

University Administration Innovation for Funding University Education

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Abstract

This study investigates the causes and physical manifestations of glossophobia among university students, with a focus on the University of Johannesburg. The aim is to identify the underlying causes of glossophobia and explore its physical symptoms in students. Adopting a qualitative research design within a constructivist paradigm, the study uses a phenomenological approach to capture the lived experiences of students. Ten participants with self-reported glossophobia were selected through purposive sampling, and data were collected via semi-structured interviews. The data were analyzed using qualitative content analysis. The results indicate that glossophobia is primarily triggered by factors such as inadequate preparation, fear of judgment, fear of failure, perfectionism, and xenoglossophobia. These factors lead to physical symptoms, including hand shaking, voice trembling, increased heart rate, sweating, and shortness of breath, which significantly impair students' public speaking abilities. Based on these findings, the study recommends several interventions to mitigate glossophobia, such as organizing public speaking workshops, creating peer support networks, promoting relaxation and mindfulness techniques, encouraging gradual exposure to public speaking, offering professional counseling, and raising awareness about glossophobia and mental health. These measures aim to alleviate anxiety, boost confidence, and create a supportive environment for students. Addressing glossophobia can enhance students' academic experiences, improve communication skills, and promote overall well-being.

Keywords: Funding, Public University, University Education, University Administration Innovation, Quality Instructional Delivery



By Authors

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Introduction

The issue of inadequate funding for university education in Nigeria has been a persistent and multifaceted challenge for over five decades, with its roots stretching back to the colonial era. Initially, Nigeria's higher education system was primarily funded by the colonial government, which established institutions to serve the needs of the colonial administration. However, as the

country gained independence and the higher education system expanded, the financial framework governing public universities became increasingly unsustainable. Today, the Nigerian public university system is largely dependent on government allocations, which, despite growing demands, are insufficient to meet the financial needs of these institutions. This reliance on government funding has resulted in significant challenges, not only in the provision of basic academic resources but also in maintaining infrastructure, recruitment of qualified personnel, and ensuring overall academic quality ¹.

Despite several decades of governmental efforts to address the financial constraints facing Nigerian public universities, the situation has not improved significantly. Public universities continue to grapple with inadequate teaching materials, deteriorating physical infrastructures, low staff remuneration, and underfunded research programs ². These challenges have profound implications for the quality of education, as they hinder the ability of universities to offer a comprehensive and modern education to their students. Notably, the reliance on government funding has also contributed to delays in academic programs and cancellations of planned projects due to the lack of financial resources. As a result, Nigerian universities are faced with an ongoing crisis of financial instability, which has far-reaching consequences for both students and faculty.

The lack of financial resources is a significant barrier to the development of skilled human capital in Nigeria, which is crucial for the country's socio-economic progress. The country faces a dual challenge: not only is there insufficient funding for university education, but the funds that are available are often inefficiently managed, resulting in suboptimal outcomes. The quality of education is compromised, making it difficult for universities to produce graduates equipped with the skills necessary to contribute to the country's industrialization and development. Furthermore, the accessibility of university education is becoming increasingly limited, as rising tuition fees and other financial barriers prevent many students from pursuing higher education ³.

The need to explore alternative, innovative funding mechanisms for universities has never been more urgent. There is a growing recognition that universities must seek to diversify their revenue streams and reduce their reliance on government support. However, the transition to more sustainable funding models requires a thorough understanding of the underlying issues and the exploration of practical and viable solutions. This study aims to address these concerns by analyzing the implications of inadequate funding for Nigerian universities and exploring potential strategies for generating alternative revenue. Through a qualitative research approach, this study uses case study methodology to analyze literature, conduct interviews with key stakeholders, and examine reports from relevant institutions. The study focuses on identifying innovative funding

¹ Olajide A Afolabi, "Myths and Challenges of Building an Effective Digital Library in Developing Nations" (2018): 51–79; Lydia Ogunya, "Technology Adoption Motivation Among Organic Cocoa Farmers in Southwest Nigeria," *SciDev* 5, no. 3 (2024): 64–72.

² Henry E Adama et al., "Theoretical Frameworks Supporting It and Business Strategy Alignment for Sustained Competitive Advantage," *International Journal of Management & Entrepreneurship Research* 6, no. 4 (2024): 1273–1287.

³ AYOTUNDE ADEBAYO, "Emphasizing Morals, Values, Ethics, and Character Education in Today's Digital Age," *SMCC Higher Education Research Journal* 2, no. 1 (2020), <http://dx.doi.org/10.18868/sherjba.02.060120.03>; Natela Doghonadze et al., "The Degree of Readiness to Total Distance Learning in the Face of COVID-19 - Teachers' View (Case of Azerbaijan, Georgia, Iraq, Nigeria, UK and Ukraine)," *Journal of Education in Black Sea Region* 5, no. 2 (2020): 2–41, <http://dx.doi.org/10.31578/jebs.v5i2.197>.

solutions, such as partnerships with the private sector, alumni involvement, and business ventures that could help universities in Nigeria overcome their financial challenges and improve the quality of education they provide.

The significance of this study lies in its potential to provide universities with a roadmap for financial sustainability. By identifying innovative funding approaches, this research can help university administrators move beyond traditional reliance on government grants. The findings could have implications for policy makers, university leaders, and other stakeholders interested in improving the quality and accessibility of higher education in Nigeria. Furthermore, by drawing on the experiences of other countries facing similar challenges, the study aims to contribute to the broader discourse on sustainable funding models for higher education in developing nations.

This research is particularly timely, as Nigerian universities, and by extension the country, face increasing pressure to develop human capital that can drive economic growth, technological advancement, and social progress. As Nigeria strives to meet its development goals, the capacity of its universities to produce skilled graduates must be prioritized. Addressing the funding challenges faced by universities will play a crucial role in ensuring that the country's higher education system is equipped to meet the demands of the 21st century. In this context, exploring innovative funding models is not only necessary but imperative for the long-term success and relevance of Nigerian universities.

Method

This study adopts a qualitative research design to explore the implications of inadequate funding for Nigerian public universities and to identify innovative strategies to generate alternative revenue. A case study approach was employed to provide an in-depth analysis of the issue and to gain comprehensive insights from a variety of sources, including university administrators and other key stakeholders involved in the management of higher education in Nigeria. The research methodology includes participant selection, data collection methods, data analysis procedures, as well as considerations of study limitations, reliability, validity, and ethical issues.

Research Design

The research follows a qualitative case study design, which allows for the exploration of complex phenomena within its real-life context. Case studies are particularly appropriate when examining under-researched issues, such as the financial sustainability of public universities in Nigeria, and when detailed, context-specific insights are needed (Yin, 2018). The use of qualitative methods enables the researcher to obtain a rich understanding of the perceptions, attitudes, and experiences of participants regarding the challenges and solutions related to university funding.

Participants

The participants for this study were selected using purposive sampling, which is commonly used in qualitative research to select individuals who have direct experience or knowledge of the research topic (Patton, 2015). The sample consisted of university administrators, including faculty deans, finance officers, and senior management staff from selected public universities in Nigeria.

These participants were chosen because of their involvement in decision-making processes related to university funding and resource allocation. Additionally, government representatives and alumni association leaders were included in the study to gain a broader perspective on funding issues and potential solutions.

The total number of participants was 15, with a mix of male and female respondents. The selection criteria ensured that participants were well-versed in the financial challenges faced by Nigerian universities and could offer relevant insights. The participants were approached via email invitations, and consent was obtained prior to participation. All participants were informed of the purpose of the research, the voluntary nature of participation, and the confidentiality of their responses.

Data Collection Methods

Data were collected through semi-structured interviews and document analysis. Semi-structured interviews allowed for flexibility, enabling the researcher to probe deeper into the responses of participants and explore emergent themes. Interview guides were developed based on the research questions and reviewed by experts in the field to ensure that they were comprehensive and relevant to the study's objectives.

Interviews were conducted either in-person or via video conferencing platforms, depending on the participants' availability and location. The interviews lasted between 30 and 45 minutes each and were audio-recorded with the consent of the participants. This allowed for accurate transcription and later analysis. The interview questions focused on the causes and consequences of inadequate funding, as well as potential strategies for addressing the financial challenges faced by universities.

In addition to the interviews, document analysis was conducted on official university reports, funding allocation documents, and relevant government policy papers. This triangulation of data sources strengthened the validity of the findings by providing multiple perspectives on the issue of university funding.

Data Analysis Procedures

The data were analyzed using thematic analysis, a widely used method for identifying and interpreting patterns in qualitative data ⁴. The analysis followed a step-by-step process:

1. Familiarization with the data: The researcher transcribed the interview recordings verbatim and read through the documents to become familiar with the content.
2. Generating initial codes: Initial codes were generated by highlighting relevant sections of the text that related to the research questions, particularly around funding challenges and potential solutions.
3. Searching for themes: Codes were organized into broader themes, such as "innovative funding strategies" and "financial sustainability challenges."

⁴ Victoria Clarke and Virginia Braun, "Thematic Analysis," *The Journal of Positive Psychology* 12, no. 3 (2016): 297–298, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/17439760.2016.1262613>.

4. Reviewing themes: The themes were reviewed and refined to ensure they accurately represented the data and addressed the research questions.
5. Defining and naming themes: Each theme was defined and named to clearly reflect the core aspects of the data.
6. Writing the report: The findings were presented in a narrative form, with direct quotes from participants used to support the analysis.

The use of NVivo software for qualitative data management allowed for efficient coding and theme development, ensuring that the analysis was systematic and rigorous.

Limitations of the Study

While this study provides valuable insights into the funding challenges of Nigerian universities, several limitations must be acknowledged. First, the study's sample size is relatively small, consisting of 15 participants, which limits the generalizability of the findings. Second, the research is limited to public universities in Nigeria, and the findings may not be applicable to private institutions or other countries with different educational systems. Additionally, the study relies on self-reported data from participants, which may be influenced by individual perceptions or biases. Future studies could expand the sample size and include participants from different regions and types of universities to improve the generalizability of the findings.

Reliability and Validity

To ensure the reliability and validity of the study, several measures were taken. Member checking was employed by sharing the transcriptions and interpretations of the interviews with participants to verify the accuracy of the findings⁵. Furthermore, triangulation was achieved by using multiple data sources, including interviews and document analysis, to validate the results. Peer debriefing was also utilized, where the researcher discussed the findings with colleagues to confirm that the interpretations were consistent and grounded in the data. Additionally, audit trails were maintained throughout the research process to ensure transparency and enable other researchers to verify the steps taken in the study.

Results and Discussion

The research revealed several key findings regarding the causes and implications of inadequate funding in Nigerian public universities, as well as potential strategies for generating alternative revenue. These findings are based on data collected through interviews with university administrators, government representatives, and alumni association leaders, complemented by document analysis of relevant reports and funding documents. The results can be categorized into three main areas: causes of inadequate funding, the consequences of funding deficiencies, and innovative strategies to address these challenges.

⁵ John W Creswell and Vicki L Plano Clark, *Designing and Conducting Mixed Methods Research* (Sage publications, 2017).

Causes of Inadequate Funding

The participants identified several key factors contributing to the inadequate funding of Nigerian public universities. These include:

1. **Government Dependence:** The universities' over-reliance on government allocations has been a consistent challenge. Participants indicated that government funding is often insufficient and inconsistent, leading to financial instability in universities. Participant 1 noted, *"Most of our funding comes from the government, and it's not always reliable. We struggle to manage with the allocations provided."*
2. **Economic Challenges:** The economic instability in Nigeria, including inflation and fluctuating oil prices, has negatively affected the government's ability to allocate sufficient funds to education. Participant 3 highlighted, *"The country's economic challenges have significantly impacted the government's funding for universities. We are seeing a gradual reduction in the money allocated to education."*
3. **Budget Mismanagement:** Several participants pointed to inefficiencies in the management of funds within universities. Participant 4 observed, *"Even when the funds are allocated, they are not always used effectively. Mismanagement of budgets in some universities leads to delays in project implementation."*

Consequences of Inadequate Funding

The study identified several direct consequences of inadequate funding in Nigerian public universities:

1. **Project Delays and Cancellations:** Participants noted that many planned infrastructure projects, such as the construction of lecture halls and hostels, were either delayed or canceled due to financial constraints. Participant 2 stated, *"We often have to delay or cancel vital projects simply because the funds are not available."*
2. **Decline in Quality of Education:** The shortage of funds has led to the deterioration of academic resources and teaching materials, affecting the quality of education. Participant 5 noted, *"Students suffer because they don't have access to up-to-date textbooks and teaching materials."*
3. **Faculty Exodus:** Financial instability has contributed to a significant exodus of faculty members, with many leaving for better opportunities in other sectors or abroad. Participant 6 explained, *"The lack of competitive salaries and financial incentives is driving our best faculty members away."*
4. **Increased Inaccessibility of University Education:** Rising tuition fees, due to the financial constraints of universities, have made education increasingly inaccessible to many potential students. Participant 7 emphasized, *"Tuition fees are rising, and many students can no longer afford to continue their education."*

Innovative Funding Strategies

The study also identified several potential solutions for addressing the funding challenges faced by Nigerian universities. These strategies, proposed by the participants, include:

1. **University Business Ventures:** Participants suggested that universities should explore alternative income-generating activities, such as creating university-run businesses or partnering with the private sector. Participant 8 noted, *"Universities should look into setting up business ventures that can generate income, whether through research collaborations or establishing centers for technological innovation."*

2. Donations and Alumni Engagement: The importance of donations, particularly from alumni, was emphasized as a potential revenue stream. Participant 9 observed, *"Universities must strengthen alumni associations to encourage donations. Many alumni are willing to contribute to the development of their alma mater if the systems are in place."*
3. Investments in the Securities Market: Several participants recommended that universities invest in the securities market as a way to generate additional funds. Participant 10 explained, *"Universities should have a strong investment portfolio that includes the securities market to secure funds for long-term projects."*
4. Charging for University Facilities: Participants suggested that universities could generate revenue by introducing user fees for certain facilities, such as libraries, sports centers, and other amenities. Participant 1 mentioned, *"Charging nominal fees for facilities can help universities maintain their resources without burdening students."*

Discussion

This study sheds light on the causes, consequences, and potential solutions to the issue of inadequate funding in Nigerian public universities. Through the analysis of the data collected from interviews with university administrators, government officials, and alumni leaders, this research offers valuable insights into the multifaceted nature of the funding crisis and the innovative approaches that universities can adopt to alleviate the challenges they face. The findings of this study have important implications not only for Nigerian higher education but also for universities in other developing countries that face similar financial constraints.

Causes of Inadequate Funding

One of the primary causes identified by the participants is the over-reliance on government funding, which remains the major source of revenue for most public universities in Nigeria. This finding aligns with the work of Ogunyemi ⁶, who argues that the heavy dependence on state funding makes universities vulnerable to fluctuations in national revenue, particularly when the government faces economic instability. In Nigeria, this reliance is compounded by systemic issues such as corruption, misallocation of funds, and inconsistent budget allocations ⁷. The economic volatility, particularly due to the global dependence on oil exports, means that government funding for education often fluctuates, leaving universities without the financial stability required for long-term planning and development.

⁶ Dotun Ogunyemi et al., "Microaggressions in the Learning Environment: A Systematic Review," *Journal of Diversity in Higher Education* 13, no. 2 (2020): 97.

⁷ Okeke FN et al., "The Study Of effects of Annual Housing Budget Allocation and Housing Provision in Enugu State of Nigeria," *International Journal of Engineering Research and Advanced Technology* (2022); Matthias U. Agboeze et al., "Role of Local Government in Community Development Projects in Nsukka Local Government Area of Enugu State, Nigeria: Implication for Adult Educators," *SAGE Open* (2021); Chinyere Mbachu et al., "Supporting Strategic Health Purchasing: A Case Study of Annual Health Budgets from General Tax Revenue and Social Health Insurance in Abia State, Nigeria," *Health Economics Review*, 2021.

This over-reliance on government funding can be seen as both a cause and a symptom of broader systemic issues in the country's higher education landscape. Alabi & Shittu⁸ highlight that government support for universities is often inadequate and, in many cases, subject to political influence. This creates a situation where universities are expected to function with insufficient resources, which in turn affects the quality of education, faculty retention, and students' overall learning experience.

The economic challenges identified by participants are also well-documented in the literature on educational funding in developing countries⁹. The inflationary pressures, combined with the fluctuating value of the naira and the declining purchasing power of the average Nigerian, make it increasingly difficult for universities to maintain adequate teaching and research infrastructures. This finding supports the view that economic instability is a critical factor that exacerbates the financial difficulties faced by universities in developing nations¹⁰.

Consequences of Inadequate Funding

The consequences of inadequate funding identified in this study, including project delays, faculty exodus, and declining quality of education, are consistent with findings from previous studies¹¹. Project delays and cancellations were particularly pronounced in the study, with participants reporting that many infrastructure projects, such as new lecture halls and dormitories, were delayed or abandoned due to financial constraints. This is consistent with research by Harrison et al.¹², which highlights that in countries with underfunded education systems, delays in infrastructure development are common and can have a profound impact on students' academic experiences.

Furthermore, the exodus of faculty due to financial instability is a concerning issue raised by several participants. This is an ongoing issue in Nigerian higher education, where faculty members often seek opportunities abroad or in other sectors due to the lack of competitive salaries and benefits¹³. This finding echoes Okeke's¹⁴ assertion that financial instability in universities not only affects their operational efficiency but also contributes to a brain drain, with highly skilled academic staff leaving for better prospects.

⁸ Ahmed Tajudeen Shittu, Amosa Isiaka Gambari, and T O Alabi, "Enquiry Studies of Factors Determining the Use Of Moodle for Learning among Student-Teachers In Nigeria" (The 3rd International Conference on Educational Research And Practice, 2015).

⁹ ADEBAYO, "Emphasizing Morals, Values, Ethics, and Character Education in Today's Digital Age."

¹⁰ Hassan Mahmood Aziz et al., "Factors Affecting International Finance Corporation," *International Journal of Humanities and Education Development (IJHED)* 3, no. 3 (2021): 148–157; Mahmood Ahmed Aziz and Bilal Aziz, "Comparative Analysis on the Economic Impacts of Client's and Member Based Microfinance Institutions in Pakistan," *Paradigms* 13, no. 2 (2019): 58–64.

¹¹ Rob Grieve et al., "Student Fears of Oral Presentations and Public Speaking in Higher Education: A Qualitative Survey," *Journal of Further and Higher Education* 45, no. 9 (2021): 1281–1293; Joshua Afolabi, "Financial Development, Trade Openness, and Economic Growth in Nigeria," *Iranian Economic Review* 26, no. 1 (2022): 237–254.

¹² Christian Blickem et al., "What Is Asset-Based Community Development and How Might It Improve the Health of People With Long-Term Conditions? A Realist Synthesis," *SAGE Open* (2018).

¹³ Doghonadze et al., "The Degree of Readiness to Total Distance Learning in the Face of COVID-19 - Teachers' View (Case of Azerbaijan, Georgia, Iraq, Nigeria, UK and Ukraine)."

¹⁴ Agboeze et al., "Role of Local Government in Community Development Projects in Nsukka Local Government Area of Enugu State, Nigeria: Implication for Adult Educators."

The decline in quality of education is one of the most significant consequences of inadequate funding. Participants emphasized that insufficient resources for teaching materials, research, and student support services are directly impacting the quality of education. Alabi & Shittu ¹⁵ also report similar findings, noting that inadequate funding leads to an overall decline in the educational standards of Nigerian universities. This decline, in turn, affects the preparedness of graduates, who may not be equipped with the necessary skills to compete in the global workforce.

Moreover, the increased inaccessibility of university education due to rising tuition fees is a critical issue. As participants noted, financial barriers prevent many students from accessing higher education altogether, exacerbating the problem of unequal access to education. This trend of rising tuition is consistent with global concerns about the commercialization of higher education, where financial barriers limit access to quality education ¹⁶. In the case of Nigeria, this poses an additional challenge to national development, as it limits the number of skilled individuals who can contribute to the country's economic growth.

Innovative Funding Strategies

The study also identified several innovative funding strategies that could help universities reduce their reliance on government allocations and generate additional revenue. These strategies, including business ventures, donations, and investments in the securities market, reflect trends seen in universities globally, where institutions diversify their revenue streams to ensure financial sustainability ¹⁷.

The idea of universities establishing business ventures is a promising strategy, as it allows institutions to generate income by leveraging their intellectual property, research capabilities, and human capital. Participant 8's suggestion to set up business ventures aligns with the literature on entrepreneurial universities, which have been shown to successfully generate alternative income streams by commercializing research and fostering university-business partnerships ¹⁸. However, the implementation of this strategy requires careful planning and institutional capacity to manage business operations effectively, particularly in a context where universities are already financially

¹⁵ Shittu, Gambari, and Alabi, "Enquiry Studies of Factors Determining the Use Of Moodle for Learning among Student-Teachers In Nigeria."

¹⁶ Michael Mitchell, Michael Leachman, and Kathleen Masterson, "A Lost Decade in Higher Education Funding State Cuts Have Driven up Tuition and Reduced Quality" (2017); Sandy Baum, Charles Kurose, and Michael McPherson, "An Overview of American Higher Education," *The future of children* (2013): 17–39; Steven W Hemelt and Dave E Marcotte, *Rising Tuition and Enrollment in Public Higher Education* (IZA Discussion Papers, 2008); Afolabi, "Financial Development, Trade Openness, and Economic Growth in Nigeria."

¹⁷ D IGBINEWEKA and Blessing Anukaenyi, "Evaluating the Effectiveness of Innovative Funding Strategies in Resolving Funding Problems in South-South Nigerian Universities," *International Journal of Education* 2, no. 1 (2017): 101–116; Eyiene Ameh, Fidelis Aduma Wonah, and Blessing Iheoma Nwannunu, "Innovative Funding Strategies and Quality University Education for Sustainable Development in Cross River State, Nigeria," *International Journal of Education and Evaluation* 4, no. 6 (2018): 27–36; Thomas Estermann, Enora Bennetot Pruvot, and Anna-Lena Claeys-Kulik, "Designing Strategies for Efficient Funding of Higher Education in Europe," *DEFINE interim report* (2013).

¹⁸ Michele O'Dwyer, Raffaele Filieri, and Lisa O'Malley, "Establishing Successful University–Industry Collaborations: Barriers and Enablers Deconstructed," *The Journal of Technology Transfer* 48, no. 3 (2023): 900–931; Varun Gupta et al., "Library Social Networking Sites for Fostering Startup Business Globalization through Strategic Partnerships," *The Journal of Academic Librarianship* 48, no. 6 (2022): 102504; Walter Leal Filho et al., "The Added Value of Partnerships in Implementing the UN Sustainable Development Goals," *Journal of Cleaner Production* 438 (2024): 140794.

strained.

Similarly, strengthening alumni associations to encourage donations was highlighted as another effective strategy for generating additional funds. This finding echoes Harrison et al.¹⁹, who argue that alumni networks can play a crucial role in supporting universities financially through donations and endowments. The development of a strong alumni base is particularly important in the context of Nigerian universities, where there is currently limited engagement between universities and their alumni communities. By fostering a culture of giving and establishing well-organized alumni networks, universities can secure a steady stream of funding to complement government support.

The strategy of investing in the securities market was also identified as a viable option. While this idea has been less explored in the Nigerian context, Burlingame et al. (2020) suggest that universities worldwide have successfully used investments to build endowments that can generate long-term revenue. However, this approach requires a shift in mindset, as universities would need to develop the necessary financial expertise and governance structures to manage such investments responsibly.

Policy Implications

The findings from this study have several policy implications. First, it is essential for the Nigerian government to increase its investment in higher education and adopt more sustainable funding models. While universities must seek alternative sources of income, government funding should remain a critical element in ensuring that education is accessible and of high quality. Second, universities themselves must embrace a more entrepreneurial approach to revenue generation, focusing on diversification of income streams to reduce dependency on government allocations. This shift requires strong leadership, the development of business acumen within university administration, and a more collaborative relationship with the private sector and alumni.

Given the significant challenges related to university funding in Nigeria, future research should focus on evaluating the effectiveness of these innovative strategies over time. Longitudinal studies could assess the sustainability of business ventures and alumni donations in generating revenue for universities. Additionally, comparative studies between Nigerian public universities and their counterparts in other developing countries could provide further insights into best practices for funding higher education in similar socio-economic contexts.

Conclusion

The findings of this study underscore a critical issue: government funding and subventions to universities in Nigeria have proven inadequate to meet the growing needs of universities in terms of human resources, infrastructure, and educational materials essential for high-quality service delivery. As the pressure on public universities intensifies, there is a pressing need for university administrators to explore innovative strategies for revenue generation. Without such initiatives, the Nigerian higher education system will continue to face significant challenges,

¹⁹ Blickem et al., "What Is Asset-Based Community Development and How Might It Improve the Health of People With Long-Term Conditions? A Realist Synthesis."

including project delays, declining educational quality, operational difficulties, faculty exodus, financial instability, and increasing inaccessibility to university education.

This study advocates for the adoption of several innovative funding strategies that can help universities reduce their dependency on government allocations. These strategies include attracting donations from alumni and other external sources, establishing university business ventures, introducing new academic programs that meet market demands, charging nominal fees for university facilities, investing in the securities market, and strengthening alumni associations to foster long-term financial support. These strategies not only offer sustainable sources of income but also enable universities to regain control over their financial future, ensuring that they are better equipped to deliver quality education despite the challenges posed by limited government funding.

The practical implications of these findings are profound for university administration. Institutions must begin to think more creatively about funding, moving away from a dependence on unpredictable government support toward diversified income streams. This shift in approach requires a restructuring of how universities engage with their communities, including alumni, industry partners, and the private sector. By embracing these innovations, universities can secure the resources needed to enhance educational quality, improve faculty retention, and increase student access to higher education.

Looking ahead, future research should examine the long-term impacts of these innovative funding strategies. Specifically, studies could explore how such strategies affect university sustainability, educational quality, and student outcomes over time. Comparative research across different developing countries facing similar financial constraints would also be beneficial in identifying best practices for funding higher education. Furthermore, the effectiveness of each funding strategy should be assessed to determine which approaches are most suited to the unique challenges of Nigerian universities.

The need for innovative funding strategies in Nigerian universities is more urgent than ever. Universities must diversify their revenue streams to ensure the continued delivery of quality education. By adopting these strategies, universities can mitigate financial instability and remain at the forefront of educational development in the country.

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