

Factors Militating Against the Effective Execution of TET Fund Approved Projects in Northeast Zone Nigeria: Implication for Policy

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Abstract

The study examined the Factors Militating against the effective execution of Tet Fund approved Projects in Northeast Zone Nigeria: Implication for policy. The objectives of the study are to examine the efficiency of conduct and accessing of approved Tet fund projects on growth development in polytechnics in the Northeastern States and to examine the state of effective Administration of Polytechnics strategies in utilizing of Tet fund Grants in Northeast Zone. Data were collected from primary source and secondary source for the study. However, as a survey study the data for the research will be collected through questionnaire and interview, The research design used for this study is both quantitative and qualitative. The study area is Northeast zone, Nigeria. And the data collected will be analyzed using STATA statistical tools. Based on the findings it was found that the amount allocated to the polytechnics in the Northeast is not sufficient to cover staff request on training and development, execution of capital projects. The study recommends that Tet fund should review the amount allocated to each polytechnic to cover their request (training and development and capital project). Also, whenever funds are allocated to institutions and are not assessed, such funds should be roll over or reallocated in the next year budget, again TET Fund need to embark on periodic evaluation and supervision of projects it is supporting or funding in higher institutions in the region. This evaluation and supervision should not be restricted to capital projects alone. Projects on manpower development like academic staff training, conferences, workshops, engineering fabrications, supply of equipment among others should also be subjected to severe evaluation and supervision by TET Fund.

KEYWORDS: *Factors, Militating, Execution, Tet fund, Projects*

Introduction

From 1980's and beyond, the decay of all tiers of education was monumental. Facilities had almost collapsed; teachers and lecturers' morale were at its lowest. Enabling environment for conducive teaching and learning was absent. The administration of President, Ibrahim Babangida mindful of the reality of the situation took measures to arrest the rot. In December 1990 the Federal Government constituted the Commission on the Review of Higher Education in Nigeria (the Gray Longe Commission) to review the post-independence Nigerian Higher Education after

Lord Ashby's Commission of 1959. The Longe Commission recommended among others the funding of higher education through earmarked tax to be borne by companies operating in Nigeria. An implementation committee under the chairmanship of Professor Olu O. Akinkugbe was constituted to implement Grey Longe's Commission report recommendations also an Agreement was signed between the Federal Government and ASUU on the 3rd September, 1992 on funding of universities (Iruonagbe, Imhonopi and Egharevba, 2015)

The objectives of education in Nigeria are to prepare the young ones to face future challenges and to develop them to meet the nation's manpower requirements. There is a general decay in human and material resources in Nigeria tertiary institutions owing to poor funding. These have contributed to poor quality of teachers, poor academic performances of students; low rating of institutions, poor staff performance, and recruitment of unqualified academic and non-academic staff administrative personnel. Funding of tertiary institutions throughout the world has witnessed drastic changes in the last decades. These changes are responses to a worldwide phenomenon of rising cost of university/polytechnic education in excess of the corresponding rate of increases of available revenues. In Nigeria, funding shortfalls have been the norm for many years as enrolments have increased more quickly than the government's capacity to maintain its proportional financial support. Because government funding is insufficient to maintain institutional performance in teaching and research, Nigeria universities/polytechnics just like their counterparts elsewhere in the world have to seek to supplement their public funding through other means. The period between 1960s and 1980s were regarded as the golden age of university/polytechnics education in Nigeria. Nigerian research in terms of quality and quantity was the best in Sub-Saharan Africa (Okebukola, 2002). Some universities/polytechnics in Nigeria earned global respect and recognition in specific disciplines as a result of excellence in research and publications. The problem of under-funding has generated a lot of strife between the Academic Staff Union of Universities/Polytechnics (ASUU/ASUP) and the Government. Without adequate funding, many educational goals and objectives cannot 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. Okebukola (2002) summarized the factors that contributed to the 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 administrative schedules which leave little time for research and difficulty in accessing research funds. 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. The fund was set up to administer and disburse to the Federal and State tertiary educational institutions in Nigeria. The main source of the fund income is the 2% tax paid from the profit-making companies registered in Nigeria. 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). TETFund interventions in this study are anchored on normal interventions research grant, academic staff development and publication of research reports. In addition, the Federal Government has instituted the National Research Fund to enable lecturers conduct research in a better and conducive environment. One of the objectives for establishing the Tertiary Education Trust Fund is to fund research in higher institutions to which university is included. In spite of the interventions of TET Fund in the area of research and academic growth, many tertiary institutions are unable to meet the conditions for

accessing funds allocated to them. As a result, many academic staff miss the opportunities to access free funds for research development. A recent disclosure from TET Fund (2017) reveals that the sum of N75, 206,387.13 has been released as research grant to 15 public tertiary institutions across the country to support 135 research proposals.. According to Eno-Abasi (2015) many institutions complained that the process of accessing the fund are not 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 hinders access. Therefore, it is pertinent International Journal of Development and Management Review (INJODEMAR) Vol. 14 No. 1 June, 2019 88 that lecturers and managers of the institutions should collaborate for successful completion of the proposals and access the fund earmarked for them. The study specifically aimed to examine factors militating against effective administration of polytechnics, Tet fund Strategies on growth and development in the northeast.

STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

Studies by Iruonagbe (2015), Dawodu (2010), Okebukola (2002), Obasi (2005), Obadara and Alake (2013), Odebiyi and Aina (1999) as well as Moji (2000) among others have examined the development of higher education tremendously in Nigeria adopting the explorative method of analysis and investigation. Their studies succeeded in exploring the growth and development of higher education in the country. But because most of the previous studies on the development of higher education in Nigeria were conducted before the establishment of TET Fund, initial studies were unable to assessed the factors imitating against the effective execution of TET Fund to the development of higher education in the country. This is one of the gaps created in knowledge. Several works on the development of higher education have also adopted in their analysis, qualitative method of inquiry which never gave academic and non-academic staff as well as students` the privilege to participate on studies concerning the development of higher education in the country thus, creating yet, additional gap to be bridged in the area of methodology. It is the desire to bridge gaps created in knowledge by previous studies which have failed to assessed the factors imitating against the effective execution of TET Fund to the development of higher education in Nigeria and the failure to incorporate both qualitative and quantitative methods of inquiries in their studies of on the development of higher education in Nigeria that justified the basis for this study. The researcher hopes to fill these information/ gaps.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objectives of the study is to:

- i. To examine the Factors Militating against the effective execution of Tet fund approved project in Northeast Zone
- ii. To examine the efficiency of conduct for execution of approved project on Polytechnics in the Northeastern States
- iii. To examine the state of effective Administration of Polytechnics strategies in utilizing of Tet fund Grants in Northeast Zone

LITERATURE REVIEW

Empirical Review

Agbe (2010) investigated human capital development and sustainability in education system. The study utilized a simple survey and it was discovered that there is a link between dynamic education, human capital development and economic growth. The study concluded that dynamic education that could enhance human capital development sustainability should be that type of education that encourages utility, encourages skill acquisition and entrepreneurial development. Udu and Nkwede (2014) carried out a study on tertiary education trust fund interventions and sustainable development in Nigerian polytechnics in the northeast.

Bogoro (2015) in his work on Sustainability of Higher Education in Nigeria: Challenges and Prospects opined that —foreign training is a necessary element for the creation of a pool of scientific personnel required for sustenance of research and development activities in the Third World and will remain so for the foreseeable future. The advanced countries have the infrastructure, the human resources and capacity to train personnel to the highest international levels. Makolu and Ogbuabor (2013) conducted a research on the effect of training and manpower development on institutional performances in Nigeria. The study applied structured questionnaire to a sample size of seventy five drawn by simple random sampling. The analysis of data generated was done through descriptive statistics. The analysis of the study shows that training and manpower development enhances workers job productivity and organizational performances. Kayode, Kajang and Anyio (2013) studied human Resource Development and educational standard in Nigeria. The study was aimed at examining the effects of low standard of education on its human capital development. The study adopted descriptive approach using secondary data. It was discovered that both the National Policy on Education and Nigerian Constitution emphasized the importance of investing on human capital through education for accelerated economic, political and social development. The results revealed that the rate of under development and poverty among other social ills experienced in Nigeria is a consequence of poor investment in human capital development and the decline in the quality and functional education in the country. The study recommended proper educational planning strategy, monitoring, evaluation, better living environment and adequate funding to reverse the trend while corruption and indiscipline should be tackled headlong in the educational sector.

Factors Imitating the Effective Execution of Tet fund Approved Project in Northeast

Firstly, The amount allocated for polytechnics in the northeast for staff development, research, academic conference and book development are not sufficient enough to cover staff request in the polytechnics

Secondly, Tetfund had complained that 90 percent of lecturers 'research proposals were very poor and un-fundable. Several other reasons have been adduced for not accessing the fund for research.

Thirdly, Dayo (2014) reports that incomplete documentations on the part of the institutions applying for the fund are one of the reasons for not accessing these funds. 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 hinders access of funds allocated to institutions; such funds are lost and are reallocated among all other institutions in the next year. TET Fund policies do not stipulate any provisions to help such institutions recover previously missed funds in the next year. Again, there is no provision in the TET Fund

policies that guides against using sentiments in sending academic staff for training by chief executives of tertiary institutions in Nigeria, is it because the administrative staff are not included in the TET fund study training, research and development.

Government has made efforts at addressing this problem; for example, in 1993, the Education Tax Decree was enacted to provide 2% of the profits of companies registered in Nigeria to be collected by government and paid into a fund called the Education Tax Fund (ETF) now Education Trust Fund (ETF) and recently, the Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFund). Despite increase in funding from over 11 billion naira in 1999 to over 90 billion naira in 2008, funding still remains a major challenge (Dawodu, 2010). This was the trend in Nigeria such that the admission crisis became more critical after 2001. The access rate had fallen by 2002 to less than 13 percent (Okebukola 2002). Based on this fact, the expansion of access through the establishment of Private Universities became one of the most reasonable policy options (Obasi, 2005).

There are enormous problems facing the higher education system in Nigeria. Indeed, over the years, higher education in Nigeria has suffered much neglect manifested in the form of inadequate funding, inconsistent policy changes; lack of infrastructure and disruption of the school system. These problems in the higher education system have been very disturbing. In fact, budgetary allocations to education in Nigeria have been grossly inadequate leading to agitations by lecturers and students about obsolete equipment, old and outdated textbooks and journals including poor remuneration for lecturers especially at the tertiary level, which have also heightened the level of brain drain in the country as many of them moved to different parts of the world in search of greener pastures. There have been complaints by employers of labor within and outside the country that most graduates from Nigerian Universities are not properly trained to fit into the world of work in terms of desirable knowledge and skill. In developed countries, especially in Europe and America, most Nigerian graduates are seen as half-baked due to such issues as constant strikes, conflicts, disruption of academic calendar and cultism which have destroyed the quality of education in Nigeria including the dearth of qualified and experienced lecturers. Education is the engine that drives the growth and development of a nation.

Funding for education has not been commensurate with the demand of the education sector. Reportedly, the percentage of federal budgetary allocation to education has been dwindling. It was 7.2% in 1995 and 4.5% in 2004. The condition becomes more pathetic when Nigeria's Gross National Product (GNP) allocation to education is compared with those of less affluent African nations that allocate greater percentage: Ivory Coast allocates 5% of its GNP to education, Kenya 6.5% and Nigeria 0.76%. Lack of teaching tools and poor remuneration has contributed to "acute shortage of qualified teachers" that leads to the falling standards of university education. More revealing is the 2006 ranking of African universities in which Nigerian universities, that were once highly rated, were behind universities in poorer countries. It is imperative to add that in 2004, the sum of N216, 708,206.00 was requested by the federal funded universities. The Federal government released the sum of N53, 406, 287. 01 representing 24.7% of the budget request from the Universities (Okuwa, 2004; Aluede, 2012). As espoused by Odebiyi and Aina (1999), the multiplier effects of this low level of funding include: poor laboratory facilities; limited number of field trips and academic conferences; inadequate and obsolete infrastructure and equipment; embargo on study fellowship and reduction in study grants. This is the educational situation in Nigeria that gave birth to the emergence of private universities.

Generally speaking, higher education refers to post-secondary education or tertiary educational institutions other than universities. The National Policy on Education in Nigeria

(FGN, 2004) defines higher education as post-secondary education comprising universities, polytechnics and colleges of education including such institutions as may be allied to them. In Nigeria, higher education is involved in the traditional functions of teaching, research and community service so as to develop manpower and disseminate necessary knowledge needed in Industry and other sectors. Education in general and higher education in particular are fundamental to the construction of a knowledge economy in all nations (Adesina and Awonusi, 2004). The decade from 1990 witnessed an upsurge in the number of private institutions of learning in Africa in general and Nigeria in particular. Before this decade, most African countries committed much of their expenditures on public education, which served as an instrument for building the nation, following independence. The establishment of higher educational institutions was in pursuit of meeting the global requirements of producing manpower that will serve in different capacities and contribute positively to the nation's socio-economic and political development in Nigeria (Abdulkareem, Fasasi and Akinubi, 2011). Federal Government of Nigeria promulgated enabling law to found higher education towards producing high level relevant manpower training, self-reliance, national utility through the establishment of both conventional and special universities, polytechnics, colleges of education and monotechnic in different parts of the country by the Federal, state governments, private organizations and individuals (Abdulkareem, Fasasi and Akinubi, 2011). Though, persistent problem affecting the funding of higher education in Nigeria has led to the transformation of the country's Education Trust Fund (ETF) into the Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFund) aim at creating various avenue of investing in higher education in the country

METHODOLOGY

The study was conducted using both quantitative and qualitative methods of data collection. Primary data were sourced through the administration of closed ended questionnaire which was administered on 300 respondents chosen from three selected TETFund beneficiaries' institutions in three states in the north east region of Nigeria. The study areas. Federal Polytechnic Mubi (Adamawa) Federal Polytechnic Bali (Taraba), Federal Polytechnic Damaturu (Yobe State), Ramat Polytechnic (Borno), Abubakar Tatari Ali Polytechnic (Bauchi), Mai Idris Aloomaa Polytechnic Geidam-(Yobe State), Federal Polytechnic Bauchi (Bauchi State) and Federal polytechnic Kaltungo (Gombe State) selected for the proposed research. Stratified sampling technique was used to select 400 sample sizes. This was based on the sample size guideline that when the population is about 5000 or more, 400 sample size is adequate for the study (Leedey and Ormrod, 2005), Olatunji, 2010 and Usman, 2015).

Questionnaire and interview will be used to source data for the purpose of this research. The strata comprise of Polytechnics in Northeast zone (Bauchi, Gombe, Adamawa, Taraba, Yobe and Borno State). The data will be analyzed using analysis of variance (ANOVA)

FINDINGS

At the end of the research, here are the expected outcome:

- There is need for fund allocation to Polytechnics administration of northeast zone to be reviewed which will be determined to guide policy makers in the future
- The research will advance the efficiency and effectiveness of Tet fund approved project and their roles in alleviating or militating effective administration
- The shortcomings and inadequacies of previous and current government policies towards the conduct of Tet fund will be highlighted and the stakeholders advised accordingly

- It will guide government and policy makers to have an insight into the causes of factors militating against effective administration in the polytechnics of the Northeast zone with a
- view to re-strategize in the future

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings made, the study arrived at the conclusion that, Factors Militating against execution of approved projects in Nigeria's North-East region to a larger extent. The study also reached the conclusion that, TET Fund contributions to the development of higher education in North-East Nigeria are very effective but there are some factors militating against effective administration in the polytechnics of the Northeast that need to be structured and implement to enable them access their fund for proper execution of approved project. And also, the study came to conclusion that, there is the need to improve TET Fund contribution to the development of higher education in North-East Nigeria

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