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IMPACT OF TERTIARY EDUCATION TRUST FUND (TETFUND) ON ACADEMIC STAFF DEVELOPMENT TO ALL BENEFITING TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS IN BENUE STATE OF NIGERIA

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Abstract

This research work focused on the impact of Tertiary Education Trust Fund on academic staff development in tertiary institutions in Benue State. A total of 155 academic staff from five tertiary institutions in Benue State were sampled for this research. Three research questions and two hypotheses were formulated for the studies. The study adopted the descriptive correlative survey research design. Carefully designed questionnaire was used as the instrument for data collection. The analysis made use of Chi-square to test the hypotheses. The data collected were analysed using frequency and percentages. The findings revealed that the chi-square calculated at 2 degrees of freedom is 117.071a with a P value of 0.00. Since the P-value of 0.00 is less than the set alpha value of 0.05, there is a relationship between TETFund and the academic staff training and development of academic staff of Benue State tertiary institutions. Also, there is a relationship between TETFund and academic staff research output in tertiary institutions in Benue State. TETFund intervention on training and development has great impact on improved skills and development of the staff of tertiary institutions. Also, TETFund sponsorship for training of academic staff has significant impact on research and academic growth in tertiary institutions. Findings suggest that TETFund should increase the current amount allocated for academic staff training considering the preset economic conditions and remove or reduce the bureaucratic processes involved in accessing funds for easy assessment of fund.

Keywords: Impact, TETFund, development, academic staff, training

Introduction

Quality education/ training is the foundation of social and economic development of any nation (Kingdom & Maekae, 2013; Abolarin, 2019). This is because through education individuals are trained to become literate and aware of

their social, economic and physical environment (Asiyai, 2015; Tuncel & Cobanoglu, 2018). According to Akpotohwo and Ogeibiri (2018), education is the instrument used to incorporate a person into a sector/society in order to attain self-actualization, build national consciousness, foster national unity and aim for physical, economic, political, science, cultural and technical development. This view was made more prominent by the Federal Republic of Nigeria's (2013) National Policy on Education (NPE) which sees education as the instrument per excellence, thus education is the pillar for which all things work (Bello & Ibrahim, 2021).

Tertiary education in Nigeria is very fundamental to the realization of the goals of nation building. Thus, tertiary institutions are the production conduits of the nation's human capital (Njoku & Onyegbula, 2017). However, in tertiary institutions there are constant modifications and there are willing and unwilling lecturers to be trained and retrained on regular basis to meet up with its flux (Peretomode & Chukwuma, 2013) as globalization, the economy and competition for talents is becoming the trend worldwide. The above situation implies that lecturers need to keep abreast of the time and the trends of knowledge development in their disciplines so as not to become obsolete and become redundant. Lecturers' development programmes are considered very critical (Isiaka et al., 2020). Yusuf (2010) opined that the challenges confronting tertiary institutions in Nigeria include funding, the growth of private tertiary institutions, management challenges and so on but the challenge dealing the worst deathblow is that of underfunding of tertiary institutions.

To meet up with these challenges, tertiary institutions cannot exist without adequate provisions for updating and improving the research, teaching and learning processes of their staff (Omotoyinbo, 2019). The importance of ensuring this professional training and excellence in research, teaching and learning was supported by the general conference of UNESCO in November, 1997. The importance of sustaining national and international quality cannot be overemphasized as quality in this line demands certain components that are relevant to continuous development, teaching and learning, methodology and mobility as well as national and international co-operation (Modu & Haruna, 2019). In fact, education for life entails updating the knowledge of the academic staff, improving their teaching skills and establishing appropriate academic staff development structures (Sadiq, 2021). The need for lecturers to improve their knowledge, skills, attitudes and behaviours while on the job is even more critical now in developing nations than ever because of a number of reasons (Nduagu & Saidu, 2021). For instance, academic programmes in our universities rarely adequately prepare candidates as “finished” products for their future positions and their accompanying responsibilities (Peretomode & Chukwuma, 2013). Staff training programmes are primarily aimed at preparing its recipients for the world of work and making them self employed or self-reliant (Edet, 2018; Okeke-Ezeanyanwu & Oguejiofor, 2020).

Statement of the problem

Education is widely accepted as a major tool for promoting socio-economic, political and cultural development in Nigeria (Oke & Dang, 2019). Article 8 (b) of

the World Declaration on Higher Education in the 21st century (1981) mandated higher institutions to offer varieties of training programmes which include; short courses, part-time, modularized courses, and distance learning (Ikutal & Edet, 2018). In support of training Jehanzeb and Bashir (2013) stated that organizations that do not provide sufficient training opportunities for employees are doing themselves a disservice. These organizations may miss out employees that are dedicated to their jobs (Olusanya et al., 2012).

It is imperative to note that between the first and second Republic in Nigeria, thousands of graduates from government owned universities and polytechnics were highly demanded due to their skills and exploits in various fields of human endeavour resulting from the quality of training inputs by the institutions. However, the situation has changed due to poor human resources development resulting from inadequate funding of education, poor staff attitude to work, policy inconsistency, managerial incompetence, and corrupt practices (Ezeali & Esiagu, 2009). For a better academic future, it is important for Nigeria to invest in human capital development of its tertiary institutions.

Objectives of the Study

The main objective of this study is to examine the impact of TETFund in staff training and development in public tertiary institutions in Benue State. Specifically, the study seeks to:

- i. determine the extent of TETFund contribution to academic staff training and development in tertiary institutions in Benue State of Nigeria;
- ii. Examine the influence of TETFund contribution in enhancing academic staff research output in tertiary institutions in Benue State and
- iii. Investigate the influence of TETFund performance in terms of academic staff training and development in tertiary institutions in Benue State of Nigeria.

Research questions

In line with the problem stated above, the following research questions were designed for further analysis.

- i. To what extent has TETFund contributed to academic staff training and development in tertiary institutions in Benue State?

Hypotheses

In order to examine the impact of TETFund in academic staff training and development in tertiary institutions in Benue State of Nigeria, the following hypotheses were formulated:

- i. H_{o1} : There is no significant relationship between TETFund and academic staff training and development in public tertiary institutions in Benue State of Nigeria.
- ii. H_{o2} : There is no significant relationship between TETFund and academic staff research output in tertiary institutions in Benue State.

Research design

Research design as defined by Kumar (2005) is a procedural plan that is adopted by the researcher to answer questions validly, objectively, accurately and economically. This research work adopted the survey method of research. This is because method of research enables the researcher to undertake an investigation into a phenomenon in its context thereby not making it necessary to replicate the phenomenon in a laboratory or experimental setting in order to better understand the phenomena in other words. It also gives room for the generalization of findings from a sample to a population (Sulaiman, 2016).

Population and sample size

The study covered all the five TETFund benefitting tertiary institutions in Benue State of Nigeria. The population size was drawn from five benefitting institutions in Benue State which are:
Benue State University, Makurdi, University of Agriculture, Makurdi, College of Education, Oju College of Education, Katsina-ala, and Benue State Polytechnic, Ugbokolo.

Sampling Technique

Simple random sampling technique was used for this research. This is because the simple random sampling technique ensures that each element within the population has an equal chance of being represented, that is, each element has an equal probability of being represented (Bhardwaj, 2019).

Method of Data Collection

The study collected data/ information through interviews and questionnaires which were administered to academic staff of the selected institutions. The data collected for this study was presented in tables, using absolute figures and percentages which were useful for explanation and further analysis. The study employed the use of descriptive and inferential statistics with the aid of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) to test the formulated hypothesis.

Results and Discussion of Findings

Research Question 1: To what extent has TETFund contributed to academic staff training and development in tertiary institutions in Benue State?

Table 1: Awareness of TETFund for academic staff training and development in tertiary institutions in Benue State

Response	Frequency	Percentage %
Yes	155	100.00
No	0	0
Total	155	100

Source: Fieldwork, 2023

Table 2: Respondents that benefitted from TETFund

Responds	Frequency	Percentage %
Yes	134	86.50
No	21	13.5
Total	155	100

Source: Fieldwork, 2023**Table 3: Areas of TETFund staff development programme respondents have benefitted**

Question / Responds	Frequency	Percentage %
M.Sc, M.Phil, Ph.D.	82	52.9
Seminar, conferences, workshops	10	6.5
Both	42	27.1
Non	21	13.5
Total	155	100

Source: Fieldwork, 2023**Table 4: Areas of TETFund staff development programme Respondents benefitted from**

Location of benefitted programme	Frequency	Percentage %
Locally	124	80
Overseas	10	6.5
Non of the above	21	13.5
Total	155	100

Source: Fieldwork, 2023**Table 5: Impact of TETFund sponsored training on staff skills and development**

Location of benefitted programme	SA	A	D	SD	UD
TETFund is an effective instrument to achieving staff training and development	114 (73.5 %)	31 (20%)	NIL (0.0%)	10 (6.5%)	NIL (0.0%)
Accessing TETFund for staff training and development is difficult	NIL (0.0%)	54 (34.8%)	56 (36.1%)	45 (29%)	NIL (0.0%)
TETFund intervention for staff training and development is sufficient for supporting institutions manpower needs	85 (54.8%)	32 (20.7%)	11 (7.1%)	22 (14.2%)	5 (3.2%)

Source: Fieldwork, 2023

This question can be answered by Tables 1-5. The results presented on Table 1 showed that TETFund has created awareness on the existence of staff training and development programmes in these tertiary institutions. This is because 100 % of the sampled academic staff are aware of the existence of TETFund staff training and development in tertiary institutions. Although all the academic staff are aware, not all of them have accessed these funds for staff train and development. However, majority (86.5 %) of the sampled staff used this medium for training just a few representing 13.5 % have not as presented on Table 2. The results in Table 3 showed that TETFund have trained academic staff through several programmes such as PhD, M.Sc., M.Phil, seminar, conferences and workshops. These programmes were not only locally within Nigeria but also overseas. Most of the academic staff training were locally about 80 % while only 6.5 % were trained overseas. The results presented on Table 5 showed that the staff trained accessed the funds without difficulty. Although a good percentage (34.8 %) also accessed with great difficulty. The results on Table 5 also proved that TETFund intervention is an effective instrument to achieving staff training and development of these institutions. The research also showed that TETFUND intervention for staff training and development is adequate for supporting institutions manpower needs as 75.5 % respondents agreed to this

Question 2: How has TETFund contributed in enhancing academic staff research output in tertiary institutions in Benue State?

Table 6: Awareness of TETFund research and publication intervention strategy

Responds	Frequency	Percentage %
Yes	144	92.9
No	11	7.1
Total	155	100

Source: Fieldwork, 2023

Table 7: Impact of TETFund sponsored training on staff research and publication

Location of benefitted programme	SA	A	D	SD
TETFund research grant is enough to meet academic staff demand of you institution	48 (31.1 %)	NIL (0.0%)	96 (61.9 %)	11 (7 %)
TETFund research grants enhances the research output of academic staff	108 (69.7 %)	36 (23.2 %)	NIL (0.0 %)	11 (7.1 %)

Location of benefitted programme	SA	A	D	SD
Accessing TETFund is challenging, difficult and discouraging	21 (13.5%)	33 (21.3%)	52 (33.5%)	49 (31.6 %)

Source: Fieldwork, 2023

Table 8: Areas of TETFund academic staff research benefitted

Area of research intervention accessed	Frequency	Percentage %
Institutional base research (IBR) grant	134	86.5
National research fund (NRF)	0	0.0
Not benefitted	21	13.5
Total	155	100

Source: Fieldwork, 2023

Table 9: Most valuable research grant

Research intervention	Frequency	Percentage %
Institutional base research (IBR) grant	144	92.9
National research fund (NRF) grant	0	0.0
Not benefitted	11	7.1
Total	155	100

Source: Fieldwork, 2023

This research question can be addressed using Tables 6-9. The research showed in Table 6 that not all the academic staff of these tertiary institutions are aware of the TETFund research interventions. However, majority of the staff (92.9 %) of these institutions are aware and have utilized the fund while a few (7.1 %) are not. The research also showed that the research grant is an effective tool in improving/ enhancing quality of research of academic staff of these tertiary institutions. The research also proved that TETFund research and intervention grant is not adequate in meeting academic staff demand. This is because 68.9 % of the academic staff agreed to it sufficient in meeting academic staff demand as shown on Table 7. Results on Table 8 showed that the most accessed research intervention is institutional base research compared to national research fund. Hence the institutional base research (IBR) grant is the most valued grant by academic staff of the studied institutions.

Testing of Hypothesis

H₀1: There is no significant relationship between TETFund and academic staff training and development in public tertiary institutions in Benue State of Nigeria.

Table 10: Chi square analysis of the relationship between TETFund and academic staff training and development in public tertiary institutions in Benue State of Nigeria

Responses	fo	fe	R	P	Df	χ^2 cal.	Decision
SD	10	51.7	-41.7	0.00	2	117.071 ^a	Sig.
A	31	51.7	-20.7				
SA	114	51.7	62.3				
Total	155						

Source: Fieldwork, 2023

In the Table 1, Chi-square analysis shows that the value of chi- square calculated at 2 degrees of freedom is 117.071^a with a P value of 0.00. However, since the P-value of 0.00 is less than the set alpha value of 0.05. Therefore, null hypothesis stating that there is no significant relationship between TETFund and academic staff training and development in public tertiary institutions in Benue State is not accepted. This means that the alternative hypothesis is accepted, indicating that there is a relationship between TETFund and academic staff training and development in public tertiary institutions in Benue State.

H₀2: There is no significant relationship between TETFund and academic staff research output in tertiary institutions in Benue State.

Table 11: Chi-square analysis of the relationship between TETFund and academic staff research output in tertiary institutions in Benue State

Responses	fo	fe	R	P	Df	χ^2 cal.	Decision
SD	96	51.7	44.3	0.000	2	70.310 ^a	Sig.
A	11	51.7	-40.7				
SA	48	51.7	-3.7				
Total	155						

Source: Fieldwork, 2023

Table 2 shows that the value of chi- square calculated at 2 degrees of freedom is 70.10^a with a P value of 0.00. Again, since the P-value of 0.00 is less than the set alpha value of 0.05, the null hypothesis stating that is no significant relationship between TETFund and academic staff research output in tertiary institutions in Benue State is not accepted. This means that the alternative hypothesis is accepted, indicating that there is a relationship between TETFund and academic staff research output in tertiary institutions in Benue State.

Conclusion

From the research, it is clear that the manpower sponsored programmes established by TETFund are commendable. This is because it has been found that the training of academic staff has positive influence on the individual staff productivity. The study concluded that TETFund interventions have significant impact on academic staff performance of tertiary institutions in Benue State. However, delay in disbursement of staff training funds have discouraged and even denied many academic staff some special training.

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