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AN ASSESSMENT OF THE IMPACT OF TETFUND INTERVENTIONS ON INFRASTRUCTURAL DEVELOPMENT IN TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS IN NASARAWA STATE

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Abstract

The study analysis the impact of intervention of Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFund) on physical infrastructural development in tertiary institutions in Nasarawa State. The main objective of this paper is to examine the challenges of TETFund interventions in ensuring infrastructural development in tertiary institutions in Nasarawa State. The study uses secondary data and the system theoretical framework was utilized to explain how TETFund has supported infrastructural development because of poor infrastructures in the State's tertiary institutions. The paper revealed that the state of physical infrastructure in tertiary institutions in Nasarawa state before the TETFund intervention were inadequate and dysfunctional. Findings from the paper show that TETfund as an intervention agency has addressed some of the challenges of physical infrastructure in tertiary institutions in Nasarawa state. The study recommends that government at different levels should be committed to educational development instead of leaving the whole weight to TETFund. The Federal Government should adopt full implementation of Public-Private-Partnership policy to complement the effort of TETFund rather than depending on the agency to provide the physical infrastructure in the institutions. The Federal government should allocate adequate funds to enable TETFund complete the ongoing projects as well as initiate new ones in order to increase access to education in the country. Since the only source of funding available to the TETFund is the 2% tax collected from the accessible profits of registered companies in Nigeria the government should review the tax to 5% to provide enough funding for the agency to execute its objectives.

Key Words: TETFund, Infrastructure, Development, Tertiary Institutions, PPP.

1. Introduction

Education is widely accepted as a major instrument for promoting socio-economic, political and cultural development in Nigeria (Ajayi & Ekundayo, 2014). This important role placed the development of the sector as a priority for government, development partners, and international agencies. As stated in the philosophy of Nigeria's National Policy on Education: (i) Education is an instrument for national development, and the interaction of persons and ideas are all aspects of education. (ii) Education fosters the worthy development of the individual, for each individual's sake, and general development of the society. (iii) The training of the mind in the understanding of the world around. (iv) The acquisition of appropriate skills and competencies as equipment for the individual to live in and contribute to the development of the society.

Thus, developing the educational sector remains a critical concern for all governments. In this regard, most governments commit sizeable financial and human resources for the improvement of the sector. Although, developing the sector is a continuous process even as the developed countries continue to engage in further development through planning and research, it is of paramount concern to the developing countries, as greater effort and commitment are required on the part of the various governments, if they must bridge the gap between them and the industrialized nations.

Education has three stages, the primary, secondary or post primary and tertiary levels. Universities, polytechnics and colleges of education belong to the third level of education, that is, the tertiary level. Tertiary education is needed to provide for acceleration of social change, economic stability and human development (Aprebo & Amaewhule, 2018). Ibukum in Ogundu and Nwoke (2016) noted that tertiary education provides the much-needed manpower for all spheres of human need.

The fact remains that, many policies have been put in place by different administrations to address the aforementioned problems in Nigeria. (TETfund, 2013) Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETfund) 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 structures, academic teaching and research equipment's etc.

This poses a lot of challenges in the management of the fund to meet the number of problems facing the sector. The funding situation in these institutions, mostly the state- owned tertiary institutions is very alarming because of poor structure, poor library and laboratory equipment's etc. Consequently, the Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETfund) is being looked upon by the education sector as an alternative source of funding to run the system. Despite these demands, TETfund largely depends on resources from the profits of companies which are not doing well due to several years of government neglect. The real challenges, therefore, are the ability to equitably manage the available funds to meet the yearnings of stakeholders, the ability to impact on the sector to encourage taxpayers to continue to support the programme, ability and capability to ensure the judicious use of the meager resources, the ability to make effective decision to enhance and boost the teachers' morale to such a level as to positively rekindle interest in teaching and learning, ability to sufficiently sanitize and collaborate effectively with the Federal Inland Revenue Service to ensure and build maximum revenue from the tax collected.

However, despite the establishment of TETFund as an intervention agency to address infrastructural needs affecting the tertiary institutions, there are still cases of continuous degradation of infrastructure, lack of adequate classrooms for learning, lack of adequately equipped libraries for research and over population in classrooms. This is in spite of the heavy amount of funding to institutions of higher learning in Nasarawa state. Notwithstanding, TETfund is criticised in carrying out its mandate. Even though researches have shown that the gap is due to mismanagement of the available funds, (Ajayi and Ayodele 2002, Ekundayo 2009) other researches argued that is because of political interference, (Ajayi Ekundayo, 2009) some maintained that corruption (Okoroma, 2006 and Dike 2006) is the basis and some argued on poor monitoring and supervisions. (Ugwoke, 2013) There must be reasons as to the low performance of the Tertiary Education Trust Fund towards solving the problems facing the education system especially at tertiary level. While supporters of TETfund absolve TETfund from any negligence and, have, in fact, scored it high in the deliverance of services, it should be stated that there has not been any independent assessment of the fund with a view of setting the records straight. It is on this note that this research is designed to investigate the challenges of TETFund Interventions on infrastructural Development in Nasarawa State Tertiary Institutions.

Objectives of the Study

The general objective of this research is to assess the factors militating against TETFund Interventions in infrastructural Development in Nasarawa State Institution Nigeria. The specific objectives of the study include:

i. To evaluate the extent at which TETfund infrastructural interventions on tertiary institutions been effective in Nasarawa State;
ii. To examine the factors militating against TETfund in its efforts at providing for the development of tertiary education in Nasarawa state.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Conceptual Issues

Concept of TETFUND Intervention: Ogunde, (2011) defined TETFUND Intervention as a fund given to institutions that cover the post-secondary section of national education system. These include Universities, Polytechnics, Colleges of Technology and Education, the Advanced Teachers' Training

Colleges, Correspondence Colleges and other higher institutions that are provided with infrastructural facilities due to inadequate funding of these institutions in Nigeria.

Nairaland (2013) in Onyeike V. & Eseyin O. (2014) defined TETFUND as an interventional measure of the Federal Government to tackle inadequate facilities in our tertiary institutions. This is the major role that the agency plays since it came into existence in 2011.

Concept of Infrastructural Development: Fulmer, (2009) sees infrastructure development as technical structures that support a society, such as roads, water supply, sewers, electrical national grids, telecommunications, and so forth, and can be defined as “the physical components of interrelated systems providing commodities and services essential to enable, sustain, or enhance societal living conditions.
Usman, (2014) defined Infrastructural development as a basic physical and organizational structure needed for the operation of a society or enterprise, or the services and facilities necessary for an organization to function.

Concept of Tertiary Institutions: The Nigerian National Policy on Education (FGN, 2014) described higher education as education given after secondary education in universities, colleges of education, polytechnics, mono-technics, including those institutions offering correspondence courses.

2.2 Empirical Review

Factors militating against TETFUND Infrastructure’s Development of Tertiary Education

Wenibowel and Warrant (2021). Carried out a study to examine the role of Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETfund). The finding showed that TETFund as an interventionist agency has implemented several of its mandate programmes in many higher institutions of learning. However, as a result of lack of adequate funding and internal measure put in place by the agency that is now an impediment to higher institutions’ access to funds has resulted in the non-attainment of the desired goals of the educational sector in Nigeria. They concluded that tertiary education subsector needs to be developed to make the necessary impact in Nigeria.

Gbarato, Cookey, Pamogho and Nwikina (2020). Examined Funding tertiary education for economic development: Nigerian score card. The empirical result of the multiple regressions (OLS) revealed that all employed explanatory variables have marginal effect on economic development. Results show that recurrent expenditure on education and TET-Fund exert positive influences on economic development while capital expenditure on education exerts negative influence on economic development. The study concludes that Nigeria witnessed backwardness in economic development following poor funding and misappropriation of fund for tertiary education in the country. The study recommends an increase of more than 18% in government budgetary allocation to the educational sector; shun the unhealthy interference of government or its agency in the utilization of allocated funds; an improvement in the facilities and welfare of educational staff, alongside regular monitoring of the level of fund utilization in the educational sector to enhance literacy rate, standard of living and employment level in Nigeria.

Ubogu and Money (2018) examined Financing education in Nigeria and its implications and options for national development. The study revealed that, one of major problem now facing education in Nigeria is the issue of underfunding. We have, in the last decades, witnessed a gradual degradation in infrastructure, in manpower development and access to qualitative education. Precisely, the federal government spending on education is below 10 percent of its overall budget. This is largely due to the fall of the oil market, and the need to reduce the huge and raising debt service obligations. This study concludes that, past and present situation of financing education in Nigeria has led to inadequate funding and possible strategies of funding education. Thus, it was suggested among others that all stakeholders, parents and guardians, the society in general, the private sector and non-governmental agencies must become involved in the financing of education in Nigeria.

Adavbiele (2016) investigated the impact of education Trust Fund on tertiary institution taking a core look at college of education, Ekiadolor as the case study in Benin Municipal Council of Edo state in Nigeria. The population of the study comprise of all the students of College of Education Ekiadolor, Edo state. There are approximately 40-60 thousand students presently; this population includes both the ICEP (Institute of Continue Education Part-time) and degree students of the institution. The findings showed despite the developmental impact in institutions of learning. ETF lacks effective internal control and this has given rise to numerous ills, the institution stands high risk of losing large portion of its resources through wastage and misappropriation. The study also revealed that problems that ETF is facing can be surmounted. They are lack of proper accounting record, lop-sidedness in the management of ETF, lack of proper sharing formula of the fund among the tertiary institutions. Recommendations were made on how tertiary institutions can be tailored to be Centre of Excellence, a place of building brains, training of disciplined and highly skilled individuals in Nigeria.

Hamisu and Musa (2015) studied 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). The study revealed that funds allocated to the universities overtime were under-accessed due to their inability to meet conditions defined by TETFund. The study however suggested that TETFund should also focus more attention on institutions with special needs. Eno-Abasi (2015) was of the view that many institutions complain about the process of accessing the fund as cumbersome. 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. These empirical works have concluded due to problem of underfunding public tertiary institutions in Nigeria, namely universities, polytechnics, mono-technics and colleges of education have not performed as expected. Accordingly, because poor funding affects not only the availability of quality educational facilities and infrastructure, but also, research, capacity building, and teaching, public tertiary institutions in the country have not fared well in terms of contributing to the economic development of the nation and community service.

Udu and Nkwede (2014) studied the impact of TETFund interventions in Nigerian Universities and its implications for sustainable development with special attention on Ebonyi State University (EBSU), Abakaliki. The study concluded that despite the TETFund interventions, tertiary institutions in Nigeria still face the challenge of sufficient funds necessary to upgrade the institutions to international standard. The study also pointed out that even when the funds are approved by TETFund, not all the funds are always fully accessed by the beneficiary institutions.

Ugwoke (2013) on Education tax law and administration in Nigeria examines the administration of the ETD of 1993 as amended by the Act No 40 of 1988. It concludes that with improved transparency and accountability, rigorous training and retraining of the staff of the fund in tax audit and monitoring of project implementation, encouragement of the beneficiaries of the fund to shun their current lackadaisical attitude to the accessing and utilization of the Education Trust Fund money, the Education Tax Act will survive the present onslaught by the organized private sector who are recently very vocal about and against multiple taxation in the economy.
Ekundayo and Ajayi (2009) examined the myriads of problems militating against the effective management of the Nigeria university education system. According to their study, these include: financial crisis, poor infrastructure, and brain-drain, erosion of university autonomy, graduate unemployment, volatile and militant students' unionism, secret cults, examination malpractices and sexual harassment.

2.3 Theoretical Framework
The paper adopted system theory developed by Easton, (1965). However, the system theory will be adopted because the theory talks about input and output mechanism of the political system. The theory has five elements of Input, Output, Political System, feedback and lastly the environment. The system theory is relevant in explain the TET-fund supported infrastructural development intervention in Nasarawa State because poor infrastructures and the clamored for development is an input while the intervention by TET-Fund is an Output as a result of government policy.

The Nigerian political system has many parts working harmoniously to achieve the overall objectives of the nation. Among the parts, is education which needs to be strong in order to aid other parts to achieve the goal of development, policies upon policies have been set up to ensure educational system is lifted to the required standard. Among the policies and agencies put in place is Tertiary education trust fund (TETfund) which is put in place as inputs with personnel and financial resources but with the supervision of the federal government (political system) to produce outputs in form of good structures, standard library and laboratory equipment's, research grant and lectures training and development etc in the Nigerian tertiary institution which by extension would ensure sound vibrant graduates to handle others sectors.

Among these productive sectors which education aids are industrial sectors, agricultural sector, commercial sector, technological sector etc which are uplifted by quality of graduates that the education sector is producing. Quality manpower produced by the education sector should be able to transform the entire political system to a better state and the entire political environment or society should feed the education system back as to the quality of graduates it produces the feedback mechanism helps to revolve round the entire system and reshape the outputs to a better standard. It is expected that quality education system should produce quality and vibrant graduates (manpower) that would work in other sector such as small and medium scale industries, mechanized agriculture, communication and information units etc the entire political system works harmoniously to ensure social, economic and political development of Nigeria as a whole.

Easton did not approve of the idea of equilibrium analysis employed by the sociologists. His two major defects in that viewed.

- It attaches too much importance to equilibrium
- It does not attach importance to the processes or problem formulated by the processors.

The system may have some other goals than that of reaching one or any other point of equilibrium.

3. Methodology

3.1 Study Area

The research concentrates on five government owned tertiary institutions in Nasarawa State which is Federal University Lafia, Nasarawa State University, Keffi, Federal Polytechnic Nasarawa, Isa Mustapha Agwai Polytechnic; Lafia and Nasarawa State College of Education Akwanga.

3.2 Research Design

The research will use survey design in undertaking the study.

3.3 Method of Data Collection

The methodology adopted in this paper is secondary method of data collection.

3.4 Method of Data Analysis

The paper will employ qualitative method using historical analysis. Thereafter, qualitative data in form of interview was transcribed narrative description; the result obtained was interpreted and explained.

4. Results and Discussion

Tetffund and Its Intervention in Nasarawa State Tertiary Institution

The programme of the fund aimed at improving the institutions' facilities and essential physical infrastructure for teaching, research, and ranking. A part from these has helped in the upgrade and enrollment capacity of the institutions and provides the minimum requirements for the accreditation of some courses offered in the tertiary institutions of Nasarawa State. The institutions accessed fund through normal/special/zonal interventions and had completed almost all projects in the area of constructions and procurement and installation of equipment.

Table 1: The Summary Report of the Status of TETFund Intervention Projects (Normal/Special/Zonal/ in Tertiary Institution in Nasarawa State as at 1999-2021

S/N	Institutions	Total No. of Projects Allocated	Amount Disbursed	No. of Completed Projects	No. of Ongoing Projects

1	Federal University, Lafia	40	4,652,455,386.88	34	6
2	Nasarawa State University, Keffi	83	8,596,308,092.00	69	14
3	Federal Polytechnic Nasarawa	25	8,483,400,000.00	23	2
4	Isa Mustapha Agwai Polytechnic, Lafia	26	4,463,993,917.29	24	2
5	College of Education Akwanga	22	3,497,226,870.34	17	5
	Total	196	36,809,791,551.56	167	29

Source: Field Survey, 2021

From the report a total of 196 projects of the various tertiary institutions in Nasarawa State received over ₦36.8 billion for projects construction. 40 projects went for Federal University (#4,652,455,386.88), Lafia, 83 projects went for Nasarawa state university, Keffi (#8,569,308,092.00), 25 projects went for federal Polytechnic Nasarawa (#8,483,400,000), 26 projects went for Isa Mustapha Agwai Polytechnic (#4,463,993,917.29), while 22 projects went for College of Education Akwanga (#3,447,226,870.34). In all, between 1999 and 2021 a total number of 196 projects benefited from TETFund's infrastructure programme in Nasarawa State tertiary institutions. Prior to the introduction of this intervention scheme only 40 percent of projects in Nasarawa's Tertiary institutions had essential infrastructures facilities but with this intervention the percentage has risen to 80 percent. The contribution of TETFund intervention, in terms of Manpower Development to the institutions is enormous. The benefits accrued to the institutions through training, conferences and Research Grants being accessed since year 1999. This has in no doubt become a morale buster to the institutions.

Challenges Militating Against Tetffund Intervention in Nasarawa State Tertiary Institution

Some of the challenges confronting TETfund in the execution of its functions include but not limited to the following:

Government Policy: One of the policies of the government which can be said to have curtailed the scope of operation of the agency is in the area of limiting their role to that of intervening in only the nation's public tertiary institutions and not the private. Government directives in some cases have the capacity to expand or minimize the function of various agencies in the country. The case is not different for the TETfund. Funds generated by the agency are subject to some prescribed governmental policies. As such, the agency lacks the freedom to express their will on how their activities should be coordinated.

Funding: Funding has remained a major challenge to almost all the sectors of the Nigerian economy. This is because funding is a very vital resource in the course of executing a strategic function like that which is executed by the TETfund. The activities of TETfund in Nigeria is highly capital intensive. The agency needs money in order to keep up with the financial, human and material needs of all the tertiary institutions in the country. The projected expenditure of the agency is usually higher than generated income. The agency therefore becomes incapacitated to execute effectively the sole responsibility which it is expected to carry out.

Level of Cooperation between TETfund and Benefiting Institutions: One of the areas in which the agency has been restricted in executing her responsibility is in the area of smooth cooperation between the agency and most of the benefiting institutions within the country. While some institutions assume that the agency usually adopts bias criteria in funding tertiary institutions in the country. Other institutions inflate facts and figures in order to acquire an undue advantage from the agency. This has made the working relationship between the TETfund and these institutions to be distorted.

Overloading of Responsibilities: The TETfund over time has been experiencing challenges in the area of clear definition of responsibilities. However, there are cases where the TETfund has been involved in the funding of lower levels of education such as the primary and secondary levels. Therefore, in the midst of the inadequacy of resources available to the agency, the agency remains yet overcrowded with the responsibility of attending to the various other levels of education in the country. As such, the agency needs to constantly strategize on how to manage available resources with demand from the various levels of education in the country.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

After an in-depth investigation and analysis of the data collection from TETFund and these selected tertiary institutions, the paper concluded that the impact of TETFund on the development of tertiary institution cannot be over emphasized. TETFund is one of the most coordinated interventionist programme. Since independence, TETFund intervention has succeeded in unifying the tertiary institutions in the country and on the basis of that, it should be further strengthened and empowered by the federal government to contribute in tackling the problems facing the education sector in the country.
The paper concludes that the provision of these infrastructure facilities has enhanced the sustainable infrastructural development of these institutions in the State. The paper discovered that there is a reasonable proof to show the execution of TETFund projects in selected tertiary institution in Nigeria particularly Nasarawa State.

All hands are to further strengthen their effort that is, the government, private sector and the beneficiaries in financing the education system of the country because without sound education system economy of the country is in danger of being static if not back-warding.
In line with the findings of this paper, following recommendations should be taken into considerations which are:

i. Federal Government should put more effort to increase the special grand supplied to the TETFund intervention which would improve their sourcing powers to deliver their services effectively and efficiently on forms of infrastructural for tertiary institutions in Nasarawa state, Nigeria.
ii. TETFund fund intervention should also restructure their allocation system to be based on needs and not flat system of allocation. Some tertiary institutions are more developed than others and have more powers to generate revenue internally. By flat system of allocation some institutions would develop more rapidly than others.

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