



Impact of TETFund Intervention on Quality and Relevance of Research Development in Tertiary Institutions in North Central Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

The study examined the impact of Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFund) intervention on quality and relevant educational research (2015-2019). The study focused on the impact of TETFund interventions on adequate relevant research development in tertiary institutions in Nigeria with special interest in state owned Colleges of Education in North Central Nigeria. Descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study with African political economy model and resource-based model laying theoretical foundation. The total population of the study was Eight thousand, seven hundred and eleven (8711) respondents drawn from five tertiary institutions in North Central Nigeria. Structured questionnaire was administered to a sample of 650 drawn from the population of the study. 612 valid copies of the questionnaire were used for analysis. The hypothesis used for the study was tested with one-way ANOVA at 0.05 levels of significance. The result indicates that TETFund intervention to a high extent has no significant impact on quality and relevant research by employees of state owned Colleges of Education in North Central Nigeria. This was attributed first, to the fact that funds allocated to these institutions overtime were under accessed due to the institutions' inability to meet conditions set by TETFund for continuous access. Secondly, many institutions/staff that access research grants use part of them to take care of their personal needs leaving a paltry sum for research. The study recommends that the concerned institutions should work towards meeting the conditions for assessment by eliminating corrupt tendencies, and adequately remunerate academics so that research grants would be used for what they are meant for, TETFund should cut down on some of the procedures to enable lecturers access the fund in due time, Tertiary Education Trust Fund should make provision to allow a tertiary institution to assess missed funds provided for the previous year instead of forfeiting such allocations.

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INTRODUCTION

The demand for Western education in Nigeria is very high because education is not only an investment in human capital, but also a pre-requisite as

well as a correlate for economic development. The belief that education is an engine of growth rests on the quantity and quality of education in any country. A common phenomenon in tertiary



institutions in Nigeria is the fact that many academic (teaching) staffs are stagnated for a long period of time without promotions or advancement in their work places. This problem is attributable to the fact that many of them are unable to further their academic achievements due to financial constraints. They therefore remain with their entry status for a long time as a result of lack of incentives or motivation to further their academic backgrounds. This does not only affect the staff themselves but also their products who are the trainees (students) since no new ideas or knowledge is imparted. On the long run, the objective of education cannot be achieved if no new knowledge or ideas can be inculcated into students of tertiary institutions.

There is a general decay in human and material resources in Nigeria tertiary institutions due to poor funding. These have contributed to poor teacher quality, poor academic performances of students; low rating of institutions, poor staff performance, and recruitment of unqualified teachers. Funding of tertiary institutions throughout the world has witnessed dramatic changes in the last decades. These changes are responses to a worldwide phenomenon of rising cost of university education in excess of the corresponding rate of increases of available revenues. In Nigeria, funding shortfalls have been the norm for many years as enrolments have increased more quickly than the government's capacity to maintain its proportional financial support. Because government funding is insufficient to maintain institutional performance in teaching and research, Nigeria universities just like their counterparts elsewhere in the world have to seek to supplement their public funding through other means.

The period between 1960s and 1980s were regarded as the golden age of university education and also its research in Nigeria. Nigerian research in terms of quality and quantity was the best in Sub-

Saharan Africa (Okebukola, 2002). Some institutions in Nigeria earned global respect and recognition in specific disciplines as a result of excellence in research and publications. For example, University of Ibadan was famous in Medicine, Education, Religious Studies and History; Ahmadu Bello University was known in Engineering, Veterinary Medicine, Agriculture, History, Arts and Radical Social Sciences; University of Lagos was recognized in Business Administration, Law and Social Sciences and University of Nigeria, Nsukka was famous in Languages and Literature (NUC, 2002).

The late 1980s recorded a decline in research productivity in Nigeria universities. Nigerians number of scientific publications for 1995 was 771, significantly less than its output of 1,062 scientific publications in 1981. Web metrics ranking of universities, which measures web presence and content, did not mention a single Nigerian university until after 1,600 other mentions (Akinaso, 2012). Similarly, Nigeria was placed 140th in human capital and research; 14th under knowledge and technology; and 74th under creative output (Aluko, 2014). The latest ranking of Nigeria Colleges of Education by a website ranked Adeyemi College of Education, Ondo State as the best in Nigeria because of its affiliation with Obafemi Awolowo University (OAU) Ile-ife. Niger State College of Education Minna is the only institution among the top ten from North Central Nigeria which is ranked Third position. Others include Federal College of Education Zaria (2nd position), Federal College of Education (Special) Oyo (4th position), only four state owned Colleges of Education are ranked among the top ten. The major ranking criterion is quality of research output (www.nigerianinfonedia.com.ng/best-colleges-of-education-in-nigeria.html)

Several reasons have been attributed for the low quality of research output by Nigerian Colleges of Education.



The problem of under-funding has generated a lot of strife between the College of Education Staff Union (COASU) and the Government. Without adequate funding, many educational goals and objectives cannot be achieved. Saint, Harnett and Strassner (2013) report that the Nigeria's low research output is probably a reflection of the low priority accorded research and development by government decision-makers and that Nigeria's Federal Colleges of Education system spends only 1.3% of its budget on research. Okebukola (2002) summarized the factors that contributed to decline in research as follows: lack of research skills in modern methods; lack of equipment for carrying out state-of-the-art research; overloaded teaching and administration schedules which leave little time for research and difficulty in accessing research funds.

Worried about inadequate fund to conduct research and other problems confronting the education sector such as deteriorating educational infrastructure and the falling standard of education, Government established the Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFund) by an act of the National Assembly in June 2011. This act replaced the Education Tax Fund (ETF) Act Cap.E4 laws of the Federation of Nigeria 2004 and Education Tax Fund (Amendment) Act No 17, 2003. The fund was set up to administer and disburse to the Federal and State tertiary educational institutions in Nigeria. The main source of income available to the fund is the 2% tax paid from the profit making companies registered in Nigeria. In the distribution of the fund, 41 per cent goes to the Universities, 30 per cent to the Polytechnics while 29 per cent goes to Colleges of Education (TETFund, 2013). TETFund interventions in this study are anchored on normal interventions research grant, academic staff development and publication of research reports.

In addition, the Federal Government has instituted the National

Research Fund to enable lecturers conduct research in a better and conducive environment. One of the objectives for establishing the Tertiary Education Trust Fund is to fund research in higher institutions to which university is included. In spite of the interventions of TETFund in the area of research and academic growth, many tertiary institutions are unable to meet the conditions for accessing funds allocated to them. As a result, many academic staff misses the opportunities to access free funds for research development. A recent disclosure from TETFund (2017) reveals that the sum of ₦475, 206,387.13 has been released as research grant to 15 public tertiary institutions across the country to support 135 research proposals.

According to the then Executive Secretary of TETFund, said the disbursement made in July 2019 was under the Institution Based Research (IBR) an aspect of mandate of the agency supporting academic staff with quality research proposal. But out of 152 universities in the country, comprising of 40 federal universities, 44 state universities and 68 private universities, only four universities were among the beneficiaries of the research grant, which awards a maximum of ₦2million to academic staff with research proposal.

The report further revealed that Enugu State University of Science and Technology; Ladoko Akintola University, Oyo State; Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University, Bauchi; and Federal University, Oye-Ekiti were the universities with 31 research proposals that got ₦425,004,523.88 of the ₦475million. Federal Polytechnic Mubi, Adamawa State and Institute of Management and Technology, Enugu were also the only polytechnics on the list of beneficiaries with 22 research proposals, taking ₦410,429.824.00 of the total grant, while 9 colleges of education with 82 research proposals took ₦39,732,039.00. Among the Colleges of Education were: Kaduna



State College of Education, Gidan Waya; Federal College of Education, Osiele, Ogun State; Federal College of Education (Technical; Potiskum: Adeyemi College of Education, Ondo State and Federal College of Education, Katsina. Others were FCT College of Education, Zuba; College of Education, Gindiri I Plateau State; College of Education, Ikwo, Ebonyi State and Federal College of Education Okene, Kogi State. TETFund had complained that 90 percent of lecturers' research proposals were very poor and un-fundable. Several other reasons have been adduced for not accessing the fund for research.

Dayo (2014) reports that incomplete documentations on the part of the institutions applying for the fund is one of the reasons for not accessing these funds. According to Eno-Abasi (2015) many institutions complained that the process of accessing the fund is cumbersome. In addition, he 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 is the in-house politics at the level of submission at the institution level. This is because it is the responsibility of the 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 lecturers and the managers of the institutions collaborate for successful completion of the proposals and access the fund earmarked for them.

The study specifically aimed to examine the impact of TETFund interventions on quality and relevance of research in state owned tertiary institutions in Nigeria. To achieve this, it is hypothesized that the extent of quality and relevance of TETFund interventions in state owned universities in South East Nigeria are not significant. The research question to guide the study is: what is the extent of the quality and relevance of

TETFund interventions in state owned Colleges of Education in North Central Nigeria?

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The issue of Colleges of Education underfunding in Nigeria is deeply rooted in the social, economic and political structures of the society as exemplified in the African political economy model. The model focuses on how⁷ political and economic forces shape the context within which Nigerian public tertiary institutions carry out their primary functions of teaching and research. It helps to explain the specific political, economic and social matrix of the present environment in Nigeria, whereby economic depression, political instability and cuts in government expenditure, all impact on the tertiary institution system. The political economy model sees the different structures in the society including the economic, political, social structures and the belief system as interacting and interdependent. Thus the tertiary institution system which is also a sub-section is subjected to the influence of the super structure which is the economic system (Agha, 2014).

The resource based model is also adopted for this study as a strategy for sustaining financing of tertiary institutions. This is because Nigeria public tertiary institutions are weak in terms of budgeting, determination of operational costs and revenue generation. There is therefore a need to develop a logical framework that seeks to capture the major operations of the institutions and the resource flow's to support them. The model creates the opportunity for all units in tertiary institutions to be financially well structured and transparent.

It enables them strive to achieve and maintain financial balance, while they are constantly aware of the resource implication of their performances and activities and prepare for associated challenges. The model is dynamic for

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determining over time, the quantum of resources that a tertiary institutions require within a particular time frame and consciously strategize on the ways to raise such funding so that they become less subject to the vagaries of the fluctuations in the fortunes and resources of its owners and the operating environment (Bamiro and Adedeji, 2010).

METHODOLOGY

The study adopted descriptive survey design. The major variables on which information were extracted from the target population through the use of structured questionnaire were TETFund Intervention and quality and relevant research. Tertiary Education Trust Fund interventions in this study are anchored on the following areas: conference attendance, manuscript development, normal interventions research grant, academic staff development and publication of journals. The study was anchored more on the impact of TETFund intervention on quality and relevant research in state owned Nigeria Colleges of Education. The questionnaire items were specially prepared to elicit responses from respondents on the parameters of the variables studied.

The population of the study was derived from five states owned Colleges of Education in North Central Nigeria namely: Niger State College of Education,

Minna. College of Education. Akwanga, Nasarawa State, College of Education. Oro, Kwara State, College of Education, Ankpa, Kogi State and College of Education, Gindiri, Plateau state. The total population of the study was eight thousand, seven hundred and eleven (8,711) respondents drawn from five tertiary institutions in North Central Nigeria. A sample size of 650 was used for the study using stratified sampling technique for each tertiary institution. The major source of data used for the study was primary source. The data collection instrument was a structured questionnaire which was administered to a sample of 650 drawn from the population of the study. 612 valid copies of the questionnaire were used for analysis. The hypotheses used for the study was tested using one way ANOVA at 0.05 levels of significance. The responses of the items on the questionnaire were structured on a 5 Likert point rating scale. Descriptive statistics such as frequencies, percentages and tables were used for the analysis of the research questions while hypotheses were tested using ANOVA

RESULTS

Research Question: What is the extent of quality and relevance of TETFund intervention in research in North Central Nigeria tertiary institutions?

Table 1: Respondents' Responses on the Impact of TETFund Interventions on Research Development in Colleges of Education in North Central, Nigeria

Item	No of Respondents To a High Extent (HE)	Scores of Respondents To a High Extent (HE)	No of Respondents To a Low Extent (HE)	Scores of Respondents To a Low Extent (HE)	Total
1	147	436	468	200	612
2	257	124	355	365	612
3	76	167	536	723	612
4	97	786	515	130	612
5	475	543	137	652	612
6	232	89	380	341	612
Total	1284	2145	2391	2411	3672
Mean	214	357.5	398	401.8	612

Source: Field survey, 2020.



In table 1 the high extent group had a mean score of 214 representing 34.97%. This mean of High Extent (HE) is lower than the mean of Low Extent (LE) group with mean score of 398 representing 62.03%.

Table 2: Result of One-Way Analysis of Variance

Source	DF	Adj SS	Adj SS	F-Value	P-Value
Factor 1		12145	112145		
Error	10	674536	40932	1.52	0.170
Total	11	686681			

Model Summary

S	R-sq	R-sq (adj)	R-sq (pred)
146.32	1.00	15.73	0.00%

Means Factor	N	Mean	St. Dev	95% CI
Score HE	6	214	146.64	(2710.4, 712.9)
Score LE	6	398	146.92	(265.1, 702.6)

Pooled St Dev = 146.32

From table 2, the hypothesis test showed that F-critical 1.56 at 10 degrees of freedom and at 0.05 levels of significance was greater than F-computed (0.170). The null hypothesis H_0 was not rejected. The p-value at 0.170 was greater than the significant level of 0.05 (i.e. $p > 0.05$). The null hypothesis was therefore upheld, the co-efficient of determination,

R^2 (adj) was 15.73 percent. The result showed that the extent to which lecturers access TETFund intervention fund was 15.73 percent. Therefore, Tertiary Education Trust Fund intervention fund has no significant impact on educational research on Colleges of Education in North Central, Nigeria.

Table 3: Summary of Institutional Based Research Project by TETFund (2015 to 2019)

S/NO	Name of Institutions	Allocation ₦	Cumulative Payment (₦)	Balance ₦	Percentage Disbursed (%)
1	Benue State College of Education Oju	51,500,000	35,572,479	15,927,521.2	69.07
2	College of Education Anpka, Kogi State	102,000,000	2,041.605	99,958,395	2.00
3	Niger State College of Education Minna	145,500,000	78,159.900	67,340,100	53.71
4	College of Education Akwanga, Nasarawa State	145,500,000	79,268.580	66,231,420	54.48
5	College of Education Gindiri, Plateau State	145,500,000	45,249.000	100,251,000	31.10
Total		590,000,000	240,291,564	349,708,436	40.73

Source: TETFund, 2020

The results also showed that under the Institutional Based Research

Project (2015-2019), TETFund sponsored both teaching and non-teaching staff of



tertiary institutions to conferences both within and outside Nigeria. Such conferences were designed to provide opportunity for the lecturers to interact with their colleagues worldwide and benefit from such exposure and interaction to the advantage of Nigeria's education system. These findings were consistent with the findings of Vanish (2013). The findings of Vanish were absolutely relevant and supportive of the findings of the study because he studied the relationship between employee training and improved performance in government owned organizations in India.

DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

The findings revealed that the extent of the impact of Tertiary Education Trust Fund intervention fund at 15.72 percent had no significant impact on quality and relevance of educational research on Colleges of Education in North Central, Nigeria. This implied that only 15.72 percent of TETFund intervention fund was accessed and utilized by the lecturers in Colleges of Education while 84.28 percent fund were not accessed for staff training and development.

Similarly, TETFund allocated the sum of ₦590,000,000 (2015-2019) to the five selected Colleges of Education in North Central Nigeria for institutional research project, but only ₦240,291,564 was disbursed which is 40.73 percent of the total allocation; (TETFund, 2020). Among the institutions selected. College of Education Ankpa, Kogi State received ₦42,041,605.00 which is 2.0 percent of the total ₦102,000,000.00 allocated to the institution within the same time frame, while Benue State College of Education Oju received the highest with allocation of ₦51,500,000 (2015-2019), a total of ₦35,572,479 was received by the institution making it 69.07 percent (TETFund, 2020). This agrees with Umeh (2014) who reported that out of the allocation of over 141 0,052,000,000 to Universities, Polytechnics and Colleges of

Education for Institution-based Research by the Federal Government and disbursed by TETFund, over ₦7, 800,000,000 was accessed.

Similarly, TETFund (2013) report collaborated with the above when it states that many beneficiaries for research were not able to access the fund allocated to them. Out of the 265.02 billion naira that was disbursed for research, only 0.14% was accessed. Implication is that Nigerian academics should engage in meaningful research that will lead to development and innovations and research grants should not be mis-applied. It is only when their researches meet the required standard that they can access TETFund intervention funds, while mis-application of research fund can stop or be minimized with enhanced remuneration of academics (Udu and Nkwede,, 2014).

CONCLUSION

A summary of the major findings of the study shows that Tertiary Education Trust Fund intervention does not have significant impact on quality and relevance to state owned tertiary institutions in North Central Nigeria. The result provides a strong basis for tertiary institutions, most especially College of Education to appreciate the need for the encouragement of quality and relevant research among Academic staff The results revealed that despite the fact that TETFund has immensely improved our trained and qualified staff since its inception, there is still need for improvement in the area of research development. Although an interesting level have been reached in conducting academic research, more effort needs to be made by academic staff of public tertiary institutions in accessing research grants from TETFund.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Based on the findings, the study recommends that there is need to do more in the area of research and



- academic growth of public tertiary institutions in North Central Nigeria.
2. There is need for more enlightenment on the part of Chief Executives of tertiary institutions in Nigeria and TETFund desk officers with regards to procedures of accessing the funds. This is to avoid the challenge of losing funding opportunities which is as a result of inability of institutions to meet the requirements for assessment of yearly allocation due to ignorance about the procedures.
 3. Chief executives of institutions should be advised to stop the show of discriminations and sentiments in recommending academic staff for trainings, seminars and workshops. Until this area is looked at seriously as a matter of concern, the practice will likely continue and thereby deprive qualified beneficiaries from accessing funds for advancement.
 4. TETFund should cut down on some of the procedures to enable lecturers access the fund in due time.
 5. Lastly, Tertiary Education Trust Fund should make provision to allow a tertiary institution to assess missed funds provided for the previous year instead of forfeiting such allocations.

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