

# Principals Financial Management Strategies for Effective Administration of Private Secondary Schools in Obalga and Phalga in Rivers State

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## Abstract

*The study investigated Principals Financial Management Strategies for Effective Administration of Private Secondary Schools in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area (OBALGA) and Port Harcourt Local Government Area (PHALGA) in Rivers State. The study adopted descriptive survey research design. The population of the study consisted of 767 principals in fully accredited private secondary schools in OBALGA and PHALGA in Rivers State. Four Objectives, four research question and four null hypotheses were formulated for the study. The sample size of the study was 230 principals drawn from the population of the study, which represent 30% of the entire population. Simple random sampling technique was used for the sample. The sample was gotten from fully accredited private secondary schools in OBALGA and PHALGA in Rivers State. OBALGA (140) PHALGA (90). A structured questionnaire by the researcher titled "Principals' Financial Management Strategies and Administration of Private Secondary Schools. (PFMSAPSSQ) was used to obtain responses from the respondents. The instrument was validated by three Experts, two from Business Education and one from Measurement and Evaluation all in the Faculty of Education Rivers State University. Reliability of the instrument was obtained using test re-test method. Sample was correlated using Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC), and a reliability co-efficient index of 0.77 was obtained. Mean was used to analyze the data collected, while t-test was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significant. The findings revealed that. Principals of private secondary schools in OBALGA and PHALGA apply financial management strategies. The Researchers therefore recommended that Principals of private secondary schools should embark on training to acquire more knowledge on budgeting strategies for the process of deciding when, what, where and how to do certain activities in the administration of school financial management in OBALGA and PHALGA in Rivers State.*

**Keywords:** *Principal, Financial, Management, Strategies and Administration.*

## Introduction

Education is as old as man and this is because man has always found a means of increasing in knowledge since his existence. Thus no nation can advance beyond the level of its education. Education is therefore paramount to the growth and development of any nation and should be treated with utmost importance. The first secondary school in Nigeria was church missionary society grammar school founded in 1859 by T.B. Macauley in Lagos Nigeria. Many other secondary schools were established between 1859 and 1882 with little or no financial support from the colonial government (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. Today we have two categories of secondary school in the country, public secondary schools which are owned and managed by the government through the Ministry of Education and private secondary schools which are owned by private individuals under the regulation and supervision of the ministry of education.

The first private secondary school was Eko Boys High School Lagos founded 13<sup>th</sup> January 1913 by Rev. William Benjamin Euba, a teacher and master of religion at the Methodist Boys High School, Lagos. It was with the greatest spirit and a desire to establish an African Institution that will provide educational opportunities for the less privilege citizens of Lagos that made Rev. Euba to establish this school.

The school started with 28 students at 30 Broad Street Lagos, next building to St. George's Hall, Lagos, opposite the Methodist Boys High School.

Financial management has been looked at as a very critical segment for the survival of any institution. This is because the growth and development of educational sector and any other establishment is dependent on how well its finances are managed. The finances for learning institutions are utilized for daily operations and activities of concern to the institutes. Financial management therefore, seeks to plan, organize, allocate, and control the resources of any organization; by ensuring that such resources whether financial or non-financial are used in the most efficient and effective way in order to achieve short-and long- term goals of the organization or institution.

Koko (2018) opined that the importance of maintaining an adequate monetary accountability in a business organization cannot be overemphasized. The principle of accountability dictates that individuals must be responsible for any monetary transactions entrusted to them within a given period. This task involves taking care of working capital (recurrent and capital costs) and other sundry expenses.

Gulick and Urwick in Koko (2018) highlighted in their seven principles of administration the importance of budgeting as an act of effective financial management. Budgeting involves consideration of five basic elements, *vis-à-vis*; what was, what is, what ought to be, and what is achieved. This exercise enables the Principal to examine previous practices and experience with what is available in order to project the future. This (previous accounting period budget estimates) with Principal is able to project current budget based on expectations for the period. Financial management is one of the means to examine the accomplishment or not of the budget provisions. Invariably, every manager or principal is expected to account for any monies given as working capital at the end of a specified period through keeping basic account books. Thus, it has been recommended that to effectively accomplish this important management accounting as a tool for decision-making, essentially, the principal will need to keep daily records of all financial transactions in the office through the maintenance of petty cash book, income and expenditure account, the cash book, profit and loss accounts and the balance sheet. According to Fung (2015), the rationale for financial management is raising funds for both short-term and long-term use and enhancing proper utilization of the fund. According to Kalu (2011), financial management in organizations firms and institutions had been a sensitive issue over the years. This is because the government and the public are interested on how funds are planned, controlled, and applied for specific assignment to achieve set objectives. In educational institutions, the realization of desired educational goals and objectives depend largely on the efficient planning and management of school funds by the school administrators.

Every organization is operated by a group of people but headed by one person at a time, academic institution inclusive. Secondary schools whether private or public is headed by the Principal on whom the responsibilities of the school rests on. The Principal is saddened with the responsibility of managing the finances of the school. The Principal is expected to source for funds for daily running of the school, he is expected to increase the sources of the school's income by generating more avenue to generate revenue other than that made available to him. Some of this revenue can be generated from school magazines, workshops, school poultry and farms, school canteen, sales of student's art and crafts, PTA contributions among others. The school Principal has the responsibility of ensuring that school funds are not wasted or misappropriated.

Oche (2019) referred to the Principal as the executive head of a secondary school and is responsible for coordinating all school activities ranging from students enrolment, planning of the school time table, keeping of school records like the class registers, book keeping log book, visitor's books updating staff with information from the ministry of education instructing the students 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.

Financial Management and Accounting: Koko (2018) stated that from time to time, managers (Principals) request for funds to meet the immediate need of the office or to provide services to its day to day running of the school activities. This request must be followed with a record of previous financial showing accountability. All previous income and expenditure are clearly recorded to get a clear picture of the financial trend and to guide decision making. Sometimes, shareholders may request for revenue accruing to the school declared as profit and loss account to enable decisions concerning government tax, dividend or profit sharing. All this information is provided by adequate financial accounting.

#### Principals' Responsibilities as Financial Managers

- Planning
- Investment and spending of money
- Financing and raising of funds
- Maximizing the value of the firm, organization or school through the impact of long-term decision making of financial managers or principals of schools.

The principals stand to exhibit or display the following as good financial managers:

- a. Manage all the financial resources of the school.
- b. Keep the school functional.
- c. Proper utilization of funds.
- d. Maintain balance between risks and profitability of the school.
- e. Facilitates cost control.
- f. Involved in analytical or strategic thinking for school growth.
- g. Co-ordinates all processes for effectiveness, efficiency and profitability.

System Management Theory was propounded by Austria Biologist Ludwig Von Bertalaffy first publication (1950). This theory postulates that an organization is a social system made up of interdependent parts. The system was seen as a series of interrelated and interdependent parts in such a way that the interaction of any part of the system affects the whole system. That is, one part of the system must interact and depend on the other parts around it to function efficiently. The system theory is important to education system because education is a system and the concept of interaction and interdependence of parts with the education system like all other social systems has selfsame properties. The theory is of utmost help to this research work as the principals reflects in the objectives, functions and the ultimate goal of the educational system in which they operate with the other system analysis methods and systematic thinking which allow the system to interact effectively and efficiently for maximal productivity or profitability to sustain continuity.

Acheck (2015) examined the Motivational Strategies of Principals in the management of selected secondary Schools in Fako Divisions of the Southwest Region of Cameroon. The study was guided with three research objectives and three research questions. The descriptive survey design was used to select data from a representative sample of the population using questionnaires for teachers and principals. The data was analyzed using means and standard deviation and presented on tables and histogram. The findings revealed that motivational strategies of principals include those related to empathetic, supportive, caring and just on academic and disciplinary matters, positive leadership good behavior and transformational leadership style. This was explained by the aggregate mean score of 3293243 on a scale of 1 to 4. The findings revealed that motivation is significant in the teaching and learning process is positively related to the teaching/learning process (3.572973). Finally, the economic state of the nation, the character of the school and administrator, school physical environment, political image of the nation, school location and the financial status of the school; in order are the factors that influence staff motivation in secondary schools.

Acheck concluded that problem of secondary schools is not teacher motivation by principals, but is due to other factors like; up-grade of teachers' salaries by government since after the 1990s global economic meltdown. There is therefore a need for government to revisit the salary situation of teachers among other factors. This study is related to the study under review because it examined Motivational Strategies of Principals in the management of schools.

Agwuma (2020) examined the Principals' Financial Management Strategies for Effective Administration of Public Secondary Schools in Orashi Region of Rivers State. The study was guided with four research objectives and four research questions. Descriptive survey design was used for the study, area of the study consisted of Abua/Odual, Ogba/Egbema/Ndoni, Ahoada East and Ahoada West Local Government Areas of Rivers State, the population of the study was 136 principals, (PIPFMAPSS) was used as self-structured questionnaires for data collection, mean and standard deviation was used to answer the questions while z-test was used to test the hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance. The findings revealed that adequate record keeping procedures help in accountability, demanding for strict adherence to budget plans is one thing but scrutinizing the efficacy and prudence of income and expenditures is another thing. Agwuma concluded that proper budgeting, planning, putting effective control mechanism, checks and balance are good strategies for management of public secondary schools in Orashi Region.

Akpan (2008) revealed that in ensuring accountability in financial management, Principals should regularly cross check and monitor school accounts, insist on collection of receipt of purchase from staff, keep ledger accounts of all maintenance costs. All these practices are commendable and will minimize the incidence of financial mismanagement in private secondary schools in Rivers State. This study is related to the study under review because it examined Principals' financial Management Strategies and Administration of Public Secondary Schools in Orashi Region of Rivers State, while the study under review is Principals' Financial Management Strategies for Effective Administration of Private Secondary Schools in OBALGA and PHALGA in Rivers State.

### **Strategy**

The term strategy is derived from the Greek word "strategos" and is defined as a general method or policy for achieving specific objectives (Thom-Otuya & Ubulomin Amesi & Obi 2020). These specific objectives are geared towards achieving a goal. In the same vein, Ugwuanyi (2012) asserted that strategy is a wide basic plan of action by which individual(s) or organizations(s) intend to reach their goals.

Strategic management is defined as the process of evaluation, planning, and implementation designed to maintain or improve competitive advantage. The process of evaluation is concerned with assessment of the external and internal environments of business. Planning involves developing business models, corporate direction, competitive tactics, international strategy, acquisitions, and collaborative action. The implementation phase requires leadership to build the appropriate organizational structure, develop management culture, control the strategic processes, and steer the organization through ethical corporate governance. The outcomes of strategic activity are visible in the change in revenues, market shares, profits, and return on investment for stakeholders. The outcomes create a feedback loop which in turn affects the external and internal environment of the organization.

### **Planning**

Concept of planning is based on the theory of "thinking before acting". Planning is an integral part of our life; we make plans in each and every step of our life whether it be to go to school or buy household goods during shopping. We make plans according to the limitations of our budget and resources to get maximum satisfaction and to fulfill goals from our activities.

Planning is the process of deciding when, what, where and how to do a certain activity before starting to work. Various types of plans are operational, tactical and strategic plan, formal and informal plan, proactive plan and functional and corporative plan. The planning process comprises – Analysis of the environment, setting the objective, formulation of the derivative plan, Budget formulation, implementation of the plan and follow up action.

### **Budget and Budgeting**

Many authorities in business sectors and in educational institution have defined budget in many ways. For instance, Kalu, (2011) defined budget as a financial statement, prepared in advanced at the opening of a fiscal year of the estimated revenue and proposed expenditure of the organization for the ensuring year. This suggests that the budget is a financial plan, summing the financial experience of the past, stating a current plan and projecting it over a specific period in the future. It is a forecast and of revenue and expenditure for a stated period which explains in details institutional fiscal policies and its corresponding annual plan.

### **Cash Management Strategies**

Peter and Sunday (2015) opined that in many industries, both debt and equity funding remain difficult to access. This creates a serious challenge for companies that require cash to remain competitive, maintain financial flexibility and pursue potential growth opportunities. While market trends change and customer preferences shift, one thing is immutable: cash remains king. Companies primarily focused on accessing that financing externally, however, may be overlooking a large, hidden source of capital: their own balance sheets. To be sure, accessing that cash requires organization-wide financial discipline and a clear working capital optimization strategy. On some level, most companies understand this. However, understanding is not the same as actively implementing strategies for improving your cash flow. If you don't have a formal working capital strategy, have not adopted appropriate drivers and metrics, or simply have not communicated clear policies across the organization, you may be missing out on opportunities to hit your free-cash targets, reduce costs, increase shareholder returns and fund growth. While there are numerous ways to free up working capital, this series focuses on four core strategies: accounts receivable, accounts payable, inventory and cash management. This third installment looks at cash management.

### **Building a Cash Management Culture**

Accounts receivable, accounts payable and inventory are all components of working capital that companies can streamline to access cash trapped on their balance sheets. When approached holistically, however, proper management of your accounts receivable, accounts payable and inventory all fall under the umbrella of effective cash management. To improve any of these levers, companies must create a cash management culture. For senior management, this means going beyond prioritizing cash flows in an effort to free up cash. It means encouraging financial and cash flow discipline in both good and more difficult economic times. Depending on a company's goals, financial discipline can translate into different initiatives. These may include the adoption of more prudent investing criteria or a leaner cost structure. Either way, a focus on financial discipline including integrated financial and cash flow forecasting generally allows companies to strengthen their balance sheet improve financial stability and can lead to greater profitability. As a result, your company gains the control and flexibility.

### **The Principal and Accountability in Secondary School**

The role a principal play is regarded primary as that of a head teacher who keep thing in good order, discipline students, submit reports, perform whatever clerical as necessary and keep track of students record. All these are aim at achieving the goal for which the principal is to be held accountable (Oche 2009). The principal cannot make policy statement without interference. His performance is being subjected to increasing criticisms by parents and other stake holders who see the management of the school as not just the responsibility of the principal alone but a collective responsibility of the entire community. The principal has to realize the commonality of interest he shares with those from the ministry education and other stake holders therefore the principal is to provide himself with the management skills for the increasing demand for accountability to government, community, students and other constituencies.

According to Tafida (2015), accountability include setting current goal evaluating the degree of achievement and at what price, presenting and interpreting the information to the public, and accepting responsibility for any result that are perceived as adequate. According Adesina (2017), is largely a legal concept define by recommended or required procedures in record keeping and financial transaction. It also requires procedure for reviewing and discipline individual who tends to violate professional ethics and standard. It involves an audit to ascertain whether resources have been used for specified purpose according to practices or requirement. Principal, who are appointed outside merit or due to political consideration, may not possess the management expertise and experience needed for efficient and effective school management (Udoh et al., 1997).

According to Ogonnaya (2015), financial control is defined by Financial Training Centre (FTC) 2005 as a branch of management which enables expenditure to be kept in check under the will and decision of the controlling body, and the inflow of revenue to be constantly under review in view of the analysis made so far financial controlling is an established device to promote checks and balances in organizational finance management and there are specified principles, rules and regulations laid down by the supervisory body to ensure the desired control.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Education is an instrument for national development. It is also a cornerstone of a nation's culture and an absolute necessity for economic development. There is hardly any household in this nation that is not concerned about the state of our educational system, particularly the secondary education. The role of a Principal is to strategically direct the affairs of secondary school system. Principals' ought to develop standardized strategic planning, strategic record keeping, cash management strategies, capital budgeting strategies, revise policies and procedure, monitor student's achievement, encourage parent involvement, hire and evaluate staff and oversee facilities. However, the reverse is the case as the structure for effective administration of private secondary schools is in a deplorable condition. Teachers are demoralized and disenchanted as the secondary school's system now produces millions of virtually illiterate young people or secondary school leavers who roam the streets in search of employment that is not available (Sofoluwe, 2012). Additionally, this evidence of decline also relates to financial dryness in administration, inadequate planning, quality training of principals, and mismanagement of funds and lack of internal auditors. Hence there is a great concern on how the decline can be controlled so as to meet the needs of the students and also laying a solid foundation for the private secondary schools' education in OBALGA and PHALGA in Rivers State.

It is against this backdrop that the researcher wants to examine whether principals of private secondary schools in OBALGA and PHALGA apply financial management strategies to produce millions of literate young secondary school leavers who can gainfully be employed in the society.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of the study is to determine whether Principals apply financial management strategies for effective administration of private secondary schools in OBALGA and PHALGA in Rivers State. Specifically, the study intended to:

1. Determine whether Principals apply financial strategic planning for effective administration of private secondary schools in OBALGA and PHALGA in Rivers State.
2. Determine whether Principals apply financial strategic record keeping for effective administration of private secondary schools in OBALGA and PHALGA in Rivers State.
3. Determine whether Principals apply capital budgeting strategies for effective administration of private secondary schools in OBALGA and PHALGA in Rivers State.
4. Determine whether Principals apply cash management strategies for effective administration of private secondary schools in OBALGA and PHALGA in Rivers State.

## Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. Do Principals apply financial strategic planning for effective administration of private secondary schools in OBALGA and PHALGA in Rivers State?
2. Do Principals apply financial strategic record keeping for effective administration of private secondary schools in OBALGA and PHALGA in Rivers State?
3. Do Principals apply capital budgeting strategies for effective administration of private secondary schools in OBALGA and PHALGA in Rivers State?
4. Do Principals apply cash management strategies for effective administration of private secondary schools in OBALGA and PHALGA in Rivers State?

## Hypotheses

1. Principals in OBALGA do not significantly differ from those in PHALGA on the application of financial strategic planning in the administration of private secondary schools.
2. Principals in OBALGA do not significantly differ from those in PHALGA on the application of financial strategic record keeping in the administration of private secondary schools.
3. Principals in OBALGA do not significantly differ from those in PHALGA on the application of financial capital budgeting strategies in the administration of private secondary schools.
4. Principals in OBALGA do not significantly differ from those in PHALGA on the application of financial cash management strategies in the administration of private secondary schools.

## Methodology

The study investigated whether Principals apply financial management strategies for effective administration of private secondary schools in OBALGA and PHALGA in Rivers State. The descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. The population of the study consisted of 767 Principals in fully accredited private secondary schools in OBALGA and PHALGA in Rivers State. The sample size of the study was 230 Principals, which represent 30% of the entire population. Simple random sampling technique was used for sampling and a sample size of 140 Principals for OBALGA and 90 Principals for PHALGA. A structured questionnaire titled “Principals Financial Management Strategies and Administration of Private Secondary Schools (PFMSAPSSQ)” was used to obtain responses from the respondents. The Questionnaire was made up of 25 items, structured on a 4-point rating scale of Strongly Agreed (SA, 4), Agreed (A, 3) Disagreed (D, 2) Strongly Disagreed (SD, 1). The instrument was validated by three Experts, two from the Business Education and one from Measurement and Evaluation all in the Faculty of Education Rivers State University. Reliability of the instrument was obtained using test re-test method. Thus, 30 copies of the instrument were administered to 30 Principals twice in fully accredited private secondary schools in Ikwere Local Government Area of Rivers State. After two weeks the first and second scores of the sample was correlated using Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC), and a reliability co-efficient index of 0.77 was obtained. The instrument was administered to the respondents accordingly, a total of 230 copies of questionnaire were produced and administered using two trained research assistants. The Instruction about the filling of the questionnaire was carefully given to the respondents and copies were collected immediately. Mean was used to analyze the data collected, while t-test was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significant. The decision was that the null hypotheses were rejected if t-calculated is greater than the t-critical value. Then the null hypotheses were accepted if the t-calculated is less than t-critical value.

## Results

**Research Question 1:** Do Principals apply financial strategic planning for effective administration of private secondary schools in OBALGA and PHALGA in Rivers State?

**Table 1: Mean on Principals Application of Financial Strategic Planning for Effective Administration of Private Secondary Schools in OBALGA and PHALGA in Rivers State** N = 230

S/N		Local Government Areas			
		OBALGA (n=140) $\bar{X}$	Remarks	PHALGA (n=90) $\bar{X}$	Remarks
<b>Principals application of financial strategic planning</b>					
1	Finance planning improves professionalism amongst finance officers.	2.86	Agreed	3.28	Agreed
2	Finance planning enhance financial transparency.	3.14	Agreed	3.44	Agreed
3	Finance strategies enhance financial prudence.	3.07	Agreed	3.33	Agreed
4	Planning for periodic budgeting is a good financial strategy to be used by school principals.	3.18	Agreed	3.33	Agreed
5	Finance planning helps in the realization of public sector.	2.10	Disagreed	3.33	Agreed
6	Finance strategies by principal enhance accountability.	3.25	Agreed	3.32	Agreed
<b>Total Mean</b>		<b>17.6</b>		<b>20.03</b>	
<b>Grand Mean</b>		<b>2.93</b>		<b>3.37</b>	

Source: Field Survey 2024

Table 1 above shows that the mean of all the responses that are above 2.50 are at the agreeable region and there are no items that scored below 2.50. Thus, it could be ascertained from the responses that Principals apply strategic planning in the effective administration of private secondary schools in OBALGA and PHALGA in Rivers State.

**Research Question 2:** Do Principals apply financial strategic record keeping for effective administration of private secondary schools in OBALGA and PHALGA in Rivers State?

**Table 2: Mean on Principals Application of Strategic Record-Keeping for Effective Administration of Private Secondary Schools in OBALGA and PHALGA in Rivers State.** N = 230

S/N	Item	Local Government Areas			
		OBALGA (n=140) $\bar{X}$	Remarks	PHALGA (n=90) $\bar{X}$	Remarks
<b>Principals application of strategic record keeping</b>					
7	Record-keeping enhance internal/external financial decision making.	3.19	Agreed	3.55	Strongly Agree
8	Record-keeping enhance strategic financial effectiveness.	3.11	Agreed	3.38	Agreed
9	Record-keeping improves financial records in an organization.	3.21	Agreed	3.22	Agreed
10	Record-keeping enhance professional performance.	3.02	Agreed	3.31	Agreed



11	Record-keeping enhances the effectiveness of financial officers.	3.21	Agreed	3.20	Agreed
12	Record-keeping enhance prudence in the management of finances in an organization.	3.03	Agreed	3.33	Agreed
13	Record-keeping enhance accountability.	3.21		3.26	Agreed
	<b>Total Mean</b>	<b>21.98</b>		<b>23.25</b>	
	<b>Grand Mean</b>	<b>3.14</b>		<b>3.32</b>	

Source: Field Survey 2024

Table 2 shows that the mean of all the responses are all above 2.50 are at the acceptance region and there are no items that scored below 2.50. Thus, it could be ascertained from the responses that Principals apply strategic record-keeping in the administration of private secondary schools in OBALGA and PHALGA in Rivers State.

**Research Question 3:** Do Principals apply capital budgeting strategies for effective administration of private secondary schools in OBALGA and PHALGA in Rivers State?

**Table 3: Mean on Principals Application of Capital Budgeting Strategies for Effective Administration of Private Secondary Schools in OBALGA and PHALGA Rivers State? N=230**

S/N	Item	Local Government Areas		Remarks	Remarks	
		OBALGA (n=140) $\bar{X}$	PHALGA (n=90) $\bar{X}$			
	<b>Principals application of capital budgeting strategies</b>					
14	Principals updating budget assumption	3.03		Agreed	3.05	Agreed
15	Principals adheres to budget guidelines in executing projects	2.74		Agreed	3.17	Agreed
16	Principals need more knowledge on capital budgeting	3.07		Agreed	3.14	Agreed
17	Principals should be trained more on budgeting	2.86		Agreed	3.28	Agreed
18	Principals obtaining budget approval	2.96		Agreed	3.33	Agreed
19	Principals apply budget guideline	2.93		Agreed	3.28	Agreed
20	Principals issuing the budget	3.14			3.39	Agreed
	<b>Total Mean</b>	<b>20.73</b>			<b>22.64</b>	
	<b>Grand Mean</b>	<b>2.96</b>			<b>3.23</b>	

Source: Field Survey 2024

Table 3 shows that the mean of all the responses are above 2.50 and at the agree region and there are no items that scored below 2.50 and grand mean is 2.96 and 3.23. Thus, it could be ascertained from the responses that Principals need more knowledge and more training on capital budgeting in Private Secondary Schools in OBALGA and PHALGA in Rivers State.

**Research Question 4:** Do Principals apply cash management strategies for effective administration of private secondary schools in OBALGA and PHALGA in Rivers State?

**Table 4: Mean on Principals Application of Cash Management Strategies for Effective Administration of Private Secondary Schools in OBALGA and PHALGA Rivers State N=230**

S/N	Item	Local Government Areas		Remarks	Remarks
		OBALGA (n=140) $\bar{X}$	PHALGA (n=90) $\bar{X}$		
	<b>Principals application on Cash Management Strategies</b>				
21	Cash management strategies improve the management of public finance.	3.11	3.37	Agreed	Agreed
22	Cash management strategies enhance quality financial service delivery.	3.06	3.22	Agreed	Agreed
23	Cash management strategies promote financial transparency.	2.96	3.27	Agreed	Agreed
24	Cash management strategies enhance the attainment of organizational financial goals.	2.86	3.28	Agreed	Agreed
25	Cash management strategies speeds up financial record management.	2.78	3.16	Agreed	Agreed
	<b>Total Mean</b>	<b>14.77</b>	<b>16.30</b>		
	<b>Grand Mean</b>	<b>2.95</b>	<b>3.26</b>		

Source: Field Survey 2024

Table four shows that the mean of all the responses that are above 2.50 are at the acceptance region and there are no items that scored below 2.50. Thus, it could be ascertained from the responses in item 21, 22, 23, 24, and 25 that principals apply cash management strategies in the administration Private Secondary Schools in OBALGA and PHALGA in Rivers State.

**Hypotheses 1:** Principals in OBALGA do not significantly differ from those in PHALGA on the application of financial strategic planning in the administration of private secondary schools.

**Table 5: t-test Analysis on Principals Application of Financial Strategic Planning for Effective Administration of Private Secondary Schools in OBALGA and PHALGA in Rivers State**

Principals of Private Secondary Schools	N	Mean	df	t-cal	t-crit	Level of sig.	Decision
OBALGA	140	2.93	228	-4.56	1.96	0.05	Accepted
PHALGA	90	3.37					
<b>Total</b>	<b>230</b>	<b>6.3</b>					

Source: Field Survey 2024

t-calculated value of -4.56 is less than the t-critical value of 1.96 at 0.05 level of significance and DF of 228. Thus, we cannot reject the null hypothesis because there is no significant difference in the mean responses between OBALGA Principals and PHALGA principals in the administration of Financial Strategic Planning in Private Secondary Schools in OBALGA and PHALGA in Rivers State.

**Hypotheses 2:** Principals in OBALGA do not significantly differ from those in PHALGA on the application of financial strategic planning in the administration of private secondary schools.

**Table 6: t-test Analysis on Principals Application of Financial Strategic Planning for Effective Administration of Private Secondary Schools in OBALGA and PHALGA in Rivers State**

Principals of Private Secondary Schools	N	Mean	df	t-cal	t-crit	Level of sig.	Decision
OBALGA	140	3.14	228	-1.73	1.96	0.05	Accepted
PHALGA	90	3.32					
<b>Total</b>	<b>230</b>	<b>6.26</b>					

Source: Field Survey 2024

t-calculated value of -1.73 is less than the t-critical value of 1.96 at 0.05 level of significance and DF of 228. Thus, we cannot reject the null hypothesis because there is no significant difference in the mean responses between OBALGA Principals and PHALGA principals in the administration of Financial Strategic record-keeping in Private Secondary Schools in OBALGA and PHALGA in Rivers State

**Hypotheses 3:** Principals in OBALGA do not significantly differ from those in PHALGA on the application of capital budgeting strategies for effective administration of private secondary schools.

**Table 7: t-test Analysis on Principals Application of Capital Budgeting Strategies for Effective Administration of Private Secondary Schools in OBALGA and PHALGA Rivers State**

Principals of Private Secondary Schools	N	Mean	Df	t-cal	t-crit	Level of sig.	Decision
OBALGA	140	2.96	228	-1.24	1.96	0.05	Accepted
PHALGA	90	3.23					
<b>Total</b>	<b>230</b>	<b>6.19</b>					

Source: Field Survey 2024

t-calculated value of -1.24 is less than the t-critical value of 1.96 at 0.05 level of significance and DF of 228. Thus, we cannot reject the null hypothesis because there is no significant difference in the mean responses between OBALGA Principals and PHALGA principals in the administration on capital budgeting strategies in Private Secondary Schools in OBALGA and PHALGA in Rivers State

**Hypotheses 4:** Principals in OBALGA do not significantly differ from those in PHALGA on the application of cash management strategies for effective administration of private secondary schools.

**Table 8: t-test Analysis on Principals Application of Cash Management Strategies for Effective Administration of Private Secondary Schools in OBALGA and PHALGA Rivers State**

Principals of Private Secondary Schools	N	Mean	df	t-cal	t-crit	Level of sig.	Decision
OBALGA	140	2.95	228	-3.44	1.96	0.05	Accepted
PHALGA	90	3.26					
<b>Total</b>	<b>230</b>	<b>6.21</b>					

Source: Field Survey 2024

t-calculated value of -3.44 is less than the t-critical value of 1.96 at 0.05 level of significance and DF of 228. Thus, we cannot reject the null hypothesis because there is no significant difference in the mean responses between OBALGA Principals and PHALGA principals in the administration of Finance on cash management strategies in Private Secondary Schools in OBALGA and PHALGA in Rivers State

## Discussion of Findings

Findings from the research question one indicates that the respondents considered principals application of financial strategic planning to improve: professionalism amongst officers, enhance financial transparency, prudence, periodic budgeting, realization of public sector needs, and financial accountability. Gurlic and Urwick in Koko (2018) posited that budgeting is an act of effective financial management. The exercise enables the Principals to examine previous practical and experience with what is available in order to project the future. Koko (2018) also opined that principles of accountability dictate that individuals must be responsible for any monetary transactions entrusted to them within a given period of time. The finding is in agreement with the views of Kalu (2011), Fung (2015) and Oche (2019). These scholars opined that government and the public are interested in how funds are planned, controlled and applied for specific assignment to achieve set objectives. Thus, institutions or firms desire to achieve set objectives. Thus, institutions or firms desire achievement of educational goals and set objectives; depend largely on the efficient planning and management of school funds by the school administrators (Principals). Because every organization is operated by a group of people but headed by one person at a time (academic institutions inclusive). The result of the hypothesis one proved that there is no significance in the mean responses between principal or private secondary schools in the administration of financial strategic planning in OBALGA and PHALGA in Rivers State. This means that financial management seeks to plan, organize, allocate and control the resources of organizations; by ensuring that such resources whether financial or non-financial are used in the most efficient and effective way in order to achieve short-term and long-term goals of the organizations or schools.

Findings from research question two proved that respondents considered record keeping to enhance: internal and external financial decision making, financial effectiveness, professional performance, prudence in the management of finances in an organization and accountability of principals' strategies for effective management of school finances. These findings were in agreement with the views of Peter and Sunday (2015), Ugwuachi (2012) who revealed that debt and equity funding remain difficult to access. Thus, it creates serious challenges for companies or organizations that require cash to remain competitive, flexible and also pursue potential growth opportunities because market trend charges and customers' preferences do shift with time. However, Thom-Otuya, Ubulom, Amesi and Obi (2020) posited that strategy is a general method or policy for achieving specific objectives geared toward achieving a goal. Therefore, the process of deciding when, what, where and how to do certain activities before the main task of operations are carried out in an organization or institution of learning the principals of private secondary schools in OBALGA and PHALGA in Rivers State. The result of hypothesis two tested indicates that there is no significant difference between the mean responses of OBALGA and PHALGA principals on how principals effectively manage school finances. Thus, adequate cognitive practice or professional exposures of principals administrative and management application of strategic record-keeping in administration of schools in OBALGA and PHALGA in Rivers State.

Findings from research question three proved that the respondents considered principals' application of capital budgeting through updating budget assumptions, guidelines in executing projects, knowledge on capital budgeting and budget approval for projects. Kalu (2011), Tafida (2015) and Adesina (2017) opined that recommended procedures in record keeping and financial transactions are required for accountability and transparency sake in an organization or institution. It is also a required procedure for reviewing and discipline individuals who financial transactions who tends to violate professional ethics and standard in an organization or institution of learning. In agreement with Agivums (2020) who revealed that adequate record keeping help to enhance accountability, demand for strict adherence to budget plans, scrutinizing the efficacy and prudence of income and expenditure. Proper budgeting, planning, putting effective control mechanism, checks and balances are good strategies for management or public secondary schools in Rivers State. The results of hypothesis three tested indicates that there is no significant difference in the responses of principals in OBALGA and PHALGA administration of capital budgeting strategies in private secondary schools. A look at the findings of this study indicated that efforts ought to be intensified in the provision of adequate budget to principals to attract qualified, administrative and management inclined principals for effective and efficient resource allocation for profitability in the institutions.

The findings from research question four showed that the respondents considered principals' application of cash management strategies through: cash management to improve management of public finance, enhance quality financial service delivery, promote financial transparency, attainment of organizational goals and speed up financial record management. All these shows the extent to which principals applied cash management strategies in various private schools in OBALGA and PHALGA. The findings were in agreement with Peter and Sunday (2015) who opined that debt and equity funding remained difficult to access. It also creates serious challenges for companies that require cash to remain competitive, maintain financial flexibility and pursue potential growth opportunities. However, organizations and institutions focused on internal and external sources of funds and their balance sheets to ensure financial discipline and working capital optimization. Thus, adoption of more prudent investment criteria or a less costly structure and integration of financial cash flow to strengthen organizational or institutional balance sheets, improve financial stability and increase profitability. The results on hypothesis four tested indicates that there is no significant difference in the mean responses between principals in the administration of finance and cash management strategies in private secondary schools in OBALGA and PHALGA in Rivers State.

### Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study, the researchers concluded that principals of private secondary schools in OBALGA and PHALGA apply financial management strategies, strategic planning, and strategic record keeping in the administration of private secondary schools in Rivers State. Principals need more knowledge on capital budgeting.

### Recommendations

Principals of private secondary schools should embark on training to acquire more knowledge on budgeting strategies for the process of deciding when, what, where and how to do certain activities in the administration of school financial management in OBALGA and PHALGA in Rivers State.

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