the public universities. The non--availability of such items has led to poor conditions of most public universities, majorly as a result of poor funding. The inability of university administrators to effectively run the affairs of their various institutions have been largely blamed on the inability of government to provide the financial backing to the public universities for the running, provision and maintenance of equipment and facilitates. Obviously, there is the fear of university education system being unable to produce quality graduates that are needed to run the national economy in their capacity due to the weak standard of educational provision from university system.

There is the issue of seemly falling standard, finance, lack of infrastructural facilities and school management etc. Many public universities do not have enough funds to sustain their administration. There are cases of poor funding, increase in students' population, demand for education, unavailability of infrastructure in many universities in Nigeria. All these have combined to make it difficult for government alone to adequately fund education. Hence, the essence of this study is to agricultural proceeds and social programme proceeds as alternative revenue sources for sustainable funding of public universities in Rivers State?

Aim and Objectives of the Study

The aim of this study was to investigate the extent alternative revenue sources contribute to sustainable funding of public universities in Rivers State. Specifically the objectives were to:

i. determine the extent to which agricultural products proceeds contribute to the sustainable funding of public universities in Rivers State
ii. examine the extent to which social programmes proceeds contribute to the sustainable funding of public universities in Rivers State

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study,

i. To what extent do agricultural products proceeds contribute to the sustainable funding of public universities in Rivers State?
ii. To what extent do social programmes proceeds contribute to the sustainable funding of public universities in Rivers State?

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were tested in the study at 0.05% level of significance

1. There is no significant contribution of agricultural products proceeds to the sustainable funding of public universities in Rivers State.
2. There is no significant contribution of social programmes proceeds to the sustainable funding of public universities in Rivers State.

METHODOLOGY

Research design

The design that was adopted in this study was the correlational design. The design was appropriate for this study because the researcher was interested in finding out the relationship between alternative

revenue sources and sustainable funding. Correlational design is a design that seeks to establish the relationship between two variables.

Population for the Study

The population of the study comprised 303 administrators in the three (3) public universities in Rivers State. These were the Deans, the HODs, Bursars, Finance Officers, Treasury unit head, Budget unit head, and Account unit head in the three public universities in Rivers State. (Source: Academic Office/Bursary Department 2021)

Sample and Sampling Technique

The sample of the study consisted of the 303 administrators in the three (3) public universities in Rivers State. These were the Deans, the HODs, Bursars, Finance Officers, Treasury unit head, Budget unit head, and Accounts unit head. The Purposive sampling technique was used to determine the sample size.

Instrument for Data Collection

The instruments that were used for data collection in this study consists of two self-structured questionnaire titled "Alternative Revenue Sources Questionnaire (ARSQ) and Sustainable Funding of Public Universities (SFPUQ)". The first Instrument which was the Alternative Revenue Sources Questionnaire (ARSQ) comprised of 42 items. Seven items measured each of the six sub-variables identified for the study namely; agricultural products proceeds, social programmes proceeds, facilities rental proceeds, contract proceeds, alumni contribution and university/investor proceeds. Each item was structured using four points rating scale of Very High Extent (VHE) = 4, High Extent (HE) = 3, Low Extent (LE) =2 and Very Low Extent (VLE) = 1. The second Instrument which was the "Sustainable Funding of Public Universities (SFPUQ)" was also structured on a four- point Likert rating scale with 30 items. All the instruments had 72 items that guided the various variables.

Validity of the Instrument

The face and content validities of the instruments were determined by the researcher's supervisors and two experts in test and measurement and experts in educational management. This was done by presenting copies of the instrument to them with the aim and objectives of the study, research questions, and hypotheses of the study. They were requested to assess the suitability of the language, the comprehensiveness, adequacy and relevance of the items in addressing the research questions. Their comments, suggestions and corrections were represented in the final production of the instruments before administration.

Reliability of the Instrument

A sample of 30 teachers which were not part of the sample for this study was randomly drawn for the reliability test from private universities in Rivers State. The data generated from the responses of teachers for trial testing were used to estimate the reliability of the instrument. The reliability coefficient was determined using Cronbach method, which established the internal consistency of the test items. The reliability of the six clusters of the independent variable of the study were 0.88, 0.91, 085, 0.87, 0.79 and 0.86 with an average reliability index of 0.86 while that of the dependent variable was 0.92. Cronbach's alpha is a measure of internal consistency. That is, how closely related a set of items are as a group. It is considered to be a measure of scale reliability. As the average inter-item correlation increases Cronbach's alpha increases as well (Holding the number of items constant).

The result of the instruments show that the Cronbach's Alpha reveals a high level of internal consistency of the respondents for our scales for this specific samples.

Methods of Data Collection

The research instrument was administered by the researcher and 2 research assistants who were trained for this purpose. Permission was sought from the appropriate authorities of each university before the administration of the instruments. To avoid undue influences, the instruments for the analysis were directly administered to the respondents on an individual basis in their offices once permission had been obtained. After the respondents had answered all of the questions correctly, the instruments were retrieved on the spot. Three hundred and three (303) copies of the questionnaire were administered and all were retrieved.

Methods of Data Analysis

The research questions were answered using simple regression, while t-test associated with simple regression was used to test the hypotheses. The Statistical Package of the Social Science (SPSS) was used to analyse the data gotten from the field.

RESULTS

Research question one: *To what extent do agricultural products proceeds contribute to the sustainable funding of public universities in Rivers State?*

Table 1: Simple Regression Analysis on the extent agricultural products proceeds contribute to the sustainable funding of public universities in Rivers State

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.747[a]	.727	.716	2.35319

Table 1 revealed that the regression coefficient R was calculated to be 0.747 while the regression squared value was computed to be 0.727. This shows that agricultural products proceeds contribute to the sustainable funding of public universities in Rivers State. Judging by the coefficient of determination, it shows that 72.7% change in sustainable funding of public universities can be explained by agricultural products proceeds, while 28.3% was accounted by other variables not considered in this study. Therefore, the extent to which agricultural products proceeds contribute to the sustainable funding of public universities in Rivers State was on high extent.

Research Question Two: *To what extent do social programmes proceeds contribute to the sustainable funding of public universities in Rivers State?*

Table 2: Simple Regression Analysis on the extent social programmes contribute to the sustainable funding of public universities in Rivers State

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.849[a]	.721	.720	2.69183

Table 2 revealed that the regression coefficient R was calculated to be 0.849 while the regression squared value was computed to be 0.721. This shows that social programmes contribute to the sustainable funding of public universities in Rivers State. Judging by the coefficient of determination, it shows that 72.1% change in sustainable funding of public universities can be explained by social programmes, while 27.9% was accounted by other variables not considered in this study. Therefore, the extent to which social programmes contribute to the sustainable funding of public universities in Rivers State was high.

Test of Hypotheses

The null hypotheses formulated for the study were tested using t-test associated with simple regression, which is a relationship.

HO_1: There is no significant contribution of agricultural products proceeds to the sustainable funding of public universities in Rivers State.

Table 3: T-test associated with simple regression on no significant contribution of agricultural products proceeds to the sustainable funding of public universities in Rivers State.

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	3.354	.546		6.147	.000
	Agricultural products proceeds	.772	.036	.747	21.293	.000

Table 4 revealed that agricultural products proceeds contribute to the sustainable funding of public universities in Rivers State by 0.747. The t-test value 21.293 associated with linear regression was statistically significant at 0.000 when subjected to 0.05 alpha level of significance. By implication, the

null hypothesis was rejected. Therefore, this shows that there is a significant contribution of agricultural products proceeds to the sustainable funding of public universities in Rivers State.

HO_2: There is no significant contribution of social programmes proceeds to the sustainable funding of public universities in Rivers State.

Table 4: T-test associated with simple regression on no significant contribution of social programmes proceeds to the sustainable funding of public universities in Rivers State.

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	6.158	.545		11.301	.000
	Social programmes	.597	.037	.849	16.175	.000

Table 4 revealed that social programmes proceeds contribute to sustainable funding of public universities in Rivers State by 0.849. The t-test value 16.175 associated with linear regression was statistically significant at 0.000 when subjected to 0.05 alpha level of significance. By implication, the null hypothesis was rejected. Therefore, there is a significant contribution of social programmes proceeds to the sustainable funding of public universities in Rivers State.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The findings of the study revealed that agricultural products proceeds contribute to the sustainable funding of public universities in Rivers State by 72.7%. Also, the study showed that there is a significant contribution of agricultural products proceeds to the sustainable funding of public universities in Rivers State. Proceeds from agricultural products are alternative revenue sources for universities in form of funding. The respondents attested that selling of farm products to lectures, to catering services, to the community where the universities reside, collaborating with farmers and also selling to other universities are alternative revenue sources for funding public universities in Rivers State. These findings agree with a study carried out by Adeyemi (2011) that stated that funds can be internally generated from within schools if they engage in one form of business sale or the other from products gotten from the school. Agricultural products are found within the university and university administrators can use the products from the farm in creating a source of revenue for funding their respective universities.

The results of the study pointed out that proceeds from agricultural products is an essential source of alternative revenue for universities. Looking inwards to this source will provide huge money for them in order to fund their universities effectively.

Furthermore, the findings of the study revealed that social programmes proceeds contribute to the sustainable funding of public universities in Rivers State by 72.1%. Also, the study showed that there is a significant contribution of social programmes proceeds to the sustainable funding of public universities in Rivers State. According to the respondents, social programmes proceeds include organizing football competitions with other universities, organizing inter-house sports between university students, organizing beauty pageants among university students, holding quiz competitions, holding competitions between universities as well as organizing interactive sessions between universities. Proceeds from here are alternative sources of revenue for funding public universities in Rivers State. This finding corroborates with Jaiyeoba (2006) who opined that various social programs can be developed and enhanced by ways of teaming up with other schools, to ensure co-existence and sportsmanship. This in return would generate funds for school through participatory activities.

Social programmes are essential in the activities of any university as it will expose them to the activities and social programmes that are imbedded in other universities. It allows for interactions between and amongst universities and the proceeds serve as a source of revenue for them.

CONCLUSION

The global downturn in economy has made it more difficult for the government to fund public university education alone. There are Alternative to sources available to public universities in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria to harness and overcome the problem of perennial underfunding of their programmes. Planning and harnessing these sources will make them less dependent on the

Government. The fund sources have been found to be sustainable only if some challenges especially corruption, mismanagement, insecurity in the Nigeria etc. are properly addressed. Agricultural products proceeds, social programme proceeds to the funding of public universities in Rivers State.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations were made based on the findings of the study:

1. Public universities should endeavour to increase the cultivation of more agricultural products as they serve as alternative sources of revenue for them.
2. Social programmes in public universities should be intensified and more creative programmes enshrined

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