

**THE IMPACT OF TETFUND ON SPECIALIZED TERTIARY
INSTITUTIONS: A STUDY OF FEDERAL UNIVERSITY OF
TECHNOLOGY, OWERRI**

¹Juliet Anulika Ndoh & ²Japhet O. Nnaeto

¹Department of Political Science, Imo State University, Owerri, Nigeria
Email: anuligr8@gmail.com

²Department of Political Science, Gregory University, Uturu, Abia State, Nigeria
Email: nnaetojaphet@gmail.com

ABSTRACT: The study examined the impact of TETFund on specialized tertiary institutions with focus on Federal University of Technology, Owerri. The study was specifically carried out to determine the extent to which Tertiary Education Trustfund (TETFund) impacts on the infrastructural and academic staff development of the institution. It adopted the content analytical tool for analysis. Data collection was through secondary instrument and direct observation. Public choice theory was adopted for the study which revealed that TETFund intervention has had great impact on the development of Federal University of Technology, Owerri. It has done well in infrastructural and human capital development. This has to an extent impacted on the quality of teaching and learning in the institution. The study therefore recommended that TETFund should replicate such developments strides in other universities especially state owned universities.

Keywords: *Specialized Tertiary Institutions, Infrastructural Development, Human Capital Development, Public Choice, TETFund.*

INTRODUCTION

Education is a significant factor in the growth and development of every individual and society at large. It is a vital instrument that can be used to change the world. The Central Bank of Nigeria views the role of education as a means of understanding, controlling and redesigning human environment. It is a major factor for social transformation, national stability, security, unity and prosperity. According to Onuma (2017), education constitutes the core of human development, national development and most crucial institution for empowering youths with knowledge and skills. In turn it provides the youths with access to productive employment. No wonder the 20th Nigerian Economic Summit described education as the sector which holds the key to national development and Nigeria's ability to compete on the global stage.

There are three levels of education operating in Nigeria, namely, the primary, secondary and the tertiary education. While the basics and post primary schools constitute the primary and secondary levels of education respectively, the universities, polytechnics and colleges of education belong to the third level which is the tertiary education. The goal of tertiary education according to the National Policy on Education by the Federal Republic of Nigeria is to contribute to national development through high level manpower training, provide accessible and affordable

quality learning opportunities in formal and informal education in response to the needs and interest of all Nigerians and to provide high quality career counselling and life-long learning programmes that prepare students with the knowledge and skills for self-reliance.

Statement of Problem

To achieve the above goals and objectives in Nigeria, funds are needed and provided through proper budgetary allocation. Regrettably, the federal and state governments in Nigeria have never met the twenty-six percent (26%) annual budget allocation to Education as recommended by the United Nation Education, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO). Okebukola (2002), remarked that the period between 1960s and 1980s were regarded as the golden age of tertiary education and research in Nigeria. Research in Nigeria was the best in terms of quality and quantity in sub-Saharan Africa. Unfortunately the educational sector in Nigeria has witnessed a total decay in contemporary times. The enabling environment for teaching and learning is no longer as conducive as was the case in the previous decades. The morale of lecturers is at its lowest ebb. Several factors contribute to the total decay and low quality output by the educational sector in Nigeria. Poor funding of the educational sector is a major factor contributing to the near collapse of tertiary educational institutions. Poor or inadequate funding has resulted to poor teaching and learning conditions in the tertiary institutions. The tertiary institutions in Nigeria are faced with the problems of decay of infrastructural facilities, poor library and lack of research grant to mention a few. The frequent industrial actions by the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) were as a result of poor or inadequate funding of the educational sector.

Federal University of Technology faces severe shortage of professionals and skilled manpower since its inception in 1980. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) report in 2003 ranked FUTO low in Human Development Index (HDI) on the basis of physical health and Education. The major sources of funding for Federal University of Technology are the federal Government monthly subvention and internally generated revenue which comes basically from school fees and other commercial ventures embarked upon by the University. The monthly subvention from Federal Government and the internally generated revenue often does not pay staff salaries and allowances as well as being able to provide the necessary facilities needed for teaching and learning. The inadequacy of this source of funding has compelled the management of the University to increase school fees severally. However, salaries and allowances of staff are fully borne by the federal government while internally generated funds are used for provision of stationeries and sundry administrative cost. This shows that there is hardly any fund available for infrastructural development, research, staff development and library materials among other things.

In order to address the problem of funding in the educational sector the Tertiary Education TrustFund (TETFund) which was formerly known as Education Trustfund (ETF) was established by an Act of the National Assembly in June, 2011. It is the brainchild of Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) and it is charged with the responsibility of providing funds for the provision and upgrading of teaching and learning facilities as well as training and development of staff in tertiary institutions. To what extent has TETFund been able to impact on the

infrastructural and staff development of tertiary institutions in Nigeria? This is what this study sets out to investigate focusing on Federal University of Technology, Owerri (FUTO) Imo State.

Theoretical Framework

The study adopted Public Choice Theory to explain the tertiary institutions' choice of TETFund to meet up with the enormous needs of educational infrastructure in Nigeria's Universities using Federal University of Technology, Owerri as a reference. Public Choice theory is of social science persuasion, precisely Economics. The theory first emerged in the 1950s but was given currency by James Buchanan and Gordon Tullock in 1986. Public choice takes the same principles economists use to analyze people's action in the marketplace and apply them to people's action in collective decision making (Buchanan & Gordon, 1962). According to Shaw (2002) public choice focuses on public interests which is construed as a fundamental obligation of government. This explains the reason the Federal Government of Nigeria established the TETFund programme to effectively support innovations that will sustain quality education in Nigeria. One of the tenets of public choice theory is its drive to achieve the interests of the public.

FUTO at a Glance

In response to the need for the development of technology based economy, the Federal University of Technology, Owerri (FUTO) was established on the 1st of October, 1980 under the democratic administration of President Shehu Shagari. The University first started at the premises of the Government Technical College, Owerri with a few staff borrowed from the Imo State Civil Service and Professor Umaru D. Gowmwalk as its first Vice Chancellor. The University later moved to its temporary site at the Lake Nwaebere Campus where it opened its doors for its first intake of students in October, 1981. FUTO operated on the Lake Nwaebere Campus until 1992/93 session when it relocated to its permanent site situated at Ihiagwa/Eziobodo which is about 25kilometres south of Owerri metropolis.

Obviously, students' enrolments, over the years, have increased tremendously. The University is made up of five schools, namely: the School of Sciences (SOSC), School of Engineering Technology (SEET), School of Agriculture and Agricultural Technology (SAAT), School of Agriculture and Technology (SAT), School of Health Technology (SHT). These schools have thirty (30) departments with a Directorate of General Studies. Its entire Academic programmes are Technology compliant. It also has a Postgraduate school with student enrolment of over five hundred. The University remains the first University of Technology in the South East of Nigeria.

An Overview of TETFund

Tertiary education in Nigeria appears to have been in funding crisis for years and has culminated in shortage of material and human resources, poor education planning and poor learning environment. Observations by the United Nations Education Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO, 2000) and Kpolovic (2017) points to poor fund allocation and policy on

education sector in Nigeria, hence poor implementation of educational policy programmes especially at the tertiary level. Nwite (2017) remarked that it's not an over statement to observe that poor quality primary education produces poor candidates for secondary education which in turn produce very poor candidates for tertiary institutions for learning that deliver unfinished professionals to the labour market. Abdu (2003) similarly observed that funding education sector in Nigeria has remained limited and underfunded. Schools suffer from overcrowding, poor sanitation, abandoned capital projects, inadequate funding, poor condition of service, poor supervision practices and unconducive environment are not left out of the limitations. These have led to incessant strike actions and closure of schools especially by the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU). Due to inadequate funding and other problems confronting the educational sector like deteriorating educational facilities and the falling standard of education, the Tertiary Education TrustFund (TETFund) was established.

Tertiary Education TrustFund (TETFund) was established therefore as an Intervention Agency 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. TETFund is charged with the responsibility of managing, disbursing and monitoring the Education Tax to public tertiary institutions in Nigeria.

The main source of income for the Intervention Agency is the imposed two percent (2%) Education Tax on the assessable profit of all registered companies in Nigeria. The Federal Inland Revenue Service (FIRS) is empowered by the Act to assess and collect education Tax. The Board of Trustees established under section 4 of the New Act manages the fund. The fund is disbursed on the ratio of 2:1:1 (Universities:2, Polytechnics:1 and Colleges of Education:1) forty one percent (41%) goes to the universities, Thirty percent (30%) goes to the Polytechnics while twenty nine (29%) goes to Colleges of Education. The fund is administered and disbursed to federal and state tertiary institutions specifically for the provision and maintenance of:

- i. Academic Staff Training and Development
- ii. Instructional Materials and Equipment
- iii. Research and Publications
- iv. Essential Physical Infrastructure for teaching and leaning
- v. Any other need as approved by the Board of Trustees. The need has to be essential for the improvement of quality and maintenance of standards in the higher educational institutions.

From the above, one can assume that TETFund was created to salvage tertiary education in Nigeria by directing resources towards improving the productivity and quality of higher education.

METHODOLOGY

The information provided in this study was gathered through secondary sources and direct observation. The information was analyzed using the content analytical approach/tool.

FUTO and TETFund

Prior to the establishment of Tertiary Education Trust Fund, the major sources of funding the Federal University of Technology were the federal government monthly subvention and internally generated revenue which comes basically from school fees. The monthly subvention and internally generated revenue cannot pay salaries and allowances of staff or even provide the needed necessary infrastructural facilities for teaching and learning. The inadequacy of this source of funding led to the poor infrastructural development, library equipment, research materials, classroom and hostel accommodation etc. Going by this, the management of the university did not hesitate to start accessing TETFund benchmark by following the guidelines for accessing the fund in order to have its systems turned around.

TETFund has sponsored about two hundred and seventeen (217) academic staff of the university to national and international conferences, seminars and workshops. Several academics have gone for their higher programmes (M.Sc. and Ph.D.) sponsored by TETFund in universities where their courses are tenable. Among over Ninety (90) TETFund projects in the university are faculty buildings, lecture theatres, classrooms, hostels, Centre for Entrepreneurship Studies, School of management Technology Complex, School of Engineering Complex and six coaster buses. These projects have been completed and new ones are coming up. TETFund intervention has ameliorated the infrastructural and manpower challenges of the university to an extent.

Table 4.3.1: Showing the number of TETFund intervention beneficiaries in FUTO (2011-2017)

| S/No | Description | Number of Beneficiaries |
|--------------|---------------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. | Conferences | 217 |
| 2. | Research | 121 |
| 3. | Publication of Journal/Books | 8 |
| 4. | Staff Training and Development | 123 |
| 5. | Needs Assessment Staff capacity | 35 |
| Total | | 504 |

Source: Futo TETFund Office (2018)

Table 4.3.2: Showing TETFund Intervention projects in FUTO (2011 – 2017)

| S/No | Projects Completed |
|------|---|
| 1. | Completion Of Daycare/Women and Child Development Center (CDC) Complex. |
| 2. | Completion of Building Complex for Research and Technical Assistance for Development of Youth Training Scheme. |
| 3. | Completion and Furnishing of Lecture Hall/Laboratory Block for School of Agriculture and Agricultural Technology. |
| 4. | Completion of Post-Graduate School (PGS) Building Complex. |
| 5. | Procurement of 140 No collapsible lecture theatre/classroom furniture. |
| 6. | Construction and furnishing of Goodluck Ebele Jonathan (GEJ) Engineering Complex. |
| 7. | Construction and furnishing of Department of Optometry Building. |
| 8. | Construction and Furnishing of Departmental Building for the School of Environmental sciences. |
| 9. | Construction and furnishing of Department of Dental Technology Building. |
| 10. | Construction and furnishing of Lecture Theatre for School of Environmental Sciences. |
| 11. | Extension of Existing Engineering Workshop I. |
| 12. | Extension of Existing Engineering Workshop II |
| 13. | Construction and furnishing of 1000 capacity Lecture Theatre. |
| 14. | Construction and furnishing of Entrepreneurship Centre Building. |
| 15. | Construction and furnishing of school of science building (Department of Physics). |
| 16. | Construction and furnishing of school of agriculture and agricultural technology phase 1. |
| 17. | Construction and furnishing of school of agriculture and Agricultural Technology Phase 2. |
| 18. | Construction and furnishing of Library Complex. |
| 19. | Construction and furnishing of Administrative Block for Institute of Women, Gender and Development Studies (IWoGDS) |
| 20. | Construction and furnishing of School of Management Technology Complex. |
| 21. | Construction and furnishing of FUTO Guest House. |
| 22. | Construction and furnishing of Department of Geology Building |
| 23. | Construction And Furnishing Of 800 Capacity School of Science Lecture Theatre. |
| 24. | Public Procurement and Research Centre Building |
| 25. | ICT Building. |
| 26. | Construction of the School of Agricultural Technology Departmental Building. |
| 27. | 32-room Academic Staff offices for school of Agriculture and Agricultural |

African Journal of Social and Behavioural Sciences (AJSBS)
Volume 8, Number 2 (2018) ISSN: 2141-209X

| | |
|-----|---|
| | Technology. |
| 28. | Constriction and Furnishing of Departmental Offices and Classroom for School of Health Technology. |
| 29. | Construction and furnishing of 1 No Lecture Theatre and Offices. |
| 30. | Construction and furnishing of Departmental offices and classrooms for school of sciences. |
| 31. | Construction and furnishing of staff offices for school of Environmental Sciences. |
| 32. | Construction of Zoo. |
| 33. | Construction of Screen and Green House. |
| 34. | Construction and Furnishing of Central Academic Staff Offices. |
| 35. | Construction and Furnishing of University Auditorium |
| 36. | Construction and furnishing of School of Engineering and Engineering Technology workshop/Laboratory. |
| 37. | Construction and Furnishing of 800 Capacity Lecture Theatre. |
| 38. | Construction and Furnishing of School of Science Workshop/Laboratory. |
| 39. | Construction and Furnishing of Academic Staff office for school of Health Technology. |
| 40. | Furnishing Of The School Of Agricultural and Agricultural Technology Building Phase I. |
| 41. | Furnishing of the School of Agriculture and Agricultural Technology Building Phase II. |
| | Rehabilitation of Existing Buildings |
| 1. | Rehabilitation of Hostel A (LOT 1) |
| 2. | Rehabilitation of Hostel C (LOT 3) |
| 3. | Rehabilitation of Hostels E&D (LOT 2) |
| 4. | Rehabilitation of Postgraduate School Lecture Theatre (LOT 4) |
| 5. | Rehabilitation of School of Management Technology Building (LOT 5) |
| 6. | Rehabilitation of School of Science Lecture Hall/Building (LOT 6) |
| 7. | Rehabilitation of School of Agriculture and Agricultural Technology (LOT 7) |
| 8. | Rehabilitation of 500 Capacity Lecture Theatres (LOT 9) |
| 9. | Rehabilitation of Library Building (LOT 10) |
| S/N | Supply and Installation of Laboratory/Teaching Equipment |
| 1. | Supply and Installation of Laboratory/Teaching Equipment to school of Health Technology |
| 2. | Supply and Installation of Laboratory/Teaching Equipment to School Environmental Sciences |
| 3. | Supply and Installation of Laboratory/Teaching Equipment to School of Agriculture and Agricultural Technology |
| 4. | Supply and Installation of Farm Implements to the school of agriculture and agricultural technology |
| 5. | Supply and Installation of Laboratory/Teaching Equipment for Department of Polymer and Textile Engineering |

African Journal of Social and Behavioural Sciences (AJSBS)
Volume 8, Number 2 (2018) ISSN: 2141-209X

| | |
|------------|--|
| 6. | Supply and Installation of Laboratory/Teaching Equipment for Department of Mechanical Engineering |
| 8. | Supply and Installation of Laboratory/Teaching Equipment for Department of Biomedical Technology |
| 9. | Supply and Installation of Laboratory/Teaching Equipment for Department of Mechanical Engineering (Aeronautical Engineering Training Equipment) |
| 10. | Supply and Installation of Laboratory/Teaching Equipment for Department of Food Science Technology |
| 11. | Supply and Installation of Laboratory/Teaching Equipment for Departmental of Electrical and Electronic Engineering (Electrical Option) |
| 12. | Supply and Installation of Laboratory/Teaching Equipment for Central Instrument and Equipment Centre |
| 13. | Supply and Installation of Laboratory/Teaching Equipment for Department of Petroleum Engineering |
| 14. | Supply and Installation of Laboratory/Teaching Equipment for Department of Electrical and Electronic Engineering (Electronic option) |
| 15. | Supply and Installation of Laboratory/Teaching Equipment for Department of Materials and Metallurgical Engineering |
| 16. | Supply and Installation of Laboratory/Teaching Equipment for Department of Biochemistry (Administrative Building) |
| 17. | Supply and Installation of Laboratory/Teaching Equipment for Department of Biochemistry (Laboratory Building) |
| 18. | Supply and Installation of Laboratory/Teaching Equipment for Department of Civil Engineering |
| 19. | Supply and Installation of Laboratory/Teaching Equipment for Department of Agricultural Engineering |
| 20. | Supply and Installation of Laboratory/Teaching Equipment for structural and soil testing for department of civil engineering |
| 21. | Supply and Installation of Laboratory/Teaching Equipment and Furniture for Library (Phase 2A) |
| 22. | Supply and Installation of Laboratory/Teaching Equipment for Department of Mechatronic Engineering |
| S/N | Procurement of Generators and Electrical Equipment |
| 1. | Procurement, Installation and commission of 800KVA brand new Perkins generating set with generator house, armoured cable 1000AMP gear and change over switches |
| 2. | Supply and installation of solar plant street lightening for classrooms, lecture theatres and student Hostels |
| 3. | Supply and Installation of 3Nos 500KVA Perkins Soundproof Generator sets with Accessories and construction of Generator House |
| 4. | Installation of 2Nos 25KV solar Energy plants at new and old Academic areas. |
| S/N | Procurement of Furniture |
| 1. | Procurement and Installation of computer tables with Extension |

| | |
|------------|--|
| 2. | Procurement and Installation of 800 Nos Double Lecture Theatre Seats |
| 3. | Procurement and Installation of 20 Nos Executive Tables with Extension |
| 4. | Procurement And Installation Of 4,536 Nos Double Seater Classroom Desks For Institute Of Women, Gender And Development Studies |
| 5. | Procurement and Installation of Furniture for Lecture Theatre for school of Environmental Sciences |
| 6. | Procurement Of Tables And Chairs For Council/Senate chamber |
| 7. | Procurement of Conference table and Executive chairs for vice-chancellor's conference room |
| 8. | Procurement and Installation of Furniture for Department of Dental Technology Building |
| 9. | Procurement and Installation of Furniture for Department of Optical Technology |
| S/N | Procurement of Vehicles |
| 1. | Procurement of 2 Nos 30 Seater Toyata Coaster Buses |
| 2. | Procurement of 2Nos Toyota Hilux Vehicles |
| 3. | Procurement Of 1Nos Toyota Double Cabin Pick-up vehicle |
| 4. | Procurement of 7Nos 56+1 Seater Ashok Falcon City Buses |
| 5. | Procurement of 6Nos Toyota Corolla Cars for all Deans of Schools |
| 6. | Procurement of 6Nos Toyota Corolla Car for council/University use |
| S/N | Constructions/Rehabilitation of Roads |
| 1. | Construction of New Road to the Hostels |
| 2. | Construction of New Road to new SMAT Complex |
| 3. | Construction of 1 KM Access Road to the Reach and Technology Park |
| 4. | Rehabilitation of FUTO Road 4 |
| 5. | Rehabilitation of FUTO Road 2 |
| 6. | Rehabilitation of FUTO Road 1 |
| S/N | Stabilization of Erosion |
| 1. | Stabilization of Erosion Site at Directorate of General Studies (DGS) |
| 2. | Stabilization of Erosion Site at School of Health Technology (SOHT) |
| 3. | Stabilization of Erosion Site at School of Management Technology (SMAT) |

Source: Physical Planning Unit FUTO (2018)

All these and many more were possible through TETFund intervention in Federal University of Technology, Owerri.

Findings and Discussion

From the above data, it is clear that the rate of infrastructural development and academic staff training/development in FUTO through TETFund is on the high. This could be as a result of FUTO being among the second generation tertiary institution, whose infrastructure must have decayed. Again, being a University of Technology is the rationale behind the more attention given to the institution. The impact of

TETFund in FUTO has enhanced the quality of teaching and learning in the institution. The management has substantially improved the level of infrastructure on campus to meet the population in the University community through the TETFund intervention fund. There are five hundred and four (504) academic staff that have benefitted from the fund and over ninety (90) project completed within the period under review through the intervention fund.

Conclusion

Education is generally seen as a tool for promoting development in every society. Tertiary education is needed to provide for acceleration of social change, economic sustainability and human capital development. Nigeria suffers greatly from the under-utilization of her human resources which is reflected in the poor funding of tertiary and vocational institutions. This has led to the dearth of research and development as well as lack of adequate and skilled manpower. This could be seen by the low quality of graduates in recent times and brain drain.

TETFund is an intervention agency set up by the federal government to assist in development of tertiary institutions by providing fund for research, training of academic staff, support in conferences and workshops as well as infrastructural development. It is playing its role in the standardization and upliftment of the educational standard in the Nigerian public tertiary institutions. Federal University of Technology being a public tertiary institution has benefitted from the intervention fund. The intervention agency has done well in the institution under study. This could be seen in the number of staff that has accessed the fund and the number of TETFund projects in the institution. TETFund has impacted positively in the infrastructural and human capital development of Federal University of Technology Owerri. Virtually all the capital projects in the institution under study are TETFund funded. The agency has ameliorated the infrastructural and manpower challenges of FUTO to an extent.

However, the study revealed that accessing the fund is not easy. There is a high level of bureaucratic bottlenecks associated with accessing the intervention fund. Also there are some projects that are yet to be completed. For instance the global research centre is still under construction and it is seen and described by people as abandoned project.

Recommendations

Despite the huge allocations to tertiary institutions by TETFund and the proclamation that the intervention agency has impacted positively on the institutions, tertiary institutions in Nigeria still rated backwards in the history of best universities in the world and the quality of education is still considerably low. We therefore recommend that:

1. The procedure for accessing the fund should be made easy. The bureaucratic bottlenecks should be reduced to some extent. The principle of meritocracy should be applied when allocating the fund.
2. Abandoned projects by TETFund in FUTO should be completed as soon as possible

3. TETFund should replicate such developmental strides in other universities especially states owned universities.

REFERENCES

- Buchanan, J.M & Tullock Gordon. (1962). *The Calculus of Consent*.
- Okebukola, P. (2002). *The State of University Education in Nigeria*. National Universities Commission. Abuja: Nigeria.
- Okotoni, O. & Erero J. (2005). "Manpower Training and Development in the Nigerian Public Service". in *African Journal of Public Administration and Management (AJPAM)* Vol. XVI, No 1.
- Onuma, N (2017). "Under Funding Tertiary Education in Nigeria: Implication for Sustainable National Development", *International Journal of Education and Multidisciplinary Studies*. Vol.7 No.3.
- Onyeike, V.C & Eseyin, E.O (2014) "Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFund) and The Management of University Education in Nigeria",. *Global Journal of Educational Research Vol. 13 2014*
- Onyeizugbe, C.U, Orogbu O.L. & Igbodo, R.O. (2016) "TETFUND Intervention Programmes and Academic Staff Development of Selected Universities in South East Nigeria",. *Journal of Economic and Public Finance* Vol.2 No.1.
- Shaw, J. S.(2002). *The Public Choice*. Retrieved from <http://www.econlib.org>
- TETFUND List Achievements, Honours Tax Payer Thisday Newspaper, 13th Dec, 2014. www.pressreader.com. Accessed on 10th Nov. 2018.
- Udu L.E. & Nkwede, J.O. (2014) "Tertiary Education Trust Fund Intervention and Sustainable Development in Nigeria Universities: Evidence from Ebonyi State University, Abakilik", *Journal of Sustainable Development* Vo.7 No.4.