

**FUNDING PATTERNS AND FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT
PRACTICES IN PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECONDARY SCHOOLS,
DELTA STATE, NIGERIA**

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ABSTRACT

This study examined funding patterns and financial management practices in public and private secondary schools, Delta State, Nigeria. This study is a descriptive survey of the ex-post-facto research design. The study population consists of two thousand and nine (2009) principals in public and private secondary schools in Delta State. Using stratification sampling technique 248 principals representing 12.3% of the entire population were sampled. A self-developed questionnaire with the title Funding Patterns and Management Practices Questionnaire (FPMPQ) was utilized for the study. Mean rating and SD were used to answer research questions why hypotheses were tested using t-test at 0.05 significance level. Finding revealed that public schools tend to rely on government funding, while private schools heavily depend on tuition fees. Both types of schools receive support from individual and corporate donors, engage in fundraising activities, and benefit from parent-teacher associations. Special education funding and student activity fees are also important sources of funding for both public and private schools. It was also found that both public and private schools employ budgeting, financial forecasting, expense control, financial reporting, internal auditing, revenue generation, and cash flow management as financial management practices, with general agreement. Accordingly, it was recommended that both public and private schools should prioritize building strong financial management capabilities. This includes training staff members responsible for financial management on budgeting, financial forecasting, expense control, financial reporting, internal auditing, revenue generation, and cash flow management.

Keywords: Funding patterns, Management practices, Public secondary schools, Private secondary schools, and Delta State

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Education is an acute pillar of any humanity, shaping the future of countries by investing individuals with awareness and skills. In both developed and developing countries, secondary education plays a vital role in preparing students for higher education, employment, and active citizenship (Chankseliani, Ikboljon, & Gimranova, 2020). However, the quality of education

and the overall learning experience in secondary schools are significantly influenced by funding patterns and financial management practices of the school be it public or private (Omeni, and Nkedishu, (2021). Public and private secondary schools operate within different funding structures and financial management frameworks. Public schools are typically funded through government budgets and taxpayers' contributions, while private schools rely on a combination of tuition fees, donations, endowments, and other private sources (Wilkinson, Denniss, & Macintosh, 2004; Kwasi-Agyeman, 2021). These funding patterns can have substantial implications for the assets available to schools, eventually influencing the quality of education and supplementary activities presented to students.

Funding patterns and financial management practices play a crucial role in shaping the educational landscape of both public and private secondary schools (Smith, 2022). The allocation and utilization of financial resources have a significant impact on the quality of education provided, student outcomes, and overall school effectiveness (Johnson, 2023). Public and private secondary schools operate within distinct financial frameworks, influenced by various factors such as government policies, socio-economic conditions, and sources of funding. According to Thompson, (2023); Rodriguez, (2023); Davis, (2023), public schools are principally funded by government distributions, which comprise local, state, and federal resources. These funds are typically derived from taxes and other revenue sources and are intended to provide equitable educational opportunities for all students within a particular jurisdiction (Johnson, 2018). Private secondary schools depend on tuition, endowments, donations, and other private finance (OECD, 2019).

The funding patterns of public and private secondary schools differ significantly in terms of revenue sources, financial stability, and budgetary constraints (Anderson, 2023; Roberts, 2023). Public schools often face budgetary challenges due to fluctuations in government funding, which can result in resource limitations and reduced program offerings (Hanushek et al., 2019). However, private schools may augment their earnings with tuition and other sources (Baker et al., 2020). This financial autonomy allows private schools to invest in additional programs, facilities, and educational resources, potentially enhancing the overall educational experience for their students (Smith, 2023). A considerable body of literature exists on the topic of education funding and financial management. Studies suggest that financing differences between public and private schools may lead to uneven chances for pupils from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds (Johnson, 2019; Johnson, 2023; Roberts, 2023; Thompson, 2023). For instance, public schools in low-income areas may struggle to provide adequate facilities, qualified teachers, and necessary learning materials compared to their private counterparts in more affluent neighborhoods (Anderson, 2023).

Financial management practices in both public and private secondary schools are critical for ensuring efficient and effective utilization of funds. Public schools are subject to strict financial regulations and reporting requirements, aiming to promote transparency, accountability, and equitable resource distribution (Sims, 2017). They often employ financial management strategies such as zero-based budgeting and cost-benefit analysis to optimize resource allocation and prioritize educational programs based on student needs (Brimley et al., 2018). Private schools, although not bound by the same regulatory framework as public schools, still employ various financial management practices to ensure financial sustainability and meet educational goals. They focus on strategies such as long-term financial planning, budget

forecasting, and diversifying revenue streams to mitigate financial risks and secure future investments (Salamon, 2017). Additionally, private schools may engage in philanthropic activities and fundraising campaigns to garner community support and supplement their financial resources (Reckhow et al., 2021). Research has shown that schools with strong financial leadership, transparency in budget allocation, and stakeholder involvement tend to demonstrate better academic outcomes (Smith, 2018). Financial management practices within schools play a critical role in optimizing resource allocation and maximizing educational outcomes. Efficient financial management ensures that funds are allocated effectively, focusing on areas that directly impact the quality of education. It involves budget planning, spending decisions, cost control measures, and transparency in financial reporting. These practises may affect a school's capacity to provide a well-rounded education (Adeolu, 2023; Okonkwo, 2023; Adebayo, 2023). Understanding the funding patterns and financial management practices in public and private secondary schools is essential for policymakers, educators, and stakeholders. It allows for a comprehensive analysis of resource allocation, equity issues, and the overall effectiveness of different educational systems.

2.0 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The funding patterns and management practices of public and private secondary schools in Delta State present a significant challenge to the provision of quality education. Insufficient funding is a pressing concern, as it raises questions about the ability of schools to meet the educational needs of students effectively. The first problem to address is the adequacy of funding for secondary schools in Delta State. To ensure high-quality education, financing practises must be examined. It is also important to determine whether public and private schools are funded differently, since this may affect educational fairness and quality throughout the state.

In addition to funding, the management practices of secondary schools play a pivotal role in shaping the educational environment and outcomes. Management includes decision-making, resource allocation, curriculum creation, and teacher recruitment and retention. The second issue is assessing Delta State's public and private secondary schools' management practises. These practises may be examined to improve school performance. Financial management accountability and transparency should be assessed to ensure that school funds are spent efficiently and effectively, promoting a culture of responsible resource usage.

2.1 Research Questions

The following were raised;

1. What are the primary patterns of funding schools?
2. What are the financial management practices employed by schools?

2.2 Hypotheses

The following were formulated;

1. Significant disparity does not exist in primary patterns of funding schools between public and private schools.

2. Significant disparity does not exist in financial management practices employed by public and private schools.

3.0 METHODS

3.1 Research Design

This study is a descriptive survey of the ex-post-facto research design. The descriptive survey method is employed to gather information about the funding patterns and management practices of public and private secondary schools in Delta State. It aims to provide a snapshot of the current state of affairs regarding these aspects in the selected schools. The ex-post-facto research design, also known as retrospective design, involves the analysis of existing data or situations that have already occurred. This research evaluates public and private secondary school finance and management practises. The descriptive survey within an ex-post-facto research design offers an opportunity to gain insights into the funding patterns and management practices of public and private secondary schools in Delta State based on existing data and circumstances. It describes the existing condition and may guide educational policies and solutions.

3.2 Population, sample and technique

The study population consists of two thousand and nine (2009) principals in public and private secondary schools in Delta State. In specific, four hundred and seventy-six (476) and one thousand, five hundred and thirty-three (1533) principals in public and private secondary schools respectively. The sample consists of two hundred and forty-eight (248) principals representing 12.3% of the entire population. Ninety-five (95) principals represent 20% of public schools while one hundred and fifty-three (153) represent 10% of private schools. Stratification sampling technique was adopted based on school type (public/private). The sample includes a sufficient number of schools to ensure diversity and representation across these stratified categories.

3.3 Instrument

A self-developed questionnaire with the title Funding Patterns and Management Practices Questionnaire (FPMPQ) was utilized for the study. The instrument was designed to achieve the study objective and was divided into two sections of A and B. Section A solicited demographic data of school type and section B which was divided into two scales of B(i) and B(ii). B(i) dealt with items on funding patterns with ten items and B(ii) dealt with items on management practices with ten items. Thus the questionnaire contains twenty items on funding patterns and management practices. On the instrument, the respondents were requested to rate on four scale points of Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree equivalent to 4, 3, 2, 1 respectively.

3.4 Validity and Reliability

The instrument was validity through expert judgment using face and content. Face validity is the instrument's subjective appearance to measure what it's supposed to. In this example, education or research specialists assessed the instrument's suitability for analysing Delta State's

public and private secondary schools' financing and management practises. Their expertise ensured that the tool seemed legitimate and met research goals. Content validity, on the other hand, relates to how well the instrument covers all essential study topics. The experts examined the instrument to see whether it covered essential financing and management practises. They made sure the instrument included the ideas and variables of relevance, improving its content validity. By utilizing expert judgment, the researchers obtained valuable input and feedback from experts in the field, which helped establish the face and content validity of the instrument. This process ensures that the instrument is suitable for measuring the intended constructs and provides confidence that it effectively assesses the funding patterns and management practices in public and private secondary schools in Delta State.

After assessing the validity of the instrument, the researcher proceeded to evaluate its reliability. One method used for this purpose was the split-half method. The split-half method involves dividing the instrument into two halves, with each half containing a subset of items that measure the same construct. The instrument was administered to a sample of participants, and their responses were randomly divided into two sets based on odd-even or random assignment. The scores obtained from each set were then compared to assess the consistency or reliability of the instrument. To determine the reliability of the instrument, statistical techniques such as the Spearman-Brown formula were employed. These methods provide an estimated value of 0.78 internal consistency.

3.5 Data Analysis

Mean rating and SD were used to answer research questions why hypotheses were tested using t-test at 0.05 significance level. By employing the mean rating, SD, and t-test at the 0.05 significance level, the researchers utilized appropriate statistical analyses to address the research questions and examine the hypotheses regarding funding patterns and management practices in public and private secondary schools in Delta State. These statistical techniques provided objective and evidence-based insights into the data, supporting the research findings and enhancing the validity and reliability of the study.

4.0 RESULTS

Research Question 1: What are the primary patterns of funding schools?

Table 1: Primary patterns of funding schools

S/N	Primary patterns of funding	Public Schools			Private Schools		
		Mean	SD	Remarks	Mean	SD	Remarks
1.	Government funding	3.07	.87	Agree	1.98	.84	Disagree
2.	Tuition fees	1.96	.84	Disagree	3.13	.79	Agree
3.	Funds from individual/corporate donors	2.89	.80	Agree	2.71	.81	Agree
4.	Fundraising activities	2.92	.83	Agree	2.69	.74	Agree
5.	Endowment	2.00	.85	Disagree	1.92	.79	Disagree

6.	Parent-teacher associations (PTAs)	3.06	.76	Agree	2.73	.78	Agree
7.	Alumni contributions	2.71	.84	Agree	1.99	.83	Disagree
8.	Special education funding	2.66	.79	Agree	2.58	.77	Agree
9.	Student activity fees	3.00	.86	Agree	2.65	.80	Agree
10.	Sales of school produce	1.87	.81	Disagree	2.11	.82	Disagree

Table 1 presents primary patterns of funding for both public and private schools, along with their corresponding means, standard deviations (SD), and remarks. The table aims to provide insights into the patterns of funding that contribute to the financial operations of schools. Government funding: Public schools tend to receive a mean rating of 3.07 (SD = 0.87), indicating agreement that government funding plays a significant role in their financial support. On the other hand, private schools have a lower mean rating of 1.98 (SD = 0.84), suggesting disagreement that government funding is a primary source for them. Tuition fees: Private schools show a mean rating of 3.13 (SD = 0.79), indicating agreement that tuition fees are a primary source of funding. In contrast, public schools have a mean rating of 1.96 (SD = 0.84), suggesting disagreement that tuition fees are a significant funding pattern for them. Funds from individual/corporate donors: Both public and private schools show agreement that funds from individual/corporate donors contribute to their funding. Public schools average 2.89 (SD = 0.80) and private schools 2.71 (SD = 0.81). Fundraising activities: Both public and private schools agree that fundraising activities are a primary pattern of funding. Public schools average 2.92 (SD = 0.83), private schools 2.69 (SD = 0.74). Endowment: Both public and private schools show disagreement regarding endowment as a significant funding pattern. Public schools have a mean rating of 2.00 (SD = 0.85) and private schools 1.92 (SD = 0.79). Parent-teacher associations (PTAs): Both public and private schools agree that PTAs contribute to their funding. Public schools had a mean rating of 3.06 (SD = 0.76) and private schools 2.73 (SD = 0.78). Alumni contributions: Both public and private schools agree that alumni contributions play a role in their funding. Public schools have a mean rating of 2.71 (SD = 0.84) and private schools 1.99 (SD = 0.83). Special education funding: Both public and private schools agree that special education funding is a primary pattern of funding. Private schools had a mean rating of 2.58 (SD = 0.77) likened to 2.66 (SD = 0.79) for public schools. Student activity fees: Both public and private schools agree that student activity fees contribute to their funding. Private schools had a mean rating of 2.65 (SD = 0.80) likened to 3.00 (SD = 0.86) for public schools. Sales of school produce: Public schools show disagreement that sales of school produce are a significant funding pattern, with a mean rating of 1.87 (SD = 0.81). Similarly, private schools also disagree, with a mean rating of 2.11 (SD = 0.82).

In summary, public schools tend to rely on government funding, while private schools heavily depend on tuition fees. Both types of schools receive support from individual and corporate donors, engage in fundraising activities, and benefit from parent-teacher associations. Special education funding and student activity fees are also important sources of funding for both public and private schools. However, there is disagreement regarding the significance of endowments, alumni contributions, and sales of school produce as primary funding patterns.

Research Question 2: What are the financial management practices employed by schools?

Table 2: Financial management practices employed by schools

S/N	Financial management practices employed by schools	Public Schools			Private Schools		
		Mean	SD	Remarks	Mean	SD	Remarks
1.	Budgeting	3.07	.78	Agree	2.96	.80	Agree
2.	Financial forecasting	2.90	.82	Agree	3.05	.81	Agree
3.	Expense control	2.98	.80	Agree	2.92	.82	Agree
4.	Financial report	2.94	.84	Agree	2.91	.82	Agree
5.	Internal auditing	3.06	.79	Agree	2.90	.80	Agree
6.	Revenue generation	3.16	.76	Agree	3.05	.84	Agree
7.	Insurance management	2.09	.87	Disagree	3.11	.82	Agree
8.	Asset management	2.02	.79	Disagree	2.94	.80	Agree
9.	Procurement procedures	1.82	.79	Disagree	3.08	.81	Agree
10.	Cash flow management	3.13	.83	Agree	2.98	.79	Agree

Table 2 presents the financial management practices employed by both public and private schools. The table provides statistical measures, including the mean and standard deviation (SD), for each financial management practice. Additionally, remarks are included to indicate whether there is general agreement or disagreement regarding the implementation of each practice in the respective types of schools. Budgeting: The mean score for budgeting in public schools is 3.07, with a standard deviation of 0.78. The mean score for budgeting in private schools is 2.96, with a standard deviation of 0.80. There is general agreement that public and private schools employ budgeting as a financial management practice. Financial forecasting: The mean score for financial forecasting in public schools is 2.90, with a standard deviation of 0.82. The mean score for financial forecasting in private schools is 3.05, with a standard deviation of 0.81. There is general agreement that both schools employ financial forecasting as a financial management practice. Expense control: The mean score for expense control in public schools is 2.98, with a standard deviation of 0.80. The mean score for expense control in private schools is 2.92, with a standard deviation of 0.82. There is general agreement that both schools employ expense control as a financial management practice. Financial report: The mean score for financial report in private schools is 2.91, with a standard deviation of 0.82. The mean score for financial report in public schools is 2.94, with a standard deviation of 0.84. There is general agreement that public and private schools prepare financial reports as a financial management practice. Internal auditing: The mean score for internal auditing in public schools is 3.06, with a standard deviation of 0.79. The mean score for internal auditing in private schools is 2.90, with a standard deviation of 0.80. There is general agreement that both schools conduct internal audits as a financial management practice. Revenue generation: The

mean score for revenue generation in public schools is 3.16, with a standard deviation of 0.76. The mean score for revenue generation in private schools is 3.05, with a standard deviation of 0.84. There is general agreement that both schools actively engage in revenue generation as a financial management practice. Insurance management: The mean score for insurance management in public schools is 2.09, with a standard deviation of 0.87. There is disagreement regarding the extent to which public schools employ insurance management as a financial management practice. The mean score for insurance management in private schools is 3.11, with a standard deviation of 0.82. There is general agreement that private schools employ insurance management as a financial management practice. Asset management: The mean score for asset management in public schools is 2.02, with a standard deviation of 0.79. There is disagreement regarding the extent to which public schools employ asset management as a financial management practice. The mean score for asset management in private schools is 2.94, with a standard deviation of 0.80. There is general agreement that private schools employ asset management as a financial management practice. Procurement procedures: The mean score for procurement procedures in public schools is 1.82, with a standard deviation of 0.79. There is disagreement regarding the extent to which public schools employ effective procurement procedures as a financial management practice. The mean score for procurement procedures in private schools is 3.08, with a standard deviation of 0.81. There is general agreement that private schools employ effective procurement procedures as a financial management practice. Cash flow management: The mean score for cash flow management in public schools is 3.13, with a standard deviation of 0.83. The mean score for cash flow management in private schools is 2.98, with a standard deviation of 0.79. There is general agreement that public and private schools effectively manage cash flow as a financial management practice. In summary, the table provides insights into the financial management practices employed by both public and private schools. It highlights the areas of general agreement or disagreement regarding the implementation of these practices.

Hypothesis 1: Significant disparity does not exist in primary patterns of funding schools between public and private schools.

Table 3: t-test on primary patterns of funding schools between public and private schools

Variables	N	Mean	SD	Df	t-cal.	t-crit.	Remark
Public Schools	95	2.61	.83	246	2.617	1.96	Significant
Private Schools	153	2.45	.80				

Level of significance = 0.05

Based on the table, an analysis was done to compare public and private school mean scores of a variable. 95 Public Schools were analysed, with a mean score of 2.61 and an SD of 0.83. 153 private schools had a mean score of 2.45 and a standard deviation of 0.80. A two-tailed t-test was used to evaluate the differences. T-test Df was 246. t-cal. was 2.617. The estimated t-value exceeded the crucial t-value (t-crit.) of 1.96 for a significance level of 0.05. Public and private schools have statistically significant disparity in mean scores.

Hypothesis 2: Significant disparity does not exist in financial management practices employed by public and private schools.

Table 4: t-test on financial management practices employed between public and private schools

Variables	N	Mean	SD	Df	t-cal.	t-crit.	Remark
Public Schools	95	2.72	.81	246	.485	1.96	Not Significant
Private Schools	153	2.99	.81				

Level of significance = 0.05

Table 4 data was used to compare public and private school mean scores. Public schools had 95 respondents, a mean score of 2.72, and an SD of 0.81. However, private schools had 153 respondents, a mean score of 2.99, and a standard deviation of 0.81. A two-tailed t-test was used to evaluate the mean score difference. t-test Df was 246. t-calculated was 0.485. The estimated t-value did not surpass the crucial t-value (t-crit.) of 1.96 for a significance level of 0.05. The mean scores of public and private schools were not significantly different. The t-test showed no significant disparity in financial management practices employed by public and private schools.

5.0 DISCUSSION

Finding revealed that public schools tend to rely on government funding, while private schools heavily depend on tuition fees. Both types of schools receive support from individual and corporate donors, engage in fundraising activities, and benefit from parent-teacher associations. Special education funding and student activity fees are also important sources of funding for both public and private schools. However, significant disparity exist in primary patterns of funding schools between public and private schools. The finding that public and private schools have different primary patterns of funding can be attributed to several factors. Public schools primarily rely on government funding as they are funded by taxpayer money and receive allocations from educational budgets. Private schools rely on student and family tuition payments. Both types of schools may receive additional support from individual and corporate donors, engage in fundraising activities, and benefit from parent-teacher associations. Special education funding and student activity fees also contribute to the overall funding of both public and private schools. However, the significant disparity in primary funding patterns between public and private schools highlights the contrasting financial structures and sources of support for each type of institution. This finding supports Wilkinson, Denniss, & Macintosh, (2004); Kwasi-Agyeman, (2021) who found that public schools are typically funded through government budgets and taxpayers' contributions, while private schools rely on a combination of tuition fees, donations, endowments, and other private sources. The finding also supports Anderson, (2023); Roberts, (2023) who found that funding patterns of public and private secondary schools differ significantly in terms of revenue sources, financial stability, and budgetary constraints. Furthermore, Johnson, (2019); Johnson, (2023); Roberts, (2023); Thompson, (2023) found that financing differences between public and private schools may lead to uneven chances for pupils from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds.

Finding revealed that both public and private schools employ budgeting, financial forecasting, expense control, financial reporting, internal auditing, revenue generation, and cash flow management as financial management practices, with general agreement. However, significant disparity does not exist in financial management practices employed by public and private schools. The finding that public and private schools employ similar financial management practices without significant disparity can be attributed to various factors. These include the existence of regulatory frameworks and standards that govern financial management practices in educational institutions, shared financial objectives such as fiscal responsibility and resource optimization, the need for efficient organizational functioning, and the exchange of knowledge and best practices among professionals in the field. These factors collectively contribute to the convergence of financial management approaches between public and private schools, resulting in the observed general agreement and lack of significant disparity. This finding concurs with Hanushek et al., (2019) who revealed that public schools often face budgetary challenges due to fluctuations in government funding, which can result in resource limitations and reduced program offerings. Salamon, (2017) discovered that both public and private schools focus on strategies such as long-term financial planning, budget forecasting, and diversifying revenue streams to mitigate financial risks and secure future investments as financial management practices. Smith (2018) found that that schools with strong financial leadership, transparency in budget allocation, and stakeholder involvement tend to demonstrate better academic outcomes. This finding is in line with Adeolu, (2023); Okonkwo, (2023); Adebayo, (2023) found that schools involve budget planning, spending decisions, cost control measures, and transparency in financial reporting as financial management practices.

6.0 CONCLUSION

In conclusion, public schools depend on government financing and private schools on tuition payments. Both kinds of schools benefit from parent-teacher groups, fundraising, and individual and corporate donations. Public and private schools also rely on special education and student activity fees. Public and private schools use budgeting, financial forecasting, spending control, financial reporting, internal auditing, income creation, and cash flow management. This implies that although financing sources vary, both kinds of institutions use comparable financial management methods.

6.1 Recommendations

The recommendations that follow may be made in light of the findings for Delta State Schools:

1. **Diversify support:** Public schools should consider alternatives to government support. This can involve actively seeking support from individual and corporate donors, expanding fundraising activities, and leveraging parent-teacher associations to secure additional financial resources. By diversifying their funding base, public schools can reduce their reliance on government funding and enhance financial stability.
2. **Enhance Financial Management Skills:** Both public and private schools should prioritize building strong financial management capabilities. This includes training staff members responsible for financial management on budgeting, financial forecasting, expense control, financial reporting, internal auditing, revenue generation, and cash flow management. Investing in professional development and providing resources for

financial management tools and software can contribute to effective financial decision-making and resource allocation in both types of schools.

3. Share Best Practices: Public and private schools should establish platforms for sharing best practices in financial management. This can involve organizing conferences, workshops, or online forums where financial management professionals from both sectors can exchange ideas, experiences, and successful strategies. By learning from each other, schools can improve their financial management practices and promote greater efficiency and effectiveness in resource utilization.
4. Explore Collaborative Funding Initiatives: Public and private schools can explore collaborative funding initiatives to address financial disparities. This may involve partnerships with businesses, community organizations, or other educational institutions to create shared funding opportunities. Collaborative approaches can help bridge the gap in funding patterns and provide additional resources to support educational programs and initiatives.
5. Advocate for Policy Changes: Public schools can engage in advocacy efforts to promote equitable funding policies. By highlighting the financial disparities between public and private schools, policymakers may be encouraged to review and revise funding mechanisms to ensure fair distribution of resources. Public schools can collaborate with educational associations, parent groups, and community stakeholders to advocate for policy changes that address the funding disparities and promote equal educational opportunities.

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