

## **Innovative Funding Strategies and Quality University Education for Sustainable Development in Cross River State, Nigeria.**

**Ameh, Eyiene, Wonah, Fidelis Aduma & Nwannunu, Blessing Iheoma**

Department of Educational Administration and Planning

Faculty of Education

University of Calabar, Calabar,

Nigeria.

[eyiene.ameh@gmail.com](mailto:eyiene.ameh@gmail.com), [fidelwonah@gmail.com](mailto:fidelwonah@gmail.com)

[blessme4sure2@gmail.com](mailto:blessme4sure2@gmail.com)

---

### **Abstract**

*This study examined innovative funding strategies and quality university education for sustainable development in Cross River State, Nigeria. Two research questions and two null hypotheses were stated to guide the study. Survey research design was adopted for the study. The population of the study consisted of all the 65 head of academic departments in the University of Calabar. Accidental sampling technique was adopted to get the sample of 50 head of academic departments. An instrument titled “Innovative Funding Strategies and Quality University Education for Sustainable Development Questionnaire (IFSQUESDQ)” was used for data collection. Data collected were subjected to statistical analysis using Pearson product moment correlation analysis. Results obtained revealed that the identified innovative funding strategies had a significant positive relationship with quality university education for sustainable development. Based on the findings, it was concluded that for universities to have quality education needed for sustainable development, the establishment of viable microfinance banks and the revitalization of university farms by university managers is very necessary. It was recommended that university managers should establish viable microfinance banks in order to boost their internal revenue generation other than over-depending on government.*

---

**Key words:** *University, Funding, Microfinance, Farms, Quality, Education.*

---

### **Introduction**

Education is the supreme vehicle for national development, socio-economic, scientific and technological advancement. Education in general and university education in particular in every society is obviously known to be an indispensable tool for nations’ economic growth and development. It has been empirically proven and universally acknowledged that unless the citizens of a given country are well educated and appropriately trained, the achievements of rapid economic and social development cannot be guaranteed (Ahmed, 2013).

Nigeria as a nation has been making several efforts to ensure access to qualitative education at the tertiary level. This is because of the place of education as a primary agent towards sustainable development and increasing people’ s capacities to transform their vision for society into reality. Quality education will nurture the kind of leaders, promote the kind of values and ensure that the right kind of graduates that will in turn bring about the required kind of changes that the nation desperately requires today. According to Akinpelu in Akuegwu (2014), quality of education means that the products (graduates) of an education system must be the best example of those who can be regarded as educated in their cultures and who should be generally seen as the best of humanity. Quality education refers to the

suitability of the education system in relation to its goals and objectives. It has to do with issues of relevance, validity, functionalism and efficiency in the attainment of prescribed goals and objectives of the educational system. Quality education according to Saint, Harriett and Strassner (2003) refers to education that is meaningful, worthwhile and responsive to individuals and societal needs. Quality education entails good learning environment, relevant curricula, effective teaching-learning process and good learning outcomes.

However, in the last two decades, there has been mounting concern about the quality of teaching and schooling in Nigeria. This is rooted in the realization that literacy will influence an individual's job attainment and the general economic well-being of society. Poor university education has become the greatest barrier to political, social and economic transformation in Nigeria today. It has become clear that graduates of tertiary institutions in Nigeria are often not suitably qualified to fill available vacancies or to contribute effectively to national development. The frequent and sometimes protracted strikes by university workers (both academic and non-academic) disrupt academic programmes, thus, affecting learning processes. This frequent disruption of academic programmes has a lot of implications on the quality of education that would have led to sustainable development.

Furthermore, Akuegwu (2014) stated that there can be no sustainable development without quality tertiary education. This is so because, it is in tertiary education that human mind is trained to function effectively. When the mind is refined and transformed, it has the capability of dictating what is right and wrong. It knows the meaning, importance and essence in living a useful and beneficial life. Through this, desirable qualities and characteristics are transferred to others. The Nigerian society's development can be sustained to the extent that her citizens receive the right quality of tertiary education.

Similarly, tertiary education empowers an individual to realize his/her potentials. This empowerment however comes with the quality of education received. Quality education confers members of the society with the ability to make positive changes (Dienye, 2011). When positive changes are entrenched, vices such as inter-ethnic conflicts, anti-social behaviours, oppression, dishonesty, corruption and other unpatriotic acts cannot find space in the lives of Nigerians. Thus, sustainable development evolves when people perform efficiently with everyone perceiving it has a sense of duty and responsibility to contribute towards the well-being of others.

Meanwhile, various factors have been blamed as the reason for this anomaly. Some of the contributing factors identified are: castrated and/or truncated programme duration, illegal admission concessions, poor quality of matriculants, unqualified lecturers, lack of dedication among professors, defective institutional environment, inadequacy of study facilities, examination malpractices, incompetent examination administrators, the waiver clause which allows failed students to graduates, brain-drain syndrome, deteriorated infrastructures, poor funding, erosion of university autonomy, political interference in university administration, unions unrest, student union activism, lecturers' impunity, academia rascality, inadequate research, regulative failure of National Universities Commission (NUC), irrelevant curricula, federal character and quota system syndrome, among others (Ajani & Ekundayo, 2006).

Obayan (2006) believed that providing quality education for the citizenry is a must, yet there can be no quality education without adequate funding. The problem of university education financing in Nigeria has to do with lack of commitment on the part of the

government to provide quality education to its citizens, this is evident in the last 10 years where the total number of students' enrolment tripled while public resource allocated to the education sector continued to decline. Ajayi and Ekundayo (2006) argued that the Nigerian government over the years has not met the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) recommendation of 26% of the total budget allocation to education sector despite the government's allocation towards education on yearly basis. The underlying rationale for public funding of education is to equip people with the requisite knowledge, skills and capacity to enhance the quality of life, productivity and enable them to participate actively in the development process.

Ezekwesili (2006) affirmed that underfunding of education especially at the tertiary level has become a persistent occurrence in Nigeria as funds released to the tertiary sector can no longer meet the increasing demands and growth of Nigerian tertiary institutions. Funding of Nigerian higher education is imperative because of the costs involved in maintaining an institution. John and Parson (2004) observed that the continuing cost of governance is ascribed to increasing higher educational bills of many countries of the world especially the developing countries, coupled with growing overhead costs.

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. According to Imhabekhai and Tonwe (2001), inadequate funding deters growth in the tertiary institutions. 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.

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. It was based on this that the researchers seek to examine the relationship that exist between innovative funding strategies and quality university education for sustainable development in Cross River State, Nigeria.

### **Literature review**

Sources of funding university education have been extensively researched by many scholars. Some of which are highlighted in this study. Aja-Okorie (2016) ex-rayed the strategies for improving the internal generated revenue (IGR) base of Ebonyi State University, Abakaliki. The study specifically focused on how the establishment of vocational centre, sport clubs, and skills acquisition centres in the universities could improve the IGR generation. The results of the study showed that the establishment of entrepreneurship training centres in the university can enhance the IGR of the state university, that the university partnership programmes or collaboration with other institutions can improve the

university internally generated revenue base and that adoption and efficient utilization of e-payment of school fees and online registrations can help to increase the internal generated revenue of the university.

Ekpoh and Okpa (2017) studied diversification of sources of funding university education for sustainability: challenges and strategies for improvement. Findings revealed some of the diversified sources of funding to include: consultancy services, commercialization of physical facilities, part-time degree programmes among others. Ekpoh, Ukpong and Edet (2009) stated that alternative mode of funding include: providing consultancy services, establishment of university farms, lease of university lands for private developers, expanded sources of endowment earnings, establishment of small and medium scale industries, commercialization of university sport facilities, hotel services among others.

Chukwurah (2011) advanced that education is being funded through internally generated income which includes consultancy services, farm products, investment and mounting of consultancy educational programmes. Undeshi, Okoro, Akinde and Ateh (2016) examined funding innovation and university entrepreneurship education goal attainment in Cross River State. The findings revealed that commercialization of research work and proceeds from university agricultural product significantly relate to entrepreneurship education goal attainment.

Ofoegbu and Alonge (2016) identified the major sources and utilization of internally generated financial revenue by Nigerian university administrators. The analysis revealed that commercial ventures were among the main sources of IGR while the proceeds were used for services including staff welfare, maintenance of facilities and beautification of the university premises. A further analysis of data showed that there was a significant relationship between internally generated resources and the management and development of universities in Southern Nigeria. Famurewa (2014) advocated sale of services as a veritable source of funds. According to Famurewa, sale of services can be divided or broken into sub-divisions, such as: sale of admission forms and general services, rental of physical facilities and consultancy services. Sale of general services includes among others the sale of admission forms, instructional academic records, farm produce, academic robes and examination and pre-degree forms. These services can yield substantial revenue to the tertiary institutions if properly harnessed.

Famurewa (2014) also noted that tertiary institutions can maximize their internally generated revenue from business enterprise. Business enterprise, according to Famurewa, is an indirect way of generating funds for higher institutions, while the first two approaches (financial aids and sale of services) constitute a direct way. There are four major business enterprises in which tertiary educational institutions can invest their productive funds. These are: agriculture, manufacturing, commercial, and portfolio management. In agriculture, Famurewa indicate that even though, some of the tertiary institutions in Nigeria are known to have established agricultural projects, all tertiary institutions should, as a matter of deliberate policy and urgency be encouraged to embark on this venture. They should play a significant role both in research work and practical agriculture in order to assist in feeding the growing population and to reduce the nation's dependence on imported foods from abroad. Moreover, higher educational institutions can embark on other creative commercial ventures such as establishing Micro Finance Bank or selected institutions can come together to jointly set up commercial banks. Additionally, funds may be raised through lottery and raffle draws.

These techniques, apart from serving as sources of revenue to these institutions, are reliable ways of redistributing the nation's wealth.

Famade, Omiyale and Adebola (2015) asserted that individual institutions could supplement their funding stream through the establishment of revenue yielding ventures/project. Such projects/venture like bookshops, micro finance bank, hotel and catering services, printing press, consultancy service, etc., are veritable means of raising funds needed to enhance their service delivery. Paul (2016) opined that school activities represent another good source of financing public secondary schools. They include such activities as sales of students hand crafts, sales of books and stationery, staging of school plays and raffles, sales of farm products from the school farm, funds raising activity can be organized by the school authority where parents could be invited to raise money for school projects.

### **Statement of the problem**

The value of the university education on the overall development of the Nigerian society cannot be underestimated. University education prepares youth who would contribute their quota to socio-economic development of the society. Despite these entrusted objectives of universities in Nigeria, it seems not to have lived up to the expectation. Unfortunately, university education seem not to have liberated Nigerians from the bondage of parochialism, ethnicity, tribalism, oppression and injustice. Disappointingly, those who seem to fan the embers of tribalism and ethnicity, and are dangerously corrupt are the educated class. This could be the effect of the poor financial status of the universities.

It has been observed with dismay that the rapid expansion in number of universities in Nigeria is not matched with increased supply of qualified lecturers and increased funding, either by federal or state governments, since most of the expansion took place at periods of economic decline in real terms. The level of funding of education thus declined over the years with attendant decay of infrastructure and low staff morale. The effects of inadequate funding of the Nigerian 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. All of these factors combine together to hamper the quality of university education in the contemporary Nigerian society. There is therefore an urgent need to address these problems with a view to improving the quality of university education being received by the growing number of youths in the society.

The decline in quality seems to be brought about by a number of factors, which include but not limited to poor states of economy, weak internal capacity, poor governance, poor research activities, brain drain, political interference, incessant industrial actions, unruly and destructive conduct of undergraduates, poor preparation of entering students, unsuitable policy environment, poor funding, shortages in instructional materials, laboratory equipment and poor library facilities. Other factors are the unexpected consequences of the government policy at the primary and secondary level. All of these have had a devastating effect on the

quality of education and have therefore informed this study.

Efforts made by government to remedy these problems include but not limited to advising university managers to source for 10% of their annual expenditure and the establishment of the Education Tax Fund (ETF). Despite all these, the problem of lack of fund still persist. It is pertinent at this point to raise the question: ‘ to what extent does innovative funding strategies relate to quality university education for sustainable development in Cross River State, Nigeria?’

### **Purpose of the study**

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship that exist between innovative funding strategies and quality university education for sustainable development in Cross River State, Nigeria. Specifically, the study sought to examine the relationship between:

1. Establishment of micro finance bank and quality university education for sustainable development.
2. Revitalization of university farms and quality university education for sustainable development.

### **Statement of hypotheses**

1. Establishment of micro finance bank has no significant relationship with quality university education for sustainable development.
2. Revitalization of university farms has no significant relationship with quality university education for sustainable development.

### **Methodology**

Survey research design was adopted for the study. The population of the study consists of all the 65 Head of academic Departments (HOD) in the University of Calabar. Accidental sampling technique was adopted because the researchers administered the research instrument to HOD who were met in their respective offices. The sample size for the study consisted of fifty five (55) HOD. A questionnaire titled “ Innovative Funding Strategies and Quality University Education for Sustainable Development Questionnaire (IFSQUESDQ)” was used for data collection. The instrument was divided into two sections – sections A and B. Section A was designed to elicit information on innovative funding strategies with sixteen items on a four point modified Likert scale type. Section B was designed to elicit information on quality university education for sustainable development with eight items. The instrument was subjected to face validity and Cronbach Alpha reliability. The reliability index ranged from .75 to .82. Pearson Product moment correlation analysis was used to analyze the data collected. The results were placed at .05 level of significance and 53 degrees of freedom.

### **Results**

#### **Hypothesis One**

Establishment of micro finance bank does not significantly relate with quality university education for sustainable development. Pearson product moment correlation analysis was used to analyze this hypothesis as presented in Table 1.

**Table 1: Pearson product moment correlation analysis of the relationship between establishment of micro finance bank and quality university education for sustainable development. N = 55.**

Variables	$\bar{X}$	S.D	r-cal
Establishment of micro finance bank	19.491	4.447	
Quality university education	17.891	2.225	.511*

\*Significant at .05 level; critical r = .261; df = 53.

The result of the analysis presented in Table 1 showed that there is a significant positive relationship between establishment of micro finance bank and quality university education for sustainable development ( $r = .511; p < .05$ ). Based on this result, the null hypothesis was rejected because the calculated r-value of .511 was found to be greater than the critical r-value of .261 at .05 level of significance and 53 degrees of freedom. This finding implied that establishment of micro finance bank has a significant positive relationship with quality university education for sustainable development. This implied that the establishment of viable micro finance banks and the proper utilization of it's proceed will help to provide the needed educational resources for quality education.

### Hypothesis Two

Revitalization of university farms has no significant relationship with quality university education for sustainable development. Pearson product moment correlation analysis was used to analyze this hypothesis as presented in Table 2.

**Table 2: Pearson product moment correlation analysis of the relationship between revitalization of university farms and quality university education for sustainable development. N = 55.**

Variables	$\bar{X}$	S.D	r-cal
Revitalization of university farms	19.456	4.876	
Quality university education	17.891	2.225	.565*

\*Significant at .05 level; critical r = .261; df = 53.

The result of the analysis presented in Table 2 showed that there is a significant positive relationship between revitalization of university farms and quality university education for sustainable development ( $r = .565; p < .05$ ). Based on this result, the null hypothesis was rejected because the calculated r-value of .565 was found to be greater than the critical r-value of .261 at .05 level of significance and 53 degrees of freedom. This finding implied that revitalization of university farm has a significant positive relationship with quality university education for sustainable development. This implied that the revitalization of university farms will help to provide the needed educational resources for quality education.

## Discussion

The result in Table 1 showed that establishment of micro finance banks had a significant positive relation with quality university education for sustainable development. That implied that the higher the university established micro finance banks, the higher the funds will be available for the provision of quality university education for sustainable development. This finding is in agreement with the findings of Famurewa (2014) who asserted that tertiary institutions can maximize their internally generated revenue from business enterprise. The researcher added that higher educational institutions can embark on other creative commercial ventures such as establishing Micro Finance Bank or selected institutions can come together to jointly set up commercial banks. This was supported Famade, Omiyale and Adebola (2015) who are of the opinion that individual institutions could supplement their funding stream through the establishment of revenue yielding ventures/project. Such projects/venture like bookshops, micro finance bank, hotel and catering services, printing press, consultancy service, etc., are veritable means of raising funds needed to enhance their service delivery.

The results in Table 2 revealed that revitalization of university farms had a significant positive relationship with quality education for sustainable development. That implied that the higher the university farms are revitalized, the higher the funds will be available for the provision of quality university education for sustainable development. This result is in consonance with the findings of Ekpoh, Ukpong and Edet (2009) who stated that alternative mode of funding include: providing consultancy services, establishment of university farms, lease of university lands for private developers, expanded sources of endowment earnings, establishment of small and medium scale industries, commercialization of university sport facilities, hotel services among others. Chukwurah (2011) advanced that education is being funded through internally generated income which includes consultancy services, farm products, investment and mounting of consultancy educational programmes. Undeshi, Okoro, Akinde and Ateh (2016) added that commercialization of research work and proceeds from university agricultural product significantly relate to entrepreneurship education goal attainment.

## Conclusion

It was concluded in this study that for universities to have quality education needed for sustainable development, the establishment of viable microfinance banks and the revitalization of university farms by university managers is very necessary.

## Recommendations

Based on the conclusion, it was recommended among others that:

1. University managers should establish viable microfinance banks in order to boost their internal revenue generation other than over-depending on government.
2. University managers should revitalize the university farming system in order to use proceeds from the farm to improve their internally generated revenue for the provision of quality university education.

## References

- Ahmed, S. (2013). Availability of funds and utilization in Federal Universities of Technology in North-East Zone of Nigeria. *Multi-disciplinary Journal of Science, Technology and Vocational Education (MJOSTEVE)*, 2(1), 80-90.
- Aja-Okorie, U. (2016). Alternative strategies for improving internally generated revenue



- (IGR) of state universities in Nigeria: Implications for Ebonyi State University (EBSU) Abakaliki. *International Journal of Science and Research*, 5(10), 1991-1996.
- Ajayi, I. A., & Ekundayo, H. T. (2006). *Funding initiatives in university education in Nigeria*. Paper presented at the national conference of Nigerian Association for Educational Administration and Planning (NAEAP), Enugu, Nigeria.
- Akinyemi, S. (2012). Funding strategies for qualitative university education in developing economies: the case of Nigeria. *International Journal of Higher Education*, 2(1), 53.
- Akuegwu, B. A. (2014). Quality higher education and sustainable development. In G. O. Unachukwu and P. N. Okorji (Eds). *Educational management: A skill building approach*. Anambra, Rex Charles & Patrick Limited, 631-646.
- Arikewuyo, M. D. (2001). Public participation in management of higher institution in Ogun state, Nigeria. *Evaluation Research*, 1, 30-37.
- Chukwurah, C. (2011). Diversification of education funds for quality assurance in open and distance education in Nigeria. *Journal of Education and Social Research*, 1(1), 77-82.
- Dienye, V. U. (2011). Education and society development: The quality imperative. *African Journal of Education and Technology*, 1(3), 15-24.
- Ekpoh, U. I., Ukpong, N. N. & Edet A. O. (2009). Funding university education in Nigeria: The way forward. *International Journal of Higher Education*, 4(1), 191-200.
- Ekpoh, U. I. & Okpa, O. E. (2017). Diversification of sources of funding university education for sustainability: Challenges and strategies for improvement. *Journal of Education, Society and Behavioural Science*, 21(2), 1-8.
- Ekundayo, T. A. (2008). Expanding access to higher education in Nigeria: The question of quality control. *Journal of Reforming Higher Education in Africa*, 22-36.
- Ezekwesili, O. (2006). *Lack of fund is the bane of the Nigerian education system*. NTA Network News, October, 2006.
- Famade, O. A., Omiyale, G. T. & Adebola, Y. A. (2015). Towards improved funding of tertiary institutions in Nigeria. *Asian Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences (AJHSS)*, 3(2), 83-90.
- Famurewa, I. O. (2014). Inadequate funding as the bane of tertiary education in Nigeria. *Greener Journal of Economics and Accountancy*, 3(2), 020-025.
- Imhabekhai, C. I. & Tonwe, D. A. (2001). Funding higher education in Nigeria. *Evaluation Research*, 1, 30-37.
- John, E. P. S., & Parsons, M. D. (2004). *Public funding of higher education: Changing contexts and new rationales*. JHU Press.
- Obayan, F. O. B. (2006). *Educational financing: Principles, trends and strategies*. Ilorin: ACEMDEV Publications.
- Ofoegbu, F. I. & Alonge, H. O. (2016). Internally generated revenue and effectiveness of university administration in Nigeria. *Journal of Education & Learning*, 5(2), 1-8.
- Okojie, C. O. (2010). *Systems and strategies for funding Nigerian Universities*. A paper presented at a lecture on innovative and administrative effectiveness of University administrators in Nigeria.
- Okojie, J. A. (2010). *System and strategies for funding Nigerian universities*. NAPE. pp. 10.
- Olokoba, A. A. (2014). *Impact of funding on the provision and management of student welfare services in Colleges of Legal and Islamic Studies in Nigeria*. Ph.D Dissertation, Department of Educational Foundations and Curriculum, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, Nigeria.
- Paul, N. (2016). Alternative sources of financing secondary education in Ebonyi State by the school administrators. *British Journal of Education*, 5(4), 10-14.
- Saint, W., Hartnett, T. A., & Strassner, E. (2003). Higher education in Nigeria: a status

report. *Journal of Higher Education Policy*, 16, 259-281.

Undeshi, C. A., Okoro, P., Akinde, U. E. & Ateh, G. A. (2016). Funding innovation and university entrepreneurship education goals attainment in Cross River State. *Nigerian Journal of Educational Administration and Planning*, 16(1), 39-46.