

INFLUENCE OF TERTIARY EDUCATION TRUST FUND (TETFUND) ON EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH IN NIGERIAN UNIVERSITIES.

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Abstract

This study investigated the Influence of TETFUND Intervention Fund to Educational Research in Nigerian Universities. Descriptive survey method was adopted. The target population was 6,939 lecturers in South East Universities. Stratified simple random technique was used. The sample size was 386. One research question and one hypothesis guided the study. The questionnaire adopted the four point Likert scale. Two lecturers in the Department of Educational Management and one lecturer from Measurement and Evaluation validated the instrument. Using 10 lecturers from University of Uyo, the reliability coefficient was determined using Cronbach's Alpha technique which yielded 0.965. The hypothesis was formulated and tested with one-way ANOVA and Minitab software techniques at 0.05 level of significance and 14 degrees of freedom. The findings showed that TETFUND intervention fund to a high extent has no significant influence on educational research in Universities in South East, Nigeria. Recommendations were also made.

Keywords: Influence, TETFUND, Education, Research, Universities.

A university is an institution of higher learning, a place where people's minds are trained for clear thinking, for independent thinking, for analysis and for problem solving at the highest level. The importance of universities to the construction of a knowledge based economy and society cannot be over-emphasized. One of the reasons for establishing universities is for the conduct of research. Research is seen as a means to stimulate economic development and spur innovations and advancement. It is a major tool for human advancement. Most of the new products and services that people are enjoying at present were the research outcome of leading universities. Through research, many countries have developed and advanced in technology. Miller and Senker (2000) opine that university research is the original investigation undertaken to acquire new knowledge (innovations) in the natural sciences, social sciences and

humanities. Lucky and Samson (2013) stress that advancement in research gave rise to the growth in science and technology which in turn lead to industrialization -creation of job opportunities, increase income, increase production of goods and services, creation of wealth, improved quality of life, improved transportation /communication system, networking regions of the world, clustering of people and integrating nations socially, economically and politically. Bako (2005) observes that the current global advanced capitalist development was consciously and intellectually nurtured and researched into principally by the western universities through their triple mandate of producing requisite high skilled manpower, knowledge and related services.

The main criteria for measuring the world class universities is not so much on the volume of teaching, student population, or community services a university could muster, but research output measured by the breakthrough findings published in first class and medal winning journals and books which could increase the volume and rate of knowledge accumulation. Research derives its meaning from the Latin word "re-think", which literally means "to seek". Research means to search and search and search until solution is found to advance the course of development. According to Oloyede (2010), research is the process of proffering solutions to human problems through well defined methods. It is the systematic investigation of a phenomenon. Developed countries have been harvesting the technological spin-offs of scientific knowledge from research for national development and wealth creation. They have continued to strengthen their scientific research leadership and capacity in their universities in order to strengthen the development of a knowledge -based economy (Brenner, 2008). No wonder they are on top of the world. For instance, the United States of America which invests the largest share of the world research and development capital controls the largest of the world class universities and the equal lion share of the world knowledge economy (Bako, 2005). Supporting the above assertion, Okecha cited in Osaige (2012) opines that it is the huge expenditure of developed countries such as the United States of America, Canada, South Korea, India, Brazil, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Singapore and European countries on Research and Development that explains their enhanced enviable level of industrialization ,economic prosperity and self-reliance.

In Nigeria, the period between 1960s and 1980s were regarded as the golden age of university education and also its research. Nigerian research in terms of quality and quantity was the best in Sub-Saharan Africa (Okebukola, 2002). Some universities in Nigeria have earned global respect and recognition in specific disciplines as a result of excellence in research and publications. For example, University of Ibadan was famous in Medicine, Education, Religious Studies and History, Ahmadu Bello was known in Engineering, Veterinary Medicine, Agriculture, History, Arts and Radical Social Sciences, University of Lagos was recognized in Business Administration, Law and Social Sciences and University of Nigeria, Nsukka was famous in Languages and Literature (NUC, 2002). During this period, the British handed over infrastructural, personnel and tradition of research to the pioneer universities. The British developed,

equipped and staffed the universities. They inherited a well-trained research cadre of staff, mostly British and Americans who conducted many researches in Nigeria and outside. Bako (2005) opines that the regional government between 1960s and 1980s devoted from 25% to 30% of her annual budgets to education.

There was decline in research productivity in Nigerian universities in the late 1980s. Nigerias' number of scientific publications for 1995 was 771-significantly less than its output of 1,062 scientific publications in 1981 by a comparatively much smaller university system. While the scientific publication for South Africa about this same time was 3, 413, 14,883 for India, 310 for Indonesia and 5,440 for Brazil (Task Foce, 2000). Hartnett (2000) adds that Nigeria has 15 scientists and Engineers engaged in research and Development per million persons, India has 158, Brazil has 168 per million, China has 459, while the United States of America has 4,103 (Aluko and Aluko, 2012). Webometrics ranking of universities, which measures web presence and content, did not mention a single Nigerian university until after 1,600 other mentions (Akinnaso, 2012). In the same vein, Nigeria was ranked 120 out of 142 countries on the Global Innovation Index, which measured countries' innovation capabilities and how they drove economic growth and prosperity. Similarly, Nigeria was placed 140th in human capital and research;14th under knowledge and technology; and 74th under creative output(Aluko,2014). Moreso, Aina and Mabawonku cited in Okiki, (nd)observe that Nigeria had the highest proportion of rejection in Africa out of the papers submitted to the African Journal of Library, Archives and Information Science(AJLAIS) for publication.

Several reasons have been attributed for the low quality of research output by Nigerian Universities. Okujagu cited in Akpan, Archibong and Undie (nd) points out that research is not well funded as to have the impact it should. Therefore, funding Universities generally and research in particular is inadequate. The problem of under- funding has generated a lot of strife between the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) and the Government. The Holy Bible in Ecclesiastes 10:19b states that "Money Answers All Things". Without adequate funding, no educational goals and objectives can be achieved. Saint, Harnett and Strassner (2013) report that the Nigeria's low research output is probably a reflection of the low priority accorded research and development by government decision-makers and that Nigeria's Federal University system spends only 1.3% of its budget on research. According to Donwa (2006), the average annual allocation to Federal Universities for recurrent expenditure is 0.4% of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and 5% of this allocation is to be used for research. This is less than 1% GDP and not adequate to conduct useful research. It is not near to the United Nations Educational and Scientific Organization's (UNESCO) recommendation of 26 per cent. Bako (2005) and Akpochafo (2009) report that currently research in the Universities is funded by graduate students, staff-in-training and academic staff who are poorly paid. According to Chiemeké, Longe, Longe and Sharb (2009), motivation to do research and publications is low. Research grants,

though available are not sought, since nothing new is being baked in most of our academic ovens. Okebukola (2002) summarized the factors that contributed to decline in research as follows: lack of research skills in modern methods; lack of equipment for carrying out state-of-the-art research; overloaded teaching and administration schedules which leave little time for research ;difficulty in accessing research funds and diminishing ability of seasoned and senior researchers to mentor junior researchers due to brain drain.

Worried about inadequate fund to conduct research and other problems confronting the education sector such as deteriorating educational infrastructure and the falling standard of education, Government established the Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFUND) by an act of the National Assembly in June 2011. This act replaced the Education Tax Fund Act Cap.E4 laws of the Federation of Nigeria 2004 and Education Tax Fund (Amendment) Act No 17,2003. The fund was set up to administer and disburse to education the collections and to the Federal and State tertiary educational institutions in Nigeria. The main source of income available to the fund is the 2% ion tax paid from the assessable profit companies registered in Nigeria. These levies are collected by the Federal Inland Revenue Services (FIRS). The fund is managed by a Board of Trustees established under section 4 of the new Act. The ratio of disbursement is 2:1:1-Universities (2), Polytechnics (1) and Colleges of Education (1). In the distribution of the fund, 41 per cent goes to the Universities, 30 per cent to the Polytechnics while 29 per cent goes to Colleges of Education. (TETFUND, 2013). In addition, the Federal Government has instituted the National Research Fund to enable lecturers conduct research in a better and conducive environment. Since then, TETFUND has disbursed billions of naira for research and other projects. There has been a lot of improvement in infrastructural development, training of academic staff for higher degrees and support for conferences for both academic and non-teaching staff, provision of enough research materials such as textbooks, internet in the offices and libraries but improvement in research is still very low. TETFUND complains that money disbursed for research is not accessed. Out of the 265.02 billion naira that was disbursed for research, only 0.14% was accessed (TETFUND, 2013). Umeh (2014) posits that the minister of education, Shekarau said that out of the allocation of over #10.052 billion to Universities, Polytechnics and Colleges of Education for Institution - Based Research by the Federal Government and disbursed by TETFUND, over #7.8 billion is yet un-accessed among others. Furthermore, Wale (2013) reports that the sum of #266,570,615 was disbursed to 13 researchers out of the #3billion initial fund approved for the first batch National Research Fund (NRF) beneficiaries.

The initial 119 proposals submitted to TETFUND were reduced to 20 and then the final 13. Out of the 13 initial proposals approved by Board of TETFUND, none were from the South East universities. They are as follows: University of Ibadan(2); Nigerian Defence Academy ,Kaduna (1); Federal University of Technology ,Akure (2); University of Benin(1); Usman Danfodio University, Sokoto(2); Ahmadu

Bello University, Zaria(2); Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife(1) and University of Lagos(1)(Wale,2013). The former minister of education Nyeson Wike, expressed the hope that TETFUND intervention fund would address the excuse being advanced by universities that lack of funds was the reason for poor quality of research in the country.

Several reasons have been adduced for un-accessing TETFUND fund for research. Dayo (2014) reports that incomplete documentations on the part of the institutions applying for the fund is one of the reasons for not accessing these funds. It may be that the institutions failed to file in the document on time or did not complete the process. According to Eno-Abasi (2015) many institutions complained that the process of accessing the fund is cumbersome. In addition, he states that TETFUND cannot take all the blames as the managers of the institutions are also to be blamed for not publicizing the call for proposals. Another hindrance is the in-house politics at the level of submission at the institution level. This is because it is the responsibility of the institutions to forward the selected proposals to TETFUND for further consideration and approval. Delay in the documentation of the proposal may hinder access. Therefore, it is pertinent that the lecturers and the managers of the institution collaborate for successful completion of the proposals and access the fund earmarked for them.

Many authors have researched on different aspects on TETFUND. Udu and Nkwede (2014) investigated Tertiary Education Trust Fund Interventions and Sustainable Development in Nigerian Universities: Evidence from Ebonyi State University, Abakiliki while Hamisu and Musa(2015) examined "The Impact of Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFUND) on Higher Institutions in Nigeria: A Case Study of Tertiary Institutions in Three North Eastern States (Yobe, Bauchi and Gombe). This is the reason this study investigated the Influence of Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFUND) on Educational Research in Nigerian Universities with particular reference to Federal Universities in South East Nigeria.

Statement of the Problem

Innovations through university research have been globally recognized as instrumental in driving economic growth and technological advances. One of the objectives for establishing the Tertiary Education Trust Fund is to fund research in higher institutions to which university is included. Since its inception, TETFUND has disbursed fund for research purposes. But unfortunately, almost three quarter of the fund is not accessed by the lecturers every year. Despite the plea by TETFUND executives for lecturers to access the fund, there has been no change. The lecturers have given many reasons for not accessing the fund such as that the guidelines for accessing TETFUND intervention fund are difficult to attain. TETFUND officials maintain that the quality of their research is below standard. The question is, "To what extent has TETFUND intervention fund influenced Educational Research in Nigerian universities?"

Research Question

1. To what extent has TETFUND intervention fund influenced educational research and innovations in Universities in South East, Nigeria?

Hypothesis

H₀₁: TETFUND intervention fund has no significant influence on educational research and innovations in Universities in South East, Nigeria.

H₀₂: TETFUND Intervention fund has significant influence on educational research and innovations in universities in South East Nigeria.

Delimitation of the Study

This study was limited to lecturers in federal universities in South East Nigeria. They are: University of Nigeria Nsukka (UNN); Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka(NAU); Federal University of Technology, Owerri (FUTO); Michael Okpara University of Agriculture, Umudike(MOUAU) and Federal University Ndufu- Alike Ikwo (FUNAI), Ebonyi State.

Methodology

This study adopted the descriptive survey research design. The population consisted of all the 6939 lecturers in the five federal universities in South East Nigeria, comprising UNN (1260); MOUUAU (771) NAU (2064); FUTO (1877) and FUNAI (67). The stratified random sampling technique was used to select the sample for the study. The sample size of 386 was determined using Yamane (1967) formula (Eboh, 2009). Applying Bowley's proportional allocation formula, the sample size for each category of the respondents was determined; UNN (120), NAU (115), MOUUAU (43), FUTO (104) and FUNAI (4). Data were accessed through primary and secondary sources. Some lecturers were also interviewed. A self-constructed questionnaire titled "Influence of TETFUND Intervention Fund on Educational Research" was used to elicit information from the respondents. The instrument consists of 2 sections-A and B. Section A consists of demographic information while section B contained 8 items on the extent of TETFUND Intervention Fund on Educational Research in the universities in South East Nigeria. The Four Point-Likert Scale format viz, to a very high extent (4 points), to a high extent (3points), to a very low extent (2points) and to a low extent (1). The questionnaire items were validated by experts in the department of educational management and measurement and evaluation. Using 10 lecturers from one of the universities in South South (University of Port Harcourt), the reliability coefficient was determined using Cronbach's Alpha technique which yielded 0. 965. A lecturer in each of the Universities Assisted in administering the questionnaire. The questionnaire was collected on the spot. With one-way ANOVA and Minitab software techniques, the hypothesis of the study was formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance and 2

degrees of freedom. The Minitab software was applied to determine the extent TETFUND Intervention Fund has influenced Educational Research in universities in South East Nigeria.

Data Presentation and Analysis

Research Question1: To what extent has TETFUND intervention fund influenced educational research and innovation in Universities in South East, Nigeria?

Table 1: Respondents responses on the influence of TETFUND intervention fund on educational research and innovation in Universities in South East, Nigeria.

Item	No of Respondents to a high extent(HE)	Scores of Respondents To a high extent(HE)	No of Respondents to a low extent(LE)	Scores of Respondents To a low extent(LE)	Total
1	47	161	339	526	386
2	46	163	354	517	386
3	47	167	306	492	386
4	39	138	336	515	386
5	38	132	356	526	386
6	321	1132	84	107	386
7	56	200	334	497	386
8	50	178	364	518	386
Total	644	2271	8444	3698	3088
Mean	81	283.88	306	462.25	386

Source: Field data 2016.

In table 1 the high extent group had a mean score of 283.88 representing 38 percent. This mean of 283.88 is lower than the mean of low extent group with the low extent group having the highest mean of 462.25 representing 62 percent.

Test of hypothesis

H₀₁: TETFUND Intervention fund has no significant influence on educational research.

H₀₂: TETFUND Intervention fund has significant influence on educational research.

Table 2: Result of one-way ANOVA application

One-Way ANOVA: Scores A, Scores D.

Analysis of Variance

Source	DF	Adj SS	Adj MS	F-Value	P-Value
Factor 1		127271	127271	1.84	0.197
Error	14	970586	69328		
Total	15	1097857			

Model Summary

S	R-sq	R-sq (adj)	R-sq (pred)
263.301	11.59%	5.28%	0.00%

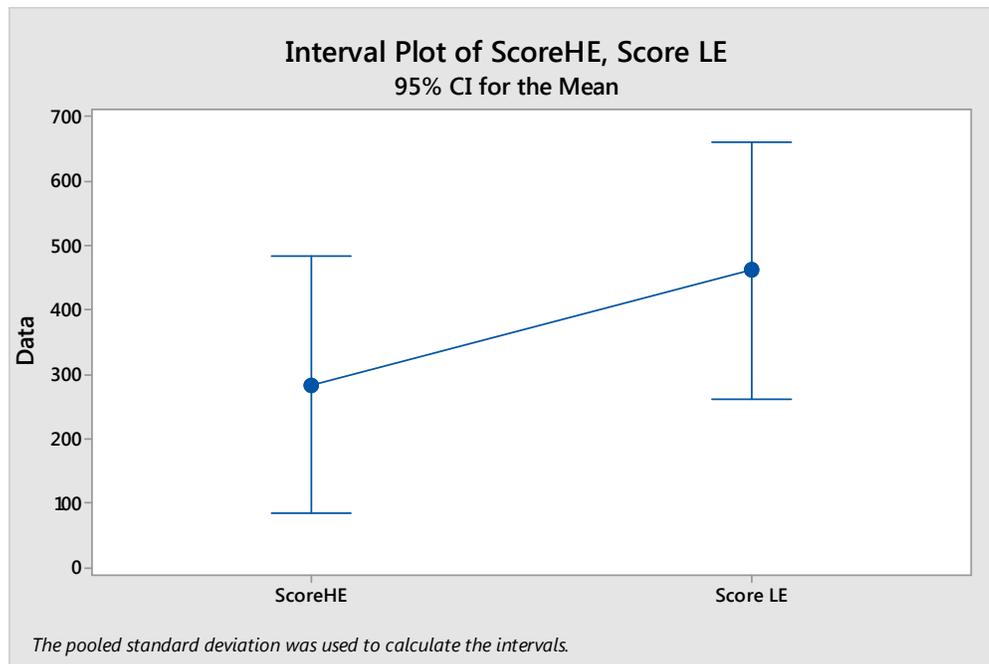
Means

Factor	N	Mean	StDev	95% CI
ScoreHE	8	284	343	(84, 484)
Score LE	8	462.3	144.1	(262.6, 661.9)

Pooled StDev = 263.301

From table 2, the hypothesis test showed that F-critical 4.60 at 14 degrees of freedom and at 0.05 level of significance was greater than F-computed (1.84). The null hypothesis H_0 was not rejected. The p-value at 0.197 was greater than the significant level of 0.05 (i.e. $p > 0.05$). The null hypothesis was therefore upheld. The co-efficient of determination, R^2 (adj) was 5.28 percent. The result showed that the extent to which lecturers access TETFUND intervention fund was 5.28 percent. Therefore, TETFUND intervention fund has no significant influence on educational research in universities in South East, Nigeria.

Figure 1: Graphical representation of the result



In figure 1, the graph further shows that the high extent group had a mean of 283.88 which is lower than the mean of the low extent group with the highest mean scores of 462.25, indicating that TETFUND intervention fund had no significant influence on educational research in universities in South East Nigeria.

Discussion of Results

The findings revealed the extent of the influence of TETFUND intervention fund at 5.28 percent had no significant influence on educational research in universities in South East, Nigeria. This implied that only 5.28 percent of TETFUND intervention fund were accessed and utilized by the lecturers in these universities while 94.72 percent of the fund are un-accessed. This agrees with Umeh (2014) who posits that the minister of education, Shekarau states that out of the allocation of over #10.052 billion to Universities, Polytechnics and Colleges of Education for Institution -Based Research by the Federal Government and disbursed by TETFUND, over #7.8 billion is yet un-accessed. Similarly, TETFUND (2013) report collaborated with the above when it states that many beneficiaries for research have not been able to access the fund allocated to them. Out of the 265.02 billion naira that was disbursed, for research, only 0.14% was accessed. No wonder Nigeria has only recognized 15 scientists and Engineers engaged

in research and Development per million persons. This explains why the country is dependent on other countries for survival.

The implication is that Nigerian academicians should engage in meaningful research that will lead to development and innovations. It is only when their researches can meet the needs of the country that they can access TETFUND intervention fund.

Conclusion

The importance of research in the socio-economic development of countries cannot be over-emphasized. Most of the new products and services that people are enjoying at present were research outcome of leading universities. The federal Government through TETFUND has made available fund for universities to conduct research that will meet the needs of the people. But the lecturers cannot access the fund because the conditions to access the fund is cumbersome. The fund is allowed to lie fallow. This has resulted to low research output. TETFUND complain that the quality of their research is not of good quality. Therefore, TETFUND intervention fund for research has no significant influence on educational research in Nigerian universities.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations aimed at improving the quality of research and access to TETFUND intervention fund was made:

1. TETFUND should cut down on some of the procedures to enable lecturers access the fund in due time.
2. Lecturers should engage in researches that would feed both the government and the private sector with useful information for socio-economic development and improvement of the living standard of the people.
3. Institutions should enlighten lecturers on the processes involved from the submission stage to the application for the first tranche.
4. Lecturers should be transparent about the entire procedures and transactions.
5. Nigerian universities should be research inclined in order to come up with solutions to the numerous problems facing the country.

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