



# Principals Fund Management Strategies for Effective Administration of Public Secondary Schools

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## Abstract

This study investigated fund management strategies for effective administration of public secondary schools in Rivers State. The study adopted a descriptive survey research, which sampled the opinion of principals of secondary schools in Rivers State on the role of fund management strategies, accountability, factors that hinder fund management strategies and factors that strengthen effective administration of secondary schools. The research was carried out in secondary schools in Obio/Akpor and Port Harcourt City Local Government Areas of Rivers State. All principals in senior secondary schools in Obio/Akpor and Port Harcourt City Local Government Areas in Rivers State constituted the population of the study. The sample of this study comprised all the principals (36) of senior secondary schools in Obio-Akpor and Port Harcourt city local government areas of Rivers state. Purposive sampling was used because they are principals that would give answers to the questions raise based on their positions as principals in the chosen local government areas. The instrument consisted of 26 items questionnaire titled “Fund Management Strategies for Effective Administration of Public Secondary Schools Questionnaire (FMSEAPSSQ). The questionnaire was validated by the researcher’s supervisor and two experts in the field of Measurement and Evaluation in Ignatius Ajuru University of Education, Rumuolumeni, Port Harcourt, Rivers State. Cronbach Alpha was used to test the reliability of the instrument and a reliability estimate of .773 was obtained for the 26 items in section B of the questionnaire. Mean scores, standard deviation and percentages were used to answer the research questions while chi-square analysis was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 alpha level of significance. The study found that there are significant relationships between principals fund management strategies, accountability, factors that hinder, and factors that strengthens and effective administration of secondary schools in Rivers State.

**Keywords:** Principals, Fund Management, Strategies, Effective Administration, Public, Secondary Schools.

Reference to this paper should be made as follows:

Amirize, M., & Ololube, N. P. (2018). Principals Fund Management Strategies for Effective Administration of Public Secondary Schools. *International Journal of Scientific Research in Education*, 11(3B), 545-576. Retrieved [DATE] from <http://www.ijsre.com>.

## INTRODUCTION

Education is as old as human existence, and is the most important sector in the development of a nation. Every country's education system are powerful instrument for socio-economic progress without which neither an individual nor a country can achieve professional and economic growth (Ololube, Ololube & Aiya, 2016a; Ololube, Onyekwere & Agbor, 2016b). As such the funds that are made available to the education system are expected to be properly managed. School financing in Nigeria was initially left in the hands of the missions that brought and established schools. The first primary school was built at Badagry in 1842. Many other primary schools were established by different missionaries between 1846 and 1929 (Achuonye, 2007). The first secondary in Nigeria was Church Missionary Society Grammar School founded in 1859 by T. B. Macauley. Many other secondary schools were established between 1859 and 1882 with little or no financial support from the colonial government (Ogbonnaya, 2012). It took colonial administrators about 40 years after inception of formal education in Nigeria to indicate strong intention to intervene in educational matters by issuing an ordinance. The financing or funding of schools was left in the hands of the missions that established them. Colonial government made their first appearance in financing education between 1870 and 1879 with a paltry allocation of £300 (three hundred pounds) to the various mission schools (Adesina et al., 1983).

The grant-in-aids system expanded over the years in scope and complexity. By 1912, every mission school that attained certain standards was assisted on the basis of examination result average attendance and organizational efficiency (Ogbonnaya, 2012). Government acquired and opened more schools as the communities began to appreciate western education. By 1970, according to Ogbodo in Peretomode (2004), government acquired all primary and secondary schools from the voluntary agencies. Also in 1972, education which was in the concurrent list according to 1963 constitution was reversed and all the state universities were acquired by the federal government. Governments' financial involvement in the running of the schools has increased tremendously over the years due to radical increase in demand and expansion of the education industry. Today, we have two categories of schools. They are; those that are owned and sponsored by government (public schools) and those that are owned by individuals (private schools). In the public schools, the various levels of government play major (important) roles in financing education at different levels. It is equally important to note that parents and guardians contribute in financing of education in Nigeria through payment of levies, school fees, taxes, donations etc. and even the opportunity cost incurred by sending their children to school.

Education remains the main catalyst for development in any society whether in the developed or developing world. The future development of the world and individual nations hinge more than ever on the capacity of individuals and countries to acquire, adopt and advance knowledge (Republic of Kenya, 2007). In addition, efficient management of schools resources is crucial in order to make the school a pleasant, safe and comfortable center that will increase students attendance, motivation and willingness to participate adequately in both curricula and co-curricula activities (Osei-Owusu & Kwame, 2012).

Education constitutes a vital flow in the management of human, physical and financial resources of a nation especially in developing countries like Nigeria and growing states like Rivers. This is so because education had been considered the key to all development process and produces the right skills and attitudes to move a nation forward (stressing the importance of education and the role of human resources development in a nation's developmental process).

For Okafor (2006, p. 52), human beings are active agents who accumulate capital and natural resources, build social, economic and political organizations and also carry forward national development. A country or state which is unable to develop the skills and knowledge of its people and utilize its resources effectively in the national economy will be unable to develop anything.

Fund refers to sum of money or other resources set aside and for a specified purpose (Mifflin, 2016). Fund can be any of the following forms, physical cash, credit facilities that is trade credits, bank credits, allowances or discount received, differed expenses such as differed taxes, rents, bills, undistributed profit in the form of retained earnings, reserve etc. There are short and long term sources of funds. Short term sources of funds are funds needed for a short period of time. Short term sources of funds can be grouped into two; internal and external sources. The internal sources are the ones available within the organisation. They include retained earnings, depreciation provisions accounts payable, new equity and proceeds from sales of assets. External sources are those sources outside the school or educational institutions which requires contact with external bodies like United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) and United Nations Children Fund (UNICEF). Other external sources of funds available to educational institutions include commercial bank loans, exchange programmes embarked upon by various institutions etc. The success or failure of any educational institution therefore, depends hugely on the availability of funds and the effective usage and management of such funds by the school administrator.

A school itself is an organisation which requires human, financial and material resources for the purpose of achieving its goals and objectives. Every government owes its citizens basic secondary education as one of the social welfare services. Notwithstanding, the provision of these services can only be calculated in monetary terms to make people aware of their full impact (Ebong, 2006). It is imperative, given the fact that money (resources) is limited in supply for the principals to judiciously manage the available fund for effective school administration.

Management according to Jones and George (2011) is planning, organizing, leading and controlling of human organizational goals efficiently and effectively. Therefore, the provision, custody and disbursement of the financial resources needed for the running of public or government institutions is what management of funds is all about. Management of funds in secondary schools has been such a touchy, and sensitive and controversy filled issue. Reason being that it brings to the fore the strengths, weaknesses and failures of the managers in which these funds are entrusted into their care. The Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN) (2014) in her National Policy on Education acknowledged education as a vehicle for national development. The role of adequate financial support in the achievement of educational goals in any nation cannot be overemphasized. Therefore, the funding and prudent management of scarce financial resources in our secondary schools are very important and should be properly handled and managed.

The principal is the executive head of a secondary school. He/she is responsible for controlling and coordinating all school activities ranging from students enrolment, planning of the school timetable, keeping of school records like the class registers, log book, updating his staff with information from the ministry of education, making budgetary and fiscal plans, sourcing for funds to run the school and managing the funds made available to run the school with the aim of realizing educational goals and objectives.

Prudent financial management is one of the responsibilities of the secondary school principal. The principal of secondary school is therefore, the fundamental element on which the

resources of school depend. The principal is expected to source for funds for the running of the school by expanding the sources of the school income from school magazines, workshops, school canteen, students art and crafts. It is the fundamental duty and responsibility of the principal to manage the available funds (cash) in the school to avoid wastage and displacement of priorities in attending to school needs. Where the principal is weak and ineffective in managing the resources of the school, success will be very hard and difficult to achieve.

Public secondary school (education) in Nigeria and Rivers State in particular is not excluded in the issue of underfunding. In any case, there are some practical attempts of infrastructural development of secondary schools within the state by the present Wike's administration. Principals of secondary schools in the state depend on school fees as sources of generating fund for the school. Other sources of funds include; government's monthly or quarterly allocation (imprest). Despite all the sources available to secondary school principals, yet some school activities and programmes are not being effectively handled due to the claim of insufficient funds.

Principals are the chief accounting officers of their respective secondary schools. They are supposed to generate funds internally to run their schools as well as ensure that fund provided by stakeholders are properly managed. The claim by some principals that they lack funds to run their various schools may be as a result of the manner in which they manage the little fund available to them. This constitutes management problem, which to a large extent results to shortage of teaching aids, seats, desks, labour tools etc. These are negative effect of financial mismanagement in secondary schools.

Meanwhile, the problem of inadequate institutional facilities in secondary schools in Rivers State do not rest on funding alone as often claimed, but rather, the problem are made most complex by or due to poor financial management by the principals. Some of the principals are perceived as lacking the necessary training required of financial managers, while others are accused of imposing illegal levies on students, neglecting budget plans, delaying disbursement of funds for fraudulent reasons. Such situation apparently creates a turbulent atmosphere for the success of teaching-learning process (Asodike, 2015).

According to Nwankwo (1999), school administrators need specific skills in financial management, they are as follows – revenue generation, assessment of the school needs, planning and programming, prioritizing areas of pressing needs, cost benefit analysis, stock taking, market survey, budgeting and financial record keeping, receipts, banking strategies, delegation of staff for financial matters, auditing and accountability.

Fund management practices of principals in Rivers State have become a sensitive issue over the years. This is because of the growing public and government concern and interest in the provision of funds for the implementation of school programmes. Administrators are expected by the public to ensure prudent management of school funds. Principals are facing barrages of speculations and accusations of financial mismanagement and lack of initiatives to create other sources of funding the school, neglect of budgetary plans in financing school programmes, poor disbursement of funds, lack of trained personnel such as bursars, and cashiers, lack of training in financial management by some principals, impositions of illegal levies on students, incompleteness of projects already approved and paid for by the government, poor record keeping, abuse of PTA funds etc.

The planning of school finances usually starts with the preparation of a budget which describes the statement of the school expressed in monetary terms. A budget is an estimate of income and expenditure for a set period of time. It is therefore a planning which contributes in a

constructive way towards preventing the disruption of educational programmes as a result of insufficient or exhausted resources. Therefore, for there to be an efficient planning and management of funds in schools, there is need for proper and correct record keeping. Schools should keep records of all financial transactions and dealings which are to be made available any time they may be requested to do so. A qualified accountant should be appointed by the principal to manage the accounts (funds) of the school for efficiency.

Principals are the ones saddled with the onerous tasks and responsibility of managing all the money that is collected and paid out by the school. It is against this background that this study is designed to investigate whether government has a budget for the running of its secondary education and the amount that is allocated, also the role budgeting, record keeping and accountability play in the management of funds and the challenges of managing these funds by the principals in public schools in Rivers State.

### **Statement of the Problem**

The present state of some secondary schools in Rivers State is quite deplorable. Some of the books in the library are obsolete, inadequate equipment in the laboratory in situations where you even find one, and buildings are overdue for renovation. All these could be as a result of poor fund management practices by principals of public schools in the state. The importance of fund in the education sector cannot be over emphasized.

These problems usually stem from the inability of some school administrators to plan and execute school budgets in accordance with the objectives of the school. Some of these principals obviously fail in their statutory functions such as the identification of sources of school finances, methods employed in the collection and how the revenues are adequately and effectively managed. Despite all the funds made available by both federal/state governments and other sources of funds available to the schools, it has been observed that the condition of teaching and learning have not improved much over the last two decades.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The main purpose of the study is to investigate fund management strategies for effective administration of public secondary schools in Rivers State. Specifically, this study intends to:

- Examine principals fund management strategies for effective administration of secondary schools in Rivers State.
- Determine the extent to which principals are accountable in fund management in secondary schools in Rivers State.
- Investigate factors that hinder fund management by principals in secondary schools in Rivers State.
- Ascertain the factors that strengthen fund management by principals in Rivers State.

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions guided this study:

- What are the principals fund management strategies for effective administration of secondary schools in Rivers State?
- How do principals fund management strategies account for effective administration of secondary school in Rivers State?
- What are the factors hindering principals fund management strategies for effective administration of secondary schools in Rivers State?
- What are the ways the principals fund management strategies could be used to strengthen effective administration of secondary schools in Rivers state?

## **Hypotheses**

The following hypotheses further guided this study:

- There is no significant relationship between principals fund management strategies and effective administration of secondary schools in Rivers State.
- There is no significant relationship between principal's accountability in fund management and effective administration of secondary schools in Rivers State.
- There is no significant relationship between factors hindering fund management and effective administration of secondary schools in Rivers State.
- There is no significant relationship between principals' opinion on the extent fund management strategies and factors that strengthen effective administration of secondary schools in Rivers State.

## **REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

### **Theoretical Framework**

This work is anchored on the scarce resources theory as propounded by Swanson (2007). This theory predicates on the economic assertion that resources for solving human wants are scarce while human wants are increasingly unlimited. In fact, there is need for efficient and proper management of these scare resources in order to achieve already set out goals.

According to Swanson (2007), how could responsible performance improvement not include direct analysis, action and measurement of economic outcome? Overtime, organizations must generate more income than they spend in order to exist. Unless performance improvement expenditure contributes to viability and profitability of an organization, those expenditures will almost certainly be cut back or eliminated.

Therefore, scarce resources theory informs us that there are limitations to everything. The limitation is money, raw materials, time and so on; require us to make choices as to how capital will be utilized in order to gain the greatest return. Decision makers choose among options based on their forecasted return on investment. This is a simple and powerful notion that forces decision makers to separate the most valuable and worthy initiatives from the many things that they could do if there were no resources (Swanson, 2009).

Considering the nature of this theory, it is therefore, important for administrators of government schools to make judicious and meticulous use of funds that are given to them maximally in order to achieve school goals and objectives.

On a final note, therefore, the application of the scarce resources approach to this study was vital because it offers the opportunity to first define resources problem in a systematic term. Second, he views scarce resources problem as always interrelated thereby lending its application to other components of scarce resources management in the administration of school. Also the purpose of this choice is not to test or refute the theory used but to use it to select variable of interest and to organize this dissertation. An examination of the concepts used in this work fits into this framework because a picture of the typical outlook of the issue of funding in school administration is the first step towards accepting the contemporary meaning of the role of funding in school administration.

### **Concept of Effectiveness**

The degree to which objectives are achieved and the extent to which targeted problems are solved. In contrast to efficiency, effectiveness is determined without reference to cost and whereas efficiency means doing the things right, effectiveness means doing the right thing. Hence the success of every organization, be it formal or informal is geared towards effectiveness that is based on the fact that they want or wish to attain some or an already predetermined goals. The achievement of a specific goal or aim of an institution or establishment is what effectiveness is all about. Effectiveness is therefore, the production of desired effect or result. Organization varies as school is one of the units of the concept of organization. The effectiveness of an educational organization varies from public utility, such as, the ability to manage funds and student's levels of achievement etc. all combined to determine the effectiveness of an educational organization. The realization of public expectation confirms the effectiveness of a public organization according to Moses (2014).

Administrators are expected therefore, despite whatever the method or approach they may wish to adopt, implement managerial policies towards the achievement of the organizational set goals and objectives.

### **Concept of Management**

Management is the organizational process that includes strategic planning, setting objectives, managing resources, deploying the human and financial assets needed to achieve objectives, and measuring results. Management also includes recording and storing facts (Hissom-Dauherty, 2009).

As a discipline, management comprises of the interlocking functions of formulation of corporate policy's objectives. The size of management can range from one person in a small firm to hundreds or thousands of managers in multinational companies.

**The four fundamental management tasks:** management is seen as a process which is depicted in the following figure:

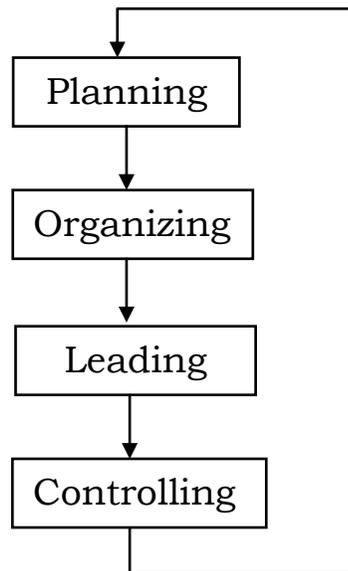


Figure 1: Fundamental management tasks. Sources: Du Toit (2007, p. 130).

Nwadiani and Sokefun quoted in National Open University of Nigeria (2008), conceived management as a process concerned with creating, maintaining, stimulating, controlling and unifying (formally and informally), organizing human and material energies with a unified system, designed to accomplish predetermined objectives of the organization.

Akinwumi and Jayeoba in National Open University (2008) defined school management as the scientific organization of human and material resources and programmes available for education using them systematically and meticulously to achieve educational goals. Basically, Management in secondary school implies the management of human and material resources and programmes available for education and carefully using them systematically for the achievement of educational objectives.

### **Concept of Financial Management**

Financial management refers to the managerial activities which deal with planning, controlling, organizing the financial resources of an organization: that is, the management of the finances of a business in order to achieve the financial objectives of the business (Donnell & Keontz, 2004).

According to Ezra (2008), the function of financial management is to review and control decisions to commit and recommit funds to a new or ongoing uses. Financial management is that activity of management which is concerned with the planning, procuring and controlling of the firm's financial resources (Deepika & Rani, 2014).

For Oche (2009), financial management deals with the source of funds, their efficient used and maximization of costs or losses for greater profitability of the business and in ministerial department, post primary institutions for enhanced welfare of students and staff. What the above definitions mean thus far is that financial management is all about decision making

within the use of available funds. The head, who is the administrator, performs the tasks of financial manager in the educational sector.

### **Revenue Generation in Secondary Schools**

Education is the process of facilitating learning, or the acquisition of knowledge, skill, values, beliefs and habits. Educational methods include storytelling, discussion, teaching, training and directed research. Education therefore, constitutes the single largest enterprise in Nigeria, because the largest tool for economic progress, political survival, social mobilization and effective national development of any nation. It was started in 1960 by the missionaries. The government becomes properly involved in the issue of education when it realized that what the missionaries had was not efficient and adequate enough to meet its changing societal needs.

Since the management of finance is an important issue in the running of the schools or school systems, school administrators need to be properly well versed and oriented in politics, economics and budgeting in order to manage the finances of the school effectively. According to Madugu (1993), school administrators need to be oriented in economics and politics because there are many contending interests in the society which want a share of the national revenue, and in budgeting, because whatever is allocated has to be properly distributed among various departments and units. Thus, it has become crystal clear that the traditional resources of government grants to schools are no longer enough for the management of these schools. The school administrators do not have enough funds for the running of the schools as it were. Funds are needed to maintain and sustain the school facilities and for an effective implement of school curriculums etc. The school administrators cannot be expected to fold their hands while the situation degenerates. They should look at and exploit other reliable and legitimate sources of funds for the school (Ede, 1997; Fagbemi, 1986).

### **Budgeting and Effective Fund Management**

Budgeting is the activity of recording financial and or non-financial elements into the budget (Achim, 2009). Onuorah (2005) however holds that budgeting spells out plans in quantitative terms. According to him, it also helps to evaluate organizational plans, while at the same time performing two vital management functions namely:

- The formulation of a comprehensive future plan action; and
- It compares actual result with predetermined plan, thus planning and control (which are two primary functions of Management) are also essential features of the budgeting process.

Many authorities in business sectors and in educational institutions have equally defined budgeting in many different ways. Njoku (2003) defined budget as a financial statement prepared in advance at the opening of a fiscal year of the estimated revenue and proposed expenditures of the organization for the ensuing year. This suggests that the budget is a plan and summing the financial experience of the past, starting a current plan and projecting it over a specific period of time in future. It is a forecast of revenue and expenditure for a stated period which explains in details institutional fiscal policies and its corresponding annual plan.

Also, the Chartered Institute of Management Accountants (CIMA) (2000) defined a budget as a financial or qualitative statement prepared and approved prior to a defined period of time for the purpose of attaining a given objective. It may include income, expenditure and the employment capital.

Morphet, John and Reller in Ogbonnaya (2000), defined school budgeting as an educational plan with an estimated receipts and expenditures necessary to finance it for a defined period of time. It follows that school budget is broadly regarded as an outline of the plan for financing the activities for the given period. Igwe (2000) described budget as a cost plan relating to period and cost it, he said is a value of economic resources used. It is a quantitative expression of plan of action and an aid to coordination and implementation of instructional programmes.

Budgeting is one of the important instrument that can be used by school administrators to make sure that fund are properly managed. According to Kruger (2003), the planning of school finances usually begins with the drafting of a budget. Also Bischof as cited by Kruger (2003) described budget as the mission statement of the school expressed in monetary terms. Budgeting is a technique used by school administrators to help determine how many financial resources will be needed and how they will be used (Izeiuj, 2011).

Ihedioha (2003) defined budgeting as a process for coordinating the activities of various functions and operating segment of establishment. While Adeniyi (2002), sees budgeting as a process of planning and controlling financial and quantitative course of action, prepared and approved prior to a defined period of time to be pursued during the period for the purpose of attaining a given objectives. It may include income, expenditure and employment of capital.

Educational budget according to Nnabuo (2001) and Eden (2003) is a document which describes how various educational programmes outlined for the year or another stated period of time are to be financed. Nwafor (2000) stated that, financial resource made available to educational institutions need to be judiciously used and accounted for in other to ensure judicious spending and accountability.

Budgeting is probably the widest managing financial technique in use in many organizations including homes and schools because it measures the actual achievement of people, department and institutions. In homes, wives or heads of families may estimate the income for the family within a month and on how the income is to be spent within the period. They stated various items that would be needed and discuss such estimated and need items with their spouses, raise the money and spend it based on their estimates. This is called family budget. In months to come, the family may increase or decrease the income or expenditure depending on their previous experience and financial resources. This is a simple illustration of what budgeting should be. Koontz and O'donnell (1998) synchronized the above view as they see budgeting as the planning made before the actual expenditure is incurred. It is therefore, necessary for the management to have fore knowledge of the work to be done. This means that, management must plan its course of action in advance and budgeting is one of the systematic approaches that facilitate effective and efficient management performance.

Van der Westhuizen as cited by Makhubela (2005) pointed out that the budget is a planning instrument, which contributes in a constructive way towards preventing the disruption of educational programmes as a result of insufficient or exhausted resources. Meaning that budgeting is a plan for allocating resources, a plan for specifying how resources especially time or money will be allocated or spent during a particular period. Roe as cited in Ogbonnaya (2012) defined educational budget as the translation of educational needs into financial plan which is interpreted to the public in a way that when formally adopted, it expresses the kind of

educational programme the community is willing to support financially and morally for a one year period. Adesina in Ogbonnaya (2012) also defined a school budget broadly as an outline of the plan to finance the school system for a given period. Simply put, school budgets are based on programmes and activities of a schools fiscal year or a specified period of time.

Budgeting is setting of expenditure priorities and the weighting of alternatives. It is a system of resource allocation hence it implies looking ahead and planning since decision involved in the process are of future orientation. A good budget requires comprehensiveness, a meaningful presentation of budgeting balance and appropriate grouping of expenditure items. There should be clear and realistic sets of goals and objectives to be achieved during budget planning. Although the budget controller (principal) is responsible for planning and coordinating the budget, full and meaningful participation of managers and their subordinates should be sought in budget planning.

Giving the importance of budgeting in school (education), the principals should not take it with levity as it could make or mar effective administration and management of the school system. Moses (2014) posited that budgeting guarantees effectiveness of school administration by ensuring that only planned programmes are pursued, unnecessary spending is avoided and that all proposed expenditures are matched towards the expected revenue, leaving no room for deficit but rather creating a greater room for budget surplus. Maduagwu (2006) also added that because funds in the country are becoming very lean, school budget therefore should be able to provide some flexibility and alternative to meet the budgetary needs of the school.

For a budget to be successful, it must go through the process that is based on sound and quality information. Preparatory stage should involve the participation of both teaching and non-teaching staff as well as students whose idea and proposals must be given maximum consideration (Maduagwu, 2006). However, preparatory stage of the budget is not the end of a school budget irrespective of its quality and working principles. Meanwhile, the budget itself is as important as the budgeting practice and the achievement of the objectives of the budget (Whawo in Ajileye, 2008). The administration, supervision and control of the activities in budget reveal the managerial capacities of principals.

The principals of the schools should be responsible for the preparations of the budget document. However, the head teachers need to consult the other relevant authorities and departments. The budget therefore should be a result of corporate efforts of those concerned with needs of their children (Flavia, 2012). Ogbonnaya (2012) stressed the purpose of budget as follows:

- School budget forecasts the activities, services and programmes which an appropriate governing council (e.g., board of governors) has approved for a given period usually a one year in relation to income and expenditures;
- School budget shows that revenue is to be anticipated and from what source this is to be derived;
- School budget shows details, statement and estimates and expenditure of the various items of the school system as a whole;
- School budget shows that other contribution and pressures on the budget that are anticipated during the financial year e.g.,: the pressure of inflation and how the school intends to raise more money over and above its original budget or how it intend to adjust itself to the situation; and

- School budget must be prepared in such a way that it can be executed by any one; even from outside the school system. In this way the school budget aids the administration of the school programmes in accordance with the accepted financial plan.

Moses (2014) opines that the fundamental importance of a budget is that it controls the financial behaviour of administrators in the school system. Meaning that a budget guides the financial management practices of educational administrators, whether it is in the primary, secondary or tertiary levels of education. A budget also prevents waste and reckless spending of funds provided for various educational services. This is so because the implementers of it are tied to or compelled to follow the approved estimate in spending funds. Finally, budget aids easy adjustment for instance where there are fluctuations in cost items for purchase, the budget aids in easy adjustment. And again, Ezeoha in Nwafor (2012) acknowledges the budget process as an inevitable time-consuming one as it involves an elaborate working out of all the estimated revenue and expenditure sections, item by item in greater details. A budget process is presented by Ezeocha (1990) as follows:

- Careful study of the educational needs of the school and estimation of the revenue that will be necessary to meet these needs;
- Planning and procurement of the necessary revenue to implement the educational programmes agreed upon;
- The determination to execute the educational programmes; and
- The determination of the ways to allocate the available revenue in such manner as to avoid friction, duplication and waste.

Ubong, Oguzor and Aburuga (2003) state that school budget has principal elements. These are the educational plan, the revenue plan and the expenditure plan. The three make up a functional school budget. The educational plan present the objectives of the school as derived from the national community objectives. It also states the target as for instance, the number of students expected to pass the junior and senior secondary examination. It also documents the resources available in the school such as instructional materials, classroom and other spaces, school plant generally, special services rendered and personnel (teaching and non-teaching staff) among other things. The revenue plan details the likely sources of funds such as government (Federal, State and Local) education “tax fund”, funds from philanthropic or charitable organizations, funds from the community associations, Parents Teachers Association levies. The revenue plan also details capital receipts (money realized from sale of school equipment or grant from government for construction) and miscellaneous receipts (donations, development funds). The expenditure plan contains, details of the different item of projected expenditure with the amount to be expended on each item.

The administration of a school budget means the operation, execution and implementation of the school budget. In administering the school budget, the very first thing the administrator should do is to provide himself with the necessary school account books for the purposes of entering both the detailed amount budget for receipts and expenditures. Secondly, a double check should be provided for a double check on the expenditures. A simple ledger in which expenditures can be entered showing either weekly or monthly balance should be provided. Thirdly, proper handling of reserve fund set up to handle special needs as they arise is an important aspect of budget preparation. Switching of funds exists in some budget systems.

This means that as long as the appropriation in any given fund is not exceeded, the administrator may switch changes from one account to another within the coverage of the fund itself (Ezeocha as cited in Ogbonnaya, 2012).

### **Record-Keeping and Effective Fund Management**

Record-keeping is one of the important tools that can also be used to guide financial issues. Mngoma (2009) stipulated that efficient planning and management of funds in schools call for the correct record-keeping. Each school has to keep records of all financial transactions that were effected and must be kept safely in a record book. Accounting is an important aspect of managing the school funds. The schools bookkeeping may be delegated to a capable member of staff who has the knowledge of accountancy. The principal must facilitate the execution of its statutory functions relating to the assets, liabilities, property and other financial management issues (Mestry, 2004, p. 130). The principal should see to it that monthly and quarterly statements are kept. A final report on the income and expenditure for the financial year must be submitted to the ministry for approval.

In specifying why school records are kept, Opinimi (2007) opined that they serve as point of reference when the need arises to:

- Explain any event in the school;
- Tell the history of the school;
- Assess the pupils performance and progress;
- Compare the pupils performance;
- Estimate the resources needed for the year ahead;
- Account for the schools spending; and
- Make suitable plan for the school expansion and so on

On his own part, Farrant and Onye (2006) explained that, the school head who handles a lot of money in the course of the year should keep a strict record of cash book if he is to give proper account. Akpan (2006) stressed the importance of financial record keeping. He encouraged school heads that manage the account of the schools to keep and maintain clean records. This is essential because discovery of mistakes, mismanagement of funds and incurring of losses are uncovered through accurate and periodic checks of school records. The three basic stages of record keeping as it affects every organization are identified by Babayemi (2006, 2009) as; record creation, record use and machine and record disposition. These stages create records. Some of these records are produced from within the organization. For effective and easy access to records, proper maintenance and storage of records is required; and for the records to be safely guarded from risk of fire, dust, insects and flood, adequate and proper security must be taken. Doing away with the records that are no longer in use is part of record management. Also, for organization to destroy or retain its record will largely depend on the availability of storage facilities.

### **Principals Accountability Practices and Effective Fund Management**

Financial accountability is an integral part of efficient and effective financial management in schools (TE Mpokokeng, 2011). Transparency and information sharing among stakeholders is what financial management is all about.

The issue of accountability in the management of fund cannot be overemphasized. Accountability has become a collective responsibility that must involve all stakeholders. Principals are expected to handle the issue of funds in such a way and manner that shows responsibility and accountability to all the critical stakeholders i.e. parents, learners, the community and the government. Accountability is when employees, employers take credit or blame for their actions. Agreeing, Onye (2006) emphasized that principals have no option than to braze themselves with the rudiments of accounting process. As a result, Musanzi as cited by Moses (2014) posited that principals must do the following:

- Be acquainted with relevant financial instructions and circulars;
- Understand the correct and acceptable accounting procedures as laid down by the ministry of education post primary schools board; and
- Check properly the account books, payment vouchers, bills, imprest account books to make sure that information contained in them are correct before signing.

In alliance with this above, Onye (2006) maintained the need for principal to consult from time to time the “financial memorandum and accounting procedure” and be conversant with government circular on school finance.

Accountability of school teachers where money is set aside for the management of schools has become a serious concern of the government, customers of the education services and the general stakeholders in education. As the principals need to account for every kobo spent. It is only when this happens that there will be a guarantee for a continuous funding of education. The knowledge by the principals that they are accountable for every money given to them enhance their effectiveness. It is only this way that a judicious utilization of the money given to them can be assured and subsequently exonerate themselves from any form of blames or accusations. Auditing is an important aspect of accountability. It serves as a criterion for checking imbalance and verifying the accuracy and completeness of school accounts (Eheazu as cited in Ezeugwa, 2006). Munkmen as cited in Green (2010) gave the definition of accountability as a social relationship which developed in early stage of organized society. It arises when men took charge of property of another or several others or of the community at large.

Accountability according to Hornby (2005) is the ability for one to be responsible for his decision or actions and expected to explain them when the need arises. The expectation that the employees will accept credit or blame for their performance is accountability. Wali (2006) stated the following as needs for principal's accountability:

- It protects public fund from possible loss and careless expenditure for education objectives through operation budget related report processes;
- It provides for systematic ways to relate expenditure to the attainment of educational objectives through the operation of budget and related report and processes;
- It provides an objective method of appraisal of performance of school personnel in attaining schools objectives;
- It protects the image and reputation of the officer who collects and disburses school finances; and

- It forms a sound foundation for improved administrative decision for preparation and revision since enough data have been provided. Even though principals can delegate the function of collecting, keeping of school accounts to bursars, yet it is their responsibility to ensure proper accounting system and judicious use of allocated revenues.

Lulsegg as cited in Uba (2012) sees accountability in education as having the following functions:

- The setting of realizable goals and objectives;
- Determination of the validity and relevance of these goals and objectives;
- Assessment of how fully these goals and objectives have been achieved;
- Examination of which conditions helps facilities and which retard such achievement; and
- Modification of methods and for objectives to improve performance

From the above points stated, there is no doubt that the span of accountability has broadened more than ever before and as a result, has produced more tasking challenges or hindrances.

### **Challenges of Effective Fund Management**

There are lots of factors that make up the problems of fund management in secondary schools. In the attempt for principals to manage effectively funds entrusted into their care, there are obviously some challenges that are before them. Affirming this, Codja (2010) insists that modern-day fund management poses specific challenges which managers of finance have to contend with in their different organization. A good number of educational administrators as well planners are not knowledgeable enough with financial terminologies, concepts and principles in order to practice as chief executive of institution or organization. These terminologies include planning, budgeting system, cost benefit analysis, financial accounting, taxation etc.

Therefore, for the principals who are no doubt the managers of the school finances to avoid wastages, there is need to take these challenges seriously as well as to make plans to acquaint themselves with these challenges in order to improvement in the management of school finances in tune with the above, Onye (2006) sees financial management skill as a sine qua non for principals to ensure judicious use of available funds. The know-how of these terminologies and skills are important factor in principal's financial management. However, the lack of research has shown that many principal do not have these knowledge and skills for fund management and as a result, these has led to lapses and wastages and such have hindered secondary school growth.

The fact that principals rose from the ranks as classroom teachers to become heads (principals) without adequate professional preparations for the task of that magnitude has no doubt worsen their handicapped situation in school fund management skills. However, in spite of these handicaps they still assume the position on monthly bases.

The issue of these principals working without some vital professionals manning some key positions such as accountants or capable financial assistants has inadvertently made their job more tasking, tedious and challenging.

According to Umukoro (2008), financial accountability has become a major challenge facing schools; many schools do not have the right people that should be in charge of their fund. As a result, the school heads perform virtually all the accounting duty despite the fact that they

have no training in that regard. Truth though is that where you have these account clerks or accountants, most of them are not actually trained ones or in a situation where you have the trained one, it is either the principal is sidelining them completely or underutilizing them while some principals do not really understand the responsibilities and role of this finance staff. This is why Akpan (2006) states emphatically that it is the responsibilities of principals to know the financial duties and responsibilities of their clerks and bursars as contained in the accounting procedures and also in the Ministry of Education's financial memorandum. Still on Akpan (2006) unfortunately, some principals who do not possess the required skill and experience for fund management wave some of these regulations thus leading to frauds, embezzlement and misappropriation of funds.

The introduction of free and compulsory education under the UBE program in the face of underfunding has also constituted a big challenge to principals fund management, as a result, there has been some level of uncontrollable surge in students enrolments both in the primary and secondary schools such that principals and head teachers are struggling to cope. To worsen it all, the government has in fact not been able to comply with UNESCO's recommendation that at least 26% of every country's annual budget be spent on education (Okeocha, 2008).

Does government have budgetary allocation for schools? Yes they do. But problem is its late approval and release. This grants are small (impress) but in most cases, late approval has also been the challenges faced by principals. This was confirmed by Emenalo (2009) that annual budgetary allocations are sometime difficult to get and very late too.

Another challenge that the principals face is non-availability or inadequate equipment necessary for work. For Babayemi (2009), equipment or materials for office work range from the simple office stationary used in the offices to heavy equipment and even includes office vehicles. According to Codija (2011), the principal can only convince the outside world of his financial performance if he or she can ensure proper recording of all financial transactions and ensure timely report of financial data.

Data on staff, school, students as well as every financial transaction can be stored and retrieve through the aid and help of a computer. A computer no doubt can help the principal tremendously in this regarding this days and age of information technology and as such makes the financial tasks of budgeting, record keeping and accountability a lot easier. But unfortunately most of the equipment that contribute to the effectiveness of principal's financial management are either not available or not enough or maintained. In spite of the fact that items of school equipment are essential aids to effectiveness of school administration still in most of our secondary schools these equipment are broken down without being replaced (Nwogu, 2006) admits.

## **Fund Mismanagement**

Fund management is the act of planning, organizing and controlling monetary activities in one's care. Simply put, mismanagement means to manage incompetently or dishonestly of anything put in one's care. Dictionaries may include terms like to manage ineptly, incompetently, inefficiently, badly, dishonestly etc. Funds mismanagement is the management processes and practices that deliberately mishandle moneys made available to a person in ways that are characterized as badly or carelessly (Ololube, 2016). Therefore in the context of this article, management of education funds is simply the act of effectively planning, organizing and

controlling the education finance in one's care, while mismanagement of education funds means to manage incompetently or dishonestly of education funds put in one's care.

In 2010, the former secretary of the National University Commission Prof. Okojie acknowledged that most federally controlled universities' complained of inadequate funding and the effects of this problem has resulted in the deterioration of physical facilities; internal and external brain drain among the faculty, dearth of quality scientific research and managerial capacities of Nigerian public university system (Okojie, 2010). Famurewa (2014) noted that with this type of funding, it is certain that Nigeria education will not yield progressive results to be able to compete favorably with their counterparts in the west.

To corroborate the idea of Dr. Jamila Shuara in Tihamiyu (2012), there is a lot of mismanagement of fund by educational boards and the moneys meant for education are mismanaged as much as Nigerian educational institutions have joined other public sector institutions in having a sizeable number of uncompleted or abandoned projects.

For example, university leaders spend millions of Naira to erect super gates when their libraries are still at foundation stages. They expend millions to purchase exotic vehicles for university officers even though they lack basic classrooms furnishings; spend hundreds of millions in wall-fencing and in-fencing when student's accommodations are inadequate. Governments are interested in expending money on creation of new universities instead of consolidating and expanding access to existing ones; they are keen to award new contracts rather than completing the abandoned projects or standardizing existing facilities. Government expends hundreds of millions paying visiting and part-time staff rather than recruiting full-time staff. Nigerian government (federal and states) expend hundreds of millions in mundane administration cost instead of providing boreholes and power supplements (Ololube, 2016, Agbor et al., 2017).

Failure in the proper and prudent management of funds according to Ololube (2016) can be attributed to unfriendly policy implementations, inability to access funds, inconsistency and complete lack of courage to implement policies and mismanagement of funds by successive government and institutional leaders. Thus, in spite of the inadequate funding of education in Nigeria, the little funds appropriated are mismanaged (Acho & Abuh, 2016). According to Mobegi (2015), any country where mismanagement of funds is experienced, its quality of education is bound to decline. Ololube (2016) is of the opinion that to salvage Nigerian education, proper planning and effective administration are needed because no organization functions excellently without fundamental policy framework in its planning, organizing and controlling mechanism.

## **METHODOLOGY**

This chapter is organized under the following subheadings; research design, population, sample and sampling technique, instrument for data collection, validity of the instrument, reliability of the instrument, method of collection, method of analysis.

### **Research Design**

The design of this study is a descriptive survey; this study seeks to sample the opinions of principals of secondary schools in Rivers State on sources of fund generation, budget preparation, disbursement of funds and how funds are accounted for effective administration of their schools. Alli (2006, p. 296) defined survey as "a study which seeks or uses the sampled data

of an investigation to document, describe and explain what is existent or non-existent on the present status of an event being investigated". The reason for using survey design is because it is the most relevant and appropriate method for this study since the study is aimed at collecting data and describing them in the way they appear.

## Population of the Study

The research was carried out in secondary schools in Obio/Akpor and Port Harcourt City Local Government Areas of Rivers state. The entire population of all the principals in senior secondary schools in Obio/Akpor and Port Harcourt City Local Government Areas in Rivers State was used as the population of the study. The population will not be sampled due to the manageable size.

## Sample and Sampling Technique

The sample of this study comprised the principals (36) of senior secondary schools in Obio-Akpor and Port Harcourt city local government areas of Rivers State. Purposive sampling was used because they are principals that would give answers to the questions raise based on their positions as principals in the chosen local government areas.

## Instrument for Data collection

The instrument used in this study consisted of 26 items questionnaire titled “Fund Management Strategies for Effective Administration of Public Secondary Schools Questionnaire (FMSEAPSSQ). The questionnaire is divided into two sections; section ‘A’ collects information on respondents’ demographic data, while section ‘B’ dealt with items and variables on the theme of the study. The questionnaire was structured along a four-point Likert rating scale of strongly agreed (SA) = 4 points, agreed (A) = 3 points, disagreed (D) = 2 points and strongly disagreed (SA) = 1 point.

## Validity of the Instrument

The instrument for this study faced a content validity by the researcher’s supervisor and two experts from the field of measurement and evaluation and educational statistics lecturers from the Department of Educational Management Ignatius Ajuru University of Education, Rumuolumeni, Port Harcourt, Rivers State. They were required to critically study the items in order to access the suitability of the language adequacy and relevance of the items in addressing the research questions bearing in mind the purpose of the study. Their corrections and comments were used to prepare the final draft of the questionnaire.

## Reliability of the Instrument

Cronbach Alpha was statistically used to test the reliability of the instrument and a reliability estimate of .773 was obtained for the 26 items in section B of the questionnaire.

Table 1: Reliability Statistics for Section B of the Questionnaire

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.773	26

## Method of Data Analysis

After the information gathered from the field were collected and analyzed, the researcher used mean scores, standard deviation to answer the research questions, while Chi-square statistical analysis was used to test the research hypotheses at 0.05 alpha level of significance.

The criterion mean that was used in scoring is 2.50, which was obtained by summation the weighted points and divided by four (4).

$$= \frac{4 + 3 + 2 + 1}{4} = 2.50$$

It is presumed that any hypothesis that is greater than .05 level of significance was accepted, while any hypothesis that is equal or less than .05 level of significance was rejected.

## RESULTS

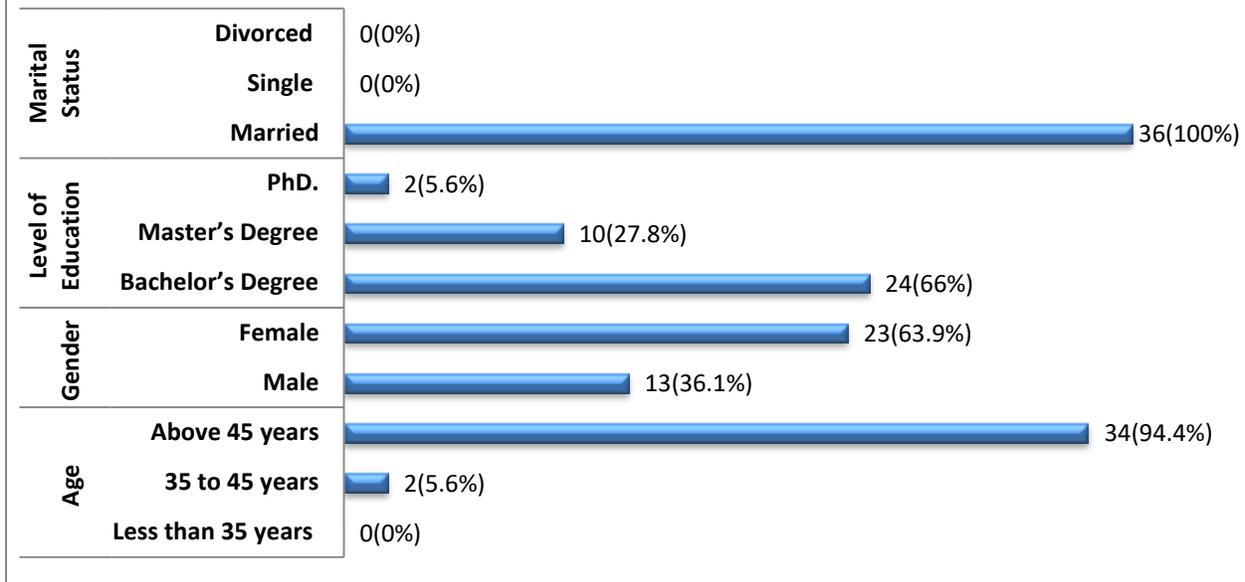
### Descriptive Statistics of Respondents Demographic Variables

Data presented in Table 2 and Figure 1 shows that respondents information for those who are between 35-45 years were 2(5.6%) and those above 45 years were 34(94.4%). For gender, it revealed that male respondents were 13(36.1%), while female were 23(62.9%). Information on respondents' level of education revealed that bachelor's degree holders were 24(66.7%), and those with master's degree were 10(27.8%), while those who hold doctorate degree were 2(5.6%). Information on marital status depict that all the respondents are married 36(100%).

Table 2: Frequency and percentage distribution of respondents' demographic variables

Demographic Variables		Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Age	Less than 35 years	0	0.0
	35 to 45 years	2	5.6
	Above 45 years	34	94.4
Gender	Male	13	36.1
	Female	23	63.9
Level of Education	Bachelor's Degree	24	66.7
	Master's Degree	10	27.8
	PhD.	2	5.6
Marital Status	Married	36	100.0
	Single	0	0.0
	Divorced	0	0.0

**Figure 2: Bar Chart Representation of Respondents Demographic Information**



### **Research Question 1: Fund Management Strategies and Effective Administration**

Research question one states that “What are the principals fund management strategies for effective administration of secondary schools in Rivers State?” The purpose of this research question is to determine respondents’ response on how principals fund management strategies relates to their effective administration of secondary schools in Rivers State. This research question was tallied along agree and disagree on items 1-8 of section B of the questionnaire. The result (see Table 3) revealed that there is a relationship between fund management strategies and effective administration of secondary schools. This is reflected in the highest (3.7778) and the lowest mean (3.2778) ratings of the respondents on the eight items. The respondents agree that fund management is an important issue in the running of the schools or school systems; this is as much as they agree that effectively planning of available funds is a good strategy for effective administration of schools. They were equally of the view that effectively outlining budget for a period is a good strategy for effective administration of schools.

### **Research Question 2: Fund Management Accountability and Effective Administration**

Research question two states that “How do principals fund management strategies account for effective administration of secondary school in Rivers State?” The rationale behind this research question is to determine respondents’ response on how principals fund management accountability influence their effective administration of secondary schools in Rivers State. To answer this research question, items 9-13 of section B of the questionnaire were tallied along agree and disagree, and the results (see Table 4) exposed that there is a relationship between fund accountability and effective administration of secondary schools. This is replicated in the highest mean of 3.4444, and the lowest mean rating of 2.7778. Thus, the respondents agree that fund accountability is an imperative issue in the management of schools; the respondents’ agree that

financial accountability is an integral part of efficient and effective financial management in schools and a good strategy for effective administration of schools. They were equally of the view that transparency and information sharing among principals is significant for fund management in schools and it is regarded as good strategy for effective administration of schools. They opined that principals are expected to handle the issue of funds in a way that shows responsibility and accountability to all; and they should brace themselves with the rudiments of accounting process in order to be accountable.

Table 3: Mean and Standard Deviation of Respondents Answer to Fund Management and Effective Administration

s/n	Items on Fund Management/Effective Administration	Mean	Std. Deviation	Remark
1.	The management of fund is an important issue in the running of the schools or school systems	3.7778	.42164	Accepted
2.	Effectively planning of available funds is a good strategy for effective administration of schools.	3.7222	.45426	Accepted
3.	Effectively organizing of the available funds is a good strategy for effective administration of schools.	3.3889	.54917	Accepted
4.	Effectively directing the available funds for proper use is a good strategy for effective administration of schools.	3.5833	.50000	Accepted
5.	Effectively controlling the available funds by ensuring checks and balances is a good strategy for effective administration of schools.	3.6389	.48714	Accepted
6.	Effectively organizing of the available funds is a good strategy for effective administration of schools.	3.4167	.55420	Accepted
7.	Effectively outlining budget for a period is a good strategy for effective administration of schools.	3.2778	.51331	Accepted
8.	Budgeting is one of the important strategies that can be used by school administrators to make sure that funds are properly managed.	3.5833	.55420	Accepted

Table 4: Mean and Standard Deviation of Respondents Answer to Fund Accountability and Effective Administration

s/n	Items on Fund Accountability/Effective Administration	Mean	Std. Deviation	Remark
9.	Financial management is an integral part of efficient and effective financial management in schools.	3.4444	.55777	Accepted
10.	Financial accountability is an integral part of efficient and effective financial management in schools.	3.2778	.61464	Accepted
11.	Transparency and information sharing among principals is important for fund management in schools.	3.4167	.64918	Accepted
12.	Principal are expected to handle the issue of funds in a way that shows responsibility and accountability to all.	3.3889	.49441	Accepted
13.	Principals should brace themselves with the rudiments of accounting process in order to be accountable.	2.7778	.63746	Accepted

### Research Question 3: Factors Hindering Fund Management and Effective Administration

Research question three states that “What are the factors hindering principals fund management strategies for effective administration of secondary schools in Rivers State?” The purpose of this research question is to evaluate respondents’ answers on the factors that hinder principals fund management and how it influences their effectiveness in the administration of secondary schools in Rivers State. To answer this research question, items 14-20 of section B of the questionnaire were tallied along agree and disagree, and the results (see Table 5) show that there is a relationship between factors that hinder fund management and effective administration of secondary schools. This is shown in the highest mean of 3.3889, and the lowest mean rating of 2.5000. Thus, the respondents agree on the factors that hinder fund management and effective administration of schools; the respondents’ agree that factors that hinder fund management affect effective and effective administration of schools. They say that there inadequate fund management skills by principals is a major challenge; Lack of skilled personnel (bursars/accountants) is a major challenge; lack of experience in financial management; and above all inadequate funds is a major challenge to school principals.

Table 5: Mean and Standard Deviation of Respondents Answer to Factors that Hinder Fund Management and Effective Administration

s/n	Items on Factors Hindering Fund Management and Effective Administration	Mean	Std. Deviation	Remark
14.	Inadequate fund management skills by principals is a major challenge	2.6667	.79282	Accepted
15.	Lack of skilled personnel (bursars/accountants) is a major challenge	2.8611	.72320	Accepted
16.	Bursars and account clerks tend to neglect their duties and this is a major challenge	2.5000	.94112	Accepted
17.	Principal’s lack of experience in financial management	2.5056	.78629	Accepted
18.	In adequate funds is a major challenge to school principals	3.3889	.64488	Accepted
19.	Pressure of high student enrolment in the face of underfunding is a major challenge.	2.8056	.74907	Accepted
20.	Non implementation of the financial duties and responsibilities of bursars as contained in the accounting procedure.	2.8158	.64907	Accepted

### Research Question 4: Principals Fund Management Strategies/Strengthen Effective Administration

Research question four states that “What are the ways the principals fund management strategies could be used to strengthen effective administration of secondary schools in Rivers state?” The purpose of this research question is to evaluate respondents’ answers on the factors that strengthen principals fund management in the effective administration of secondary schools in Rivers State. To answer this research question, items 21-26 of section B of the questionnaire were tallied along agree and disagree. The results revealed that effective fun management strengthens effective administration of school. This is shown in the highest mean of 3.5556, and the lowest mean rating of 3.2500. Thus, are of the view that proper budgeting is a good strategy for effective school administration; adequate planning of the available fund; effectively direct the available fund; putting control mechanism on the available funds; properly checking the account

books, payment vouchers, bills, impress account books to make sure that information contained in them are correct before signing; and understanding the correct and acceptable accounting procedures as laid down by the ministry of education and post primary schools board are the ways principals can strengthen their administration of schools in Rivers State (see table 6).

Table 6: Mean and Standard Deviation of Respondents Answer to Fund Management Strategies and Factors that Strengthens Effective Administration

s/n	Items on Fund Management Strategies and Factors that Strengthens Effective Administration	Mean	Std. Deviation	Remark
21.	Proper budgeting is a good strategy for effective school administration.	3.5440	.50709	Accepted
22.	Adequate planning of the available fund is a good strategy for effective school administration.	3.5556	.50395	Accepted
23.	Principals should effectively direct the available fund is a good strategy for effective school administration.	3.2500	.64918	Accepted
24.	Principals should put control mechanism on the available funds is a good strategy for effective administration of schools.	3.2508	.50500	Accepted
25.	Principals should properly check the account books, payment vouchers, bills, impress account books to make sure that information contained in them are correct before signing.	3.5000	.65465	Accepted
26.	Principals should understand the correct and acceptable accounting procedures as laid down by the ministry of education post primary schools board	3.0833	.69179	Accepted

### Hypothesis One: Fund Management/Effective Administration

Hypothesis one states that “There is no significant relationship between principals fund management strategies and effective administration of secondary schools in Rivers State”. This hypothesis was developed to provide answers to respondents view on fund management strategies and effective administration of secondary schools in Rivers State. The results obtained showed that there is significant relationship between principals fund management strategies and effective administration of secondary schools in Rivers State. This can be seen in the significance of  $p < .000$  to  $p < .008$  for items (1-8), at .05 significant level. Hence, hypothesis one was rejected (see table 7).

### Hypothesis Two: Accountability and Effective Administration

Hypothesis two states “There is no significant relationship between principal’s accountability in fund management and effective administration of secondary schools in Rivers State”. This hypothesis was developed to provide responses to respondents view on fund accountability and effective administration of secondary schools in Rivers State. The results attained revealed that there is significant relationship between principals fund management strategies and effective administration of secondary schools in Rivers State. This can be seen in the significance of  $p < .001$ ;  $p < .002$ ;  $p < .005$ ;  $p < .003$ ;  $p < .000$  respectively at .05 significant level. Consequently, hypothesis two was rejected (see table 8).

Table 7: Chi-square Analysis of Fund Management/Effective Administration

s/n	Items on Fund Management/Effective Administration	Chi-square	Df.	Sig. (2-tailed)	Remark
1.	The management of fund is an important issue in the running of the schools or school systems	11.111 <sup>a</sup>	1	.001	Significant
2.	Effectively planning of available funds is a good strategy for effective administration of schools.	7.111 <sup>a</sup>	1	.008	Significant
3.	Effectively organizing of the available funds is a good strategy for effective administration of schools.	16.167 <sup>b</sup>	2	.000	Significant
4.	Effectively directing the available funds for proper use is a good strategy for effective administration of schools.	11.000 <sup>a</sup>	1	.005	Significant
5.	Effectively controlling the available funds by ensuring checks and balances is a good strategy for effective administration of schools.	22.778 <sup>a</sup>	1	.000	Significant
6.	Effectively organizing of the available funds is a good strategy for effective administration of schools.	15.500 <sup>b</sup>	2	.000	Significant
7.	Effectively outlining budget for a period is a good strategy for effective administration of schools.	22.167 <sup>b</sup>	2	.000	Significant
8.	Budgeting is one of the important strategies that can be used by school administrators to make sure that funds are properly managed.	18.500 <sup>b</sup>	2	.000	Significant

Table 8: Chi-square Analysis of Accountability/Effective Administration

s/n	Items on Fund Accountability/Effective Administration	Chi-square	Df.	Sig. (2-tailed)	Remark
9.	Financial management is an integral part of efficient and effective financial management in schools.	15.167 <sup>a</sup>	2	.001	Significant
10.	Financial accountability is an integral part of efficient and effective financial management in schools.	12.167 <sup>a</sup>	2	.002	Significant
11.	Transparency and information sharing among principals is important for fund management in schools.	10.500 <sup>a</sup>	2	.005	Significant
12.	Principal are expected to handle the issue of funds in a way that shows responsibility and accountability to all.	11.778 <sup>b</sup>	1	.003	Significant
13.	Principals should brace themselves with the rudiments of accounting process in order to be accountable.	32.889 <sup>c</sup>	3	.000	Significant

### Hypothesis Three: Factors Hindering Fund Management and Effective Administration

Research question three states “There is no significant relationship between factors hindering fund management and effective administration of secondary schools in Rivers State”. This hypothesis was postulated to provide responses to respondents view on factors that hinder effective administration of secondary schools in Rivers State. The results got revealed that there is significant relationship between the factors that hinder fund management strategies and effective administration of secondary schools in Rivers State. This is as stated in the significance of  $p. < .002$ ;  $p. < .002$ ;  $p. < .000$ ;  $p. < .002$ ;  $p. < .001$ ;  $p. < .000$ ;  $p. < .000$  respectively at .05 significant level. As a result, hypothesis three was rejected (see table 9).

Table 9: Chi-square Analysis of Factors that Hinder Fund management and Effective Administration

s/n	Items on Factors that Hinder Fund Management And Effective Administration	Chi-square	Df.	Sig. (2-tailed)	Remark
14.	Inadequate fund management skills by principals is a major challenge	14.444 <sup>a</sup>	3	.002	Significant
15.	Lack of skilled personnel (bursars/accountants) is a major challenge	14.167 <sup>b</sup>	2	.002	Significant
16.	Bursars and account clerks tend to neglect their duties and this is a major challenge	16.000 <sup>a</sup>	3	.000	Significant
17.	Principal’s lack of experience in financial management	14.889 <sup>a</sup>	3	.002	Significant
18.	In adequate funds is a major challenge to school principals	15.167 <sup>b</sup>	2	.001	Significant
19.	Pressure of high student enrolment in the face of underfunding is a major challenge.	23.333 <sup>a</sup>	3	.000	Significant
20.	Non implementation of the financial duties and responsibilities of bursars as contained in the accounting procedure.	23.321 <sup>a</sup>	3	.000	Significant

### Hypothesis Four: Factors that Strengthen Effective Administration

Hypothesis four states that “There is no significant difference between principals’ opinion on the extent fund management strategies and factors that strengthen effective administration of secondary schools in Rivers State”. This hypothesis was aimed at providing answers to respondents view on fund management strategies and factors that strengthen effective administration in Rivers State. The results got showed that there is significant relationship between fund management strategies and factors that strengthen effective administration secondary schools in Rivers State. This is as shown in their significance at  $p. < .000$  in all the variables at .05 significant level. Thus, hypothesis four is rejected (see table 10).

Table 10: Chi-square Analysis of Fund Management Strategies that Strengthen Effective Administration

s/n	Items on Factors that Strengthen Effective Administration	Chi-square	Df.	Sig. (2-tailed)	Remark
21.	Proper budgeting is a good strategy for effective school administration.	23.000 <sup>a</sup>	1	.000	Significant
22.	Adequate planning of the available fund is a good strategy for effective school administration.	22.444 <sup>a</sup>	1	.000	Significant
23.	Principals should effectively direct the available fund is a good strategy for effective school administration.	34.000 <sup>b</sup>	3	.000	Significant
24.	Principals should put control mechanism on the available funds is a good strategy for effective administration of schools.	24.500 <sup>c</sup>	2	.000	Significant
25.	Principals should properly check the account books, payment vouchers, bills, impress account books to make sure that information contained in them are correct before signing.	16.167 <sup>c</sup>	2	.000	Significant
26.	Principals should understand the correct and acceptable accounting procedures as laid down by the ministry of education post primary schools board	28.667 <sup>b</sup>	3	.000	Significant

## DISCUSSION

This study evaluated principals fund management strategies and for effective administration of public secondary schools in Rivers State. This study revealed that the findings are in line with Ezra (2008) who stated that the function of financial management is to review and control decisions to commit and recommit funds to a new or ongoing uses. Same is true of Deepika and Rani (2014), were they observed that financial management is the activity of management which is concerned with the planning, procuring and controlling financial resources. To Ololube (2016), fund management is the act of planning, organizing, controlling and monitoring monies in one's care for the effective administration of the education systems.

In line with the study of Wali (2006), he stated that fund accountability protects public fund from possible loss from careless expenditure for education objectives through operation budget related report processes; provides for systematic ways to relate expenditure to the attainment of educational objectives through the operation of budget and related report and processes; provides an objective method of appraisal of performance of school personnel in attaining schools objectives. He further stated that fund accountability protects the image and reputation of the officer who collects disburses school finances; and forms a sound foundation for improved administrative decision for good preparation and revision since enough data have been provided. Same is correct of Hornby (2005) study. Hornby is of the view that fund accountability is the ability for one to be responsible for his/her decision or actions and expected to explain them when the need arises. The expectation is that a principal will accept credit or blame for their performance through accountability.

For instance, Codja (2010) study insists that modern-day fund management poses specific challenges which managers of finance have to contend with. He contends that a good number of educational administrators are not knowledgeable enough with financial terminologies, concepts and principles in order to practice. These factors include planning, budgeting system, cost benefit analysis, financial accounting. Same is through of Onye (2006) study, who sees financial management skill as a sinequanon for principals to ensure judicious use of available funds.

This study is in line with Nsikan and Emmanuel (2015) and Ololube (2016) who stated that to strengthen education system, proper planning and effective administration are needed because no institution functions excellently without fundamental financial planning, organizing and controlling mechanism.

## **CONCLUSION**

The researcher has presented readers with basic information on principals fund management strategies and effective administration of secondary schools in Rivers State and Nigerian in general. This study provided avenue to evaluate principals' view on possible variables that may or may not be responsible for fund management strategies and their relationship on effective administration of schools. The study did not prior to the study assess the actual knowledge of the respondents on the theme of this study. Rather respondents were only asked to give self-assessment of their views and knowledge of what they know about fund management strategies and their relationship with effective administration of secondary schools in Rivers State.

This research, which adopted a descriptive approach provides reliability to this study's purpose, research questions and hypotheses. A detailed comprehensive literature review was done. And the instrument used for data collection was a self-structured questionnaire that was validated by the researcher supervisor and experts in measurement and evaluation from Ignatius Ajuru University of Education.

The questionnaire was administered by the researcher personally to the respondents and the data that were collected from the respondents were properly organized in tables and analyzed quantitatively. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics (frequencies, percentages, mean and standard deviations).

This study has cogently illuminated the relationships between principals fund management strategies and effective administration of secondary schools in Rivers State. Indications from this study are robust that the apparatuses of fund management strategies used in this study shows significant relationships. Strategies, accountability, factors that hinder and methods used to strengthen related effective administration (Ololube, 2016; Ezra, 2008; Deepika & Rani, 2014).

The investigation revealed the adequacies and inadequacies in the fund management strategies and the relationship they have in effective administration in terms of personnel, skills, accountably. The unauthorized, misappropriation, intentional or ineffective use of the appropriated funds by principals has negative effect on proper and effective management, planning and control of the quality of administration in Rivers and Nigeria in general. Fund mismanagement and strategies misapplication throw administration of schools into bad light. The little funds appropriated to schools tend to be grossly mismanaged.

This study has proved that proper budgeting, Planning, putting effective control mechanism, checks and balances are all good strategies for effective administration of school

administration. According to Ololube (2016) and Acho and Abuh (2016) proper fund planning and accountability results to effective administration of educational systems.

Every research work contributes to knowledge and this one has done the same by contributing its quota to the academic community. This study has added to the academic communities understanding of the role of fund management strategies on effective administration of schools in Rivers State. By expressing how this research is structured, researchers can make better efforts in their future research actions and experiences. And by meaningfully contributing to how this study's interpretations are made researcher can build better understandings of the how fund management strategies relates to effective administration of school in Rivers State. Through this improved understanding researchers can initiate more meaningful assessments, design more effective forms of actions, and be more thoughtful about their efforts in commencing a new study.

This research has produced an increasing body of empirical evidence that can be used to make decision on the role of fund management strategies and their effect on administration of schools. The major trust of this study is that it does not suggest that this research is an end in itself, but can nevertheless be applied in a purely procedural way to help solve part of our understanding of fund management strategies. This research has further provided implications by providing new knowledge base for educational fund management strategies and understanding how effective administration of schools is achieved.

## **Recommendations**

This study recommends that:

- Effective management strategic practices should be encourages to the extent that it provides for effective administration of schools in River State.
- Accountability as a strategy for effective fund management should be made to take precedence in the management of funds as a means for effective administration of school in River State.
- The factors that hinder fund management strategies need to be reduced to the barest minimum for effective administration to be experienced in River State.
- The factors that encourages fund management strategies applied to strengthen effective administration of schools in River State.
- The level of human resources planning in higher education is a precondition for lecturers job satisfaction in tertiary institutions in River State as a result it should be given priority.

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