

Evaluation of Tertiary Education Trust Fund Intervention in Ignatius Ajuru University

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Abstract

The study evaluated Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFund) Intervention in Ignatius Ajuru University of Education. Four objectives and research questions guided this study. The design adopted for the study was the utilitarian evaluation design. The sample size for the study comprised of the five TETFund Desk Officers at the institution. The census sampling technique was adopted for the study. This study is mainly on data generated from the Department of the Tertiary Education Trust Fund from the Desk officers. The period under study ranges from 2016-2018 (a three-year period). The performance data in the study was analyzed using frequency and percentage. The study showed that TETFund intervention impacted positively on infrastructural development in IAUE during the period of 2018. But showed that no intervention in 2016 and 2018 for instructional materials, but in 2017 there was a very high extent of TETFund Intervention in instructional material and equipment in IAUE. The result shows that only two academic staff out of 711 staff received research grants between 2016 and 2018. That is, 0.003% of the staff benefitted. Also, out of 711 academic staff, only 36 staff were sponsored for conferences representing 5.1%. This implies a very low extent of TETFund intervention on staff development in IAUE. Based on the findings, it is concluded that TETFund agency should be retained and modified because it supports Internally Generated Revenue towards the development of tertiary institutions in the State. It is recommended among others that there is need for more enlightenment on the part of chief executives of tertiary institutions in Rivers State and TETFund desk officers with regard to procedure of accessing the funds.

Keywords: Evaluation, TETFUND, and Ignatius Ajuru University of Education

INTRODUCTION

Higher education remains crucial to the expansion and improvement of every society. Higher education provides solutions to problems that countries encounter on their journey to sustainability through research, inventions, innovations, and studies. The Nigerian higher education system was

created in the context of this aspiration. However, over time, it started to encounter formidable obstacles that threatened its very existence. These issues included insufficient financial resources, which posed a threat to the expected high quality of higher education output. These are in addition to the many social vices and systemic corruption. However, there have been attempts to rein in and reorient the system for maximum production by stakeholders in the education sector, particularly the Academic Staff Union of Universities and the Federal Government. One of these initiatives is the creation of the Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFund), which was given the mandate of managing, disbursing, and monitoring the education tax to public tertiary institutions in Nigeria in 2011 under the TETFund (Establishment) Act.

The Education Tax Act No. 7 of 1993, as amended by Act No. 40 of 1998, established the Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFund) initially as the Education Trust Fund (ETF). The purpose of the fund was to act as an intervention fund for all public education levels (Federal, State and Local). Act No. 40 of 1998 changed the law, but the agency still faced too many difficulties to be useful. For instance, it was overworked and overstretched in addition to duplicating the duties and objectives of other organizations like the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the Universal Basic Education (UBE), and funds were dispersed thinly with little effect on the deteriorating facilities in tertiary institutions (Bogoro, 2015). The 2011 Tertiary Education Trust Act so superseded the Education Trust Fund. It is an intervention organization created with the primary goal of using money and project management to revitalize, restore, and consolidate tertiary education in Nigeria. It supports all levels of public tertiary institutions. The two percent education tax collected on the assessable profit of businesses registered in Nigeria is the Fund's primary source of funding. For the benefit of the Fund, the tax is assessed and collected by the Federal Inland Revenue Service (FIRS). The TETFund Act (2011) states that funds are distributed for the provision or maintenance of essential physical infrastructure for teaching and learning; instructional material and equipment; research and publication; academic staff training and development; and any other requirements that, in the Board of Trustees' opinion, are crucial and necessary for raising and maintaining standards in higher education institutions.

In their discussion on the value of infrastructure development for high-quality literacy, Cohen and Bhatt (2013) argued that providing students with quality education depends on the availability of appropriate educational infrastructure. This role can be carried out by collaborating with the National Universities Commission (NUC). This is done to make sure that facilities are adequate to support the programs offered by these universities. The available facilities, such as classrooms, labs, workshops, libraries, office spaces, canteens, and common areas, etc., are egregiously inadequate for both professors and students (Miller, 2013).

On the other hand, instructional materials serve as the vehicle through which the desired knowledge is transmitted. Effective teaching and learning will be ensured through the usage of instructional materials. According to Emalie (2008), an effective teaching aid should have the following qualities: size, or the ability to be seen by the farthest student in the classroom; colour, or the ability to be attractive and colourful in order to draw students; and durability, or the ability to be used for more than one lesson in order to be reused. According to Ojo (2016), TETFund should focus more on the provision of educational resources for universities. This is consistent with Aliyu's (2002) assertion that there cannot be effective teaching without appropriate teaching resources. This supports Rimi's (2012) observation that the institutions' use of instructional materials has not been considerably changed by TETFUND.

Without a doubt, the difference in resources allocated to research and development is what distinguishes nations in terms of their level of global development. According to Fawole and Alade (2014), research and development is a process used largely for technological advancement to develop new materials, products, or processes, as well as incremental enhancements to existing ones. The private sector's contribution to economic growth is woefully inadequate in the majority of African

nations, including Nigeria, which has the continent's largest economy. This suggests that it is safe to predict that public money will continue to be these nations' main source of funding for research and development. Currently, only 0.2% of funds for research and development are provided by industry (Fawole & Alade, 2014). However, as private research funding increases, TETFund is making active efforts to find more creative methods to use cash from donors and the government in research initiatives and programs.

Without current knowledge, academia will undoubtedly make minimal or no contributions to the advancement of education. Many Nigerian university academic staff members' academic progress and development have been stifled by a lack of financing. Despite TETFund's efforts to support the growth of academic staff, many tertiary institutions are unable to fulfil the requirements to access the funds that have been granted to them (Arikewuyo & Adegbesan, 2009). As a result, a lot of academic personnel pass up chances to get funding for additional training and development. This has informed the programme evaluation of Tetfund in Rivers State. Programme evaluation, according to Kpolovie (2012), is a systematic approach for gathering, examining, and applying data to address inquiries regarding projects, policies, and programs, particularly in regards to their efficacy and efficiency. This study will employ a summative evaluation strategy. Summative evaluation is done at the end of a program to give potential customers an opinion on the value or merit of that program.

The research employed the Raph Tyler model of summative evaluation. Tyler saw evaluation as a procedure for figuring out how well the educational goals of a curriculum or school program are actually being met. The board of directors' shared understanding of the TETFund's goals was contrasted with the performance to see if there was any difference. According to the reviewed empirical studies, Tetfund has been playing a crucial supporting role in the funding of research and academic growth in tertiary institutions (Afebende, 2017; Hamisu and Musa, 2015; Zabbey and Leyira, 2017; Ezeali, 2017), with the exception of Agha and Udu (2015) who found that Tetfund intervention has no significant impact on quality and relevant research (Ugwuanyi, 2014). An overview of the articles that were evaluated reveals that research and staff development were the main foci of the majority of studies on Tetfund and its effects in tertiary institutions. Evaluation of Tetfund's goals (physical infrastructure, instructional materials, research and publications, and academic staff development) at Ignatius Ajuru University of Education in Rivers State became necessary as a result.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The purpose of the TETFund is to offer funding to tertiary institutions of learning as an intervention for the supply of physical infrastructure, provision of instructional materials, provision of manpower training, research, and other needs that are academic in nature. In certain tertiary institutions, the situation is less than positive. This was based on a paper by Zabbey and Leyira (2017), who found that many university departments are falling behind in terms of having access to physical facilities, educational resources, and funding for undertaking research. Academic quality is declining as a result of a lack of incentives for research and publication (Arikewuyo & Adegbesan, 2009).

Many Nigerian university academic staff members' academic progress and development have been stifled by a lack of financing. Academic staff promotions and elevations are being delayed as a result of the issue mentioned above. Many tertiary institutions are unable to meet the requirements for accessing funds allotted to them, despite the interventions made by TETFund in the field of academic staff development. As a result, a lot of academic personnel pass up chances to get free money for additional training and development. In light of this, the following inquiry is made: To what extent has Ignatius Ajuru University of Education implemented the TETFund's objectives? The aim of the study was to evaluate the TETFund in Ignatius Ajuru University of Education.

The following research questions guided this study;

- 1) To what extent does TETFund Intervention support physical infrastructural development in Ignatius Ajuru University of Education?
- 2) To what extent does TETFund Intervention provide instructional material and equipment in Ignatius Ajuru University of Education?
- 3) What is the extent of TETFund Intervention on research and publication in Ignatius Ajuru University of Education?
- 4) What is the extent of TETFund Intervention on academic staff training and development in Ignatius Ajuru University of Education?

Theoretical Framework

General System Theory propounded by Ludwig von Bertalanffy in Zabbey and Leyira (2017), viewed a system as “a set of *related components that work together* in a particular *environment* to perform whatever *functions* are required to achieve the system's *objective*. This theory is relevant to this study, in other to understand the various stages of TETFund program, the outcome can be reached from the relationships among those parts (inputs and process) and the environment. Tertiary institutions must receive inputs as well as interacts with the external environment to ensure their survival.



Fig. 1 Organizational system theory model (from Hayajneh, 2007)

METHODOLOGY

The design adopted for this study was the utilitarian evaluation design. Utilitarian evaluation design investigates the effectiveness, efficiency and accountability of an educational programme as planned and executed for the overall good of the society (Kpolovie, 2012). The sample size for the study comprised all the 5 TETFund Directors and Desk Officers at the institutions. There was no sampling because the population size is small. This study relies on archival records generated from the Department of the Tertiary Education Trust Fund with the Desk officers. The period under study ranges from 2016-2018 (a three-year period). Document analysis is used; the reason is that TETFund’s input can only be seen from documentation showing appropriation and disbursements over time. The performance data collected were sorted, collated and analyzed using frequency and percentage. A score of less than 45 per cent was considered low, 45-59 percent was considered moderate, 60-69 per cent was considered high, while 70 per cent and above was considered very high. This grading system is Asher’s criteria as modified by Okafor (1997). Tylerian Evaluation steps was applied such as (Iweka, 2015):

1. The objectives of the programme was stated clearly.
2. A very clear classification of the objectives was made
3. The objectives of the programme was stated in behavioural terms
4. Find situations in which achievement of objectives can be shown
5. The measurement techniques to be applied was selected
6. The evaluator collected performance data
7. Finally, the performance data was compared with the behaviourally stated objectives.
8. Conclusively, discrepancies or differences between performance and objectives would lead to modifications that are intended to correct the deficiency and the evaluation cycle would be repeated

Result

Table 1: TETFund and Infrastructural Development in Ignatius Ajuru University of Education (IAUE) from 2016-2018

Year of Intervention	Amount allocated (₦)	Amount accessed (₦)	Purpose utilized	Percentage	Decision (interpretation)
2016-2017	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	
2018	165,823,700.00	32,924,300.00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construction of 3 storey classrooms/offices building for Faculty of Business Studies. 	98.0%	Very high extent
		48,891,359.00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Procurement and installation of furnishing for Department of management and marketing. • Procurement and installation of furnishing for Dean's floor (Right and left wing) 		
		44,920,130.00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Procurement and installation of furnishing for Department of Accountancy. • Information management and faculty library 		
		35,865,000.00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Procurement and installation of furnishing for classrooms. 		
Total	165,823,700.00	162,600,789.00			

Source: TETFund Desk Officer, 2020

From the above table, there was no intervention within the period of 2016-2017 for physical infrastructural development. On the contrary, a total of N165,823,700.00 was released in 2018, while N162,600,789.00 representing 98.0% of the allocation was accessed. This implies that to a very high extent, TETFund intervention impacted positively on infrastructural development in IAUE during the period of 2018.

Table 2: TETFund and Instructional Materials in IAUE (2016-2018)

S/N	Year	Amount allocated (₦)	Amount Access (₦)	Purpose utilized	Percentage
1.	2016	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
2.	2017	51,584,127.78	50,473,094.62	Procurement of laptops, computers, chair and tables	97.8%
3.	2018	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil

Source: TETFund Desk Officer, 2020

The results in table 2 shows that no intervention in 2016 and 2018 for instructional materials, but in 2017, N51,584,127.78 was released for procurement of laptops, computers, chairs and table. Out of N51,584,127.78 that was released, 50,473,094.62 was accessed representing 97.8% of the TETFund intervention used in 2017. Though there was no procurement of books, laboratory equipment. The result shows that in 2017 there was a very high extent of TETFund Intervention in instructional material and equipment in IAUE.

Table 3: TETFund and Research/Publication in IAUE 2016-2018

S/N	Number of Staff	Research title	Year	Amount allocated(₦)	Percentage	Decision
1	1	Design and synthesis of Novel, Pyrimiding metal complex for Antimicrobial and environmental application	2016-2018	3,738.325.00	0.003%	Very low extent
2	1	Synthesis of some Schiff bases and their metal organic framework as potential antimicrobial drugs	2016-2018			

Source: TETFund Desk Officer, 2020

Table 3 shows that only two (2) academic staff out of 711 staff received research grants between 2016 and 2018. That is, 0.003% of the staff benefitted. This implies that little or nothing was done in Research and Publication within the period of 2016-2018. This indicates a very low impact of TETFund intervention on Research and Publication in IAUE.

Table 4: TETfund and Staff Development in IAUE (2016-2018)

S/N	Programme category/course	No.	University	Year	Total Accessed (₦)	Percentage
1.	Ph.D	29	Nigeria	2016-2018	2.5-4 million each	5.1% (very low extent)
2.	Masters	7	Nigeria	2016-2018	1.5 million each	
	Total	36			83.0 – 126.5 million	

Source: TETfund Desk Officer, IAUE (2020)

Table 4 shows the programme, location of the universities and the total amount in Naira on each candidate. So far, 83 - 126.5 million has been spent in this direction between 2016-2018 years. TETfund has also sponsored 29 staff for Ph.D and 7 staff for Masters. From the allocation, a total of 83-126.5 million was used for staff training and development, remaining an outstanding of ₦207,623, 500.00. Out of 711 academic staff, only 36 staff were sponsored representing 5.1%. This implies a very low extent of TETfund intervention on staff development in IAUE.

Table 5: Conference Attendance (2016-2018) IAUE

S/N	Date of Release	No. of staff	Amount released (₦)	Total Outstanding (₦)	Percentage
1	January 2016	9	5,066,010.00	19,094,196.52	32.1% (low extent)
	July 2016	46	24,793,334.00		
2	March 2017	2	319,800.00	85,546,806.52	
	September 2017	14	2,598,500.00		
	December 2017	12	1,915,955.00		
3	April 2018	2	3,810,000.00	60,427,248.79	
	August 2018	9	8,053,640.75		
	September 2018	12	3,674,828.00		
	December 2018	2	2,746,875.00		
	Total	108	52,978,942.75	₦165,978,942.75	

Source: TETFund Desk Officer, 2020

In addition to the foregoing, table 5 revealed that TETfund has sponsored 108 staff of IAUE to conferences. According to the TETfund records in IAUE, N52,978, 942.75 has so far been spent, in this direction between 2016-2018. There is also an outstanding of N165,068,251.83, this shows that 32.1% of the fund was accessed. Whereas 67.9% of the intervention still needs to be accessed by the staff. It implies a low extent of TETfund intervention on staff development in IAUE.

DISCUSSION

The records, N162,600,780 representing 98.0% of the allocation was accessed for infrastructural development in IAUE between 2016 – 2018. This indicates a positive impact of TETFund intervention on physical infrastructural development in IAUE. Moreso, result shows that procurement of learning accessories were done in 2018, while within the period of 2016-2017 there was no intervention according to the information given to the researcher. This indicates a low impact of TETfund intervention in instructional material in the University of Port Harcourt between 2016-

2018. In line with the study, Adamu, (2014) stated in one of his briefings that one of the major challenges facing the funding programme was the inability of some tertiary institutions to access over N67 billion of the funds earmarked to boost their teaching and learning infrastructure. He described the trend as worrisome, in view of the general complaints about poor funding of tertiary institutions, leading to persistent strikes by the unions of the institutions over the years. The study revealed that a total of two (2) academic staff received research grants between 2016 and 2018. Whereas an outstanding of N16,261,675.00 was not accessed. This indicate a low impact of TETFund on research grant in IAUE. According to Nnana (2018), the reasons why some Nigerian academics run overseas have a lot to do with inadequate incentives for research and other conditions of service. The study showed that a total of 83-126.5 million was used for staff training, remaining an outstanding of N207,623,500.00. That is, 40.0% to 60.2% of the allocation was used in IAUE. This result tallies with Bogoro (2019) stated that prior to the introduction of this intervention only 40% of academic staff in Nigeria's Tertiary Institutions had Ph.D which is the minimum requirement to be a lecturer in a Tertiary institution. But today this percentage has risen to nearly 70% due to this intervention. Also, the result shows that 32.1% of the fund have been accessed for staff conference attendance between 2016-2018. 67.9% of the intervention still needs to be accessed for conference attendance. It implies that to a moderate extent TETFund has impacted staff conference attendance between 2016-2018. This does not only affect the staff themselves but also their products who are the trainees (students) since no new ideas or knowledge is imparted. On the long run, the objective of education cannot be achieved if no new knowledge or ideas can be inculcated into trainees or students of tertiary institutions.

CONCLUSION

Base on the findings of the study, despite the fact that TETFund has improved our tertiary institutions in terms of infrastructure, there is need for improvement in the area of staff training, research development and instructional materials. Although an interesting level has been reached in conducting academic research, more effort needs to be made by academic staff of public tertiary institutions in accessing research grants from TETFund. Finally, TETFund as an intervention agency should be retained and modified.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. There is need for more enlightenment on the part of chief executives of tertiary institutions and TETFund desk officers with regard to procedure of accessing the funds.
2. TETFund should cut down on some of the procedures to enable lecturers access the fund in due time.
3. TETFund should make provision to allow a tertiary institution to assess missed funds provided for the previous year instead of forfeiting such allocations.
4. There is need for adequate funding for the provision of relevant educational infrastructure that will ensure quality education given to the students of high schools.

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