

## Effective Management of Educational Resources for Attainment of Sustainable Development Goals in Agbani Education Zone.

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### ABSTRACT

*This study examined effective management of educational resources for the attainment of sustainable development goals in Agbani education zone. Resources, as used in the study included financial and physical resources. Survey research design was adopted for the study. The population for the study was 45 principals of public secondary schools in Agbani Education zone. Two research questions were answered using mean and standard deviation. A questionnaire constructed by the researcher and titled Predictors of Effective Management of Educational Resources Questionnaire (EMERQ) was used as the instrument for data collection. The questionnaire was validated by three experts, two from the Department of Educational Management and one from the Measurement and Evaluation unit, Department of Mathematics and Computer Education all from the Faculty of Education, Enugu State University of Science and Technology, Enugu. The reliability coefficient of the questionnaire was calculated using Cronbach Alpha and the reliability index of the clusters was found to be 0.69. Some of the major findings indicated that the effective management of two key educational resources namely: financial and physical, are to a great extent predictors of the attainment of sustainable development goals in Agbani education zone. Based on the findings, some recommendations were made. They includes that principals should undergo periodic training through seminars and workshops on financial management, among others.*

**Keywords:** Effective management, educational resources, sustainable development goals.

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### INTRODUCTION

Education is an indispensable instrument for fostering economic and technological development, especially in this era of knowledge economy, globalization, comparative economic advantage, competitiveness and sustainable development. According to Chukwu (2018), education is the cardinal pillar in the development of individuals, communities, societies and nations. As a tool for social transformation, growth and sustainable development, education breeds the best brains, builds the best work force, develops the best social beings, ensures formidable teams of leaders and followers in many nations. If man has not been constantly involved in the acquisition and impartation

of knowledge through teaching and learning (formally, informally and non-formally), he would not have survived in his environment. It is for these reasons that education needs to be effectively managed for anticipated goals to be achieved in Agabani education zone. According to Ani (2007), education is the development of knowledge, skills, ability, character by teaching, initiation or training. The *National Teachers Institute* (2004), perceived education as a conscious and deliberate attempt by society through certain agencies to help individuals develop their physical, mental, moral and social capabilities. The acquisition and development of these qualities are not ends in themselves but are geared towards the



development of the individuals and the society at large. The implication is that education affects the community in short and long terms. Education takes place in the schools and secondary education is the education after primary education and before tertiary education. In secondary school, the Principal is the head.

The school principal, by his designation is, therefore, vested with the responsibility of managing the numerous human and material resources of the school (secondary) to achieve the various goals as set out in the *National Policy on Education (2013)*. Amadi (2014) noted that the principal is the professional administrative head of the school. His responsibilities include - to plan, organize, direct and co-ordinate all human (staff, students, other stakeholders) and material resources (funds, facilities, policies among others) towards achieving the goals as well as objectives of the school. It is imperative, therefore, to state that the school principal is the driving force and the critical factor in achieving the national educational goals and objectives at the secondary school level (Asuru & Ogidi, 2014). It is in the light of the above that the school principal could be seen to be operating at an executive level at which policies and major decisions are interpreted and implemented in the school. The success of the school is hinged on the extent to which he is able to effectively and efficiently perform his assigned duties. The assigned duties are classified as management roles.

Management in broad terms is a process used to accomplish organizational goals and objectives. It involves the process of getting people together by inspiring and motivating them to accomplish desired goals and objectives (Asuru, 2016). Management is thus regarded as the process undertaken by one or more individuals to co-ordinate the activities of others to achieve results not achievable by one individual acting alone

(Aguba, 2009). The management of secondary school is, therefore, under the headship of the principal.

Education does not exist in a vacuum; it requires a combination of various resources to succeed. Resource, according to Block (2002), is anything which contributes to economic activities. Educational resources according to Flippo in Eze (2017) refer to those things that are needed to help or support the achievement of educational goals and objectives. Eneh (2019) categorized educational resources into two, namely; financial resources and physical resources. In a broad sense, educational resources, therefore, refer to all inputs that are utilized in the business of educational production. They can be broadly classified into financial and physical resources.

Finance involves not only the raising of fund for purpose of achieving an organization's objective but it also entails the allocation and prudent management of such funds. Good financial management helps in the procurement of other resources such as physical resources, material resources, human resources and information resources. Physical resources refer to all the identifiable resources that could be seen and touched and which have lasting value in the process of enhancing teaching and learning. They include - buildings, laboratories, libraries, generating sets, classrooms, land, plant, machinery, among others. Material resources refer to all those consumable items like stationary and record. Information resources refer to the data and information assets of an organization. Information resource is another name for the information system or information technology. Information is a resource on its own, as well as an asset to others. It falls within the resource hierarchy which starts with data, leads to information coming together as knowledge and resulting in wisdom. Resource management in education is,

therefore, a judicious use of human and non-human resources to achieve effective and efficient educational goal (Ozoanya, 2012).

The present study is anchored on the predictors of effective management of educational resources for the attainment of sustainable development goals in Agbani education zone. Specifically, these educational resources are financial and physical resources. In Agbani education zone, there are myriads of constraints which constitute impediments to effective management of these resources by principals. These constraints adversely affect the realization of educational objectives. Effective management of educational resources is among the guarantors to quality education. The management is effective when it is producing or capable of producing an intended result. Effective resource management is expected to have certain predictors or indices associated with it. The extent of principals' assessment of such predictive variables will enhance their effectiveness in the management of the resources.

To the best of the knowledge of the researcher, no empirical study has so far been conducted on effective management of educational resources for the attainment of sustainable development goals in Agbani education zone. This was the gap which the present study was poised to fill. In a nutshell, the gap that this study intended to fill was to determine the extent to which principals are effective in the management of educational resources for the attainment of sustainable development goals in Agbani education zone.

### **Statement of the Problem**

One of the greatest challenges of public secondary schools in Enugu State today is management of educational resources,

especially in Agbani Education zone. In situations where good working conditions are made difficult because of poor management of scarce resources, the quality of education is threatened.

Unfortunately, the current scenario in public secondary schools in Agbani education zone suggests that principals have myriads of constraints, which constitute impediments to their management roles. These constraints are financial and physical resources. These are critical predictors of effective secondary school administration. The abnormally arising from poor funding coupled with the fact that a good percentage of the available fund goes into funding the overbloated bureaucracy in the Ministry of Education and parastatals, leaving the principals with little to run the schools are worrisome. The ripple effects generated by this manifests in dilapidated physical facilities, unhealthy school environment, impoverished work force, and near absence of storage facilities.

The above are unsatisfactory situations that negatively impact on school administration, management, teaching – learning activities, students academic achievement and indeed the entirety of school processes which invariably affect productivity, efficiency and effectiveness. The poor academic performance of secondary school students in internal and external examinations appear to be a direct consequence of these educational resource management constraints. Under this pitiable condition, human capital development which is akin to economic development cannot be guaranteed. The problem of this study is, therefore, to ascertain the extent to which principals are effective in the management of educational resources for the attainment of sustainable development goals in Agbani education zone.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The main purpose of this study was to ascertain the extent to which principals are effective in the management of educational resources for the attainment of sustainable development goals in Agbani education zone. Specifically, this study sought to:

1. determine the extent of principals' effectiveness in financial resource management for the attainment of sustainable development goals in Agbani education zone.
2. investigate the extent of principals' effectiveness in physical resource management for the attainment of sustainable development goals in Agbani education zone.

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions guided the study:

1. To what extent are principals effective in financial resource management for the attainment of sustainable development goals in Agbani education zone?
2. To what extent are principals effective in physical resource management for the attainment of sustainable development goals in Agbani education zone?

### **Research Method**

The design of this study was survey design. It is a design that is used to determine effective management of educational resources for the attainment of sustainable development goals in Agbani education zone. The study was conducted in Agbani education zone of Enugu state. Agbani education zone is one of the six education zones in Enugu state. Agbani education zone is made up of three Local Government Areas, namely Enugu South, Nkanu East and Nkanu West. The study covered all the public secondary schools in Agbani Education zone. The

population for the study was 45 principals of public secondary schools in Agbani education zone. Though the design of the study is survey, the whole population for the study was used in the study since the population was manageable. Therefore, sample size for the study was 45 principals.

The instrument for data collection was a questionnaire constructed by the researcher titled: "Effective Management of Educational Resource Questionnaire (EMERQ)". The questionnaire has two sections: A and B. Section A concerned background information of the respondent. Section B contained 21 items that were constructed to answer the two research questions. Section B also had two parts, each addressing a particular research question. Part 1 which contained 11 items dealt with effective financial resource management. Part 2 with 10 items dealt with effective physical resource management. Each of the parts contained items that the respondents were expected to indicate their responses on a four-point scale of Very Great Extent (VGE), Great Extent (GE), Low Extent (LE) and Very Low Extent (VLE) with nominal values of 4, 3, 2, and 1 respectively.

The instrument was face validated by three experts; two experts in the field of Educational Management and one in Measurement and Evaluation unit of Department of Mathematics and Computer Education. The experts were all lecturers in the Faculty of Education, Enugu State University of Science and Technology (ESUT). They were requested to validate the instrument in terms of relevance, comprehensiveness of content, appropriateness of items, clarity of statement, possibilities of ambiguities, errors and omissions. The expert opinions and comments of the validates guided the production of final instrument which the researcher used for data collection.

The reliability of the instrument was determined by administering 20 copies of the questionnaire on 20 public secondary school principals in Awgu Education. Awgu Education Zone was chosen because it has similar characteristics with Agbani Education Zone. The data obtained from their responses were used in computing the reliability coefficient using Cronbach Alpha method. Cronbach Alpha was deemed appropriate since it is applicable to items that are not dichotomously scored. Consequently, reliability coefficients of 0.68 and 0.70 were obtained for parts 1 and 2 of the questionnaire respectively. A grand coefficient of 0.69 was got, indicating that the instrument was reliable.

The copies of the instrument (questionnaire) were administered to the principals by the researcher with the assistance of two research assistants through face to face mode. A brief letter of introduction explaining the purpose of the study was attached to each copy of the instrument. The respondents were assured that all information supplied by them would be kept strictly confidential. 45 copies of the instrument administered were correctly filled and retrieved showing 100% return rate. The researcher achieved this rate of return because as a member of All Nigeria Confederation of Principals of Post Primary School (ANCOPPS), he was allowed during

zonal meetings to distribute and retrieve the filled questionnaires successfully.

In order to analyze the data, mean statistic and standard deviation were used to answer the two research questions. The criteria of 2.50 was adopted as follows: VGE, = 4, GE = 3, LE = 2, and VLE = 1 (i.e.  $10/4 = 2.50$ ). Therefore, any item whose mean was equal or greater than 2.50 was interpreted as great extent, while item, whose mean score falls below 2.50 was interpreted as low extent. When the standard deviation was less than 1, it was interpreted as low indicating that the respondents did not differ in their assessment of the items, whereas when it was above 1, it was interpreted as high indicating that the respondents' differed in their assessments of the items.

### Results

The results are presented in Tables according to the research questions that guided the study.

Research question one: To what extent are principals effective in financial resource management for the attainment of sustainable development goals in Agbani education zone?

**Table 1: Mean ratings of principals on the extent to which they are effective in financial resource management for the attainment of sustainable development goals in Agbani education zone.**

S/N	The following are extent of principals effectiveness in financial resource management:	$n = 45$				$\bar{x}$	SD	Decision
		VGE (4)	GE (3)	LE (2)	VLE (1)			
1	Principals' attendance to periodic training on financial management	240	88	1	0	3.75	0.45	GE
2	Involvement of stakeholders in school budget planning	161	158	7	3	3.45	0.59	GE

3	Diversification of investments to generate revenue	159	162	8	0	3.46	0.55	GE
4	Charges for use of school facilities	11	26	122	170	1.63	0.77	LE
5	Appeal to philanthropists for fund	95	176	46	12	3.08	0.76	GE
6	Appeal to old students for fund	103	192	31	3	3.20	0.64	GE
7	Appeal to professional associations for fund	64	160	85	20	2.81	0.81	GE
8	Use of appropriate accounting books	165	45	18	1	3.44	0.61	GE
9	Proper authorization of expenditure	158	158	13	0	3.44	.057	GE
10	Entrenching internal audit	137	179	13	0	3.34	0.68	GE
11	Supervising of all school financial and business management	182	144	3	0	3.54	0.52	GE
<b>Cluster mean &amp; standard deviation</b>						3.19	0.55	GE

Table 1 shows that high mean ratings of 3.73, 3.45, 3.46, 3.08, 3.20, 2.81, 3.44, 3.44, 3.34 and 3.54 were obtained for items 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11 respectively, indicating that the respondents (principals) are effective in financial resource management. On the other hand, a low mean rating of 1.63 was obtained by item 4 showing that the respondents did not assess monetary charges for use of school facilities for effective financial resource management. A cluster mean of 3.19, with standard deviation of 0.55, was obtained for all the eleven items, which is indicative of the fact that the secondary schools principals in Agbani education zone generally uses

financial resource management for the attainment of sustainable development goals in Agbani education zone to a great extent. The low overall standard deviation (0.55) shows that the principals did not differ remarkably in their assessment of the various items for effective financial resource management.

Research question two: To what extent are principals effective in physical resource management for the attainment of sustainable development goals in Agbani education zone?

**Table 2: Mean ratings of principals on the extent to which they are effective in physical resource management for the attainment of sustainable development goals in Agbani education zone.**

S/N	The following are extent of principals effectiveness in financial resource management:	$n = 45$				$\bar{x}$	SD	Decision
		VGE (4)	GE (3)	LE (2)	VLE (1)			
12	Involving Parents Association (PA) in school constructions	226	96	6	1	3.66	0.53	GE
13	Equipping permanent staff securities	105	207	15	2	3.26	0.57	GE
14	Using local vigilante	97	156	53	23	2.99	0.86	GE
15	Adequate imprest to principals to maintain existing structures	153	140	28	8	3.33	0.73	GE

16	Assigning responsibilities for the care of school facilities	129	192	8	0	3.37	0.53	GE
17	Regular inspection of school facilities	173	142	14	0	3.48	0.58	GE
18	Contracting of artisans for adequate utilization of equipment	131	177	20	1	3.33	0.60	GE
19	Involvement of end users (like principals) in the areas of school plant planning and construction	88	233	5	3	3.23	0.51	GE
20	Attendance to workshops on the effective use of school facilities	168	153	6	2	3.48	0.57	GE
21	Having good plant maintenance culture	194	129	5	1	3.57	0.54	GE
<b>Cluster mean &amp; standard deviation</b>						<b>3.37</b>	<b>0.64</b>	<b>GE</b>

Table 2 shows that high mean ratings, ranging from 2.99 to 3.57, were recorded for all the ten items (12 – 21), indicating that the principals (respondents), to a great extent, assess each of the items as a predictor of effective physical resource management. A cluster mean of 3.37, with standard deviation of 0.64, was obtained for all the items, thereby indicating that the principals generally uses physical resource management for the attainment of sustainable development goals in Agbani education zone, to a great extent. The overall standard deviation (0.64) is relatively low, showing that the principals had similar views on each of the items as for effective management of educational resources for the attainment of sustainable development goals in Agbani education zone.

### Discussion of findings

It was revealed in the study that effective financial resource management from the assessment of principals include: Principals' attendance to periodic training on financial management; involvement of stakeholders in school budget planning and implementation; diversification of investments to generate revenue; appeal to philanthropists, old students and professional associations for fund; use of

appropriate accounting books and records; proper classification and authorization of expenditure; and entrenching internal audit. This finding is quite revealing and instructive. The finding agrees with the findings of Asuru (2015) and Onwe (2013), who in their separate studies discovered that the issue of funding is a critical factor in education. They posited that a major challenge of Nigerian education sector is that of poor funding; adding that over the years, the percentage budgetary allocation to the sector falls far below the UNESCO recommended benchmark of 26% and far below 20% of "Dakar framework for Action". The implication is that states (Enugu) inclusive should improve on the way they fund education which has a spill-over effect on the overall management of other educational resources.

The finding on principals' attendance to periodic training on financial management agrees with the views of Ogbonnaya (2005) who observed that finance is the science of controlling money and not just raising of fund. Therefore, periodic training of principals on financial management increases their effectiveness in the prudent management of financial resources. Principals who are bereft of proper accounting knowledge and practices are

guided and advised in the exercise of their control of expenditure as well as in the application and interpretation of the financial instructions and circulars.

The finding on involvement of key stakeholders in school budget planning and implementation agrees with the views of Ozoanya (2012) and Nzegebulem (2013) who in their separate studies captured it right when they lamented that most education analysts have narrowed educational problems in the secondary school system to lack of proper preparation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of budgeting provision. For them, these have contributed to the terrible crises in the educational sector. The finding also agrees with Ikediugwu (2000) who asserted that a school system without budgeting blue print is like a journey to an unknown destination. Therefore, it is a collective responsibility of stakeholders in all the units of educational system with the principal as the arrow head. If key stakeholders are involved in the school budgeting, they will not only gather authentic data for a realistic budget but also see it as “their budget” not “principal’s budget” and therefore work in synergy to implement it to the letter.

The finding on the diversification of investments to generate revenue agrees with the views of Omeke and Onwurah (2010) who opined in their study that poor sourcing of funds and lack of financial prudence were part of the observed management problems of principals in public and private secondary schools in Nsukka Education Zone. This particular finding is very germane. Though National Policy on Education (FRN, 2013) saw education as an expensive social service that required financial provision from all tiers of government, yet it has equally become imperative that government source alone cannot meet the country’s educational needs. Therefore, secondary school principals should think outside the

box for increasing their internally generated revenue. This is in line with Babalola and Amafa in Ede (2014) who in their separate studies suggested school activities like sale of school uniforms, textbooks, farm produce, school canteen, identity cards, badges, students handicrafts, and sports days as sources of educational finance.

The finding on appeal to philanthropists, old students and professional associations for fund agrees with the views of Ezeocha in Ede (2014) who opined that Alumni Association of Schools (i.e. Old Boys’ Association) have raised money to carry out useful projects in schools. This is in consonance with Ukeje in Ede (2014) who asserted that money for education can be provided by rich individual members of the society for endowment funds. This is also in line with Nneji in Ede (2014) who asserted that one of the sources of funds for educational development was community fund raising.

The finding on the proper authorization and entrenching of internal audit, agrees with the views of Nwangwu (2007), who opined that the principal as the chief accounting officer with the assistance of the bursar, should ensure full collection of revenue in the school through the use of appropriate accounting books and records and remit all approved fees to the government. All revenue generated which the school is entitled to retain must be properly accounted for, having due regards to proper classification of expenditure, vouching, full authorization and full authentication of expenditure. All the necessary receipts, accounts books and other relevant financial document must be readily available for audit inspection on demand. It is also in line with the views of American Association of School Administration in Ede (2014) who asserted that the use of auditing as a means of preventing discrepancies in recording



income and expenditure of school money will guarantee prudence. This ensures supervision and control generally.

However, the finding that principals do not agree with charges for use of school facilities for effective financial resource management appears not to be surprising because if the community helps in raising fund for the development of the school, it would be impracticable to ask the same community to pay charges for the use of the same school facility which it helped to fund through Parents Association.

It was found in the study that effective physical resource management from the assessment of public secondary school principals include: involving Parents Association (PA) in school constructions; equipping permanent staff securities; using local vigilante; adequate imprest to principals to maintain existing structures; assigning responsibilities for the care of school facilities, regular inspection of school facilities; contracting of artisans/resource persons for adequate utilization of equipment; involvement of end users in the areas of school plant planning and construction; attendance to workshops and seminars on the effective use of school facilities; and having good plant maintenance culture. The finding agrees with the view of Adesina in Oluwo and Aloba (2008) who posited that the quality of education has a bearing with the availability and use of physical facilities and overall atmosphere in which learning takes place. The finding on involving Parents Association (PA) in school construction agrees with the view of Asiegbu (2014) who observed that the amount of money specifically voted for capital projects in education by different states and federal governments are not enough to meet the demands of new school plants and the expansion of the existing ones coupled with the increasing rate of population growth on

the school system. Functional Parents Association assist to a great extent in constructing capital projects. The finding is in line with the views of Young, Green and Roehrich Patrick (2003), who asserted that the quality of school facilities influence citizens' perception of schools, which in turn, influences their support for public education.

The finding on equipping permanent staff securities and using local vigilante agrees with the view of Eneh (2016) who identified poor security arrangement as one of the constraints of physical resource management in public secondary schools in Enugu State, and so suggested equipping of permanent staff securities and contracting of local vigilante. The finding is also in consonance with Eneh (2016) who posited that the government should endeavour to release adequate imprest to principals periodically for the maintenance of the existing facilities in the school. The finding on having good plant maintenance culture agrees with the views of Ehiamentalor (2001), who observed that billions of naira have been spent on the construction of school buildings, purchase of equipment, machinery and furniture to enhance teaching and learning, but very little thought has been given to their maintenance. The finding is equally in consonance with the views of Asiegbu (2014) who suggested the assigning of responsibility for the care of school facilities and regular inspection of school facilities to promote positive maintenance culture in schools. Contracting of artisan/resource persons for adequate utilization of equipment as revealed in the study agrees with the view of Anioke in Ozoanya (2012) who observed that most of the physical resources in public secondary schools are underutilized and left to rust as well as vandalized. It is also in line with the views of Adesina in Oluwo and Aloba (2008) who asserted that the quality of education has a bearing with the availability

and use of physical facilities and overall atmosphere in which learning takes place. The finding also agrees with the view of Eneh (2016) who suggested that teachers should be given opportunities to attend workshops and seminars to update their knowledge on the effective use of equipment and facilities. The finding on involvement of end users in the areas of school plant planning and construction agrees with ESSPIN (2009) who observed that there is very limited involvement of communities in the planning, implementation and maintenance of school buildings. It therefore suggested the need to involve the members of communities and other end users like principals and staff in such activities.

### Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study, it is hereby concluded that secondary school principals in Agbani education zone generally assess the two key areas of educational resource management: financial and physical human resources, for effective management of educational resources, to a great extent. Education and resources are inseparable because education cannot exist in a vacuum. A prudent management of any aspect of the educational resource is important for effective management of educational resources for the attainment of sustainable development goals in Agbani education zone.

### Recommendations

In the light of the findings of the study highlighted above, the researcher hereby made the following recommendations:

1. There is the need for principals to undergo periodic seminars, workshops and training on financial management to keep them abreast with the latest information, knowledge and skills required for their daily jobs. This will help them manage financial resources effectively in their schools for the attainment of sustainable development goals in Agbani education zone.
2. Principals should through the help of functional Parent Associations construct important classroom blocks; storage facilities, procure important equipment, install data processing unit, fortify security outfits and contract local vigilante for the protection of the entire school premises. This will ensure provision and effective management of physical resources in schools for the attainment of sustainable development goals in Agbani education zone.

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