

Diversification of Resource-Base of Educational Administration through Commercialization in a Period of Dwindling Economy in Tertiary Institutions in Nigeria

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Abstract

Every organization, be it service or profit oriented, strives to attain their objectives. In a period of dwindling economy, one sure ways of attaining the objectives is to commercialize their services to earn profit. It on this standpoint that this paper examined those key areas of diversifying resource base of educational administration through commercialization in a period of dwindling economy in tertiary institutions of learning. The paper concluded that: agricultural farms, hiring of farm equipment, bookshops, printing press, guest house, consultancy services, services of microbiology and biochemistry laboratory, drug production etc as key areas of diversifying educational administration through commercialization in period of dwindling economy in tertiary institutions in Nigeria. The paper recommended among other things that: every department in tertiary institutions should diverse means of making their services to be attractive to investors; tertiary institutions should introduces ventures that they will collaborate with home and foreign investors; tertiary institutions should buy shares from shareholders etc.

Key words: Educational administration, funding, Commercialisation, resource-base, dwindling economy and tertiary institutions.

Introduction

All over the globe, education is regarded as the “theatre” of development. It is a fulcrum on which all other development pivot. Thus, education is the most potent sector that changes the social economic and political life and values of any nation, thereby bringing national development. Based on this, Nigeria regarded education as an “instrument par excellence for social and economic reconstruction of the nation” (Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN), 2014).

However, there are myriad of challenge facing the educational sector in Nigeria. Prominent among them is dwindly economy. Dwindling as Webster (2010) puts it as diminish or become less, make or become smaller, decline” therefore, dwindling economy could be describe as the showing down or contraction or reduction in economic activities. Wali (2017) described it as the economic decline when is typically accompanied by a drop in the stock market, an increase in unemployment and a decline in the housing market. Koo (2011) sees dwindling economy as business circle contraction which results to a general slowdown in economic activities. The above definitions dictates that in a dwindling economy, there are decline in consumption, investment, government spending, net export activities, high rate of loss of jobs, unemployment, galloping exchange rate, high cost of goods and services, closure of businesses, owning of government workers, increase in crime rate and decrease in value of our local currency.

The dwindling economy which has affected education sector have invariably affected all the sub-sectors of education, including, tertiary education level of educational system. FRN (2014) defined tertiary education as:

The education given after post Basic education in institutions such as universities, and inter-university centres such as the Nigeria French language Village, Nigeria Arabic Language village, National institute of Nigerian Languages, Institutions such as Innovative Enterprise Institutions (IEIs), and colleges of Education, Monotechnics, Polytechnics and other specialized institutions such as college of Agriculture, school of Health and Technology and the National Teachers institutes(NTI) (39).

The policy document further states the goals of tertiary education as to:

- a) Contribute to national development through high manper training;
- b) Provide accessible and affordable quality learning opportunities in formal and informal education in response to the needs and interests of all Nigerias;
- c) Provide high quality career counseling and lifelong learning programmes that prepare students with the knowledge and skills for self- reliance and the world of work;
- d) Reduce skill shortages through the production of skilled manpower relevant to the needs of the labour market;
- e) Promote and encourage scholarship, entrepreneurship and community services;
- f) Forge and cement national unity; and
- g) Promote national and international understanding and interaction

The above goals showcased that tertiary institutes are citadel of learning and development of human resources. That the entire intellectual and professional life of a country depends on sound tertiary institutions that provides quality graduates of international standard and repute. To attain these goals of tertiary institutions is a functions of adequate funding, which is the fulcrum on which the entire life of tertiary institutions depends. Thus, funding affects every aspects of tertiary institutions' activities and functions. Unfortunately, tertiary institutions in Nigeria are characterized by Chronic under funding. This, in effect causes strikes, worsening conditions of service, poor infrastructures, brain drain and lowering the standard performance of tertiary institutions in Nigeria. The question one should be tempted to ask is: how can tertiary institutions achieve her goals, even in this days of dwindling economy?

It is on this stand point that this paper is tilted: to diversification of resource-base of educational administration through commercialization in a period of dwindling economy in tertiary institutions in Nigeria. To achieve this the paper looked at the concept of educational administration, concept of commercialization, justification of commercialization of tertiary institutions, and key areas of commercialization of tertiary institutions in Nigeria.

Concept of Educational Administration

To have a précised definition of educational administration is an “uphill task”. Reasons being that those who cares to define it may do so because of their background, environment and circumstances in which they found themselves. However, it is not the position of this paper to consider those differential. Therefore educational administration is viewed here as the arrangement of the human and material resources available for education and carefully using them systematically for the attainment of stated objectives. It involves the planning and organization of activities and resources aimed at fulfilling the goals of an educational institution.

Mussazi in Whawo(2003) defined educational administration as a social process concerned with identifying, maintaining, motivating, controlling and unifying formally and informally organized human and material resources to achieve set educational goals. Whawo

further defined it as a process of mobilizing the human and material resources within a school for effective teaching and learning so that the goals for establishing the school may be fully and efficiently realized. Ezeocha in Ogbonnaya (2010) conceptualized education administration as a way of coordinating and controlling the scarce resources of an education institution, namely manpower, finance and capital equipment so as to achieve desired educational objectives. Ochai(2012) is of the opinion that educational administration is the process where the school head such as vice chancellor, provost, rectors, principal or head teacher, as the Chief executive of the school coordinates the efforts and activities of staff (teaching and non-teaching)towards the achievement of the goals of the school. It encompasses the acquisition of resources, their prudent management, the harnessing and maximizing of the efforts of human resource within and outside institution to realize educational goals. The above definitions revealed that:

- ❖ Educational administration involves the activities of planning and organizing resources for the attainment of the objectives of a school;
- ❖ Educational administration involves staffing, providing the personnel (teaching and non-teaching staff) who will assist or contribute to the achievement of the objectives of education
- ❖ Educational administration is concerned with procuring and managing the human and material resources necessary for the support and maintenance of the organization and its programme (Ogbonnaya, 2010).

Concept of Commercialization of Tertiary Education Administration

To commercialize as Hornby (2001) puts it, is to use something to try to make profit. Commercialization could be viewed as a process by which a new product or service is introduced into the market to make profit. In other hand commercialization of tertiary education administration is seen as a process whereby tertiary institutions embark on commercial ventures with the aim of making profit. That is tertiary educational institutions are expected to be creative and activity oriented in order to make profit and be self-sufficient. They are also expected to declare their annual profits. They can raise their capital and operation expenses from the capital market.

Justification for Diversification of Resource-base of tertiary institutions through Commercialization of Activities

There are good numbers of reasons why tertiary education activities is necessary to be commercialized during dwindling economy, important among them are:

- ❖ **To achieve proper quality delivering:** For tertiary institutions to achieve their goals, they need various ways to diversity their resource base. It is on this note that FRN (2014) among other things, encouraged tertiary institutions to explore other sources of funding such as endowments, consultancy services and commercial ventures to achieve the quality delivery of their institutions.
- ❖ **To reduce the cases of underfunding:** Of a truth, the planning and administration of tertiary institutions and quality service delivery is a function of availability of funds to implement policies and prosecute programmes and best practices. But tertiary institutions do not got what they needed, rather, they work on what government could afford, and what government could afford had never been enough and hence the need for commercialization
- ❖ **To reduce the cases of inadequate infrastructure:** In tertiary institutions, there are manifestations of deteriorated and inadequate teaching and learning facilities which are caused by financial inadequacies. Ajayi and Haastrup (2009) avers that library and library space, social and laboratory facilities, lecture halls, students hostel, books,

journals, office space etc are inadequate. Similarly, World Bank in Robert- Okah and Wali (2013) observed that equipment for teaching, research and learning are either lacking or very inadequate and in bad shape to enable tertiary institutions carry out academic functions.

Okejim, Uche and Obasi (2016) in Robert – Okah (2017) added the reasons for justification of commercialization of tertiary institutions administration in the period of dwindling economy as:

- ❖ **In the face of the dwindling economy, revenue from oil has continued to decline:** Education therefore, needs not continue to enjoy the lion share in the annual budget if other sectors of the economy are to be attended to.
- ❖ The huge capital outlay required in the provision of education calls for more aggressive solicitation for financial support from other sources other than the government.
- ❖ During the oil boom era, when “money was not a problem” in Nigeria, some foreign donor agencies withdraw their financial aids to Nigeria educational institutions. Most of the aids now come in the form of services rather than cash and hence cannot be manipulated to other areas of critical needs.
- ❖ The depreciation value of naira and galloping inflation have jointly made it difficult for the effects of government “huge financial appropriation to education” to be felt.
- ❖ The immediate past President of Nigeria, Dr. Goodluck Ebele Jonathan in 2012 was unequivocal when he called on university administrators to look for ways to diversify their revenue base to meet up with their statutory obligations as government could no longer foot their financial demands alone.

Key Areas of Diversifying Resource-Base of Tertiary Institutions in a period of dwindling economy

There are many ways of diversify resource-base of tertiary institutions through commercialisation. Prominent among them are highlighted here as:

- 1) **Farming involves the practice of agriculture or aquaculture.** Such as crop farming, plantation farming, poultry farming, snail farming, mushroom farming, fish farming and animal husbandry.
 - ❖ **Crop farming:** Tertiary institutions could have crop farming for production of corn, okro, maize, yams, beans, rice, vegetables, cucumbers, cassava etc. these crop should be produce in large quantity and the proceeds should be sold to the public for consumption and money realized will increase the institution financial base.
 - ❖ **Plantation farming:** Tertiary institutions could embark on plantation farming, such as palm produce, rubber, cocoa, plantain, banana etc. the output of these farming will be sold to individuals or industries as raw materials.
 - ❖ **Poultry farming:** Tertiary institutions could increase their financial base through poultry farming. The poultry farms will produce eggs and fowls which will be sold to members of the public for consumption and the money realized will be used the institution.
 - ❖ **Snail farming:** Tertiary institutions could increase their financial base through breeding of snails in a large quantity for commercial purpose.
 - ❖ **Mushroom farming:** This involves breeding of mushroom in a large quantity and sell them to the public for consumption and money realized will increase the finance of the institution.
 - ❖ **Fish farming:** This is another area which could be used to generate income for tertiary institutions. It involve breeding of fishes in a large quantity and sold to members of the public for consumption. Fish farming is one of the highest internally generated revenue in Ignatius Ajuru University of Education, Port Harcourt.

- ❖ **Animal husbandry:** This is another revenue yielding venture which involves the rearing of animals such as cow, pigs, grass cutters, dogs, etc. With this farming, beef and milk will be produced and sold to the public, dogs are sold for security to those who are in need. Money realized are sent to the institutions coffers.
- 2) **Hiring of farm equipment:** The farm operation unit of tertiary institutions have some agricultural farm machineries such as tractors, ploughs, harrows, harvesters, grinders, bulldozers etc. These equipment could be hired out to interested members of the public for farming at moderate cost, and hence, income will be generated.
- 3) **Bookshops:** This constitute another area of commercialization in tertiary institutions. The bookshop offer its service to students, members of staff and outsiders. The bookshop business is lucrative because the students, members of the academics need the books for their academic pursuit. Bookshops has to be revitalized to make it more relevant to the tertiary institutions and wider society. To be able to do this Okororsaye-Orubito (2003) suggested that:
 - ❖ The bookshops should request from all academic departments lists of recommended textbooks for all the courses offered in the University (tertiary institutions)
 - ❖ The bookshops should then obtain a short-term loan from a commercial institution for the purchase of these books.
 - ❖ Decentralize the bookshops services by extending them to the faculties.
 - ❖ Sell these books to students at a rate slightly lower than the market price. This is an incentive to students. Other sales promotional schemes can also be worked out.
 - ❖ For books that are not available in the country, lecturers in the relevant areas can be commissioned to write the equivalent. In the alternative, the copyrights should be bought from the original publishers for printing, publication and sales in Nigeria (115-116).
- 4) **Printing press:** Corollary to bookshops, printing press constitute one of the most viable projects that is available to tertiary institutions for commercialization. Academics and members of the public sent their books and non-book material for printing and publishing at a reduced cost. The income realized from it will contribute to the institutions internally generated revenue.
- 5) **Guest house:** Every tertiary institutions should have guest house to provide accommodation, food and laundry services for visitors and strangers who may need their services. The income generated as a result of rendering these services will serve as revenue base of the institution.
- 6) **Services of microbiology and Biochemistry laboratory:** These departments, especially in University should render laboratory services to various higher learning hospitals, companies and single individuals. These services will be paid for by the beneficiaries or patients. The income generated from these services will income the purse of the institution.
- 7) **Drug production:** The faculty of pharmaceutical sciences, especially in universities, should be engaged in production of drugs and medical materials such as panadol, chloroquine, novalgin, syringes, cough syrups, vitamin tablets and syrups. These products should be produced in a large quantity and sold at different hospitals and chemist stores within and outside the institutions.
- 8) **Consultancy services:** Tertiary institutions especially the universities should run consultancy services on road construction and rehabilitation, electrical and telecommunication industry, petrochemical industry, soap and beverage manufacturing, mineral extraction, stone crushing industries. These consultancy services exists mostly in:-

- ❖ Consultancy service of mechanical and electrical electronic engineering departments
- ❖ Consultancy services of the department of architectures,
- ❖ Consultancy services of the department of management
- ❖ Consultancy services of chemical and petroleum engineering departments
- ❖ Consultancy services of the department of zoology
- ❖ Consultancy services of the department of microbiology, etc (Ogbonnaya 2012:155).

9) **Transport services:** This involves community members of the tertiary institutions and other members of the society to and from their places of endeavours. The transport services could be within, inter-state and airport. Money generated from it will be used to develop the institution.

10) **Tertiary Institution schools:** Tertiary institutions should as a matter of fact establish pre-nursery, nursery, primary and secondary schools within their campus, as a way of generating money for the institution. The pupils/students admitted will be made to pay tuition and other fees. The school fees and other charges paid by the pupils/students in this schools will go into the tertiary institution funds. Ogbonnaya (2012) identified some of the Universities in Nigeria that established nursery, primary and secondary schools as the University of Lagos, Obafemi Awolowo University Ile-Ife, University of Nigeria, Nsukka, Ogun State University, Ago-Iwoye, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaira, Abia State University Uturu, University of Port Harcourt, and Delta State University, Abraka. However, it should be noted that almost or if not all the tertiary institutions operate these schools, including Ignatius Ajuru University of Education Port Harcourt.

11) **Sandwich, Part-time and continuing Education programme.** Tertiary institutions should run sandwich, part-time and continuing education programmes for the award of diploma, certificate and degree. The continuing education programme should be for those who were unable to make their papers to qualify them entry into higher institutions. Student admitted in these programmes pay school fees and other charges, which will constitute internal generated revenue of the institution.

Other areas of diversification

Tertiary institutions could introduce other areas of business as: Bakery, restaurant merchandise shop, computer repair shop block moulding, key moulding, garment making metal fabrication, automobile workshop, woodwork shop, etc profit made should be sent to institutions coffer.

Benefits of Commercialization of Tertiary Institutions Activities.

The benefits of commercialization tertiary institutions in a period of dwindling economy are summarized below as:

- 1) It creates employment opportunities as people will be employed to occupy the job openings in such establishment, as a result of commercialization
- 2) It helps in improving economic efficiencies by ensuring that the products produced are of higher standard than the ones produced in the circular society.
- 3) Commercialisation reduces fiscal deficits of tertiary institutions as profits generated are remitted to the institution's coffers.
- 4) It helps the tertiary institution to broaden their internal generated revenue as they diversify their resources.
- 5) It helps tertiary institutions to create new openings for investment and consultation for people in both home and abroad to invest or consult on the institution's investment or market

- 6) Commercialisation encourages regular pay for success. In other words, when workers accomplish their task they are sure of regular pay.
- 7) It boost the institution image by being self-supported

Problems of commercialization of Educational Administration in tertiary institutions

In as much as commercialization tertiary institutions' Activities are beneficial, it is not left without its short comings or problems. These problems are in a nutshell state below:

- 1) Since commercialization is profit- oriented, the management of tertiary institution if not checked, might resort to be profit driven in all the activities of the institution including school fees, which may not be within the reach of the common man.
- 2) Akin to the above, corruption might set in and intoxication of authority becomes the order of the day.
- 3) It is capital intensive and most of the tertiary institutions may not have money to embark on some of the projects.
- 4) In a bid to maximizing profit, the institution may employ cheap labours or "roadside labours" to executive the projects.
- 5) Workers are over burden as few workers were employed to do the work many workers are supposed to do. In addition, workers are given a defined large daily tasks in order to meet the target (profit maximization).
- 6) There is delay in payment of salary or wages of workers especially when the venture fails to make success.
- 7) Poor condition of service as most of the workers are not persionable and their appointment could be terminated at will of the administrator/manager.

Conclusion

It has been stressed that commercialization is not divorce from profit making. Therefore, educational administrators of tertiary institutions of learning should have diverse ways of commercializing some of the activities of their institution in order to make profit, especially when the government subvention to the institution are hitched or not enough to implement their programmes. It is therefore concluded that education administration of tertiary institutions should commercialise some their activities like farming, bookshops, printing press, guest houses, drug production, consultancy services, etc in order to boost their revenue base and implement their policies and programmes.

Recommendations

For educational administration to survive in tertiary institutions in a period of dwindling economy, it is recommended that:

- ❖ Every department should diverse means on how to use their services to attract people to invest in such services and money realize will be used for the development of the institution.
- ❖ Tertiary institutions should introduce ventures that will attract both local and foreign firms collaboration. Money realized in the ventures should be used to prosecute the institution's programmes, especially during the period of dwindling economy.
- ❖ Tertiary institutions should buy shares from shareholders so that when dividends are declared they will be among the beneficiaries. The money realized should be sent to the institution's coffers for onward usage.
- ❖ Banks and other financial institutions should encourage tertiary institutions to embark on commercialization of some of their services or activities by giving loans to them. This will enable them to establish whatever product or service they desired that could be profitable.

- ❖ Vocational education courses should be one of the general courses students should learn in tertiary institutions and the entrepreneurial skills acquired will earn him/her work study employment in the institution ventures. The money paid to them will be used to pay their fees and augment other expenses that are incurred in course of the schooling.
- ❖ Government should endeavour to increase her budgetary allocation on education to 26% of her total budget as recommended by United Nation Educational Scientific Cultural Organization (UNESCO).

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