

Tertiary education trust fund intervention on academic staff capacity building in Lagos State University, Nigeria

Abdulaziz Isiaka, Olokooba Issa Nasiru, Iyekolo Alexander Olushola
Department of Social Sciences Education, University of Ilorin, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

The study adopted the descriptive survey research design to assess Tertiary Education Trust Fund intervention on academic staff capacity building in Lagos State University, Nigeria. The population for this study was all academic staff of Lagos State University. Two purposes of the study were raised and two research questions were also formulated. One hundred and ninety-six questionnaires were randomly administered to one hundred and ninety-six (196) academic staff in the university. The questionnaire titled "Tetfund Intervention on Academic Staff Capacity Building Questionnaire" was used for data collection. The findings of the study revealed that provision of infrastructure for effective teaching and learning is the major the fund intervention towards qualitative transformation of academic staff in Lagos State University. The finding of the study also showed that the fund intervention in Lagos State University for academic staff capacity building was major priority. Based on the findings of the study, it was recommended that the fund should eliminate the level of bureaucratic bottlenecks often associated with accessing approved funds. Having noted that University education is cost-effective, donor agencies and philanthropic individuals and groups, should assist governments in funding tertiary education in the country.

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Corresponding Author:

Olokooba Issa Nasiru,
Department of Social Sciences Education,
University of Ilorin,
P.M.B. 1515, Kwara State, Nigeria.
Email: olokooba.in@unilorin.edu.ng

1. INTRODUCTION

The challenges of tertiary education in Nigeria are poor structure, inadequate library and laboratory equipment, poor infrastructural facilities, poor innovative and creative approach to learning, poor scientific information and technological Literacy, inefficient allocation of the meager resources available to the sector. The role of Tertiary Education Trust Fund (Tetfund) cannot be over emphasized in addressing aforementioned problems. The tertiary education trust fund was originally established as Educational Trust Fund (ETF) by act No.7 of 1993 as amended by act No 40 of 1998 now repealed and replaced with Tertiary education trust fund (Tetfund). It is an intervention agency set to provide supplementary support to all level of public tertiary institutions with the main objective of using funding alongside project management for the rehabilitation, restoration and consolidation of tertiary education in Nigeria [1].

The main source of income available to the fund is the 2% education tax paid from the assessable profit of companies registered in Nigeria. The Federal Inland Revenue Service (FIRS) assesses and collects the tax on behalf of the government [2]. Education is regarded as the sine quo-non for societal development.

Nigerian educational system is constituted primary, secondary and tertiary education. In order to enhance the quality and standard of education particularly at the tertiary level, the Tertiary Education Trust Fund (Tetfund) was primarily established to ensure adequate funding of the sector primarily at the tertiary level as a prerequisite in providing quality and standard education back ground for the people by solving the problem [3].

Development of the educational sector means the development of all other sectors of the society. All people need training, development, upgrading and certification to engage in the various sectors of the economy [4]. The Educational sector suffers a lot of problems ranging from lack of proper supervision and monitoring, inadequate funding, mismanagement and misallocation of resources among others. Many policies have been put in place by different administration to address the afore-mentioned problems in Nigeria. [5].

Tertiary education trust fund came into being at a time when the education sector had suffered many years of neglect by successive governments which resulted in large scale decay of institutional facilities, physical structure, academic teaching and research equipment [6]. In addition, teachers' morale has been dampened and genuine interest in teaching and learning has been eroded in our educational system. [7] Reported that lecturers are the priority in Tetfund's intervention policy, because they are the driver communication and knowledge in the sector. If lecturers were omitted, a gap which cannot be filled had been created in educational development. Consequently, the Tertiary Education Trust Fund (Tetfund) is being looked upon by the education sector as the alternative source of funding to run the system. Despite these demands, Tetfund largely depends on resources of revenue from the profits of companies, which are not doing well due to several years of government neglect [3].

J. Bongila say [8, 9] Emphasized that higher education in Nigeria suffers a severe crisis of funding, and its leaders possess little experience with institutional advancement as an alternative source of funding. With the level of underfunding in tertiary institutions in West Africa, there is the need to evolve worthwhile strategies that will make it possible for the institutions to achieve qualitative and transformed education. The provision of requisite instructional materials and equipment in the various course programmes of tertiary institutions in Nigeria is grossly inadequate. This is one of factors that calls for the intervention of Tetfund in the sector[10].

As part of the responsibilities of Tetfund, they provide fund for academic staff to embark on in service training and development by sponsoring their further training in various academic fields, both local and international [6, 11] Also discovered that due to Tetfund interventions, many lecturers have been sponsored to local and international seminars and conferences in addition to Tetfund sponsored oversea training and retraining of academic staff. [12]. Findings revealed that staff development improve academic staff competence and proficiency which boost their productivity and performance for quality and academic excellence in the school. In tertiary institutions in Lagos State, participation in staff training and development is open to both male and female academic staff. However, access to it may be hindered or delayed due to certain factors specific to a particular group of people.

Article 8 (b) of the World Declaration on Higher Education in the 21st century mandated the higher institutions to offer varieties of training programmes which include short courses, part-time, modularized courses, and distance learning. It has been noted that every economy is investing in research and knowledge generation through human capital development [13-16] which will equip them to face economic challenges, competitions and their areas of needs. The training of teachers helps the education system cope with the changing society and the universities to boost their human capacity, teaching, research, skills, mentoring and knowledge acquisition. In the same vein, universities cannot exist without adequate provisions for updating and improving research, teaching and learning processes of their staff both male and female.

Education in Nigeria has been faced with so many problems including funding which has resulted in decay of physical structures poor library and laboratory equipment, poor teaching and learning materials, poor innovative and creative approaches to modern education system poor research and obsolete books and poor staff/ lecturers training among others [17]. In the light of these problems, government, after the past attempt failed to solve existing problems, decided to introduce Tetfund to overcome the above stated problems in order to standardize the education system. The intervention programme of Tetfund that provides staff capacity building is the Academic Staff Training and Development (ASTD) It has been noted that the process of accessing funds from Tetfund is quite complicated thereby leading to delayed approval of funds for intervention projects [8, 9].

Tetfund provides funds to all federal and state-owned tertiary institutions on areas such as research, training, conferences, and staff development; for example, on the area of research, Tetfund provides ₦20m (US\$63,391.60) for each university as annual intervention for research [18]. The question is how many academic staff members benefit from this Tetfund interventions. Academic staff members in Nigeria can

conduct quality research and find solution to societal problems if they are well motivated by way of accessing research grants [19].

B. I. Bako say [20] Stated that the bulk of university research has been self-funded by graduate students, staff-in-training and academic staff, and over 80 per cent has been from salaries and parents. Similarly, [21] reported that graduate students, staff-in-training and academic staff are poorly paid, research funding is capital intensive. Unfortunately, not much funds have been provided for research in Nigeria by government compared to developed countries of the world. For instance, [22] reports that Jedulius Okojie, the former National Universities Commission (NUC) executive secretary, in a workshop organized by the West African Association of Research and Innovation regretted that Nigerian Government since independence has not made it a priority of allocating substantial funds for research in the universities. Without proper funding from government, university-based researchers and scientists cannot undertake meaningful research, and the country cannot make substantial economic and industrial progress.

Theoretically, this study adopted the Public Goods Theory by [23]. The Public goods theory has two main assumptions:

- a. A good once produced for same consumers can be consumed by additional consumers at no additional cost.
- b. There is non-excludability, which means that it is difficult to keep people from consuming the good, once it has been produced.

According to [23], goods with these characteristics will be under-produced in the private sector, or may not be produced at all. Following the conventional wisdom, economic efficiency requires that the government forces people to contribute to the production of public goods, and, then, allow all citizens to consume them. A public good is a good produced by government and generally made available for the benefit of its citizens. The explanation of “public” by [24] throws more light to the public goods analysis. For [25], there are three characteristics of “publicans”. Public purpose, Public ownership and Public control. Education is a public good. The public goods theory provides justification for large public expenditure in education. This is based on the assumption that it is only the government that can effectively provide education services appropriately to the citizens given the varied externalities associated with it. These Universities are public enterprises, owned and controlled by the governments for the public interest/purpose; hence, demands accountability from the University authorities. Evidently, the injection of Tetfund projects into these Universities ensures that goods (Education) with public goods characteristics are efficiently and effectively provided. By so doing, education as public good is made available and affordable to the greater majority a situation that foster government as well as its stakeholders’ interest/benefits. [23]. The main purpose of this study was to examine the extent of Tetfund intervention in Lagos state university and specifically was to examine the benefits of Tetfund intervention towards quality transformation of academic staff capacity building in Lagos state university; and assess the impacts of Tetfund intervention on capacity building of academic staff in Lagos state university.

- a. What are the benefits of Tetfund intervention in qualitative transformation of academic staff in Lagos State University?
- b. What are the impacts of Tetfund intervention on capacity building of academic staff in Lagos State University?

2. RESEARCH METHOD

This study adopted a descriptive differential research design to examine TETFUND intervention on academic staff performance in Lagos State University. The population for this study consisted of all academic staff of Lagos state university, Lagos state, Nigeria. One hundred and ninety-six questionnaires were administered to one hundred and ninety-six (196) academic staffs in Lagos State University. Forty-nine (49) academic staff were randomly selected from four faculties. Selection of one hundred and ninety-six (196) respondents was based on research advisors for the study. The instrument comprised twenty (20) items to elicit response from the participants. The instrument had 2 sections. The section A dealt with the personal information of the respondents on benefits of TETFUND intervention in qualitative transformation of academic staff in Lagos State University while section B addressed benefits and impacts of TETFUND intervention on academic staff capacity building in Lagos State University. The scoring of the questionnaire was based on four-point Likert type scale and rated as Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree and Strongly Disagree. The instrument was subjected to face and content validity by two experts in the Department of Social Sciences Education, Faculty of Education, University of Ilorin. The corrections and suggestions were used to prepare the final draft of the instrument. The reliability of the instrument was ascertained through test re-test method. Thirty copies (30) of the instrument were administered to academic staff in a University in North Central of Nigeria twice, the data generated were analyzed using Pearson Product

Moment Correlation Statistics and coefficient of 0.83 was obtained which made the instrument reliable for the study. The data collected on the 2 research questions were analyzed using mean rating spearman ranking order.

3. RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

Research Question 1: *What are the benefits of Tetfund intervention in qualitative transformation of academic staff in Lagos State University?*

Table 1 indicates that 196 respondents participated in this study. The major Tetfund intervention towards quality transformation of academic staff in Lagos State University was provision of infrastructure for effective teaching and learning with a mean score of 2.76 (1st), while the academic staff acquisition of better skills and knowledge for imparting knowledge through Tetfund intervention ranked second with a mean score of 2.73. The significant role of Tetfund intervention on research and academic growth in LASU came third with a mean score of 2.68. The lecturers in LASU accessibility and utilization of Tetfund intervention ranked fourth with a mean score of 2.53. However, other statements had their mean scores below the benchmark of 2.50.

Table 1. Ranking order of benefit of tetfund intervention in qualitative transformation of academic staff in Lagos State University

S/N	Tetfund Intervention towards Quality Transformation of Academic Staff	Mean	Ranking
1.	Tetfund intervention plays a major role in the standardization and uplifment of academic standard in LASU	2.45	5 th
2.	Tetfund intervention has contributed majorly on provision of infrastructure for effective teaching and learning in LASU	2.76	1 st
3.	Academic staff in LASU benefits from staff training and development (ASTD) of Tetfund intervention	2.26	9 th
4.	Tetfund intervention has a quality of transforming academic staff capacity building in LASU	2.36	8 th
5.	Enough funds are disbursed through Tetfund intervention for academic staff in LASU for conference attendance	2.40	7 th
6.	Tetfund intervention plays a significant role on research and academic growth in LASU	2.68	3 rd
7.	Tetfund intervention funds are accessed and utilized by lecturers in LASU	2.53	4 th
8.	Academic staff acquire better skills and knowledge for imparting knowledge through Tetfund intervention on ASTD	2.73	2 nd
9.	Tetfund intervention in LASU provides a well-designed workshop for mentoring and orientation programmes	2.42	6 th

Research Question 2: *What are the impact of Tetfund intervention on capacity building of academic staff in Lagos State University?*

Table 2 indicates that 196 respondents participated in this study. Consideration for Tetfund intervention in Lagos State University for academic staff capacity building was ranked highest with mean score of 2.91 because it is an effective tool for staff higher productivity in academia. In addition, the role of Tetfund intervention in transforming teaching and learning positively through academic staff development programmes in LASU ranked second with a mean score of 2.85. The respondent opinion on positive relationship between Tetfund intervention on capacity building and increased academic performance was ranked third with a mean score of 2.70. Similarly, respondents' opinion on positive impact of Tetfund intervention on academic staff performance came fourth with a mean score of 2.60. The respondents view on more disbursement of Tetfund intervention to lecturers for research and better performance in LASU ranked fifth with a mean score of 2.60. However, other statements had their mean scores below the benchmark of 2.50.

On a general note, the aforementioned analyses revealed that provision of infrastructure for effective teaching and learning is the major Tetfund intervention towards qualitative transformation of academic staff in Lagos State University. It is therefore not a surprise to observe concentration of Tetfund projects in terms of building, furniture, vehicles etc in many university campuses in Nigeria. This result is in consonance with the report of [25] that TetFund has alleviated the Universities problems in the area of infrastructures, instructional materials and equipment and needs to do more in the area of human capital development. This is suffix to say that Tetfund Interventions in Nigerian Universities particularly in LASU have impacted positively on the infrastructural and human development in the institution; the implications of this for sustainable development of tertiary education in Nigeria.

Table 2. Ranking order of impact of tetfund intervention on capacity building of academic staff of Lagos State University

S/N	Tetfund Intervention towards Capacity Building of Academic Staff	Mean	Ranking
1.	There is a positive impact on academic staff performance through Tetfund intervention	2.60	4 th
2.	Capacity building of academic staff improved through releasing of Tetfund funds for staff training and development in LASU	2.21	8 th
3.	Tetfund intervention does not in any way have effect on academic staff performance	2.25	7 th
4.	There is positive relationship between Tetfund intervention on capacity building and increased academic performance	2.70	3 rd
5.	Academic staff capacity building is an effective tool for staff higher productivity in academia through Tetfund intervention	2.91	1 st
6.	Tetfund should disburse more funds for more lecturers to go on research for better performance in LASU	2.57	5 th
7.	There is no positive impact of Tetfund through capacity building on staff development in LASU	2.41	6 th
8.	Through Tetfund intervention, academic staff are frequently granted funds for training and conference attendance in LASU for better performance	2.20	9 th
9.	Tetfund intervention has never contributed to research programmes for academic staff development in LASU	2.10	10 th
10.	There is ease accessing Tetfund funds that allows more academic staff apply for and granted funds for publications, training and development in LASU	1.99	11 th
11.	Tetfund intervention in LASU is one of the biggest interventions that transformed teaching and learning positively through academic staff development programmes	2.85	2 nd

Similarly, as evident in the findings of this study the academic staff have benefited greatly in acquisition of better skills and knowledge for imparting knowledge as a result of Tetfund intervention in LASU. This implies that objective of Tetfund intervention in Nigerian university goes beyond provision of physical plants but also improvement of human resources. This finding is incongruent with the submission of [12] that most universities accessed Tetfund funding for trainings, seminars and workshops and that overseas trainings, seminars and workshops benefit in no small way for the advancement of academic staff as well as aiding them for promotions and elevations in the Universities. The finding also revealed the significant role of Tetfund intervention on research and academic growth in LASU. Lecturers require research for promotion from a cadre to another, this is capital intensive, and the need for Tetfund in this direction is a boost to actualize their dream. This result is consistent with the opinion of [7] that lecturers are the priority in Tetfund's intervention policy, because they drive communication and knowledge in the sector. However, the fourth place of the lecturers in LASU accessibility and utilization of Tetfund intervention leaves much to be desired because one is for the government to provide a succor policy to assist the lecturers' accessibility that is another bottleneck. The finding shows element of lecturers' dissatisfaction about the accessibility of the fund. This is pointing to the opinion of [20] that the bulk of university research has been self-funded by graduate students, staff-in-training and academic staff, and over 80 per cent has been from salaries and parents.

More so, the finding showed that Tetfund intervention in Lagos State University for academic staff capacity building was major priority. Empowerment of lecturers in the university is not controversial owing to the role expected them in the national development. This finding is in line with the view of [18] that Tetfund provides funds to all federal and state-owned tertiary institutions on areas such as research, training, conferences, and staff development. In addition, the finding revealed the significant role of Tetfund intervention in transforming teaching and learning positively through academic staff development programmes in LASU. This also attests to the submission of (2009 [13-16] that every economy should invest in research and knowledge generation through human capital development.

The positions of findings on positive impact of Tetfund intervention on academic staff performance and disbursement of Tetfund intervention to lecturers for research and better performance in LASU respectively indicate low implementation of Tetfund to lecturers on the other hands. This buttresses report of [22] about the former National Universities Commission (NUC) executive secretary information that Government since independence has not made it a priority of allocating substantial funds for research in the country's universities. The key thing is allocation of substantial budget for educational Tetfund intervention. This supports the view of [11] that despite the TETFund intervention, tertiary institutions in Nigeria still lack funds necessary to upgrade the institutions to international standard.

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the findings, it was concluded that Tetfund intervention towards quality transformation of academic staff Lagos State University was positive in the sense that Tetfund intervention has contributed majorly on provision of infrastructure for effective teaching and learning in LASU. In addition, capacity building of academic staff of Lagos State University was the major focus of Tetfund intervention. Arising from

the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made to enhance optimum performance of TETFund interventions in tertiary institutions in Nigeria: To make it easier for institutions to fully access approved TETFUND. There is the need to reduce or eliminate the level of bureaucratic bottlenecks often associated with accessing approved funds. Having noted that University education is cost-effective, donor agencies and philanthropic individuals and groups, should assist government in funding tertiary education in the country. To improve the volume of Internally Generated Revenue (IGR) in Nigerian, tertiary education institutions should embark on business ventures. Good governance and transparency on the part of the TETFUND and beneficiary institution's management should form the hallmark of the Funds Operations to ensure accessibility and result-oriented utilization of accessed funds.

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BIOGRAPHIES OF AUTHORS

Dr. Abdulaziz Isiaka is a Lecturer I with specialization in Sociology of Education in the Department of Social Sciences Education, University of Ilorin. He is a level adviser, Assistant Coordinator for undergraduate research project and supervises undergraduates' research project.



Dr. Olokooba Issa Nasiru is a Lecturer II with specialization in Social Studies Education in the Department of Social Sciences Education, University of Ilorin. He is a level adviser, Departmental Library Representative and supervises undergraduates' research project.



Dr. Iyekolo Alexander Olushola is a Lecturer I with specialization in Sociology of Education in the Department of Social Sciences Education, University of Ilorin. He is a level adviser, Seminar Coordinator for postgraduate research project and supervises undergraduates' research project.