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THE IMPACT OF TERTIARY EDUCATION TRUST FUND INTERVENTION ON RESEARCH DEVELOPMENTS FOR EFFECTIVE MANAGEMENT OF FEDERAL UNIVERSITIES IN SOUTH EAST, NIGERIA

Anachuna, Obinna Nonso¹i,
Chidumebi Ngozi Oguejiofor²,
Ngozi Anthona Agu³,
Joy Itoya⁴

¹PhD,
Department of Educational Management and Policy,
Faculty of Education,

Nnamdi Azikiwe University Awka, Anambra State,

Nigeria

orcid.org/0000-0001-8345-4021

²PhD,

Department of Educational Management and Policy, Faculty of Education,

racuity of Education

Nnamdi Azikiwe University,

Awka, Anambra State,

Nigeria

³PhD,

Department of Educational Management and Policy,

Faculty of Education,

Nnamdi Azikiwe University,

Awka, Anambra State,

Nigeria

⁴PhD,

Department of Business Administration,

Ambrose Ali University,

Ekpoma, Edo State,

Nigeria

Abstract:

This study investigated the impact of Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFund) intervention on research intervention for effective management of Federal Universities in South East, Nigeria. One research question guided the study while one hypothesis was tested at a 0.05 level of significance. The study adopted a descriptive survey design. The population of the study comprised all 231 staff from the five (5) federal universities in South East, Nigeria. This consisted of 16 staff in TETFund offices and 215 Heads of

ⁱCorrespondence: email on.anachuna@unizik.edu.ng, an.agu@unizik.edu.ng

Departments in the five federal universities in South East, Nigeria. The entire population was used as the study sample purposively. The instrument used for data collection was a researcher-developed questionnaire. The instrument was validated and the reliability of the instrument was established using Cronbach Alpha to determine the internal consistency which yielded a reliability index of 0.75. In analyzing the data, mean scores and standard deviation were used to answer the research question. The t-test was used to test the hypothesis at a 0.05 level of significance. The findings revealed among others that, TETFund intervention had a significant impact on research development for effective management of federal universities in South East, Nigeria. Based on the findings, it was recommended among others that, TETFund should improve its intervention in providing grants for academic staff development for conference participation (International and National), and publications in federal universities in South East, Nigeria.

Keywords: tertiary trust fund, research development, university management

1. Introduction

Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFund) is established to create a positive impact on the management of university education in Nigeria. University education is one of the most important needs of every individual for the survival and well-being of any society. Ukala and Nwabueze (2014) defined university education primarily as an institution where knowledge, skills and ideas are built for economic expansion in the global economy through training and research. It could be referred to as an institution where knowledge is transferred and skills acquired through teaching, learning and research aimed at bringing about the needed changes in people and society at large. In the context of this work, university education is the training acquired from universities, which provides knowledge and skills needed for individual growth and societal development.

University education is a vehicle for economic, political, social and technological development of any nation. Onokerhoraye and Nwoye in Ogbonnaya (2005) stated that, through university education, new knowledge and skills are acquired for the transfer, adaptation and dissemination of knowledge generated elsewhere in the world. Ukala and Nwabueze (2014) viewed university education as a central system for economic and political development, which is vital to global competitiveness in increasing knowledge production and development. In universities, teaching, learning, administration, research processes and community service take place through the proper utilization and management of educational resources for individual growth as well as national development (Nwabueze & Nwokedi, 2016). University is a tertiary institution on which the future of every country depends because it produces elites for the growth and technological advancement of every country at a given period of time (Kpokpo, 2018). Hence, universities have the major responsibility of equipping individuals with the

advanced knowledge and skills required for positions in government, business, engineering, marketing, medicine, research and sciences.

Harvey (2004) defined university education as a non-compulsory education provided to train the younger ones to become specialists in their areas of specializations. It is the training delivered in universities through teaching, which prepares individuals for future work in various sectors of the economy (Kpokpo, 2018). University education equally means the totality of general and specialized knowledge and skills that enable university graduates to solve problems they may encounter in industries or perform scientific research as well as pedagogical work within the area of specialized knowledge that they have acquired (Ukala, Madumere-Obike & Nwabueze, 2013). University education equips individuals with new knowledge and skills to participate in nationbuilding. Proper management of university education increases staff and students' productivity through resource mobilizations for institutional growth and national development (Jaja, 2013). Hence, university education management is a systematic process of making use of human resources (academic and administrative staff) as well as non-human resources (school buildings, instructional resources, finance and time) to achieve the goals and objectives of the institution. It involves proper planning of school activities, controlling, organizing, staffing, leading, coordinating and directing the human and non-human activities needed for students' productivity and global competitiveness. Proper management of educational resources in universities increases staff and students' productivity for institutional growth and national development. Hence, students' productivity and institutional growth can be achieved through proper management of educational resources.

Management in education refers to a process of making use of the available resources towards the achievement of educational goals and objectives. Oragwu and Nwabueze (2019) stated that resources are stock or supplies of money, materials, staff and other assets that can be drawn by a person or an organization to function efficiently and effectively for university benefits. Management of university resources could be the systematic coordination of available resources (human, material, time, energy and funds) in the university through proper organization for quality teaching and learning geared towards the actualization of institutional set goals and objectives (Nwabueze, 2017). It is a distinct process consisting of activities such as planning, organizing, actuating and controlling of educational resources aimed at actualizing individual growth and institutional development. University management plays a vital role in fostering social cohesion, reducing inequalities and raising the level of knowledge, skills and competences in society. It is the initiative by university managers and administrators to properly and effectively attend to the concerns, queries, proposals, grievances and feedback of students, and academic and non-academic staff promptly for improved productivity (Kpokpo, 2018). Hence, the management of university resources is a process demanding the performance of specific functions required for quality outputs from university institutions.

The management of these resources available in universities could be defined as the systematic process of controlling and directing human resources (academic and administrative staff) for knowledge building as well as non-human resources (school buildings, instructional resources, energy, finance and time) to achieve the goals and objectives of universities (Nwabueze, 2016). All these resources can be managed properly by the administrative heads of universities to achieve the objectives of establishing the universities. Universities in Nigeria are owned by the state government, federal government, individuals and organizations. The focus of this study was on the Federal Universities in South East, Nigeria. The universities in the zone have experienced so many setbacks in the management of educational resources for over twenty (20) years both in the provision and maintenance of the needed resources, which eventually made the utilization of these resources ineffective. Even when few non-human resources are available, the human resources available to utilize the resources are poorly managed and motivated. Poor management of educational resources had led to a series of industrial actions (strikes) by the lecturers, which had affected the quality of graduates produced by Nigerian universities.

The universities are disposed to research, teaching and training of quality graduates for both the intermediate and higher education sectors, but the resources needed to achieve quality education seem to be poorly managed. The poor management of educational resources in the federal universities in South East, Nigeria seems to affect the academic programmes negatively. These poor management practices seem to create poor lecturers' attitudes to work and managerial ineffectiveness in universities. Some of the administrative heads of these universities seem not to perform their duties as expected due to poor management of educational resources in the universities in the South East leading to poor delivery of instructions to the students, which negatively affects their academic productivity. The unavailability and poor utilization of these educational resources in universities in South East, Nigeria had really affected the university administrative functions, academic instructions and students' achievements, which calls for the assistance of TETFund in the management of universities in South East (Ukala & Nwabueze, 2014).

These setbacks made the Nigerian government to establish an intervention agency known as 'Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFund)' to assist tertiary institutions in Nigeria to manage educational resources properly for quality education delivery. Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFund), which started as the Education Tax Fund (ETF) in 1993 in pursuance of the Education Decree of 1993, as an Intervention Fund to administer and disburse 2% education tax imposed on profits of all registered companies operating in Nigeria (TETFund, 2012). The ETF started off well, intervening in all aspects of public education, but became overburdened, overstretched and less effective mainly due to inadequate funding and expanded scope (Udu & Nkwede, 2014). Subsequently, in 2011, a Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFund) replaced the ETF with a special focus on improving and sustaining education in States and Federal Tertiary Institutions using the same 2% education tax. Specifically, the TETFund has the mandate to intervene and

mitigate the apparent lingering problems noticed in the education sector since the early 1990s, which are often attributed to the inadequacy of infrastructural, academic learning facilities and funding (Udu & Nkwede, 2014). Generally, TETFund is responsible for the repositioning of public tertiary institutions in Nigeria by translating vision into a strategic plan for promoting higher education.

TETFund was introduced in Nigeria to support the students and academic staff in knowledge building through fund generation and disbursement for knowledge management, and skill acquisition through research and development programmes (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2011). The major areas in universities where TETFund assistance is needed in the management of universities include academic staff management, infrastructural management, students' management, and financial management (Ukala & Nwabueze, 2014). In the university system, academic staff implement the academic programmes, solve academic problems, and cope with their own individual needs and those of the society for global competitiveness with proper intervention by TETFund. Academic staff of universities with the assistance of TETfund promote effective instructional transactions from the domain of teaching, research and learning through creative ideas, participation and cooperative learning, research development, analysis and critical thinking, problem-solving, innovation and encouragement of creative and divergent thinking with appropriate time management practices for quality outputs (Madumere-Obike, Ukala & Nwabueze, 2013). These instructional transactions can lead to adequate development of knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values that enable academic staff to function effectively in the university system and live as responsible citizens as well as make useful contributions to society at the appropriate time and place (Kareem, Akinpelu & Gafar, 2021). Hence, the contributions and impact of TETFund to universities for research and global development include the provision of buses to convey staff/students for lectures, the building of hostels for students, the building of classroom blocks for teaching/learning, the provision of funds for school development, and provision of learning materials/equipment to schools (Ukala & Nwabueze, 2014). The school buses provided through TETfund interventions are used to convey staff/students within and outside the school for academic activities; hostels provided for students are used for accommodation; classroom blocks are used for teaching/learning/examinations; and funds provided by development, procurement **TETFund** used for school learning materials/equipment for creativity and capacity building (Aprebo & Onyeike, 2018).

Unfortunately, all the above targets are hard to actualize due to poor fund management and encouragement from the Government, and as such require the intervention of TETFund for adequate management of the institutions. The challenges inhibiting the proper management of funds for university development include: mismanagement of funds for institutional underdevelopment, diversion of facilities provided by TETFund into private use, poor management of educational facilities by students, and poor maintenance of the available educational resources (Ukala & Nwabueze, 2014). These challenges affect the management of students' academic

progress and academic staff building. Academic staff management is the systematic management of staff in the areas of promotion, condition of service, grants for research and development, accommodations, transport allowances, academic scholarships, health and safety management, and motivational packages through adequate provision of funds by TETFund. The funds generated by TETFund are disbursed as research fund grants for training, professional development and knowledge building among academic staff of universities, as well as the development of physical infrastructure. TETFund contributes maximally to erecting buildings such as staff offices, classroom blocks, libraries, laboratories, and ICT facilities needed for the development of middle-level manpower skills (students' productivity) in universities (Ukala & Nwabueze, 2014). Hence, there is a need for TETFund interventions in universities in Nigeria generally, and in the South-East particularly to promote students' personnel administration in university management. With the effort of TETFund to improve access to quality education in Nigeria tertiary institutions, it had sponsored over 26,840 academic staff who benefitted from staff training and development with some of them studying outside Nigeria and over 1,101 presidential scholarships awarded to graduates for innovation and development to study in 25 top universities in the world, but federal universities in South East, Nigeria have only benefitted little (Nagbi & Micah, 2019).

Amongst other TETFund achievements in Nigeria universities are over 89 academic journal publications and 46 manuscript developments, of which the majority of staff that benefited are from the North-East, North-West, North-Central, South-West and South-South, Nigeria (Abubakar, Musa & Muhammad, 2019). According to Abubakar, Musa and Muhammad (2019), an N 3 billion seed grant was set aside to serve as a research fund to encourage institution-based research, but universities in South-East, Nigeria have benefited little or none from the project. Also, over 5, 999 conference attendances where academic staff are sponsored to various places in the world for interaction with other colleagues to gain ideas and bring these ideas back home had been sponsored by TETFund, but the academic staff of universities in South-East, Nigeria seem to have benefited little or none (Larry & Joseph, 2014). Could it be that the university management is not managing the TETFund allocations to universities in South East as expected, or the management staff diverted these funds into private use or that the allocations are partially not allocated to the universities by the TETFund management?

Despite the successes recorded with regard to TETFund intervention, Nigeria are still facing problems and challenges in assessing the funds generated through TETfund interventions. These universities have been complaining of poor infrastructural resources which affect the building of knowledge and skills negatively, lecturers seem to not receive the research grants expected of them for capacity building and development among other challenges. This poor management of educational resources seems not to have changed much as there are still cases of inadequate classrooms, lecture halls and teaching aids, and the issues of poor capacity building, high turnover of workers and poor library services (Nwaogwugwu & Nwaogwugwu, 2020). According to Nagbi and Micah (2019), the attention of the government has been drawn to the "sorry state" condition of Nigerian

universities by stakeholders, but their effort seems to be neglected. These and other factors seem to have been the causes of strikes in universities from time to time. This study therefore investigated the impact of the Tertiary Education Trust Fund on research developments for the effective management of Federal Universities in South East, Nigeria.

2. Statement of the Problem

Despite some successes made by TETFund to enhance the delivery of quality education in Nigeria, universities in South East, Nigeria are facing problems and challenges that require TETfund interventions. Universities in South East, Nigeria are still faced with challenges in accessing the funds generated through TETfund interventions for institutional development and global competitiveness. These universities have been complaining about the dearth of research grants which has affected the building of knowledge and skills negatively; the lecturers seem not to receive the research grants expected of them for capacity building and development among other challenges. This poor management of TETFund interventions especially as it is concerned with research development has resulted in high turnover rates among lecturers most especially In South East Nigeria. Could it be that funds are not evenly distributed to universities in South East by TETfund? or could it be that the funds distributed are not properly managed by university administrators? Poor management of funds disbursed to universities in the South East seems to negatively affect research development which invariably affects the quality of teaching and learning in those universities which are institutions established to produce high-level manpower needed for societal growth and development. It was against this backdrop that the impact of TETFund intervention on research development for effective management of Federal Universities in South East, Nigeria was necessitated.

2.1 Purpose of the Study

This study aimed to assess the impact of Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFund) intervention on research development for effective management of Federal Universities in South East, Nigeria.

2.2 Research Questions

The following research question guided the study.

 What is the impact of TETFund intervention on research developments for the management of Federal Universities in South East, Nigeria?

2.3 Hypothesis

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

• There is no significant difference between the mean scores of TETFund staff and heads of departments on the impact of TETFund intervention on research

developments for effective management of Federal Universities in South East, Nigeria.

3. Research Method

This study adopted a descriptive survey design. The study was carried out in the South-East Nigeria. There are five states in the zone, and they include: Abia, Anambra, Ebonyi, Enugu, and Imo. The population of the study comprised all 231 staff from the five (5) federal universities in South East, Nigeria. The entire population comprising 231 TETFund staff and Heads of Departments in the five federal universities in South East, Nigeria were used as the study sample purposively in this research. This consisted of 16 staff in TETFund offices and 215 Heads of Departments in the five federal universities in South East, Nigeria.

The instrument used for data collection was a structured questionnaire developed by the researcher from the views of experts and the literature reviewed. The questionnaire was subjected to face validation using three experts who are lecturers; two in the Department of Educational Management and Policy and one from Measurement and Evaluation in the Department of Educational Foundations, all in the Faculty of Education, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka. The Cronbach Alpha method was used to determine the internal consistency (reliability) of the instruments which yielded a coefficient of 0.75. The instrument was administered to the respondents by the researcher with the help of 12 research assistants. Mean scores and standard deviation were used as the statistical tools to answer the research questions while the t-test was used to test the hypotheses at a 0.05 level of significance.

4. Results

What is the impact of TETFund intervention on research developments for Effective Management of Federal Universities in South East, Nigeria?

Data in Table 1 present the mean scores and standard deviation of TETFund Staff and Heads of Departments on research developments for the management of federal universities in South East, Nigeria. The respondents agreed on all the items presented in the table with high mean scores above the mean criterion of 2.50 except item 29 which has low mean scores from both staff. From the analysis, it was indicated that the higher the mean score, the lower the standard deviation and vice versa.

The aggregate mean scores of 3.17 and 3.23 for TETFund Staff and Heads of Departments indicated that they agreed on the items in the Table except item number 29. Therefore, the Impact of TETFund intervention on research developments for effective management of federal universities in South East, Nigeria include: providing grants for academic staff involvement in local conferences for knowledge building, assisting them with grants to participate in international conferences for knowledge sharing, assisting academic staff in Institution Based Researches for global competitiveness, supporting

academic staff in academic journal publications for career growth, sponsoring of university-based journal publications for institutional growth, encouraging research collaboration between academia and industries for institutional growth, award recognition for outstanding research outcomes to encourage staff for more works, and giving them financial incentives for outstanding academic publications promote hardwork.

Table 1: Mean Scores and Standard Deviation of TETFund Staff and Heads of Departments on the Impact of TETFund Intervention on Research Developments for Effective Management of Federal Universities

	The impact of TETFund intervention on research	TETFund		HODs		Decision
S/N	developments for effective management of federal	Staff (16)		(215)		
	universities includes:	Mean	St.D	Mean	St.D	
21	Providing grants for academic staff involvement in local conferences for knowledge building.	3.38	1.66	3.47	0.45	Agreed
22	Assisting them with grants to participate in international conferences for knowledge sharing.	3.19	1.70	3.46	0.45	Agreed
23	Assisting academic staff in institution-based research for global competitiveness.	3.31	1.67	3.44	0.45	Agreed
24	Supporting academic staff in academic journal publications for career growth.	3.50	1.63	3.33	0.46	Agreed
25	Supporting the organization of seminars and workshops by university faculties for the exchange of knowledge.	3.50	1.63	3.42	0.45	Agreed
26	Sponsoring of university-based journal publications for institutional growth.	3.38	1.66	3.54	0.44	Agreed
27	Encouraging research collaboration between academia and industries for institutional growth.	3.44	1.64	3.43	0.45	Agreed
28	Award recognition for outstanding research outcomes encourages them for more work.	3.69	1.58	3.45	0.45	Agreed
29	Giving them financial incentives for outstanding academic publications promotes hard work.	1.15	2.21	1.53	0.58	Disagreed
	Aggregate Mean scores	3.17	1.71	3.23	0.47	Agreed

Ho1: There is no significant difference between the mean scores of TETFund staff and heads of departments on the impact of TETFund intervention on research developments for effective management of federal universities in South East, Nigeria.

Table 2: Summary of t-test analysis on the difference between the mean Scores of TETFund staff and heads of departments on the impact of TETFund intervention on research developments for effective management of federal universities

Intervention on i	cocarci	i ac veio	princition of effective management of federal and versities						
Staff	N	Mean	St.D	df	t-calculated value	t-critical value	Decision		
TETFund	16	3.17	1.71	229	- 0.140	12.00	Accept		
HODs	215	3.23	0.47		- 0.140	±2.00	Ho1		

Data presented in Table 2 showed the summary of the t-test analysis on the difference between the mean scores of TETFund staff and heads of departments on the impact of TETFund intervention on research developments for effective management of federal universities in South East, Nigeria. The null hypothesis was accepted because the t-calculated value of - 0.140 is less than the t-critical value of ±2.00 at 229 degrees of freedom and 0.05 level of significance. This implies that there is no significant difference between the mean scores of TETFund staff and heads of departments on the impact of TETFund intervention on research developments for the management of federal universities in South East, Nigeria.

5. Discussion of Findings

5.1 Impact of TETFund Intervention on Research Development

The findings of this study equally revealed that the impact of TETFund intervention on research developments for effective management of federal universities in South East, Nigeria include: providing grants for academic staff involvement in local conferences for knowledge building, assisting them with grants to participate in international conferences for knowledge sharing, assisting academic staff in Institution Based Researches for global competitiveness, supporting academic staff in academic journal publications for career growth, sponsoring of university-based journal publications for institutional growth, encouraging research collaboration between academia and industries for institutional growth, award recognition for outstanding research outcomes to encourage staff for more works, and giving them financial incentives for outstanding academic publications promote hard-work. The test of hypothesis three showed that there is no significant difference between the mean scores of TETFund staff and heads of departments on the impact of TETFund intervention on research developments for effective management of federal universities in South East, Nigeria. Both TETFund staff and heads of departments agreed that TETFund intervention in research developments promotes innovative ideas and creativity for the management of federal universities.

TETFund as an intervention agency assists staff and students of tertiary institutions in research and publications for improved productivity as well as create a positive impact on the research development of universities in South East, Nigeria. This is because Institutional Based Research (IBR) helps to explore and generate revenue needed for research and development among staff and students of tertiary institutions. It then, therefore, means that TETFund helps to make positive impacts on effective university management through research and development. In line with the findings, Onwuchekwa (2016) revealed that TETFund intervention to a high extent has no significant influence on educational research in Universities in South East, Nigeria. The findings of this study are also in tandem with Fejoh and Adesanwo (2021) who revealed that TETFund interventions have a significant impact on infrastructural development, staff development and industrial peace in universities. TETFund is meant to intervene in staff and student's growth and progress through scholarship and research development, especially the academic staff that are still studying to acquire higher degrees.

6. Conclusion

Based on the findings, the study concluded that TETFund intervention had been a building block in the development of tertiary institutions in Nigeria. However, the Intervention in the management of federal universities in South East, Nigeria by TETFund has brought about positive changes in the institutions. These positive changes are seen in the area of research development which invariably leads to improvement in the teaching and learning processes because of the involvement of university staff members engaging in research development made possible by TETFund.

6.1 Recommendations

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

- TETFund should increase its intervention in providing grants for academic staff development for conference participation (International and National), and publications in federal universities in South East, Nigeria.
- TETFund should intervene in providing grants for students' personnel administration, which include; research building, and industrial training to improve their performance academically and the management in federal universities in South East, Nigeria.

Conflict of Interest Statement

I confirm that I have carefully read and accepted the journal's policies and I confirm that I have received a permission from co-authors to publish this paper with the journal and I equally confirm that this paper is not already published elsewhere.

About the Author(s)

Dr. Obinna Anachuna is currently a senior lecturer in the Department of Educational Management and Policy, Faculty of Education, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka Anambra State, Nigeria. He has a special interest in educational planning, management and administration.

Google Scholar: https://scholar.google.com/citations?hl=en&user=NE4KycMAAAAI

Academia.edu: https://unizik.academia.edu/ObinnaNonsoAnachuna
Researchgate: https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Obinna-Anachuna-2

ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8345-4021

Dr. Chidumebi Ngozi Oguejiofor is currently a Lecturer II in the Department of Educational Management and Policy, Faculty of Education, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, Anambra State, Nigeria.

Dr. Anthonia Ngozi Agu is currently a Lecturer I in the Department of Educational Management and Policy, Faculty of Education, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka Anambra State, Nigeria.

Dr. Joy Iyota is currently a Lecturer I in the Department of Business Administration, Ambrose Ali University, Ekpoma, Edo State, Nigeria.

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