

## CHALLENGES CONFRONTING THE OPERATORS OF PRIVATE PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN AWKA SOUTH LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF ANAMBRA STATE

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### **Abstract**

*This study examined the challenges confronting the operators of private primary and secondary schools in Awka South Local Government Area of Anambra State. Three specific purposes, three research questions and three hypotheses guided the study. Descriptive survey design was adopted for the study. The population of the study comprised all the 214 (58 private secondary school and 156 private primary school) operators in the local government area; which was used as the sample for the study. Researchers structured rating scale “Challenges Confronting Private School Operators Rating Scale (CCPSORS)” was used for data collection. The instrument was face validated by three experts in Faculty of Education. Average internal consistency co-efficient of 0.79 was obtained using Cronbach Alpha statistical method. The researcher administered the instrument to the respondents with the help of two research assistants. Data were analyzed using aggregate mean. The findings revealed that inadequate funds, inadequate infrastructures, and inadequate instructional materials are challenges that confront the operators of private primary and secondary schools in Awka South Local Government Area of Anambra State. The study concluded that these challenges could impede students' learning experiences, limit educational opportunities, and hinder overall academic achievement; and addressing them is crucial for ensuring equitable access to quality education and fostering positive learning outcomes. Based on the findings, the study recommended among others that Private school management should make adequate funding a top priority by creating and implementing sustainable funding strategies. They should focus on improving infrastructure*

*and also prioritize the provision of instructional materials, such as textbooks, digital resources, and hands-on equipment, to enhance teaching and learning opportunities.*

**Keywords:** *Challenges; School Operators; Primary School. Secondary school.*

## **Introduction**

Nigeria's public primary and secondary schools have been facing numerous challenges that have made it difficult to provide quality education to learners. These challenges include inadequate funding, poor infrastructure, insufficient teaching materials, and low teacher morale, among others. As a result, many parents have turned to private schools as an alternative. However, as a result of the inability of public primary and secondary schools to optimally function in Nigeria has given room for the springing of many private schools in the country. There has been the rise of many private primary and secondary schools. Primary school, or elementary school, according to Ogundele and Adebayo (2016) is an educational institution where children receive the first stage of compulsory education known as primary or elementary education. It is typically for children aged between 6 and 11 years old, depending on the country's education system. Similarly, Ezenwankwo (2016) described primary school is a type of school in which children receive primary or elementary education from the age of about five to twelve, coming before secondary school and after preschool. In the context of this study, primary school refers to the first stage of compulsory education where children aged between 4 and 11 years old receive education in key stages. Just like primary schools, a secondary school, according to Amao (2018) is an educational institution that provides secondary or high school education, which typically covers students between the ages of 11 and 18 years old. Secondary education is the stage of education following primary education, and it usually prepares students for higher education or employment. Similarly, Uzohuo (2022) defined a secondary school as a school that provides education for children during the period that includes the end of primary school and the beginning of tertiary education. It usually includes students from the age of 11 to 16 or 18. However, as a result of the inability of the public primary and secondary to function optimally in Nigeria, there are many private operators of these schools.

In Nigeria, private schools are increasingly popular due to the perceived quality of education they offer and the better infrastructure they often provide compared to public schools. Private schools are independently funded educational institutions, operated without financial support from the government, and rely on tuition fees and private donations for sustainability (Obasi, 2020). Adeyemi and Ajayi (2021) viewed private schools as educational institutions that are owned, funded, and operated by individuals or non-governmental organizations, as opposed to being controlled by the government. These schools rely on tuition fees and private contributions for their operation and are generally free to set their own curriculum, teaching methods, and admissions standards, although they still must meet basic educational regulations set by the government (Eze & Okeke, 2023). Private operators of primary and secondary schools, according to Aliyu and Abdullahi (2019) are organizations or individuals who own, manage, or operate schools that provide primary or secondary education to students. They are responsible for ensuring that the schools meet national and local education standards, hiring and managing teachers and staff, and providing educational resources and facilities for students. Also, Adeyemi (2014) defined private operators of primary and secondary schools as individuals or organizations that are involved in the ownership, management, or running of schools that provide education to students in the primary and secondary levels. They are responsible for ensuring that

the schools provide quality education, comply with educational policies, hire qualified teachers, and provide a safe and conducive learning environment. Private schools in Nigeria offer several benefits to parents and students, which have attracted many parents to prefer private schools to public schools. Some of these schools often have better facilities than public schools, including well-equipped classrooms, libraries, science laboratories, sports facilities, and computer labs. Private schools can cater to different educational needs, including religious education, specialized curricula, or certain pedagogical approaches. They often have smaller class sizes and may provide more personalized attention compared to public schools. Private schools also typically have smaller class sizes; which allows for more individualized attention from teachers and personalized instruction that can cater to each student's unique needs and abilities. Additionally, private schools often have a more structured and rigorous personalized learning opportunities that can provide students with a more competitive edge when seeking admission to higher education institutions.

However, the cost of tuition and other fees in private schools can be considerably higher than those in public schools. As a result, many low-income and middle class families may not be able to afford the tuition fees, leaving them with no choice but to enroll their children in public schools that may have limited resources, overcrowded classrooms, and a less structured learning environment. This often creates an unequal education system that favours those who can afford to attend private schools. Moreover, private schools may not always offer the same level of transparency and accountability as public schools, which are accountable to the government and subject to various regulations and oversight (Obasi, 2020). Private schools may also be selective in their admission process and may not enroll students with disabilities or those from low-income families; which can perpetuate social inequalities. However, outside these disadvantages, private operators of primary and secondary schools have some challenges in operating these schools. Some of these challenges as identified by Eze and Okeke (2023) include inadequate funds, infrastructure, instructional materials, shortage of teachers and security. In this study, inadequate funds, infrastructure, and instructional materials were examined. Inadequate fund is one of the biggest challenges private operators of primary and secondary schools in Nigeria. According to Aina (2016), funds can refer to money or financial resources that are set aside or available for a specific purpose. This can include money that is saved, invested, or allocated for use by an individual, organization, or government. Funds can also refer to specific financial instruments or products, such as mutual funds, hedge funds, or exchange-traded funds, which pool investors' money to invest in a variety of assets (Gbenga, 2015). However, the high cost of operating private schools in Nigeria, coupled with limited access to funding and other financial challenges, can make it difficult for private school operators to sustain their operations over the long term. Private schools typically require significant financial resources to cover expenses such as teacher salaries, facilities maintenance, instructional materials, and administrative costs. Another challenge of operating private schools in Nigeria is inadequate infrastructural facilities. According to Adeoye and Adegbite (2017), in the context of schools, infrastructural facilities refer to the physical facilities and resources that are required to support teaching and learning activities. These can include classrooms, laboratories, libraries, computer rooms, playgrounds, sports fields, and other amenities. However, some of the infrastructural facilities are expensive, government does not support some of these facilities, and there is limited access to credit facilities and many more. As a result, this can affect the quality of education, health, and safety of pupils, students and staff in private primary and secondary schools.

More so, lack of instructional materials can affect the operations of private primary and secondary schools. According to Okeke (2017), instructional materials are any resource used by teachers to facilitate the teaching and learning process in the classroom. These materials can include textbooks, workbooks, handouts, visual aids, manipulative, and multimedia resources. Ibrahim (2018) posited that some instructional materials can be expensive to procure, especially for private schools that may not have the financial capacity to purchase a wide range of materials. Also, some instructional materials in Nigeria may be of poor quality, outdated, or not relevant to the curriculum, which can as well, affect the quality of education offered by some private schools. Nigerians are becoming comfortable with enrolling their children and wards to private primary and secondary schools. This is due to the poor handling of these schools by the Nigerian governments which the state governments are not exempted. As a result, these private operators seem to determine the quality of education in the country. Unfortunately, Anambra State is not exempted in this situation thereby leaving the educational upbringing at the mercy of private operators. However, with these challenges, the academic performance of pupils and students might be affected. It is against this background that this study seeks to examine challenges confronting the operators of private primary and secondary schools in Anambra State especially in Awka South Local Government Area of Anambra State; with school level (primary and secondary schools) as the moderating variable in the study.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Anambra State is one of the states in Nigeria that is striving to improve their academic standard. However, since governments have not shown much commitment to improve academic standard to compare to foreign counterparts, some private operators came to primarily bridge the gap. This has prompted many parents to enroll their children in private primary and secondary schools. The dangers of operating private schools without adequate infrastructural facilities, instructional materials, shortage of teachers, and lack of security on primary school pupils and secondary school students in Nigeria are significant and can have lasting effects on their education and well-being. Without proper infrastructure and instructional materials, students may be forced to learn in unsafe, overcrowded, or uncomfortable environments, which can hinder their ability to concentrate and learn effectively. Lack of essential educational resources such as textbooks, laboratory equipment, and teaching aids can also impede the quality of education offered to the students. More so, shortage of qualified and experienced teachers can lead to inadequate instruction, leading to poor academic performance, lack of interest in learning, and even dropping out of school altogether. Students who attend schools without enough teachers may not receive the attention they need, leading to missed opportunities for academic growth and development. In general, the dangers of operating private schools without adequate infrastructural facilities, instructional materials, shortage of teachers, and lack of security can significantly impact the quality of education and the well-being of primary school pupils and secondary school students in Nigeria. It is against this background that this study seeks to examine challenges confronting the operators of private primary and secondary schools in Anambra State specifically in Awka South Local Government Area.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of the study is to examine the challenges confronting the operators of private primary and secondary schools in Awka South Local Government Area of Anambra State. Specifically, this study sought to examine:

4. inadequate fund as a challenge to operators of private primary and secondary schools in Awka South Local Government Area of Anambra State, Nigeria;
5. inadequate infrastructure as a challenge to operators of private primary and secondary schools in Awka South Local Government Area of Anambra State, Nigeria; and
6. lack of instructional materials as a challenge to operators of private primary and secondary schools in Awka South Local Government Area of Anambra State, Nigeria.

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions will guide the study;

4. Is inadequate fund a challenge to operators of private primary and secondary schools in Awka South Local Government Area of Anambra State, Nigeria?
5. Are inadequate infrastructural facilities a challenge to operators of private primary and secondary schools in Awka South Local Government Area of Anambra State, Nigeria?
6. Are inadequate instructional materials a challenge to operators of private primary and secondary schools in Awka South Local Government Area of Anambra State, Nigeria?

### **Hypotheses**

The following null hypotheses were and tested at 0.05 level of significance.

1. There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of operators of private primary and secondary schools in Awka South Local Government Area of Anambra State, Nigeria on inadequate fund as a challenge their schools' operation.
2. There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of operators of private primary and secondary schools in Awka South Local Government Area of Anambra State, Nigeria on inadequate infrastructural facilities as a challenge their schools' operation.
3. There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of operators of private primary and secondary schools in Awka South Local Government Area of Anambra State, Nigeria on inadequate instructional materials as a challenge their schools' operation.

### **Theoretical Framework**

The theoretical framework for the study is anchored on Resource Dependence Theory (RDT). Resource Dependence Theory was first introduced by Jeffrey Pfeffer and Gerald Salancik in their book "The External Control of Organizations: A Resource Dependence Perspective," published in 1978. Resource Dependence Theory is a theory that explains how organizations, including schools, are dependent on external resources for their success. This theory suggests that organizations must actively manage their relationships with external entities to ensure that they have access to the resources they need to operate effectively. In the context of education, Resource Dependence Theory suggests that schools' ability to provide quality education is heavily influenced by the resources available to them. These resources can include funding, staff, materials, and technology. Schools with fewer resources may struggle to provide the same level of education as schools with greater resources, leading to disparities in educational outcomes. For example, schools in low-income areas may have less funding



available for textbooks, technology, and extracurricular activities. This can lead to lower student achievement, higher dropout rates, and other negative outcomes. In addition, schools also depend on human resources, such as teachers and administrators, to provide quality education. Schools with fewer qualified teachers or administrators may struggle to provide the same level of education as those with more experienced and qualified staff. Resource Dependence Theory suggests that schools can improve their ability to provide a quality education by seeking out and leveraging external resources. This can include partnerships with community organizations, seeking out grants and other funding opportunities, and collaborating with other schools or school districts. By doing so, schools can work to overcome resource limitations and provide a more equitable educational experience for their students.

## Method

Descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. According to Nworgu (2015), descriptive survey is the design which aims at collecting data on, and describing in a systematic manner the characteristic features or facts about a given population. The study was carried out in Awka South Local Government Area of Anambra State, Nigeria using private primary and secondary schools. The population of the study comprised all the 214 (58 private secondary school and 156 private primary school) operators in the local government area. The entire population of the study was used due to the relatively manageable size; hence, the study adopted census technique. Structured rating scale “Challenges Confronting Private School Operators Rating Scale (CCPSORS)” was used for data collection. The instrument was developed from the review of related literature, consultation with experts and the specific purposes of the study. PFGSRS contains two sections, A and B. Section A sought background data of the respondents (operators of private primary and secondary schools) on the level of education. Section B contains 15 items spread across three clusters (A-C) to elicit data on the challenges confronting private school operators. Cluster A contains five items inadequate fund; cluster B contains five items on inadequate infrastructural facilities; and cluster C contains five items on inadequate instructional materials. The items are placed on a 4-point rating scale of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D), and Strongly Disagree (SD). The range of the scale weighted as 4, 3, 2, and 1 respectively. The instrument was face validated by three experts in Faculty of Education Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka. Internal consistency co-efficient of 0.86, 0.81, and 0.90 were obtained for clusters A-C respectively using Cronbach Alpha statistical method. The researchers administered the instrument to the respondents with the help of two research assistants. Out of the 214 copies (58 private secondary schools and 156 private primary schools) administered, 204 copies (55 private secondary schools and 149 private primary schools) were returned duly completed, and used for data analysis. This gave a return rate of 97.42%, which the researchers considered adequate for the study. Descriptive statistics (mean and standard deviation) were used to answer the research questions and determines the homogeneity or otherwise of the respondents’ views. In determining the agreement level of school operators, aggregate mean score was used to ascertain the mean score of school operators’ agreement level. For the purpose of this study, the mean score of 2.50 and above was grouped as Agree while those with 2.49 and below was grouped as Disagree. The independent t-test was used for testing the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The p-value was used to determine the significance of the difference for all hypotheses. The decision rule was: a null hypothesis was not accepted where the calculated p-value was less than the stipulated level of significance (0.05).

The reverse was the case where the calculated p-value was greater than the stipulated level of significance. All analyses were carried out using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) Version 25.

## Results

**Research Question One:** Is inadequate fund a challenge to operators of private primary and secondary schools in Awka South Local Government Area of Anambra State, Nigeria?

**Table 1: Mean and standard deviation results on inadequate fund as a challenge to operators of private primary and secondary schools in Awka South Local Government Area of Anambra State, Nigeria**

S/N	Item Description	Primary Schools = 149			Secondary Schools = 55		
		Mean	SD	Decision	Mean	SD	Decision
1	Inadequate funding makes provision of teaching materials difficult	3.35	0.74	Agree	2.98	1.05	Agree
2	Inadequate funding negatively affects the provision of laboratory equipment for schools	3.40	0.79	Agree	3.05	0.82	Agree
3	Inadequate funding leads to dilapidation of school infrastructure	3.19	0.71	Agree	2.91	0.93	Agree
4	Inadequate funding hinders professional development for primary school employees	3.40	0.79	Agree	2.98	0.97	Agree
5	Inadequate funding increases operational costs	3.03	0.88	Agree	2.90	1.03	Agree
	<b>Grand Mean</b>	<b>3.27</b>	<b>0.78</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>2.96</b>	<b>0.96</b>	<b>Agree</b>

Table 1 shows the mean ratings on inadequate fund as a challenge to operators of private primary and secondary schools in Awka South Local Government Area of Anambra State, Nigeria. The results revealed that items 1 to 5 have mean scores of 3.27 and 2.96 for primary school and secondary schools operators respectively are above 2.50. This implies that all the rating scale items listed above indicated that inadequate fund is a challenge to the operators of private primary and secondary schools in Awka South Local Government Area of Anambra State, Nigeria. Consequently, the standard deviation of 0.78 and 0.96 for primary school and secondary schools operators respectively show that the standard deviation is relatively small compared to the mean. This indicates that the data points are clustered closely around the mean; suggesting homogeneity of primary and secondary school operators' responses.

**Research Question Two:** Are inadequate infrastructural facilities a challenge to operators of private primary and secondary schools in Awka South Local Government Area of Anambra State, Nigeria?

**Table 2: Mean and standard deviation results on inadequate infrastructural facilities as a challenge to operators of private primary and secondary schools in Awka South Local Government Area of Anambra State, Nigeria**

S/N	Item Description	Primary Schools = 149			Secondary Schools = 55		
		Mean	SD	Decision	Mean	SD	Decision
6	Inadequate infrastructural facilities make learning tedious for learners	3.29	0.82	Agree	3.14	1.00	Agree
7	Dilapidated school infrastructural facilities creates unconducive environment for learners	3.40	1.01	Agree	3.15	0.87	Agree

8	Poor school infrastructural facilities dampens teachers' morale	3.42	0.85	Agree	3.18	1.03	Agree
9	Inadequate infrastructural facilities negatively affects delivery of teaching contents	3.41	0.70	Agree	3.18	0.85	Agree
10	Deficits in infrastructural facilities negatively affects classroom climate	3.41	0.71	Agree	3.25	0.96	Agree
<b>Grand Mean</b>		<b>3.39</b>	<b>0.82</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>3.18</b>	<b>0.92</b>	<b>Agree</b>

Table 2 shows the mean ratings of inadequate infrastructure as a challenge to operators of private primary and secondary schools in Awka South Local Government Area of Anambra State, Nigeria. The results revealed that items 6 to 10 have mean scores of 3.39 and 3.18 for primary school and secondary schools operators respectively are above 2.50. This implies that inadequate infrastructural facilities are challenges to the operators of private primary and secondary schools in Awka South Local Government Area of Anambra State, Nigeria. Thus, the standard deviation of 0.82 and 0.92 for primary school and secondary schools operators respectively show that the standard deviation is relatively small compared to the mean. This indicates that the data points are clustered closely around the mean; suggesting homogeneity of primary and secondary school operators' responses.

**Research Question Three:** Are inadequate instructional materials a challenge to operators of private primary and secondary schools in Awka South Local Government Area of Anambra State, Nigeria?

**Table 2: Mean and standard deviation results on inadequate instructional materials as a challenge to operators of private primary and secondary schools in Awka South Local Government Area of Anambra State, Nigeria**

S/N	Item Description	Primary Schools = 149			Secondary Schools = 55		
		Mean	SD	Decision	Mean	SD	Decision
11	Inadequate instructional materials hinders learners' interest	3.27	0.92	Agree	3.46	0.82	Agree
12	Poorly designed instructional materials make learning difficult	3.15	0.91	Agree	3.38	0.83	Agree
13	Inadequate instructional materials reduce learners' motivation to learn	3.04	0.65	Agree	3.52	0.77	Agree
14	Inadequate instructional materials reduce teachers' efficiency	3.25	0.84	Agree	3.58	0.87	Agree
15	Inadequate instructional materials limits learners' learning opportunities	3.04	0.77	Agree	3.57	0.69	Agree
<b>Grand Mean</b>		<b>3.15</b>	<b>0.82</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>3.50</b>	<b>0.80</b>	<b>Agree</b>

Table 3 shows the mean ratings of lack of instructional materials as a challenge to operators of private primary and secondary schools in Awka South Local Government Area of Anambra State, Nigeria. The results revealed that items 6 to 10 have mean scores of 3.15 and 3.50 for primary school and secondary schools operators respectively are above 2.50. This implies that inadequate infrastructural facilities are challenges the operators of private primary and secondary schools in Awka South Local Government Area of Anambra State, Nigeria. However, the standard deviation of 0.82 and 0.90 for primary school and secondary schools operators respectively show that the standard deviation is relatively small compared to the mean.



This indicates that the data points are clustered closely around the mean; suggesting homogeneity of primary and secondary school operators' responses.

### Test of Hypothesis One

**H01:** There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of operators of private primary and secondary schools in Awka South Local Government Area of Anambra State, Nigeria on inadequate fund as a challenge their schools' operation.

**Table 4: T-test analysis on significant difference in the mean ratings of operators of private primary and secondary schools in Awka South Local Government Area of Anambra State, Nigeria on inadequate fund as a challenge their schools' operation**

	Variable	No.	Mean	SD	Df	A	t-Cal	t-Crit.	P-value	Decision
Operators	Sec. Sch.	55	2.96	0.78	202	0.05	1.02	4.30	0.31	No Sig.
	Pri. Sch.	149	3.27	0.96						

The t-test analysis presented in Table 4 shows that there is no significant difference in the mean ratings of operators of private primary and secondary schools in Awka South Local Government Area of Anambra State, Nigeria on inadequate fund as a challenge their schools' operation. This was shown by the calculated p-value (0.31) which is greater than the stipulated 0.05 level of significance. Therefore the null hypothesis of no significant difference between the two groups was upheld.

### Test of Hypothesis Two

**H01:** There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of operators of private primary and secondary schools in Awka South Local Government Area of Anambra State, Nigeria on inadequate infrastructural facilities as a challenge their schools' operation.

**Table 5: T-test analysis on significant difference in the mean ratings of operators of private primary and secondary schools in Awka South Local Government Area of Anambra State, Nigeria on inadequate infrastructural facilities as a challenge their schools' operation**

	Variable	No.	Mean	SD	Df	A	t-Cal	t-Crit.	P-value	Decision
Operators	Sec. Sch.	55	3.18	0.82	202	0.05	1.49	4.30	0.14	No Sig.
	Pri. Sch.	149	3.39	0.92						

In Table 5, the calculated p-value (0.14) of the items enumerated was greater than the stipulated 0.05 level of significance. This shows that there is no significant difference in the mean ratings of operators of private primary and secondary schools in Awka South Local Government Area of Anambra State, Nigeria on inadequate infrastructural facilities as a challenge their schools' operation. Thus, the null hypothesis of no significant difference between the two groups was not rejected.

### Test of Hypothesis Three

**H01:** There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of operators of private primary and secondary schools in Awka South Local Government Area of Anambra State, Nigeria on inadequate instructional materials as a challenge their schools' operation.

**Table 6: T-test analysis on significant difference in the mean ratings of operators of private primary and secondary schools in Awka South Local Government Area of Anambra State, Nigeria on inadequate instructional materials as a challenge their schools' operation**

	Variable	No.	Mean	SD	Df	A	t-Cal	t-Crit.	P-value	Decision
Operators	Sec. Sch.	55	3.50	0.80	202	0.05	1.55	4.30	0.12	No Sig.
	Pri. Sch.	149	3.15	0.82						

The analysis presented in Table 6 shows that there is no significant difference in the mean ratings of operators of private primary and secondary schools in Awka South Local Government Area of Anambra State, Nigeria on inadequate instructional materials as a challenge their schools' operation. This was shown by the calculated p-value (0.12) which was greater than the stipulated 0.05 level of significance. Therefore the null hypothesis of no significant difference between the two groups was upheld.

### Discussion of Findings

Based on the results of the study, it was revealed in Table 1 that all the respondents believed that inadequate funding makes provision of teaching materials difficult, inadequate funding negatively affects the provision of laboratory equipment for schools, inadequate funding leads to dilapidation of school infrastructure, inadequate funding hinders professional development for primary school employees and inadequate funding increases operational costs. The analysis in Table 4 showed that there is no significant difference in the mean ratings of operators of private primary and secondary schools on the challenges of inadequate fund in Awka South Local Government Area of Anambra State, Nigeria. In line with these studies, Bamidele and Odukoya (2017) found that inadequate funding was a major challenge for private school operators, leading to a lack of resources and facilities, difficulty in paying teachers, and higher tuition fees for parents.

More so, the results in Table 2 revealed that all the items listed as responded by the respondents indicated that inadequate infrastructure affect the operators of private primary and secondary schools in Awka South Local Government Area. Inadequate infrastructure makes learning tedious for learners, dilapidated school infrastructure creates unconducive environment for learners, poor school infrastructure dampens teachers' morale, inadequate infrastructure negatively affects delivery of teaching contents and deficits in infrastructure negatively affects classroom climates. In Table 5, the results showed that there is no significant difference in the mean ratings of operators of private primary and secondary schools on the challenges of inadequate infrastructural facilities in Awka South Local Government Area of Anambra State, Nigeria. In agreement with these findings, Adebowale and Adebowale (2017) found that inadequate infrastructure was a major challenge for private school operators, leading to overcrowded classrooms, insufficient learning materials, and poor sanitation facilities.

In addition, the results in research question three indicated that the respondents agreed that lack of instructional materials affects the operators of private primary and secondary schools in Awka South Local Government Area. They agreed that lack of instructional materials hinders learners' interest, poorly designed instructional materials make learning difficult, inadequate instructional materials reduce learners' motivation to learn, lack of instructional materials reduce teachers' efficiency and lack of instructional materials limits learners' learning opportunities. In table 6, the results also revealed that there is no significant difference in the mean ratings

operators of private primary and secondary schools on the challenges of inadequate instructional facilities in Awka South Local Government Area of Anambra State, Nigeria. In affirmation to these findings, Okeke and Eze (2016) found that the availability and use of instructional materials were inadequate, leading to poor academic performance by students and low morale among teachers.

## Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, it can be concluded that inadequate funding, inadequate infrastructural facilities, and inadequate instructional materials significantly affect the operators of private primary and secondary schools in Awka South Local Government Area of Anambra State, Nigeria. Thus the study concluded that these challenges could impede students' learning experiences, limit educational opportunities, and hinder overall academic achievement; and addressing them is crucial for ensuring equitable access to quality education and fostering positive learning outcomes.

## Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made:

1. Ministry of Education should increase support and oversight for private schools by providing access to grants or subsidies to mitigate financial constraints.
2. Operators of private schools should prioritize efficient financial management and explore partnerships to secure funding and improve infrastructure and instructional materials.
3. Teachers should adopt creative teaching methods and maximize available resources to deliver quality education despite material constraints.
4. Students should adapt to available learning environments and engage in self-directed learning to supplement the instructional resources provided.
5. Parents should actively contribute financially or through volunteering to support their children's schools in addressing resource challenges.

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