

SUSTAINABLE FUNDING STRATEGIES BY TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS FOR IMPROVING EDUCATION AND SKILL TRAINING IN BENUE STATE.

¹Shimave, Aondohemba G., ²Kesiki, W. B. & ³Azuaga, C. I.

^{*1} Department of Agricultural Education, Federal University of Agriculture, Makurdi.

^{*2} Department of Agricultural and Bioenvironmental Engineering, College of Agriculture, Jalingo.

^{*1} E-mail: shima.aondo@gmail.com

Abstract

Sustainable funding is a contemporary issue gaining importance, especially in higher institutions in the face of dwindling government funding. In spite of its importance, many tertiary institutions have not creatively keyed into the funding mix to enhance their mandate of education and skill training. The study investigated sustainable funding strategies utilised by tertiary institutions for improving education and skill training in Benue State. 3 research questions guided the study. The population for the study was 182 vocational and technical education lecturers consisting of 47 lecturers from the two public universities and 135 lecturers from the two state colleges of education. A 45 item, 4-point scaled instrument was used for data collection. 109 of the 182 copies of the questionnaire distributed were retrieved and analysed using the mean and standard deviation to answer the research questions. It was found that tertiary institutions in the state do not fully utilise available sustainable funding strategies from government, the community, and from internally generated revenue. It was therefore recommended tertiary institutions should: adopt the identified strategies to boost their financial viability for improving skill training; and that government agencies exercising should use the sustainable funding strategies as a template for tertiary institutions to implement on a yearly basis to enhance their capacity to produce graduates with employable skills to stem the nation's unemployment.

Introduction

The need for production of skilled manpower to harness the nation's natural resources for economic growth and development cannot be contested. A skill is the manifestation of acquired knowledge, or the transmission of knowledge to practical activity (Ukorie, 2000). For Osinem (2008) a skill is a well-established habit of doing something that involves the acquisition of performance capabilities. Both Ukorie and Osinem are of the view that skill acquisition is rewarding in that it can result to economic growth/stability, curb anti-social vices in society, promote personal and national greatness, and that, a skilled worker is less susceptible to layoff (than the unskilled). This

therefore, makes skill training not only desirable but imperative.

Skill training is training given to an employee to enable the one to perform more expertly on the job using knowledge effectively in execution of one's performances (Osuala, 2004). Mighty recruiter (2018) explains that though skill training is for employees to gain the knowledge and abilities necessary to fulfil specific requirements of their job positions, it is also used for re-educating and retraining employees whenever new technology, processes or systems are introduced. The source adds that skill training is also given to new graduates to gain experience to get started in the workplace. Though skills can be

learned at other levels of education, the skills necessary for national growth and development are climaxed at the tertiary institution.

Tertiary education is education given after secondary education in universities, colleges of education, polytechnics, and monotechnics including institutions offering correspondence courses (Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council- NERDC, 2015). Bogoro (2015) views tertiary education as the apex of knowledge generation. Mamdani adds that, tertiary institution is where teachers are

trained, curricula developed, the leadership of an independent country cultivated, and research located. Tertiary institution in this study therefore, refers to institutions that offer the third level (post- secondary) education. The aims of tertiary education institutions include amongst others to:

- contribute to national development through high level relevant man power training;
- develop and inculcate proper values for survival of the individual and society;
- acquire both physical and intellectual skills which will enable the individual to be self -reliant and useful member of the society, (NERDC, 2015).

Shimave, A. G., Kesiki, W. B. & Azuaga, C. I.

Bogoro (2015) avers that with the knowledge and skills generated at tertiary institution, jobs and wealth are created, poverty mitigated, and global competitiveness enhanced. Because of the varied range of learning options and opportunities offered at tertiary institutions to achieve the above (and more expectations), Tewarie (2010) remarks that, it is the most costly level of education, and hence the need for proper funding.

Funding is the act of providing a primary stream of money to offset cost of delivering higher education (Okebukola, 2015). It can also be defined as the act of providing financial resources, usually in the form of money, or other values to carry out something (Hornby, 2010). Estermann, Pruvot, and Claeys-Kulik (2013) note that, the traditional funding pattern in most developed countries is that budgetary allocation represents up to 90% of tertiary institutions' income structure. The authors add that diversifying income sources is only a way to mitigate risks within the system, but not a replacement or compensation for declining public funding. The percentage is not different in developing countries like Nigeria where government directs that tertiary institutions should source at least 10% of their total yearly income internally (Bamiro, 2012).

Given the importance of budgetary allocations and the need for it to be substantial enough to cater for educational purposes, the United Nations prescribed that developing countries should earmark 26% of their annual budgets for education. Historically, Nigeria did not start badly. Yesufu as cited by Famurewa (2014) informs that in the 1950s and 60s the regional governments used to set aside 25 to 30% of their annual budgets to education. Ukeje confirms that between 1962 to 1975, there was no substantial difference each year between the

amounts requested by Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, and the amount received from the Northern Regional Government, and that in some years the amount received was higher than the amount requested for. Okebukola (2015) traces that the tide changed to inadequate funding in the mid-80s and witnessed a steady decline. The author adds that the funding became unreliable, paltry and unpredictable, and could hardly support the purchase of equipment, tools and other resources for quality education.

In Benue State, many tertiary institutions- both public and private undertake the training of the burgeoning student population. It has however, sadly been observed by the researchers that in most tertiary institutions, laboratories and workshops are ill equipped (with tools, machines and equipment) for skill training. Where tools, machines and equipment exist, they are either obsolete or the student ratio per equipment is too high for effective skill training. In some cases, machines break down, and need spare parts to make them functional. A common refrain from the institutions' management is inadequate funding. This thus results in the churning out of skillless graduates who endlessly seek for (paid) employment even among work' opportunities because of their lack of sellable skills. These groups of graduates do less attractive or poorly paid jobs, depend on parents for a longer time, and can more easily join bad groups to commit crimes to sustain their living. Yet a United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) document as cited by Alpha (2006) unequivocally alerts that equipment for skill training in virtually all the vocational and technical courses are expensive in terms of operating cost, maintenance, and replacement. If tertiary institutions must fulfil their mission of skill training in the face of reduced budgetary

Shimave, A. G., Kesiki, W. B. & Azuaga, C. I.

allocations from government (going down to as low as 7% in 2018 budget), but expensive nature of skill training, they must to develop suitable funding strategies for assistance.

A strategy is a high level plan designed to achieve a long-term overall goal (Hornby, 2010). A strategy is often called for under conditions of uncertainty or when the resources available to achieve set goals are limited, as is the case with the Nigerian education sector. Suitable strategies will intervene to ensure sustainable funding for tertiary institutions by narrowing the gap between what is provided for in the budget and what they need.

Sustainable funding is a holistic approach to fundraising that moves beyond traditional tactics of funding to developing new and creative funding mechanisms to helping organisations become more stable, allowing them to achieve their goals (Cruickshank, 2011). The author advises that to be sustainable institutions should consider the funding sources within their reach, and that by incorporating multiple types of funding, an institution will become more able to overcome financial challenges. In this study, sustainable funding refers to alternative sources of finance other than budgetary allocations used by tertiary institutions to enhance their financial viability. Tewarie, (2010) proposes that tertiary institutions can: develop a range of pathways including ventures, related to their core business of education delivery, research and service; harness commercial opportunities in activities associated with the institution to generate income; and, create structures and infrastructure to support fundraising initiatives to engage possible donors and to attract research funding. The author enumerates government, tuition fees, community

investment, donations, endowments, philanthropy, commercial operations, entrepreneurial ventures, private sector investment, fundraising infrastructure for events/projects, bonds, security instruments, and loans, student loan system, graduate tax as some funding options. Famurewa (2014) categorises the sources that tertiary institutions can raise funding into three: government, community and the institution's internally generated revenue. Okebukola (2015) supports the classification, justifying that since education is a public good, the funding burden should be shared by the stakeholders. In the wake of complaints of inadequate funds and the resultant massification of skill-less graduates, one wonders if tertiary institutions ever explore these options, since their financial vulnerability will negatively impact on skill training. This prompted the researchers to determine sustainable funding strategies by tertiary institutions for improving education and skill training in Benue State

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to determine sustainable funding strategies utilised by tertiary institutions for improving education and skill training in Benue State. Specifically, the study determined;

- 1 Sustainable funding strategies from government utilised by tertiary institutions for improving education and skill training in Benue State.
- 2 Sustainable funding strategies from the community utilised by tertiary institutions for improving education and skill training in Benue State.
- 3 Sustainable funding strategies from internally generated revenue utilised by tertiary institutions for improving education and skill training in Benue State.

Research Questions

Shimave, A. G., Kesiki, W. B. & Azuaga, C. I.

The following research questions were raised to guide the study.

- 1 What are the sustainable funding strategies from government utilised by tertiary institutions for improving education and skill training in Benue State?
- 2 What are the sustainable funding strategies from the community utilised by tertiary institutions for improving education and skill training in Benue State?
- 3 What are the sustainable funding strategies from institution's internally generated revenue utilised by tertiary institutions for improving education and skill training in Benue State?

Methodology

Three research questions guided the study. The study adopted questionnaire survey research design. This research design was suitable for the study because questionnaire was used to collect data from a representative of lecturers and the result was generalised for the entire teachers of vocational and technical education in the study area. The study was carried out in Benue State having four public tertiary institutions offering vocational teacher education. The population of the study was 182 lecturers of vocational and technical education made up of 47 University lecturers and 135 College of Education lecturers. 182 copies of the instrument were distributed

A 45- item structured questionnaire titled, Sustainable Funding Strategies Questionnaire (SFSQ) was developed by the researchers from literature reviewed and used for data collection. The questionnaire was divided into two parts A and B. Part A solicited information on personal data of the respondents, while Part B had 3 sub-sections which obtained respondents' opinion on the sustainable funding strategies from government, sustainable funding strategies from the community and sustainable funding

strategies from internally generated revenue utilised by tertiary institutions in Benue State. The three sub-sections of section B had a four-point response option of highly utilised, moderately utilised, slightly utilised, and not utilised, with corresponding value of 4, 3, 2, and 1, respectively. Three experts validated the instrument, one from Department of Educational Foundations and General Studies, and two from the Department of Agricultural Education of University of Agriculture, Makurdi, Benue State. The observations and suggestions of the experts were used to develop the final copy of the SFSQ used for data collection. Cronbach alpha reliability method was adopted to determine the internal consistency of the questionnaire items which produced a coefficient index of 0.86, meaning that the instrument was reliable and valid for the study.

The instrument was distributed by the researchers with 2 research assistants. 182 copies of the SFSQ were administered to the respondents but only 109 copies of the SFSQ were retrieved. Data collected were analysed using weighted mean produced from Statistical Package of Social Science (SPSS, version 21) to answer the research questions. The cut off point for decision making was a mean of 2.50, which means that any item with a mean value of 2.50 or above was regarded as utilised while any item with a mean less than 2.50 was regarded as not utilised. The standard deviation was used to determine the closeness of the opinion of the respondents. Any item with a standard deviation less than 1.96 (95% confidence limit) indicated that the respondents were close to the mean and to one another in their responses.

Results

The results for the study were obtained from the research questions answered through data collected and analysed.

Research Question 1

What are the sustainable funding strategies from government utilised by tertiary institutions in Benue State for improving skill training?

Table 1: Mean and standard deviation of responses of lecturers on sustainable funding strategies from government for improving skill training utilised by tertiary institutions in Benue State?

S/N	Sustainable funding strategies from government	N	Mean	S.D	Remarks
1	Grant from TETFund for construction of laboratories and workshops.	109	3.55	.56	Utilised
2	Grant from TETFund for equipments, tools and machines.	109	2.99	.73	Utilised
3	Support from government for organizing workshops and seminar on skill training	109	3.30	.63	Utilised
4	Support to lecturers for attending workshops and seminars	109	3.00	.60	Utilised
5	Scholarship for students	109	2.52	.71	Utilised
6	Sponsorship of lecturers on training leave	109	3.11	.31	Utilised
7	Competitive/innovation fund	109	1.75	.91	NU
8	Financial aid from PTDF for purchase of book/facilities	109	2.32	.46	NU
9	Support from PTDF for training/workshops	109	2.21	.62	NU

S. D-Standard deviation; NU-Not utilised

Data in Table 1 showed that 6 of the 9 sustainable funding options from government had their mean values ranged from 2.52 to 3.55 indicating that their mean values were above the cut-off point of 2.50. This implies that the items were utilised by tertiary institutions for improving skill training. 3 of the items however had their mean values ranged from 1.75 to 2.32 indicating that their mean values were below the cut-off point of 2.50. This implies that the items were not utilised by tertiary institutions in Benue State. The standard deviation ranged from .31 to .91 indicating that the respondents were not far from the mean and also close to one another in their responses

Research Question 2

What are the sustainable funding strategies from community utilised by tertiary institutions for improving skill training in Benue State?

Table 2: Mean and standard deviation of responses of lecturers on sustainable funding strategies from government for improving skill training utilised by tertiary institutions in Benue State?

S/N	Sustainable funding strategies from the community	N	Mean	S.D	Remarks
1	Individuals setting endowment fund	109	1.91	.51	NU
2	Individuals contributing to development appeal fund	109	1.78	.62	NU
3	Alumni funding of programmes/activities	109	1.72	.65	NU
4	Gifts (tools, equipments, machines, cash, etc) from individuals	109	2.43	.83	NU
5	Private sector investment	109	2.28	.52	NU
6	Donation of portions of land	109	1.96	.88	NU
7	Crowd funding (online funding e.g. contests or blog posts)	109	1.58	.49	NU
8	Contributing expertise in specialized skill areas	109	2.33	.73	NU
9	Availing laboratories/workshops or other facilities for use/ training.	109	1.56	.49	NU

S. D-Standard deviation; NU- Not utilised

Data in Table 2 revealed that all the 9 sustainable funding options from the community had their mean values ranged from 1.56 to 2.43 indicating that their mean values were below the cut-off point of 2.50. This implies that all the items were not utilised by tertiary institutions in Benue State. The standard deviation ranged from .49 to .88 indicating that the respondents were not far from the mean and also close to one another in their responses.

Research Question 3

What are the sustainable funding strategies from internally generated revenue utilised by tertiary institutions for improving skill training in Benue State? Data in Table 3 showed that 9 of the 27 sustainable funding options from internally generated revenue had their mean values ranged from 2.70 to 3.55 indicating that their mean values were above the cutoff point of 2.50. This implies that the items were utilised by tertiary institutions in Benue State. The standard deviation ranged from .46 to 1.23 indicating that the respondents were not far from the mean and also close to one another in their responses. 18 of the items however, had their mean values ranged from 1.11 to 2.24 indicating that their mean values were below the cut-off point of 2.50. The implication is that all the 18 items were not utilised by tertiary institutions in Benue State. The standard deviation ranged from .31 to .99 indicating that the respondents were not far from the mean and also close to one another in their responses.

Table 3: Mean and standard deviation of responses of lecturers on sustainable funding strategies from internally generated revenue utilised by tertiary institutions for improving skill training in Benue State?

S/N	Sustainable funding strategies from internally revenue	N	Mean	S.D	Remarks
1	Sales of admission forms	109	2.91	1.10	Utilised
2	Sales of students handbook	109	2.91	1.10	Utilised
3	Sales/hiring out of academic robes	109	3.16	.72	Utilised
4	Examination fees	109	3.43	.49	Utilised
5	Examination cards	109	3.31	.46	Utilised
6	Renting hall/classroom	109	1.84	.88	Not utilised
7	Renting free field space	109	1.56	.49	Not utilised
8	Renting canopies	109	1.56	.49	Not utilised
9	Renting plastic chairs/tables	109	1.38	.71	Not utilised
10	Event management	109	1.45	.97	Not utilised
11	Consultancy/part time courses/services	109	3.55	.56	Utilised
12	Commercial crop production	109	1.78	.62	Not utilised
13	Keeping/rearing of farm animals	109	2.24	.91	Not utilised
14	Fish farming	109	2.70	1.23	Utilised
15	Detergent making	109	1.12	.33	Not utilised
16	Food processing	109	1.11	.31	Not utilised
17	Bakery	109	1.83	.67	Not utilised
18	Construction of real estate	109	1.68	.46	Not utilised
19	Construction of market shops	109	3.42	.78	Utilised
20	Construction of filling stations	109	1.88	.80	Not utilised
21	Hotels and catering services	109	1.12	.33	Not utilised
22	Bookshops	109	3.08	.64	Utilised
23	Printing press	109	2.13	.99	Not utilised

		Shimave, A. G., Kesiki, W. B. & Azuaga, C. I.			
24	Transport services	109	1.75	.91	Not utilised
25	Lottery	109	1.31	.63	Not utilised
26	Raffle draw	109	1.17	.38	Not utilised
27	Micro-finance banking	109	1.11	.31	Not utilised

Discussion of Findings

The result of the study found out that 6 sustainable funding strategies from government, none from the community, and only 9 of the 27 sustainable funding strategies from internally generated revenue were utilised by tertiary institutions. This is consonant with the study of Akomolafe and Aremu (2016) in a study on alternative sources of financing university education in Lagos State where it was found out that of the 32 available alternative sources, one of the universities used only 7 sources. The finding of the study also agree with Akinkule’s work of on funding higher education in Nigeria as cited in Famurewa (2014) where three broad sources of funding government, community and the tertiary institution’s effort were identified.

By implication, the result of the study also agree with Apanuko (2012) who showed that the principal source of funding for tertiary institutions has been the government in its different tiers and agencies, sadly making the institutions over 85% dependent on government, and with Okebukola’s assertion that many tertiary institutions are yet to maximally explore their potential for internal generation of revenue, and those that are in commercial ventures hardly make a success of it. The findings of the authors cited above help to validate the result of the study on sustainable funding strategies by tertiary institutions for improving education and skill training in Benue State.

Conclusion

Many tertiary institutions in Benue State are neither well equipped with machines, tools and equipment, nor is fund readily available to purchase neither them, nor broken down spare parts for effective skill training. This leads to the production of skill-less graduate to populate the already saturated labour market. Skill-less graduates depend on parents for a longer time, and can more easily join bad groups to commit crimes, and become a nuisance to society. The study was carried out to determine sustainable funding strategies by tertiary institutions for improving skill training in Benue State so as to curb the impending danger of joblessness. The study determined 45 sustainable funding strategies- 9 each from government and community, and 27 from the institution’s internally generated revenue. Conversely, it was found out that only 6 sustainable funding strategies from government, none from the community, and 9 sustainable funding strategies from internally generated revenue were utilised by tertiary institutions in Benue State.

It was therefore recommended that the 45 sustainable funding strategies determined by this study should be utilised by tertiary institutions for improving education and skill training in Benue State. The

Shimave, A. G., Kesiki, W. B. & Azuaga, C. I.

identified sustainable funding strategies could also be used as a template by supervising agencies (like NUC and NCCE) for tertiary institutions to implement on yearly basis to boost their financial viability.

References

Akomolafe, C. O. and Aremu, E. T. (2016).

Alternative sources of financing university education in Lagos State, Nigeria. *European Scientific Journal* 12 ,34, 284-296 doi: 10.19044/esj.2016.v12n34p284

Akpanuko, E. E. (2012). Tertiary education development and sustainability in Nigeria: Beyond financial accountability. *Journal of Economics and Sustainable Development*. 3(8) 90-98 Retrieved from [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/26](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/268350137)

8350137

Bamiro, A. A. (2012). *Sustainable financing of higher education in Nigeria: Funding Models*. A paper presented at the

Consultative Policy Dialogue by the

Committee of Vice Chancellors in Dakar,

Senegal. Retrieved from file:///C:/Users/AED/Downloads/bamiropaper

.pdf

Bogoro, S. E. (2015). *Sustainability of higher education institutions in Nigeria: Challenges and prospects*. Paper presented at the 44th Air Force Institute of Technology

Convocation Lecture held in Kaduna, Kaduna State. Retrieved from

[http://www.tetfund.gov.ng/download/su_he.p df](http://www.tetfund.gov.ng/download/su_he.pdf)

Cruickshank, C. (2011, September, 17). A sustainable funding option for non-profit organisations. [Web log post]. Retrieved from https://www.huffingtonpost.com/calandracruickshank/a-sustainable-fundingopt_b_268532.html

Estermann, T., Pruvot, E. B. and Claey-Kulik, A. (2013). *Designing strategies for efficient funding of higher education in Europe*. Brussels: European University Association.

Retrieved from

[https://eua.eu/downloads/publications/define /interim/report/designing/strategies/for/efficient_funding/of/higher/education.pdf](https://eua.eu/downloads/publications/define_interim/report/designing/strategies/for/efficient_funding_of_higher_education.pdf)

Shimave, A. G., Kesiki, W. B. & Azuaga, C. I.

- Famurewa, I. O. (2014). Inadequate funding as the bane of tertiary education in Nigeria. *Greener Journal of Economics and Accountancy* 3 (2): 020-025
- Hornby, A.S. (2010). *Oxford advanced learner's dictionary* (International student's edition). New York: Oxford University Press.
- Mighty recruiter (n.d). Skills training. Retrieved from <https://www.mightyrecruiter.com/recruiterguide/hiring-glossary-a-to-z/skills-training/>
- Montanini, M. (2013). Strategies for effective higher education funding in Sub-Saharan Africa. Retrieved from http://bsuud.org/fileadmin/user_upload/bsuuhared/ISPI_Working_Paper_no._49__2013.pdf
- Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council, NERDC (2015). *National policy on education*. Lagos: Author.
- Okebukola, P. (2015). Towards models for creatively funding higher education in Nigeria. In P. Okebukola (Ed.). *Towards innovative models for funding higher education in Africa*. Accra: Association of African Universities (pp 45-73).
- Osinem, E. C. (2008). *Managing agricultural education and training: resources, principles and methods*. Enugu: Belony international publishers.
- Osuala, E, C. (2004). *Foundations of vocational education*. Enugu: Cheston agency limited.
- Tewarie, B. (2010). Finding solutions for sustainable financing of tertiary education in small states. Retrieved from <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000218980>
- Ukorie, J. U. (2000). *Developing Nigeria's workforce*. Calabar: page environs publishers.