

Revitalizing
Nigerian Education in
Digital Age

Soji Oni (Ph.D)

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Stakeholders' Perceptions of Fund Mobilisation in Nigerian Public Universities

Onuka, O.U. Adams

Introduction

In every clime, higher education plays a significant role in the supply of high-level manpower for its holistic development. Nigeria cannot, therefore, be exempted since she cannot act in isolation. It is in this regard that the Nigerian National Policy on Education (Federal Republic of Nigeria [FRN, 2004]) posited that higher education is designed to contribute to national development in producing highly skilled and relevant personnel and to develop as well as inculcate proper values in the individuals for the individual and society's survival and growth, which will produce intellectually capable individuals that will be in a position to understand and appreciate their immediate and external environments among other things.

In the Nigerian context, higher education implies post-secondary education provided by tertiary institutions such as universities, polytechnics, technical colleges, monotechnics, and colleges of education. Tertiary institutions in Nigeria are classified by type of ownership: state (public) and private; hence the term *public and private institutions*. University is the highest level of providing education in Nigeria, and universities provide learning and research cum community service by which its business is the pursuit of teaching, research, manpower development, and services to their community. Public universities in Nigeria are established, controlled, administered, and funded by the federal and state governments. Their governance is undertaken by governing councils partially appointed by the state and by the respective university communities, internal university management, university senates, while standards are regulated

by regulatory agencies such as the National Universities Commission (NUC), National Board for Business and Technical Education (NBTE), National Commission on Colleges of Education, and the Federal and various State Ministries of Education. Current level of global technological advancement dictates that universities, whether public or private, should strive to provide quality education for their students in order to compete favourably with the rest of the world. This, however, requires excellent level of adequate funding, which the government cannot obviously cope with, in the face of other sectors competing with the education for government funding attention. Quality education is imperatively essential for human and national advancement and for personal and national survival, as well as development of one's full capabilities for sustainable livelihood and excellence at work. University education equally enables one in Nigeria to fully participate in national development and for the improvement of the quality of human living standards among other things. Quality higher education empowers its possessor to make reliable and helpful decisions and to continue in the quest for knowledge through learning. The quality or standard of higher education is a fundamentally and increasingly important determinant of a nation's position in the comity of nations.

It is pertinent to note that fund mobilisation is very critical to sustainable development in the university system; it is providing quality or excellent education for the teeming youth population so as to equip them to becoming total men and women who will be useful not only to themselves but also to their families, the nation, and the world at large. Onuka, Onuka and Owoeye (2009), observed that all educational institutions are in the business of providing quality education in order to output quality manpower for national and international utilisation and for the progress of humanity. The quality of the products of higher institutions is one of the factors considered in rating or ranking of higher institutions in the world. Jones-Esan (2009) stated that Obafemi Awolowo University and University of Ibadan ranked 44 and 66 in Africa and 5,832 and 6,809 in the world. It is a surprise to note that several universities in South Africa as well as universities in other African countries that are less endowed than Nigeria in terms of financial and human resources were ranked ahead of Nigeria. This development may not be unconnected to the differential level of funding of university education in these countries vis-à-vis Nigeria. For instance, in the year 2000, South Africa allocated about 33% of its annual budget to education which reflects in the quality of education

given to its citizens. This development, according to Bisi (2006), is a revelation of the poor state of funding of higher education in Nigeria. He further confirmed fact that vice chancellors of state universities in Nigeria identified underfunding as the main inhibiting factor to optimal performance in Nigerian public universities.

Fund is one of the major resources needed by the public universities in Nigeria and elsewhere to engender the provision of quality higher level of education. Fund, therefore, must be properly mobilised to make the universities to live up to the expectations of the society. This is why Fajingbesi (1999 in Onuka 2007) defined resource mobilisation as "a process of, or series of activities geared at generating, accumulating and directing resources in the right form and sufficient quantity for optimal utilization". The mobilisation, collation, collection, and commitment of educational resources for academic use are all referred to as components of an uninterrupted decision-making process aimed at achieving the desired objective of the institutions of higher learning. This portends that fund mobilisation is an essential ingredient needed to make provision for all other resources possible namely, well-equipped laboratories, lecture theatres, lecture rooms, offices, libraries, information and communication technology facilities (ICT), instructional materials, and quality teaching and non-teaching staff. Imperatively, therefore, fund must be properly mobilised, developed, and organised for ensuring that there is provision of quality education to the Nigerian nation which will lead to greater attainment of our dreamed development. The university system needs a lot of funds, but there must be an optimal way of generating such funds for the realisation of national educational goals.

Obviously, Nigerian public universities have been experiencing gross underfunding over the last thirty years, and this has led to the unavailability of or inadequately functional, and lack of well equipped laboratories, lecture theatres, lecture rooms, offices, libraries, ICT facilities in the system. This has also resulted in outputting poor quality graduates and inability to employ quality academic and support staff. According to Jones-Esan (2009), Harvard University, for instance, produces world-class graduates as a result of the abundance of financial resources at their disposal. Furthermore, he revealed that during the fiscal year 2005, the Harvard University's income totalled \$2,228,200,000 with an endowment fund valued at \$22.6 billion as at the end of January 2005, whereas

It is very disheartening to note that in spite of the significance of higher education to a nation's development, public universities in Nigeria have been suffering from financial inadequacy. Ibukun (1997 in Onuka, 2005) lamented about the growing shortage of funds and learning resources in the Nigerian public university system. Ekundayo and Ajayi (2009) confirmed that the gross underfunding of the educational system in the country has virtually rendered the Nigerian public university system incapacitated in meeting its twin mandate of teaching and researching or, better still, its triplet mandate of teaching, researching, and community service provision. Oyeneye (2006) and Adegbite (2007) observed that the major problem facing the management of university system, especially public universities in Nigeria is inadequate funding. In consonance with this observation, Ajayi and Ekundayo (2006) concluded that the Nigerian governments, over the years, failed to meet the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization's (UNESCO) recommendation of allocating at least 26% of the total budget allocation to the education sector. In fact, in view of the magnitude of the rot in the system, 26% of annual budget would be invariably grossly inadequate. It is noteworthy that governments' budgetary allocation to education has, over the years, continued to fall below expectation. This gives credence to the need for Nigerian public universities to devise strategies, to mobilise, to position the system well enough to accomplish its objective of providing standard higher education for the nation. It is also an indication that the governments themselves are a contributing factor to the poor financial state of Nigerian public universities. It is imperative that the shortage in the funds available to the public universities system has been responsible for deteriorating state of libraries, social and laboratory facilities, ICT facilities, infrastructures, and the concomitant poor quality of their outputs. Therefore, the smooth running of public universities would continue to be a difficult task unless the system individually or synergistically devices strategies for effective and efficient funding mobilisation for achieving national educational goals.

Basically quality in university education system is not meant only for its products but also for the nation at large. The problem of funding mobilisation in the university education system, especially those owned by Nigerian governments has increasingly become the major cause of the falling standard of tertiary education in the country. It is also the reason for students' protest and endless strikes by the academic and non-academic staff unions of these universities.

From the findings of Okeke and Onye (2009), it was revealed that mobilisation of resources such as fund through development partners like UNESCO, UNDP, World Bank, NUC, NDDC, etc. donations from individuals, companies, organisations (endowment), etc. fund raising/foundations-involvement of alumni association, gate fee, parking fee, cybercafe and Internet facilities, farms, supermarkets, printing press, university hotel/guest house/restaurant/fast-food centres, consultancy programme, capital market (shares and bonds), land and property development, government supplementary special budget, external linkages with international organisations and Nigerians in Diaspora, and some socio-cultural organisations in the geopolitical zones were not accepted as means of mobilising funds and as such need to be reformed and revitalised.

The study, however, strictly examined stakeholders' perception of fund mobilisation in Nigerian public universities in order to proffer the way forward on any observed lapse in the process.

Research Questions

The following four questions were addressed in this study:

1. How do stakeholders perceive the sources of fund available to Nigerian public universities?
2. What percentage of the annual budget estimates of the universities was met by each source of fund?
3. How sufficient are the funds made available to units in the universities?
4. What are the suggested sources of fund mobilisation by stakeholders?

Methodology

Basically, the design for the study was ex post facto type, since no manipulation of any kind was made as the study gathered purely the after-fact data. The study covers the Nigerian public university education system using the South-West Nigeria as the population for the study. Two public universities in Oyo State were purposively selected because they met the main criterion of both federal and state ownership. Public universities within were clustered by federal and state ownership, and the University of Ibadan, Ibadan (UI), and Ladoke Akintola University of Technology

study. The study covered the period 2005-2009. A total of five hundred subjects from the two universities (made up of students, academic and non-academic staff as well as alumni/alumnae, company executives who are employed products of the two universities) were purposively selected since subjects must be connected to the two universities by criteria stated for participation. An instrument named Fund Provision (Mobilisation) and Utilisation in Nigerian Public Universities Stakeholders' Instrument (FPNUNSI) with reliability and construct validity coefficients of 0.87 and 0.83 respectively. The validation was done using the Olabisi Onabanjo University, Ago-Iwoye, for the pilot study. Also relevant financial statements were obtained from both universities. For this study, only the section regarding fund mobilisation was used.

Data collected in the course of the study were aggregated, collated, managed, and analysed using descriptive statistics (percentages).

Results

Table 1. The sources of funds to the universities as perceived by management staff

S. No.	Sources of fund	NR F (%)	VA F (%)	A F (%)	FA F (%)	I F (%)
1	Government	0 0.0	11 2.1	20 22.0	43 47.3	17 18.7
2	Communities	0 0.0	2 2.2	11 12.1	23 25.3	55 60.4
3	Private sector (organisation support)	0 0.0	10 1.0	20 22.0	34 37.4	27 29.7
4	Fees	0 0.0	15 16.5	26 28.6	29 31.9	21 23.1
5	Endowments and gifts from individuals	2 2.2	6 6.6	11 12.1	30 33.3	42 46.2
6	Return on investment	5 5.5	10 11.0	10 11.0	43 47.3	23 25.3
7	Funds from researches	3 3.3	2 2.2	25 27.5	29 31.9	32 35.2

Stakeholders' Perceptions of Fund Mobilisation in Nigerian Public Universities

8	Invention (patent)	11 12.1	8 8.8	10 11.0	17 18.7	45 49.5
9	Levies	0 0.0	7 7.7	30 33.0	29 31.9	25 27.5
10	Loans, bonds, debenture	5 5.5	9 9.9	14 15.4	31 34.1	32 35.2
11	External/technical aids (grants)	11 12.1	10 11.0	10 11.0	31 34.1	29 31.9
12	Application (post UME) fees	6 6.6	21 23.1	12 13.2	25 27.5	27 29.7
13	Registration fees	6 6.6	18 19.8	23 25.3	26 28.6	18 19.8
14	Funds from use of facilities	10 11.0	8 8.8	26 28.6	27 29.7	20 22.0
15	Sales of goods and miscellaneous items	9 9.9	2 2.2	27 29.7	11 12.1	42 46.2
16	Consultancy services	2 2.2	9 9.9	22 24.2	25 27.5	33 36.3
17	ETF	12 13.2	12 13.2	21 23.1	30 33.0	16 17.6
18	Financial supports from companies	6 6.6	12 13.2	15 16.5	31 34.1	27 29.7
19	Boarded equipment (scraps)	11 12.1	0 0.0	24 26.4	24 26.4	32 35.2
20	Miscellaneous services, e.g., technical valuation, parks zoological services	2 2.2	10 11.0	16 17.6	36 39.6	27 29.7
21	Fees from PG programmes	4 4.4	15 16.5	30 33.0	25 27.5	17 18.7
22	Returns from distance learning programmes	4 4.4	23 25.3	27 29.7	22 24.2	15 16.5

The table shows the rating of the sources of funds to the universities. No response (NR) was added at the point of analysis as some of the respondents respond only to those items they preferred. Going through the table and combining very adequate and adequate, fairly adequate and inadequate, it can be seen that only returns from distance learning contributed something substantially above 50% of what was expected from it to the internally generated revenue (IGR) in one of the universities in the study. The rest of the sources of income included government, communities, organised private sector (OPS), fees, endowments and gifts from individuals, return on investment, funds from researches, invention (patent), levies, loans, bonds, debentures, external/technical aids (grants), application (post UME) fees, registration fees, funds from use of facilities, sales of goods and miscellaneous items, consultancy services, education trust fund (ETF), financial supports from companies, boarded equipment (scraps), miscellaneous services, e.g., technical valuation, parks, zoological services, and fees from PG programmes have percentages above average for fairly adequate and inadequate. The percentage for no response where it occurred is minimal. It can then be concluded that sources of fund to the universities is either fairly adequate or inadequate.

The analysis above shows that funds available to the Nigeria public university system are mainly from government and internally generated revenue. The latter is far between as federal public universities are not allowed to charge outside of municipal fees, which, in themselves, are paltry sum of money, and that would be resisted by the student population by hook or crook means at the slightest increase in them. Thus, the public universities are left at the mercies of the owner (governments), who although have a lot to do in providing good living standard for citizenry, yet care little about developing the university except perhaps as much as possible their recurrent needs. This is why, according to Onuka (2005, 2007), the little attention being paid by the government to the financial needs of the public university system (federal or state) has resulted in several strike actions that had often paralysed the system with giving thought to the loss of man-hour which can never be recovered and consequently the economy and the citizenry bears the consequences as students stay longer on their programmes than they had actually bargained for while the economy counts its losses in terms of man-hour and double expenditure incurred in the process. From the table, it is also very glaring that without fees being

grounded to a halt and by the nation too because the system is the engine for national planning and development. It must be noted, however, that the Nigerian public university system has begun to mobilise funds from sources outside its traditional sources; hence, for instance, the University of Ibadan now has a full-fledged University Advancement Centre, which *assists it in soliciting funds from sundry sources.*

The study, however, reveals that the Nigerian corporate are yet to fully partner with the Nigerian public university in terms of funding specific programmes in a sustainable manner, except in trickles that cannot sustain any appreciable strand. In some other climes, groups like the Dangote, Globacom, Global Fleet, and the multinationals among others would have set up foundations in several public universities across the nation as part of their corporate social responsibility, majorly in sponsoring sports only, good as it may seem. This abysmal state of finance mobilistaion in public universities in Nigeria confirms the finding of Onuka (2005) that the Federal Ministry of Education, and indeed, the State Ministries of Education have too many agencies, possibly with duplicable functions, suggesting that the overhead in such agencies as the Education Task Fund and the three tertiary institutional regulatory bodies, if the former was scrapped and the money from education tax dispense directly to the beneficiary institutions while the latter be merged all in a bid to save cost and make more money available to the educational institutions at all levels that direly need the fund. From this finding in the current study, the recommendation still remains germane.

The implication of this finding is that while the university system devices ways of improving their internally generated fund, the government should review the usefulness of the various agencies in the education sector with the view to reducing to a manageable number that will serve the sector and economy more profitable, in terms of social and not necessarily in economic terms. The corporate bodies and well-endowed individual Nigerians should be encouraged to get involved in the financing of the public university system for the corporate good of the nation and its entire citizenry as proposed by Onuka (2011).

Table 2. Percentage of estimated budgetary income and actual from each source

S. No.	Sources	No. of response F (%)	Actual F (%)	Relatively actual F (%)
1	Government subvention	1 2.6	23 59.0	15 38.5
2	Communities	4 10.3	11 28.2	24 61.5
3	Private sector organisation support	4 10.3	18 46.2	17 43.6
4	Fees	6 15.4	24 61.5	9 23.1
5	Endowments/gifts from individuals	3 7.7	13 33.3	23 59.0
6	Returns on investment	6 15.4	18 46.2	15 38.5
7	Fund from researches	6 15.4	19 48.7	14 35.9
8	Invention (patent)	9 23.1	16 41.0	14 35.9
9	Levies	4 10.3	17 43.6	18 46.2
10	Loans, bonds, debentures	5 12.8	15 38.5	19 48.7
11	External/technical aids (grants)	7 17.9	15 38.5	17 43.6
12	Application fees (post UME) change of course etc	6 15.4	17 43.6	16 41.0
13	Use of facilities	6 15.4	14 35.9	19 48.7
14	Scale of goods/services and miscellaneous items	6 15.4	16 41.0	17 43.6

15	Consultancy services	7 17.9	12 30.8	20 51.3
16	ETF	9 23.1	15 38.5	15 38.5
17	Alumni support	5 12.8	14 35.9	20 51.3
18	Disposal of equipment/scraps	9 23.1	16 41.0	14 35.9
19	Miscellaneous sources	3 7.7	12 30.8	24 61.5
20	PG programmes	5 12.8	24 61.5	10 25.6
21	DLC programmes	7 17.9	22 56.4	10 25.6
22	Interest on loans	6 15.4	15 38.5	18 46.2

The table shows how well the expectation on the budget estimates above were met. The results showed that the actual amount demanded were often met in part by what was realised from the expected sources. From the table, it can also be inferred that it was in respect of four expected revenue items: government subvention, fees, PG programmes, and DLC programmes that more than half of the expected revenues were substantially met: at 59.0%, 61.5%, 61.5%, and 56.4%. The implication of this is that the expectations from majority of these sources were not met. It thus calls for greater drive towards mobilisation of funds for the public university system.

The above finding contradicts the government's popularly declared policy that it has a duty to provide all qualified Nigerians with university education at minimal cost as enunciated in the constitution (Wachira Kigotho (2002) [In the *Higher Education Chronicle*, Tuesday, May 28, 2002]). It also negates the aspiration of the majority of the Nigerian population to acquire university degree as according to Bamiro and Adedeji (2010), the poor in Nigeria can only access university education through Federal Universities and Open/Distance Learning Degree programmes. It also did not conform with the directive of the government though the National Universities Commission makes it mandatory for all federal universities to generate

diversification means (Odebiyi and Aina, 1999: vii, 36) as it did not appear they were able to meet this target since they are not allowed to charge tuition fees from the undergraduate students. It could also be seen that even the 10 per cent the government expects from the universities could not be adequately generated as can be seen from the table. Even if they could, it would have still been inadequate to their annual obligations to provide quality education at that level. It also corroborates the fact that all federal universities receive the bulk of their financing (almost 95 per cent) from the federal government through the National Universities Commission (Hartnett: 1) and Campbell (2007) though fund from the government is not adequate as shown by the table by the result of the study. This, therefore, should call for the attention of the federal government to find out if the money it disburses to the NUC is distributed accordingly or not.

The result on the other agrees with the findings of Ibukun (1997 in Onuka, 2005) who found that there was growing shortage of funds and learning resources in the university system. Ekundayo and Ajayi (2009) confirmed that the gross underfunding of the educational system in the country has been rendering the university system incapacitated, thus, being corroborated by the result of this investigation. Oyeneye (2006) and Adegbite (2007), finding a similar situation to this result, argued that the major problem facing the management of university system, especially public universities in Nigeria is that of inadequate funding. This result again is in consonance with Ajayi and Ekundayo's (2006) submission that the Nigerian government, over the years, has failed to meet the UNESCO's recommendation of at least 26 per cent of the total budget allocation to the education sector as what obtained in Nigeria is far less than that level.

Table 3. Sufficiency level of funds available to service unit

S. No.	Description	NR F (%)	VS F (%)	S F (%)	I F (%)	NA F (%)
1	Direct teaching	1 3.4	6 20.7	13 44.8	7 24.1	2 6.9
2	Research	3 10.3	3 10.3	10 34.5	10 34.5	3 10.3
3	Academic services	2 6.9	3 10.3	11 37.9	12 41.4	1 3.4
4	Teaching staff development	2 6.9	2 6.9	9 31.0	12 41.4	4 14.8

6	Seminars	2 6.9	1 3.4	12 41.4	13 44.8	1 3.4
7	Conferences	3 10.3	1 3.4	10 34.5	15 51.7	0 0.0
8	Support staff development	2 6.9	3 10.3	6 20.7	15 51.7	3 10.3
9	Technical support staff development	2 6.9	2 6.9	8 27.6	10 34.5	7 24.1
10	Academic equipment procurement	2 6.9	2 6.9	9 31.0	11 37.9	5 17.2
11	Maintenance of academic equipment	3 10.3	1 3.4	9 31.0	11 37.9	5 17.2
12	Replacement of academic equipment	1 3.4	2 6.9	11 37.9	11 37.9	4 14.8
13	Maintenance of infrastructures	1 3.4	1 3.4	10 34.5	14 48.3	3 10.3
14	Infrastructural development	0 0.0	3 10.3	10 34.5	14 48.3	2 6.9

The table shows the level of sufficiency of funds available for services in the universities. A combination of direct teaching and administrative services were funded fairly well at 66 per cent. The results for other services namely, research, academic services, teaching staff development, workshops, seminars, conferences, support staff development, technical support staff development, academic equipment procurement, maintenance of academic equipment, replacement of academic equipment, maintenance of infrastructures, infrastructural development, student support services, learning materials, journals, and other publications and contingencies show that they got far less than they had expected to keep going and to sufficiently prosecute their functions without hindrance.

The results above are contrary to the intention of the government that the federal universities' budgeting processes and expenditures have to adhere to budgeting and expenditure formula stipulated by NUC as follows: 60 per cent for total academic expenditure; 39 per cent for administrative support; and 1 per cent for pension and benefits (Hartnett and Campbell, 2007) as the result does show conformity to government's intention. The government did not implement as it often does to allocate not according to the budget estimates submitted by each university. The direct teaching got above average in terms of the estimates submitted in its respect and could still have got something under administrative expenses since the latter might have materials needed for the teaching built into it. However,

as one of the principal functions of the university system, more should be given to direct teaching so that the system could creditably discharge this function, having the right equipment in place so that those produced by the system would be employable (*the Scholar*, 2001). To neglect this aspect of the university system, mandate is perilous to the nation because not only would standard/quality of the university product becomes doubtful, the performance of the economy would be below the standard of what is obtained in other economies, and she will, thus, continue to be perpetually dependent on these other economies for her survival. The investigation of how university budgets are approved by the government reveals that universities are merely allocated funds rather than being given what it budgeted. The implication cannot be anything else than being underfunded. The system is thus left with no alternative than to employ the Makerere example of diversifying its financial base through external degree provision and private candidateship (which already exists in our own system), its business fully privatised, decentralised management, etc (Court, 1999).

Suggested Alternative Sources of Fund Mobilisation for the Nigerian Public University

Table 4. Suggested alternative sources of fund mobilisation

S. No.	Suggested alternatives of funding	NR F (%)	SA F (%)	A F (%)	D F (%)	SD F (%)
1	Increased alumni/alumnae contribution	2 0.5	131 29.7	212 48.1	74 16.8	22 5.0
2	Increased government subvention	5 1.1	230 52.2	153 34.7	47 10.7	6 1.4
3	Increased philanthropic gestures	13 2.9	151 34.2	219 49.7	50 11.3	8 1.8
4	More endowment by well-wishers	7 1.6	146 33.1	245 55.6	29 6.6	14 3.2
5	Reintroduction of moderate tuition fees	5 1.1	118 26.8	167 37.9	110 24.9	41 9.3
6	More investment in capital market	10 2.3	164 37.2	190 43.1	48 10.9	29 6.6
7	Development and sundry fees	13 2.9	70 15.9	223 50.6	104 23.6	31 7.0
8	Provision of research and invention (patent)	13 2.9	148 33.6	237 53.7	35 7.9	8 1.8
9	Soliciting funds/fund raising	11 2.5	122 27.7	229 51.9	59 13.4	20 4.5
10	Revenue from increased public	12 2.7	110 24.9	251 56.0	54 12.2	16 3.6

11	Mounting of specialist training programmes	6 1.4	125 28.3	245 55.6	58 13.2	7 1.6
12	Increased involvement by donor agencies	5 1.1	156 35.4	240 54.4	30 6.8	10 2.3
13	Greater involvement by the corporate world	5 1.1	173 39.2	224 50.8	32 7.3	7 1.6
14	Improved revenue consultancy services	6 1.4	122 27.7	260 59.0	41 9.3	12 2.7

This table reveals suggested alternative sources of fund mobilisation. From the table, the results strongly indicated that subjects in the study agreed with the suggested sources for fund mobilisation. This is evident in number of respondents agreeing with suggested sources from which funds could be mobilised for the sustenance of the system (64.7% to 90.0%). This result is contrary to the finding of Okeke and Onye (2009) which revealed that mobilisation of resources such as fund through development partners like UNESCO, UNDP, World Bank, NUC, NDDC etc. donations from individuals, companies, organisations, etc. (endowment), fund raising/foundations-involvement of alumni association, gate fee, parking fee, cybercafe, and Internet facilities, farms, supermarkets, printing press, university hotel/guest house/restaurant/fast-food centres, consultancy programme, capital market (shares and bonds), land and property development, government supplementary special budget, external linkages of international organisations and Nigerians in Diaspora and some socio-cultural organisations in the geopolitical zones were not accepted as means of mobilising funds and as such need reforms and revitalisation.

By implication, the study is suggesting that the system should make concerted efforts to source funds from the sources listed in the study as well as possible avenues of funding as was suggested by Kasozi (2009 in Egbokhare, 2010).) and that there should be a joint fund mobilisation committee to raise and disburse funds to universities according to their needs as government could not do it alone, and where it can, bureaucracy will work against the effectiveness of such mechanism. It is important for those who are responsible for sourcing to take cognisance of the submission of Bamiro and Adedeji (2010) that the poor in Nigeria access university education only through the federal universities and distance learning programmes, while the rich access the same through federal, state, and private universities as well as through the distance learning mode and institutions abroad so that fees at federal universities are not

to university education. Otherwise, in an attempt to solving an existing problem that had actually constrained the achievement of quality may become compounded by creating an unimaginable level of crime than the country is currently witnessing in tandem with what Abati (2001) described as creating an army of unhappy who may not believe in the country into which they were born.

Conclusion

The study has basically unveiled the fact that governments by themselves alone cannot satisfactorily fund the public university system due to the enormity of the responsibility the constitution thrusts on them, and if they can, they are unwilling to do so for political reasons as they have to meet some needs of those who contributed to their successes at the polls in terms of constituency development projects and similar demands. It also revealed that the current level of available funds to the Nigerian public university system is simply inadequate to meet its statutory functions and as such could not be in a position to compete favourably with the universities in the rest of the world and even in Africa. It can also be inferred that the system's overreliance on government is its bane, yet that is the only available option for now if the vast majority of Nigerians are not to be denied access to quality university education. Another basic revelation from the study is the fact that many stakeholders do not know the accurate financial standing of the system at any point in time as can be inferred from the differences in their perception of the financial status of public universities. It could thus be concluded that stakeholders held the view that all hands must be on deck with regard to fund mobilisation for the system because it is imperative that the only way of not underfunding the system is sourcing funds from means other than the government (State or Federal) to complement the government's own. The stakeholders held the opinion that though each public university could devise its own mechanism, there was need for a kind of quadripartite efforts on the parts of government, universities, corporate bodies, and well-endowed individual Nigerians to jointly fashion out mechanisms for fund mobilisation in the Nigerian public universities; however, the suggestion does not preclude the other stakeholders from participation in the process of ensuring lasting solutions to the lingering underfunding of the system. Another fact that came out clear from the study is that universities should devise mechanism for increasing its internally generated revenues and equally the fees could be

strictly meant for indigent prospective Nigerian university undergraduate and possibly graduate students too.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusion of the study, the following were recommended:

- That a workable and sustainable fund-mobilisation mechanism involving stakeholders drawn from among the parents, government, the Nigerian corporate world, students and staff, and other important people interested in the university should be evolved to brainstorm and mobilise funds on a continuous basis for the system so that it can take its pride of place in the comity of nations.
- That mechanism should be evolved to ensure that the level of internally generated revenue from its services like consultancy services, training programmes, other form of community services, rental of its facilities, dividends from investments, parks and gardens, zoological garden, research and farms outfit, slaughtering services, etc. could be tremendously improved.
- That its research outputs be patented and corporate bodies should buy them and develop them for the benefit of the society, and besides purchasing them, they should also pay royalties to the university that discovered such inventions/innovations.

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