

The Role of Tertiary Education Trust Fund in the Development of Higher Institutions in Nigeria: A Case Study of Imo State, Nigeria.

BY

**Dr. Ijeoma Nneamaka Ezebuiri, Ph.D, CLN
Imo State University, Owerri.**

Abstract

The role of Tertiary Education Trust Fund in the development of higher institutions in Nigeria: a case study of Imo State is a survey research. The study was delimited to three (3) higher institutions in Imo state namely; Imo State University, Owerri, Federal Polytechnic Nekede, Owerri and Imo State Polytechnic, Umuagwo, Owerri. The study was aimed to ascertain the extent to which Tertiary Education Trust Fund had assisted in the provision of teaching materials in tertiary institutions; to determine the extent to which TETfund has assisted academic staff training and development; and to identify the extent to which TETfund has provided infrastructural development in higher institution. The study adopted simple random sampling technique in order to give all the respondents an equal opportunity of being selected. Three hundred (300) students were selected and thirty (30) teaching staff was selected for the study. Rating scale was used to elicit response from the respondents. Data collected was analyzed using mean statistics. The findings of the study include among others; that TETfund assisted in the provision of teaching materials, academic staff training and development and provision of new structures in the three institutions studied. It was recommended among others that the audit of the TETfund account should be transparent enough to enable Nigerians and researchers keep abreast of the funds activities in line with its objectives, the provision of up to date books and ICT facilities.

Key words: Tertiary Education Trust Fund(TETfund), Tertiary institutions, Funding of National Education, Development, Infrastructural resources, Nigeria

Introduction:

Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETfund) is a scheme established by the Federal government of Nigeria in 2011, to disburse, manage and monitor education tax to government owned tertiary institutions in Nigeria. Prior to the establishment of the scheme in 2011, government owned tertiary institutions were poorly funded. The scheme was designed to improve on the management of funds disbursed by the

government to higher institution of learning. Onyeike and Eseyin(2014) observed that various levels of education in the country have been confronted with problems which ranges from financial, human to material resource insufficiency. It is for this reasons that various steps have been taken by the government to restore the dwindling fortune of the nation's educational system.

However, most affected among the levels of education within the country is the tertiary level of education. Nwagwu (2011) opines that every government on board uses the educational system for wealth creation and maintenance of social system. Most government owned tertiary institutions in Nigeria are characterized by a lot of decay in infrastructure, learning aids, observation has shown that probably more than 50% of the institution of higher learning do not use public address system in their lecture rooms, most of their libraries are not automated with many outdated books, journals and dilapidated buildings etc. In realizing quality transformation of education, education resources mobilization agency was established such as (ETF) now called and known as Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETfund). These agencies have played an important role on the tertiary institutions in Nigeria addressing their challenges in terms of provision of funds, infrastructural facilities, staff development, scholarship to students, sponsoring of research project of lectures etc. (TETfund, 2016). Implicitly, since the overall development of the nation is anchored on the survival of the educational system, all efforts need to be made to ensure that these institutions survive in all of their endeavors. TETfund was established to provide supplementary support to all level of public tertiary institutions in Nigeria. With the government interventionist measures, people still complain about inadequate infrastructure, poor staffing, research training, funding etc. The question one could ask is, Is TETfund performing their duties well or not? Could the tertiary institutions function well to meet up to the quality/standard expected of them by the society with adequate funds, facilities, staff development programs?, these and many other questions is what this research work tends to answer.

Purpose of the Study

The general purpose of this study is to ascertain the role of Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETfund) on educational development of tertiary institutions in Nigeria, with the following specific the objectives:

1. To ascertain the extent to which TETfund has assisted in provision of teaching materials in institutions under study.
2. To determine the extent to which TETfund has assisted academic staff training and development to the institutions under study.
3. To identify the extent to which TETfund has provided infrastructural

development in the institutions under study.

Research Questions

The researcher formulated the following research questions which harmonize with the purposes of the study to guide the research:

1. To what extent has TETFund assisted in the provision of teaching materials in the institutions under study?
2. To what extent has TETFund assisted in academic staff training and development in the institutions under study?
3. To what extent has TETFund assisted in the provision of infrastructural development in the institutions understudy?

Review of Related Literature

Education generally entails teaching, training and learning for the development of knowledge and skills so as to prepare individuals to live happily with themselves and others in the society. Education sector is one of the vital sectors in Nigeria economy because education indeed is an investment that pays off in due time. Educational development has suffered a lot of setbacks in Nigeria due to unstable trends in the allocation of resources to the education sectors. Aligbokhan (2007), says that dwindled oil revenue due to fall in price, affects the federal budgeting allocation to the education sector. The widespread corruption in the management of educational institutions by politicians and school administrators, could also contribute to the underfunding of the sector. Urakpa (2013) asserts that owing to the students admission explosion in tertiary institutions, the atmosphere in which learning takes place no longer comfortable in most tertiary institutions. Today the much population of students can no longer cope with such facilities such as administrative blocks, hostels, lecture halls, laboratory, and libraries. Lamenting on the appealing situation in our universities, colleges of education and polytechnics before the emergence of education tax fund act, Onyenze (2005) insists that our tertiary institutions have shortage of lecture halls, administrative blocks, and learning materials needed for effective teaching and learning enhancement.

The Role of TETFfund in the Provision of Infrastructural Facilities.

Chijioke (2012) carried out a study on the impact of TETFfund, in the provision of educational facilities in Federal Polytechnic Nekede, Owerri Imo state. The result shows that TETFfund has made great impact in the provision of educational facilities in the schools. Agunbiade(2006), highlighted various projects that has been funded by TETFfund under library development program to include the following; computerized libraries, provision of books, journals, and research materials, provision of library

building. TETfund has made establishment of capital intensive laboratory to all Nigerian tertiary institutions to engage in research and will create opportunities for graduates in the applied and natural sciences. TETfund built and completed lecture halls, lecture theaters, and offices in Imo State University. Dr Abdullah Bichi Baffa the executive secretary of TETfund visited the Imo State University Owerri in line with his scheduled tour in some universities in the country. He commended the vice chancellor. Prof. Mrs. Adaobi Obasi for the work well done. (27th Oct. 2017 Nigerian horn newspaper)

The Role of TETfund in the Development of Higher Institutions.

The resource mobilization agency has assisted in staff development in the Nigerian tertiary institutions. The broad objective of this body is to break the unhealthy culture in breeding of academic and non academic staff by not exposing them to other intellectual traditions within and outside Nigeria. Programs such as seminars, conferences, workshops, grants of scholarship within and abroad oversea training, grants for academic staff pursuing doctorate programs in Nigerian universities. Akwarandu (2018) says that most of the tertiary institutions in Nigeria have an accumulated amount of money allocated to it by the TETfund for academic staff training and development e.g. the University of Ibadan has an accumulated amount of 136 million naira allocated to it by the TETfund for their staff training and development. Also in Imo state university, Owerri a number of academic non teaching staff have their studies in various higher institutions in Nigeria and abroad through this agency TETfund.

Role of TETfund in Provision of Scholarship to Students in the Higher Institutions

Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETfund) has offered scholarship to many students in the higher institutions. The agency award scholarships to brilliant students by sending them abroad for advance studies, they equally provide scholarship to the less privileged since they do not have any sponsor. Amaechi (2016) in his study on the evaluation of the extent of TETfund contribution towards quality transformation of tertiary institution in Imo state, using Imo state polytechnic Umuagwo, Imo state university, Owerri and Imo college of health science , the study reveals that most of the students have benefitted immensely through this intervention. The study shows that TETfund has sponsored the establishment of new lecture halls, renovation of classroom blocks, maintenance of students lecture sits and ensure completion of infrastructural projects.

Theoretical Framework

The theory of fiscal policy was propounded by John Maynard Keynes (1930). He described the study as the manipulation of activities such as spending, taxation, borrowing, etc by the government to attain designed objective i.e. optimum allocation of

economic resources. When an economy is faced with unpleasant economic situation, the government could through the manipulation of some of its activities tend to bring the economy back to a desired state.

Relating it to the study, poor academic performance could be the resultant effect of inadequate learning materials, resource centers, conducive learning environment, ill motivated staff / teachers etc, to remedy this situation, the government could taxes increase which is the source of revenue for TETfund, i.e. 2% taxes on company profits and also increase expenditure on the education sector (in the form of increasing the agencies funding) which in turn provide those basic learning utilities and consequently bring about improved academic performance among learners. This would create better academic environment and teachers would be motivated to work. Therefore a well conducive environment makes teaching and learning effective and efficient. Psychologists have said that learning experiences is enhanced when it is concrete rather than abstract.

Methodology

The study adopted the descriptive survey research design. The study is delimited to three higher institutions in Imo state, Owerri, namely; Imo State University Owerri, Federal Polytechnic Nekede, and Imo Polytechnic Umuagwo. The study adopted simple random sampling technique in order to give every member of the population an equal opportunity of being selected. As a result of this, sample of 300 students was chosen from the three institutions 100 from each institution understudy while, thirty teaching academic staff was selected from these institutions representing the population of the study. The instrument for data collection was a rating scale consisting of four point likert scale. The rating scale contains 15 items in a tabular form 1-5 seeks information on the students opinion on the research question, 6-10 if the lecturers opinion on the research question and 11-15 is for both students and staff respectively. Data collected were analyzed using mean statistics

Research Question 1:

To what extent has TETfund assisted in the provision of teaching materials our institutions?

Student's questionnaire item 1-5 was used to answer the above questions.

Table 1: TETfund Assistance in Providing Teaching Materials

S/N	Questionnaire Items	No of Respondent	SA	A	D	SD	SCORE	X	Decision
1	TETfund provides books, journals and other library materials to students	300	58	64	95	83	697	2.3	Rejected
2	TETfund provides computers i.e resources, library materials to facilitate teaching and learning in institutions	300	100 400	120 360	46 92	44 44	896	3.0	Agreed
3	TETfund provides white boards for effective teaching and learning in your institution	300	108 432	99 297	63 126	30 30	885	2.9	Agreed
4	TETfund provides desks and chairs for effective learning in your institutions	300	119 476	90 270	68 136	23 23	905	3.0	Agreed
5	TETfund provides interactive boards for students	300	50 200	69 207	88 176	93 93	676	2.2	Rejected

Grand mean = $13.4/5 = 2.7$

Table 1: The items in 2, 3, and 4 agreed that TETfund facilitate learning by providing computers, white boards for classroom teaching and learning based on the decision rule, while items 1 and 5 still based on the decision rule, rejects that TETfund does not provide books, library journals and other library materials to students and interactive boards to the institutions.

Research question 2: To what extent has TETfund assisted in staff training and development? The lectures questionnaire items 6-10 will be used to answer above research question.

Table 2: Lecture's Perception on TETfund Provision of Staff Training and Development

S/N	Questionnaire Items	No of Respondent	SA	A	D	SD	SCORE	X	Decision
6	Seminars, Conferences and Workshops are sponsored by TETfund in order to improve the capacity of teaching and non-teaching staff	30	10 40	15 45	2 4	3 3	92	3.0	Agreed
7	TETfund gives grants for training lecturers at home and abroad	30	12 48	13 39	2 4	3 3	94	3.1	Agreed
8	TETfund aids on the job training for non-academic staff	30	10 40	15 45	1 2	3 3	92	3.0	Agreed

9	TETfund has helped in furnishing lecturers' offices	30	3 12	5 15	10 20	12 12	59	1.9	Rejected
10	TETfund gives cars to senior lecturers	30	3 12	5 15	9 18	13 13	59	1.9	Rejected

Grand mean = $13/5 = 2.6$

From Table 2, questionnaire items no. 1-3 all have their mean greater than 2.5 going with the decision rule; we accept that; TETfund sponsors workshops, seminars and workshops for lecturers in Nigerian tertiary institutions. TETfund gives grants for training of lecturers at home and abroad. TETfund also aids on the job training for non-academic staff, still going with the decision rule, result shows that TETfund does not give cars to senior lecturers in these institution and has not furnished their offices.

Research Question 3:- To what extent has TETfund been involved in the provision of infrastructural resources in your institution. The questionnaire item is for the lecturers and students questions 11-15 will be used to answer the questions respectively.

The questionnaire item was for the lecturers and students; a question 11-15 was used to answer the questions respectively.

Table 3: TETfund Provision of Infrastructural Facilities

S/N	Questionnaire Items	No of Respondent	SA	A	D	SD	SCORE	X	Decision
11	TETfund has built an administrative block in your institution	300	122 488	98 294	50 100	30 30	912	3.0	Agreed
12	TETfund helps in building lecture halls, library and laboratory facilities to aid teaching and learning	300	125 500	102 306	40 80	33 33	919	3.0	Agreed
13	TETfund made provisions for better accommodation for students	300	38 152	42 126	100 200	120 120	598	1.9	Rejected
14	TETfund has constructed accessible roads leading to campus and bridges	300	40 160	48 144	102 204	110 110	618	2.0	Rejected
15	TETfund contributes towards quality transformation of your institutions	300	108 432	102 306	50 100	40 40	878	3.0	Agreed

From table 3, the results reveals that TETfund has provided administrative blocks, lecture halls, library and laboratory facilities and has contributed towards quality transformation in these institutions studied as each of the items has a mean greater than 2.5 items 11, 12 and 15 respectively.

Table 4: Lectures' Responses to Questionnaire 11- 15

S/N	Questionnaire Items	No of Respondent	SA	A	D	SD	SCORE	X	Decision
11	TETfund has built an administrative block in your intitution	300	10 40	12 36	5 10	3 3	89	2.9	Agreed
12	TETfund helps in building lecture halls, library and laboratory facilities to aid teaching and learning	300	15 60	10 30	4 8	1 1	91	3.0	Agreed
13	TETfund made provisions for better accommodation for students	300	3 12	2 6	15 30	10 10	58	1.9	Rejected
14	TETfund has constructed accessible roads leading to campus and bridges	300	-	-	12 24	18 18	42	1.4	Rejected
15	TETfund contributes towards quality transformation of your institutions	300	20 80	8 24	- -	- -	108	3.6	Agreed

From the table, the result reveals that TETfund built administrative blocks in these institutions studied as the questionnaire item has a mean of 2.9. The questionnaire item reveals that lecture halls, library and laboratory facilities were provided by the Tertiary Education Trust Fund to teaching and learning, similarly question item 15 shows positive result that TETfund contributes toward quality transformation of tertiary institutions. The table however reveals that TETfund did not make provision lectures accommodation, construction of accessible roads and bridges were necessary in the institutions studied as part of the expansion plan of the school as the items has a mean of 1.9 and 1.4 respectively.

Discussion of Findings

The finding from table one revealed that TETfund did not provide books, and journals materials to students and the provision of interactive boards for students with the mean of 2.3 and 2.2 respectively. This indicated that the school authorities are the ones that provided these learning materials for students and not TETfund. Although the respondents agreed that TETfund provided computers, white boards, desks and chairs with the mean rating of 3.0, 2.9 and 3.0 respectively. But the main information resources for teaching and learning were not provided by TETfund. This agreed with Onyeneze(2005) were he observed that that there are inadequate information materials like books and journals for staff and student to use in teaching and learning.

In the analyses in research question two which was on the extent TETfund assisted in

staff training and development. The finding showed that TETFund has invariably assisted in staff training and development as the mean rating of the respondents were 3.0, 3.1, 3.0, however, in the furnishing of lecturers office and provision of cars to senior lecturers were with the mean rating of 1.9 and 1.9 respectively. This finding aligns with Akwarandu(2018) that TETFund has done tremendously in staff development.

The findings in research question three which was on the extent of TETFund provision of infrastructural resources showed that both lecturers and students questionnaire were used in the discussion of finding, both respondents agreed that TETFund has provided adequate infrastructural resources in the institution. In the area of administrative blocks and lecture blocks, the mean rating of 3.0 and 3.3 respectively was positive. This agreed with Chijioke(2012) and Agunbiade(2006) that TETFund has done very great project in the building of administrative blocks and lecture halls. The findings has shown that TETFund has been the shoulder on which every higher institution hinges or leans on for the provision of information resources, infrastructural resources and human development for quality education in Nigeria.

Conclusion

Evidently this research work has shown that Tertiary Education Trust Fund has built lecture halls, administrative buildings, library and laboratories in almost all the tertiary institutions studied. TETFund has assisted in staff developments in tertiary institutions in Nigeria such as attending professional conferences, workshops, seminars, grant of scholarship in Nigeria or oversea training for academic staff pursuing doctorate programs. Equally students are offered scholarship, mostly brilliant ones are sent abroad for advance studies.

The analysis further reveals lapses on the part of TETFund, in the areas of provision of books, construction of accessible roads and bridges, provision of cars for senior lecturers, provision of accommodation for students and lecturers, and furnishing of lecturers' offices in the institution. These lapses if created would have no doubt ease the plights of students as well as lecturers and the whole learning environment in general

Recommendation:

Based on the findings of this study, the researcher recommends thus;

1. A forum should be created where students and lecturers and other members of the school community can air their views, opinions, recommendations, needs as well as advice since the activities of the fund directly and indirectly affect them.
2. More emphasis should be made on infrastructural development, especially in the areas of ITC, so that students can benefit maximally like their counterparts in other institutions.

3. Provision for accommodation should be made for students and the members of the school staff, so that the suffering of the students especially will be eased off.
4. The funds should do more in the provision of up to date books, journals, seminar papers and other relevant materials for students and other personnel's to benefit from.
5. Other forms of remuneration should be provided, like cars for senior lectures and stipends for students teaching practice.
6. The audit of the TETfund account should be transparent as much as possible, to enable Nigerians and researchers alike keep abreast with the activities of TETfund in relation to its objectives.

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