Influence of TETFund Intervention on Staff and Infrastructural Development for Improving Quality Tertiary Education in Abia State, Nigeria.

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Abstract: The study assesses the influence of TETFund interventions on staff and infrastructural development for improving quality tertiary education in Abia State, Nigeria. Cross Sectional Survey design was used for the study; five research questions and five hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance. A sample of 365 staff were selected from a population of 6280 in four public tertiary institutions in Abia State that access TETFund interventions. A self-designed questionnaire tagged “TETFund Intervention on Staff and Infrastructure Development for Improving Tertiary Education Questionnaire” (TISIDIQEQ) was used with a modified four-point Likert scale of measurement. The validity and reliability of the modified four-point Likert scale were obtained through the guidance of experts in educational measurement and evaluation, and the result of pilot study conducted for this purpose. Reliability coefficient obtained at 0.86. SPSS (version 23.0) was used in analysis, and the hypothesis was tested using Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) at 0.05 level of significance. The findings show that there is positive significant influence of TETFund intervention on staff and infrastructure development which has led to improvement in the quality of tertiary education in Abia State, but more can be done. The study recommended a scale up of staff development locally and overseas. Also, the benefiting institutions should put necessary measures in place to enable easy access to interventions provided for infrastructural development in tertiary institution in Abia State, Nigeria.

Keywords: TETFund intervention, Staff, Infrastructure, Development Quality Tertiary Education.

1. Introduction

Education is an effective means of developing the capacities and potentials of human resources, as well as competent workforce through the acquisition of practical life skills, relevant to the world of work as an indispensable means of developing sound intelligent learning societies, fit and relevant to the 21st century (FRN, 2014). Hence, the objectives of Nigerian education strategic plan are to engender an expanded role for education as an investment for economic, social and political development and as an aggregate tool of empowerment for the poor, and the socially marginalized groups in the society.

There is a strong relationship between education and economic growth, and in developed and developing countries of the world, the propelling force of development is the type and quality of education the citizens acquire from primary to tertiary levels. In the Nigerian case, this is clearly stipulated in the national educational philosophy, No.3:

A. Education is an instrument for national development and social change.
B. Education is vital for the promotion of a progressive and united Nigeria.
C. Education maximizes the creative potential and skills of the individual for self-fulfillment and general development of the society.
D. Education is to be qualitative, comprehensive, functional and relevant to the needs of the society (FRN, 2014).
Tertiary institution, according to National Policy on Education (FRN, 2014) are institutions that cover the post-secondary section of the national education system which are offered in universities, polytechnics and colleges of education including colleges of technology, the advanced teachers training colleges, correspondent colleges and institutions as may be allied to them. The major challenges facing the realization of objectives of the tertiary education are insufficient and poor funding, and inadequate staff development. Hence, educational activities have been hindered when the resources (human and non-human) are not readily available. However, inadequate funding of tertiary education has been a contributing problem in Nigeria. This can be adduced from the incessant industrial action embark by Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU), College of Education Association Staff Union (COEASU) Association of Staff Union Polytechnics (ASUP) and other associations in affiliated with tertiary education in Nigeria. Strikes and industrial actions have increased, especially during times of economic recession and periods of economic reversals in the petroleum oil sector, such as the one witnessed since 2014. During these periods, financing of education and staff development programs suffered untold setbacks.

Tertiary institutions need finance to meet up with the institutional human and non-human needs such as staff development through training, conferences, workshops and seminars as well as infrastructural and institutional social amenities, and research in various disciplines as medicine, engineering, education, etc. The tertiary institutions need funds for training and retraining of lecturers, acquire current state of the art facilities and other amenities that can engender students to realize the aims and objectives of tertiary education.

The challenges faced by tertiary institutions in meeting the needs of staff and infrastructural development such as in building of lectures halls, offices, laboratories, furniture, library equipment and vehicles are not mostly unique to one region or state of Nigeria. Since the creation of Abia State. The state has witnessed an increase in the establishment of tertiary institutions as a result of sustained quest for quality, affordable and accessible higher education; therefore, the state can boast of various types of degree-awarding institutions that cut across universities, polytechnics, colleges of education and other specialized institutions of higher learning. These institutions have their shares of funding challenges. The factors militating against adequate funding of tertiary institutions in Nigeria is traced to social, economic and political structures of the society as exemplified in the African political economy model (Agha 2014). The model focuses on how political and economic forces shape the context within which public tertiary institutions carry out their primary functions of teaching and research. The specific political, economic and social matrix of the present environment in Nigeria, whereby economic depression, political instability and cuts in the government expenditure impact on the tertiary education system. The inconsistency in the socio-political sphere of the state has grossly affected the educational system of the country most especially in the development of staff and infrastructural facilities. The resultant effect is seen as tertiary institutions turn out graduates who are not independent but solely depends on their paper qualifications rather than employability skills.

These gaps in staff and infrastructure development necessitated the establishment of Education Trust Fund Decree No 7 of 1st January, 1993 which recognized the decline in educational standards and deep decay in infrastructure and human capital development in tertiary institutions in Nigeria. At the tertiary level of education, it was obvious that there was an urgent need for emergency funding to improve educational facilities and infrastructure, restore high morale of lecturers, attract and retain qualitative entrants into the profession, encourage professionalism in teaching and improve teacher education curriculum.

The Education Trust Fund was a product of crises in the educational sector, going back to the 1980s with the introduction of the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) when funding of education became a huge challenge in Nigeria. Hence, the Lande Committee’s report and subsequently the negotiation between the Federal Government and Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) in 1993 (Eze, 2011). The debate then was that the government alone cannot fund education due to the huge financial implications, and so, it has to align with the private sector in assisting the government to fund education properly. Hence the idea to introduce a public tax, which necessitated the establishment an Education Trust Fund. There is an obvious presence of TETFund in the government-owned tertiary institutions, however, it is not clear if the goals and objectives of the initiative are being realized. Anyone visiting the tertiary institutions in Abia State is likely to see buildings that are named after TETFund, which include Normal Intervention, Special Impact or NEEDS Assessments, etc. However, the presence of buildings does not translate to the realization of the initiative's goals. Therefore, it is of interest to assess how the TETFund resources that are made available to tertiary institutions in Abia State have helped in improving the quality of staff and infrastructural development of tertiary institutions in Abia State.
Statement of the Problem

The Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFund) is an intervention agency under the Education Trust Fund, which is meant to assist tertiary institutions on staff development, provision of infrastructural facilities and improving quality of education. Ajayi and Ekundayo (2006) remarked that the Nigerian government over the years, has not been meeting the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) recommendation of 26% of the local budget allocation to Education Sector. Furthermore, no tertiary education system of a country rises above the quality of its human resources and infrastructural facilities available for teaching and learning. It is because of this gap that TETFund was established - to tackle the menace of under-funding and decline in human capital development in tertiary institutions. Some important questions to ask are: 1) what are the objectives of TETFund in the development of staff in tertiary institutions in Nigeria and 2) how does TETFund interventions enhance the development the infrastructural facilities of tertiary institutions in Nigeria?

TETFund had complained that 90 percent of the lecturers’ research proposals were very poor and un-fundable (TETFund 2017). Several other reasons have been given for not accessing the fund for staff and infrastructural development in tertiary institutions. Dayo (2014) reports that incomplete documentations on the part of the institutions applying for the fund is one of the reasons for not accessing the funds. According to Eno-Abasi (2015), many institutions complained that the process of accessing the fund is cumbersome. Eno-Abasi (2015) further states that TETFund cannot take all the blames as the managers of the institutions are also to be blamed for not publicizing the call for proposals. Another hindrance in accessing the agency interventions are the in-house politics at the level of submission at the institution level. This is because it is the responsibility of institutions to forward the selected proposals to TETFund for further consideration and approval. Delay in the documentation of the proposal hinders access. Therefore, it is pertinent that the staff and the administrators of tertiary institutions collaborate to ensure successful completion of proposals and access the funds.

Given TETFund’s objectives and accessibility challenges as highlighted herein, this study specifically aims to assess the influence of TETFund interventions on staff, infrastructure facilities and how it has improved quality tertiary education in Abia State.

Objectives of the Study

1. To ascertain the influence of TETFund intervention on staff development for improving quality tertiary education in Abia State, Nigeria.
2. To determine the influence of TETFund on physical infrastructural development for improving quality tertiary education in Abia State, Nigeria.

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were formulated and tested at $p \leq 0.05$ levels of significance

- $H_{01}$. There is no significant influence of TETFund intervention on staff development for improving quality tertiary education in Abia State.
- $H_{02}$. There is no significant influence of TETFund interventions on infrastructural development for improving quality tertiary education in Abia State.

Methodology

The research design adopted for the study is the cross-sectional survey design Where the study describes “the present state of affairs” (Sambo 2005; Yakubu 2018). The study involved the collection of data from samples in order to make inferences on a prevalent condition or situation (TETFund Interventions). It covered all government owned tertiary institutions in Abia State that accesses TETFund Interventions and these institutions include: 1) Abia State University 2) Abia State Polytechnic, 3) Abia State College of Education and 4) Michael Okpara Federal University of Agriculture Umudike.
The population of the study comprises of teaching and non-teaching staff. The population of the staff is 5247. This study used a cluster sampling technique; each of the tertiary institutions were made a cluster. The sample of staff in the study is three hundred and sixty-five (365) which were drawn from the staff population of the four government tertiary institutions in Abia State, Nigeria.

The instrument used in the study is a self-designed structured questionnaire tagged TETFund Interventions on Staff, Infrastructure Development and Improving Quality Education Questionnaire (TISIDIQE). This is supported by Best and Khan (1995) who noted that questionnaire is used when factual information is desired from different respondents. The questionnaire consists of two sections: A and B. Section A requests for the respondent bio data, while section B is sub-divided into 5 sections (A-E) containing 30 items.

The questionnaire was distributed to both academic and non-academic staff. Split-half method; this involves splitting a test into halves and correlating examinees’ scores on two halves of the test. This was adopted to establish the reliability of the instrument. The instrument was administered and collected the same day. The scores where split into odd and even numbers. Spearman Rank Order correlation technique (www.sciencedirect.com) were used to correlate the two set of scores. The reliability of half of the instrument was obtained. A coefficient of 0.86 was obtained after substituting the value into Spearman’s Brown formula (assess.com 2018). An alpha coefficient of 0.7 and above is considered suitable to make accurate group inferences.

The data collected was coded, computed, tabulated, analyzed and presented in tabular forms. The hypotheses were tested using ANOVA through the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS Version 23.0) software.

**Results**

The total number of questionnaires dispatched was 365, but 358 were returned, representing 98% of the distributed questionnaires. The questionnaires were distributed among teaching 203 staff (57%) and 155 non-teaching staff (43%). Figure 1 shows the educational qualification of respondents which represent 2% NCE, 7% HND, 29% B.Sc, 36% M.Sc and 26 Ph.D.

![Figure 1. Educational qualifications of survey respondents](image)

Note, the term SA mean (Strongly Agree), A means (Agree), D means (Disagree), SD mans (Strongly Disagree), N is the number of respondents, Mean is the average score of responses from the questionnaire, while STD mean standard deviation. It shows a quantity expressing how much responses differ from the mean value.
Table 1. The frequencies, means and standard deviations of the respondents on TETFund interventions on staff development for improving quality tertiary education in Abia State.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S/N</th>
<th>Statements</th>
<th>SA</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>STD.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Many staffs have benefited from TETFund’s national and international training in your institution.</td>
<td>156</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>358</td>
<td>3.51</td>
<td>0.501</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Staff have been sponsored by TETFund at conferences, workshops and seminars where they acquired new knowledge that led to an increase productivity in your institution.</td>
<td>172</td>
<td>186</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>358</td>
<td>3.48</td>
<td>0.500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Many staff have benefited from national and international TETFund retraining programmes which have improved their ability to compete favourably with other scholars in the world.</td>
<td>156</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>358</td>
<td>3.43</td>
<td>0.507</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>The quality of education in your institution has improved as a result of well-trained staff who can effectively transfer knowledge to student due to TETFund interventions on both international conferences, workshops and seminars.</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>358</td>
<td>2.20</td>
<td>0.904</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Have you ever benefited from TETFund staff development programmes overseas or locally on training, seminars, conferences or workshops from your institution.</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>142</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>358</td>
<td>2.07</td>
<td>0.865</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>The quality of tertiary education in your institution has improved due to TETFund scholarships granted to staff for further studies.</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>191</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>358</td>
<td>3.15</td>
<td>0.699</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1 presents the responses from the staff of tertiary institutions in Abia State on the influence of TETFund interventions on staff development for improving quality tertiary education. The mean scores obtained above, 3.51, 3.48, 3.43, 2.20, 2.07 and 3.15, show that on average, the staff of the institutions agrees that TETFund interventions on staff development have improved quality tertiary education in Abia State.

Table 2. TETFund Intervention on physical infrastructural development for improving quality tertiary education in Abia State

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S/N</th>
<th>Statements</th>
<th>SA</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>STD.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>TETFund has intervened in the construction and renovation of Theatre Halls, Lecture Rooms and Laboratories in your institution.</td>
<td>173</td>
<td>168</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>358</td>
<td>3.43</td>
<td>0.612</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Offices and staff’s accommodation have been constructed and or renovated through TETFund interventions in your institution.</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>262</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>358</td>
<td>3.16</td>
<td>0.505</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Students’ hostels have been constructed and or renovated in your institution through the TETFund interventions programme.</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>244</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>358</td>
<td>3.28</td>
<td>0.569</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
10. The provision of lecture halls and theatre through TETFund intervention has enabled the students to no longer stand during lectures but sit comfortably during classes.

11. TETFund intervention on the provision of comfortable office accommodation for staff has enabled them to perform effectively which has led to improve teaching and learning in your institution.

12. The provision of ICT materials (computers, televisions, projectors, videos or satellites) through TETFund intervention has brought significant improvement in methods of teaching and learning in your institution.

Table 2 presents information on TETFund intervention on physical infrastructural development for improving quality tertiary education. Overall result from item 7-12 shows the mean scores of 3.43, 3.16, 3.28, 3.37, 3.25 and 3.20. The mean score indicated that staff of tertiary institutions in Abia State, Nigeria agreed that TETFund has supported the institutions with infrastructural facilities which has led to improving quality tertiary education in Abia State, Nigeria.

Testing of Hypotheses

$H_{01}$ is a hypothesis that there is no significant influence of TETFund intervention on staff development for improving quality tertiary education in Abia State. The null hypothesis was tested with Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source of Variation</th>
<th>Sum of Square</th>
<th>Df</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>P-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Between Groups</td>
<td>52039</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>17346.3333</td>
<td>4.424</td>
<td>.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within Groups</td>
<td>78413</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>3920.65</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>130452</td>
<td>23</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note Df = Degree of Freedom; is the sum of the individual degrees of freedom for each sample. Mean Square is the arithmetic mean of the squares of set of numbers (Wikipedia), $F$= variation between samples means and variation within the samples. While P-value is the probability of observing a result ($F_{critical}$).

The results in Table 3 above shows the influence of TETFund intervention on staff development for improving quality tertiary education in Abia State. The results show that there is significant influence among the respondents; in their views, TETFund has contributed to staff development through training, retraining, workshops and seminars. This is because of a P value of .01 which is less than alpha value of 0.05. Hence, the null hypothesis is hereby rejected and consequently, alternate hypothesis was adopted. Therefore, from the result obtained, there is significance influence of TETFund intervention on staff development for improving quality tertiary education in Abia State.

$H_{02}$. There is no significant influence of TETFund interventions on physical infrastructural development for improving quality tertiary education in Abia State.
Table 4. Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) statistics of TETFund interventions on physical infrastructural development for improving quality tertiary education in Abia State

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source of Variation</th>
<th>Sum of Square</th>
<th>Df</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>P-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Between Groups</td>
<td>179941</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>59980.33333</td>
<td>97.64808031</td>
<td>.0004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within Groups</td>
<td>12285</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>614.25</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>192226</td>
<td>23</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4 presents the Analysis of Variance Statistics (ANOVA) on the influence of TETFund intervention on infrastructural development for improving quality tertiary education in Abia State. The results show that there is significant influence in the contribution of TETFund intervention among respondents. This is because a P value of .0004 is obtained which is less than alpha value of 0.05; therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected while the alternate hypothesis was adopted. From the results obtained, it can be inferred that there is a significant influence of the contribution of TETFund intervention on the provision of physical infrastructure facilities for improving quality tertiary education in Abia State.

Discussion of Findings

The results presented in Table 3 show that there is significant influence of TETFund intervention on staff development through training, conferences, workshops and seminars locally and overseas which has led to improving quality tertiary education in Abia State. The result obtained from the descriptive analysis with total mean score of 17.84, standard deviation of 3.976 and result obtained from the ANOVA, P-value calculated (0.001) which is less than alpha value of 0.05 show that there is significant influence of TETFund intervention on staff development through training, conferences, workshops and seminars locally and overseas in tertiary institutions in Abia State. The result is supported by the finding by Suleiman (2019). Prior to the introduction of this intervention only 40% of academic staff in Nigeria’s Tertiary Institutions had a Ph.D., which is the minimum requirement to be a lecturer in a Tertiary institution. But today this percentage has risen to nearly 70% due to TETFund’s intervention which has resulted in foreign Ph.Ds (3,902), local Ph.Ds (8,447), foreign Masters (2,940) and local Masters (8,501) degrees through academic staff training and development (AST&D) (see page 34-38). Furthermore, Malou and Ogbuabor (2013) showed that training and manpower development enhanced workers job productivity and organizational performances.

ANOVA statistics showed that there is significant influence of TETFund intervention on physical infrastructure development (lecture halls, hostels accommodation and offices) for improving quality tertiary education in Abia State (Table 4). Furthermore, the result from the descriptive analysis also, support that TETFund intervention has influenced physical infrastructure development of tertiary institutions in Abia State with a total mean score of 19.69 and a standard deviation of 3.473. The results also show that hardly will a visitor not see buildings in Abia State tertiary institutions with the inscription of TETFund. With the result obtained from the ANOVA, the P-value calculated to be 0.00004, which is less than alpha value of (0.05), indicating that TETFund intervention has significantly improved physical infrastructure in tertiary institutions in Abia State. The study results are supported by the findings of Udu and Nkwede (2014) which found that TETFUND interventions in Nigeria universities, particularly in Ebonyi State University impacted positively on infrastructural development while the implications for sustainable development were also positive. Also, in a related study, Nduagu et al, (2015) concluded that TETFund had made tremendous impact in infrastructural facilities in Alvan Ikoku Federal College of Education Owerri Imo State.

Conclusions

This study assesses the influence of TETFund interventions on staff development and infrastructure facilities, and how it has improved quality tertiary education in Abia State. From the outcomes of the study analyses, it was concluded that TETFund interventions have significant impact on staff development through training, conferences, workshops and seminars locally and overseas in tertiary institution in Abia State. The study also found that TETFund intervention has a significant influence on physical infrastructure development (lecture halls, hostels accommodation and offices). The implication of this is that the quality of educational output may have been
increased because of TETFUND’s intervention in Abia State tertiary institutions.

**Recommendations**

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made.

1. For competitive educational system that will attract foreign investments, TETFund should as a matter of urgency scale up her staff development interventions on training, conferences, workshops and seminars locally and overseas in tertiary institution in Abia State. This will ensure that the staff of tertiary institutions will be function effectively in the discharge of their duties. Staff development is the bedrock for profitable educational outcomes.

2. Since the efforts of TETFund has yielded positive impact on the provision of physical infrastructural facilities, a concerted efforts should be made by the benefitting institutions to put the necessary measures in place to enable easy access to interventions provided for the improvement of lecture halls, hostels accommodation and offices for effective teaching and learning in tertiary institutions in Abia State, Nigeria.

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