



# TERTIARY EDUCATION TRUST FUND POLICY ON RESEARCH AND PUBLICATIONS, AND ACADEMIC STAFF TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT IN SOUTH EAST, NIGERIAN: ASSISSMENT

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## ABSTRACT

*The aim of this study is to ascertain the extent TETFund as an intervention agency has gone in providing supplementary support to the public tertiary educational institutions with the purpose of rehabilitation, restoration, and consolidation of tertiary Education in Nigeria. The purpose of this study was to assess the Tertiary Education Trust Fund policy implementation for universities improvement in the South – East of Nigeria. The study was guided by two research questions and two hypotheses. The researchers adopted descriptive survey design for the study. The population of the study is 765 staff of the federal and state public universities in South- East, Nigeria. There was no sampling since the number of Heads of Departments, Deans of Faculties, and TETFund Committees of the Universities was manageable, the entire population was studied. Assessment of TETFund Policy Implementations for Universities improvement questionnaire was used as instrument for data collection. The researcher also used a checklist to really ascertain the authenticity of the data provided by the respondents. Data were analyzed using Mean and Standard Deviation to answer the research questions and ANOVA was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The findings from the results revealed that the extent Tertiary Education Trust Fund's policy on sponsorship of research and publications in the South-East, Nigeria has been implemented is low and there is no significant difference between the mean ratings of the respondents. The study also revealed that the extent TETFund has implemented policy on sponsorship of academic staff training and development has been implemented for universities improvement in the South-East, Nigeria is high, and there is significant difference in the mean ratings of the HODs, Deans of faculties, and TETFund committee members of the universities in the South-East on the result. The researcher made some recommendations which include: that TETFund Board of trustees should step up in the provision of funds for sponsorship of collaborative research and publications of book manuscript written by both staff and students; secondly, Board of trustees of TETFund should ensure speedy release of funds for academic staff trainings and development to the beneficiaries to avoid unnecessary delays in the training programmes.*

**KEY WORDS:** Policy, Implementations, Universities Improvement, Teaching and Learning

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## INTRODUCTION

Tertiary education plays a key role in economic social and physical development of any nation. This is particularly the case in today's globalised, information and knowledge-based economics. Ojedele and Fadokun (2009) explained that no country can expect to successfully integrate into and benefit from the 21<sup>st</sup> country economy without a well-trained educated work force. The federal republic of Nigeria (FRN) (2013) see tertiary education as the education given after post basic education in

institutions such as universities and inter university centers. FRN (2013) goes on to outline the goals of tertiary education as contributing to national development through high level relevant manpower training, providing accessible and affordable quality learning opportunities in formal and informal education in response to the needs and interest of all Nigerians; provide high quality career counseling and lifelong learning programmes that prepare students with the knowledge and skills for self reliance and the world of work; reduce skill shortage through the production of



skilled manpower relevant to the needs of the labour market; promote and encourage scholarships and community service; forge and cement national unity, and promote national and international understanding and interaction.

Idogbo (2011) in addition points out that in Nigeria today and in several other African countries, the problem which higher education must seek to address should include: combating high level poverty, hunger and famine, combating drought and desert encroachment, addressing the increasing rate of

HIV/AIDS pandemic and other sexually transmitted diseases, addressing the prevailing economic meltdown, addressing pronounced fraud in the systems, eradicating high level corrupt practices among the leaders. Others according to Idogbo include: combating the rising incidents of campus activities that frequently lend to death of students and crippling academic lives, addressing poor quality of graduates from several tertiary institutions leading to them being discriminated against in the international labour market, and addressing poor rating of Nigeria tertiary institutions in terms of ranking among tertiary institutions across the global, which is largely a function of poor quality research, teaching and learning in these universities.

It could be said that from Nigerian independence till 1980's, higher institutions in the country seemed to have pursued to tackle these challenges with vigor, until 1980's and beyond when the decay of all tiers of education system in the nation became glaring. In terms of pure academic researches, Nigeria educational system, most especially in the south east currently seems to lack pure academic researches which ought to have been answers or solutions to the numerous problems faced by the society. The consequences of this could be seen in the constant outbreak of diseases, social vices, religious fanaticism, electoral fraud, tribal conflicts, terrorist attacks, and kidnapping which has ravaged the zone. Mortality rate seems to be very high in every strata of the society- the rich, the poor, the middle class, the infants, youths, women, adults without any serious causes.

In the area of academic staff training and development, most academic staff of Nigeria universities never had the opportunity for further development and training. Hence, there was lack of provision and maintenance of qualified academic staff. A lot of academic staff had remained complaisant in the previously acquired qualifications and might have continued to teach with such for many years perhaps due to their inability to finance such trainings considering the meager salary and biting economy

which the south-east university academia suffer most due to large number of families total dependence coupled with other encumbrances.

As a measure to correct this not, the federal government of Nigeria in 2011 promulgated an act called tertiary education trust fund Act. It is an intervention agency set up to provide supplementary support to all levels of public tertiary institutions, with the objectives of using funding alongside project management for the rehabilitation, restoration and consolidation of tertiary education in Nigeria. Section 2(1) of the act provides that the federal Inland Revenue services (FIRS) assesses and collects 2% tax of the assessable profit of all the companies in Nigerian on behalf of TETFund. Section 7 subsections 1 (a)-(e) provides TETFund specific objectives as the provision and maintenance of:

*Essential physical infrastructure for teaching and Learning; instructional materials and equipment, Research and productions; academic staff training and*

*development and any other need which in the opinion*

*Of the board of trustees is Critical and essential for the improvement and maintenance of standards in the higher educational institutions (TETFund 2014,p.4)*

Provision and maintenance of research and productions entails providing and maintaining sponsorship for individuals, institutional, commissioned, students and collaborative researches in the universities; while provision and maintenance of academic staff training and development entails providing sponsorships for academic staff acquisition of higher degrees nationally and internationally; provision and maintenance of sponsorship for academic staff professional conferences, workshop and seminars

### **Research and Publications**

Bako in Yusuf (2012) defines research as a systematic search and investigation for increasing the sum of knowledge; and research development as the search and application of this knowledge for the development of new and improved products, services and industrial processes of capital development. In other words, research is the process of creating new knowledge or new, insights on knowledge or unlocking knowledge. Ibidapoobe in Yusuf (2012). According to Yusuf, Research in the universities may take the form of:

- a. **Individual research:** this is initiated and conducted by an individual researcher or a team of researchers who may seek funding from the University Board of Research or from alternative funding agencies, including international



organizations, Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO's) and the private sector.

- b. **Institutional research:** This is initiated and supervised by the institution or a unit of the institution (faculty, department etc) and usually involves a team of researchers. Funding is internal, except where assistance is obtained from external sources.
- c. **Commissioned or Contractual research:** This is carried out at the instance of an external body, which may be government or a government organ, the private sector, NGO's etc, which also funds the research. The sponsor has right of ownership of the research results.
- d. **Collaborative research:** This is a joint research effort with common objectives or goals and involving the sharing of ideas, methodologies, facilities etc between individual researcher or research team, from same or different institutions, organizations, countries or regions of the world.
- e. **Students Research:** This is an undergraduate or postgraduate research project undertaken by a student, supervised by the student's department, and the results of which are reported in student's thesis or dissertation. Student research is usually jointly funded between the student himself (or his sponsor) and his department.

Aberman, Schiffer, Johnson, and Oboh (2010) described three potential reasons why research policy linkages in Nigeria have been generally weak:

- a. Lack of high-quality research, despite having one of the largest numbers of policy research institutions and think tanks in Africa.
- b. Lack of interaction between policy makers and researchers, thereby limiting meaningful discussion on research findings and their suitability to policy-related problems, as well as limiting identification of policy areas requiring additional research.
- c. Insufficient use of available research-based information in public policy making, creating disenchantment by policy researchers.

### **Academic Staff Training and Development**

Academic Staff Training and Development or professional development according to Yemmy in Amadi (2013) is a process engaged in to enhance the knowledge, skills and attitudes of the teachers. To Amadi, this implies the responsibility to create, preserve, evaluate and transmit knowledge through continuing learning. Development programme, Amadi continued to say, have the ingredient of fostering and preserving the scholarly values, curiosity and integrity to nurture these values through inculcation.

To Guskey (2000), professional development refers to those processes and activities designed to enhance the professional knowledge, skill and attitudes of educators so that they might in turn, improve the learning of students. Guskey and Huberman, in Othman and Dahari (2011) opines that high quality professional development is considered extremely crucial to educational improvement. Professional development entails three main characteristics. Firstly, it is an intentional process based on a clear vision of purpose and planned goals. It has to begin with a clear statement of worthwhile purpose and goals which can be calibrated and tracked. Secondly, it is an ongoing process, simply because of the dynamic nature of education and the continuous expansion of knowledge. Consequently, educators need to engage in continuous learning throughout the entire span of their professional career. Thirdly, it is a systematic process which incorporates changes over an extended period of time and at all levels of the organization, (Othman & Dahari, 2011).

South East Nigeria currently has ten public universities with large intake of students each year. The quest for education by the citizenry leaves much for one to worry about. Do these universities have the carrying capacities proportionate to their yearly intake? Do these institutions have the quantity and quality of academic staff to implement the National University Commission (NUC) Lecturer-student Ratio policy? Are there available to staff and students quality research reference materials for proper academic works? It is against this background that the researcher decides to embark upon this study on tertiary education trust fund policy on research and production, and academic staff training and development in south east, Nigeria: assessment.

### **PROBLEM STATEMENT**

Despite TETFund intervention and policy of rehabilitation, restoration and consolidation and huge amount of fund supposedly being pumped into these universities, researches in the south east universities seem to have degenerated greatly. Academic staff trainings and developments embarked upon in other universities have to suffered serious set-backs as people abandon trainings due to lack of finance to up-set accumulated school fees. These are serious issues of concern to the universities improvement.

This may be the reason while even in the whole country, poverty, insecurity, kidnapping, fraud in all sphere, tribal clashes and terrorism skills thrives and away on the increase to an alarming rate.



## RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Two research questions were formulated to guide the study.

1. To what extent has tertiary education trust fund policy in sponsorship of research and publication been implemented for universities improvement in the south east?
2. To what extent has tertiary education trust fund policy on sponsorship of academic staff training and development been implemented for universities improvement in the south-east, Nigeria?

## HYPOTHESIS

Two hypotheses were also formulated to test the significance of any outcome extent the research questions will give:

1. There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of HOD'S, Deans of faculties and TETFund committee members of the universities on the extent TETFund committee members of the universities on the extent TETFund has implemented policy on the sponsorship of research and production for universities improvement in the south east, Nigeria.
2. There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of HOD'S, Deans of faculties, and TETFund committee members of the universities on the extent TETFund has implemented policy on the sponsorship of academic staff training and development for universities improvement the south east, Nigeria.

## METHOD

The study adopted descriptive survey design and focused on the South-East region of Nigeria due to the zones excessive love for education and constant claim by the people for government marginalization in terms of distribution of essential amenities. 765 HODs, Deans of faculties, and TETFund committee members of the ten public universities in the area were used for the study and as such there was no sampling. Researcher developed validated instrument called: assessment of TETFund policy implementation for universities improvement (ATPIU) with three sections was used to collect data. The reliability of the instrument was carried out using Cronbach alpha which yielded a reliability coefficient of 0.93. A checklist was also developed to cross check the authenticity of the data collected by the questionnaire which also yielded a reliability coefficient of 0.81 using inter-rater and kappa

coefficient. Data was analysed using analysis of variance (ANOVA) Statistics.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSIONS

### Research and Publications

The extent to which Tertiary Education Trust Fund's policy on the sponsorship of research and production is being implemented in the South-East, Nigeria is low and there is no significant difference in the mean ratings of the opinions respondents on the result.

The result of the analysis depicts that TETFund provisions of sponsorship on the following types of research is high: Individual research and publications, institutional research and publication commissioned research, students' research and publications as well as annual research journals and publications. However, sponsorship on the following types of research appears: low collaborative research and publications, books and manuscripts written by staff and students. This however indicates that the extent to which TETFund sponsors research and publications in the universities in South-East is low. This finding also proves that there is no significant difference in the opinions of the respondents in the result which also indicates that generally in the South-East, Nigeria the extent of TETFund provision of fund for the sponsorship of research and publications is low. However this finding disagrees with the findings of Darinho (2000) in an empirical study on the role of TETFund in educational development of UNN where Darinho finds that TETFund has contributed in the provision of research and publications among others. The reason for this disagreement may be on the readiness of each institution to access the fund. Despite this still, in South East as a whole the extent is low. The reason for this result may be that universities in the South-East have not carried a high level of awareness to staff and students to write books and manuscripts to be sponsored. It may also be that the few written ones are not of quality and may have failed scrutiny; hence TETFund has little or nothing to sponsor.

### Academic Staff training and development

Tertiary Education Trust Fund policy on the sponsorship of academic staff training and development is being implemented for universities improvement in the South-East, Nigeria to a high extent. However, there is a significant difference in the mean ratings of the respondents on this result.

The result is an indication that all aspects of academic staff training and development in South-East universities are high on the whole. The obtained grand mean of 20:8 is higher than the expected grand mean of 20. This shows that the extent to which TETFund



implemented its policy on the provisions of academic staff training and development in South-East universities is high. This finding agrees with Bogoro (2014) view that TETFund intervention on academic staff training and development in Africa is among the best in the world. To Bogoro (2014), no fewer than 10,363 members of the academic and non-academic staff of public institution in the country have been trained by TETFund between 2010 and 2014. The findings also agree with the findings of Ogundu and Nwokoye (2009) who opined that TETFund in its role in the university development in Nigeria has intervened and assisted in sponsoring 5,277 lectures for post graduate studies overseas in the last 3 years, out of this number, the study indicates that 1,204 have either started or completed their studies and are back home. In the same vein, the findings is in conjunction with the findings of Udu and Nkwede (2014) assert that TETFund interventions in Nigerian universities particularly Ebonyi state university have impacted positively on the human development of the institution.

The reason for this high agreement in the result may be due to high level of awareness created among the academic staff and the quest for further development of the individuals as well as enrichment of the faculty. Secondly, because of the biting economy, many who could not have afforded sponsorship of further training avail themselves of the opportunity provided by TETFund. In this case therefore accessing this fund becomes faster. However still, the finding also proved that there is significant difference in the mean rating on the opinions of the HODs, Deans of faculties, and TETFund committee members on the result. The reason for this still may not be farfetched. Some university leaders may be ticking staff for TETFund sponsorship on the bases of cliqueship, familiarity and loyalty, and not on the bases of merit. In some institutions, some qualified staff may have applied for sponsorship but due to the fact that no one close to the authority can speak for them it is denied. Some leaders may as well be using it to victimize some staff through denial and unnecessary delays.

#### **Educational Implications of the Findings**

1. The extent to which Tertiary Education Trust Fund's policy on sponsorship of research and publications is being implemented for universities improvement in the South-East, Nigeria is low. This could imply that research and publications in these institutions are also low.
2. Tertiary Education Trust Fund's policy on sponsorship of academic staff training and development has been implemented for universities improvement in the South-East,

Nigeria to a high extent. This implies that TETFund has concentrated mainly on sponsorship of academic staff training and development with little emphasis on other areas

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

In the light of the findings of this study, the researcher therefore recommends as follows:-

1. Since the end product of research is its publication, TETFund Board of Trustees should step up in the provision of funds for the sponsorship of collaborative researches and publications of book manuscripts written by both staff and students, as this would go a long way in encouraging the students as well as the staff.
2. Some of the areas where TETFund has not done much according to the findings of this study could be traced to the inability of some institutions not accessing funds available to them either due to their inability to make a prompt retirement of the previously accessed funds, to this note therefore the researcher recommends that TETFund Board of Trustees should come up with definite datelines on retirement of accessed funds as well as sanctions for failure to access new funds.
3. Since the essence of setting up TETFund is for the improvement of the universities in Nigeria, from the findings of this study, since TETFund has not done much in implementing some of its policy objectives in the South-East of Nigeria, it therefore means that the universities in this area have not been improved. The researcher therefore recommends that the federal government should upon recommendation by TETFund discipline any individual who indulges in any activity tantamount to sabotaging government effort towards the improvement of the universities.

#### **CONCLUSION**

Constant training and retraining is the bane of further improvement. When the staffs of this universities are properly trained and periodically updated, quality researches which are solutions to the ravaging societal problems will be the nations celebrated virtues.

#### **Limitations of the Study**

The study made use of questionnaire for data collection. Though, the researcher had wanted to use



inspection and observation for data collection. The use of questionnaire may lead to inadequate responses. However, the respondents were well guided and directed. The checklist that was used with questionnaire helped to confirm that the questionnaire responses were real.

The institutions that were investigated were not all at the same level of development and need. Some have existed for decades while some are new. As a result the intervention of TETFund in the institutions may not be equal. The above stated challenges notwithstanding, the findings are very valid and reliable

### SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCHES

1. It is suggested that this work be repeated in other geo political zones in Nigeria
2. It is also suggested that a study be conducted on monitoring of TETFund projects in Nigeria.
3. The researcher still suggests that this study may be repeated using inspection and observation methods.

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