

Research Article

# An Evaluation of the Innovative Funding Models on Effective Administration of Secondary Schools in Imo State, Nigeria

Kelechi Chinemerem Mezieobi<sup>1,\*</sup> , Juliet Nkonyeasua Ossai<sup>2</sup> ,  
Anashie Anastasia Iwang<sup>3</sup> , Destiny Onyeka Ukor<sup>4</sup> 

<sup>1</sup>Department of Arts and Humanities Education, Alex Ekwueme Federal University, Ndufu-Alike, Ikwo, Ebonyi State, Nigeria

<sup>2</sup>Department of Social Science Education, University of Delta, Agbor, Delta State, Nigeria

<sup>3</sup>Department of Educational Management, University of Calabar, Calabar, Cross Rivers State, Nigeria

<sup>4</sup>Department of Social Science Education, Delta State University, Abraka, Delta State, Nigeria

## Abstract

There is room for innovations at every given point in time including in the financial management of educational institutions. Innovative funding models are contemporary funding models explored and used in effective and efficient financial maintenance of an institution. This institution can be educational, financial, religious, business, and so on. This study examined the influence of innovative funding models on administration of secondary schools in Imo State. Two research questions guided the study while two hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance. Descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. The population for the study was 297 principals which comprised 83 males and 214 females. There was no sampling procedure because the population was manageable. The questionnaire used for data collection was a 15-item structured titled “Innovative Funding Models on Effective Administration of Secondary Schools Questionnaire (IFMEASSQ)”. The questionnaire was validated by three research experts, two experts in Educational Management from the Department of Social Science Education and one expert in Measurement and Evaluation unit of Department of Educational Foundations, all from Faculty of Education, Imo State University (IMSU), Owerri. Cronbach Alpha statistic was used to compute the internal consistency of the instrument which yielded .83 and .81 for clusters 1 and 2 with an overall reliability index of .82 which indicates that the instrument was reliable. The research questions were answered using mean and standard deviation while the hypotheses were tested with t-test statistic. The findings of the study showed that community involvement and corporate sponsorships influence the administration of secondary education in Imo State to a great extent. Based on the findings, the study recommended that Imo State government should create attractive policies that would enhance massive participations of individuals and corporate bodies in the funding administration of secondary schools.

## Keywords

Innovation, Funding Models, Administration, Community Involvement, Corporate Sponsorships

\*Corresponding author: [kcmez2016@gmail.com](mailto:kcmez2016@gmail.com) (Kelechi Chinemerem Mezieobi),

[kelechi.mezieobi@funai.edu.ng](mailto:kelechi.mezieobi@funai.edu.ng) (Kelechi Chinemerem Mezieobi)

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## 1. Introduction

Funding is an important aspect of effective administration of educational institutions in Nigeria and other parts of the world. The emphasis on quality and standard education is reliant on other factors including effective funding of education which should be the priority of every government. The secondary school system is designed to prepare students for future education and make them become useful individuals in the society. Secondary education in Nigeria, as outlined by the Federal Republic of Nigeria [8], refers to the educational phase that follows primary education and precedes tertiary education. It is recognized as the second stage of formal schooling, lasting six years, and is deemed a crucial level of education within the country. At this stage, a robust basis for further education and practical life skills is established [17]. Effective administration in secondary education is crucial for the successful operation of schools, the achievement of educational objectives, and the overall growth and development of students. Effective administration of schools cannot be achieved without adequate funding. The act of meeting up with financial obligations of the educational institutions implies adopting funding models that can be explored and adopted.

Educational administration generally refers to the process of managing and organizing educational resources, people, and activities within an educational organization or a specific educational domain to achieve specific educational goals and objectives effectively and efficiently. On the same note, Stillman (2015) has defined administration as involving planning, coordinating, directing, and overseeing various tasks and responsibilities to ensure smooth operations and optimal outcomes. Administration is the management of public affairs efficiently. Administration is generally defined as the process of working with and through others to efficiently accomplish organizational goals [19]. The principals oversee the administrative activities in the secondary schools.

The principal is the administrative and management head of every secondary school in Nigeria. A principal in the secondary school administrative hierarchy holds a distinct and vital role as a leader. Their responsibilities include overseeing and being accountable for the school's operations including the financial management of the secondary school. Egwu (2016) characterizes a principal as a leader tasked with planning, organizing, and overseeing school operations to ensure they function efficiently. The principal's primary duties involve displaying effective instructional leadership to enhance the school's curriculum diversity and instructional quality, contributing to effective school management. Each public secondary school in Nigeria, especially in Imo state, relies significantly on the government to provide the necessary resources for their day-to-day functioning. Occasionally, principals engage with various educational stakeholders, including parents, teachers, school boards, and community

members, to discuss funding needs and garner support for financial initiatives that benefit the school. This initiative helps in the development, advancement, enhancement and improvement of the schools and their activities within the community.

Funding is essential in all establishments. Without finances, the organisation's goals and objectives cannot be achieved. Funding refers to the process of supplying financial resources, typically in the form of money, to support business endeavours, investments, purchases, educational goals and objectives or various projects [10]. Financial support provided by various sources, typically organisations, governments, foundations, communities or individuals, to facilitate specific projects, initiatives, research, or activities can be referred to as funding [9]. This support is intended to cover expenses associated with the designated purpose, which may include salaries, equipment, materials, overhead costs, and other necessary resources. Funding is a critical determinant of the quality and efficiency of educational institutions. Adequate and well-allocated financial resources are essential for providing necessary infrastructure, educational materials, staff training, and other crucial components that contribute to an enriching learning environment. In recent times, traditional funding models for education have encountered limitations in trying to meet the evolving needs and demands of contemporary educational systems. As a result, innovative funding models have emerged as potential solutions to bridge the financial gaps and promote efficiency within educational institutions. This is important in this era of digitalization, globalization and modernization.

Innovative funding model is a funding model that can be explored in the financial management of educational institutions for effectiveness and efficiency. It refers to new and unconventional approaches or strategies for raising funds to support projects, ventures, initiatives, or organizations. These models often deviate from traditional funding methods and involve creative thinking, alternative sources of capital, or novel ways to engage stakeholders. According to Belleflamme, Lambert and Schwienbacher (2014), there are several innovative funding models which include: crowdfunding, impact investing, social impact bonds, donor-advised funds, venture philanthropy, community involvement, peer-to-peer lending and corporate sponsorships. In this study, the researcher focused on community involvement and corporate sponsorships.

Community involvement refers to the active engagement, participation, and collaboration of individuals or groups within a community to contribute to its betterment, development, and well-being. According to Draper and Cohen (2013), community involvement encompasses a wide range of activities, such as volunteering, advocacy, community service, organizing events, and participating in decision-making pro-

cesses that affect the community. Community involvement is essential for fostering social cohesion, empowering individuals, and driving positive change within communities [22]. Community involvement in secondary school administration refers to the active engagement and participation of community members, parents, organizations, and stakeholders in various aspects of school governance, decision-making, and support. This collaboration is crucial for the overall improvement of educational outcomes and the well-being of students.

Community involvement through corporate sponsorships serves the dual purpose of supporting the community's well-being while promoting the corporation's brand, reputation, and positive engagement with its stakeholders. Corporate sponsorship refers to a business arrangement where a company provides financial or other forms of support to an event, activity, organization, or individual in exchange for promotional benefits or association with the sponsored entity. This support could be in the form of monetary contributions, goods, services, or resources. According to Kotler and Armstrong (2017), corporate sponsorship refers to a strategic partnership or financial support provided by a business entity to an event, activity, organization, or project in exchange for brand visibility and promotional benefits. It involves the contribution of funds, resources, or products by a corporation to enhance its brand image, promote its products or services, and align itself with specific causes or demographics. Corporate sponsorships in secondary schools involve partnerships between schools and businesses or corporations for mutual benefit. These partnerships typically involve financial or in-kind support from the corporation in exchange for various forms of brand exposure and marketing opportunities within the school environment. Corporate sponsorships in secondary schools can have various impacts on gender dynamics and the overall school environment. Furthermore, another innovative funding model for educational institutions is when the educational institutions establish businesses for the school or make investments that can be yielding dividends from time to time. Proceeds from such investments or businesses can be used in financing the schools activities, payment of staff salaries and benefits, maintenance and sustenance of material resources and so on [12].

Meanwhile, gender is an important variable in this paper. It is the roles, behaviours, activities, expectations, and societal norms that a particular culture or society considers appropriate for men and women in their different nature. Gender encompasses all physical, biological, mental, and behavioural attributes distinguishing between the feminine and masculine individuals [1]. Gender as the social construction of female and male identity, is more than biological differences between men and women [14]. It is also referred to as how those differences have been valued, used, and relied upon to simply classify women and men and to allocate roles and expectations to them [16]. For Aydon (2015), gender is described as the social phenomenon of distinguishing males and females

based on a set of identity traits. It is a social, not psychological, or biological construction [3]. On the same note, Ametefe and Ametefe (2017) pinpointed that gender is a social construct that establishes and differentiates status and roles between men and women, particularly in the way they contribute and participate in social, political, and economic activities and are rewarded by the economy and most social institutions. It has been noted that gender is a contextual issue in research generally [14]. The gender of the principal may influence the perception of the school community, especially students, about what leadership looks like which might pose as a challenge [2, 13].

The challenge of funding is eminent in most secondary schools in Nigeria. Imo state is no exception. The researchers express concern about the substantial challenges faced by the secondary education system in Imo State, mirroring the situation in numerous Nigerian states. Specifically, the issues revolve around insufficient funding and ineffective administration. The customary funding approaches often prove insufficient in meeting the diverse requirements and growing needs of secondary schools. The lack of financial resources severely impedes the provision of high-quality education, resulting in inadequate infrastructure, a scarcity of teaching materials, use of unqualified subject teachers to teach various subjects, lack of ICT and ICT accessories in this digital age and constrained extracurricular activities. Given this predicament, it is crucial to delve into innovative funding models, particularly emphasizing community engagement and corporate sponsorships [18, 20, 21]. Consequently, this study evaluated the influence of such innovative funding models on enhancing the administration and management of secondary schools in Imo State.

### 1.1. Statement of the Problem

There are numerous challenges facing the administration and management of secondary schools in Imo state. Inadequate funding is one of the numerous challenges. In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the effective administration of secondary schools in Imo State has faced significant challenges attributed to inadequate financial resources. Traditional funding models, primarily reliant on government allocations and parental contributions, have proven to be insufficient for meeting the evolving needs and demands of modern education. Consequently, the education sector has explored alternative funding models, such as community involvement and corporate sponsorships, as potential solutions to bridge the funding gap. However, the extent and impact of these innovative funding models on the effective administration of secondary schools in Imo State, particularly regarding community involvement and corporate sponsorships, remain poorly understood and warrant thorough evaluation [20]. This study ascertained the influence of innovative funding models on the effective administration of secondary schools in Imo State, with a specific focus on the role of community involvement and corporate

sponsorships, to provide insights and recommendations for enhancing educational outcomes and sustainability in secondary schools in Imo State.

**Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study is to evaluate the influence of innovative funding models on effective administration of secondary schools in Imo State. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. examine the extent to which community involvement influences the innovative funding models on effective administration of secondary schools in Imo State; and
2. determine the extent to which corporate sponsorships influence innovative funding models on the effective administration of secondary schools in Imo State.

**Research Questions**

The following research questions guided the study:

1. To what extent does community involvement influence innovative funding models on the effective administration of secondary schools in Imo State?
2. To what extent do corporate sponsorships influence innovative funding models on the effective administration of secondary schools in Imo State?

**1.2. Hypotheses**

The hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance:

HO<sub>1</sub>: There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of female and male principals on the extent to which community involvement influences innovative funding models on the effective administration of secondary schools in Imo State.

HO<sub>2</sub>: There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of female and male principals on the extent to which corporate sponsorships influence innovative funding models on the effective administration of secondary schools in Imo State.

**2. Research Method**

Descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. Descriptive survey research design is a method cen-

tered on collecting data and structuring it systematically to offer a thorough depiction [15]. The study involved a total of 297 principals, with 83 being males and 214 being females. No specific sampling procedure was necessary as the population size was manageable. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire titled "Innovative Funding Models on Effective Administration of Secondary Schools Questionnaire (IFMEASSQ)" consisting of 15 items. The questionnaire's validity was confirmed by three research experts, two experts in Educational Management and one expert in Measurement and Evaluation, all from the Faculty of Education, Imo State University, Owerri. The internal consistency of the instrument was assessed using Cronbach Alpha statistics, resulting in reliability indices of .83 and .81 for clusters 1 and 2 respectively, with an overall reliability index of .82, indicating the instrument's reliability.

Mean and standard deviation were employed to address the research questions, while the hypotheses were assessed using the t-test statistics. However, among the 297 copies of questionnaire distributed to the participants, the researchers, along with two research assistants, retrieved 286 completed copies of questionnaire (79 from male principals and 207 from female principals), resulting in a return rate of 96.30%. The researchers utilized mean and standard deviation to address the research questions, and the hypotheses were tested using the t-test statistics at a significance level of 0.05. In evaluating the mean ratings, each response option was associated with a numerical range based on specific numerical limits: Very Great Extent (VGE) was within the range of 3.50 to 4.00, Great Extent (GE) fell within 2.50 to 3.49, Low Extent (LE) spanned from 1.50 to 2.49, and Very Low Extent (VLE) ranged from 0.00 to 1.49. The assessment of the hypotheses involved examining the significance (sig.) values obtained from the SPSS output. The null hypothesis was upheld if the probability values were greater than 0.05, whereas it was rejected if the probability values were less than 0.05.

**3. Results**

Research Question 1: To what extent does community involvement influence innovative funding models on the effective administration of secondary schools in Imo State?

**Table 1.** Mean ratings of female and male principals on the extent to which community involvement influences innovative funding models on the effective administration of secondary schools.

S/N	ITEMS  Community involvement influences the effective administration of secondary schools when they are involved in the following:	Female Principals207			Male Principals79		
		$\bar{x}$	SD	Dec	$\bar{x}$	SD	Dec
1.	building of classrooms in the schools.	2.50	.95	GE	2.56	.91	GE
2.	building of sick bay.	2.53	.86	GE	2.52	1.01	GE

S/N	ITEMS  Community involvement influences the effective administration of secondary schools when they are involved in the following:	Female Principals207			Male Principals79		
		$\bar{x}$	SD	Dec	$\bar{x}$	SD	Dec
3.	construction of school libraries.	2.59	.90	GE	2.61	.96	GE
4.	construction of school laboratories.	2.54	.93	GE	2.56	.99	GE
5.	construction of ICT facilities.	2.55	.99	GE	2.59	.77	GE
6.	provision of staff quarters.	2.53	.91	GE	2.60	.89	GE
7.	organization of fundraising activities.	2.61	.99	GE	2.55	.88	GE
8.	provision of school hostels.	2.55	.90	GE	2.58	.94	GE
9.	maintenance of discipline.	2.60	.92	GE	2.53	.91	GE
	Cluster Mean/SD	2.56	.93	GE	2.57	.92	GE

The data presented on Table 1 showed that the female principals' mean ranged from 2.50 to 2.61 while their male counterparts mean ranged from 2.52 to 2.61. In addition, they have cluster means of 2.56 and 2.57 with standard deviations of .93 and .92 respectively. The respondents were generally of the view that community involvement as a funding model

influences the effective administration of secondary schools in Imo State to a great extent.

Research Question 2: To what extent do corporate sponsorships influence innovative funding models on the effective administration of secondary schools in Imo State?

**Table 2.** Mean ratings of female and male principals on the extent to which corporate sponsorships influence innovative funding models on the effective administration of secondary schools.

S/N	ITEMS  Corporate sponsorships influence the effective administration of secondary schools when they are involved in the following:	Female Principals207			Male Principals79		
		$\bar{x}$	SD	Dec	$\bar{x}$	SD	Dec
10.	financial support.	2.63	.98	GE	2.58	.94	GE
11.	scholarship programmes.	2.59	.93	GE	2.63	.98	GE
12.	resource enhancement.	2.55	.90	GE	2.50	.91	GE
13.	staff professional development.	2.60	.99	GE	2.57	.93	GE
14.	influence on curriculum.	2.56	.95	GE	2.59	.96	GE
15.	encouraging community involvement.	2.59	.98	GE	2.58	.99	GE
	Cluster Mean/SD	2.59	.96	GE	2.58	.95	GE

The data presented on Table 2 showed that the female principals' mean ranged from 2.55 to 2.63 while their male counterparts mean ranged from 2.50 to 2.63. In addition, they have cluster means of 2.59 and 2.58 with standard deviations of .96 and .95 respectively. The respondents were generally of the view that corporate sponsorships as funding model influence the effective administration of secondary schools in

Imo State to a great extent.

**Hypotheses**

HO<sub>1</sub>: There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of female and male principals on the extent to which community involvement influences innovative funding models on the effective administration of secondary schools in Imo State.

**Table 3.** Summary of *t*-test analysis of the mean ratings of female and male principals on the extent to which community involvement influences innovative funding models on the effective administration of secondary schools.

Group	n	$\bar{x}$	SD	df	p-value	Decision
Female Principals	207	2.56	.93	284	.092	H <sub>01</sub> not rejected
Male Principals	79	2.57	.92			

Data on Table 3 show that at 284 degree of freedom, the p-value was .092 which is greater than .05 level of significance set for this study. This signifies that the null hypothesis was not rejected and, therefore, there was no significant difference between the mean ratings of female and male principals on the extent to which community involvement influ-

ences innovative funding models on the effective administration of secondary schools in Imo State.

HO<sub>2</sub>: There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of female and male principals on the extent to which corporate sponsorships influence the effective administration of secondary schools in Imo State.

**Table 4.** Summary of *t*-test analysis of the mean ratings of female and male principals on the extent to which corporate sponsorships influence innovative funding models on the effective administration of secondary schools.

Group	n	$\bar{x}$	SD	df	p-value	Decision
Female Principals	207	2.59	.96	284	.099	H <sub>02</sub> not rejected
Male Principals	79	2.58	.95			

Data on Table 4 show that at 284 degree of freedom, the p-value was .099 which is greater than 0.05 level of significance set for this study. This signifies that the null hypothesis was not rejected and, therefore, there was no significant difference between the mean ratings of female and male principals on the extent to which corporate sponsorships influence innovative funding models on the effective administration of secondary schools in Imo State.

## 4. Discussion of Findings

The finding of the study showed that community involvement as a funding model influences the effective administration of secondary schools in Imo State to a great extent. The hypothesis tested showed that there was no significant difference between the mean ratings of female and male principals on the extent to which community involvement influences innovative funding models on the effective administration of secondary schools in Imo State. The findings are in accordance with Bolatito (2022), Ogunbiyi (2018) and Ugwuanyi (2013) who posited that community involvement influences the effective administration of secondary schools. Mezieobi and Mezieobi (2023) have noted that when the school's management involves its catchment or host community in the administrative process, the community ensures that the goals and objectives of the school are achieved including

funding. Therefore, the current research is in agreement with the findings because community involvement has proven to be a powerful catalyst in fostering a sense of ownership, shared responsibility, and active participation in the development and management of secondary schools. Local communities, when engaged and empowered, contribute not only financially but also with valuable resources, expertise, and guidance [7]. This involvement helps to bridge gaps, improve infrastructure, and enhance educational programmes, ultimately elevating the standards of secondary education. Furthermore, community involvement also enhances and encourages peaceful coexistence between the schools' stakeholders (principals, teachers, students) and the communities [4, 5].

Also, the finding of the study showed that corporate sponsorships as funding model influences the effective administration of secondary schools in Imo State to a great extent. The hypothesis tested showed that there was no significant difference between the mean ratings of female and male principals on the extent to which corporate sponsorships influence innovative funding models on the effective administration of secondary schools in Imo State. The findings are in line with Bolatito (2022), who posited that corporate sponsorship has a significant influence in the effective administration of secondary schools. It is noteworthy that corporate sponsorships have emerged as vital funding avenues

that supplement government resources and community contributions. The involvement of corporate entities through financial aid, in-kind donations, infrastructure development, and skill-based initiatives has significantly bolstered the educational landscape. Corporate partnerships bring in a fresh perspective, modernization, and access to specialized knowledge, thereby enriching the learning environment and equipping students with skills relevant to the evolving workforce. Corporate sponsorships facilitate the human resource and infrastructural development of secondary schools.

## 5. Conclusion

Innovative funding models are contemporary funding styles for the improvement of education and achievement of educational goals and objectives. The study has shown the significant impact of innovative funding models on the effective administration of secondary schools in Imo State, particularly emphasizing the critical role of community involvement and corporate sponsorships. The findings underscore the importance of collaborative efforts between the government, local communities, and corporate entities in enhancing the quality of education and overall educational experiences within secondary schools in Imo state. It is imperative for secondary education stakeholders to continue nurturing and expanding these collaborative efforts, fostering a conducive teaching and learning environment that nurtures academic excellence, social responsibility, and a brighter future for the secondary schools' students in particular and students in general of Imo State. By harnessing the potential of innovative funding models and fostering robust partnerships, the government can strive towards an educational system that empowers, enriches, and ensures a prosperous tomorrow for the youth and the community at large. This will also advance the quest for the internationalization of the Nigerian education in no distant time and improve the quality and standard of the Nigerian education at all levels.

## 6. Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations were made:

1. The management of secondary schools in Imo state should build cordial rapport and relationships between the schools and their host communities.
2. The Imo state government should create attractive policies that would enhance massive participations of individuals and corporate bodies in the administration of secondary education.
3. Secondary education stakeholders should implement a transparent and accountable financial reporting system that clearly outlines how funds generated from community involvement and corporate organizations are utilized within the school. Provide regular updates to

the communities and corporate organizations, showcasing the impact of their contributions and promoting trust and confidence in the funding model.

4. All education stakeholders should be encouraged to get involved in the funding of secondary schools in particular and education in general in Nigeria.
5. Seminars and workshops should be organized by the Imo state government on regular basis for teachers and students that will enlighten them on how to maintain and sustain effective school-community relations in order to attract funding from members of the host communities.

## Abbreviations

IMSU: Imo State University, Owerri

## Author Contributions

**Kelechi Chinemerem Mezieobi:** Conceptualization, Validation, Writing - review & editing, Writing - original draft

**Juliet Nkonyeasua Ossai:** Resources, Supervision, Writing - review & editing

**Anashie Anastasia Iwang:** Formal Analysis, Investigation, Project administration, Writing - review & editing

**Destiny Onyeka Ukor:** Methodology, Project administration, Writing - review & editing

## Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

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